

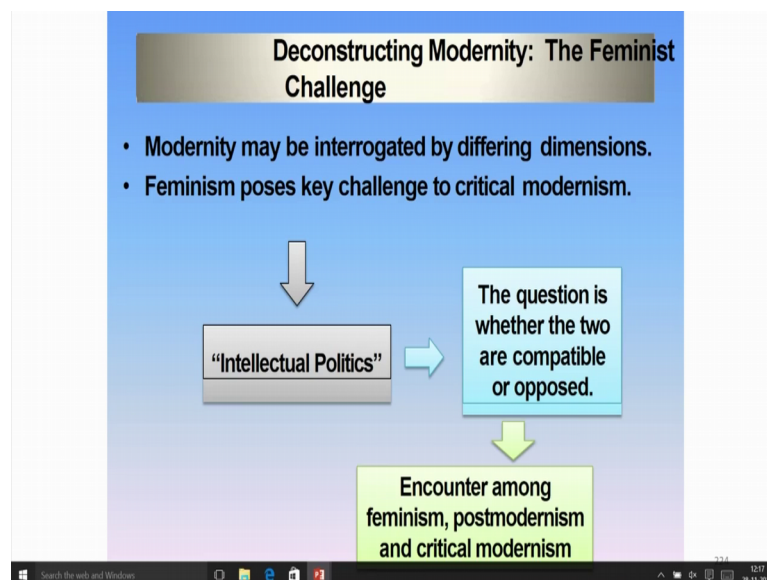
Sociological Perspectives on Modernity
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Lecture – 21
Deconstruction of Modernity: The Feminist Challenge I

Welcome to the 21st lecture of the course on Sociological Perspectives on Modernity. Till now we have covered the modules on first thematic preliminaries, secondly, sociological modernity through the works of Marx and Weber, thirdly structuralist interpretation through the works of Levi Strauss and Louis Thuja. Fourthly, we have covered the western Marxist reflections on modernity I mean society as a human creation through the works of Lou Cox Rumsey and (Refer Time: 01:02).

Fifthly we have discussed I mean thematic preliminaries I said, then sociological modernity - secondly, thirdly - structuralist interpretation, fourthly western Marxist, fifthly we have discussed the module on synthesizing modernity and social theory through the works of Wallerstein, Giddens and Habermas and now we will come to the sixth module on deconstruction of modernity.

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And in this module, we are going to discuss the especially three important perspectives which attempt to deconstruct modernity namely feminism, secondly cultural studies, and thirdly post model, these three are very important so far as deconstructing modernity.

When I say deconstruction of modernity deconstruction is very integral to the (Refer Time: 02:05) concept of difference. We have already discussed this now under what circumstances under what limiting conditions. We want to make sense of the feminist challenge to the linear view of modernity, the singular view of modernity namely European modernity and so on.

Now, let us see this lecture, and in the coming lecture, in the next lecture what we are going to discuss we are going to discuss especially the feminist challenge to the discourse on European modernity. And in another couple of lectures, we will discuss cultural studies and then another couple of lectures we will be devoted to post modernist perspectives, then we will try to forge a new totality and so on. Now, let us see how feminist the scholars of the scholars drawn from feminist movements, feminist intellectual politics, they contributed to the domain of critique to modernity or deconstruction of modernity.

Feminism suggests that European modernity guided by the industrial revolution enlightenment, critical thinking, reasoning capacity and so on must be interrogated by different dimensions by employing different parameters. And feminism poses key challenge to critical modernist paradigm in sociology those four central pillars of modernity namely holism or totality, reflexivity, rationality and social movements. Those four are the guiding principles of critical modernist paradigm in sociology and how feminists attempt to deconstruct those central themes of the critical modernist paradigm in sociology.

When I say feminism poses key challenge to critical modernist paradigm in sociology in terms of what in terms of intellectual politics. So, when I say if you look at this intellectual politics, when I say whether I mean it is related to a certain intellectual question which is historically conditioned that that kind of intellectual politics when you look at.

When I say feminism poses key challenge to critical modernism in terms of intellectual politics, I mean the question is whether the two are compatible or opposed. Whether feminism on the one hand and intellectual politics on the other whether there is a compatibility or there diadems or they constitute dichotomy. I mean dichotomy I mean they are opposed groups.

