



South Asia

Newsletter

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Food, Health and Agriculture in South Asia: Contemporary Issues and Future Trends

by William Phelan & Emera Bridger



L to R: Chandani Liyanage, Harris Solomon and Amy Nichols

South Asia is home to a range of vibrant, unique, and diverse cuisines which have historically been well-adapted and suitable to sustain its population. However, during the past sixty years there have been massive changes not only in the way that food is grown but also in the ways in which people eat. This increasing globalization of food has had tangible impacts on people's health and on the social systems of communities throughout South Asia. These were the issues addressed at this year's Cornell-South Asia Consortium's annual conference. The conference, "Food, Health and Agriculture in South Asia: Contemporary Issues and Future Trends" was held on the Syracuse University campus on March 30 and April 1, 2012.

The conference was kicked off on the evening of March 30th with a screening of the film, "Still, the Children are Here," directed by Dinaz Stafford. This poignant film looks at the plight of the Garo people of Northeastern India, whose traditional agricultural practices and the crops that they grow are quickly becoming obsolete. Ms. Stafford was kind enough to Skype in to answer our

questions despite it being very early in the morning in London. Stafford stressed that she gave considerable control over its creation to the villagers with whom she worked. "Every morning," she said, "the villagers would come to me and say: 'we're going to film this over there.' Thus the men and women that we met in the film helped shape our understanding of the changes that commodification in their society and the demand for their resources for the global economy is having on their way of life".

Friday morning, the conference began in earnest with an engaging keynote address by Dr. Krishnendu Ray, Professor of Food Studies at NYU. His talk was entitled "Cuisines between Nations: On the Limits of National Culture". Two Cornellians gave papers at the conference. Devparna Roy, Visiting Fellow Polson Institute for Global Development, Department of Development Sociology, spoke about the nature of development in the agricultural sector in India. She discussed the ways in which genetically modified foods have been received by the government and the farmers themselves. Amy Nichols-Uber, a graduate student in Applied Economic Management, discussed an eco-nutrition strategy improving child nutrition and initiating a long term nutrition curriculum within the school feeding program, Food for Life-Vrindavan, located in Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh, India.

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Lines of Control

by Iftikar Dadi

Lines of Control: Partition as a Productive Space was a large-scale art exhibition shown during spring 2012 at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University. More than 40 works of video, prints, photographs, paintings, sculpture, and installation by 33 international artists and groups grappled with the issues that arise when territories are divided and borders are drawn to create new nations. Living within and across these lines can be a messy, bloody business but also offers a productive space where new nations, identities, languages, and relationships are forged.

At its core, Lines of Control investigated the historic upheaval of the 1947 partition of India that spawned the nations of Pakistan and later Bangladesh. The exhibition is part of an ongoing investigation initiated in 2005 by Green Cardamom, a London-based nonprofit arts organization. Expanding on the significance of partition in South Asia, Lines of Control at the



Johnson Museum also addressed physical and psychological borders, trauma, and the reconfiguration of memory in other partitioned areas: North and South Korea, Sudan and South Sudan, Israel and Palestine, Ireland and Northern Ireland, Armenia and its diaspora, and questions of indigenous sovereignty in the United States. The exhibition was curated by Hammad Nasar of Green Cardamom, Cornell faculty member Iftikhar Dadi, and Johnson Museum chief curator Ellen Avril, with assistance from London-based curator Nada Raza. It will travel to Duke University's Nasher Museum of Art next year.

Lines of Control exhibition was also accompanied by a film program at Cornell Cinema, a major catalog, and a symposium held on March 3-4. A number of prominent scholars and artists spoke at the symposium, including UCLA based

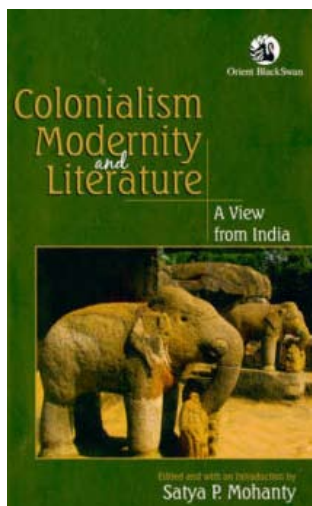
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LITERATURE

Literature To Combat Cultural Chauvinism

From Indian literature to world literature: In conversation with Satya P. Mohanty, Professor of English, Cornell University. By Rashmi Dube Bhatnagar and Rajender Kaur

(from: *FRONTLINE*, Volume 29 - Issue 06 :: Mar. 24-Apr. 06, 2012)



How should readers and critics approach the idea of “Indian literature”— or, for that matter, “world literature”? This wide-ranging conversation explores that question. It also asks how a genuinely comparative study of the regional traditions in various Indian languages can be conceived. Within the context of these two questions, it delves into more general issues: Can literary criticism be seen as part of a collaborative project in which historians, philosophers and social scientists participate as potential interlocutors or even partners? How are “theories” such as postmodernism and philosophical realism relevant to the study of Indian literature and culture?

Satya P. Mohanty, Professor of English at Cornell University, has written extensively about philosophical and literary realism as well as contemporary approaches to Indian literature. He is also well known for his critical introduction to the 2005 translation of Fakir Mohan Senapati's ground-breaking realist novel *Chha Mana Atha Guntha* (*Six Acres and a Third*; University of California Press, 2005; Penguin-India, 2006), first serialised in Oriya in 1897-99. Set in a village in colonial Orissa, the novel traces the rise and fall of a rapacious landlord, Ramachandra Mangaraj. Far from fitting into the stereotype of the sleepy little village as the timeless essence of an ancient and pre-modern Asian civilisation, however, the village in *Chha Mana Atha Guntha* emerges as the site of profound changes unleashed by the Permanent Settlement of 1793 in the territories of Orissa, Bengal and Bihar. To read the interview, please go to: <http://www.frontlineonnet.com/fl2906/stories/20120406290608500.htm>



This interview in *Frontline* has led to a major Global South Cultural Dialogue project (which includes Asia, Africa, Latin America, as well as minority and diasporic communities in Europe and America), initiated by the Kenyan writer and scholar Mukoma wa Ngugi, which will lead to over 20 writers and scholars responding to it, with simultaneous publication in over 6 journals published in India, USA, UK, Kenya, South Africa, and other countries.

