



CCMG INVITED LECTURE ON

A Circus Archive: History of a Labor Union and a Workers' Circus

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Abstract:

The history of Indian circus is more or less the memories and memorabilia of the circus community. They have been the primary sources while researching my doctoral thesis, 'A History of Circus and Circus Performances in Twentieth Century Kerala'. It is as if they have been creating 'an archive of one's own'. In this presentation we would be looking at some significant attempts in unionizing the circus workers, gleaned from this hitherto unexplored archives. I will speak about the formation of Akhil Bharat Circus Karmachari Sangh organized during 1960s and also a circus company of their own, Akhil Bharat Circus. Although circus figures in the common sense as a place of extreme exploitation it is hard to find circus workers' unions in the official histories of labor movements in India. This is quite startling since circus flourished in North Malabar along with the Communist movement and trade unions in the first half of the 20th century.

Bio

Nisha P R received her doctorate from the Department of History, University of Delhi, in 2015. Her research was on the social history of circus and circus performances in twentieth century Kerala. Her monograph, *The Jumping Devils: A Tale of Circus Bodies* has been published in the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Occasional Paper Series. Her writings have appeared, amongst others, in Economic and Political Weekly, Conservation and Society, Indian Journal of Gender Studies and Social Science Probings. She has recently completed a short term postdoctoral fellowship at the Human Geography Department, Lund University, Sweden.

EVENT DETAILS

Venue: CCMG Network Governance Lab

Date: Thursday, 25 February, 2016

Time: 2:00 pm