Do we think that no intellectual politics, does not consider social movement as a part of critical modernist paradigm in sociology. If it does not include social movement as a parameter of critical modernist paradigm in sociology then feminine moves away from intellectual politics, Marxism is also moves away from intellectual politics and so on. Now, if there is a compatibility with feminism and on the one hand and intellectual politics on the other precisely because both intellectual politics as well as feminism they always try to include social movements in today's world.

For a long time intellectual politics did not include social movement as a parameter of critical modernist paradigm in sociology. Whatever we discussed in academic sector need not have any bearing on social movement. Feminism push that question, Marxism pushes that.

We will see what are the what kind of analogy we can bring up out so far as Marxism and feminism are concerned that is why feminism on the one hand and intellectual politics on the other is there compatibility or are the opposite. And these points to earlier discussions on encounter between feminisms on the one hand and post modernism on the other. We will also discuss this, in these two lectures on feminist challenge to European majority.

And when we when I say that that the region or there appears to be an encounter between feminism, post modernism and modernist paradigm in sociology, you may say one may say that no feminism and post modernism on the one hand they try to bring about a critic to critical modernism. It does not imply that feminism and post modernism are same; no, they are different. There is also a close encounter between feminism on the one hand and post modernism on the other.

And in this lecture what we are going to do this lecture in fact in these two lectures, these two lectures basically assume very basic knowledge about feminist ideas. Then if I say that feminism imposes critical key challenge to critical modernism in terms of intellectual politics Marxism also poses key challenge to critical modernist paradigm in sociology in terms of intellectual point post modernism also that. Scholars drawn from cultural studies also do the same. Then that then let us first discuss the analogy between feminism on the one hand and Marxism on the other.

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Social movements

Analogy between Marxism and feminism:

- (a) interaction between “movement” intellectuals and academic intellectuals;
- (b) recomposition within the academy;
- (c) characteristics from social movements – concern for agency / ideology, experience / reflexivity.



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There in this sense now we are going to discuss those four parameters through which we try to those four lenses through which we try to examine critical modernist paradigm in sociology. Let us start with social movements because therein lies the significance of the analogy between Marxism and feminism in terms of what they fall apart from intellectual politics.

We will also discuss we will also discuss the analogy between Marxism and post modernism feminism and post modernism and so on. To start with we are trying to discuss the analogy between Marxism and feminism so far as social movement is because social movements are very important components so far its critical modernist paradigm in sociology is concerned, this is very important.

When I say there is an analogy between Marxism and feminism in terms of at least three parameter. One the there must be an interaction between movement intellectuals and academic intellectual. I mean the proponents of intellectual politics or the proponents of academic intellectual dominance for a long time even to in 2017 or 2018 and today we can say that even in general we do not tend to include social movements as a part of intellectual exchange of hiding.

We always refer to the freedom struggle that India had during the colonial period we also refer back to the October revolution, Chinese revolution, industry revaluation, French revolution and so on. But what we discuss does it have any bearing on the outside world

today that intellectual politics that no we will just restrict our movement to only the these four walls, we are not bothered whether because we are academic community, we do not have any role to play so far as politics is concerned.

Marxism, feminism, cultural studies, post modernism, they all challenge this position. This suggests both Marxism I mean all Marxism, feminism, cultural studies, post modernism, they always suggest that there must an interaction between academic intellectuals as well as movement intellectual. Suppose, if I have to give you an example of some people who come under both who are considered both as movement intellectuals as well as academic intellectuals maybe Antony Giddens, Immanuel Wallerstein, Judith butler.

I mean they are university professors, Michel Foucault, Erich Fromm, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer and so on. Even in India, we find many, many people at least at not many, but at least a few people who come under both who are considered both movement intellectuals as well as academic intellectuals.

They try to go beyond this narrow distinction between movement intellectuals and the academic intellectuals. If there is no interaction between her for Marxism for feminism, if there is no interaction between movement intellectuals and academic intellectuals, then this gap that is that will be created that will not be able to sustain our desire for change. That is why whatever we discuss here must have some kind of implications for our economic culture and politics.