Cornell Alumnus Edits “India” an Anthology of Indian Poetry in English



Bhisham Bherwani (1990), whose poetry volume *The Second Night of the Spirit* (CavanKerry Press, Fort Lee, NJ) was published in 2009, has just published an anthology of modern and contemporary poetry in English from India (*Atlanta Review*, April 2012). While the anthology is under consideration for publication in an expanded edition as a monograph by a major university press, the *Atlanta Review* edition, though compact (and well-priced at \$8.00), stands on its own as representative of the development of composition of poetry in English in post-occupation India since the 1950s.

Some of the research for the anthology was conducted at Cornell, among other places (including at Bombay University and Columbia University libraries), over a period spanning two years. “It was good to be able to punctuate work on a new manuscript with readings for the anthology,” says Bhisham, who spent some of the fall of 2009 in Ithaca as a resident fellow at the Constance Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts. “In hindsight, it appears some of the newer poems were being influenced by the readings for the anthology. For example, several newer poems resonate with my childhood in Bombay, when the residues of foreign subjugation, to which preceding generations had been subject, were disappearing.” Countering this, says Bhisham, “I feel it was advantageous to my work as an anthologist to have the perspective, as an American, of an objective outsider.”

There are poems addressing family and politics, poems about Alzheimer’s disease, divorce, and sectarian violence. There are elegies and love poems. The erotic love poems are delicious; the divine love poems are outrageous. There are translations from six languages. Notably, the poems in the anthology embody none of the tired “exotic” and puerile clichés often too readily served up to uninformed, if not outright ignorant, audiences, perhaps by equally ignorant purveyors. In this regard, the world of commerce, with its well-traveled businessmen and entrepreneurs, seems ironically to have outpaced the world of literature in developing a more mature appreciation of Indian culture.

In addition to his undergraduate work at Cornell, Bhisham completed graduate work at New York University and, more recently, at New England College, where he studied Creative Writing between 2004 and 2006 in the then new (and only) single-genre Poetry MFA program in the US. He lives in New York City, where he currently teaches literature at the City University of New York.

The anthology is complemented by a Web site at www.indianpoetryinenglish.com. The paperback Atlanta Review edition is available locally at The Cornell Store on campus and at Book Culture in DeWitt Mall, off the Ithaca Commons.



OUTREACH

International Studies Summer Intensive on Water: Symbolism and Sustainability



Emera Bridger lectures on water issues in India

The Cornell Educational Resources for International Studies (CERIS) outreach team is committed to engaging audiences outside of the University. Made up of outreach coordinators and educators from the area-studies programs from the Einaudi Center for International Studies and the South

Asia Center at Syracuse University, CERIS is guided by the principle that we extend expertise in International Studies to advance the public good and the Cornell University mission.

Every June, CERIS holds a three-day teachers-training workshop, referred to as the International Studies Summer Institute (ISSI), which targets elementary, middle and/or high school teachers, enabling them to teach about particular global topics, both generally and specifically while meeting the New York State Department of Education standards. This year the “Water: Symbolism and Sustainability” teacher-training event was successful in bringing together 51 middle and high school teachers and pre-service teachers from all over New York State to learn about water symbolism and sustainability across the globe. The cross-curriculum workshop engaged educators in activities on integrating world area knowledge on global issues related to water in order that the teachers and their students have a greater understanding of how this life-sustaining natural resource plays a significant role in culture, tradition, politics and the arts as well as in the current state of the planet in terms of scarcity and sustainability. The material was presented in an interdisciplinary approach, which included art, science, history and religion of these specific world areas; namely, South Asia, South East Asia, East Asia, Latin America, Europe, and Africa.

South Asia was represented in two presentations. The opening speaker, Ph.D. Candidate and Outreach Coordinator from Syracuse University’s South Asia Center, Emera Bridger’s paper, “Competing Developments: Teaching about Water Resource Conflicts,” focused on India. Emera pointed out the water issues in India, such as pollution, depletion and contamination, the effects from climate change, and the fact that Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, and Nepal all share water resources with India, mainly by way of transnational rivers. She then focused on the Narmada Valley Development Project, which started in 1947, and is projected to be completed by 2040. The purpose of this project is to generate power, and to provide water for both irrigation

and drinking. However, this project is controversial because approximately one million people will be displaced, most from the *adivasi*, or tribal communities, who will shift to urban areas without adequate compensation for their land. At the end of her lecture, Emera highlighted how this information could be used as a teaching tool using a case study or role play approach, allowing the students to explore different perspectives on not just this topic, but other issues as well. She explained how students can incorporate research skills by including the use of primary sources and critical reasoning abilities. This teaching approach is valuable because it can be applied to different disciplines.

