



CCMG INVITED LECTURE ON

The Thoti's Stick: A Social History

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Abstract:

This paper is an attempt at unravelling the hegemonization of the Dalit self by the other (Non-Dalit or Upper Castes). The analysis is based on actual experiences which are verbalized, visualized and made audible, the embodied framings of a sequence of actual events. The narrative begins from a small dalit hamlet, Chinnagorpadu "Mallapalli" in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh to the nation's capital. The endeavour is to put forward the ethnography of ideas that looks into the politics in and of culture as part of a social conspiracy in the caste ridden undemocratic society. Social segmentation is an inevitable part of Indian society and is strictly practiced in daily life. Since it is based on social hierarchy, individuals who are at a lower level have to negotiate with the socially constructed superior 'other' on many fronts, from birth to death including the social, economic, cultural and political. As caste is the central feature of Hindu society, the Dalits who are at the bottom scale have to bear the burden of their hegemonized self. This paper attempts to interrogate the semiotics of the objective reality of the Dalit identity. Is caste identity manifested on the body? The objective reality which a Dalit encounters is really embodied with repeated experiences of exclusion. In this process of discrimination, the Dalit self is constructed. Every aspect of Hindu society, be it rituals, daily communication, nature is associated with sacred meanings. The hierarchic social order is reproduced within the sites of everyday association.

Bio

N Sukumar is Professor in the Department of Political Science at University of Delhi. He worked on projects on issues of Social Exclusion and Right to Representation, Governance and Inclusive Development. His research areas of interest are Ambedkar Studies, Indian Political Thought, Human Rights, Social Exclusion and Inclusion, Dalit Politics and Poverty Studies. Besides, Prof. Sukumar is also involved in activism.

EVENT DETAILS

Venue: CCMG Network Governance Lab

Date: Thursday, 27 October, 2016

Time: 2:00 pm