



In Pursuit of Liberation

Religious agency and authority among Jain female ascetic orders

Guest Speaker: **Manisha Sethi**

Distinguished Fellow at the Max Weber Centre for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies,
University of Erfurt

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Venue: Room 002, Keplerstr. 2

Present day records show an overwhelming numerical preponderance of nuns in Jain mendicant orders. Their striking presence demands that we question the androcentric models of renunciation in South Asia, as well as interrogate the commonsensical assumptions about the attraction that a lifetime of mendicancy may hold for women. By privileging the voice of the nuns themselves, this presentation looks at how the Indic concept of liberation as spiritual deliverance (moksha) may sometimes overlap, or approximate the more this-worldly idea of women's liberation.

About the Speaker: Manisha Sethi has taught at the Centre for the Study of Comparative Religions, and Centre for Jawaharlal Nehru Studies, both at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, as well as NALSAR University of Law Hyderabad. She is the author of *Escaping the World: Women Renouncers among Jains* (Routledge, 2012) and *Kafkaland: Law, Prejudice and Counterterrorism in India* (Three Essays Press, 2014) and the editor of the volume, *Communities and Courts: Religion and Law in Modern India*.