Each year CERIS invites the participating teachers to apply for a CERIS Curriculum Grant by developing a specific curriculum based mainly on the workshop topic, but opened to other topics as well. The outreach coordinators review the proposals, and award the chosen teachers with stipends in order to develop these curriculums. The winning curriculums are made available to be used by other educators through the appropriate area studies programs’ websites as well as through the CERIS website. Last year’s recipient through the South Asia Program was Janet Scheffler, a science teacher from the Auburn City School District. Janet took the already-developed curriculum from the SAP’s Nepali Water Box designed for sixth grade social studies teachers by the Ithaca chapter of Educate the Children, and converted it into a curriculum for high school science teachers. One activity which she demonstrated was a water-cycle lab, using a hands-on approach with ISSI attendees playing the role of the students in the “classroom”. Her curriculum was multi-faceted and included a number of activities for the students to implement during their week-long unit on water. All lessons, demos, and activities for this unit are aligned to New York State standards for math, science, and technology (MST standards), and more specifically to standards for The Living Environment (Regents Biology). For Janet Scheffler’s full curriculum unit, “Water, Water Everywhere...” go to: <http://einaudi.cornell.edu/system/files/water%20water%20everywheret.pdf>

The three-day long event also included “Water Infrastructure: Balancing Competing Interests” by Sri Vedachalam, a postdoctoral research associate at the New York State Water Resources Institute at Cornell University, who spoke about the pros and cons of water harvesting and usage in neighboring communities. While one community can benefit from a water source, the neighboring community can suffer repercussions as a result. Salva Dut, the founder and director of Water for South Sudan explained what led him to installing water pumps in South Sudan villages, where women would originally have to carry all their daily water great distances from unhygienic water sources. As an 11-year old Dinka from Tonj in southwest Sudan, Salva Dut fled first to Ethiopia. Then later, as a teenager, he led 1500

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STUDENTS

Cornell Ph.D. Candidate, Emme Edmunds, Receives World Health Organization Fellowship



Emme Edmunds (right) with public health nurse Sunita Singh and musician and human rights scholar, Nikhil David

Emme Edmunds, a Ph.D. candidate in Cornell's Department of Development Sociology, has been researching policy and access to sex education and sexual and reproductive health in a human rights context in the United States and India. She is also a midwife and nurse practitioner. In 2011, she did field research in Delhi, India listening to the experiences and attitudes of women regarding sex education. Another related project is to investigate connections between reproductive health and environmental sustainability. She was recently awarded a fellowship for the summer of 2012 from the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland for the Department of Public Health and Environment, Climate Change and Health Unit as part of the Council of Women World Leaders' Graduate Leaders Program. The Council of Women World Leaders operates within the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and is a network of current and former women presidents and prime ministers. The Council's mission is to promote good governance and enhance the experience of democracy globally by increasing the number, effectiveness, and visibility of women who lead at the highest levels in their countries.

Ph.D. Student from Nepal Receives Anthropological Award to Study at Cornell

It was a great pleasure to be in Department of Anthropology, Cornell University with the support of Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, New York. As a Ph.D. student of Tribhuvan University Nepal, participation in the courses and seminars of Anthropology and the Department of Sociology enormously increased my confidence in researching food, culture and people in the world in general and indigenous Chepang communities of Nepal in particular. I have reviewed and understood major trends and debates on food security and sovereignty in global and local level. My participation in the academic discourse and in-depth indulgence in the related literature at Cornell has enormously contributed to sharpen the theoretical underpinnings associated with the question 'what people eat and who they are'. Professors Kathryn March, David Holmberg from the Department of Anthropology and Professor Philip McMichael from the Department of Sociology were instrumental mentors to look after my academic performance and provide guardianship in my ups and downs while I was away from home. I believe the skills and knowledge I gained from Cornell stay are of genuine use to Nepal in particular and to the human society in the world in general. I disseminate them through teaching and research in my host university and academia. Thanks to Wenner-Gren Foundation for making it possible.



Uddhav Rai, Lecturer and Phd Candidate
Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu

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"Lost Boys" hundreds of miles through the Southern Sudan desert to the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. Relocated to the United States in 1996, he now leads Water for South Sudan, Inc., the non-profit organization he founded in 2004.

Thamora Fishel, the Outreach Coordinator for the Southeast Asia Program at Cornell, talked about "Water Symbolism and Local Knowledge in Southeast Asia", which focused on the connection between water uses and symbolism in religious practices. Latin American Study Program students spoke of their projects in South America, referred to as the "Agua Clara Project", where environmental and mechanical engineering students set up water treatment plants for a minimal expense in villages where potable water is scarce. For a complete list of the topics and presenters, please visit: <http://einaudi.cornell.edu/node/11390>.

At the end of each day the teachers would divide into breakout groups, and discuss the day's presentations and activities, stating, among other things, what they can take back to the classroom with them, which is the main objective of the ISSI workshops.

This event was sponsored in part by a grant from the US Department of Education, the South Asia Program, the Einaudi Center for International Studies, and the five other collaborating outreach programs of CERIS.

*SAP Congratulates Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Recipients
for 2011-2012 Academic Year*



Andrew McKinney Amstutz is a Ph.D. student in the Department of History. He studied Persian to enable him to pursue his research interests focused on political contours and geographic shifts of Urdu publishing in the early 20th century. An important component of this will be examining how Urdu publishers drew on early modern Indo-Persian's historical trajectory and textual traditions in narrating a long history for Urdu in different parts of South Asia.



Anaar Desai-Stephens is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Music, where she studies Ethnomusicology. Her research focuses on the intersection of gender, embodiment, and social respectability in Hindustani musical pedagogy and performance. As a FLAS recipient, she has been studying Hindi.



Aimee Douglas is a second-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Anthropology. With the support of a second FLAS fellowship she is studying Sinhala in order to acquire language skills critical to her research pursuits in politics and ritual transformation in Sri Lanka.

Hayden Kantor is a third-year doctoral student in the Department of Anthropology. As a FLAS recipient, for two consecutive years, he is studying Hindi. He is interested in agriculture and food systems in North India. His research examines the capitalization of agriculture and how this is changing the way villagers in Bihar eat and grow food.



Raina Mirabueno, class of 2013, is pursuing a M.A. in Landscape Architecture. She is currently studying Hindi and is interested in using design as a cultural celebration of architecture, people and the natural landscape of India. This is her second FLAS Fellowship.

Ariel Morales is a second-year master's student in the Department of City and Regional Planning. He is studying Hindi and his current academic interests include participatory theatre, transformative education and land reform.



