

SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES (SAST)

SAST 2610a / HUMS 4501a / PHIL 1118a / RLST 1270a, Buddhist Thought: The Foundations Staff

This class introduces the fundamentals of Buddhist thought, focusing on the foundational doctrinal, philosophical, and ethical ideas that have animated the Buddhist tradition from its earliest days in India 2500 years ago down to the present, in places such as Tibet, China, and Japan. Though there will be occasional discussion of the social and practical contexts of the Buddhist religion, the primary focus of this course lies on how traditional Buddhist thinkers conceptualize the universe, think about the nature of human beings, and propose that people should live their lives. Our main objects of inquiry are therefore the foundational Buddhist ideas, and the classic texts in which those ideas are put forth and defended, that are broadly speaking shared by all traditions of Buddhism. In the later part of the course, we take up some of these issues in the context of specific, regional forms of Buddhism, and watch some films that provide glimpses of Buddhist religious life on the ground. HU o Course cr

* **SAST 2620a / AMST 3303a / EP&E 247 / ER&M 3530a / FILM 2980a, Digital War** Madiha Tahir

From drones and autonomous robots to algorithmic warfare, virtual war gaming, and data mining, digital war has become a key pressing issue of our times and an emerging field of study. This course provides a critical overview of digital war, understood as the relationship between war and digital technologies. Modern warfare has been shaped by digital technologies, but the latter have also been conditioned through modern conflict: DARPA (the research arm of the US Department of Defense), for instance, has innovated aspects of everything from GPS, to stealth technology, personal computing, and the Internet. Shifting beyond a sole focus on technology and its makers, this class situates the historical antecedents and present of digital war within colonialism and imperialism. We will investigate the entanglements between technology, empire, and war, and examine how digital war – also sometimes understood as virtual or remote war – has both shaped the lives of the targeted and been conditioned by imperial ventures. We will consider visual media, fiction, art, and other works alongside scholarly texts to develop a multidisciplinary perspective on the past, present, and future of digital war. none HU, SO

* **SAST 2690a / HUMS 4598 / PHIL 4474 / RLST 2820a, Philosopher Queens of Hinduism and Buddhism** Sonam Kachru

Inspired by the bestselling book *The Philosopher Queens*, this course seeks to make cognitive room for women in the history of Indian (and Indian Buddhist) philosophy, and to reflect on what making such room involves: we explore the arguments and concerns of neglected figures – some human (like Nanduttara or Lalleshwari), some not; some historical (Laksmikaradevi), some not – and explore philosophical concerns involved in the reconstruction of their voices and views. HU

* **SAST 3030a / ANTH 4883a, In Ordinary Fashion** Jane Lynch

Clothing fashions not only our bodies but also our experiences in and claims about the world. It has been used to define the nature and radical possibilities of indigeneity, anti-colonial nationalism, counter-cultural narratives, and capitalist critiques. At the same time, dress – and its social and legal regulation – also creates and reinforces social

hierarchies, systems of morality, and forms of exclusion. This course centers these competing social realities and histories using clothing as a way into understanding the poetics and politics of everyday life. Readings include ethnographies and social histories of textiles, fashion, and the manufacture of garments including cases from India, Guatemala, Italy, China, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Trinidad, and the United States.
SO

*** SAST 3040b / ANTH 3858b, Corporations & Communities** Jane Lynch

Can communities redefine corporations? How do corporations shape everyday life? To whom are they responsible? This course examines the relationship between commerce, society, and culture through a diverse set of case studies that are rooted in both global and local histories. Students learn about Henry Ford's rubber plantations in the Amazon, family firms in Italy, how the East India Company shaped the modern multinational, the first company town to be established and run by an Indian firm, transnational "stakeholder" arrangements to compensate injured garment workers in Bangladesh, and the rise of "corporate social responsibility" culture. The goal of this course is not to define the relationship between corporations and communities as singular or obvious, but rather, to draw out the variety of factors – economic, historical, social, and cultural – that shape commercial interactions, institutional cultures, and claims about market ethics and social responsibility. HU, SO

*** SAST 3340a / ER&M 3633a / HIST 3463a, Mobile South Asians and the Global Legal Order** Rohit De

South Asians make up the largest population of overseas migrants in the world, close to 33 million in 2017 and a diaspora that is almost double that number. This course looks at the unprecedented mobility of South Asians from the mid-19th century until now as merchants, indentured labor, students, pilgrims, professionals, domestic workers, political exiles, refugees, and economic migrants, through the lens of state attempts to control movement and individual resistance, subversion, and adaptation to such controls. Focusing on the legal consciousness of South Asian migrants and the emergence of South Asian nations as political players on the global stage, this class traces how South Asian mobility led to the forging of a new global order, over migration, multiculturalism, Islamic law, civil liberties, labor law, and international law.
WR, HU

*** SAST 3450a / GLBL 226 / PLSC 3108a, National Security in India in the Twenty-first Century** Sushant Singh

This course examines the state and dynamics of national security in India in the past two decades. As an emergent power, India is an important country in Asia, with its economic and geo-political strength noticed globally. A major share of the country's heft comes from its national security paradigm which has undergone a significant shift in the twenty-first century. This course intends to take a holistic look at the conceptions for the basis of India's national security, its evolution, the current challenges and its future course by exploring its various dimensions such as China, Pakistan, global powers, Indian Ocean region, Kashmir, nuclear weapons, civil-military relations and defense preparedness. SO

*** SAST 3640a / HIST 3415a / HSHM 4740a, Health, Medicine and Science in Modern South Asia** Gourav Krishna Nandi

In this seminar, we explore health, medicine, and science in South Asia during the 19th and 20th centuries, and examine how networks and circulations of medical knowledge,

local and transnational actors, and anticolonial physicians and scientists shaped colonial modernities and postcolonial nationalism in the region. In the first part, we examine the establishment of colonial medicine in British India, colonial interventions during plague visitations, and approaches to famine and food in the 19th century. We explore how science in colonial India was intertwined with anticolonialism, and examine anticolonial arguments against famines using modern economic sciences. In the second part, we explore pluralist practices of medicine in colonial South Asia and analyze how diverse approaches of colonial Indian medical practitioners blur the categories of “traditional” and “modern” medicine. We then focus on colonial and postcolonial public health interventions – including, regulating poisons and adulterated food, population control, and vaccination campaigns – and their contestations. In the final part, we focus on the postcolonial state and explore how scientific nationalism shaped the postcolonial state’s approaches to modernization and development. We examine how Indian physicists and surgeons created and maintained knowledge networks using alliances on both sides of Cold War rivalries.” WR, HU

* **SAST 3760a / ANTH 2252a / RLST 3300a, Religion, Place, and Space** Harini Kumar

This seminar explores why ‘placemaking’ is significant for practitioners of various religions worldwide. From the holy city of Mecca to the sacred landscape of Banaras in India, religious traditions are tethered to sacred geographies. These locations are often physical sites imbued with sacred energies and social meaning. Religious activities can occur in churches or mosques, forests or mountains, community centers, public squares, or homes. The course materials consider specific religious sites and contexts (including those on the Yale campus), examining how these places simultaneously become sites of worship, articulations of identity and heritage, claims of political significance, and hubs of social and emotional life. Special attention is given to how space and place are gendered, racialized, and shaped by emotions, senses, and memories. HU, SO

* **SAST 3830b / ANTH 3873b, Water and Society: Culture, Life, and Values** Staff
Water has become an urgent theme not just in current anthropology, but in development studies and environmental studies more generally. Beyond questions of scarcity and sustainability, water allows human life to flourish, and without water, there would be no civilization. Yet water is not equitably distributed across time or space, leading to contestation and conflict around water. Against such a background of strife, this course examines how human beings have related to water, to other life forms, and to each other through the control of water, in different historical moments and different parts of the world. The seminar is organized around four porous thematic clusters: (i) “urban water”, to do with cities and urban industrial life; (ii) “agrarian water”, to do with rivers, irrigation systems, and agrarian life; (iii) “rural water”, to do with coasts, lakes, dams and rural life; and (iv) “living water”, to do with social, cultural and political values, and human and more-than-human life. This seminar introduces students to the everyday values of water, as well as the everyday politics of water, including the production of water and its attendant politics at the level of the nation-state as well as the city municipality while also being attentive to the moral ecologies of water. By studying water in different ways through the lens of culture, environment, social justice, and spirituality or faith, students develop a nuanced understanding of development, urbanization, environmental justice, and climate change. HU, SO

* **SAST 4860a, Directed Study** Jane Lynch

A one-credit, single-term course on topics not covered in regular offerings. To apply for admission, a student should present a course description and syllabus to the director of undergraduate studies, along with written approval from the faculty member who will direct the study.