

State University of New York at Stony Brook
Department of Philosophy
2018 Lecture Series

You are cordially invited to a
lecture by

Arindam Chakrabarti
Stony Brook University
**Professor of Philosophy and Nirmal and Augustina Mattoo Chair of
Indic Humanities**

OWNERSHIP

An Indian Philosophical Critique of Locke, Kant and Proudhon on Private Property



Like the word “property” which could be used in both the legal-economic sense of asset that one possesses as well as in the ontological sense of a general feature that a substance or particular has, the verb “to own” is also used in two senses. A person or a thing owns the property that belongs to her or it. Locke’s “labor theory of private property” and even Kant’s doctrine of an original acquisition which makes something external “mine” were sharply criticized by P.J. Proudhon. In this lecture, a 5th century Buddhist (Vasubandhu’s) critique of ownership –in response to the question: “Who owns passing mental states?” is brought to bear on the problem of how could gift-giving be ethically obligatory if wealth is owned privately in an unrestricted sense? The lecture ends by suggesting an unusual comparison between the idea of private property and the idea of solipsistic meanings or what Wittgenstein imagines to be an allegedly private language.

October 31st, 2018
1:00-2:30
Harriman Hall 214

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