Kasia Paprocki is a second-year Ph.D. student in Development Sociology. Kasia's research interests involve landlessness, NGO development, and agrarian change in Bangladesh. She is studying the Bengali language on her second FLAS at Cornell.



Rafia Usmani is a M.A. student in the School of City and Regional Planning. She is studying Bengali to further research the impact of displacement on communities and urban environments.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Sindhi Language and Sindhi Books in Pune

Andrew McKinney Amstutz is a Ph.D. student in the Department of History. He is in India this summer studying Sindhi through the AIIS Summer Language Program as a SAP summer FLAS awardee. These are his 'Notes from the Field':

Initially, Pune, Maharashtra, seemed a rather odd location to study Sindhi. Despite being hundreds of miles from the province of Sindh (Pakistan) and more often associated with the Marathi language and the history of the Maratha Empire, the city of Pune is the location of the American Institute of Indian Studies' (AIIS) Sindhi Language Program where I am studying Sindhi this summer. However, after arriving in Pune, I realized that the city had witnessed the movements of Sindhi-speakers and Sindhi texts across the shifting borders of colonial and post-colonial India and the fluctuating status of the Sindhi language in South Asia. Sindhi is predominantly spoken in the province of Sindh in Pakistan and by three million Sindhi speakers in India. Colonial Sindh, as well as much of modern-day Maharashtra, was grouped within the Bombay Presidency during the colonial-era and the Presidency sponsored Sindhi (written in the Arabic script) as the vernacular administrative language of Sindh. As a result Sindhi books are scattered across the shelves of some of Maharashtra's colonial-era university libraries, including Deccan College in Pune. Following the 1947 Partition of British India, many Sindhi Hindus migrated to India (and tens of thousands of Sindhis settled in Pune) while urban Sindh became the center of Urdu-speaking north Indian Muslim migration to Pakistan. Although Sindhi was the vernacular language of colonial administration in Sindh, Urdu quickly became the dominant language of the public sphere in Sindh after 1947. In India, Sindhi (both in the Devanagari and Arabic scripts) was established as one of the 'official' languages of India in 1967, and Deccan College in Pune became a center for Sindhi language instruction. As a result, I have spent the summer in Pune learning Sindhi in both scripts.

Despite its official status, Sindhi publishing and readership have largely shrunk in post-colonial India and dusty Sindhi collections found in libraries across Pune testify to these changes. For example, the Deccan College Library contains a Sindhi collection, which dates back to the end of the 19th century when colonial Bombay was the center of Sindhi publishing. Continuing circulation of Sindhi books between Pakistan and India until the 1965 War resulted in a large collection of early Sindhi publications from Pakistan landing in the Deccan College Library as well. However, intensified border controls following the war coupled with declining Sindhi readership in India has contributed to the shrinking of Sindhi publishing in India. Despite this, Sindhi book collections in Pune present a range of surprises for those who take a look. While browsing through Deccan College Library's Sindhi collection, I came across large numbers of 19th century prints of classical Urdu prose and poetry stuffed into the Sindhi catalog. At some point librarians, probably unfamiliar with different Perso-Arabic scripts, had included the library's colonial-era Urdu collections in the Sindhi collection. While in post-colonial Pakistan the north India Urdu literary canon was promoted as an appropriate 'national' culture at the expense of 'regional' literatures, including Sindhi, due to the accidents of library organization and script, in the Deccan College Library, Sindhi has absorbed classical Urdu.



Sanskrit Scholar Sheldon Pollock Visits Cornell as Distinguished University



The University Lecture fund was first endowed at the beginning of the twentieth century by Goldwin Smith, a distinguished historian of English birth who, in Nathaniel Hawthorne's phrase, wanted to "open an intercourse with the world." The designation "University Lecturer" is given to a speaker whose subject is likely to draw, on the occasion of presenting a single lecture, a wide audience from a range of departments or programs.

On Tuesday, April 24, 2012, Sheldon Pollock, the Arvind Raghunathan Professor of South Asian Studies at Columbia University, gave a lecture on *Philology in Three Dimensions*, which was hosted by the South Asia Program and sponsored by the University Lecture fund. He argued for philology—meaning close reading of primary texts and of other texts about texts—as the quintessential humanist approach. Hard-core Sanskrit philology has virtually disappeared in India and is waning in Europe. Columbia and Cornell do, however, hold firm in this difficult classical quest for truth through texts.

From 2005-2011 Pollock served as the William B. Ransford Professor of Sanskrit and Indian Studies at Columbia, and before that as the George V. Bobrinsky Distinguished Service Professor of Sanskrit and Indic Studies at the University of Chicago, where he taught from 1989-2005. He was educated at Harvard University, receiving his undergraduate degree in Classics (Greek) *magna cum laude* in 1971 before earning a Masters in Sanskrit and Indian Studies in 1973. His Ph.D. in Sanskrit and Indian Studies followed in 1975. His areas of specialization are Sanskrit philology, Indian intellectual and literary history, and, increasingly, comparative intellectual history.

Pollock is General Editor of the *Murty Classical Library of India* (Harvard U. Press). He was General Editor of the *Clay Sanskrit Library*, for which he also edited and translated a number of volumes, and joint editor of *South Asia across the Disciplines*, a collaborative venture of the University of California Press, University of Chicago Press, and Columbia University Press. He also directs the international collaborative research project "Sanskrit Knowledge Systems on the Eve of Colonialism."

His publications include the monograph *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (2006), which won the Coomaraswamy Prize from the Association of Asian Studies as well as the Lionel Trilling Award, and the edited volume *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia* (2003). Two new book projects are entitled *Liberation Philology* (Harvard University Press) and *Reader on Rasa: A Historical Sourcebook in Indian Aesthetics*, the first in a new series of historical source books on classical Indian thought that he is editing for Columbia University Press.

