

NISHA POYYAPRATH RAYAROTH

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Education

Ph.D., “A History of Circus and Circus Performances in Twentieth Century Kerala”,
Department of History, University of Delhi, 19th November 2016

M.Phil., “Spacing and Bodying of Self in the Her Poetry in Malayalam, 1990 - 2000”,
Department of Studies in English, University of Kannur, 24th July 2010

Masters Degree in English Language and Literature, University of Calicut, 25th June 2005

Bachelors Degree in English Language and Literature, University of Calicut, 26th May 2001

Bachelors Degree in Education, Kannur University, 06th October 2003

Post Graduate Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication, Kerala Press Academy,
9th February 2007

Fellowships

Social Science Research Council Transregional Research Junior Scholar Fellow (2016- 2017)
at Centre for Indian Studies in Africa, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South
Africa, August 2017- August 2018

Charles Wallace India Trust Research Grant, United Kingdom, 2016

Swedish South Asian Studies Network Short Term Postdoctoral Fellowship, University of
Lund, Sweden, 2015

Indian Council for Historical Research Junior Research Fellowship, New Delhi, India 2012-
2014

Papiya Ghosh Memorial PhD Fellowship, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata,
India 2008-2010

Academic Activity Profile

Organiser and Keynote Speaker

International Conference, ‘Circus Histories and Theories’, 21-22 June 2018 at the Centre for
Indian Studies in Africa, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa.

Curator

Indian Circus: A Photo Exhibition, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, January 18 - 24, 2013

Publications

Books

Jumbos and Jumping Devils: A Social History of Indian Circus, Oxford University Press, India, Forthcoming, 2019

On the Move: Circus Histories and Theories (Provisional Title), Co-editing with Prof Dilip M. Menon, Oxford University Press, India (Book Proposal Accepted)

Monograph

“Jumping Devils: A Tale of Circus Bodies”, Occasional Paper Series, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, Perspectives in Indian Development (55), 2015

Research Papers and Articles

English

“Ban and Benevolence: Circus, Animals and Indian State”, *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 54, No. 2, June, 2017 (among the most downloaded five in 2017 *IESHR*)

“The Circus Man Who Knew Too Much”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. LII, No. 34, August, 2017

Book Review of *Conflict, Negotiation, and Coexistence: Rethinking Human-Elephant Relations in South Asia* edited by Piers Locke and Jane Buckingham, *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 54, No. 3, September, 2017

“A Tight Rope Walk: Chronicle of a Circus Trade Union”, *Social Scientist*, 42(3-4), March-April, 2014

“Folding the Tent: Kerala Circus Academy”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 11 January 2014, Web Exclusive

“Indian Circus Images”, *Circus Historical Society Newsletter*, Vol. 4, No.3, June 2013

“Children and the Indian Circus”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLVI, No. 33, August, 2011

“‘A Tactful Union’: Domestic Workers’ Unionism, Politics and Citizenship in Kerala, India”, (Co- authored with J Devika and A K Rajasree) *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol. 18, No 2, June, 2011

“Performing Bodies, Physical Cultures: Looking at the Circus Kalaris in Malabar”, *Social Science Probing*s, Vol. 22, No.1, June, 2010

“Jumbo Minorities”, Book Review of *Jumbo: the Greatest Elephant in the World* by Paul Chambers, *Conservation and Society*, Vol. 8, No.2, April-June, 2010

Malayalam

Articles

“Jeevitham Kondoru Reality Show: *Seven Bar Sreedharettan*”, [A Reality Show with Life: *Seven Bar Sreedharettan*], *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, Vol 86, No 9, May 4-10, 2008

“VishamamKondum, Ishtam Kondum: Stree Circus Kalakarikalude Athmakathanangal”, [Out of Misery, Out of Love: Autobiographical Narrations of Women Circus Artistes], *Pachakuthira Magazine*, Vol 2, No 10, May 2006

Public Lectures

“Writing Women into History: Episodes from Indian Circus”, National Conference on ‘Negotiating Sexual Difference: Ethics of the Present’, Government Brennen College, Kannur University, Thalassery, India, 14 December 2018

“Trapezing across Continents: Transnational Lives and Indian Circus”, International Conference on ‘Beings in Motion: Migrations and Dislocations’, Krishna Menon Memorial Government Women’s College, Kannur University, Kannur, India, 6 December 2018

“A History of Labour Union Movements in the Indian Circus”, Symposium on ‘The Problems and Crisis: Circus as an Industry and Art’ as part of the 40th Anniversary of the Indian Circus Employees’ Union, Thalassery, India, 4 November 2018

“Boneless Children: Law, Livelihood and Transnational Lives in Indian Circus”, History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, 4 April 2018

“In Terms of ‘Cruelty’: Animals, State and Indian Circus”, Social Anthropology, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, 15 March 2018

“Just across the Ocean: Transnational Lives and Indian Circus”, Centre for Indian Studies in Africa, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, 8 March 2018

“Battles in Tents: Tales of Labour from Indian Circus”, School of Languages, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 February 2018

“Untouchable Heights: Circus and Body Politics in Colonial Malabar”, Centre for Indian Studies in Africa, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, 28 September 2017

