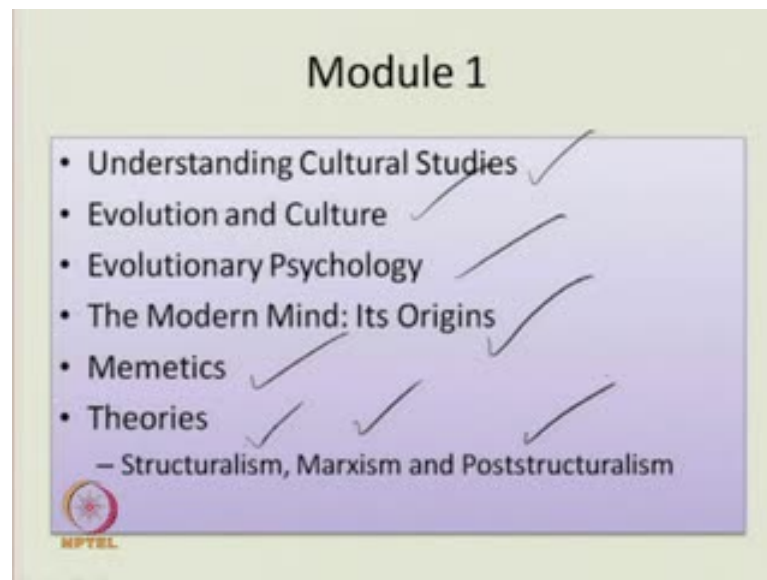


Cultural Studies
Prof. Dr. Liza Das
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati Module No. # 02

Key Concepts
Lecture No. # 01

Subjectivity Hello and welcome to module 2 of this series of video lectures on cultural studies. We completed the first module, which we will do a quick recap.

(Refer Slide Time: 00:39)



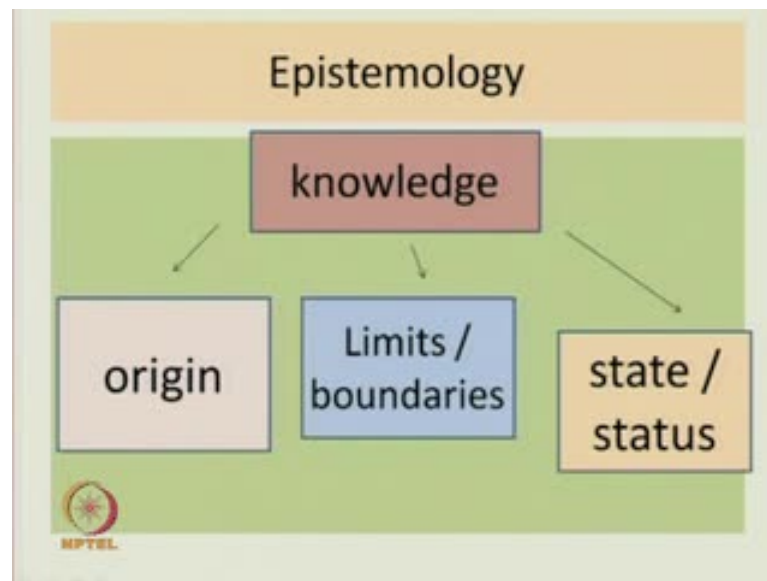
We recall that in module 1, which was essentially an introduction to cultural studies, we devoted two lectures to understanding cultural studies. This entailed a definition of culture, of cultural studies, this entailed looking at the scope of cultural studies, this entailed looking at kindred fields like sociology, anthropology and how these are different from cultural studies.

And we looked at the crux of cultural studies as **a, as a,a**, a political practice, in the sense that, one does cultural studies with a view to forming policies that would bring about change. So, **we did**, we did two lectures on understanding cultural studies and then we, following Chris Barker, we argued that we cannot, that it is not profitable or it is not wise **to**, to leave out the contributions from science

And we looked at evolution and culture, we looked at evolutionary psychology and we recall the five principles of evolutionary psychology, we looked at the origins of the modern mind and we looked at an analogy between cultural transmission and genetic transmission using MEMs and comparing or rather, drawing analogy from genes in the theory of memetics.

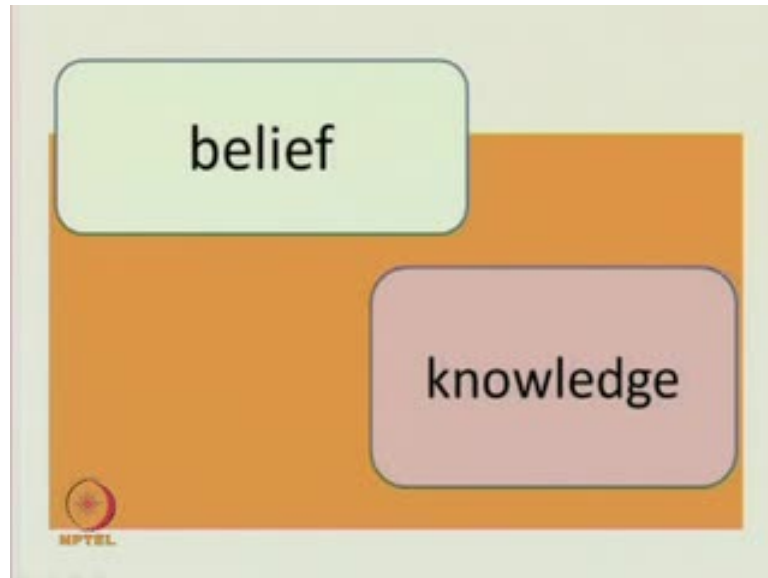
Then, we went on to look at three **theoretical schools of**, theoretical schools of cultural studies with the caveat, that there are other schools, which will be dealing with, we shall be dealing with when we look at other modules, because, though for instance when you speak of gender, that is when feminism would come in as a theoretical school. So, just to give you an example of how people theorize regarding culture, we took up these three: structuralism, marxism and poststructuralism.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:10)



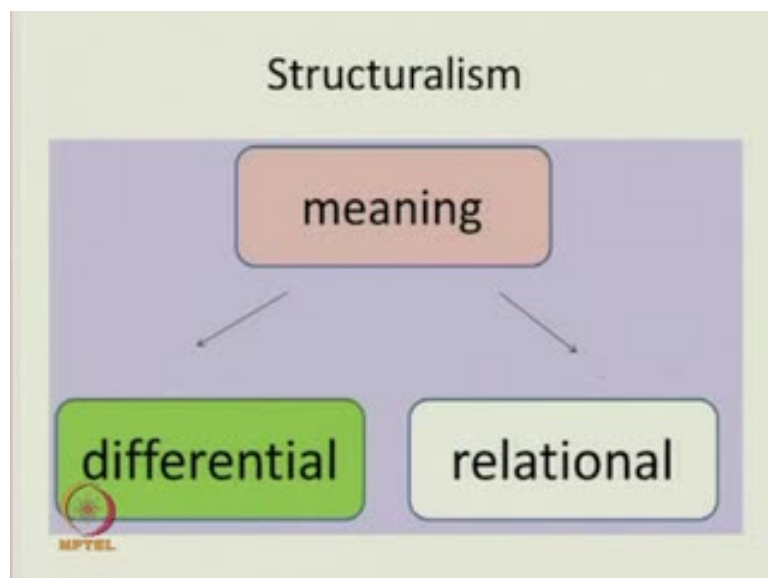
So, we devoted 10 lectures in module 1 and quickly to look at what we did in the last lecture, that is on poststructuralism. We looked at this branch of philosophy called epistemology and we said that epistemology is a theory of knowledge that looks into the origin on sources, the limits or the boundaries and the state of status of knowledge, and we saw how this, you know, going back to epistemology is a key strategy in poststructuralism.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:44)

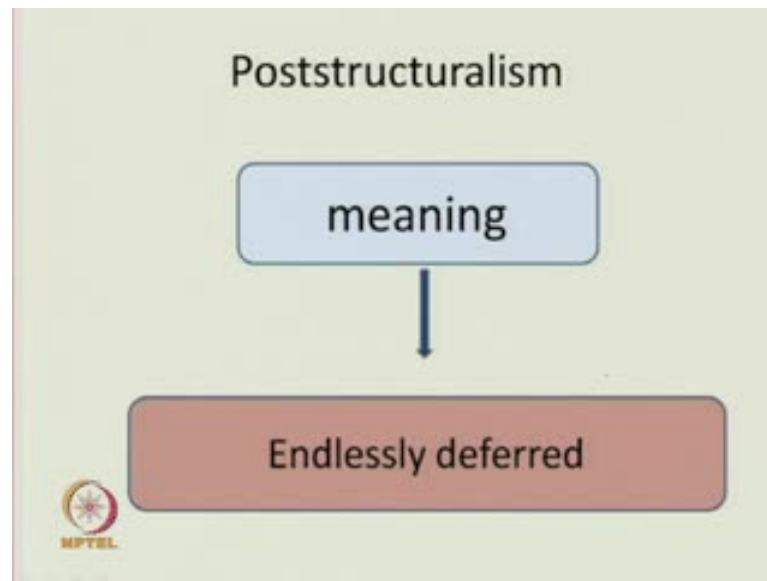


We also looked at belief and knowledge and we said that in cultural studies or you know, not in cultural studies only in epistemology, **sorry**, belief is seen, a knowledge is seen, believe that has been justified. So, belief by itself, you know, very generally speaking does not qualify to be knowledge, unless it is justified.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:08)



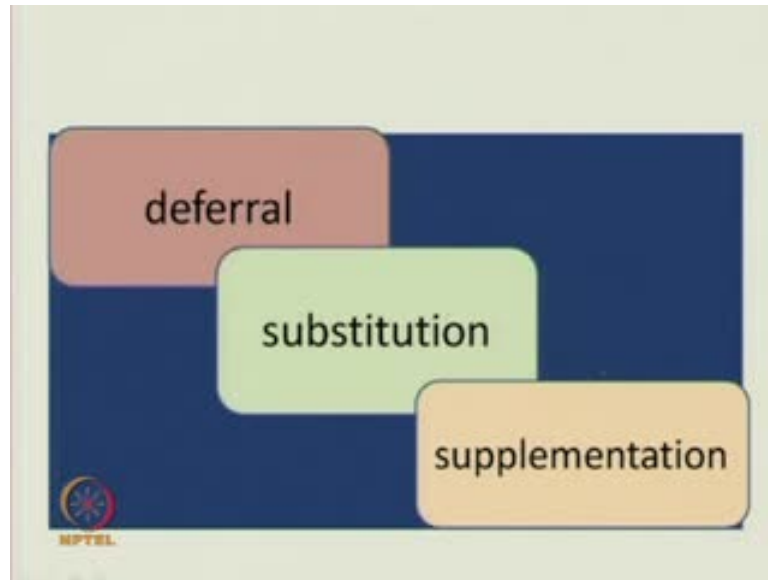
(Refer Slide Time: 04:22)



Then, we saw that unlike structuralism which looks at meaning as differential and relational, and **yet**, yet says that there can be stable meaning. What happens in poststructuralism is that '**meaning**' owing to the very argument of structuralism that meaning is in a differential and relational poststructuralist hold, that meaning **is** on account of this, meaning is endlessly deferred; so, there is what we call the impossibility of arriving at meaning in a final sort of a way.