In 2008, Pollock received a Distinguished Achievement Award from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, for significant contributions to humanistic inquiry. In 2009, he received the President's Award for Sanskrit, and in 2010, the Padma Shri award, both from the Government of India. His newest initiative is the Ambedkar Sanskrit Fellowship Program at Columbia, which aims to establish an endowment to fund graduate studies in Sanskrit for students from historically disadvantaged communities.*

*biographical information from: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/imesaas/faculty/directory/pollock.html>

EXHIBITIONS

Essence of Indian Textiles: Selections from the Parpia Collection



Indian, Coromandel Coast, made for the Indonesian market. Palampore, 18th century

This exhibition celebrates the extraordinary aesthetic and technical diversity of Indian textiles over the last six hundred years. Drawn from a private collection of astonishing range, depth, and quality, the selections presented here provide an overview of India's long history of preeminence in the production of cotton, silk, and wool fabrics.

The earliest pieces in the exhibition are remnants of a flourishing trade with Indonesia, where Indian textiles were treasured and preserved as heirlooms. Other examples of trade textiles made for specific markets, such as Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Europe, highlight the dexterity of textile designers and makers to tailor fabrics to appeal to foreign tastes and desires.

Luxury textiles made for imperial and princely patrons display some of the finest-quality weaving, dyeing, and embroidery designs and techniques, executed to an unparalleled level of sophistication and agility to satisfy royal demands.

The diversity of regional textile production for domestic usage and adornment encompasses a broad range of techniques, including painting, block printing, ikat, tie-dye, brocade, tapestry, and embroidery. Rich variations in traditions of ornamentation reflect the various social and cultural contexts for which these textiles were made. Examples of textiles made to serve important roles in the devotional practices of Hindus and Muslims are also included.

We are grateful to Banoo and Jeevak Parpia for sharing their passion, extensive knowledge, and treasures to make this exhibition possible. A comprehensive catalogue of their collection is currently being written and is planned for publication in 2012.

Ellen Avril
Chief Curator and Curator of Asian Art

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Nalini Malani & Iftikhar Dadi, Detail of Bloodlines, 1997 (refabricated 2011) Sequins and thread on cloth; two sections: 165 x 187 cm and 124.5 x 159 cm

scholars Aamir Mufti and Saloni Mathur, Duke historian Sumathi Ramaswamy, Guggenheim Museum curator Sandhini Poddar, Cornell faculty Salah Hassan and Jolene Rickard, and artists Naeem Mohaiemen and Seher Shah from New York, and Amar Kanwar and Shuddhabrata Sengupta from New Delhi.

My own involvement in the Lines of Control project, first as an artist, and now also as co-curator of its Johnson Museum manifestation, is artistic and scholarly in the professional sense; but above all, it is deeply personal. Both of my parents and much of their extended families hail from India and left for Pakistan in the wake of Partition. My mother's family, which was based in Lucknow and Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh, traces itself as members of the Rohillas, the quintessential middle-class professionals and civil servants that Aligarh University produced. They were deeply

invested in Urdu language and literature.

On the other hand, my father's immediate family was based in Bombay, but the extended family was from the small town of Godhra in Gujarat. The numerous members of the Gujarati-speaking "Godhra community" that had migrated to Karachi formed an elaborate labyrinth linked by intermarriages, and they were above all interested in trading and other business activities, rather than salaried employment. Members

of both sides of my family have remained in India, many others migrated to Pakistan and then to Canada, the US, Europe, and the Middle East, forming a dispersal that can no longer be gathered in any stable territory that is "home."

As an artist, my engagement with the legacy of Partition began with a chance meeting, in 1996 at an exhibition in Copenhagen, with Indian artist Nalini Malani, who had moved from Karachi to Bombay following Partition. We discussed an alternative "celebration" of the 50th anniversary of the independence of India and Pakistan, as well as Partition, in 1997. This resulted in a pioneering exhibition that traveled to New Delhi, Bombay, and Lahore. We also collaborated to develop *Bloodlines* in 1997. But the work could not easily be made together—partly due to visa and travel restrictions—and so it was fabricated by professional embroiderers in Karachi. Its exhibition at the Johnson was an important milestone in my continued engagement with these tangled legacies.



Nalini Malani & Iftikhar Dadi, Bloodlines, 1997 (refabricated 2011) Sequins and thread on cloth; two sections: 165 x 187 cm and 124.5 x 159 cm

FACULTY

A Visit to Puzhal Prison

by Mary Fainsod Katzenstein, Stephen and Evalyn Milman Professor
of American Studies, Cornell University

My visit last June to one of the three newly-built Puzhal prison complexes an hour north of Chennai began with a flourish of military pageantry. A rifle-bearing unit of 8-10 guards performed an intricate drill while my guide, Mrs. Raja Soundari, Deputy Inspector General of Prisons, Chennai, and I stood at attention. From there, a small party of officers along with two young men in white prison shorts and shirt assigned to hold umbrellas above the heads of both the DIG and myself made our way across the neatly-swept paths and trim grounds from one section of the prison to another.

Our first stop was the entrance to the section designated in large painted letters as the GALLOWS.

High metal posts marked the frame from which the hanging rope is to be suspended. An officer stepped forward to demonstrate how the lever that opened the trap door would cause the prisoner to fall and the noose to tighten. As he pulled the lever, the door tumbled against the metal base releasing a sonorous clang that reverberated across the prison yard. No mistaking the message the falling metal grate was intended to send.

