

**Indian Society: Sociological Perspectives**

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**Lecture-42**

**Feminist Perspectives and Gender Studies in India II**

Welcome back to the class. We are continuing with the same essay written by the late Sharmila Rege as an introduction to her edited work, which, as I told you in the previous class, is a compilation of essays or articles that appeared in Indian Sociological Bulletin, the journal of Indian Sociological Society. So, we were looking into the introductory section of her essay where she talks about the very problematic, uneasy relationship between gender studies and Sociology. She was talking about how there are different approaches towards that. If you look at the trajectory of the evolution of sociology as a discipline, it is characterised by different stages. She does not really agree with the characterisation of dividing, of explaining the relationship on the basis of different stages. So, in this section, she is moving from the Sociology of women to the Sociology of gender. Much of the feminist scholarship of the last 25 years or more has been directed towards underlining the social construction of gender.

It sorts to establish sex as biologically determined and gender as socially constructed. However, the constructionist does not agree on the causes of the sex-gender distinction. They vary in their conceptions of gender as a manifestation of contingent stereotyping or structural power relations. Moreover, the differences arise over whether one considers these structures in the singular or plural.

So, this is about how a radical transformation has happened in our understanding of what constitutes gender. Earlier, the more conventional understanding is that sex is

biological whereas the gender is social. That was a, of a conventional understanding that the the the male or female categories are socially constructed whereas the term sex is a biologically assigned one. So, that was seen as an understanding, but that has again come under serious revisions

Now, however, the constructionist does not agree over the causes of this sex-gender distinction because this neat distinction between something as biological and something as cultural has been problematised and complicated further. They vary in their conceptions of gender as a manifestation of contingent stereotyping or structural power relations. Moreover, differences arise over whether one considers these structures in singular or plural. The issues of race were central in propelling these debates on gender in multiple structures of power. Looking into how gender becomes a very important angle to look at, to understand again if a relationship emerged as a major theme of discussion in the West.

Several arguments were put forward to move beyond class and race as a mere additive to gender. However, in the linguist's turn in theory, gender theorisation has shifted the focus from the material to discursive structures. How discourses create gender became a very important part of discussion later. In such discourse on gender, femininity and masculinity have no ontological foundations and are conceived as relational and contextual. So, this poststructuralist turn looked into how discourses are capable of creating this idea about something that is real and, and it has no basic connection with any ontological connection to that.

The neat distinction between biological and socially constructed is rendered increasingly untenable as the body came to be seen as a transformation in social practice. This neat distinction that something is biological and something is social, it was again considered highly problematic. And then, for example, Butler's argument is a very important argument about performativity, how genders are products of performativity which are socially constructed. It is not based on biological sex, but rather it is a product of a discursive and performative world. It must also designate the very apparatus by which sex is produced as natural.

Judith Butler's very important argument. This gender is a construction with no necessary relationship to particular bodies or sexualities and, in the final analysis, appears as a manifestation of text and cultural practices. This is a very radical argument. I am using the term radical because it is a very radical argument to say that gender has nothing to do with biological characteristics if you look into the contemporary argument about transsexuality and about how there is a rainbow of sexualities within each body, it tells you that the biological determinism is almost absent or what is your body in medical science or in biological science has nothing to do with your gender orientation or your gender interests and then identities. With this cultural turn, gender or feminist theorisation appears more as a cultural difference than a social hierarchy and feminist politics is surrendered along with meta-narratives.

Jackson advocates sociological feminism as a corrective to the cultural turn and delineates four intersecting levels of social construction: structural, discursive, everyday lives and subjective. Now, the study of gender in Sociology first emerged in the research on sex roles. Under the influence of role theory and functionalism, gender was conceived as an achieved status accompanied by a set of patterned gender roles. This, again, something that we mentioned earlier, how, in the initial period, Sociology was preoccupied with the questions of gender, but mainly as an uncritical acceptance of gender roles as a taken-for-granted category. Now, these are all elaborations about how different scholars looked into this category and how it evolved in classical sociological theory, which I do not think we need to go through in detail.

