I shall explore two kinds of caricatures and the differential responses they evoked in different publics. The first caricature is that of Dr B.R. Ambedkar in a state-mandated textbook that became controversial in 2012. The second caricature is more recent—the one casually drawn by renowned political psychologist Ashis Nandy at a literature festival where he characterised entire sub-populations—dalits, adivasis and Other Backward Classes, the three classes that have benefited from the policy of reservation (affirmative action) in independent India—as the ‘most corrupt’. Both these caricatures elicited highly polarised and contrarian reactions and were turned into issues of ‘free speech’ and ‘freedom of expression’ by the intellectual classes of India. Using images from the popular and social media, from cartoons and comic books, I will attempt to lay bare the fears of the well-entrenched intellectual classes and what they are afraid of losing.

**Abstract**

What Is It They Fear?

**Mr S. Anand**
Publisher of Navayana and Co-Author of Bhimayana

**About the Speaker**

S. Anand is the publisher of Navayana, an independent press that focuses on issues of caste from an anti-caste perspective. He is the co-author of Bhimayana, a graphic biography of Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, which has been published in nine languages so far. For his work as publisher of Navayana, he won the British Council-London Book Fair’s International Young Publisher of the Year award in 2007. Earlier, Anand was a journalist with the print media for ten years.

**Event Details**

Wednesday, 20 March 2013
3.00pm to 4.30pm
AS2 #04-13
Kent Ridge Campus
National University of Singapore

Sponsored by the FASS Faculty Reading Group, "Religion, Discrimination and Social Justice in Asia"; convened by Dr Annu Jalais (South Asian Studies); Dr Timothy Amos (Japanese Studies); Dr Andrea Pinkney (South Asian Studies)