



School of Humanities and Social Sciences Indian Institute of Technology Indore

SHSS Seminar Series- Invites you to the lecture on

“Mind, Modernity, Madness: The Impact of Culture on Human Experience”



Speaker: Professor Liah Greenfeld

University Professor and Professor of Sociology,
Political Science, and Anthropology,
Boston University, USA.

Date: 7th April 2025

Time: 9 am Eastern Time (6:30 pm IST)

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/91683342845?pwd=COiI5KFAFNiYwKLca84VbNtXmn0cdG.1>

Abstract

The lecture will discuss *Mind, Modernity, Madness: The Impact of Culture on Human Experience* – the concluding volume of Liah Greenfeld’s nationalism trilogy. It will place the book within the framework of **human science**, defining humanity as an empirical reality of its own kind and locating it among other realities (the material – matter, studied by physics, and the organic – life, studied by biology) shaping our common existential experience. It will then apply the fundamental concepts of symbols, mind, and culture to the empirical focus of the book: the functional mental illnesses of major depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia – all severe medical diseases of unknown organic origin, causing great suffering and not infrequently leading to the lethal outcome – interpreting them as symbolic, mental, cultural phenomena. This will explain these diseases causally, connecting them and the increase in their rates to the dynamics of modern culture and, specifically, nationalism.

About The Speaker

Professor Liah Greenfeld is a University Professor and Professor of Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology at Boston University, USA. An Israeli-American scholar of Russian-Jewish, she is an interdisciplinary thinker dedicated to the scientific study of human social reality—from the individual mind to the level of civilization. Greenfeld earned her doctorate in Sociology and Anthropology from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Post Doctorate from University of Chicago. Afterwards she served as an Assistant Professor and John L. Loeb Associate Professor of Social Sciences at Harvard University. Throughout her career, Greenfeld has held visiting positions at eminent institutions such as RPI, MIT, the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris), Lingnan University, and the Open University of Hong Kong. She has been honored with several prizes and awards including UAB Ireland Distinguished Visiting Scholar Award, fellowships from the Institute for Advanced Studies (Princeton), the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, the Institute for Advanced Studies in Jerusalem and 2024 Bernard Lewis Prize. Her research has been supported by grants from the Mellon, Olin, and Earhart foundations, the National Council for Soviet & East European Research, and the German Marshall Fund of the United States. Greenfeld's scholarly contributions have earned prestigious accolades, including the American Historical Association's Kagan Prize (2002) for her book *The Spirit of Capitalism* (recognized as the best work in European history). A prolific author, her work has appeared in leading international journals, and her books and edited volumes have been published by Harvard University Press, Oxford University Press, and Wiley Blackwell.

Scan QR for meeting



Venue: POD-1C (SHSS Seminar Hall-301)

For any query reach out at: medicalhumanitieslab@iiti.ac.in