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اسم المحاضرة الحادي عشر باللغة الإنكليزية **Conflict, competition, and cooperation**

Conflict, competition, and cooperation

Group conflict has often been viewed as a basic mechanism of social change, especially of those radical and sudden social transformations identified as revolutions. Marxists in particular tend to depict social life in capitalist society as a struggle between a ruling class, which wishes to maintain the system, and a dominated class, which strives for radical change. Social change then is the result of that struggle. These ideas are basic to what sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf has called a conflict model of society.

The notion of conflict becomes more relevant to the explanation of social change if it is broadened to include competition between rival groups. Nations, firms, universities, sports associations, and artistic schools are groups between which such rivalry occurs. Competition stimulates the introduction and diffusion of innovations, especially when they are potentially power-enhancing. Thus, the leaders of non-Western states feel the necessity of adopting Western science and technology, even though their ideology may be anti-Western, because it is only by these means that they can maintain or enhance national autonomy and power. Additionally, competition may lead to growth in the size and complexity of the entities involved. The classic example of this process, as first suggested by Adam Smith, is the tendency in capitalism toward collusion and the establishment of monopolies when small firms are driven out of the competitive marketplace. Another example came from Norbert Elias, who suggested that western European nation-states were born out of competitive struggles between feudal lords. Competition also dominates theories of individualism, in

which social change is seen as the result of individuals pursuing their self-interest. [Game theory](#) and other mathematical devices, however, have shown that individuals acting in their own self-interest will in certain conditions cooperate with one another and thereby widen the existing social networks.