

THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF HINDU TRADITIONS (CHITRA), THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION, AND THE CENTER FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES AND GENDER RESEARCH PRESENT

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Woman *Becomes*
Goddess
in Bollywood

Justice, Violence, & the Feminine in Popular Hindi Film

a lecture by **Kathleen Erndl**, Religion, Florida State University

In the famous Hindu sacred text *Devi-Mahatmya*, in times of crisis when the cosmic moral order has been usurped by demons, the Goddess appears in order to destroy evil and re-establish justice. This theme of feminine (divine/human) retribution, repackaged in modern political and social contexts, has emerged in popular Indian cinema. Erndl analyzes the film *Anjaam* ("Outcome," 1994, directed by Rahul Rawail), starring Madhuri Dixit and Shah Rukh Khan. An excellent example of the resurgence of the "feminine principle" in popular culture, it provides a vision of what may happen when, in the words of the film's refrain, "woman becomes Chandika."