Now, thus, gender remains much contested but is an indispensable concept. Contested because some scholars challenge this shift from women to gender and indispensable to others because they see it as allowing for a more inclusive analysis of human experience based on intersecting structures of domination, difference and diversity. Feminists with varying intellectual frames of reference have put forth diverse positions about privileging the category of gender over women. Now, again, this question is Sociology of women, what should be the proper nomenclature? What should be the actual name? Should it be

Sociology of women, or should it be Sociology of gender?

Now, most sociologists consider gender a more inclusive, broader category than women's. Now, the shift from women to gender has been viewed by some as a replacement of the study of sexual inequality with the study of differences between the sexes. They make the case for the continuing usefulness of the term women for analysis as against the category of gender. And especially because one of the important arguments against this particular turn from women to gender is that many times it takes away the political orientation of the study of the Sociology of women. It had this political orientation to look at the subordination of women in almost every sphere of its study, or it had that stated objective of focusing on inequality, the question of inequality that women were suffering. Whereas the Sociology of gender does not focus on inequality, it looks at how discursively different genders are produced and then how it intersects both culturally and socially.

The category of gender is seen as diverting the focus from specific issues concerning women, both in the political and academic spheres. However, feminists, especially third-world black and Dalit feminists, have underlined the dangers of presuming a set of common meanings in the category of women, something that we discussed. They have argued that the category of women universalises and homogenises the experience of white, middle class and upper-class women, which we discussed earlier. On the other hand, the use of the category of gender allows for the analysis of differences in race, class, caste, nation and sexual orientation between women. The use of the category of women assumes commonality between all women and can, at best, allow the analysis of the differences among women in an additive or known or add-on manner.

So, the debate between these two sections of people who is still on. A large number of people feel that the term gender is more inclusive because women do not constitute a singular category, and women's experiences across the globe are not the same. Whereas gender offers you a broader category to look into the specific manifestations of gender in the interstices of different races, castes, classes, ethnicities and national contexts. In the analysis of caste-based society, for instance, such an assumption of commonality amounts

to a reiteration of the normative status of the upper-caste woman. If you look into, for example, the question of caste and woman, most of the time it is the experience of the upper caste woman that is naturalised and seen as the norm. Whereas the lived experience of the women of the lower caste could be entirely different, especially when you talk about, say, notions of purity and other things.

The usual argument or the usual picture that is presented is that of the upper caste women, seen as the normal and the experience of lower caste women, which could be very entirely different, are not accounted for. For those of us concerned with the engendering Sociology, it means moving from a Sociology of women to a more inclusive Sociology of gender. As Moore has argued, it was not until the anthropology women was able to make room for gender that its potential to politically, to reconceptualise fundamentally could be more fully realised. So, Sharmila Rege is of a very firm opinion that the term gender is definitely much more inclusive and it has more potential than that of the Sociology of women. Sociology of gender in India towards reading more than the absence of women.

Feminist sociological knowledge has posed challenges to the intellectual concerns of Sociology also the ways in which discipline is organised professionally and institutionally. Now, she turns her focus on the Indian context, which is more, of course, interesting to us. The challenges posed by feminist scholarship to the content, methodology and epistemology of the discipline can be more easily enumerated than those posed in the organisational and institutional practices. The systematic reviews of the development of Sociology in India by all the scholars Dhanagare, Mukherjee, Oommen and Yogendra Singh and Unnithan provide a framework for analysing the trends in Indian Sociology over the years. Almost all commentators see the origins of social anthropology and Sociology in the encounter between the colonial administration and Indian society, the Occident and the Orient and tradition and modernity.

I think this is the theme which we will take up again when we discuss Sujatha Patel's argument. Travelogues, tracts, and studies on caste, tribes, village communities,

language and land tenure systems are seen as inspired by the need for basic data of colonial administration. The indigenous sociological imagination of the social reformers, often referred to as the pre-sociological reference groups by Mukherjee, constituted the beginnings of the discipline. Most commentators argue that this indigenous pre-sociological intellectual tradition influenced the later development of Indian Sociology and social anthropology only marginally. A search for the origins of the visible woman in Indian Sociology would lead us to argue otherwise.

