

FRIDAY

# RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM

*Conversations on society since 1960*

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi

<http://sociology.du.ac.in/sociological-research-colloquium/>

FRIDAY, 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2023 AT 3:00 PM

Srinivas Seminar Room, Department of Sociology

## RATHEESH RADHAKRISHNAN



## A THEATRE OF MOBILITY: AMATEUR PLAYERS IN TRIVANDRUM CITY

### ***Abstract:***

As part of an ongoing biography project on the Malayalam film actor-star Satyan (1912-1971), this presentation attends to the centrality of amateur theatre as an institutional and associational form in the emergence of a modern city, Trivandrum, and later in the modern (linguistic) region of Kerala. Beyond its textual and performance aspects, amateur theatre functioned as a site for mobility for a generation of young men, and a few women. Remaking existing social hierarchies, amateur theatre made visible new grounds of sociability in a resolutely modern world. The resilient framework of the regional-modern that this historical moment put together was one of containment vis-à-vis a longer history of claims to modernity by 'lower' caste communities. I track the fortunes of a few well-known individuals and their access to aspirational worlds as they traversed the space of amateur theatre in Trivandrum in the 1930s and 1940s. The fortunes of a young Manuel Sathyanesan—the actor-star Satyan still in the future—allows us access to these worlds

### ***The Speaker:***

**Ratheesh Radhakrishnan** teaches at the Department of English at Shiv Nadar University. Previously, he was with the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Bombay. His research focusses on Malayalam cinema, 'world' cinema and 'world' literature, film festivals and textual publics. He is currently writing a biography of the Malayalam star Satyan supported by the New India Foundation. He is also a film programmer with some of the leading film festivals in India.