

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

**STAFF SEMINAR**

Professor Manas Ray

will give a talk titled:

**“Enlightenment, Crisis and the Making of the Self:  
Reading Kant beyond Koselleck”**

Published early in his career, Reinhart Koselleck’s magnum, *Critique and Crises*, is a classic text in the philosophy of history. It presents a fascinating fresco of enlightenment thinkers from Hobbes onwards, and argues that the rise of modern intellectual traditions is related to a certain notion of crisis. This crisis, according to Koselleck, is caused largely by the continuing expansion of subjectivity encouraged by the enlightenment thinkers, along with the subsequent obligation to rein back the social challenges this expansion gives rise to. Such a crisis, Koselleck maintained, is both structurally repetitive and unique at every turn in history, as it is dealt with by individual thinkers. In the relay of thinkers he presents, Koselleck’s account of Kant is conspicuously brief. The paper argues that this lack of attention is both intriguing and unfortunate. Kant’s engagement with the notion of crisis is particularly complex and fruitful, not only for its continuing relevance for liberal critique but also for liberal technologies of rule. To demonstrate this, the paper takes a close look at Kant’s thoughts on the self-monitoring subject, whose public use of reason gains strength from continuing argument but whose private use of reason ultimately obeys the authorities. This viewpoint, in which free speech and the art of obedience are not necessarily opposed to one another, not only framed a new public but also remains of fundamental relevance to the liberal discourse of freedom today.

Date: Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016, 3 – 5 pm  
Venue: CSSSC’s Seminar Room, Patuli Campus

Trina Nileena Banerjee  
(Convener, Seminar Committee)

All faculty members, students and associates of the Centre are invited to attend.