

# Archives and Access

*Aparna Balachandran and Rochelle Pinto*

In *Archive and Access*, Dr. Aparna Balachandran and Dr. Rochelle Pinto remind us of the larger material history of the archive fever that marks the current wave of digital humanities and big data discussions. While archiving has emerged as a ubiquitous process of the digital, there are specific politics of embeddedness, locatedness, materiality and access which the archives bring with them. The monograph posits the archive not only as a symbolic structure of authority, but as a lived space of contestation and negotiation, offering new ways of changing and forging the relationship between knowledge, archives and the state. In the monograph, Balachandran and Pinto examine the processes of archiving in a larger era of privatisation and digitisation to look at the politics of subversion, preservation and the value and worth of archiving.

Looking at the dual sites of Tamil Nadu and Goa state archives, along with the larger public and State archives in the country, the project looks at the materiality of archiving, the ambitions and aspirations of an archive, and why it is necessary to preserve archives, not as historical artefacts but as living interactive spaces of memory and remembrance. The findings have direct implications on various government and market impulses to digitise archives and show a clear link between opening up archives and other knowledge sources for breathing life into local and alternative histories. The monograph provides a new way of entering the debates around knowledge production and conditions of access which is not contained to just questions of infrastructure. Instead, we get a sense of the archive as a living artefact that invokes and references our past, and shapes and foretells the future of collected and connected learning.



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## Researchers @ work

The Centre for Internet & Society's 'Researcher's At Work' is a series designed to build and explore the intellectual resources for mapping and understanding the complex interactions between the rise of digital and communication technologies and the spheres of living that they influence. The monographs in this series, explore embedded approaches, frameworks and historical trajectories to understand the ways in which new technologies shape the nature, form, and texture of life and living in contemporary times. The (CIS-KAW) series was designed to build local intellectual resources for mapping and understanding the complex interactions between the rise of digital and internal technologies and the spheres of living that they influence.