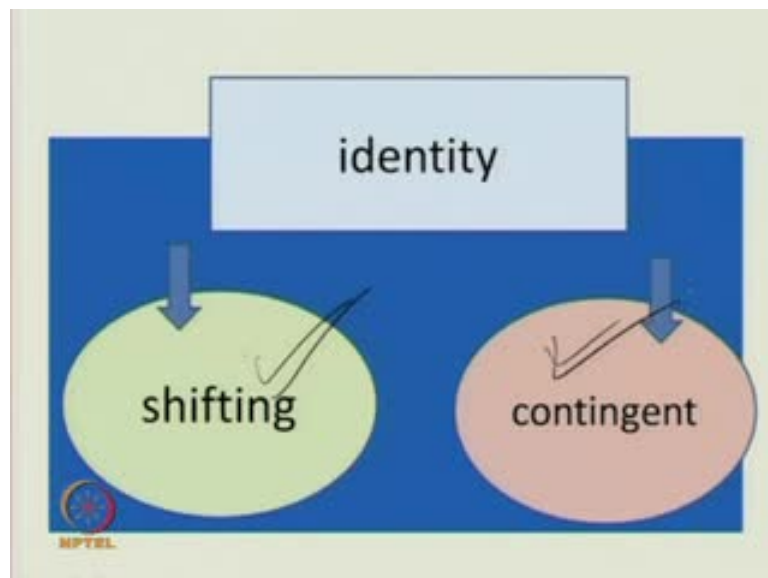
So, meaning, owing to the fact that it is by reference to relations in a system, a meaning will always carry traces of other words, in the whole differential system.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:00)



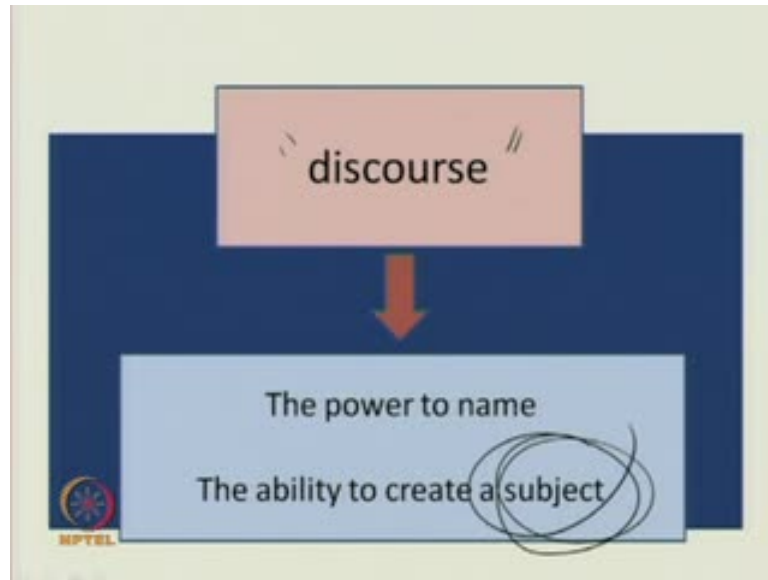
So, we looked at certain terms from Jacques Derrida, the French philosopher and these terms are deferral, substitution and supplementation.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:09)



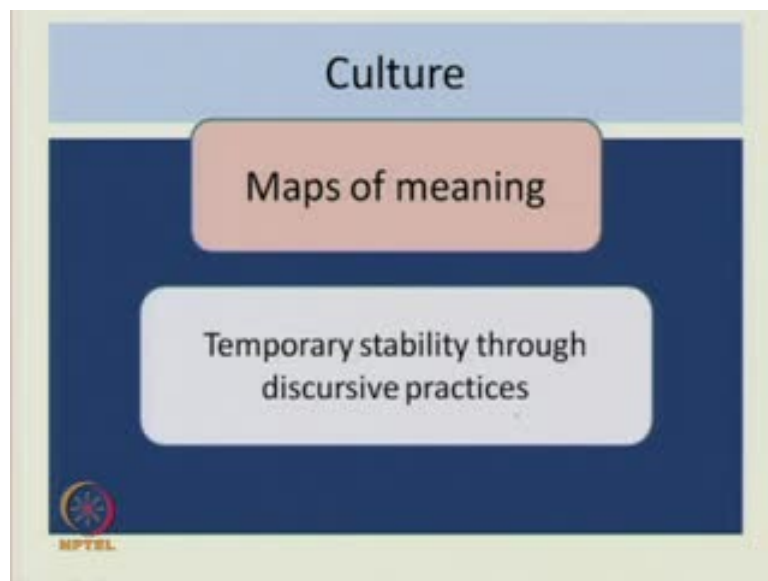
When transposed to cultural studies, we could say following poststructuralism, that identity is continually, you know, recreated, in the sense that identity is not as stable as you would have it in structuralism, but identity is always a shifting and it is contingent. So, there is a provisionality of identity looked at from the poststructuralist point of view **instructs** in cultural studies.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:39)

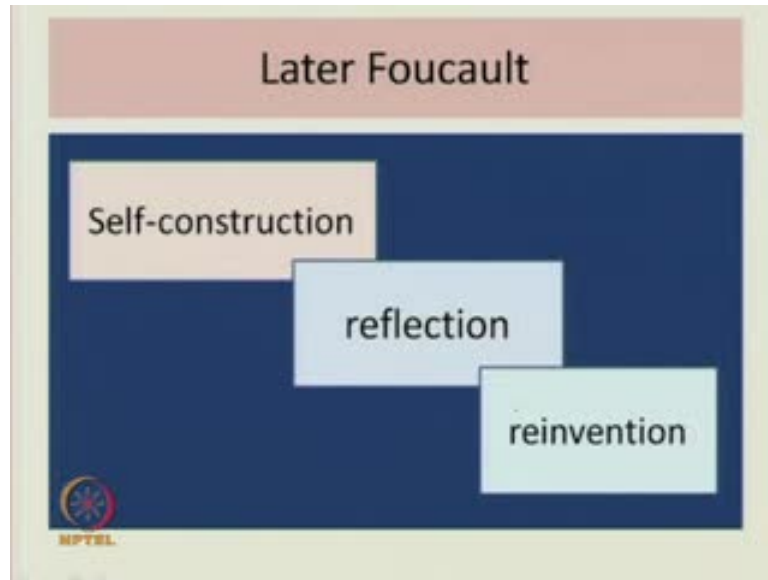


Then we looked at Foucault and the important term discourse. We found that discourse **gives, you know**, has the power to name, discourse can create what we call a subject and today's lecture will be devoted solely to subject, subjectivity **or**, and subject position. So, we talk about subjectivity in as if, you know, it is a topic of the first lecture in module two; module two as you know is devoted to key concepts.

(Refer Slide Time: 06:15)

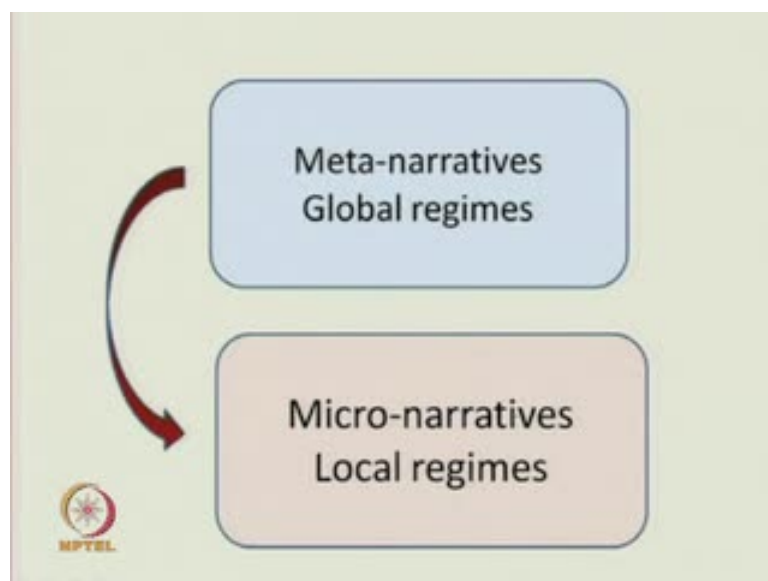


(Refer Slide Time: 06:30)



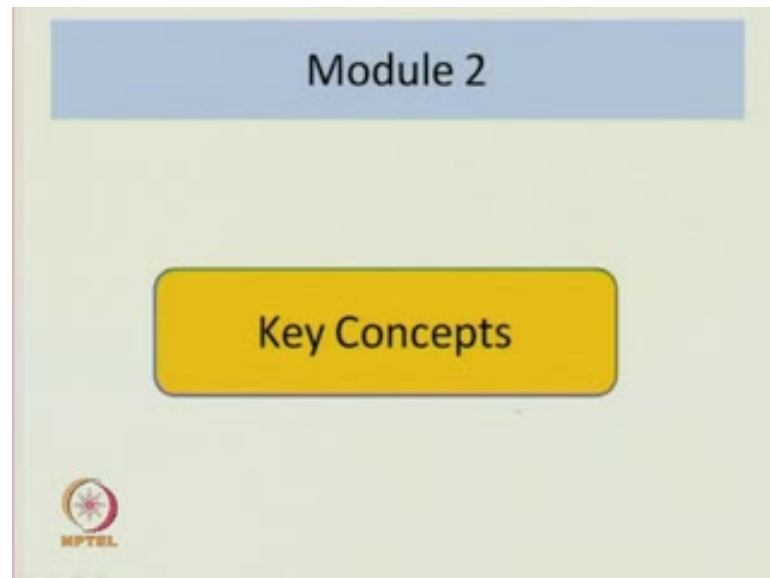
Well, culture has maps of meaning, more seen on the poststructuralism as achieving just a temporary stability through discursive practices, something that is not there once and for all, and we looked at later, Foucault who gives us, you know, a way around these problems. So, on that we have caught, we are slaves of these discourses and he says in his later work, the self-construction, reflection and reinvention are the very tools with which we can recreate ourselves.

(Refer Slide Time: 06:49)



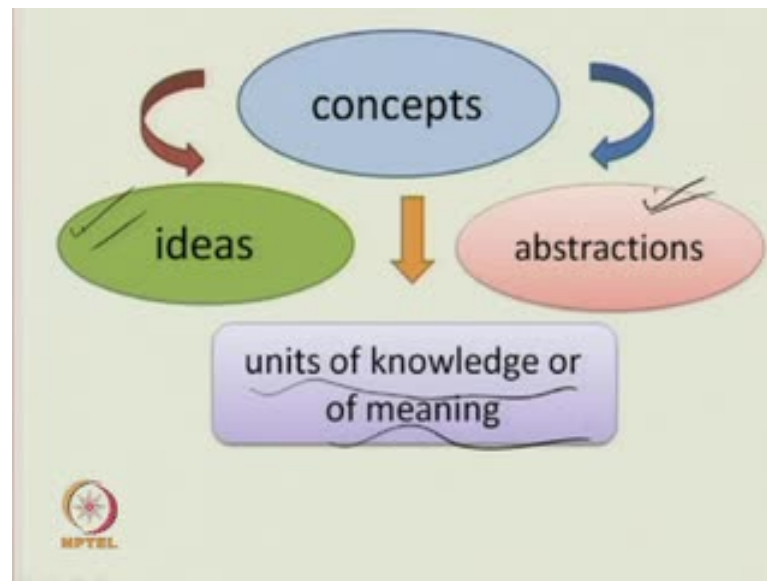
And then, finally we saw that meta-narratives and the global regimes give place to micro-narratives and local regimes.