There must be an interaction between movement intellectuals and academic intellectuals. Through what if I say that there must be an interaction between movement intellectuals and academic intellectuals, then there is an urgent need of recomposition within the academy this recomposes.


When I say there is an urgent need of re composition within the academy, I mean the academic intellectuals must try to learn from movement intellectuals, I mean the practical experience, the lived experience and then they must try to incorporate those things within the academic spaces. That is why when we discuss certain things about suppose patriarchy, suppose you discuss something about inequality that is there is I mean the way we encounter these things the way we confront with these things in the larger societal setup, they must be included in the academic spaces. Not simply for

discussion, but to ensure social change, economic change, political change, cultural change, ideological change. And feminism as well as Marxism, they emphasize on the fact that there is there is an urgent need of re-composition within the academy.


And the third analogy between Marxism and feminism suggest that I mean there are certain characteristics from social movements. What are those characteristics, I mean there must be a concern for agency, human action, not simply human action, but for purpose human action and intentional human action, that agency may be guided by certain ideology. That human agency must be guided through certain experience, lived experience, reflexive position that human agency is going to undertake, this is very important.

Then we have discussed three parameters through which we can bring about an analogy between Marxism and feminism. One the interaction between there must be an interaction between movement intellectuals, and academic intellectuals. Secondly, there is an urgent need of re-composition within the economy; and thirdly we must understand certain characteristics from social movements I mean concerned for agency, ideology, experience, lived experience reflexivity and so on these are basic ideas I mean about Marxism and feminism.

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- “First-wave” feminism
- “Second-wave” feminism
- Feminist writers devote little time to the movement as such and the feminist theory of social movements is limited.
- Most interest is on recovering history of “first-wave” feminism rather than understanding the contemporary women’s movement in sociological terms.



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The historical movement of the emergence of second-wave feminism and the interaction with the 1968 great revolution in France led by students we have already discussed this.

And also early 1970s had left important for understanding development modernity and so on. When I say second-wave feminism, there is a there is a difference between first-wave feminism and second-wave feminism. Please remember one thing you vast, vast, vast literature on first-wave feminism second-wave feminism and so on, but there is a basic difference between first-wave feminism and second-wave feminism.

Please remember this that what is primarily, what is first-wave feminism in a in the first couple of decades of the 20th century. I mean women fought for suffrage, I mean franchise or to vote, equal wage, working hours in terms of working hours and so on.

I mean if I have to go back to the first decade of the twentieth century 1989 and so on. Lifting democratic women they first started that no we want equal wage just like men there was absolute inequality even today there is inequality so far as wage is concerned even in India so far as male and female or men and women are concerned. You can you can just look at how much the captain of Indian male cricket team receives, what is his salary, and what is the salary of the captain of Indian women's cricket team. I mean huge difference even by the BCC and so on. And government also has been ignoring these aspects.

Then when left wing democratic women they made an attempt for such equal wage patterns equal I mean equal suffrage patterns or equal franchise I mean power to vote. They just kept it as de facto rights of women; it was not it did not come under the legal framework. In a second-wave feminism, those de factor rights became (Refer Time: 16:53) rights.

If I have to say that what do you mean by the transition from first-wave feminism to second-wave feminism, now transition from first-wave feminism to second-wave feminism implies that there is a transition from de facto rights to (Refer Time: 17:09) rights. My power to vote, my power to exercise my franchise I mean universal adult franchise, universal adult suffrage equal wage and so on, they came under legal scanner, legal purview in the second-wave feminism which was not there in the first look.

And feminist writers devote little time to the movement as such and the feminist theory of social movements therefore, is limited. The way you will find theories on race, class. Perhaps theories have I am and I am sure people have been working on these issues, but and then it is vast literature is available. And the way scholars of scholars should run

from feminist perspective, devote little time to the movement as such and the feminist theory of social movements is limited most interest actually is on a recovery history of first-wave feminism rather than understanding the contemporary women's movement in sociological terms.

