

**CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES, CALCUTTA,
R-1 BAISHNABGHATA PATULI,
KOLKATA 700094**

GENERAL SEMINAR

Dr. Anustup Basu
Associate Professor in English, Media and Cinema Studies, and Criticism at the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

will give a talk titled:

“Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and the Universal Caste of Man”

Abstract

This paper is part of a larger exploration of a historical quest for a 'Hindu Monotheism' that was, in a certain sense, a tacit imperative for the modern colonial anthropological invention of 'Hinduism.' In accordance with European organic theories of nationhood and ethnicity, it could be concluded that in order for there to be a Hindu nation and a Hindu state, there had to be a Hindu monotheism. There had to be an axiomatic Church and a sense of Hindu laity that could then be parlayed into the political construction of a *jealous* national fraternité. This was not just a question of affirming faith in one God (there have always been strong monistic currents in the Vedic tradition), but an Abrahamic religiosity with a strong eschatology and providential destinying. Different strands of modern (caste) Hindu nationalist and civilizational thinking have responded to, if not followed, this imperative and its secular predicates: equality, unity, transcendence, democracy, or law as opposed to theodicy. This talk will take a critical look at Radhakrishnan's 1926 Upton Lectures published as *The Hindu View of Life* in the light of that question of political theology.

Date: Friday, 22 February, 2019; Time: 3 – 5 pm

Venue: CSSSC Seminar Room 2, Patuli Campus

Debdatta Chowdhury
(Convener, Seminar Committee)
All are welcome to attend.