

## Fostering Humaneness: An Indian Perspective

by  
**Sudhir Kakar**

*“Masterclass”- Online Lecture Series  
International Institute of Indic Studies: University of Latvia*

### **Program**

Welcome to Chair Prof. Valdis Pirags, Director (UL International Institute of Indic Studies)

Chair Introduces ULIIS and Welcomes all to Inaugural Lecture of Online Lecture Series

Chair welcomes Chief Guest H.E. Mr. Artis Bertulis, Ambassador of Latvia in India

Inauguration of Lecture Series by H.E. Mr. Artis Bertulis, Ambassador of Latvia in India

Introduction and Welcome to Prof. Sudhir Kakar by Chair

Lecture by Prof. Sudhir Kakar

Chair welcomes and introduces Dr. Rolands Lappuke, Advisor on Technology to President of Latvia

Concluding remarks by Dr. Rolands Lappuke

Chair welcomes and introduces Prof. Indriķis Muižnieks, the Rector of the University of Latvia

Vote of Thanks: Prof. Indriķis Muižnieks

### **Abstract of Lecture**

The fostering of humaneness, of which sympathy and altruistic behaviour are the primary components, is not just a moral exhortation by some of our greatest icons--Buddha, Nanak, Kabir, Gandhi, Tagore come immediately to mind-- but also an empirical fact. Research in neurosciences suggests that humaneness may be wired into our brains, with beneficial effects that extend beyond psychological well-being to improved physical health and longer life span. It is also true that our humaneness has to struggle against the powerful forces of desire, aggression and narcissism that, too, are as deeply rooted in the human psyche as humaneness, and to which they pose an unceasing threat all through the life cycle. The talk

is a detailed exploration of what makes us human before it analyzes the nature and strength of the 'enemy' and then suggests some counter measures that can help in fostering humaneness.

### **The Speaker**

Professor Sudhir Kakar is a pioneering Indian psychoanalyst, novelist and researcher. He is also a major figure in the fields of cultural psychology and the psychology of religion. A leading critical thinker, he is a recipient of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, the country's highest civilian honour.

After his return to India, he started practising as a psychoanalyst in Delhi. During 1976-77, he was Professor and Head, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Delhi. He has held many visiting appointments and fellowships: 40th Anniversary Senior Fellow at the Centre for Study of World Religions at Harvard (2001-02), visiting professor at the universities of Chicago, McGill, Melbourne, Hawaii and Vienna, and INSEAD, France (1994-2013). He has been a Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton, Institute of Advanced Study, Berlin, Centre for Advanced Study of Humanities, University of Cologne and is Honorary Professor, GITAM University, Visakhapatnam.

A leading figure in the fields of cultural psychology and the psychology of religion, as well as a writer and novelist, Professor Kakar's person and work have been profiled in many leading newspapers and magazines in Europe and America. He has been listed as one of the world's 25 major thinkers as well as one of the 21 important thinkers of the 21st century. Professor Kakar's many honours include the Kardiner Award of Columbia University, Boyer Prize of the American Anthropological Association, Germany's Goethe Medal, Rockefeller Residency, McArthur Fellowship, Homi Bhabha Senior Fellowship, Merck-Tagore Award, Nehru and ICSSR National Fellowships and Distinguished Service Award of the Indo-American Psychiatric Association. He is a member of the New York Academy of Sciences, the Board of Sigmund Freud Archives in the Library of Congress, Washington, and the Academie Universelle des Culture, France. In February 2012, he was conferred the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, the country's highest civilian order.

Sudhir Kakar's twenty books of non-fiction and six of fiction, include *The Inner World* (now in its 16th printing since its first publication in 1978), *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, (with J.M. Ross) *Tales of Love, Sex and Danger, Intimate Relations, The Analyst and the Mystic, The Colors of Violence, Culture and Psyche*, (with K. Kakar) *The Indians: Portrait of a People*, (with Wendy Doniger), a new translation of the *Kamasutra* for Oxford world Classics, *Mad and Divine: Spirit and Psyche in the Modern world* and *Young Tagore: The makings of a genius*. His latest books are the novel *The Kipling File* (Penguin, 2018) and, as co-editor, *Imaginations of Death and Afterlife in India and Europe* (Springer, 2018).

Four volumes of Sudhir Kakar's collected essays Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society, Religion, Biography are under preparation for publication by Oxford University Press in its series Great Thinkers of Modern Asia.

## **ZOOM LINK**

Topic: Sudhir Kakar: "Fostering Humaneness- An Indian Perspective".

Time: Nov 16, 2020 03:00 PM Helsinki

Join Zoom Meeting

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**Chair:** Prof. Valdis Pirags, Director (UL International Institute of Indic Studies)

**Vote of Thanks:** Prof. Indriķis Muižnieks, the Rector of the University of Latvia

**Concluding Comments:** Dr. Rolands Lappuke, Advisor on Technology to President of Latvia

**Moderator:** Dr. Anurag Mishra, Founder Livonics Group & Psychoanalysis India

**Patron:** Mr. Sunny Motwani (Indian Latvian Cultural & Economic Forum)