And such dissociation from contemporary women's movements in sociological terms has negatively affected women's movements not simply in India, but across the continents in the world that is why I said historical movement of the emergence of second-wave feminism and interaction with 1968 great revolution in France led by students had left an important have significant implications for our understanding of development and modernity. And mostly feminist scholars they are engaged in recovering the history of first-wave a feminism rather than understanding the contemporary women's movements in sociological terms.

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- This disinterest is shared with other "identity politics" movements and contrasts with Marxist emphasis on analysis of present movement;
- Stronger focus on "enemy" agency ("backlash", ideology, patriarchy, etc.)
- Related to political / rhetorical strategy of arguing for necessary link between structure (patriarchy) – interests (women's) – demands (feminism) – action (movement) and reluctance to examine conditions of this;
- Related also to interests of 1970s Marxism in ideology and structure (Althusser) but not agency.

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And such dissociation, such disinterest is said with other identity politics movements and contrasts with Marxist emphasis on analysis of present moment. Now, it deviates from marketing this such dissociation from contemporary women's movements in sociological terms is said with other identity politics movement may be caste, maybe race, maybe ethnicity and so on nationality and so on rigid regionally and so on religion they are all identity based quality. But then and hence they contrast with Marx, Marx is emphasis on the analysis of present movements and there is the in feminism you will find that is

stronger focus on enemy agency these are necklace effects in terms of ideology in terms of patriarchy and so on.

It is also related I mean feminist writers they are also dwell upon certain engagement related to political and at times rhetorical strategy of arguing for necessary links between structure and between structure, demands, action and reluctance to examine conditions. When feminists try to look at modernity as forging a political strategy of arguing for necessary links between structure and agency structure and action ok, the structure may be captured by patriarchy. Patriarchy is also I mean perpetrator itself is a structure.

Then women's interests I mean they are they are a part of agency. Women's interests also can become a structure at times. And the demands the concerns that patriarchy in fact, has sabotaged our economic culture and quality and their relationship with what kind of movement that we are going to forge against patriarchal social order. And it is also related to certain level of reluctance to examine the conditions for this. It is also related to related not to provide any explains. It is also related to the interests of 1970s Marxism in ideology and structure, but not agency I mean in the words of structure lists we have seen I mean Althusser himself for new Marxist.

And we have examined Althusser under the rubric of structuralist interpretation of modernity precisely because he is he is not only a new Marxist, but also a structural Marxist. And the wave feminists try to dwell upon these that that structure becomes more important than human agency. Now, for Marx a structure is important no doubt about it, but it is the human agency which is going to ensure social change to make change possible.

For feminist perhaps faminist for most of the feminist scholars not all, most of the feminist scholars, they have been trying to dwell upon the structure more in contradistinction with what kind of consultant, organized, political accent is required to alter such social order to alter such political order to alter such patriarchal social order and so on. This is very important ok.

Now, now when I when we have to go beyond certain things that that empirical empirically when we look at these before getting into empirical discussion, I mean then what we have discussed till now we have discussed an analogy between Marxism and feminism. And then we have discussed the distinction between first-wave feminism, and

second-wave feminism. And the disinterest or the dissociation from contemporary women's movements in sociological terms by to a large extent by feminist writers is said with other identity politics movements.


I mean these feminist movements they have they have become a part of identity politics movements just like caste, race that is why whenever we look at identity politics movements we look at a caste, race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and so on ok. In contradicting to which Marxist reflects and so on the analysis of present movements in terms of class; Class is not an identity politics movement there, it is class becomes class is different I mean in this.

Feminists tend to focus more on enemy agency in terms of backlash effects, ideology patriarchy and so on that is why they put so much importance on structure ideology and so on, but not agency that is why there again here you will find there is an analogy between a feminism on the one hand and Althusser on the other.

Even within structural Marxism Marxist straight structural Marxist strained Althusser was thinking of not the actual mode of production, but the idea of mode of products if you can slightly recall in structuralist interpretation of modernity we have discussed that is a it is also my feminists also are more interested in the 1970s Marxism in terms of ideology and structure in Althusser sense, but not agency.