Sharmila Rege is saying that there is an argument especially put forward by Mukherjee and Dhanagare that the pre-sociological tradition, mostly by social reformers within Hinduism, those who argued against caste, those who argued against child marriage and those who campaigned for widow remarriage, all these things did not have much of an influence on the later development of Sociology according to scholars like Dhanagare and Mukherjee, but Sharmila Rege and a lot of others do not agree with that. The agenda of the liberal reformists and revivalists of the 19th century set the counters for the women in Sociology in the cognitive structures of the discipline. The space within sociological discourse came to be granted either to the women in the text or the middle class women in the context of modernisation. So, they argued that the social reform movement spearheaded by upper-class men, upper caste women who wanted to reform Hinduism and get rid of all its impurities and so-called traditional and unmodern customs, really privileged the upper class and upper-caste women, upper-caste sections of the population. So, she says that how the movements from lower castes were hardly recognised, or social leaders from lower caste positions were hardly recognised by the early sociologists, and that is true even with history as well as discipline.

Now, the development of Sociology, as a discipline was earlier combined with Economics, especially in Delhi University and other places it was a part of the Economics department and even in Lucknow. So, later how, so it talks about how that scenario evolved. Now, while studies on family, kinship studies, caste, social structure in religion and problems of urbanisation emerged in Bombay, Kolkata produced large-scale social surveys on tribes, peasantry and famines. The work at Lucknow suggested that the

rigid boundaries between the disciplines be reviewed critically and D.

P. Mukherji even suggested the need for sociologists to turn from description to prescription that could emerge only from stated value choices. It is a recall about the evolution of Sociology. I think there is an interesting reference about an obituary to A.

R. Waidya. C. Parvathamma recalls his explicitly stated and acted upon opposition to the caste system and the innate links between Sociology of humanism that he sought to explore. C. Parvathamma is a very brilliant scholar. She was a Dalit, and she went abroad, and then she got a PhD, and she was contemporary to M.

N. Srinivas. She was the head of the department at Mysuru University for a long time and has written extensively. So, her life itself has been quite inspiring on various counts, especially given the fact that a Dalit girl from a very difficult background, her father had passed away when she was very young and she had to face a lot of challenges and then she rose into a much higher position within Indian Sociology in Mysuru. So, Parvathamma is considered to be a very important person.

Iravati Karve's exploration, another very important person, into the issues related to marriage, family, and motherhood, using legends and folk songs, her essays, novels and short stories need deliberation. Karve has often been excluded despite her encyclopaedic work, and the reason suggested is that the work is outdated.

So, looking into that. Thus, the pre-institutionalised phase of the history of the discipline can be read as more than just Sociology of the absence of women. The task in Sociology, unlike History, Economics or Literature, was not that of making visible the invisible women. The central importance accorded to the study of family, kinship and marriage in Sociology meant that women had been visible, but their experiences had been ignored. So, she is talking about the generalisation of the pre-institutionalised phase. The pre-institutionalised phase is often referred to as the time before the 1950s because Sociology as a discipline was institutionalised after the 1950s in the form of having an organisation, establishing in different places, having a journal and other things.

So, in the pre-institutionalised phase, it was mostly that of absence of that.

However, feminist critique of the discipline in the 1980s began to underline the wide gap between the everyday works of women and sociological knowledge. The most immediate task at the time seemed to be to underline the mainstream as the malestream. Thereby articulating a one-dimensional feminist disenchanting of Sociology. The focus, therefore, was on the underlining of the invisibility of women in Sociology.

A more discerning sensitivity is probably called for reading gender in the different phases of the growth of the discipline. It is important to trace the influence of the particular trajectory of the institutional expansion of the discipline in India. Did the institutional expansion adversely affect the visibility of women in the cognitive structures of the discipline? Why did gender not become a variable for sociological analysis in the phase that brought visibility to sociologists in India? These are only some of the questions that feminist sociologists need to address. The institutional expansion began in 1952 as the knowledge methods of sociologists and social anthropology became usable by the state. state always has a very narrow view towards scholarship.

