

UNIT – IV

Late modern turns

Postmodern · Giddens · Bourdieu · Risk · Media

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 what 'postmodern' claims

02

Giddens's structuration

03

Bourdieu's capital and habitus

04

Beck's risk society

05

Media / network society in outline

06

Keep a sober exam tone

How this unit is organised

01

Postmodern

02

Structuration

03

Bourdieu

04

Risk society

05

Media

06

Exam tone

Postmodern — a careful paragraph

Suspicion of grand narratives (Lyotard); many truths; play of signs. Use, then criticise.

- Use: to question a single story of 'development' or 'nation'.
- Abuse: 'nothing is true' in a murder trial. A court cannot be postmodern about a corpse.
- A 10-mark: two claims, two Indian illustrations, one hard limit (rights, evidence).

Postmodern — a careful paragraph

KEEP

- Many voices.
- Against one development story.

DROP

- There is no fact.

Giddens — structuration

Structure is both the medium and the outcome of action. Agents know a good deal about what they do.

- A bridge between system (functionalism) and actor (interaction).
- Useful: a litigant uses caste networks (structure) and also rewrites them by filing a PoA case (action).

Giddens — structuration

STRUCTURE

- Rules and resources.

ACTION

- Knowledgeable agents.

Bourdieu

Habitus, field, kinds of capital (economic, cultural, social, symbolic).

- A law college is a field. English is cultural capital. A family name is social capital. The robe is symbolic.
- Explains why 'merit' is never naked.
- A 16-mark star if spelled right.

Bourdieu

HABITUS

- Durable dispositions.

CAPITAL

- Not only money.

Risk society (Beck)

Late modern societies produce risks (nuclear, climate, data, finance) that science both makes and is asked to certify.

- Indian: Bhopal, Ganga, Aadhaar/Puttaswamy, climate petitions.
- Law: absolute liability (M.C. Mehta), EIA, precautionary principle.
- This is where sociology III meets environmental law in Year 5.

Risk society (Beck)

OLD HARM

- Factory accident, local.

NEW RISK

- Invisible, global, disputable by experts.

Media and networks

Castells in one line if you can; else: a public made by the feed, not the village well.

- Paper II's post-1990 unit returns as theory.
- IT Act, intermediary rules, hate-speech — name, do not essay unless asked.

Media and networks

PLUS

- New publics.
- Exposé.

MINUS

- Speed of stigma.
- Deepfake as a labelling machine.

Exam tone

Name, illustrate, limit. Do not perform a French seminar.

- KSLU wants to see you have read the label and can connect India.
- One Indian case per theory is enough.

Exam tone

DO

- Bourdieu + a law college.
- Beck + Mehta.
- Giddens + a PoA filing.

DO NOT

- Name-drop ten Frenchmen.

Risk society (Beck)

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Cases a KSLU answer should name

CASE

M.C. Mehta v Union of India

(1987) 1 SCC 395

Risk society before the textbook — absolute liability.

CASE

Puttaswamy

(2017) 10 SCC 1

Data as a late-modern risk.

CASE

Vellore Citizens' Welfare Forum

(1996) 5 SCC 647

Precautionary principle — law of risk.

Provisions & materials to quote

EPA 1986 / EIA notific

Risk's statute book.

IT Act 2000

Network society's penal edge.

Art. 21

The right that late-modern risks attack.

Competition Act

Fields and capital in a market.

DPDP Act 2023 (if aske

Data as capital and as risk — name only if current in your hall.

10 / 16-mark frames from this unit

Q1

Write a note on postmodernism in sociology. What is its limit in a court of law?

Q2

Explain Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and capital with an Indian illustration.

Q3

What is a risk society? How has Indian environmental law answered it?

Q4

Explain Giddens's theory of structuration.

Unit recap

- 1 Postmodern: many narratives; not 'no facts' in a trial.
- 2 Giddens: structure as medium and outcome.
- 3 Bourdieu: habitus + four capitals — spell them.
- 4 Beck: manufactured risk; Mehta is the case.
- 5 Name, illustrate, limit.