

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

GENERAL SEMINAR

Dr. Mahitosh Mandal
Assistant Professor of English at Presidency University, Kolkata

will give a talk titled:

“Žižek Contra Miller: Remarks on the Hermeneutic Challenges
of Lacanian Psychoanalysis”

Abstract

Charisma and overall intellectual feats aside, Jacques Lacan (1901-1981) was hailed, in his lifetime, as the most insightful reader of Sigmund Freud and a radical disseminator of the Freudian discourse. However, Lacan's career was fraught with conflicts with some of the psychoanalytic, academic and political establishments of his time which dismissed, condemned and even “foreclosed” him although they ironically failed to avoid his impact. Lacan never yielded, and somewhat “obstinately” formed, dissolved, and reconstituted his own “Schools,” thereby dividing his followers. Considering such dividedness, responses to Lacan, not only involved the issue of whether to hail or dismiss him but also how (not) to engage with his ideas. Thirty-eight years after Lacan's death, the controversy over his legacy persists. The mutual, almost “symptomatic,” disagreement between Jacques-Alain Miller and Slavoj Žižek, on why and how to read Lacan, is a case in point. While my talk aims to outline the crucial disagreement between Žižek who promotes the use of Lacan in theorizing “the cultural” and Miller who, in an orthodox manner, keeps emphasizing the centrality of “the clinical” in Lacan, it proposes that such instances of disagreement are triggered by what could be defined as the “hermeneutic challenges” of Lacan. The seminars and *écrits* of Lacan pose several challenges to the reader, which, in my view, could be categorised in terms of inaccessibility, impenetrability, untheorizability, and inapplicability. While elaborating on these categories, I further argue that such responses to Lacan are conditioned by certain psychoanalytic premises that consistently inform his texts and that are, by extension, foundational to Freud.

Date: Friday, 29 November 2019; Time: 3 – 5 pm

Venue: CSSSC Seminar Room 2, Patuli Campus

Maidul Islam
(Convener, Seminar Committee)
All are welcome to attend.