The state wants the data, the policy briefing, and the policy orientation that can be applied to society for certain developmental perspectives. But of course, as we know, a discipline is capable of much more. It is capable of asking deeper, broader questions and without any concrete answers to which the state need not show much of an interest. So, sociologists were required to outline the social determinants and consequence of state sponsored development. She is talking about how, the University Grants Commission, UGC sanctioned several posts in Sociology. It is important to note that courtesy to the Community Development Program and the Ford Foundation meant a strong dose of modern survey research methods imported from the United States.

Research technology became the need for the day, and there was neither the inclination nor the time to reflect on the substantive use of methodology. Because when you look into the data or the quantitative research, quite often quantitative research does not pay adequate attention to the problematics of the categories they use. One of the important promises of the quantitative research method is that it gives you a bird's eye view of the scenario at hand. It gives you many specific categories; it tells you things in broader



strokes. And at the same time, a lot of things go unnoticed.

It is, it does not have the ability to go into the problematics of the categories that many times are used in these things. And that is exactly what she is talking about. This period of visibility for sociologists saw an estrangement of the discipline from History, Economics and Political science. This phase of institutionalisation came almost close to what feminist critique conceives as the invisibility of women in the discipline. The earlier voice of the theoretical pluralism and myth of value-free social sciences was almost lost under the burden of institutionalisation of the paradigmatic axioms of structural functionalism and research technology. She is talking about the trajectory. The trend reports of Indian Council for Social Science Research, as you might know, ICSSR is a very important governmental body that funds Social Science research in India. ICSSR has, I think around 25 to 30 research centers across India. So, ICSSR is considered to be the most important nodal agency that regulates and funds Social Science research. Suggests that in addition to caste stratification studies, social change, family, marriage, industry, managerialism, urban and rural society became the areas of core concern.

The extent to which such studies were influenced by the radical new social movement of the period is debatable. The number of this thesis on Dalit communities marked an increase, but the epistemology claimed that the Dalit movement was not addressed. Again, there were studies on the far-neglected areas, but they failed to really make use of the potential of its differential epistemology, which was very much noted. These studies are clearly limited to the marginal man in Indian society and his relative deprivation, his reference groups and social mobility.

These studies on Dalits looked at this particular category as people who have been neglected so we are studying them. But at the same time, they were incapable of theorising the experiences of these people and then using that understanding to critique mainstream Sociology. We will discuss this with Gopal Guru much later in the coming class. There are several studies in the Muslim community, most of which feminise the community. These studies centre on the problems of Muslim women, namely talaq,

pariah and lower rates of education. This, as observed by Uberoi, differentiation seems to cut across sexual hierarchy only among the communal lines.

Now, this is about the different governmental initiatives of Draft National Plan and UGC's different approvals, women's studies centres, and the institution of all those arguments. The dominant explanatory framework is the Parsonian paradigm of two roles of women and role conflict. Such a cognitive frame necessarily excludes the possibility of any analysis of the source of gender inequality in the public and private spheres. Thus, a concern with gender disparities in socialisation ends on a plea for an attitudinal change, while those concerning rural women prescribe modernisation as a solution. So, she is critically evaluating the basic premises on which these studies were carried out during the 1970s and 80s.

The challenges posed by feminist scholarship and women's movements to these received frameworks in Sociology of caste, family, kinship, marriage, work and certification have been well analysed. The feminist scholarship, as noted by the scholars, has been largely interdisciplinary and, in a sense, therefore, outside the purview of the typical student of Sociology prior to the introduction of the course of Sociology of Women. Interdisciplinary feminist challenges, if taken not of, are often disciplined in this thesis. Strategic exclusions, inclusions of the feminist challenges have to be managed in order to avoid the perennial questions about the sociological nature of the content and methodology. So, she is talking about how the overall institutional culture became more stifling to this a more engaged feminist critique, and many of them had to go by the mainstream thing.

