In light of contemporary challenges states face in managing religious diversity, this talk asks: Do other places and times with experience managing deep diversity hold lessons in how we can all live together? It addresses this question by exploring two such political responses. The first is the great Indian emperor Asoka’s emphasis on the importance of self-restraint for religious co-existence, an idea not to be confused with religious toleration. The second is from over 2000 years later, when a vicious majority-minority syndrome engulfed India. Apart from dividing the subcontinent into two nations, it stalled several freedom & equality-centred reforms. Modern Indian secularism developed in response to this complex, trouble-ridden situation. Both responses might hold important lessons for our times.

October 8, 2012, 4:30-6PM
Pane Room, Alexander Library, College Ave Campus
Contact SASP for further details: southasia.rutgers.edu, 848-932-6734

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