The South Asian Temple: Art and Devotion in South Asia

Professor Jinah Kim
Office: 60 college ave #101
Office hours: Thursdays 11:00-12:30pm or by appointment
E-mail: jinah.kim@rutgers.edu

All the handouts for the course will be available on the SAKAI. Please enroll yourself on the Sakai site for this course, if you have not already done so.

Course Description

Be it a humble roadside shrine dedicated to tutelary deities of a small town or a monumental temple enshrining major Hindu divinities such as Shiva, Vishnu or Durga, every single corner of a town in India has a temple. Such temples have provided a space for diverse communities in South Asia to come together while also serving as nexus for social and political interaction and growth. This course explores the history of South Asian temples from its inception to present day. We will examine their forms and meanings not only as the space for the divine but also as the space for the living. Thus, the learning goals of this course are 1) to understand the morphological and architectural development of South Asian temples, and 2) to understand the ways in which temples are constructed as living, communal space. Morphological and stylistic analysis of the buildings will be used to investigate how the divine nature is visualized through buildings, while anthropological and ethnographical approach will help us understand the temples as living, communal entities. The course will begin with rock-cut temples of ancient India and end with contemporary temples of diasporic communities for which we will visit the Sri Venkateswara temple in Bridgewater, NJ. While some prior knowledge of South and Southeast Asian art, history, or religion may be helpful, none is required for the successful completion of this course.

Required Texts
Vidya Dehejia, Indian Art (London: Phaidon, 1997)

*Recommended Reading for the basic tenets of Buddhism and Hinduism

**Requirements and Grading**

**Attendance and Participation:** 10%

**Attendance:** You are required to come to every class well prepared. Your grade will be lowered significantly for repeated absences. Every three classes you miss without any notification, your grade will drop by one letter grade. If you miss a class due to illness or other unavoidable emergencies, please use the Rutgers central absence self-reporting system: https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/.

**Participation:** I expect to hear your voices in class at least three times throughout the semester. When you have a question or comments, please do not hesitate to raise your hand and speak up. If you are shy and have difficult time speaking in class, you can still contribute to class discussions by filling out the index cards every class carefully and by coming to talk to me during the office hours. I hope to create a collegial and respectful environment in which everyone could speak freely in class.

* Index Cards: You are asked to fill out an index card at the end of every class from the second week of the class. This is to give you a chance to ask questions about unclear parts of the lecture and leave comments about the class material, if you have any. If you understood everything and there was nothing unclear about the lecture, you may sign your name and date the card. Index cards serve as your attendance record.

**Written Assignments:** 20%

All written assignments should be double spaced with one and a half inch margins in size-12 font. Multiple pages should be stapled. Detailed instructions will be given about each assignment throughout the semester.

- Kirkpatrick Chapel- Khajuraho comparison Paper, 2-3 pages (15%)
- Sri Venkanteswara Temple Field Trip report, 1-2 pages (5%)

**Exams:** 70%

Mid-term (30%) Final (30%), Weekly Quiz (10%)

All written works must be completed and submitted in class on the day they are due. Late assignments will be penalized one third of a grade for each day past the original due date. If an A paper is turned in two days late, the grade will drop to a B+. If you have any illness or personal emergency due to which that you find it difficult to meet a deadline, please speak with me in advance. I will accommodate all legitimate and reasonable requests for extension for such cases.

**Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism**

Plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Please visit http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml for further information on the plagiarism and other issues related to Rutgers academic integrity policy.
Course Schedule
(Readings: No mark- required, *-recommended)

Jan 17 (T) **Introduction: Understanding the Sacred in South Asia**
Link to the British Museum’s *The Art of Temple in India* webpage:
http://www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/international_tours/india_the_art_of_the_temp le.aspx

**Rock-cut temples of India**

Jan 19 (Th) **From a Shelter to a Temple: Early Buddhist rock temples**
Dehejia, *Indian Art*, 103-112.