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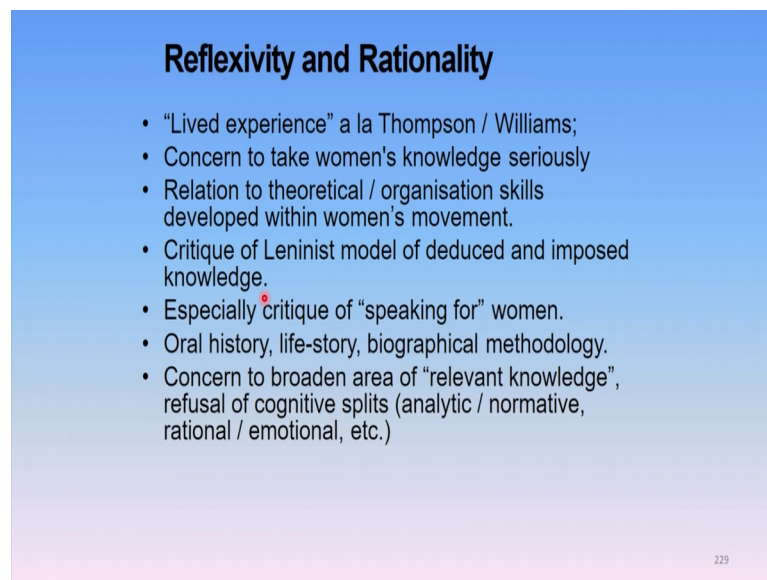
Empirical question of the compatibility / identity of movements (versus class, ethnic, etc. movements) is raised, as is the question of the nature of (women's, men's identity).



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These the empirical questions of compatibility identity movements are raised as is the question of the nature of women's or men's identity and so on. It is very important to understand these things that that these empirical questions so far as social movements are concerned.

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Reflexivity and Rationality

- "Lived experience" a la Thompson / Williams;
- Concern to take women's knowledge seriously
- Relation to theoretical / organisation skills developed within women's movement.
- Critique of Leninist model of deduced and imposed knowledge.
- Especially critique of "speaking for" women.
- Oral history, life-story, biographical methodology.
- Concern to broaden area of "relevant knowledge", refusal of cognitive splits (analytic / normative, rational / emotional, etc.)

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Now when we look at reflexivity and rationality we will discuss holism in the next lecture, but in this lecture we will discuss reflexivity and rationality so far as the feminist challenge to critical modernist paradigm in sociology is concerned. One is they emphasize more on lived experience we are going to discuss EO Thompson and Raymond Williams later on when we will discuss cultural studies and so on.

Lived experience I mean what I experienced as a human agency my experience may be different from that of yours; it does not imply that or my experience may be different from the general societal experience. Does not imply that my experience will be less significant than the social experience societal expect. My experience is unique to my own case. Feminists they always try to look at these aspects that not all women have the same experience that those lived experiences must before grounded properly ok.

Secondly, there is a concern to take women's knowledge series. For a long time even in today's world there is a there is a general perception not to take women's knowledge personally seriously. They always get a second entry I mean I mean step motherly treatment it is very important to understand these that when we look at equality between

men and women, we must create a society create a space where the relationship between women and men will not be located or situated or forged on unequal terms. And this is also a part of my lived experience that if woman's knowledge on certain things on the everything I mean everything with you will not be taken see, then the world will not be a livable place as we have been observing. The world will be a livable place only when both women and men participate in the decision making process. This is very important.

When we look at reflexivity particularly there is a relationship I mean it must be related to theoretical and organizational skills developed within women's those lived experiences they all so create a space for theory is they also create a space for the emergence of theory, they also create a space for organizational skills developed within women's movements.

The kind of organizational skills which are the which is required in present movement in manufacturing sector workers movements or banking sector insurance sectors workers movements that then the same organizational skills cannot be copied in the context of women's movements. You see organizational skills must be very creative that is why feminists they developed a critique to Leninist model of deduced and imposed knowledge.

There we will find that there is a problem here ok. I mean problem in the sense what Lenin did in Soviet Union that he tried to specify certain classes who can bring about a social and political revolution in industrial. He looked at industrial workers he looked at peasant and so on who will bring about the travels. Then for a long time it become a Leninist model that yes we can we can go ahead with social and political revolution only through industrial workers even peasantry was reduced I mean peasantry was removed from that that scenario. It was only when (Refer Time: 30:12) in China he carried out revolution through peasantry called cultural revolution only then peasantry was also considered of having the power to make social change possible.