But the military formation-cum-gallows introduction to the prison belied what followed. The organization and the ambience of the prison was less rigidly controlled or evidently punitive than the introductory minutes signaled. Although the Puzhal gallows remain operational, they have not been used. Violence of the kind found in many prisons is less frequent in this Puzhal facility. Guards are neither armed nor carry nightsticks. Tear gas and tasers are non-existent. As is universally the case, drugs (and more rarely cell phones) smuggled (or thrown) over the wall into the prison is an endemic problem. When the inevitable fights erupt guards intervene bodily but not with weapons. Prison capacity in Puzhal is under utilized and overcrowding is not a problem. The “honors” dormitory where prisoners with good behavior were permitted radio and television, was breezy and quiet. In fact, the entire prison seemed to be free of the din that is so common in US prison blocks. Virtually no isolation cells were in use. Those with death sentences (the death penalty is intently debated in Tamil Nadu) may move freely in and out of their cells into the courtyard of their units though they are not at liberty to mix with the population as a whole. A prison bakery operates with surfeit loaves sent to the local orphanages and other institutions; an active prison garden has been started. Those who enter the prison without literacy are enrolled in school, health and yoga classes are provided, and a small distance education college program has recently been initiated. Prison employment (the bakery, bookbinding, cloth bag production) provide jobs to a number of prisoners who earn about 18 rupees (25 cents) a day after upkeep and victim’s compensation (70% of earnings) is deducted. Employment, education, and training, however, fall far short of involving the full population and boredom and uselessness is an endemic issue. Family visits are allowed only once a fortnight although escorted visits home (to attend family events –marriages and funerals) are allowed. There are no phones available at this time to prisoners (or the right to have packages sent from home) so the main means of communication must be by letter. NGOs (that provide educational, crafts-and-skill-based as well as religious programs) are permitted on prison grounds. Litigation charging the prison administration or the state with denial of constitutionally acceptable prison conditions is infrequent (the staff estimated about three such cases the past year). The most prominent recent pressure from human rights groups involved prison suicides, higher in remand facilities than in the regular ‘convict’ prisons.

Two features that are distinctive to prisons in India were only partly on view in Puzhal. (1) The problem of undertrials (or remand prisoners) generally plagues Indian prisons where close to two thirds or more of all prisoners languish behind bars without charges or court trial — some for far longer than the period they would have served had they been convicted of the crime for which they may be charged. Since remand prisoners are confined in a separate space, this affliction of the prison system is not directly visible to a visitor to this Puzhal complex except in so far as it might be said that because morale in facilities where remand prisoners are kept is notoriously low, the more orderly and less violent character of this Puzhal complex may reflect the absence of undertrials behind its walls. (2) Indian prisons are also noted for a class confinement system (a holdover from colonial days) in which prisoners are separately housed according to their socio-economic status. In Puzhal, Class A prisoners are entitled to individual cells unlike Class B prisoners who are housed in dormitories. Class A prisoners receive clothing from family, and have readier access to other resources as well. But otherwise the standard of living between the two class designations was not vastly different, at least to the naked eye.

Human rights reports on prison conditions in India speak of overcrowding, rampant drug use, lack of programs, appalling health conditions, a paucity of staff, guard abuse, poor morale – a list which is all too familiar to a students of incarceration globally. But if this one day’s tour of Puzhal was indicative of a broader lesson, it is that reform is possible in particular state or institutional contexts. As Deputy Raja Soundari commented as we neared the end of the tour, “It is a chance to do positive service work under the uniform.”



Archive of Sinhala Child Language to be Available for Use by Scholars Across the World

Through a series of grants from the American Institute of Sri Lankan studies (totaling \$13,000 over the last 3 years), a unique archive of Sinhala child language will be available for use by scholars across the world. This language data from 473 children aged 2 to 6 years of age learning Sinhala as their first language was collected between 1980 and 1989 in Sri Lanka and consists of about 166 hours of digital audio samples, supplemented by transcriptions. Data consists of children's experimentally elicited production of various types of Sinhala complex sentence formation, supplemented by natural speech samples. This internet compatible archive is being constructed by the Cornell Language Acquisition Lab in conjunction with the Virtual Center for Language Acquisition (www.clal.cornell.edu/vcla) and in conjunction with Cornell's Mann Library for data and metadata management. It is integrated in the DataStaR program hosted by Mann Library (<http://datastar.mannlib.cornell.edu>), a science data "staging repository" to allow researchers to collaborate on shared data and high quality metadata during the research process and is listed in the Open Language Archives Community at www.language-archives.org.



Professor Barbara Lust and Kalyani Karunatillake with "research subject"

Key project members include: Cornell Professor Barbara Lust (Department of Human Ecology); Cornell Professor Emeritus, James Gair (Department of Linguistics); Karu Karunatillake, Kalyani Karunatillake, Kamal de Abrew, and Milan Rodrigo.



Martin F. Hatch Retires, after 31 years of Dedicated Teaching



Professor Martin Hatch dons one of his retirement gifts from the Department of Music, a gardener's hat with a beautifully embroidered headband by Concert Manager, Tokiko Nobusawa

On April 17, 2012, friends and colleagues gathered to celebrate the retirement of Professor Martin Fellows Hatch (known to his friends and colleagues as Marty), from The Department of Music after 31 years of dedicated teaching at Cornell.

Professor Hatch received an M.A. in Music from Wesleyan University, where he studied Karnatic music theory and performance which included Kanjira (South Indian frame drum) under Nagaswara Rao and vocal under Ramnadkrishnan and Sangeet Ramanatham. His research included the study of the *Natyasastra* and the *Sangitaratnakara*, two ancient treatises on music, dance and theatre in India. As a student at Wesleyan, he was the Assistant Director of the Wesleyan Gamelan Ensemble, Assistant Director of the Wesleyan Glee Club and Chapel Choir and the Instructor of Afro-American Music as well as a Teaching Assistant to an Introduction to Western Music course.

