

## *Three-day Conference*

on

### **Examining Intersections: Caste/Gender Narratives in India**

8-11 February 2016

The ICSSR sponsored three day conference on *Examining Intersections: Caste/Gender Narratives in India* organised by IDSK from 8-11 February 2016 opened up many different aspects about the intersections between caste and gender in India. The paper presenters, coming from various disciplines, with different research interests and employing different techniques of research made the conference truly interdisciplinary. The aim of the conference was to explore the complex relationship between two powerful ideologies of caste and gender. Over the course of the three days the paper presenters grappled with the issues through raising certain questions. How can we interrogate caste as a resilient social institution from a gender lens? How can the hegemony of a homogenous feminism as a default frame of reference be challenged? How can we conceive of studies on caste beyond the discourse of victimhood? How can the private lived experiences and public practices of anti-caste struggle be brought into the analysis of caste and gender?

The conference started with a Keynote lecture by Professor Uma Chakravarty titled '*The Burden of Caste: Scholarship, Democratic Rights and Activism*' which provided the historical context. Each day had a special lecture to set the tone for the discussion. The second day started with a special lecture by Prof Padma Velaskar which was titled '*Theorising the Interaction of Caste, Class and Patriarchy*' where she set the theoretical premises for intersectional studies on caste and gender. The final day had a special session by Dr. Rukmini Sen '*Bodies as Juridico-Political Site: Precarity, Violation, Humiliation*' which explored various notions within violence and bodies. Over the three days, there were sessions on education, health, culture, literature, work and livelihood, violence and identity politics. The conference not only created a space for foregrounding such discussions in the academic landscape of Kolkata, it also created a vibrant network of academics and opened up conversations between them.