(Refer Slide Time: 06:57)



Well, now we come to module 2 and as I have said, we are going to look at certain key concepts that go into, is important for us, you know, to know these concepts, is important for us to kind of lay, lay them there, it is important for us to talk about key concepts and to see how various practitioners, various theorists, various scholars have looked at these key concepts. So, we find heterogeneity of a meaning and definitions and it is important for us to look into them.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:30)

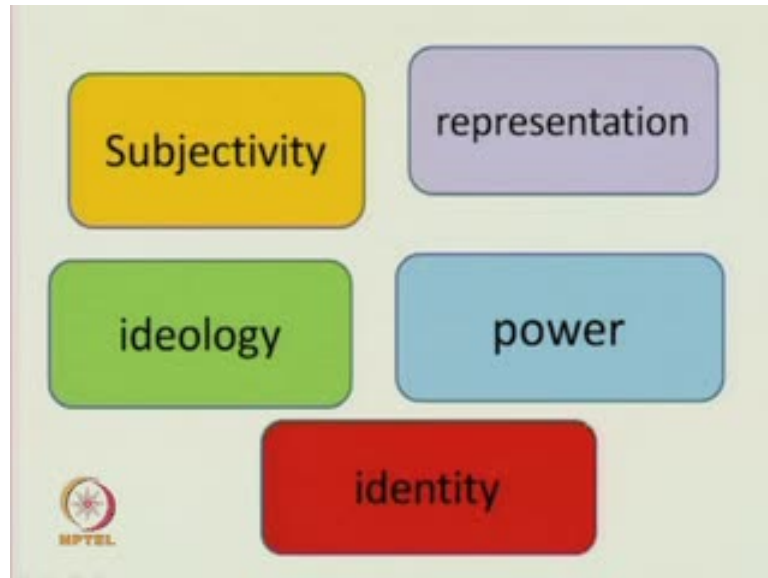


Now, to begin with, what is a concept or what are concepts? Where we could say that **concepts are ideas**, concepts are ideas and there is always a certain, you know, abstract quality about concepts.

If a concept has to be applicable in different situations, if there are certain kinds, it cannot be concrete because a **concept has to lend itself**, concept has to lend itself to various situation. So, a certain, as I said, a degree of abstractness is something that a concept will always have.

So, concepts, I have seen, as ideas and abstractions and finally they have seen as **units of knowledge**, units of knowledge or of meaning. So, units are in the sense that concepts become the **building blocks**, building blocks of any knowledge system. In order to have knowledge, in order to be able to say something intelligible and further applicable to other things and situations, we would need concepts as the basic units of building blocks.

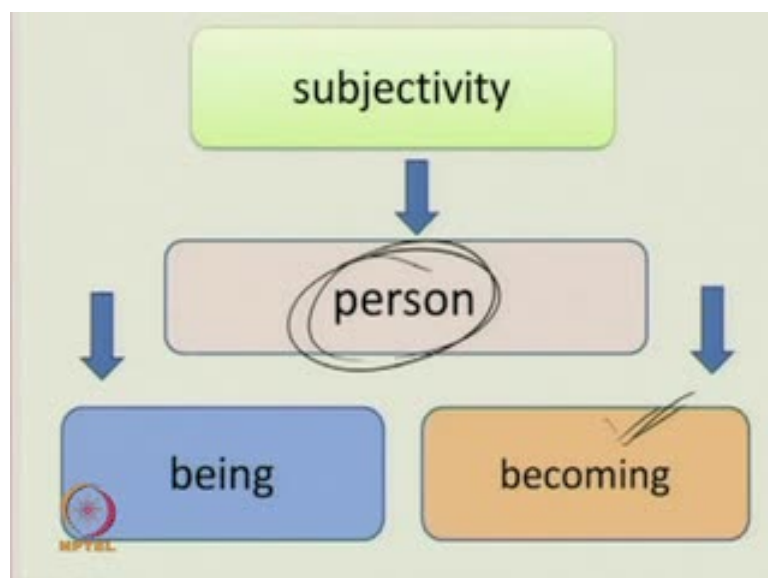
(Refer Slide Time: 08:49)



Therefore, let us look at, you know, a few of the concepts that we shall be dealing with in, one of course subjectivity, the other is representation, we also look at ideology, we look at power, we looked at power in poststructuralism and in the first 2 lectures in the last module, but we shall come back to it in a more detailed sort of way and we look at identity.

There may be a couple of other, you know, **guys be the (())**, couple of **other**, other concepts that I might bring in this module. **Fine**.

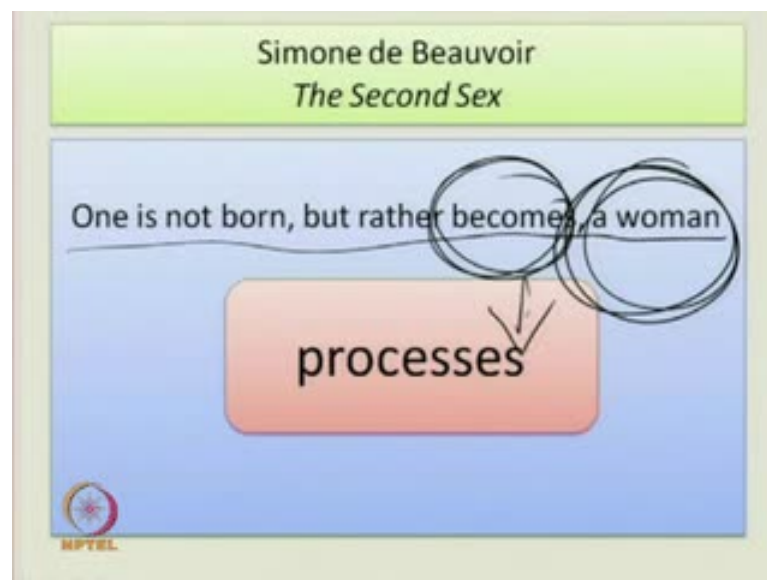
(Refer Slide Time: 09:25)



So, **we know**, we know that our topic, the topic for today's lecture is subjectivity. What is subjectivity? Subjectivity is basically, the process or define it as a process of being and becoming, for any person. Being in the sense, you are a person, but the fact that you are a person is not just a given for, or you know, once and for all.

Even if you look at yourself as a person who arrives today, you know that person has, there are certain processing. So, here this word becomes important - becoming. There are certain processes that have gone into making you as a person. So, for the time being, we define this, you know, as a beginning move we define subjectivity as the process of being and becoming a person. We will look at this closely in the next few slides.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:35)



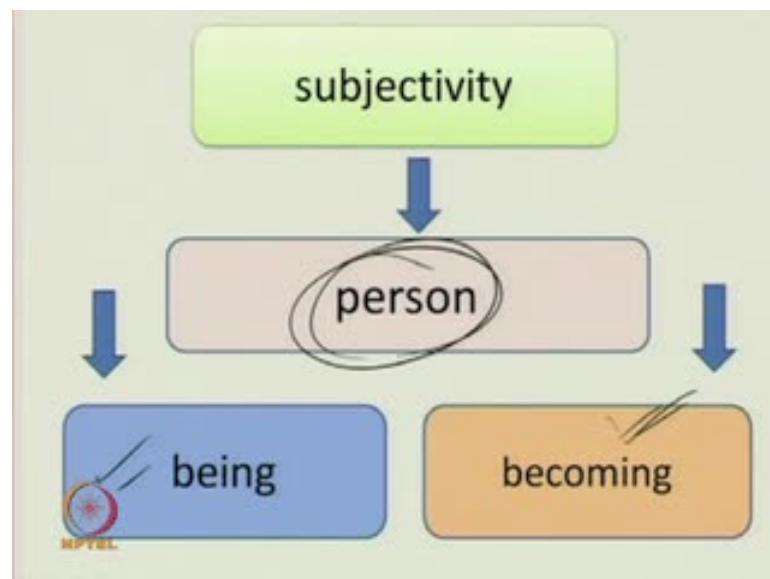
Now, let us first take, you know, a quotation which **you** are really so phenomenon in the sense, that, you know, is such a, so phenomenal in when it first came up, it was so striking. This is from the French philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir and her book - The Second Sex. The Second Sex, obviously, talks about woman, and in that book, this is one of the most celebrated sentences in that book.

She says, one is not born, but rather becomes a woman. Look at this, this in a way sums up really what subjectivity is; one is not born, but rather becomes a woman. You may think that really when a girl child is born, she is a woman, so how does she become a woman? In this whole process of becoming, see this is a process; in this whole process of

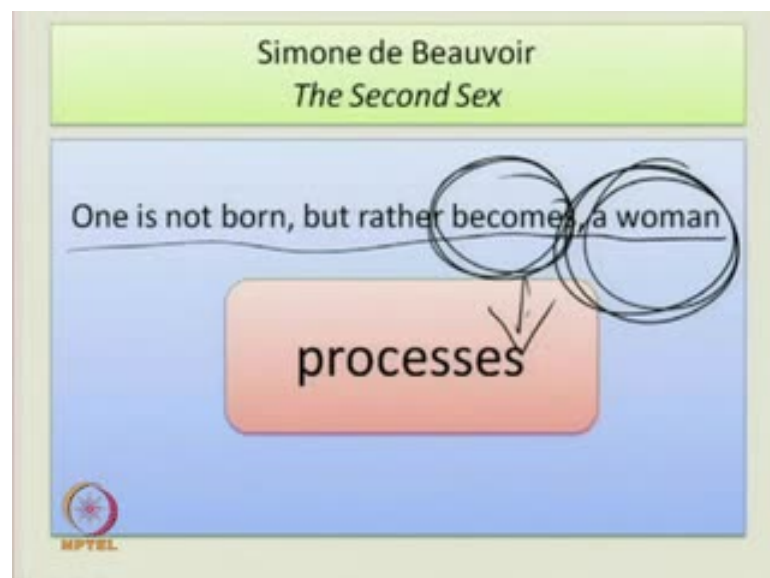
becoming and in her study of this process of becoming, Simone de Beauvoir is telling us that there are outside of a woman.

Now, this is in the case of feminism, but it applies everywhere outside a woman. There are certain social and cultural processes that make a woman; so, biologically one may be born with, you know, as a girl child, but the processes.... So, woman is not simply a sexual identity, it is a gender identity.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:12)

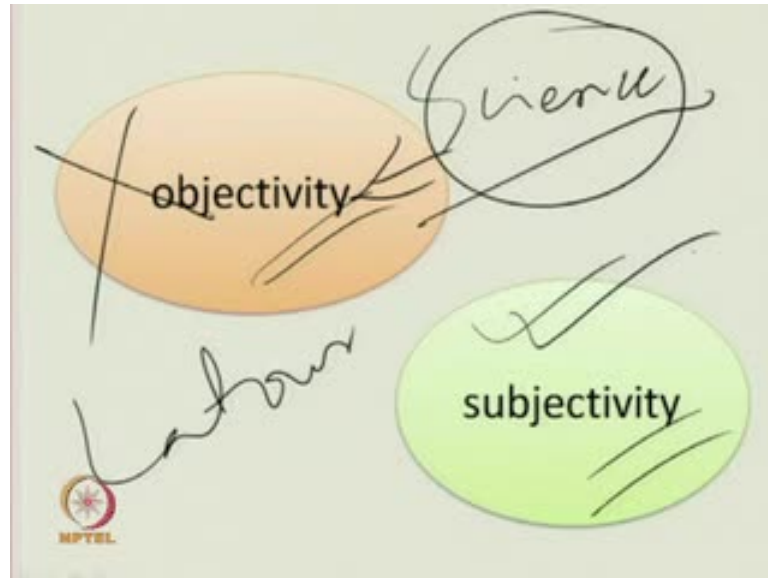


(Refer Slide Time: 12:19)



So, as a woman one has a certain subjectivity. So, this subjectivity is not simply as we saw earlier; look at, you know, not just a question of being, but this is also a question of becoming. Hence, this one is not born, but rather, becomes a woman.