Wishing to continue his involvement in a more community-based music experience, in 1972, as a Ph.D. student at Cornell, Marty became the Founder and Director of the Cornell Gamelan Ensemble, a post which he held until 2007. He also founded the Cornell Middle Eastern Music Ensemble in 2001 and was the Director of this ensemble until 2007. Both ensembles are still going strong today. He received his Ph.D. from Cornell in 1980, and was eventually appointed as an Associate Professor to the Department of Music until 2011. He taught numerous music courses which included both performance and theory. More recently, Professor Hatch founded and became the Managing Director of the American Institute for Indonesian Studies (www.aifis.org).

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Rasa in Theory, Practice and Performance



Cornell Professor Lawrence McCrea lectures to a full house.

On March 31 and April 1, the South Asia Program at Cornell University and the Department of Theatre Arts at Ithaca College, collaborated in a three-part symposium, examining how the theory, practice and performance of *rasa*, a Sanskrit word referring to the expression and reception of emotion in performance, is used in traditional and contemporary music, dance, theatre, literature, in performer training and in other contexts.

The weekend began with a colloquium entitled “Rasa in Theory”, which opened with Professor Lawrence McCrea, Associate Professor of Sanskrit at Cornell University, whose paper, “*Rasa as Meaning: The Semantics of Emotional Response in Traditional Indian Dramatic and Poetic Theory*” made clear the fact that, contrary to popular belief, it was not the Kashmiri mystic, philosopher and aesthete, Abhinavagupta (950 – 1020AD) who contributed the ninth *rasa* (*shanta*), to the eight existing *rasa*(s) found in the *Natyasastra*, but Udbhata, who was the chief

court pandit of King Jayapida of Kashmir (c. 800 AD). His only surviving work, called *Kavyalamkarasarasamgraha*, is unfortunately not translated, but the relevant details can be found in V. Raghavan’s *Number of Rasas* and S.K. De’s *History of Sanskrit Poetics*. *Santarasa* is also discussed fairly extensively in Anandavardhana’s (c. 850 AD) *Dhvanyaloka*. This piece of information was very significant for the dancers and dramatists in the audience who were erroneously led to believe through various modern texts, like the two translations of the *Abhinayadharpanam*, by Coomaraswamy (1917) and Ghosh (1934), and numerous other books on dance, published within the past 50 years, that it was Abhinavagupta’s contribution. McCrea also explained that the theory of *rasa* was first developed in the field of dramaturgy, specifically in the mid-first-millennium *Natyasastra*. But between the ninth and eleventh centuries, the literary theorists of Kashmir imported the discourse of *rasa* wholesale into their theories of (principally non-dramatic) poetry, where it eventually becomes one of the principle organizing concepts. Many of the most influential theorizations of *rasa* emerge from this tradition of literary analysis, rather than from specifically dramaturgical literature.

This was followed by the paper, “High Emotion: Exploring Euripides’ *Hippolytus* and Sarah Kane’s *Phaedra’s Love* through Rasabox Exercises” presented by Ursula Neuerburg–Denzer (Department of Theatre Arts, Concordia University, Montreal), who discussed the results and shift in focus of a practice-based research project with a group of undergraduate acting students at Concordia University. Over the past fifteen years Ursula has been exploring the actor’s emotion work using Richard Schechner’s Rasabox exercises as a vehicle in classroom, lab and workshop settings.

Durga Bor’s (South Asia Program, Cornell University) “The Gestures of *Rasa*”, explained how both the *Natyasastra* and the *Abhinayadarpanam* have withstood the test of time, and are still the texts which dancers refer to when learning physical gestures known as *mudra*. *Mudra* refers to not only the hands, but to the feet, head, neck and eye gestures as well. Bor explained how these *mudras*, when properly projected, embellish the performance and can aid in enhancing a *rasa-bhava* experience for the dancer and audience. She also demonstrated the use of *tala* (rhythm) in emphasizing expression as well as *sancharibhav*, a type of *abhinaya*, or stylized mime, which starts out with a literal interpretation of repetitive lines of a song or poem being sung by the vocalist, but ends up expressing the theme or idea of the repeated lines with non-literal interpretive gestures.

Denise Nuttall (Department of Anthropology, Ithaca College), spoke on “Rhythm and Rhymes, *Rasas* and *Rasikas*: On the Intimate Relation between *Rasa*, *Tala*, *Laya* and Hindustani Tabla Performance”. She explained how tabla players contribute to the overall *rasa* or ‘tasting’ experience and connect with their audience members or *rasikas*. Through a discussion of rhythms and rhymes, *rasas*



Denise Nuttall demonstrates *rasa* through rhythm.



Durga Bor shows the expression of *rasa* in *tala* accompanied by violinist Max Buckholtz and Denise Nuttall on *tabla*.

and *rasikas*, Denise examined how *rasa* can be a possible embodied experience in the performance of tabla.

Michele Minnick's (Department of Theatre Arts, Towson University, Baltimore, MD) paper "*Rasa* as the Basis for Ensemble Training, Character Development and Choreography: Staging Euripides' the *Bacchai* with Undergraduate Theatre Students" contextualized the Rasaboxes and the use of *rasa* as the core principle of actor training and performance composition, in the larger body of performer training developed by Richard Schechner over the years. She then focused the discussion around the production she is currently involved in at Towson University, for which she just conducted a two-week workshop focusing on the Rasaboxes and supporting elements of training.

The final paper of the day, "The Taste of Music: *Rasa* in Javanese Musical Discourse" by Marc Benamou (Music Department, Earlham College, Richmond, IN), explained that the Javanese term *rasa* (pronounced rawsaw) was borrowed from India during the first millennium of the Common Era along with Hindu and Buddhist thought and practices. Eventually it was overlain with Sufi psychological theories, and now has been completely indigenized. Musicians frequently evoke it when referring not only to the specific qualities of a musical performance, but also to what distinguishes a good performer from a mediocre one. At its most literal, it operates on the level of sensation—hence the prevalent metaphor of "taste" (explaining how specific Javanese gamelan pieces are compared to taste and textures of specific food types, like spicy or crunchy)—and at its most profound on the level of the inner heart. As such, it stands at the center of Javanese musical aesthetics.



