Mutua and Ishay take on a similar project in each of their essays. They are both trying to refine and examine the contemporary notion of human rights in such a way that it exposes the historic shaping of the human rights movement so that it can move past it. Ishay, in particular, does this through an extension of history, moving from the earliest examples of rights movements and into the present. In that way, his essay is a continuation to Mutua’s work, where Mutua plays out that exact idea in the Savage-Victim-Savior metaphor. However, Ishay takes a particular focus on the socialist influence on the conception of rights, whereas Mutua does not.

Ishay writes in the conclusion to his work that the human rights movement’s “economic and political impulse toward social justice owes much to the socialist tradition of the 19th century” (Ishay 369), drawing the comparison to a specific aspect of Western thought and tradition that has shaped the nominally liberal foundation of rights. This is an expansion to Mutua’s work in establishing the “fundamentally Eurocentric” (Mutua 204) nature of the human rights movement, wherein Inshay delineates that Eurocentric tendency into liberal and socialist sectors (albeit not perfectly segregated, but rather pushing and pulling on one another).

For example, Ishay highlights that the “Chartists in England – early socialist precursors – and later the European labor parties played a large role in the campaign for voting and social rights” (Ishay 363), which is an elaboration on the framework and critique that Mutua lays out within his own work. By examining particular examples of the shaping of the human rights corpus, Ishay is able to make Mutua’s point more clearly. However, the conflict that Ishay introduces lies in tension with Mutua’s claims. Where Ishay notes that “key elements of the original socialist platform had long since been embraced as mainstream tenets of liberalism” (Ishay 364), suggesting that the Western influence on rights has not been the sort of descending down to savages in other parts of the work that Mutua casts it to be. When Mutua writes that in “the human rights story, the savior is the human rights corpus itself” (Mutua 204), he elides that conflict within the European context of the struggle for rights.