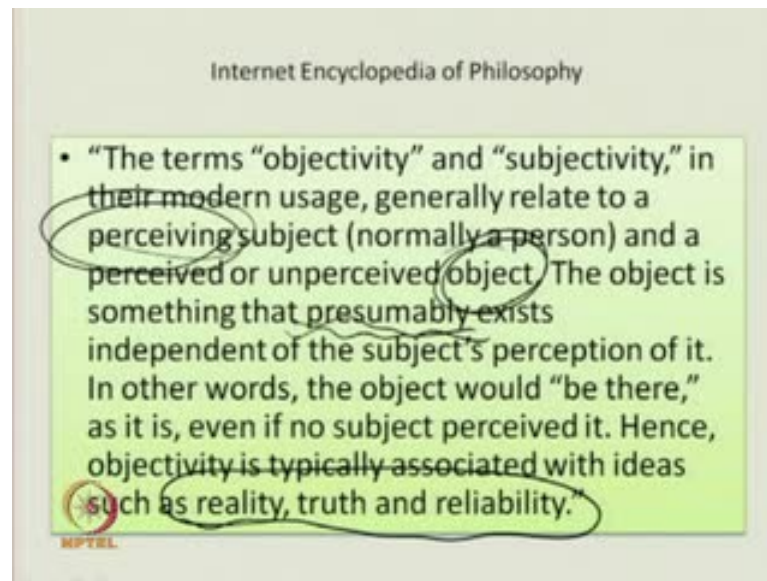
(Refer Slide Time: 12:23)



These are two terms, well, we can also understand subjectivity vis a vis or well, in opposition to objectivity. You will, **you will, will** understand that objectivity is usually given a lot of importance. Objectivity is seen to be a virtue and subjectivity is not seen to be a virtue.

Science for instance, science till recently was seen as something objective in the sense, that if you are a scientist you do not bring your inner world, your inner feelings, your inner experiences into the study of science, but no. Today, **are** specially after the uncertainty principle, especially after in a work done by so many philosophers like Bruno, Latour for instance, you cannot say that you are completely objective as a scientist. So, subjectivity becomes today very important, even when I said, even in the study of science and you know, what goes on in the laboratory. So, the observer in observing the phenomenon brings, you know, a certain picture into it.

(Refer Slide Time: 14:04)



So, subjectivity, then as I said, even in science and technology is a concept, key concept. It has come into understanding and revising or understanding of the scientific practices. Well, I will quickly, would like to look at this further, look at this and this is from the encyclopedia of philosophy.

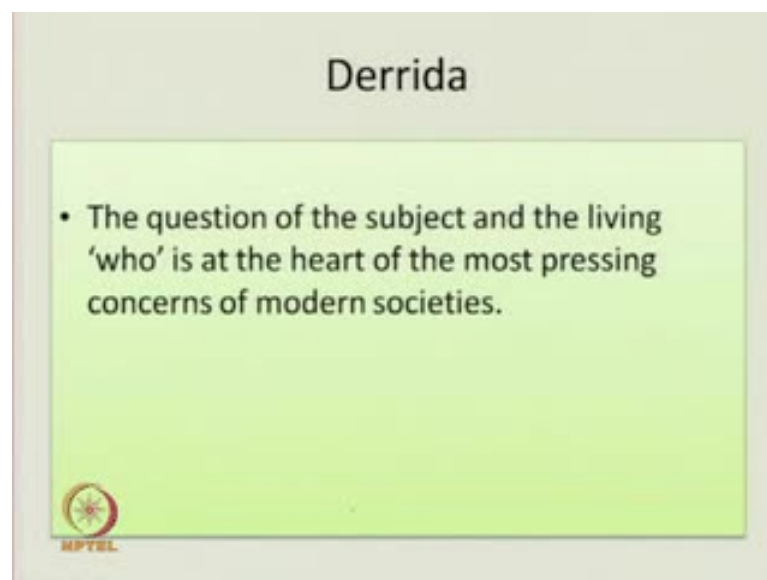
The terms, now let us read this, the terms objectivity and subjectivity, in their modern usage, generally relate to a perceiving subject, that is, a person and the perceived or unperceived object. Let us look at a piece. Objectivity and subjectivity is about perception and who perceives a subject? That is, normally you are talking about a person, a human being here; there is a subject that perceives and there is an object that you perceive. So, they, it is a division that you create, I am watching or looking at or perceiving something else. It seems as if, I am completely removed from that object.

So, the object is something that, see, look at this term here, presumably the object, presumably will only presume that it exists independent of the subject’s perception of it. In other words, the object would be there as it is, even if no subject perceived it. So, in philosophy points, we have this whole debate about, is there a world out there? Is there a reality out there, outside of our perception? There are **so many**, so many views on this, so many opinions on this, so many theoretical; there were the arguments about this.

Hence objectivity is typically associated with idea such as reality, truth and reliability. And we saw in our last lecture that this is a problematic issue, in the sense that reality, truth and reliability, as something been out there, outside of us, **is**, is a very contentious issue. Poststructuralism, remember we will say that it is, you know, these are a linguistic creations.

We perceive the world as a particular subject through our discourses and discourses are what? Discourses are, in the ultimate sense these are linguistic exercises. So, the point in bringing here, this here, it is genuinely assumed that there is an object and there is a subject. There is objectivity about the object which is there even if you are not looking at it.

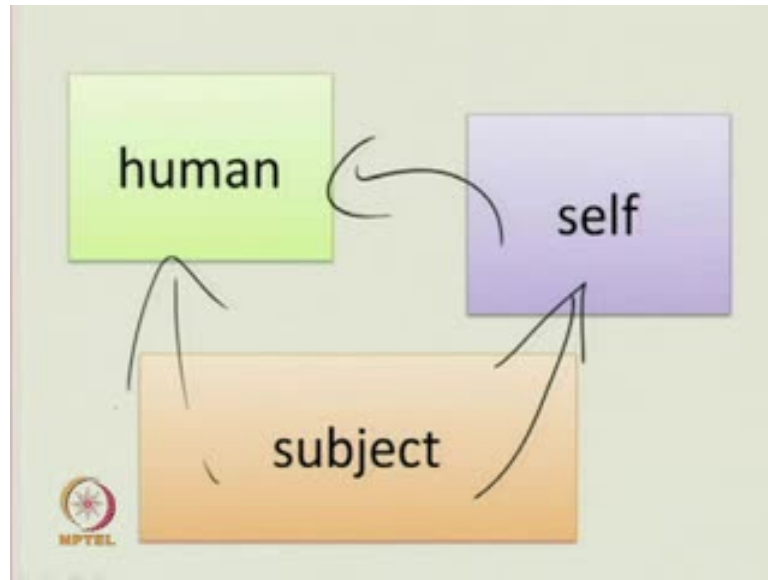
(Refer Slide Time: 16:35)



Derrida, then let us look at what Derrida say. Derrida says and he acknowledges the importance of subjectivity and the subject. Derrida says, the question of the subject and the living, who is at the heart of the most pressing concerns of modern societies. So, the subject and the who, to who is watching, who is reading, who is perceiving, this today is at the heart of one, some of the most pressing concerns of modern societies.

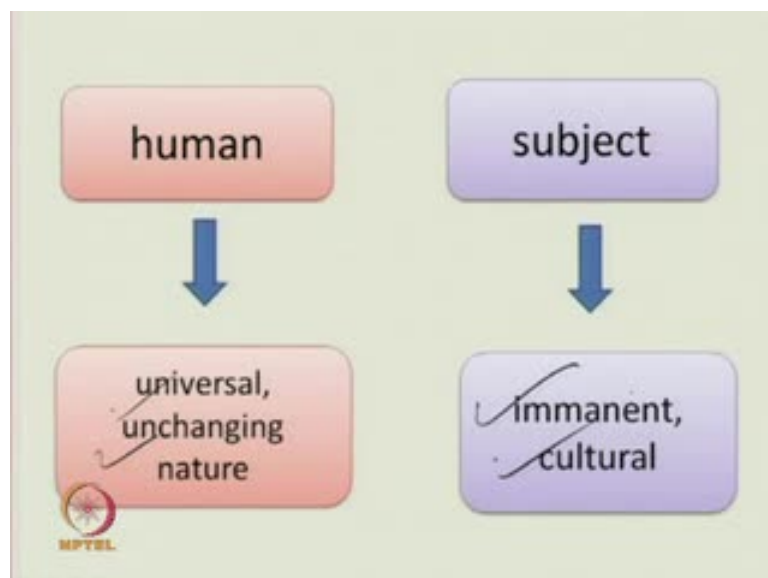
So, we know that this is rendered a problematic issue, something which is the key concept, but **on, on**, on this concept so many people have thrown light on it and all continuing to do so.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:24)



So **when we**, now, there are three terms that I wanted to look at. Now, when we look, when we say subject, when we say moment is a subject, there are kindred terms. Some people say subject, a subject is a self, some people say a subject is a human being or human or human nature.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:53)

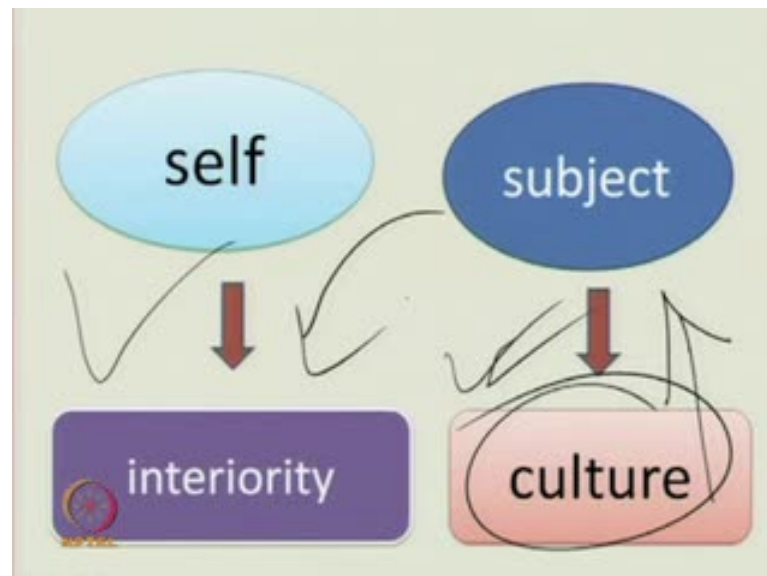


So, these are terms that are related – human, self and subject. Now, it is important for **to** us to, **to** look at the thing, you know, differences among these terms. For instance, when you say human and when you say subject, what is happening? The difference here is,

when we say human, we refer to universal; something unchanging nature. For instance, human nature, the moment you say human nature, we are in, you know, effect. We are saying that there is something called human nature, which is applicable to all human beings, something that is unchanging, something that is universal, you know. This is a kind of thing that you know, deep structures from evolutionary studies would tell you. For instance the eight emotions that we have and the strongest of them fear for instance, is part of human nature. There is no doubt that this sort of thing needs to be acknowledged of course. When we look at deep down, you look at the deep structures, definitely, there is something called human nature.

But a subject is not, what not understood as human nature, there is a difference. So, if human is universal, unchanging subject is imminent and cultural; so, it is important for us in the beginning to differentiate when you begin to talk about subjectivity. We are now going to talk about humanness or human nature in the universal.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:24)



The next difference, again as I said, is between self and subject. Many people would think that subjectivity and selfhood are interchangeable adhesive; to say that they are not exactly inter, you know, the replaceable with, by each other.

When we talk about self, it is held by many that self involves a certain interiority. **It is,** it is **about, about,** about the interior, your interior, not exactly in the sense of intimate

feelings, experiences, it is a inner world; so to speak, is the inner world. But when we say subject, we have to understand that yes, it is about our inner world, but the onus of the focus is on culture to be specific, it would be like this. The onus is on how does culture shape acts as subjects, which in turn gives us an interior world. So, there are these very certain differences between human and subject, self and subject. So, we are not in the beginning, these are different concepts; you see, self is a concept, human, human nature is a concept and subjectivity is a concept. It is important for us to train ourselves to make these certain divisions or distinctions among various concepts.

