Welcome to Human Rights and Revolution in South and Southeast Asia. In this class, we will explore the political histories and political cultures of the region of the world that stretches geographically from modern day India, around the Bay of Bengal, through the Andaman Sea, and into the Gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea. Historically, our investigations will begin in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries, with the onset of European Imperialism in the region. We will look at the political and cultural reactions to European Imperial rule, while examining the liberation movements in India, Burma, and Cambodia that freed these countries from direct foreign domination after World War II.

Secondly, we will look at how the legacy of colonialism and imperialism shaped the history of the region in more recent times. We'll look at how peasant revolts against colonial tax systems shaped the political culture of these countries; we'll read about how new traditional kings and prophets emerged from religious institutions to challenge the British and French empires. And we'll ask how this history animated the Indian National Congress and Gandhi's liberation movement, how it shapes modern life in India, how it reemerged in the ideology of the Khmer Rouge Genocide, and the current democracy and human rights movement in Myanmar (A.K.A. Burma) which is led by Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of the man who liberated Burma from British rule after World War II.

This class will pay particular attention to the role of religion in shaping the political movements in each of these cultures. Buddhism and Hinduism, contrary to popular assumptions, are not religions that produce passive and pliant subjects. Quite the opposite, religious institutions and religious thought channeled powerful violent and non-violent liberation movements through the age of colonialism. And, they continue to play an often misunderstood role in people's continuing quest for justice and human rights. A large part of this class will be devoted towards understanding how the concept of freedom and human rights are thought of in these cultures; to this end, it will be important for us to become familiar with Hindu and Buddhist thought and beliefs.

We'll need to remember that this is a region of the world marked by more than two thousand years of extraordinary cultural diversity. This is a theme that is especially important to Thant Myint-U's analyses of Burmese history and James Scott's analysis of Southeast Asian politics. The cultures, societies, and political intuitions of the region were all formed around major land and sea trading routes, meaning that peoples of all faiths and all thoughts of the globe have passed through these regions, sharing spices, foods, drinks, goods, technologies, beliefs, thoughts, religions, stories, languages, and ideas.
Also remember that we'll need more than a Wikipedia understanding of religion. There are many different types of "Hinduism" and Buddhism, just as there are many different types of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. The Buddhism of Burma is different from the Buddhism of Cambodia, and both of these Buddhas are very different from the Buddhism we find in Japan, for example. What is more, there are thousands of different "Hinduisms." We'll get into these details during class lectures. Throughout the class, your professor will distribute printouts of sermons by important historical religious leaders, poems by monks, and passages from religious texts. Most importantly, you'll be required to seek out and immerse yourself in an Indian, Burmese, Thai, Vietnamese, Malaysian, or Cambodian community in the Newark-New York metropolitan area. By the end of the class, you will have produced an original ethnographic account of the community you found. To start your ethnographic accounts, you will have to seek out either a cultural center or a religious group, and attend their gatherings and functions several times.

This ethnographic exercise is a major component of your final grade. If you cannot commit the time necessary for completing the ethnography, you should consider taking another class. However, it is entirely possible to produce a fantastic ethnographic account by just introducing yourself to the waiters and owners of a local restaurant. You will find that an entirely new world can be suddenly unlocked just a block or two away from your house. Your new understanding of their people's history will be quite the ice-breaker, I promise.

The other major components of your grade are 10 short response papers due every Sunday night at midnight. These short papers are based on the week's readings, and must be submitted through blackboard. Your final take home exam will synthesize what you learned from the various response papers.
Required Books
listed in order of the course schedule

Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*. Duke


0231131143


0813343631

Alexander Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide*. Berkeley

Gina Chon and Sambath Thet, *Behind the Killing Fields: A Khmer Rouge Leader and

Attendance
3 absences will result in failing the course. No exceptions are allowed unless the Dean's
Office excuses you.

Plagiarism & Cheating
Consult the Rutgers University official policy on plagiarism printed in the Student
Handbook and on the RU website. Rutgers's policy is my policy.

