This course is concerned with sacred places and the stories that people tell about them. We will explore the role that narratives – mythological, historical, personal, and academic – have played in the creation, maintenance and conceptualization of sacred spaces in South Asia. Each class in the first section of the course is devoted to a particular site or category of sites, and examines the roles that religious texts and iconography play in the traditions with which the sites are associated. In the second section of the course, we will consider ethnographic perspectives on religious journeys. Finally, in the third section, we will focus on the idealization of region or nation as a sacred space, and examine the manner in which narratives are invoked to formulate identities and to negotiate conflicts and differentials of power.

TU/TH: 4:00-5:20 pm
Instructor: Jay Ramesh
Location: TBA