(Refer Slide Time: 20:55)

The slide is titled "Self vs Subject" in a large, bold, black font at the top center. Below the title, there is a green rectangular box containing text. The text reads: "While **subjectivity** is a social and cultural accomplishment, our **individuality** can be understood in terms of the specific ways in which the **resources of the self** are arranged. That is, while we are all subject to the 'impress of history', the **particular form that we take and the specific arrangements of discursive elements are unique to each individual**, for we have all had singular patterns of biochemistry, family relations, friends, work and access to discursive resources." The words "subjectivity", "individuality", "resources of the self", and "particular form that we take and the specific arrangements of discursive elements are unique to each individual" are highlighted in red. There is a handwritten circle around the phrase "singular patterns" and a wavy line below the text. In the bottom left corner of the slide, there is a small red circular logo with a white star and the text "NPTEL" below it. In the bottom right corner, the name "Barker" is written in a black font.

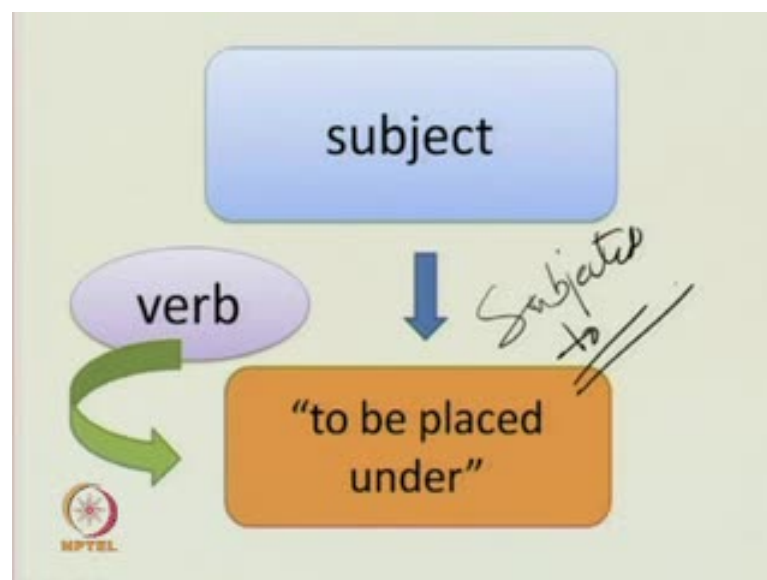
Well, I am again quoting from Chris Barker and this is again to do with self versus subject, while subjectivity, you look at this, while subjectivity says, is the social and cultural accomplishment, our individuality, now this is another, the fourth concept we come across. So, for other concepts - one is subject, one is human, of human nature, one is self and finally a fourth one, individuality. So, subjectivity is a social and cultural accomplishment curve and individuality is understood in terms of the specific ways, in which the resources of the self are arranged.

Each of us is culturally constructed; we have subject, but we arrange them in certain ways and that is why, even though the cultural situations are the same, none of us is the same. All of our inner worlds or inner feelings, experiences, etcetera are the result of arrangements.

How the resources of the self are arranged? and it is so beautifully put here by Barker - that is, while, please look at the slide, that is, while we are all subject to the impress of history, the particular form that we take and the specific arrangements of discursive elements are unique to each individual, for we have all had singular pattern, singular in the sense they are of unique, singular patterns of biochemistry, family relations, friends work and access to discursive resources.

So, remember, subjectivity then is not as Foucault have said, remember later Foucault. Subjectivity is not something that is impressed on to you once and for all or it is not a one-way traffic. We also arrange our resources according to, look at this final term here, according to the discursive resources that you have with you.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:56)

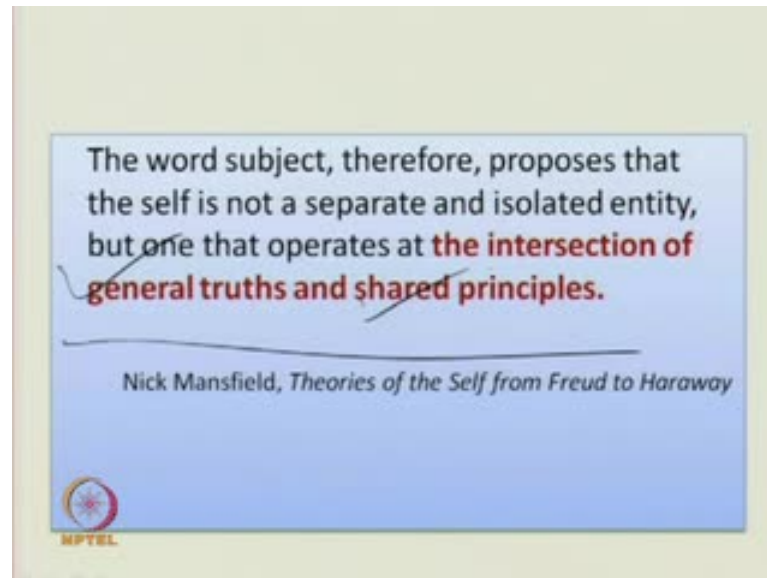


Another shade of meaning of subject, if you look at subject not as a noun, you look at subject as a verb, in the sense of, it would mean to be subjected to, mean to be subjected to, in the sense of the way you see, you talk about in feudalism. You talk about say, Bessel's as and the, and the kings in the situation of monarchy, we are the subjects and there is a king who is ruling us; the king rules over his subject, in that sense, to be placed under.

As a work, subjectivity entails to be placed under something; so, to be placed under in ourselves, some cultural studies. Now, all shall we looked at discourse, you have looked

at, you have looked at, you know, you have looked at meaning, so it will be easy for you to understand this. So, we are placed under certain regimes of discourse, do you understand? So, we are subjected to discourse.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:02)

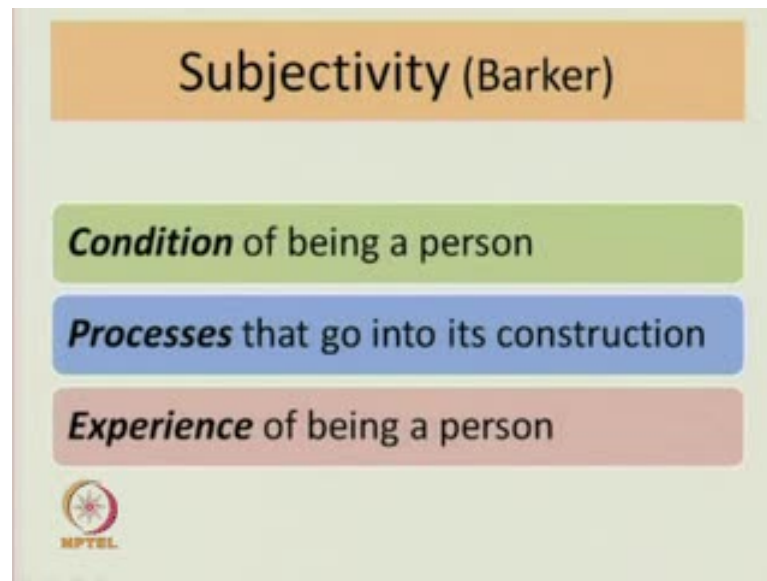


Another quotation here from Nick Mansfield, you can look up this very interesting book - *Theories of the Self from Freud to Haraway*, is talking about how different theorists, psychologists and where people from various fields, have looked at the idea **of, of, of**, of self.

Mansfield says, the word subject, therefore, proposes that the self is not a separate and isolated entity, but one that operates at the intersection, look at the words that I have given in bold and in red, operates at the intersection of general truths and shared principles; look at the two words - general truths and shared principles.

It means simply that these come from our social arrangements and from our culture. So subject is not an isolated entity, you may have an inner world, but you have to understand where that inner world is coming from, is not solipsistic, is not an isolated, separate being, separate from social processes. So, subject is **save** that comes about through the operation of general truths and shared principles from our socio-cultural arrangements.

(Refer Slide Time: 25:18)



Now, Barker therefore, as I said we are going to look at various ways of looking at subject from different persons, from different scholars; so, in this case Barker here. Barker looks at subjectivity are in three dimensions - one is subjectivity is a condition of being a person, subjectivity refers to the processes that go into the construction of the person and Barker also includes the self-part of it, he says, subjectivity is not just the condition or the state of being of a person, subjectivity is not just the processes. Subjectivity is also the very experience of being a person that inner world that we are talking about, but the inner world not as isolated, the inner world **in**, in connection to culture.

So, subjectivity is the condition of being a person, it is the processes that go in to the making of the person, the construction of the person and it is the very experience of being a particular person.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:24)

Foucault

- There are no universal subjectivities
- Subjectivity is an effect of discourse
- The subject is a discursive formation
- Discourse also 'subjects' people to its rules
- Gives us 'subject-positions' or perspectives through which we make sense of the world
- Subjectivity is historically and culturally conditioned

So, again we bring in Foucault here and let us look at these six points from Foucault. a, Foucault says there are no universal subjectivities, there cannot be a subjectivity that is common to all of us **in the in, in,** in all senses of the term, there can be many universal subjectivities. All our subjectivities differ and remember why? Because we also contribute in the arrangement of the resources of the self, as we saw, while ago.

Second, subjectivity is an effect of discourse. Remember, we saw in our last lecture, we looked at the term discourse and we said that discourses are regulated ways of speaking about something and we, if you recall, we took the example of man. **When we say,** when we say man, there are various discourses that try to define man, so to speak, to pull man into their own discursive field and to pin man **down,** down with their own terminologies.

For instance, religion is one discourse that would define man in a way very different from some other **resource, sorry, some other, other** discourse, for instance, psychology or psychiatry, economics for instance, politics for instance. So, all of these, so to speak how is take really in defining and delineating the boundaries of what any entity is.

So, subjectivity therefore is an effect of discourse. So, if you have subjectivity as a religious person, your subjectivity that is your experience and your constructedness as a religious person, is an effect of the discourse of religion. Do you follow?

Now, that has made you, in another sense, it has subjected you to the discourse of religion. Now, if you are an atheist so person who does not believe in God, in the existence of God, your position, your condition and your, using your experiences as an atheist are determined by the discourse of atheism, so to speak, in that sense subjected in the narrow sense. In this case, this is the one-way traffic, you are to be completely subjected, but we also know that there is another aspect to it.

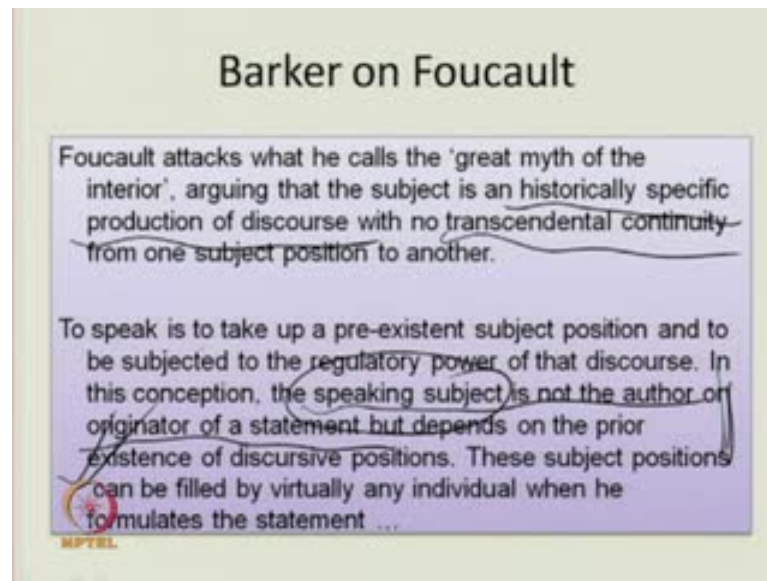
Is that the discursive practices or the discourses that we have, that you know of, **did of course** do go into the making of your subjectivity, but remember we also arrange **in**, in the manner of later Foucault; we also arrange our subjectivities according to the resources that we have and I would, that is why, I would think, that is good to inhabit as many discourses as you can, so that you do not fall prey to any one discourse.

