"Wandering Women, Wandering Goddesses, and Pressures to Stay in Place in South India"

This talk will juxtapose two classes of South Indian females who are characterized as “moving” (Indian-language word *cancal*), who move *too much*: women who have entered a particular ritual relationship with village goddesses and these goddesses themselves. They move not only through geographic space, but also social space. The women traditionally do not get married to human males, although they may have sexual relationships with them and most have children; similarly, village goddesses are not married and live in open spaces from which they wander. These wandering/moving women and goddesses are increasingly being “kept in place” through legal means, middle-class and upper-caste dominant gender mores, and (for the goddess, in particular) aesthetics. Efforts to hold *cancal* females in place have the potential to change their identities.

*** The lectures will be held in English

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