The boundaries of good Sociology are drawn around general laws, scientific methods and sequentialising human reality. The core of the discipline is sustained through a taken for granted ways of conceiving, preconceived social reality despite an expansion in the subject matter often includes the marginalised subjects. The marginalised, be they women, Dalits, Adivasis or the labouring class, although their inclusion in the substantive areas, remains on the periphery of the cognitive structures of the discipline.

She also mentions very controversial remarks made by very prominent Indian sociologist Dipankar Gupta against feminists, the potential of feminist scholarship in social theory and also by Andre Beteille during the '90s, which created a lot of discussion and debate among women. So, Gupta's views on feminisation of theory and Beteille's views on feminism in the academia are present examples of the dismissals of feminist scholarship by sociologists in India.

As Tellis has observed, the strategy employed in such a dismissal relegates a prurient, trivial and unacademic any academic and political writings on gender. Dipankar Gupta came under heavy criticism for trivialising the feminist scholarship or making a caricature of feminist theory and Beteille's argument was more nuanced. But even he argued that a feminist lens would lead only to a ghettoisation of sociological knowledge and other things. Yeah, Gupta's a very controversial thing.

They underlined the gross distortion of Gupta's readings and the omission of any discussion of Indian feminism. The intellectual arrogance of male academics in dismissing an entire system of thought and movement with a cursory examination of the sequence of its history was sharply criticised. All these people criticised Gupta, that all of them came in the same year, 1995.

However, assuming that all the women's studies are exclusionary, it is about Beteille. He concludes on a different note. He argues that unless diverse viewpoints and perspectives of both sexes are accommodated, women's studies will damage the credibility of the very institutions in which they are located. Both sociologists who call feminist scholarship into question have contributed much to the theoretical development of stratification studies. So, both Beteille and Gupta are very important pioneers in the study of Indian social stratification.

Now, the crisis in contemporary Sociology and feminist reflexivity, there have been articulations of the crisis in the discipline of 1970s and 1990s. So, this particular section is about a debate that emerged from the 1980s onwards, and of course, more visibly in the 90s and 2000s about the crisis that Sociology as a discipline was facing. Because Sociology is often seen as one of the most reflexive disciplines, a discipline that is

capable of looking within and then trying to understand the way in which the discipline is practised in different institutional settings and social settings and thereby trying to change itself. So, in this particular section, Sharmila Rege tries to understand the debates around this question of contemporary crisis in Sociology and what it can learn from the feminist reflexivity.

From the 1970s onwards, there has been a series of discussions about the reason for this crisis and what can be done. So, as Beteille writes in 1973, the theoretical side of the course is always an important argument. One of the major concerns is that we always do not produce theories; rather, we import theories from the West and the Indian society is seen as the field in which these theories can be tested. Empirical is left for the Sociology of India. In order to study stratification for example, we go by Marx or Weber, we get theory from there and then we try to test those theories on the Indian reality.

There is hardly any attempt to theorise from India and then export that theory to others. This has been a perennial question. A heavy reliance on American textbooks not only reflects the reality unfamiliar to students but also tends to present reality in overtly abstract forms.

In the 1990s, Veena Das comes up with interesting arguments and then in the late 90s, others. So, significant in the debate in 1990s is the tension between varying conceptions of the crisis itself. The crisis is conceived as one of the protocols of learning and irreverence for tradition and the sociologist's ambition to be an agent for social change. This is challenged by a more heightened sensitivity, but of the history of the growth and teaching of Sociology in India. The crisis is then conceived as one of the paradigms or one of the usability of the lack of reflexivity.

