

***NON GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANIZATIONS AND THE STATE :
A CASE STUDY OF OXFAM INDIA***

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NIDHI MANI TRIPATHI



**INTERNATIONAL POLITICS DIVISION
CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL, POLITICS,
ORGANIZATION AND DISARMAMENT
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHAR LAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067**

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जवाहर लाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHAR LAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
New Delhi - 110 067

International Politics Division
Centre For International Politics,
Organization and Disarmament,
School Of International Studies

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled '**Non Governmental Organizations and the State: A Case Study of Oxfam India**', submitted by Ms. Nidhi Mani Tripathi, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy (M. Phil.) of this University, is her original work. This dissertation has not been submitted wholly or partially for the award of any other degree of this or of any other University.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Dr. Kanti P. Bajpai
Chairperson
Chairperson
Centre for International Politics,
Organization and Disarmament
School of International Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110 067

Sushil Kumar
Supervisor

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July 21, 1998*

Nidhi
Nidhi Mani Tripathi

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The most notable trend in the present day international politics is the emergence of non state actors and the growing importance of transnational relations. While the nation state is the dominant unit, no picture of present day world politics would be complete without locating the role played by the increasing number of non-state actors. Global structures have become the distinct level of social reality in international relations. The world is more than a network of nation-states and economic units. The growing importance of transnational forces in international relations challenges the assumptions of state centric models and calls for a new approach altogether - An approach which revises the traditional role assigned to the state without heralding its demise (as has, some what, hastily been predicted)¹ and which disposes of the spatial factors without denying territorial realities.

Traditional Approach in International Relations - Traditionally, the international system was defined as 'a collection of independent political units which interact with some regularity'.² The 'independent political units' signified nation-states. After the Napoleonic wars, nations-states, particularly the European great powers replaced the kings and princes of the

¹ See John H. Herz, 'The Rise and Demise of the Territorial State' in James N. Rosenau ed., *International politics and Foreign Policy* (New York, 1969) p. 80 - 86.

² From Joseph Frankel, *International Politics : Conflict and Harmony* (London, 1969) p. 39

previous centuries and became the prime-movers of world politics. According to the traditional approach, i.e., state centric approach, state is responsible for any change in the distribution of power, for any alignment, for territorial expansion, for colonial conquests and for war and peace in the international arena. Traditionalists contend that the role played by other non-state actors or international organizations is insignificant. They don't accept the importance of transnational relations. This approach found its best exponents in the Realist School. The philosophy of realism was epitomized by the work of Hans. J. Morgenthau, who authoritatively spelled out six basic principles of realism and stated, 'International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power'.³ Henry A. Kissinger's work. *The Troubled Partnership: A Re-appraisal of the Atlantic Alliance* is another fine example of realist thought. According to the realist scholars, the world is anarchic and only nation states and economic organizations matter. Neo-realists⁴ admit that they are conditioned by transnational institutions, but they conceptualize these transnational institutions as the network of

³ See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations ; The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York, 1973) p. 1- 63. Other prominent realist thinkers of the present century are E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years Crises : 1919 - 1939* (New York, 1964) Headley Bull, *The Anarchical Society : A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York, 1977).

⁴ For a general statement of the Neo-realist perspective, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*(Reading, MA, 1979) Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York, 1980) Stephen Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequences : Regimes as Intervening Variables' in Stephen Krasner ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca, NY, 1983). Many important articles on Neo-realism has been compiled, edited

interdependence' (Robert Gilpin, 1980), controlled by its members i.e. nation-states (Stephen Krasner, 1983). So Neo-realism also offers a typical state-centric or 'state as an actor' model of international system.⁵

In both the perspectives (Realism and Neo-realism), the meta-theory at work is a sociological theory known as 'Reductionist Rationalism'. In Sociology, the state competition theories (Giddens, Skocpol and Tilly) and world system theories (Chase Dunn, Anthony Smith and Immanuel Wallerstein) reduce the transnational structures to military or economic processes regulated by major world powers.⁶ The assumptions of these schools of thought are generalized as the state-centric model. There are seven postulates of the state-centric model.⁷

Firstly, the world is divided into formally recognized geographical compartments called states. The governments of these states possess

and published in the form of a book by Robert O. Keohane, *Neo - realism and Its Critics* (New York, 1986)

⁵ See Richard Ashley, 'The Poverty of Neo-realism' *International Organizations*, Vol. 38, No - 2, spring 1984 p. 228 - 281

⁶ See Anthony Giddens, *The Nation - State and Violence : A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (Vol. 2, Cambridge, 1985), Theda Skocpol *States and Social Revolutions : A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge, 1979) Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States A.D. 1990 - 92* (Cambridge, 1994), Anthony Smith, *The Geo - politics of Information : How Western Culture dominates the world* (London, 1980), Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System, Capitalist, Agricultural and the Origins of European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century*' (New York, 1974)

⁷ From Richard W. Mansbach, Yale M. Ferguson and Donald M. Lampert, *The Web of World Politics : Non State Actors in Global System*. (Prentice Hall, 1976) , p. 2 - 6

exclusive control over their defined territories and the citizens residing in that territory.