Jan 24 (T) **The presence of the absent Buddha: wall paintings and sculptures of Ajanta**

Jan 26 (Th) **Multiplication and Devotion: emergence of mandala in the Buddhist cave temples of Ellora**
*----------, “Late Caves: Mandala unfolded,” Ibid., 61-90.

Jan 31 (T) **Manifestation of Shiva in rock: Shaiva temples of Elephanta and Ellora**
Dehejia, *Indian Art*, 124-128, 137-152.

Feb 2 (Th) **Kailasanath and an introduction to the vocabulary of the Hindu temple architecture**
Dehejia, *Indian Art*, 129-134.

Feb 7 (T) **Worship of the “indifferent” victor: Jain temples at Ellora**

Feb 9 (Th) **Mamallapuram: Unfinished business?**

Feb 14 (T) **Mamallapuram 2: the mystery of the Shore Temple**
Dehejia, *Indian Art*, 200-204.

**Building projects for the Divinities in Early Medieval North India**

Feb 16 (Th) **Emergence of the nāgara type temple: Deogarh to Bhubaneshwar**
Michelle, *The Hindu Temple*, 49-76.
Dehejia, *Indian Art*, 137-152.

Feb 21 (T) **Celestial dancers and celebration of life: Sun Temple at Konarak**
Dehejia, *Indian Art*, 176-182.

Feb 23 (Th) **Living tradition of Medieval Temples in Orissa: Lingaraja and Jagannath**
Feb 28 (T) Medieval Temples of Rajasthan: Sacred Space and Social Identities

Mar 1 (Th) Mid-Term Exam

Mar 6 (T) Khajuraho 1: the architecture
Assignment: Kirkpatrick Chapel-Parthenon Comparison paper
Dehejia, Indian Art, 155-162.

Mar 8 (Th) Understanding a space: the Kirkpatrick chapel vs. Khajuraho

Spring Break (Mar 10-18)

Mar 20 (T) Khajuraho 2—erotic imagery
Dehejia, Indian Art, 162-170.

Mar 22 (Th) Khajuraho 3—religious/ ritual space
Kirkpatrick-Khajuraho Paper due in class
Mar 27 (T) **Buildings for the “Peaceful Liberators” - Jain Temples at Mt Abu**


**Divine presence in South Indian Temples**

Mar 29 (Th) **Serving Shiva: Rajarajeshvara’s temple in Tanjore**


Apr 3 (T) **Temples on the move: Celebration of Chitrai in Madurai**

Film screening: Wedding of the Goddess by Mira Reym Binford and Michael Camerini. Joseph W. Elder, Project director. Two parts: 36 and 40 min, 16mm., color. (South Asian Center, 1242 van Hise Hall, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53076)


Apr 5 (Th) **Celebrating the divine presence: Temple town of Madurai**


**Field trip to Sri Venkanteswar temple, Bridgewater, NJ, Apr 6 (Friday) 6:30-7:30pm**

**Apr 10(T) Temples in the City of Victory (Vijayanagar)**

Temple Field Trip Report Due in class


Dehejia, *Indian Art*, 275-296

**Ritual and Politics in Pre-colonial and Post-colonial Temple Spaces**
Apr 12 (Th) **Temples to Love 1**  

Apr 17 (T) **Temples to Love 2**  

Apr 19 (Th) **Durga puja and contemporary rituals**  

Apr 24 (T) **Temples of Diaspora**  

Apr 26 (Th) **Temple as Public, Living space**  

Final Exam (As scheduled by the Registrar’s office)

**Hindu Festival days in Spring 2012**  
Holi (festival of colors, celebrating the arrival of spring) – March 8 2012  
Mahashivratri (festival celebrating God Shiva) – Mar 3, 2012  
Rama Navami (birthday of lord Rama, Vishnu’s incarnation) – Apr 12, 2012  
Hanuman Jayanti (festival celebrating birth of Hanuman)—Apr 18, 2012