

**Department of Sociology
Faculty of Social Sciences
South Asian University - New Delhi**

Psychoanalysis in South Asia

Interdisciplinary MA optional

(4 Credits)

This course, with an interdisciplinary bent, takes into account the literary implications of the interface between culture and personality, subjectivities of nation and its components, discontents of civilization and possibilities for personality formation. Furthermore, it deliberates upon the foundational components of psychoanalysis, and its application in cultural anthropology. In addition to the literary works from south of the globe, this course looks at critical engagement with psychoanalysis in the select works on/in South Asian context.

The objective of this course is not to train the learners in the skill of practicing clinical psychoanalysis or cultural anthropology. The abiding concern is not 'how to do psychoanalysis'. It is not even about 'how to do cultural anthropology'. It is instead to familiarize the learners with the debates, pertaining to culture and personality, emerging from psychoanalysis, in juxtaposition with symbolic interactionism of social psychology and cultural anthropology. What are these debates about and how are they relevant today? This question aids in connecting the posterity of psychoanalysis and cultural anthropology with the contemporary. To maintain a humanistic temperament of the course, there will be, in addition to the above-mentioned literary works, umpteen references to cinema and music from the region of South Asia. In short, the course envisages that learners will be enabled to develop a psychoanalytical understanding of the relation between culture and personality, with a focus on the instances from South of Asia.

Unit One

To break the ice, there will be a collective readings of the following to engender a literary Imagining on Culture and Personality:

The mundane and Sublime (Hermann Hesse/ Siddharth)

The pride and prejudices of Gora (Rabindra nath Tagore/Gora)

The becoming of a transnational Kabuli wala (Rabindra nath Tagore/ Kabuliwala)

The sweep of Mahatma (Raja Rao/Kanthapura)

The scarred subjectivity (Amrita Pritam/ Pinjar, Sadat Hassan Manto/ Thanda Ghosht, Ishmat Chughtai/ Lihaf)

The ambiguities of the decolonized (Salman Rushdie/Midnight's Children)

This section gathers discursive steam on the question of the relation between culture and personality, its political ramifications and complex subjectivities thereof. To put simply, the question is: how does culture contribute into the becoming of a personality (male/female) in a particular historical situation? And what suggestions emerge from the domain of literature on this question?

Unit Two: Foundations and Departures

This section invites for an elaborate engagement with the select works in Psychoanalysis, beginning with the Euro-centric foundation, the grand narrative and its meta-conceptualization of human experiences in industrial society. The foundation is accompanied by the contribution from Sri Lanka and India in the psychoanalytical understanding of personality and culture.

Basics with Freud & Propositions of Karl Jung

Resolutions of Eric Fromm and Herbert Marcuse

Applications and discontents: Gananath Obeyesekere (*The Awakened ones*), Sudhir Kakar (*Culture and Psyche: Psychoanalysis in India*) and Ashis Nandy (*At the Edge of Psychology & Savage Freud*)

Recommended Readings

Brown, J. A. C. 1964. *Freud and the Post-Freudians*. London: Penguin

Sigmund Freud. 2006. *The Penguin Freud Reader*. New York: Penguin

Carl Jung. 2001. *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. London: Routledge

Erich Fromm. 1991. *The crisis of Psychoanalysis: Essays on Freud, Marx and Social Psychology*, New York: Penguin

Sudhir Kakar. 2008. *Culture and Psyche: Selected Essays*. Delhi: OUP

Ashish Nandi. 2008. *Exiled at the Home: At the Edge of Psychology, Intimate Enemy and creating Nationality*. New York: OUP

Ashish Nandi. 2000. *Savage Freud and other Essays on Possible and Retrievable Selves*. Delhi: OUP

Unit Three: Symbolic Interactionism and Cultural Anthropology

This section will peruse perspective from social psychology and cultural anthropology to engage with the idea of culture and personality.

Symbolic Interactionism and becoming of self: Irving Goffman (*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*) & G.H Mead (*Mind, Self and Society*)

Cultural Anthropology and question of self: Malinowski (*Sex and Repression in Savage Society*), Ruth Benedict (*Patterns of Culture*), Margret Mead (*Coming of Age in Samoa & National Character*)

Recommended Readings

- E. Goffman. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor
- George Herbert Mead. 1938. *Mind, Self and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ruth Benedict. 2005. *Patterns of Culture*. New York: Mariner Books
- B. Malinowski. 2013. *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*. London: Routledge
- Margaret Mead. 1928. *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation*. New York: Morrow.

Suggested Readings:

- Ashish Nandi. 1994. *Illegitimacy of Nationalism: Rabindra Nath Tagor and the Politics of Self*. Delhi: OUP
- C. Kluckhohn, H.A. Murray & D.M. Schneider (ed.). 1956. *Personality in Nature, Society Culture*. New York: Knopf
- Carl Jung and Carl Kerenyi. 2002. *Science of Mythology: Essays on the Myth of Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis*. London: Routledge
- Calvin S. Hall and Gardner Lindzey: The Relevance of Freudian Psychology and Related Viewpoints for the Social Sciences in *Handbook of Social Psychology*. Vol. 1, Chapter 4
- Erich Fromm. 2001. *Escape from Freedom*. London: Routledge
- Gananath Obeyesekere. 1984. *Medusa's Hair: An Essay On Personal Symbols and Religious Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Margaret Mead. 1957. National Character. In A.E. Kroeber (ed.), *Anthropology Today*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Margaret Mead. 1928. *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation*. New York: Morrow.
- Norbeck, Edward, D. P. Williams, and W. McCord, eds. 1968. *The Study of Personality: An Interdisciplinary Appraisal*. New York: Holt,
- Ralph Linton. 1975. *The Cultural Background of Personality*. New York: Prentice Hall
- Ruth Benedict. 2005. *Patterns of Culture*. New York: Mariner Books

Sigmund Freud. 2001. *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of agreement between the mental lives of savages and neurotics*. London: Routledge

Sigmund Freud. 2010. *Civilization and its Discontents*. New York: Norton and Company

Sudhir Kakar. 1990. *Intimate Relations: Exploring Indian Sexuality*. Delhi: Penguin

Sudhir Kakar. 2012. *Inner World: A Psychoanalytical Study of Childhood and Society in India*. Delhi: OUP