“Bodies that Matter: Circus and Subversion in Malabar”, Gender Studies Department, Ambedkar University Delhi, New Delhi, India, 7 August 2017

“A Circus Archive: History of a Labor Union and a Workers’ Circus”, Centre for Culture, Media & Governance, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi, India, 25 February 2016

“The Animal Subject: A Brief History from Indian Circus”, Centre for Concurrences for Colonial and Postcolonial Studies, Linnaeus University, Vaxjo, Sweden, 29 October 2015

“Jumbos and Jumping Devils: A Social History of Indian Circus”, SASNET, Lund University, Lund, Sweden, 22 October 2015

“Memory as Archives: Photographs of Indian Circus Community”, Division of Digital Cultures/Division of Art History and Visual Studies, Lund University, Lund, Sweden, 21 October, 2015

“Jumping Devils: A Tale of Circus Bodies”, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, India, 11 February, 2015

Paper Presentations

“Nonhuman Citizens: A Brief History from Indian Circus”, European Conference on South Asian Studies, Paris, France, July 2018.

“Trapezing across Continents: Transnational Lives and Indian Circus”, Social Science Research Council Fellows’ Panel, AAS-in Asia Conference, New Delhi, India, July 2018

“Trapezing across Continents: Transnational Lives and Indian Circus”, Social Science Research Council Fellows’ Workshop in Conjunction with the 10th International Convention of Asian Scholars, Chiang Mai, Thailand, July 2017

“The Animal Subject: A Brief History from Indian Circus”, European Society for Environmental History Biennial Conference 2017 on ‘Natures in Between: Environments in Areas of Contact among States, Economic Systems, Cultures and Religions’, University of Zagreb, Croatia, June-July 2017

“Children of a Lesser God: Law, Livelihood and Transnational Lives in Indian Circus”, Ninth Biennial Conference of the Society for the History of Children and Youth on ‘Transition, Transaction and Transgression’, Rutgers University - Camden, USA, June 2017

“Did You See Our Human? State, Benevolence and Indian Circus Animals”, International conference on ‘Animals and Human Society in the Asian Sphere’, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, February- March 2017

“Balancing Borders: Law, Livelihood and Transnational Lives in Indian Circus”, International conference on ‘The Road to Global Inequality, 1945-Present Day: New Historical Perspectives’, Aarhus University, Denmark, November 2016

“Non-Human Citizens: Circus Elephants and Indian Law”, International Conference on ‘Asian Elephants in Culture in Nature’, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, August 2016

“Bodies that Matter: Circus and Subversion in Malabar”, Weekly Seminar, Department of Human Geography, Lund University, Sweden, September, 2015

“The journeys of elephants: An Indian circus trail”, International Elephant Conference organised by School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India, April 2016

“Children of a Lesser God: Circus Acrobatics, Livelihood and Law”, International Conference on ‘Contested Sites: The Construction of Childhoods’, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, India, November 2015

“Circus Kalaris: A History of Circus Acrobatics in Malabar”, International conference on ‘Re-Imagining the Struggles at the Margins: A History of the Unconquered and Oppressed’, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, India, July 2014

“Circus Kalaris: A History of Circus Acrobatics in Malabar”, International conference on ‘Physical Cultures: Bengal and Beyond’, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India, February 2014

“Indian Circus Employees’ Union: The Strikes and the Formation”, International conference on ‘Cultures of Memory: Mnemocultural Praxis in South, Southeast and other Asian Countries’, English and Foreign Languages University, Shillong, India, November 2013

“Akhil Bharath Circus Karmachari Sangh: The Workers’ Circus and the Union”, National Seminar on ‘Labor and Social Change in India’, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, India, January 2013

“Performing Memories: Indian Circus Employees’ Union”, Students’ Seminar, Department of History, University of Delhi, India, April 2011

“Wild Animals and Indian Circus”, National seminar on ‘Communities at the Margins: Practices and Livelihoods’, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata, India, June 2010

“Animals and Indian Circus: Notes on Wildlife, Livelihood and the State”, International workshop on ‘Environment and Livelihood: Debating Interdisciplinary Perspectives’, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, October 2009

“Performing Bodies, Physical Cultures: Looking at the Circus *Kalaris* in Malabar”, National workshop cum seminar on ‘Minority Cultures’, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata, India, June 2009

“The Circus *Kalaris* in Malabar”, National Workshop on ‘Exploring the Margins’, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, August 2009

“A History of Circus Acrobatics in Malabar”, Research Forum, Department of Anthropology, University of Kannur, Thalassery, India, November 2009

“Acrobatic Bodies as Ambivalent Bodies: Reading the Representation of Circus Women in M T Vasudevan Nair’s ‘Valarthumrughanhal’”, Young Researchers’ Workshop cum Seminar, Centre for Studies in Culture and Society, Bangalore, India, February 2007

Forthcoming Presentations

“Battles in Tents: Tales of Labour from Indian Circus”, Japanese Association of Asian Studies, 5-6 October 2019, Keio University, Japan.

“From the Circus Archives: The Story of a Workers’ Circus”, 23rd New Zealand Asian Studies Society International Conference, 24-27 November 2019, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.