In his talk, Michael Rustin will review some of the issues raised in a new book that he has edited with David Armstrong, *Social Defences against Anxiety: Renewing a Paradigm*. This book by more than 20 authors revisits the theory of social systems as a defence against anxiety, as first set out by Elliott Jaques and Isabel Menzies Lyth in papers they published in 1955 and 1960. Drawing on the Tavistock tradition of socio-technical systems theory, it will be proposed, with examples drawn from the book, that conscious and unconscious anxieties and defences are specific to occupational tasks and the institutions in which these are performed. Rustin will discuss the main arguments of the book, which concern developments in psychoanalytic theory and changes in society that have taken place since the original thesis was outlined.

Michael Rustin is a Professor of Sociology at the University of East London, where he was formerly Head of Department of Sociology and Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences. He is a Visiting Professor at the Tavistock Clinic, where he has contributed to the development of many university-accredited programmes in the field of psychotherapy and community mental health, including a substantial doctoral research programme in Child Psychotherapy. He was a Visiting Fellow in the School of Social Sciences at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, in 1984-5. He has written on the relations between psychoanalysis and various aspects of society, politics, and culture, and on other sociological and political topics. He is author of *For a Pluralist Socialism; The Good Society and the Inner World*; *Reason and Unreason: Psychoanalysis, Science and Politics*; *Narratives of Love and Loss; Mirror to Nature* (with Margaret Rustin); and *The Inner World of Doctor Who* (with Iain MacRury). He is an Associate of the British Psychoanalytical Society.