Coming back to the slide, the subject therefore, may be defined as discursive formation subject, **one**; subjectivity is an effect of discourse and it is a formation by discourse, and hence, it is a discursive formation.

So, this next point, we already taken up; discourse also subjects people to its rules, so they remember what is a discourse? Discourse is a rule bound linguistic activity, in the sense, that there are, it is a regulated, we are speaking, remember?

So, there are certain rules, you cannot go outside of those rules. So, if you are subject to its rules, then the subjectivity of people is a result of operating within those rules. Next, it gives us subject positions, so you look at this while later. Discourse subjects us, creates us, constructs us, gives us certain experiences and it gives us subject positions or perspectives through which we make sense of this world. Therefore, subjectivity is historically and culturally constructed.

(Refer Slide Time: 30:49)



Barker then comments, we have just seen what Foucault says about discourse and subjectivity. And let us look at, to read a Barker's comments on Foucault. Barker says, Foucault attacks what he calls the great myth of the interior. Now, the interior, remember the self, the interiority. Foucault says that it is a great myth; it is a myth to think that you have an interior that is isolated, that is separate from any other thing, that is sort of sacrosanct to yourself on which nobody has access, **or on which, to**, for the formation of which nobody **has**, has contributed.

So, Foucault attacks what he calls the great myth of the interior, arguing that the subject is a historically specific production of discourse; not just you are produced by a certain discourse, that discourse also has the imprint of history important to us. At which point in the historic, you know, the moment in history has, and **or the**, what is the conditions of that discourse in that moment of history? For instance, religion. Religion is a discourse which has changed from time to time; religion, there are people who have brought in reforms in religion, well, the main precepts may be the same or rather, they may believe in a God, in a supernatural being with the same. What we know for instance, the Bhakti movement in Hinduism, the Bhakti movement brought in another aspect, the Arya Samaj movement for instance, brought in another way of looking.

So, at any historical movement then the discourses historically specified. So, let us read it again, Foucault attacks what he calls the great myth of the interior, arguing that the

subject is a historically specific production of discourse with no transcendental continuity. There is no transcendental in the sense of, something that is sort of, in all time, something that is extra to historical and temporal and spatial considerations. **There is,** there is no transcendental continuity from one subject position to another.

Then to speak Barker here again, to speak is to take up a pre-existent subject position and to be subjected to the regulatory power of that discourse; this is Barker commenting on Foucault, as we know. In this conception, the speaking subject is not be authored and this is very important. When you speak you think that you are the author, when you write, you, when somebody writes, you recognize him or her as an author.

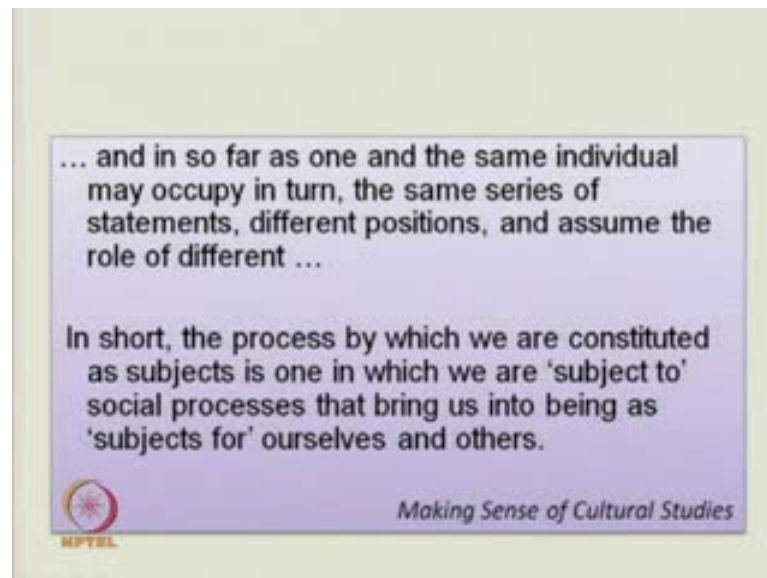
Foucault says, not so; the speaking subject is not the author or originator of a statement. Look at, this is a very important point, the speaking subject - the one who speaks, is actually not the author of his thoughts, not the author of his sentence, or nor it is the originator of the statement. You say a statement **using the where** it is my statement, I have authored it, I have said something, that Foucault would say no, and say, I as a subject feel something and I am saying something. He says no, you are not even, not only I am not the author of what you are saying, you are also not the originator of anything that you say, why? Because it depends on the prior existence of discursive positions.

Discourse has already given you the words, the terms, the sentences, the feelings, name it; so, whatever statement you are seeing, however new it may sound to you, is dependent, as he says, on the prior existence of discourse. You cannot speak outside of discourse even if you bring two discourses together; you are still speaking from the pre-existing structures of discourse.

Now, these subject positions can be filled by virtually any individual, when he formulates the statement. So, where is the concept of agency here **in a,** in a strict sort of way, if you look at the point been made here. Any person can say what you are saying, any person, you know, **that these** subject positions, this position **rocking** from a certain position, this position need not be you. It could be filled by any person that virtually **any,** **any,** any individual when he formulates the statement.

So, **the famous, you know**, the famous say, argument that discourse is everything in this you know, way; it does make a lot of sense, so you speak, from pre-existing discourses and so you are not very, the author of what you are saying.

(Refer Slide Time: 35:49)



And in, now, let us look at this, and in so far, as one and the same individual may occupy in turn the same series of statements, different positions, and assume the role of different subjectivities.

You, there is also you know, if you are, if you inhabit different discourses, you can speak from this different discourses; in that case, you will have different subject positions. According to postmodernism, this could be a very liberatory condition that you can hob from one discourse to another and not be stuck here. Remember, it is because you are seen as somebody who is subjected to a discourse. So, there are times then, you should know, according to this theory, you should be able to occupy in order to release yourself from discourses.

In short, as Barker says, in short, the process by which we are constituted as subjects. In this one, in which we are subject to social processes that bring us into being as subjects for ourselves and **others**, **others are, are**, are watching us as we make certain statements from certain discourses. That is the way they are judging us and you are doing the same for the other.

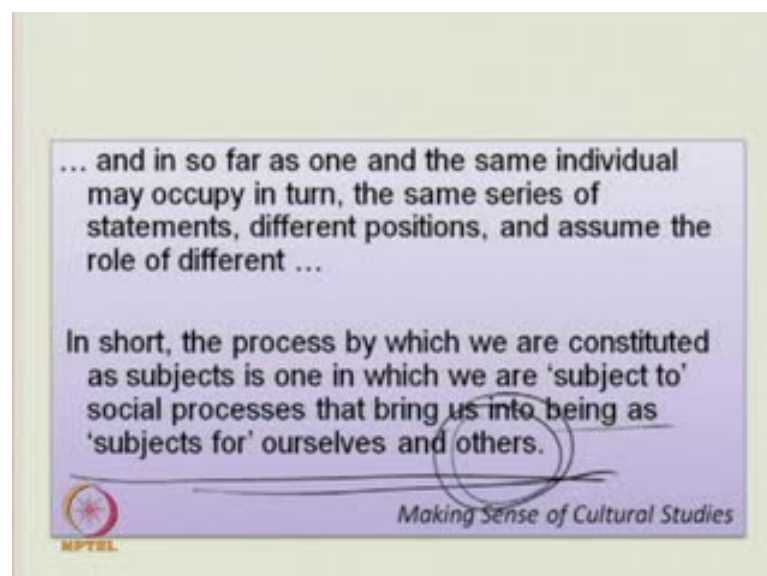
So, we are subject to social processes that bring us into being; see, processes is the state of becoming, which gives you the being as subjects for ourselves and others.

(Refer Slide Time: 37:17)



Now, I would like to point to quotation from Black Skin, White Masks and you have heard of Frantz Fanon who, look at this, this quotation from Black skin, White Masks, dirty nigger or simply look a negro, Fanon says, I came into this world anxious to uncover the meaning of things, my soul desirous to be at the origin of the world, and here I am an object among other objects.

(Refer Slide Time: 38:03)



(Refer Slide Time: 38:28)



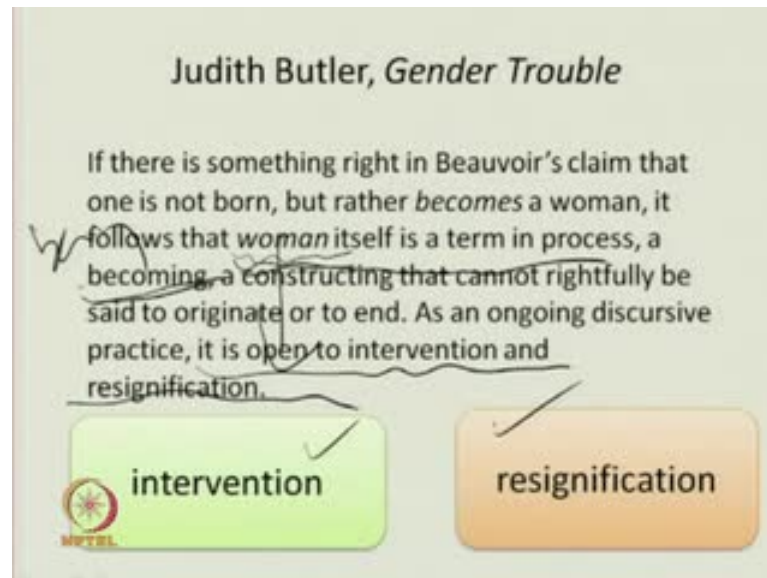
So, just before this, if you look at this quotation here, look at this - that bring us into being a subject for ourselves and others. The other who is looking at you, judging you, for him or her you are the object, the person is watching you, **you are**, is judging you; you are subject of study for that person and this process of being both, a subject and an object is so beautifully put by Frantz Fanon.

And this is the dilemma of anyone in an oppressive situation, now be he or she a dalit person, be he or she a woman in certain circumstances or be he or she a black person or a Hispanic in North America, for instance; so, you then always a feeling for the Hispanics for, you know, let us not name anyone in a situation of operation.

That person following Fanon, that person, look at this, is anxious to uncover the meaning of things, that person has a subjectivity of his or her own, his or her soul of spirit is desirous once to be in the origin of world, once to make meaning and then he says, well, when somebody calls me a dirty nigger or a negro, I understand that I have become an object for the other person. The subjectivity of that person is canceled out in the sense that the person, now begins to think that my subjectivity is something that is been made by another person, you know, what we call the gaze of the other, you know; the other, the white man is now telling me who I am. Whereas, I have an inner world, I have a subjectivity which you know an interiority, so to speak you know, **(())** world my soul

interiority, but also wishes to be at the origin of meaning, at the origin of the world; so I am being made an object by somebody.

(Refer Slide Time: 40:17)



We then look at Judith's another, you know, **another very**, very similar theories as far as gender studies is concerned, and gender trouble being one of her, you know, one of the most celebrated works. Now, Judith Butler tells this, if there is something right in Beauvoir's claim, women, Simone de Beauvoir and her book *The Second Sex* published in 1949 I think, so Butler says, if there is something right in Beauvoir's claim that one is not born, but rather becomes a woman, it follows that woman itself is a term in process, why?

Remember, if you go back to the earlier slides, we had one slide in which we said that subjectivity is, you know, being a subject is a process, it is a cultural process. So, she says that if Beauvoir's claim is correct that we become a woman, we are not simply born a woman with all our behavioral, behavioral patterns established from the day we are born. She says that it follows, it logically follows that woman itself as a concept, here as a term, the term woman itself is a term in process, it is not given once and for all. What it means to be a woman is something that is **still**, still in process. It, the meaning of which to use the evident term will defer, the meaning is deferred and it is, it defers from, **are this**, things in the system; the meaning of woman as a concept is defer.