Course Grading and Required Work

25% Weekly response papers
10 assignments of 10 points each

25% Ethnographic Account
Ethnographic Field Work Exercises, 4 assignments — 15 points each, 60 points
Final Ethnographic Account — 40 points

25% Synthetic Final Take Home Exam
First Draft — 25 points
Take Home Exam — 75 points

25% Participation
Details of Required Work

Weekly response papers

• 10 assignments of 10 points each. These are short essays that are graded on a scale of 1 through 10.
• Not following the word requirements will result in an automatic 0 for the paper.
• Use footnotes for all of your citations.
• Each paper must make one explicit connection to a past reading.
• Each paper must advance a clear and original thesis. This is not a book report; this is a short analytical essay.
• Each paper will be graded as follows:
  1. 3 points for an original thesis
  2. 3 points for demonstrating a complete understanding of the weekly reading
  3. 2 points for drawing a critical connection to a past reading
  4. 2 points for writing style, spelling, and grammar
• If you are having difficulty with these assignments, you can see me during office hours or take your essays to the Writing Center in the first floor of Conklin Hall.

Synthetic Final Take Home Exam

✠ Monday 11/28: Finished First Draft of Synthetic Take Home Final Exam is Due
✠ Date of Final Exam Take Home Synthetic Exam is Due

Your final exam is a synthetic essay. Here are the assignment requirements:

• The essay must advance and original and clear thesis that is drawn from the course readings. I will not give you a final exam question. You are responsible for making your own question. I want to encourage you to think creatively and think originally. More on that below:
• In the first paragraph, your exam essay must present a research question, from which the thesis is drawn. Present this question in your introduction paragraph. Then, present your thesis (your argument about the answer to the question). Essays without a research question or a thesis will not receive more than a C. Rambling on and on, randomly, from one topic to the next, is a recipe for disaster.
• The essay is synthetic: it must discuss and cite over 80% of the course materials, synthesizing the course readings. (This means that the essay must be built around at least 6 books, and some of the in-class handouts). You are not required to do any outside research. In fact, you are not allowed to cite anything that is not on the class syllabus.
• This assignment is not a frightening as you think. After all, you will have already written 200-300 word essays on each book during the class. Just synthesize these into one essay to demonstrate what you learned this semester.
• A rough First Draft is due Monday 11/28, in class. This assignment must be submitted on in paper, in Times New Roman 12pt font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins all around, and a cover page.

• The Final Take Home Exam is due in my office on the day of our regularly scheduled final exam. This assignment must be submitted through blackboard in Microsoft Word format, in Times New Roman 12pt font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins all around, and a cover page.

Participation
I will take note of students who contribute positively to the conversation of the class, demonstrating command and confidence in their understanding of course readings and ethnographic fieldwork.

Ethnographic Account

✎ Wednesday 9/28: Ethnographic Write-up #1 due (450-500 words, via Blackboard)
✎ Sunday 10/16: Ethnographic Write-up #2 due (450-500 words, via Blackboard)
✎ Sunday 10/30: Ethnographic Write-up #3 due (450-500 words, via Blackboard)
✎ Monday 11/14: Ethnographic Write-up #4 due (450-500 words, via Blackboard)
✎ Monday 12/12: Final Ethnographic Account Due (1,500-2,000 words, in paper)

Basics of the Assignment

• Form groups of 3 to 5 people

• You and your groups will be responsible for finding a religious group — a mosque, temple, or church — from a Diaspora of one of the cultures we are studying this semester. For example, you could choose an Indian temple in Edison or Queens, or a Burmese temple in Brooklyn. Any religious group from any South Asian or Southeast Asian culture is fine.

• You and your group will make 4 trips to this site (or, if you wish, 2 trips to two different sites). At least one trip must be to attend a religious ceremony at the site (or sites) you visit. After each trip, you will write a short Ethnographic Account

• You are not doing a full ethnography, only a short Ethnographic Account of 450 to 500 words in length. The due dates for each Ethnographic Account are above.

• Your final project will be to write a complete Ethnographic Account of 1,500 to 2,000 words, due December 12th.

What is an Ethnographic Account and how do I produce one?

• An Ethnographic Account is one slice of life in the domain your group chooses to look at (a completed ethnography is a group of ethnographic accounts that presents a more complete picture of life of a people).