And on in this case feminists bring about a critique to such model of deduced and imposed knowledge. Then especially critic of speaking for women, we do not want to speak for or against what we are trying to speak against patriarchy, against violence, against domestic violence, against violence at the workplace, against sexual assault and such things are very important. I mean such lived experiences are very important and the

methodology that we can bank on may be drawn from oral history life is life story by graphical methodology and so on.

And there must be a here reflexivity and nationality I am going to discuss at a time I mean in this section that there must be concerned to broaden the area of relevant knowledge. What is relevant knowledge, what is science, what is relevant science. There is always as Weber said no emotive social acts and effective social acts they are meaningless I mean it is meaningless it is unreflective in nature and so on. For him it was only instrumental rationality which assumes greater significance.

For feminists, no, let us not have such kind of splits, emotion also produces knowledge because emotion is also based on my lived experience that they refuse to get into such cognitive splits between act what is an analytic on the one hand and normative on the other ok, rational and emotional and so on objective and subjective and so on.

This is very important what is relevant knowledge is also a serious question that is why feminists try to overcome or feminists refuge or feminists refuse to accept such a cognitive splits between analytic and normative, the rational and emotional and so on; And then of course, what kind of reflexivity and nationality that we talk about that legitimization of for example, sexuality, housework as city subject.

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- Legitimation of, for example, sexuality, housework as "serious subjects".
- Cognitive splits seen as legitimating exclusion of women's experience and concerns.
- Male Left (= critical modernism) seen as colluding in this domination by political economy and instrumental rationality.
- Political shift from "instrumentally rational" hierarchical logics to organisation as aim in itself – issue of organisation of "academic mode of production" (Stanley).
- Doubt re "speaking for": if knowledge was universal, could be articulated, and could be deduced from general principles, anyone could speak for anyone else. But it does not work in practice.

People very often say that I mean women will be engaged in cooking, and men will do the outdoor work, such division of labor is very dangerous for a any society such thinking is little for any society. When I say cognitive splits between analytic, and normative, rational and emotional and so on, cognitive splits at seen as legitimize gene or legitimating exclusion of women's experience and concerns.

These cognitive splits have been created just to legitimize the way women's experiences lived experiences, concerns, issues can be excluded. And hence critical modern modernism is seen as colluding in this domination by political economy and instrumental rationality. And feminists here they try to give up they try to provide a critique to Marx as well as Weber. I mean when I say political economy in terms of Marx and an instrumental rationality I mean Weber.

Then there is a political shift from instrumental irrational hierarchical logics to organization as an aim in itself issue of organization of academic mode of production ok. It is very important to understand this. When there is a political shift from instrumental rational hierarchical logics to organization as an as aim itself therein lies the significance of the issues of organization of academic mode of production. I am just using this term because Marx always used the term mode of production, but academic mode of products and. In fact, stun sternly we used it for the first time that there is a hierarchy even with the negative. There is also power structure even with the negative and so on.

Because the kind of knowledge that we produce the kind of knowledge that we generate is also not universal we must doubt, what kind of knowledge, we have produced or what kind of relevant knowledge that we have certified. We must interrogate that we must question that if knowledge was universal could be articulated or and could be reduced or deduced from general principles anyone could speak for anyone else.

But it does not work in practice that is why knowledge is relative knowledge is not universal, our rationality also is relative, it is not universal; our reflexivity also is not absolute it is also relative it is also parsing that is why what I experience may differ from your experience. And your experience may differ from her experience; her experience may differ from his experience; his experience may differ from the entire societal experience. Our experiences are pretty unique to our own existence our own practices, our own structures. And now the way we try to cope with certain situations.

What then we have discussed in this lecture we have discussed the feminist challenge to critical modernist paradigm in sociology in terms of social movements, reflexivity and rationality. In the next lecture, we are going to discuss the feminist challenge to critical modernist paradigm in sociology in terms of holism or totality.

Thank you.