This course is designed as an introduction to ways of seeing, understanding, and questioning the visual arts in India. You will learn how the visual arts (cities, architecture, monuments, statues, and painting) have informed us about the history, culture, and religion of India from the rise of civilization to the colonial period. It is important to approach the works we will study not simply as objects of aesthetic taste, but as meaningful and functional to those who commissioned, used, created, and experienced them. In addition to studying the social and political nature of the arts, a large portion of this course looks at works that served to activate the sacred within and across several religious belief systems, including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam.