

THE MATTOO CENTER FOR INDIA STUDIES AND THE HUMANITIES INSTITUTE



**Introduction by Professor Peter Manning,
Department of English**

Since Plato, philosophy and poetry have been intimate enemies. Philosophy is reflexive, a process of thinking about thinking. Some of the deepest Indian philosophical texts contain the most sublime poetry, sometimes as a reflexive: "by who are *these words* propelled?" A question, in order to be philosophical, must spring from a special kind of pain that everyone does not feel. And some of our greatest poetry comes from our deepest pain or pathos. Good poetry and good philosophy may have a common source in the cultivation of unselfishness. The problem of inexplicable and undeserved suffering becomes philosophical when one examines empathy at the pain of strangers. Classical Indian philosophies, Buddhist and Anti-Buddhist—Sâmkhya and Nyâya—explore the cause of painful human bondage, and how to alleviate the suffering that, as the Buddha, Lucretius and Schopenhauer tell us, is the universal and inescapable meaning of embodiment. This lecture explores three links: between pain and beautiful poetry, between pain and philosophical contemplation, and between poetry and philosophy. A clue to the last link will be sought in a moral phenomenology of communicating and sharing pain, especially the pain of other bodies.

All are cordially invited to a reception following the talk.

INAUGURAL LECTURE: PAIN, POETRY, AND THE PRACTICE OF PHILOSOPHY

Thursday, February 28, 2019

4:00 pm

Humanities 1006

Professor Arindam Chakrabarti
Nirmal K. & Augustina Mattoo Chair
in Classical Indic Humanities



Arindam Chakrabarti did his doctoral work at Oxford under Sir Peter Strawson and Sir Michael Dummett. He has taught philosophy of language, metaphysics and philosophy of mind at the universities of Calcutta and Delhi, University

College, London, the University of Washington, Seattle, and the University of Hawaii. In Fall 2018, he joined the Department of Philosophy at Stony Brook University as the inaugural holder of the Mattoo Chair in Classical Indic Humanities. His numerous publications include *Denying Existence*, five books in Bengali, a Sanskrit book on Western epistemology, and the edited *Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Indian Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art* (2016) and *Mahabharata Now* (Routledge). His major work *Realisms Interlinked: Objects, Subjects and Other Subjects* will be published by Bloomsbury in 2019.



Stony Brook University
College of Arts and Sciences

Stony Brook University/SUNY is an affirmative action/equal opportunity educator and employer.

This event is free and open to the public.

For more information, call the Mattoo Center at (631) 632-9742 or email indiastudies@stonybrook.edu