So, there is much criticism about how this crisis is seen. Because, for example, when some scholars say that there is a lack of standards or rigour in academia, then there are questions about this whole idea about what constitutes standards, rigour? and how this discipline is practised?; who are the people who come to study Sociology? or what has

been their social background? what does the discipline offer to them? So, a lot of such questions animated the debate during that time. So, as Patel argues, the crisis is undoubtedly one of the paradigms and lack of reflexivity, for it had been one of the protocols, it should not have affected the centres of excellence that observe the protocols of academisation of the subject. Several voices in this debate, all not overtly feminist, suggest the need for reflexivity.

This is a more than encouraging trend and feminist activists in the academia suggest that we grasp the moment of reflexivity. Now, in this section, again, she goes into some of the very interesting literature on how reflexivity itself is understood because reflexivity as the ability to look into one's own past and one's own action is a very superficial understanding, grabbing multiple definitions about how reflexivity works. So, feminist analytical reflexivity shifts the soul and focus of the debate on the crisis in the discipline from questions of what we teach, to the questions of whom we teach and how. So, instead of looking into what Sociology offers and how the syllabus is organised, the contents of it, things that are included and not included. So, the focus shifted from that concern to the concerns about whom we teach and how.

This leads us to the questions about the conception of the crisis itself. How is the crisis in a discipline defined, assumed and by whom? As Bourdieu has suggested, the crisis that is referred to is a crisis of orthodoxy and there may be a high correlation between the types of cultural capital that is at the disposal of the Sociology standard, conceptions of legitimate Sociology and a crisis. So, this is a very important section. How different people, practitioners with different cultural capital can conceive crisis in a different way. For example, a professor who comes from a very elite background, and is educated abroad, can lament about the lack of standards or the inability of Indian students to read the originals of Marx and then Weber and say that, okay, these people do not have sufficient standards. Whereas standard is understood as the ability to read the originals and then engage in critical thinking.

This is a very elitist understanding of what constitutes academic rigour and academic standard. In other words, it has a Sociology. Why a particular section of the population

students cannot read has a Sociology behind it. And without understanding that Sociology, then defining the rigour in a very specific manner has become myopic. In a survey of seven universities in Maharashtra, Rege, several college teachers linked the following standards of the discipline to the recruitment of state policies and to the decline in financial grants and schemes.

In bemoaning the following standards and declining of merit, the blame is placed on the character of Sociology as a residual discipline. Enrolment records did bear out the increasing number of women, Dalits and Bahujan students and practitioners in the discipline. Moreover, for many of them, the crisis was one of the representation about relation between the sociologists in here and the people out there. The former is no longer the only ones who represent the latter in what Stanley calls a Hewlett-Packard photo-real printer style.

They out here intend if they possibly can do their own representation. So, this is again about how the, when the student population undergo significant changes, how their classroom experience or what they read and what they study Sociology is very different from their lived experience. So, that is what the crisis that she is talking about.

Now, curriculum, pedagogy and the Sociology of gender. Now, this again is about how the Sociology of gender gets reflected in the curriculum and pedagogy in Indian universities. Also looks into how this also looks into the SNDT University in Mumbai, and Neera Desai writes how SNDT had a more interesting take on that.

Now, doing Sociology gender - experience from the field. So, this represents Sharmila Rege's own study of how some of the universities engage in these questions. The response to feminist critiques of the discipline, namely inclusion, separatism and reconceptualisation, are reflected in the ways in which gender is accommodated in the curriculum. In the absence of gender in the mainstream or core courses in Sociology, all of gender was included in one optional course. So, that is how, in spite of this much criticism and critique from gender studies from a feminist perspective, gender continues to be one of the optional courses rather than getting more integrated into the mainstream courses, and the main core courses continue to be taught in the same old fashion.

So, that is a finding from many of these empirical studies. A survey of the teaching and academic conditions of production and dissemination of Sociology knowledge in the five regional universities in Maharashtra, undertaken during 1999-2000, suggests the existence of many worlds of Sociology in India. The syllabi of the undergraduate and postgraduate levels reveal that the courses that are common to the curriculum are derived from three distinct legacies. Courses broadly categorised as general Sociology, sociological theories, research methodology and contemporary Indian society represent these three legacies. The legacy of the founding fathers, the methodological legacy of quantitative techniques and the civic legacy of the substantive topics.

