



Azim Premji University Colloquium Series

presents a lecture

Philosophy and Freedom: Between Comparison and Reconstruction

Speaker

Rakesh Pandey

Assistant Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi

Date: May 05, 2016 (Thursday)

Time: 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm

Venue: 10th Floor Auditorium, Pixel A, Azim Premji University

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About the Lecture

The modern idea of philosophy has normally been seen as the availability of conceptual thinking and its rigorous application to the foundation of modern knowledge. In its original sense it was more of a conversation and the love of wisdom, a tradition which survived as a quiet but robust minority in the face of reason becoming the ground for philosophy as the act of wisdom in modern times. Philosophy in this sense has been the preserve of the Western mind, as most of the world beyond it dabbles with myths, fables and above all religion. Philosophy beyond the West has been cultural, and thus confined to the modes of living. Curiously this caricature of the non-Western societies places them closer to the original idea of philosophy as embodied and grounded practice of human thinking. I intend to engage in a conversation on the elusive career of the idea of philosophy in colonial and modern India by looking into the ways in which it emerged as a contest on the nature of Indian mind, the availability of philosophical thought, and the masks of language. Philosophy, I aim to argue, has been the site to claim a series freedoms, conceptual, linguistic and cultural.

About the Speaker

Rakesh Pandey studied ancient history and philosophy at the University of Allahabad, following it up with a postgraduate degree in modern history at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He did his doctoral work on the making of archaic and classical forms of cultural knowledge in colonial India at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Pandey's research interest is in the area of the cultural and intellectual history of modern India, with particular focus on knowledge formations, philosophy of culture, and moral orders. He is currently working on a monograph dealing with aspects of colonial archaism together with a study on interpretations of precolonial textual traditions in North India and another on philosophical aesthetics and the anti-modern focusing on Ananda K. Coomaraswamy among others. He has been actively involved with the CSDS's teaching initiative, 'Researching the Contemporary' and the Indian Languages programme. Pandey previously taught modern history at the University of Hyderabad.