Follow that, woman itself is a term in process, a becoming, not a being, and in sense given once and for all, a becoming, a constructing that cannot rightfully be said to originate or to end. Well, it is, as a process there is no **originatory**, originally, **sorry**, movement of woman, of womanhood, there is no end as a process; it is a process without a beginning and an end. Why without a beginning? It must be, do not, simply, do not know and why without an end? Because it is a process that is always and will always change.

Let us read it again, if there is something right in Beauvoir's claim that one is not born, but rather becomes a woman; it follows that woman itself is a term in process, a becoming, a constructing that cannot rightfully be said to originate or to end. As an ongoing discursive practice, this is very important, it is open, the term woman is open to intervention and resignification; we have highlighted these terms.

If it is a process, then we can intervene. If somebody tells you this is what a woman is, it is not a process of becoming, it is one of being something, that is a given, this is what a woman is or this is what the woman should be, we can recall it is a woman, is a discursive you know, it is a discourse, it is a discursive practice, just put into practice; we can intervene, we can sort of **(())** and we can intervene and we can say that well this is not woman, woman is much more than this or woman is very different than this.

Moment I say woman, I am sure you are not going to think about the woman truck driver; are you going to think about the woman truck driver? You are not going to think about, so you have to intervene and next you have to resignify. So, as an ongoing discursive practice that category woman is open to intervention from our side and it is open to re-signification, it is in a signification process, no. We have to, because it is a process, re-inscribe woman, we have to make it, you have to resignify the whole processes, it may be **(())** other signifying or processes of signification. So, I think this is a **very**, very similar, **very**, very important contribution from Judith Butler.

There are so many other points on Butler, but this, the intervention and resignification possible, when we looked at woman and woman subjectivity as a process, that is you know, open to re-signification and intervention.

(Refer Slide Time: 45:06)



Therefore, these are the terms. Now, which will come **in**, in our understanding of subjectivity, one is agency. You think of ourselves as subjects, now let us, you know, look at the just a sentence from a grammatical point of view.

You know that a subject, a sentence can be in a very elementary way divided into what - two parts, a subject and the predicate. A subject, the predicate part of a sentence is what is said about the subject, for if we say Rahul threw the ball; when we say Rahul threw the ball, then Rahul is a subject who is performing an action, that is, verb - to throw and the object is a ball. So there is certain agency, a certain doingness, the subject as a doer.

So, you feel that as a subject I have agency, as a subject I have, hear, free will. The point here is, it is not so simple as it looks, it is not just a grammatical sentence we are talking about. Our, how free are we again? An essential question from philosophy, how free are given I, to do things? And how far **are**, are things determined?

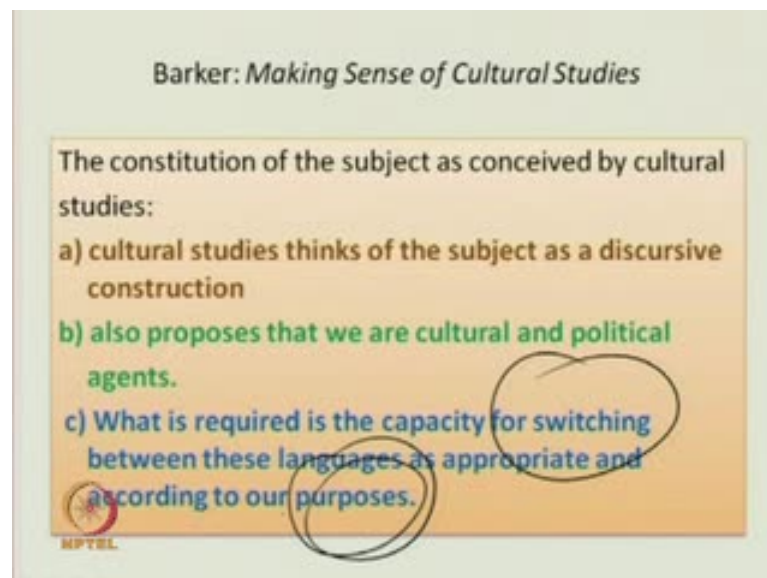
So, as a subject, our free will and our agency and I have complete free will and complete agency, is an illusion. So, also we would argue from cultural studies that **complete determination**, complete determination from social-cultural processes also is an illusion.

Remember Karl Marx, what did Marx say? Marx said that the relationship between the base and the superstructure, your relationships between the social, your consciousness and your, you know, which comes in to social processes, economy processes and your

action, these are you know **there is a certain, certain you know**, there is a certain agency to it. The point is, remember in a lecture Marxism, we found that history has already given us, so it is determined in the sense that there is a impress of history, but there is if you, there is a will in us. So, even in cultural studies, it is understood as a play between determination on the one hand, an agency and will on the other.

So, our subjectivity is a result of determinate forces, and **at the same time**, at the same time there is you know, we have the freedom to make arrangements, arrange are resources.

(Refer Slide Time: 48:05)



Barker: Making Sense of Cultural Studies

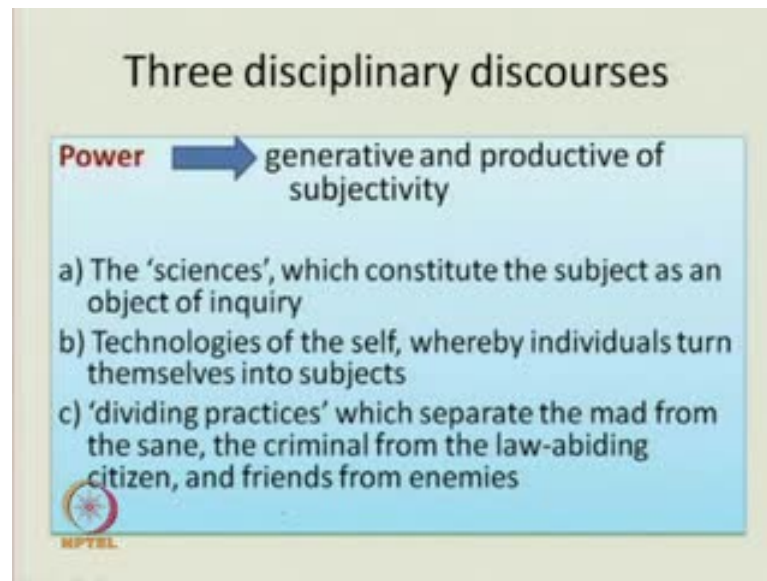
The constitution of the subject as conceived by cultural studies:

- a) cultural studies thinks of the subject as a discursive construction
- b) also proposes that we are cultural and political agents.
- c) What is required is the capacity for switching between these languages as appropriate and according to our purposes.

MPTBL

Therefore, Barker says in making sense of cultural studies, that this constitution of the subject as conceived by cultural studies is cultural studies, thinks of the subject as a discursive construction, proposes that we are cultural and political agents. And what is required is the capacity for switching these, between these languages as appropriate and according to our purposes. This gives us the freedom from complete determinacy.

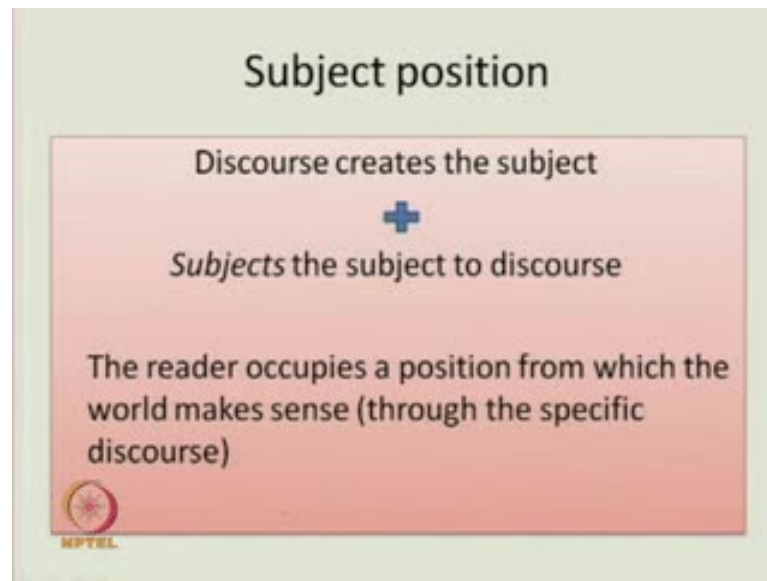
(Refer Slide Time: 48:34)



Therefore, the three disciplinary discourses are now coming quickly back to Foucault, which work through power, which is generative on productive of subjectivity are, a, the sciences which constitute the subject as an object of inquiry; the technologies of the self, whereby human eye turn ourselves into subjects and the dividing practices, which separate the mad from the sane, the criminal from the law-abiding citizen, and friends from enemies.

Now, this I will take up in detail since we do not have time here in detail, in my lecture on power and we should talk about this generation of subjectivity and these three disciplinary discourses.

(Refer Slide Time: 49:16)



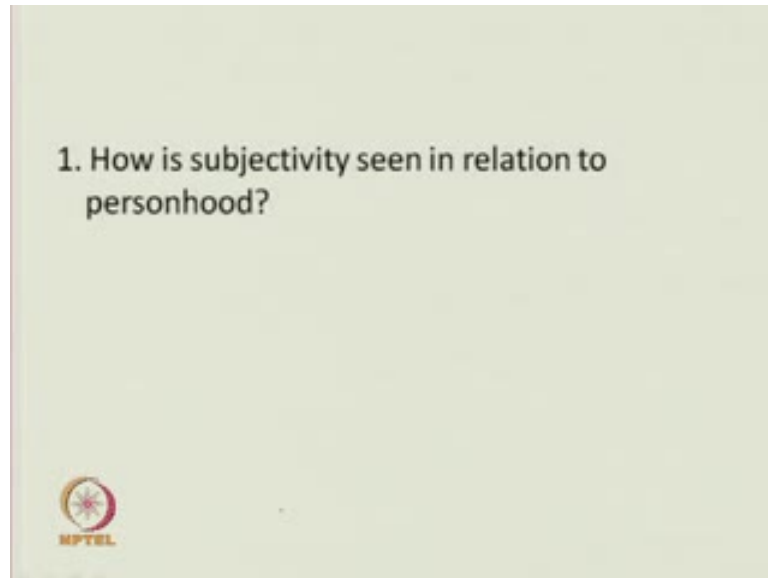
Therefore, quickly ending this lecture here, subject position means this - at discourse creates the subject and subjects the subject to discourse, and the reader or the agent occupies a position from which the world makes sense through the specific discourse; therefore, the subject position is a function of discourse.

(Refer Slide Time: 49:39)



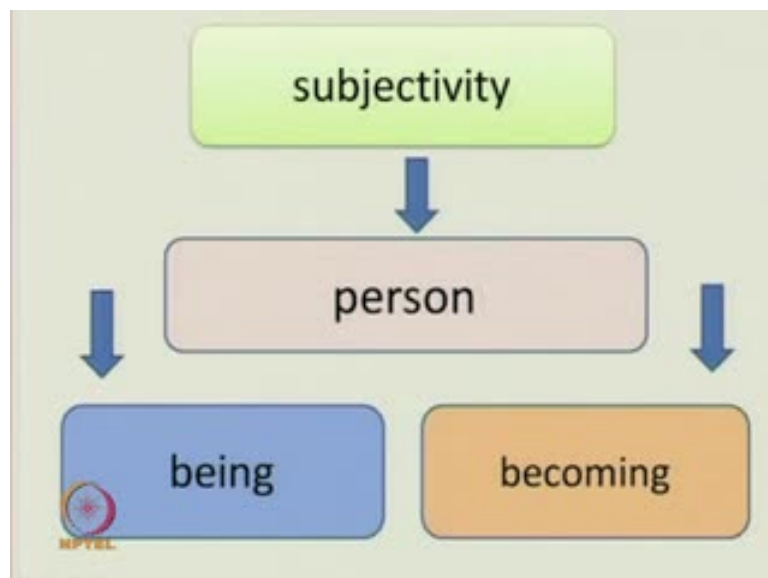
So, orientation, placing, obligation and foregrounding, these are, you know, certain terms which you can replace subject position with; rather, subject position may be seen as orientation, placing, obligation and foregrounding.

