The Transmission and Development of Indian Dance in Singapore in the 20th Century

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ABSTRACT
Today, the tradition of Indian music and dance is carried on and performed in this dynamic global forum, deviating from the original spaces and territories, especially amongst Indian diaspora around the world. It is certain that the globalization of economy and society, coupled with the rapid development of various electronic media, mean that people’s lives are increasingly socio-economically connected on a global scale. This connectivity also provides for the active flow and interaction of people, materials, information and values, as never before and the situation for the Indian music and dance is not an exception.

In dance studies, much attention has been paid recently to performance activities in the USA, Europe and the West Indies. Often under discussion are not only the aesthetic of performance itself, but also how those activities are affecting the construction of national, ethnic and religious identities in this diasporic setting. At the same time, in the fields of Cultural Anthropology and Area Studies, the issue has been raised as to how the force of globalization from the West is affecting local society and everyday life in South Asia.

This paper will highlight the dynamics of a global dance culture originally from South Asia, focusing on the situation of Indian dance in Singapore, which has not drawn much attention before. Also it will explore the process of transmission and the development of Indian dance, especially the evolution of Bharatanatyam in Singapore during the 20th century. It will also investigate how much individuals have influenced the cultivation, transmission, and transformation of Indian performing arts into the global arena by paying special attention to the life history of a Malayalee dancer.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER
Yoshiaki Takemura is a Research Fellow in Center for Integrated Area Studies on South Asia at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan. He obtained a Ph.D. in 2012 from Osaka University, with a dissertation entitled “Living as a god: Ethnographic study on the Teyyam practitioners, Kerala, South India.” His primary interest has been focused on the interaction between the transformations of bodily movement and the dynamics of the social, economic and political spheres. Currently, he is working on the politics of the institutionalization and the impact of new media technologies on Indian dance in Singapore.

DATE
Wednesday, 25 January 2017
TIME
3.00pm to 4.30pm
VENUE
AS8 Meeting Room, #06-47, Singapore 119260

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