

**Programme:- Master in Sociology**

**SEMESTER-II**

**Postgraduate Department of Sociology**

**Patna University, Patna**

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**Compulsory Paper:- C.C. 8 (Urban Sociology)**

**Unit II:- Theoretical Perspectives in Urban Sociology**

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**OTHER CONTEMPORARY THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES - from Conflict Theory:-**

***Political Economy***

- Stems from work of Marx & Engels
- Term "political economy" refers to the interplay of political and economic forces in a society
- Political and economic forces are seen to be principal driving forces underlying urban activity
- See work of Henri Lefebvre, David Gordon, Michael Storper and David Walker, Manuel Castells, David Harvey, Allen Scott

**Central themes of all Political Economy based urban sociological theories:**

- Social conflict between competing interest or status groups is a ubiquitous social process
- Capitalism as a dominant system of power dominates the development of modern urban-industrial communities,
- Cities or metropolitan communities are now increasingly controlled and shaped by worldwide system of emerging global economy

- Attempts to establish causal relationships between broad macroeconomic trends with a host of urban social problems at the more microsociological level of the local urban community or neighbourhood

### **Assumptions (Joe Feagan)**

- 1) Cities are situated in a hierarchical global system, and global linkages among cities help define the structure of the world system
- 2) The world system is one of competitive capitalism
- 3) Capital is easily moved, locations of cities are fixed
- 4) Politics and government matter
- 5) People and circumstances differ according to time and place, and these differences matter

### **David Harvey (1985, study of Baltimore)**

- Focus on capital accumulation and circulation
- The urban environment is built, destroyed, and rebuilt to allow for a more efficient circulation of capital
- Overproduction and overaccumulation of profitable commodities result in urban development
- Suburban individual home construction
- a market response to the overaccumulation of surplus capital
- a way to maintain social stability by satisfying the demand for individual homes

### **Allen Scott:-**

- Arrangement and structure of city are determined by the needs of industrial manufacturing.
- Production process rather than circulation of capital was the most important process.
- vertical disintegration--parts of the production process are "out-sourced" leaving the corporation as more of an administrator.

### **Growth Machine (John Logan & Harvey Molotch)**

- Real estate investors are primary "players" in the development of urban environment, but also have bankers, developers, corporate officials
- Cities are "growth machines" --growth and development/change are necessary for well being of city.
- Growth machine ideology influences local government to view cities not as places where people live, work and have social relationships, but solely as a place where it is necessary to create a good business climate
- Increasing value of commercial property comes ahead of community values, neighbourhood needs or a livable city.