(Refer Slide Time: 50:08)

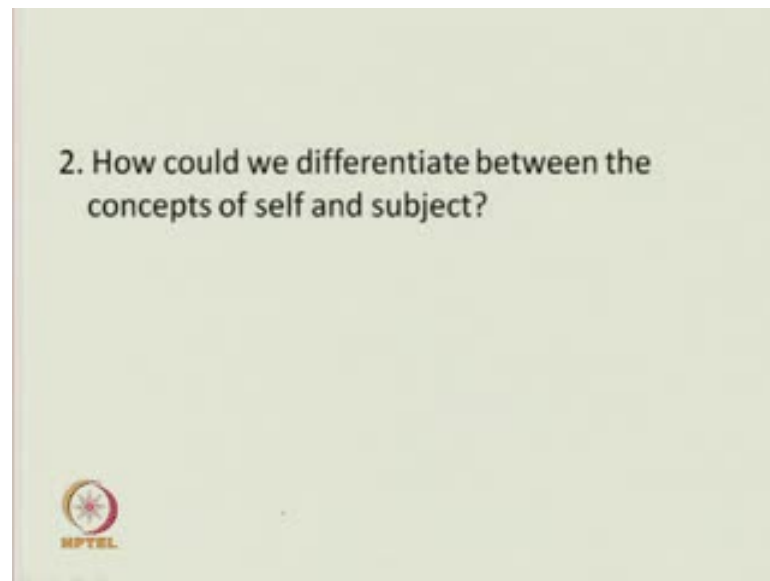


Now, quickly I would like to skip a few points which may need not be in this lecture, I will take it up elsewhere, one is you go to the discussion. And we look at how, the first question, how is subjectivity seen in relation to personhood?

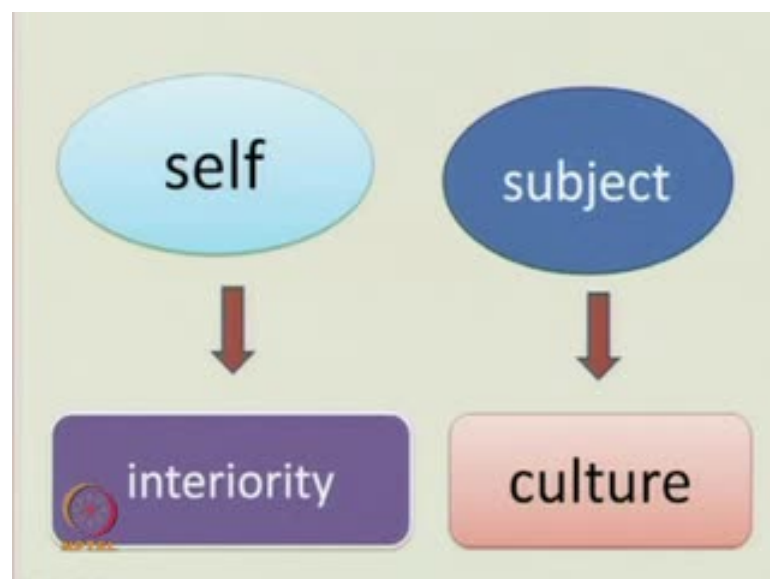
(Refer Slide Time: 50:13)



(Refer Slide Time: 50:21)



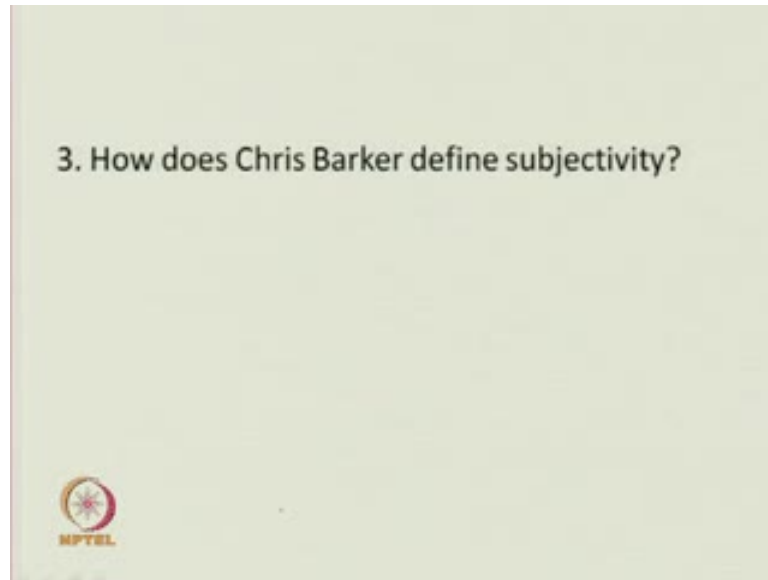
(Refer Slide Time: 50:26)



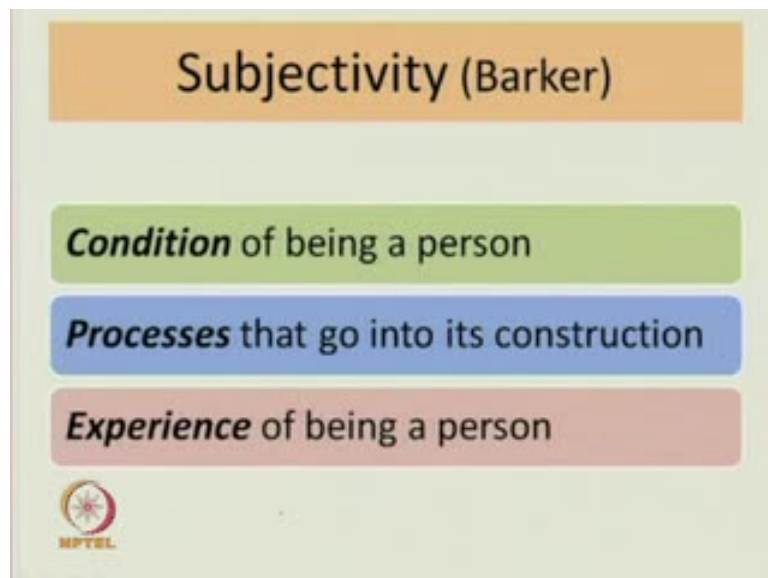
Subjectivity is seen as both, the process, you know, process, and an essence as being and to becoming; and you say, becoming is more highlighted here.

How could we differentiate between concepts of self and subject? Self refers for certain interiority and subject is cultural.

(Refer Slide Time: 50:33)



(Refer Slide Time: 50:34)




How does Chris Barker define subjectivity as the condition? It is a process and it is an experience of being a person.

(Refer Slide Time: 50:42)


Foucault

- There are no universal subjectivities
- Subjectivity is an effect of discourse
- The subject is a discursive formation
- Discourse also 'subjects' people to its rules
- Gives us 'subject-positions' or perspectives through which we make sense of the world
- Subjectivity is historically and culturally conditioned




(Refer Slide Time: 50:55)

Three disciplinary discourses

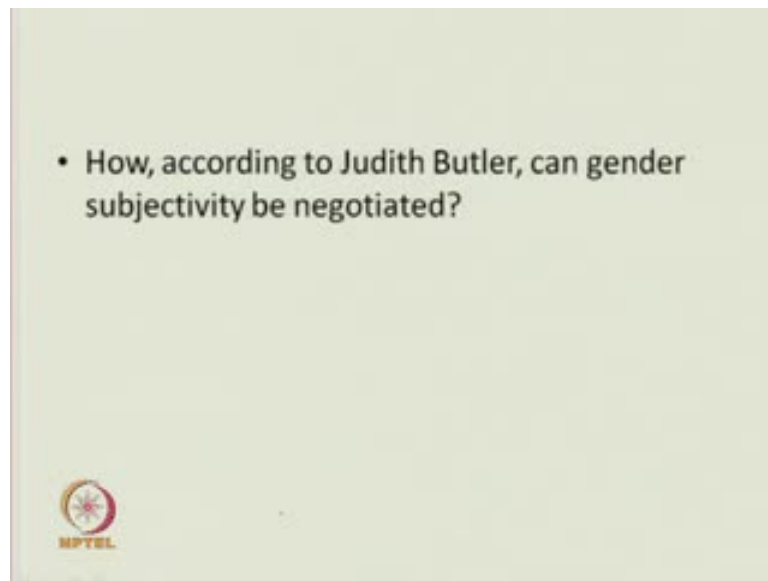
Power  generative and productive of subjectivity

- a) The '**sciences**', which constitute the subject as an object of inquiry
- b) **Technologies of the self**, whereby individuals turn themselves into subjects
- c) '**dividing practices**' which separate the mad from the sane, the criminal from the law-abiding citizen, and friends from enemies

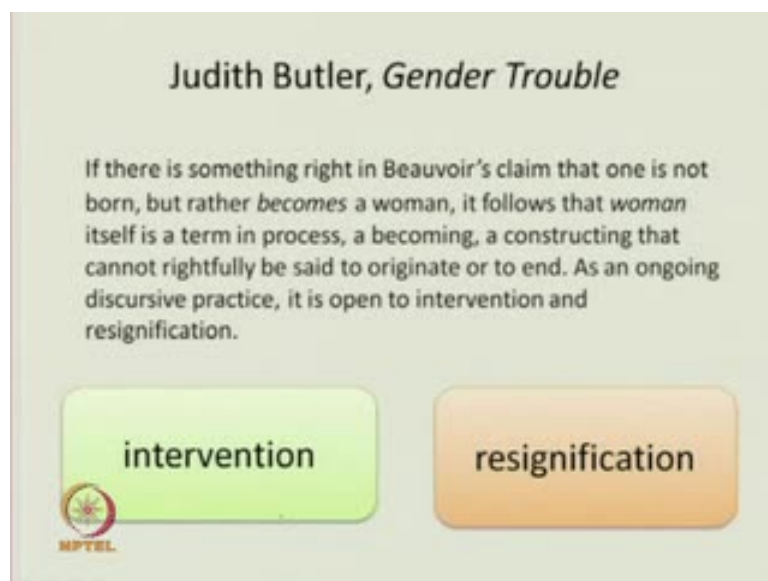


Then we looked at Foucault's understanding of subjectivity as an effect of discourse and a discursive function, and discourse also subjects us and subjectivity is historically and culturally constructive.

(Refer Slide Time: 51:04)



(Refer Slide Time: 51:05)



So, the three disciplinary discourses which I said I will take up later quickly (()) sciences, technologies of the self and the dividing practices and finally Judith Butler, how, what does Judith Butler, what does she has to say about subjectivity? When you take up women subjectivity, she says that one following Beauvoir becomes a woman and therefore, woman is a term in process.

And finally, the good news is we can intervene and we can resignify what woman means. So, we, today, we are looked at subjectivity as a key concept and there will be other

concepts that we shall be looking at; of course, these are not the only things and we cannot really pack subjectivity into one lecture.

But my hope is that I have been able to, you know, make differentiation between subject and human, and you know, save from the one end and also to be able to show you, how cultural studies argues the subjectivity? Experiencing a person is neither a given and nor it is something stagnant. There, you can also recreate or reinvent yourself, and if you can manage your subjectivity by managing the resources of the self and kind of put your own individual unique stamp on it.

So, thank you very much. The next lecture we will be doing would be something coming from subjectivity, something related to it and that would be identity. Thank you so much.