

HIS 371-01 Human Rights in Asia

MW 2:15-3:50, in Mears 312

Prof. Weiwei Luo

Office hours in Mears 312: T&TH 1:10-3pm and by appointment

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Course Description:

Few things are more prominent in contemporary political discourse than discussions of human rights. But which ideals are included at the core of this concept and what kinds of practices give it expression? In this seminar, students will first engage with the history of human rights as a category by exploring key foundational and contemporary texts. From there, we will explore the related concept of "international human rights", a powerful idea in our time, but also the focus of numerous controversies. We will discuss issues of international law and political interests, universal standards and cultural relativism, civil society and social norms, and the challenges of contemporary advocacy.

Books:

Samuel Moyn. *Human Rights and the Use of History* (expanded second edition) Verso; Reprint edition (August 29, 2017)

Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights*, W. W. Norton & Company (April 17, 2008)

Other readings will be provided on Pweb as PDFs

Requirements:

- a) The seminar paper (50%.) This paper will be a 20-to-30-page research paper (6000-7500 words) based on work with primary and secondary sources. Detailed grading rubric will be posted under Assignments on PWeb.
- b) Class participation (30%.) You are expected to attend class on time and participate actively throughout the semester. All readings are to be completed prior to the class period for which they have been assigned. You should come to class prepared to discuss them in detail.
- c) Paper proposal and peer comments (20%.) You will be required to write a five-page (double-spaced) proposal for your seminar paper, which will be due on April 1 (15%). You will read and give feedback on your classmates' proposals (5%.) which are due on April 8.

Grading Scale:

93-100%	A	83-86%	B	70-76%	C
90-92%	A-	80-82%	B-	60-69%	D
87-89%	B+	77-79%	C+	below 60%	F

Policies

Student Accessibility Services:

If you need and want accommodations in this class, please contact Autumn Wilke, in Academic Advising (wilkeaut@grinnell.edu, (641) 269-3124). She will work with you to specify the accommodations and give you a letter outlining these. This process ensures your equal participation in the class while protecting your privacy. If your access needs have already been specified, please provide me with the letter.

Religious holidays:

Grinnell College offers alternative options to complete academic work for students who observe holy days. Please contact me within the first 2 weeks of the semester if you would like to discuss a specific instance that applies to you.

Attendance and extension policies:

If you have legitimate reasons to miss class or turn in an assignment late, please let me know in advance and supply relevant documentation. Everyone is allowed 2 absences without penalty during the semester. If you have 3 or more absences (regardless of reasons,) you will incur deduction of attendance grade. You are encouraged to come to talk to me about ways to make up for absences if you have legitimate reasons to miss more than 2 classes. Everyone is allowed 1 extensions of 24 hours on 1 writing assignments without penalty. If you have 2 or more late submissions (regardless of reasons) you will incur grade deduction on the assignment depending on the amount of time lapsed. You are encouraged to come to talk to me about ways to make up for the grade.

Academic honesty:

In all assignments written for this course, you must abide by the College's rules on plagiarism. (http://catalog.grinnell.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=2537#Honesty_in_Academic_Work) Do not submit someone else's work as your own, quote from a source without citing it, or provide inappropriate help to a classmate on exams and assignments. If you paraphrase or quote any text from another you must indicate where the text comes from. Failure to comply with the requirement of academic honesty may result in receiving no credit for the assignment in question or even failing the course in cases of serious academic dishonesty. If you are in doubt about any of the rules, please consult with me, or the professionals in the Writing Lab, *before* submitting your class materials and assignments.

Schedule

Week 1 Introduction

Jan 23 Introduction

Week 2 Foundational Concepts

Jan 28 Narrating Human Rights in Western History
Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights*

Jan 30 Critique of Human Rights in Western History
Moyn, *Human Rights and the Use of History*, chapters 1-4

Week 3 Cultural Relativism and Comparative Viewpoints

Feb 4
Benedict Anderson. "Chapter 4: Frameworks of Comparison." In *A Life Beyond Boundaries*.

Bruun and Jacobsen, *Human Rights and Asian Values*, chapter 1&2

Feb 6
Stephen Angle, *Confucian Human Rights (excerpt)*

Sherma, *Hinduism and Human Rights (excerpt)*

Week 4 The Universal Declaration

Feb 11
Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Eleanor Roosevelt, "The Promise of Human Rights", 1948

Feb 13
Susan Waltz. "Reclaiming and rebuilding the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." *Third World Quarterly*3 (2002): 437-448.

Bruun and Jacobsen, chapter 3

Week 5 Venues of Justice and Statelessness

Feb 18

Mumtaz Soysal. "Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech, Amnesty International." December 1977

Moyn, chapters 5-7

Feb 20

The Dalai Lama, *Autobiography* (excerpt) and Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech

Nick Cheesman. "Problems with facts about Rohingya Statelessness."

Week 6 Women's Rights

Feb 25

Lata Mani, "Contentious Traditions - The Debate on Sati in Colonial India."

Human Rights Watch. *Marry Before Your House is Swept Away: Child Marriage in Bangladesh*. New York: HRW, 2015.

Feb 27

Hilary Charlesworth. "What are 'Women's International Human Rights'?" In *Human Rights of Women: National and International Perspectives*.

Land Watch Asia. "Issue Brief: Women's Land Rights in Asia." Philippines: Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC), 2015.

Week 7 LGBT Rights

March 4

Siobhan Somerville, "Scientific Racism and the Invention of the Homosexual Body."

Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, "Global Identities: Theorizing Transnational Studies of Sexuality."

March 6

Lynette Chua and David Gilbert. "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Minorities in Transition: LGBT Rights and Activism in Myanmar." *Human Rights Quarterly* 1 (2015): 1-28.

Human Rights Watch. (Summary, recommendations, and manga) "*The Nail That Sticks Out Gets Hammered Down*": *LGBT Bullying and Exclusion in Japanese Schools*. New York: Human Rights Watch, 2016.

Week 8 Massacre and Genocide

March 11

Nathan, The Tiananmen Papers (excerpt)

Louisa Lim. "Introduction," "Student," "Chengdu," and "Afterword." *The People's Republic of Amnesia: Tiananmen Revisited*.

March 13

Ben Kiernan. *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-1979*.

John Ciorciari. "Introduction." *The Khmer Rouge Tribunal*. Edited by John Ciorciari. Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, pp. 11-27.

Spring Break (March 18-29)

Weeks 9-14: Individual Meetings (to be scheduled with me)

Final Paper due on May 15 (noon.)