And again, how it represents the lack of focus on women. The core sociological tradition thus remains firmly embedded in the patriarchal, Brahminical notions while the optional courses make sure that all marginalised are represented. However, a preliminary attempt to map the matrix of domination, caste, class and gender as it appears in the courses and prescribed readings confirms the lack of interconnectedness and absence of a lived experience in the syllabi. Thus, the mediations between experience, history and sociological categories are nearly absent. So, this is a very insightful argument about how the syllabi are framed in most of the universities.

They are still done mechanically. There are, of course, papers on tribes and caste and Dalits and women. But they are all as an appendage, not as something integrated well within the mainstream body of the discipline. This presents a problem for feminist pedagogies which seek to subvert the academy as the sole custodian of higher learning. Feminist pedagogy seems like a contradiction in terms because feminism refers to an alternative worldview while pedagogy, in its conventional sense, suggests the education for entry into a patriarchal system. So, feminist pedagogy explicitly confronts the popularly understood division between the public and private, between reason and emotion and legitimises personal experience as an appropriate arena of intellectual activity.

As we mentioned, these arguments are highly important. Emotion is often seen as

irrational, whereas feminist theorisation quarrels with that of argument. And again, this strict distinction between private and public, between personal and political, all these boundaries have been thoroughly scrambled and questioned by the feminist scholarship. It is recognised that the teachers and students alike bring text of their own to the classroom, which shapes the transactions within them. Pedagogies such as feminist ones which are to voice and explore the unexpressed and marginalised perspectives have to be collaborative, cooperative and interactive.

This requires that the concepts be treated not as given but as common vocabularies built by making explicit connections between theory, research and experience. Feminist pedagogy centres on four common themes: an enduring connectedness of the living and concrete, emphasis on participation and interaction, collaboration, cooperation and teaching with a vision. Connectedness to the living and concrete is now narrowly interpreted as applied knowledge but called for a historical perspective on the knowledge, which then invites students to personalise the domain of study through participation and sharing of lived experience. Small discussion groups, contact outside of the classroom, sharing of teaching and reading material and use of drama and theatre techniques are found to initiate collaboration and cooperation. Teaching with a vision involves passionate pedagogy, which emerges from being involved in the issues that we study and is different from either indoctrination or preaching.

These are important, insightful arguments for those who take teaching and learning seriously. Such pedagogies, therefore, strive towards authenticity as a notion of empowerment and not a mere reversal of social power. Located in the context of interlocking oppressions, several questions confront feminist pedagogues. How do we teach comparatively and relatively, relationally about gender, caste and class arrangements while addressing questions crucial to the historical moment? Reflexive and critical approaches that map the differential privileges given to different groups in knowledge production become crucial to understanding the structures of domination.

How can in the words of Gouldner, the gap between reflexivity out there and reflexivity in here be bridged? The issue of feminist sociologists is to move beyond the rhetoric of analysis of caste, class and gender. At the level of pedagogies, the challenges is one of



promoting reflexivity in our classrooms in the sense that Gouldner outlined it. With the increasing number of marginalised entering the discipline, its partisanship can be unmasked by a sociological imagination that grasps history and biography and the relationship between the two within society. Again, this is a very important connection Peter Berger talks about; almost every classical sociologist talks about this connection between history and biography and how you look into that. How despite continuous efforts and, to a large extent, the inclusion of gender and women into Indian Sociology, the actual revolutionary potential of a feminist framework has been absent in Indian Sociology.

So, that is what she talks about in this particular essay on engendering Sociology. This is the introductory essay. Rege is full of insights, she not only provides a history of the engagement between Sociology and gender studies, but she also is inspirational in terms of the possibilities of bringing in feminist perspectives and feminist pedagogies to make the discipline of Sociology more inclusive, sensitive and capable of offering more insightful analysis about the field that we study. This also becomes a reflection on the practice of the discipline of Sociology in India. So, let us stop here and we will meet for the coming class. Thank you.