Marc Benamou defines *rasa*, as it is referred to in Javanese music.

The following day at Ithaca College "*Rasa* in Practice: Performance Workshops" were conducted by the participants. Symposium organizer, Professor Paula Murray Cole, (Department of Theatre Arts, Ithaca College), together with Michele Minnick and Ursula Neuerburg-Denzer, gave a Rasaboxes workshop. This is a method of teaching the dramatic art of acting developed by Richard Schechner (Professor of Performance Studies at the Tisch School of the Arts, New York University), by using the nine *rasa*(s), represented by large boxes drawn on the floor. The students enter the box of the *rasa* they are assigned to express, sometimes on their own, and sometimes in an interaction with other participants. Durga Bor's workshop emphasized the use of body and hand *mudra*(s), as documented in the *Natyasastra* and *Abhinayadarpanam* used in Indian classical dance as a means of *rasa* expression. Lindsay Gilmour (Department of Theatre Arts, Ithaca College) taught how contemporary dance movements can convey specific moods or emotions. The workshops ended with Marc Benamou's workshop "Listening for *Rasa* in Javanese Gamelan and Vocal Music". Marc played specific gamelan pieces and let the participants determine which *rasa* was being expressed.

This symposium ended with an evening program "*Rasa* in Performance", which featured Durga Bor, expressing specific *rasa*(s) in two classical Odissi dances (*Siva Varni* by Guru Pankaj Charan Das, and *Roopa Madhuri* by Guru Surendranath Jena) as well as an interlude of the interpretation of *vibhasta* (disgust), *karuna* (sadness, grief, compassion) and *adbhuta* (wonderment, awe) using crossover interpretive dance as a medium. For her last piece, she was accompanied by Max Buckholtz on violin and Nikolai Ruskin on tar. Contemporary dancer, Lindsay Gilmour followed with a *rasa* interlude expressing *veera* (courage, heroic, virility), *raudra* (anger), and *hasya* (laughter, comic).

This was followed by a performance piece devised by Paula Murray Cole, Matt Prigge, Freddy Villano, Nick Shuhan and Jonathan Smythe entitled "Smith/Smythe: Fragments of Arlington in the Orchard" which expressed shared memories, insights and questions about Smythe's military service. Jonathan served in the U.S. Army's Third United States Infantry Regiment, the "Old Guard", from 2004-2008. The regiment's mission is "to conduct memorial affairs to honor fallen comrades, ceremonies and special events to represent the U.S. Army, communicating its story to United States citizens and the world. Memorial affairs missions include standard and full honors funerals in Arlington National Cemetery and dignified transfers of fallen soldiers returning to the United States at Dover Air Force Base." As Sergeant Smith, Jonathan performed in the Old Guard's marching element and firing party for over 1000 funeral ceremonies honoring veterans and soldiers killed in action in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As Jonathan Smythe, he performs as a musician and currently lives and works at Littletree Orchards in Newfield, NY. As an abstract "overlay" of both his military and civilian lives, actors, Ithaca College Theatre majors Matt Prigge and Nick Shuhan, expressed various *rasas* connected with Jonathan's experiences. Live accompaniment was rendered by Freddy Valano on bass and Jonathan Smythe on guitar.

Lindsay once again took the stage with "Into the Blue", a structured improvisation exploring *rasa* in the body from a contemporary dance and music perspective. She was accompanied by Chris Seeds and Keir Neuringer on keyboards. The show ended with a dramatic dance interpretation of *rasa*(s) *bhayanaka* (fear), *sringara* (romantic, erotic, love) and *shanta* (peace, stillness, liberation) performed by senior musical theatre major (IC) Hannah Dubner, with Max Buckholtz on violin.



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Martin Hatch's research focused on the performing arts of Southeast Asia. He is well-published, with the majority of his publications being on Indonesian music. He served as the editor of the journal *Asian Music* from 1985 to 2004 and is on the board of its parent organization, the Society for Asian Music.

As a South Asia Program Associate Faculty, he taught 'Ethnomusicology: Music and Methods' and 'Introduction to World Music: Asia', which included a section on Indian music. Professor Hatch is instrumental in supporting SAP's effort to bring some of South Asia's top musicians to Cornell. His contributions are invaluable, allowing the seemingly impossible to become possible. For this, the South Asia Program will remain forever grateful. He was also a core faculty of the Southeast Asia Program at Cornell and on the faculty of the Department of Asian Studies. The SAP wishes Professor Hatch a long and happy retirement.



Continued from front page

The conference ended with an engaging, humorous and thought provoking talk by Rema Nagarajan, Assistant Editor for the Times of India and Lehman Global Health Reporting Fellow at Harvard University. She spoke upon the lack of food and the resulting lack of health in India. The lack of food, widespread malnutrition and starvation deaths exist despite the fact that the GDP is growing and India has large food stocks. She spoke about the medicalization of hunger and of the poor and starving as being seen as a promising market by food companies selling items similar to PlumpyNut, a high-protein product used to help save malnourished children. While some fortification is good in some cases and reaches the people, it also can result in the centralization of production, making farmers and consumers more dependent upon a limited number of corporations' processing and distribution of the food product. She argued that what is really needed is good food in the necessary quantities and that the Indian states that function well have infant and school feeding programs that work. Those with dysfunctional state apparatuses don't reach these constituencies with the food that they need.

The combination of thought provoking papers and an engaged audience made this conference a great success. People who attended the conference remarked at how diverse the topics of the conference were but at the same time they all spoke to the theme in direct ways. The format of the conference also allowed for questions, discussion and an exchange of ideas.

None of this would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the conference organizers—Syracuse University's Professors Tim Dye and Sudha Raj and Cornell University's Saurabh Mehta, Assistant Professor of Global Health and Nutrition.

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