

Quadrant II – Transcript and Related Materials

Programme: Bachelor of Arts

Subject: History

Paper Code: HSC 109

Paper Title: History of Women's Movements

Unit: IV

Module Name: Uma Chakravarti's Gendering Caste through a feminist lens

Name of the Presenter: Assoc. Prof. Dr Rita Braganza

Notes

Summary- Uma Chakravarti's Gendering Caste through a feminist lens

Uma Chakravarti, a feminist and a historian, in her **book** *Gendering Caste: Through a Feminist Lens*, argues that the systematic and structural oppression of women needs to be acknowledged in order to fully understand caste. A myriad of patriarchal practices within the larger framework of autonomy, kinship, labor, sexuality, access to material resources, and caste as a product of the consistent sustenance of endogamous marriages, have overtime moulded the relationship between gender and caste.

- Women's innate nature *strisvabhava* was the representation of conflict between the innate nature of women and their Dharma. Their innate nature as sexual beings leads to a conflict with their *stridharma* of fidelity to the husband. Women's sexuality is organized by paternal power in the emerging class. Social and political arrangements are also organized by men. The denial of economic autonomy, control over the productive resources and autonomy in law has resulted in women made appendages of men.

Despite the end of the colonial era in India, the traditional hierarchies and the essential social order in the Hindu society with its multiple layers of graded inequality still remains untouched. The concept of 'caste' almost seems self-perpetuating, which roots itself in the economics of class, privatisation of property, and other structures of oppression.