

UNIT – II

Conflict and Marxist perspectives

Marx · Dahrendorf · Feminist · Caste-class

Explanatory Lecture Slides

Recent Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology · Minor-II-3 · Semester III

RECENT THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIOLOGY

Topics covered in this unit

01

State the conflict question

02

Marx's base and superstructure

03

Dahrendorf's authority conflict

04

Feminist conflict over the household

05

Caste as conflict

06

Law as prize and as weapon

How this unit is organised

01

The conflict question

02

Marx

03

Dahrendorf

04

Feminism

05

Caste-class

06

Law

The conflict question

Who gets what, who is excluded, who writes the rule?

- Power, not only values. Change, not only equilibrium.
- A courtroom is a conflict theatre with an order ritual.

The conflict question

ASK

- Who benefits?

DO NOT ONLY ASK

- What need of the whole does this serve?

Marx — recap for sociology III

Mode of production; class-in-itself / for-itself; law as superstructure; ideology.

- Indian: A.R. Desai (paper II). Peasant, informal labour, State as a relative autonomous actor (Poulantzas — optional name).
- Criticism already learned: caste, gender, nation.

Marx — recap for sociology III

KEEP

- Class lens.
- Ideology.

ADD IN INDIA

- Caste.
- Gender.
- Tribe.

Dahrendorf

Conflict of authority in 'imperatively coordinated associations' — not only owners v workers.

- A court, a university, a party, a firm: each has a conflict of positions.
- Useful to read a law college, not only a factory.

Dahrendorf

CONFLICT OF

- Authority roles.

NOT ONLY

- Property classes.

Feminist perspectives

The household is political. Unpaid work, control of sexuality, law as patriarchal (until rewritten).

- Liberal, radical, socialist, Dalit-feminist (one line each if the question is wide).
- Indian law: Vishaka → POSH; 2005 HSA; D.V. Act; rape-law amendments — name, do not celebrate as finished.
- A 16-mark without gender in 2026 looks dated.

Feminist perspectives

SITE

- Family.
- Workplace.
- Religion.
- Police station.

STATUTES

- POSH.
- D.V. Act.
- HSA 2005.

Caste as structured conflict

Not a 'dysfunction' of an otherwise happy system. Graded inequality (Ambedkar) is a conflict theory of India.

- PoA Act is a conflict-statute: it names a structure, not a misunderstanding.
- Do not reduce caste to class (paper II).

Caste as structured conflict

LENS

- Ambedkar > vulgar Marx here.

LAW

- Art. 17.
- PoA.
- Reservation.

Law in a conflict reading

A prize classes fight to capture, and a weapon the captured State wields.

- Also, sometimes, a weapon the weaker win (PILs, labour statutes, reservations).
- A mature answer holds both capture and counter-capture.

Law in a conflict reading

CAPTURE

- Colonial forest law.
- Sedition as used.

COUNTER

- Art. 32.
- Legal aid.
- PoA.

Feminist perspectives

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Cases a KSLU answer should name

CASE

Vishaka v State of Rajasthan

(1997) 6 SCC 241

Conflict in the workplace named, then recoded as law.

CASE

Olga Tellis

(1985) 3 SCC 545

City conflict over land and livelihood.

CASE

Indra Sawhney

(1992) Supp (3) SCC 217

Caste-class conflict in the equality code.

Provisions & materials to quote

PoA Act 1989

A statute that assumes structure, not accident.

POSH Act 2013

Workplace conflict.

Industrial relations c

Class conflict's labour-law face.

Art. 39(b)(c)

Conflict over material resources, constitutionalised.

Art. 17

Conflict over ritual hierarchy, constitutionalised.

10 / 16-mark frames from this unit

Q1

Explain the conflict perspective. How does it criticise functionalism?

Q2

Discuss Marxist and feminist perspectives on law and family.

Q3

Is caste a form of class, or a structure of conflict of its own?

Q4

Write a note on Dahrendorf's concept of conflict.

Unit recap

- 1 Conflict asks: who benefits?
- 2 Marx: class and superstructure — then add caste and gender.
- 3 Ambedkar is India's great conflict theorist of caste.
- 4 Law is both prize and weapon.
- 5 Feminism is not an optional annex in this paper.