Norms of Humanity
Dr. Giovanni Mantilla (gm633@cam.ac.uk)
MPhil in POLIS 2021-2022
Lent Term
Fridays 3.05-4.55pm on Zoom (link to be shared via email)

Description
This module focuses on the “humanization” of world politics and global governance through a variety of “humanity-centred” legal regimes, a process that began in the nineteenth century but which solidified throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We explore a range of questions to do with the politics of the process of normative change (toward humanization) and the operation and effects of some of the most prominent strands of humanity-oriented rules, including human rights, humanitarian law, and criminal law. What explains the turn to “humanity”? How can such normative change be better described and theorized? How do various “norms of humanity” work, what are their virtues and their limits? How do we think about the present and future of a “humanized” global governance? These are some of the broad questions guiding the choice of materials and our reflections.

Mode of Teaching
This course is conducted as an advanced postgraduate seminar. It will consist of 7 two-hour discussion-based seminars with no accompanying lectures.

It is imperative that students attend the seminar ready to engage in constructive debate with others about the topic of discussion. The expectation is that you will devote the time and energy to read the assigned material in a careful and critical fashion, and that you will come with prepared insights and questions for debate. Staying silent is strongly discouraged.

Student Presentations
Students will be expected to make one presentation during the module period. Starting on the second class session, one or two students (depending on the class size) will be asked to spark discussion through brief reflection essays (of 2-3 double-spaced pages) about the required readings for the week, and by formulating two-three critical questions related to their reflection and the readings. The papers are meant to be analytical and critical, perhaps threading together and/or contrasting elements from the different readings without simply summarizing them. Presenters’ questions are meant to provoke debate among class participants, so please be sure to think about them in those terms. Each presentation should last no longer than 10 minutes to allow for collective discussion. You may -- but are not obligated to -- use power point during your presentation. Please assume that everyone will have read your essay and will be ready to engage with your reflections and questions.

Reflection essays should be emailed in word or pdf format to all seminar participants (Dr. Mantilla included) on the morning of our class session by 9am at the latest.
Sign up for the reflection essays/presentations will take place during our first session.

Assessment

Assessment will be conducted via a 3,000-word essay responding to a question prompt from a range of choices. These will be distributed early into Lent term.

Attendance will be taken at every session. For those taking the course not for full credit (i.e. ‘Pass/Fail’), failure to attend more than 2 sessions without prior justification (duly relayed to Dr. Mantilla) will result in a ‘Fail’ mark. Students opting for this modality are expected to be full participants in the seminar and are committed to class presentations.

Readings

Assigned readings are available electronically either from the University Library’s e-journals and e-books provisions or as scanned pdfs provided by Mill Lane Library. In addition to the Required Readings for each week, the syllabus also lists ‘Supplementary Reading’. These are intended for students who wish to explore a weekly topic in further depth.


Week 2. January 28. Theories and Histories of “Humane” Norms, Law, and Order in World Politics


Simmons, Beth A. 2009. *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 (pp. 3-12 ONLY) and Chapter 2, pp. 23-56


**Week 3. February 4. Human Rights**


**Week 4. February 11. The Humanization of International Humanitarian Law**


**Week 5. February 18. The Humanization of Atrocity Response and Conflict Management**


**Week 6. February 25. Transitional and International Criminal Justice**


**Supplementary Reading**