• For the purpose of our class, let’s define culture as the acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate social behavior.
• An ethnography is description of cultures and peoples, that seeks to understand the meaning of actions and events of the people we seek to understand.\(^1\)

• Your task is to produce a snapshot of the life and culture of a group of people. What is that snapshot going to be?

• For example, listen to a sermon or attend Friday night prayers. Take lots of notes about what the prayers were about or what were the sermons said. You should begin to discover what the community issues are that the sermons are addressing, and what are the spiritual issues that people are addressing. People go to religious centers for different reasons. One reason is spiritual. Other aspects are social and communal, or educational. Stick around and ask people questions after the service. Ask the religious leader lots of questions. Go early to the site and stay late, talk to people and ask, ask, ask, more and more questions.

• I'll give handouts in class about this. But, to make the experience meaningful, you should come up with several questions to ask at the site before you go. Of course, you can move on and ask other questions as the conversations change.

**How do you write an Ethnographic Account?**

• I'll give class handouts. After the first assignment, you'll have it down.

**Tips:**

• Know where you are going before you set out. Know how long the subway ride will be; know where to park. You do not want to be late. Besides jeopardizing your grade, this is embarrassing to you.

• You will find that people are very happy to talk about their cultures, customs, and beliefs. Be friendly, be polite, and don't be shy. Sometimes shyness is interpreted as offensive, especially by people who want to open their world to you. If they invite you to visit, they will expect you to be inquisitive.

• If they invite you to eat with them, join them! (If they didn't want you to be there, they would not have asked you to join :)

• Bring a camera and take pictures, and have people take pictures of you! Include some of these pictures in your final projects.

• Keep a pad of paper and a few pens handy at all times. You will want to constantly be writing about what you observe, what you hear, and what your feelings are at all times. Also, you will need that pen in order to share contact information.

• Offer to send your final papers to the people you visited. People often love to see what the students who saw them wrote.

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\(^1\) I am taking these bullet points from a classic book on how to do ethnography by James Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview*. I suggest buying it if you are an Anthropology major or if you would like to consult it for this class. Amazon.com has many cheap used copies.
### Class Schedule

| Week 1 |  
|--------|---
| **NOTE: Thursday 09/08/11 will change to Monday Schedule** |  
| Wednesday 9/7: First day of class |  
| **Ethnographic Groups** |  
| Thursday 9/8: 150 to 200 word reaction paper #1 on *Communist Manifesto* due by the end of the day, Thursday. |  
| For those students who would like to get a better understanding of the basics of Marx's thought, browse these links |  
| http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/sw/index.htm |  
| **Week 2** |  
| Sunday 9/11: 200 to 300 word reaction paper #2 on weekly reading due Marx on India |  
| Monday 9/12: Karl Marx wrote weekly articles for the New York Daily Tribune for many years. This week, we'll be reading Karl Marx's newspaper writings on the British Rule in India and the Indian uprisings against the British. Each of these is only the length of one newspaper editorial. All are available online from www.marxists.org |  
| Go to this webpage on Marxists.org: http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/sw/index.htm |  
| Read the following newspaper articles by Karl Marx: |  
| 1. "The British Rule in India" 25 June 1853 |  
| 2. "The East India Company: Its History and Results" 11 July 1853 |  
| 3. "The Future Results of British Rule in India" 22 July 1853 |  
| 4. Pick 1 more from the list called On the East India Company |  
| 5. "The Revolt in the Indian Army" 15 July 1857 |  
| 6. "The Revolt in India" 17 July 1857 |  
| 7. "The Indian Question" 14 August 1857 |  
| 8. "British Incomes in India" 4 September 1857 |  
| 9. Pick 2 from the list called The Suppression of the Insurrection |  
| 10. Pick 1 from the list called The Aftermath |  
| Wednesday 9/14: Finish our discussion on Marx in India |  
| **Week 3** |  
| Sunday 9/18: 200 to 300 word reaction paper #3 on weekly reading due Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India Chapters 1 & 2, read Chapters 3 & 4, skim closely Chapter 5 read |  
| Monday 9/19: |  
| Wednesday 9/21: Skim the rest of the book to grasp the major themes. Read the Conclusion carefully and, while reading the last chapter, review the previous chapters to help you understand the book. |  
| **Week 4** |  
| Sunday 9/25: 200 to 300 word reaction paper #4 on weekly reading due The Gandhi Reader |  
| Monday 9/26: |  

