SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES (SAST)

* SAST 020a / HIST 039a, Bombay/Mumbai: Life in a Megacity  Rohit De
Mumbai as a case study for the transformations brought by urbanization and modernity in Asia. Focus on how Mumbai’s residents and its planners navigated the challenges of living in a rapidly growing cosmopolitan city and reflected it in their art and ideas. Themes include capitalism, globalization, British empire, religious pluralism, radical politics, organized crime, and Bollywood. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  WR, HU

* SAST 061a / AMST 095a / ER&M 095a / THST 095a, South Asian American Theater and Performance  Shilarna Stokes
South Asian Americans have appeared on U.S. stages since the late nineteenth century, yet only in the last quarter century have plays and performances by South Asian Americans begun to dismantle dominant cultural representations of South Asian and South Asian American communities and to imagine new ways of belonging. This seminar introduces you to contemporary works of performance (plays, stand-up sets, multimedia events, and more) written and created by U.S.-based artists of South Asian descent as well as artists of the South Asian diaspora whose works have had an impact on U.S. audiences. With awareness that the South Asian American diaspora comprises multiple, contested, and contingent identities, we investigate how artists have worked to manifest complex representations of South Asian Americans onstage, challenge institutional and professional norms, and navigate the perils and pleasures of becoming visible.  HU

* SAST 242b / PLSC 461b, India and Pakistan: Democracy, Conflict, and Development  Steven Wilkinson
The variation in democracy, conflict, and development between India and Pakistan since 1947, as well as variation within each country. Management of ethnic and religious conflicts, secularism, secessionist movements in Kashmir and elsewhere, the tension between economic growth and equity, and problems of governance.  SO

* SAST 306a / ANTH 322a / EVST 324a, Environmental Justice in South Asia  Kalyanakrishnan Sivaramakrishnan
Study of South Asia’s nation building and economic development in the aftermath of war and decolonization in the 20th century. How it generated unprecedented stress on natural environments; increased social disparity; and exposure of the poor and minorities to environmental risks and loss of homes, livelihoods, and cultural resources. Discussion of the rise of environmental justice movements and policies in the region as the world comes to grips with living in the Anthropocene.  SO

* SAST 361a / HSAR 361, Visual South Asia: a Seminar on South Asian Art and Visual Culture  Akshaya Tankha
What do disparate events such as the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan or the construction of statues of B.R. Ambedkar, historical figure of Dalit resistance in India, tell us about the changing relationship between aesthetics and politics in South Asia? How do they resonate with movements around the world, such as Rhodes Must Fall in South Africa or BLM in North America? How do South Asian art and cultural practices attune us to its historical, cultural, and political formations? And, how do they illuminate issues of gender, caste, labor, Indigeneity, decolonization, and nationalism in modern South Asia and the rise of religious majoritarianism today? This course addresses these questions through a selective exploration of artistic production, understood to include material culture, sculpture, architecture, painting, mechanically reproduced images and new media technologies, as part of a large and shifting field of cultural practice. It also considers the many cultural conceptions of space and place that regional art constitutes, which challenge the idea of South Asia as a singular or stable category.  HU, SO

* SAST 470a and SAST 670a / PHIL 429a / RLST 430a, Indian Philosophy in Sanskrit Literature  Aleksandar Uskokov
In this course we focus on issues of philosophical significance in Sanskrit literature of “non-standard” philosophical genres, i.e., other than the treatise and the commentary. Specifically we read from canonical Hindu texts such as the Upaniṣads, Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa, Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Bhagavad-gitā, and Yogavāsiṣṭha; the classical genres of drama and praise poetry; and hagiographical literature, all in English translation. Attention is paid not only to substance but also form. The selection of philosophical problems includes philosophy of mind and personal identity; allegory; the ethics of non-violence; philosophy, politics, and religious pluralism; the highest good; theodicy; philosophical debate; etc.  HU