

Title: Understanding linkages between caste and water in India'

Speaker: Ambika Aiyadurai, IIT Gandhinagar

Area: CPP

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Abstract:

Dalit narratives, autobiographies, and testimonies often carry painful memories of their experience of lack of access to water and water sources. One should not assume that these are matters of the past. Even today, the water narratives of Dalits have direct connections to the caste identities. In this talk I will discuss the relevance of Ambedkar's Mahad Satyagraha in today's India by focusing on water and accessibility to drinking water among Dalits. Using examples from across the country, I argue that the accessibility to water should not only be examined through the lens of caste, but its inaccessibility and denial should be considered as forms of violence on Dalits. I will attempt to show how caste, water and violence are deeply connected with the aim to produce new ways of thinking about human-environment relations.

Speaker Profile:



Ambika Aiyadurai is an Assistant Professor at IIT, Gandhinagar. Her research examines the social dimensions of wildlife conservation with a special interest in human-animal relations and community-based conservation. She has a PhD in Anthropology at the National University of Singapore. She is trained in both natural and social sciences with masters' degrees in

Wildlife Sciences from the Wildlife Institute of India (Dehradun) and Anthropology, Environment and Development from University College London (UK). Her monograph *Tigers are our Brothers: Anthropology of Wildlife Conservation Northeast India* was published by OUP (2021).

Webpage Link: <https://iitgn.ac.in/faculty/hss/fac-ambika>