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Chapter 1, pages 18-28  
Chapter 2, skim this and read what you want  
Chapter 3, pages 59-76  
Chapter 4, skim this and read what you want  
Chapter 5, pages 104-124  
Chapter 6, pages 136-145  
Chapter 7, pages 154-172  
Chapter 8 & 9, skim this and read what you want  
Chapter 10, pages 235-254

**Wednesday 9/28:**  
Ethnographic Write-up #1 due

**Wednesday 9/28:**  
The Gandhi Reader  
Chapter 11, skim this and read what you want  
Chapter 12, 281-296  
Chapter 13, skim but pay attention to Gandhi on the Jews,  
Socialism, and Communism. Read whatever else interests you.  
Chapter 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 & 20 skim and read what you want

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### Week 5

**Sunday 10/2:**  
200 to 300 word reaction paper #5 on weekly reading due

**Monday 10/3:**  
The Gandhi Reader, Chapters 1, 2 & 3

**Wednesday 10/5:**  
The Gandhi Reader, Chapter 4; read what interests you in Chapter 5.

### Week 6

**Sunday 10/9:**  
200 to 300 word reaction paper #6 on weekly reading due

**Monday 10/10:**  
The River of Lost Footsteps, Read the entire book

**Wednesday 10/12:**  
The River of Lost Footsteps, Read the entire book

### Week 7

**Sunday 10/16:**  
Ethnographic Write-up #2 due

**Monday 10/17:**  
The Art of Not Being Governed  
Read: Intro, and Chapters 4 & 5

**Wednesday 10/19:**  
The Art of Not Being Governed  
Read: Chapters 6 (both part 1 and 2 of this chapter)  
Read Selected Writings about Burma on Blackboard

### Week 8

**Sunday 10/23:**  
200 to 300 word reaction paper #7 on weekly reading due

**Monday 10/24:**  
Freedom From Fear, Part 1

**Wednesday 10/26:**  
Freedom From Fear, Part 2

### Week 9

**Sunday 10/30:**  
Ethnographic Write-up #3 due

**Monday 10/31:**  
Read the Conclusion of The Art of Not Being Governed

**Wednesday 11/2:**  
Catch-up week, talk about ethnographies and class issues

### Week 10

**Sunday 11/6:**  
200 to 300 word reaction paper #8 on weekly reading due

**Monday 11/7:**  
A History of Cambodia,  
Chapter 1, read  
Chapters 2, 3, 4 & 5, skim  
Chapters 6 & 7, skim very closely  
Chapters 8, read

**Wednesday 11/9:**  
A History of Cambodia  
Chapter 9 & 10, read  
Chapters 11, 12 & 13, skim and read what you want
**Week 11**
- Sunday 11/13: 200 to 300 word reaction paper #9 on weekly reading due
- Monday 11/14: Ethnographic Write-up #4 is Due.
- Monday 11/14: *Behind the Killing Fields*
  - You'll have to type this link exactly in order for it to work. If not, google search "Douglas Irvin H-net review Behind the Khmer Rouge Killing Fields" and it should pop up as the first or second result.
- Wednesday 11/16: *Behind the Killing Fields*

**Week 12**
- **NOTE: Monday 11/21/11 will change to Wednesday Schedule**
- Sunday 11/20: 200 to 300 word reaction paper #10 on weekly reading due
- Monday 11/21: *Why Did They Kill?* Introduction and Part 1
- Wednesday 11/23: NO CLASS

**Week 13**
- Monday 11/28: Finished First Draft of Synthetic Take Home Final Exam is Due
- Monday 11/28: *Why Did They Kill?* Part 2 and the Conclusion
- Wednesday 11/30: *Why Did They Kill?* Part 2 and the Conclusion

**Week 14**
- Monday 12/5: Review
- Wednesday 12/7: Review

**Week 15**
- Monday 12/12: Final Ethnographic Account Due
- Monday 12/12: Wrap-up

**Final Exam**
- Date TBD: Take Home Synthetic Exam is Due