



Asian Studies Centre
St Antony's College
University of Oxford
South Asia Seminar, Week 1



Of Nomadology and India(n-ness)



Avishek Ray

National Institute of Technology Silchar;
Charles Wallace Fellow, Edinburgh

Tuesday October 11th, 2 p.m.
Fellows' Dining Room,
St Antony's College

Avishek Ray will explore how the dichotomy between the 'good' wanderer and the 'bad' wanderer in the 'Indian tradition' was premised upon a highly contingent process of religio-political partisanship and struggles over territorialisation. He will argue that the impulse to assume that nomadicity as a 'radical' practice articulating political dissidence and the figure of the 'nomad' as the prototype of a non-conformist, affective subject have perpetually existed in the 'Indian' cultural repertoire – for example, think of the nineteenth-century Orientalist claims on the origin of the Romani community, or for that matter, the Beats' obsession with 'India' – is symbolic of an essentialist notion of 'India'.

Avishek Ray teaches at the National Institute of Technology Silchar, Assam, India. He obtained his PhD in Cultural Studies from Trent University, Canada and works on what may loosely be called archaeology of vagabondage: the political and philosophical implications of the social construct 'vagabond' and cultural representations thereof in context of South Asia. He has edited a Bangla anthology on Religion & Popular Culture, and published in journals like the *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* (Routledge), *Canadian Journal of Comparative Literature*, *Journal of Human Values* (Sage) among others.

All are welcome

Convenor: Dr Faisal Devji

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