Secondly, global politics is, exclusively, based on the interaction of nation-states. States are viewed as actors as well as the target of actions of other states.

Thirdly, Nation-states are independent and distinguishable from one another. There is no actual higher authority over them.

Fourthly, although states vary considerably in size and power, each nation state is believed to be the sovereign equal of any other state. It is the main tenet of the twentieth century international law.

Fifthly, nation states are the secular repositories of the highest human loyalties and nationalism is the driving force in international events.

Sixthly, they ignore, what Rosenau has termed as 'Linkage Politics'⁸, that is, the inter - relationship is virtually ignored. Nation-states are seen as homogeneous political entities in which a central government controls all legal forces.

Finally, the last point and the most important for this study is that the governments of nation states through their foreign policy agents are the only participants in the world politics or in other words, nation-states are the sole actors of international politics.

⁸ See James N. Rosenau (ed.), *Linkages Politics : Essays on the Convergence of National and International Systems* (New York, 1969)

It is very clear from the above seven postulates that the state-centric model fails to explain the present day international relations. It sounds outdated and unaware of the important changes. It ignores the existence of other actors in the form of regional organizations as well as stateless ethnic groups and terrorist organizations. It does not pay any heed to the growing importance of transnational corporations (TNCs). The state-centric model does not take into account the economic integration among nation states and ignores the importance which nation-states have given to international organizations especially those related to social and economic purposes. Though these areas fall into the 'low politics' category (economic and social development) rather than that of 'high politics' (decision making and diplomacy), these actors, sometimes influence the decision making process. Though the nation states remain the prime actors in international politics, the state centric model only partially explains the modern international system which is increasingly characterized by non state actors. Today scholars categorize the state as 'first among the equals'.⁹ In fact, the growing importance of non state organizations has made the high / low politics division obsolete. According to Burton, the high/low politics distinction occurs with an imagery of 'the ground floor level' which is narrowly concerned with inter state relations, essentially power relations contrasted to 'the basement level' which is 'concerned with world society as a whole,

⁹ op.cit., n.7, p. 2 - 6

making no arbitrary boundaries between that which is national and that which is international'.¹⁰

Non State Actors and Integration Theories- The non state actors emerge through the process of 'integration-integration of the government of the nation -states or groups of citizens of many states into one organization. So the theories of 'integration' are used by scholars to explain the growth of the intergovernmental organizations and a large number of nongovernmental organizations. These organizations have been established to bring up a sort of 'integration'. Several scholars suggest different theories of integration, but there are four classical approaches as suggested by Charles Pentland.¹¹ Federalism of Etzioni, Pluralism, Functionalism of David Mitrany and Neofunctionalism of Ernst Haas. The processes and the conditions, the endproduct and other variables have been given in the table (see the Table) as suggested by each theory.

Specific reference should be made to Philip Schmitter's 'Alternative Actors Strategies'. He tries to explain the emergence and replacement of the actors in the international system through several concepts - spillover, spillover, retrench, muddleabout, spillback and encapsulation. By 'spillover', Schmitter tries to explain how regional decision-makers would

¹⁰ From J.W. Burton, 'International Relations or World Society' in J.W. Burton et. al., *The Study of World Society : A London Perspective* (London, 1974) p.5

¹¹ See Charles Pentland, *Integration Theory and European Integration* (New York, 1973), p. 90

Theories of International Integration

Comparative summary of the four Schools of International Integration

	PLURALISM	FUNCTIONALISM	NONFUNCTIONALISM	FEDERALISM
I. The End Product				
Structure	Community of states	Administrative network responsive to community need	Supranational decisionmaking system	Supernational state
Evidence	Probability of peaceful conflict resolution; communications (flows intensity)	Degree of 'fit' between structures & functions; need--satisfaction	Locus of decisions (scope & level)	Distribution of power (formal & informal)
II. The process (level of analysis)				
System	Self-sustaining growth of interdependence & informal structures	Technical self-determination; imperatives of functional needs & technological change	Political development; growth of central institutions through "forward linkage"	Constitutional revolution: dramatic re-distribution of power and authority
State	Increase of capacity for decisionmaking information & responsiveness	Reluctant cooperation to solve technical & economic problems	Bargaining progress where governments pursue interests among other groups	Bargaining resulting in hobbesiar contract among elites of states
Individual	Social learning through communication & interaction (elite & mass)	Habits of cooperation derived from satisfaction of utilitarian needs by new institutions	Effects of successful decisionmaking & conflict resolution on elite attitudes	Differentiation of loyalties according to level of government
III. Major variables measured				
PLURALISTS	FUNCTIONALISTS	NEOFUNCTIONALISTS	FEDERALISTS	
(1) unbroken links of social communication	(1) international trade and trade agreements	(1) size of unit	(1) power politics (division of, separation of, etc.)	
(2) mobility of persons	(2) technological change and cooperation	(2) rate of transaction	(2) political identification	
(3) multiplicity of persons of communications and transactions	(3) creation of international organizations	(3) pluralism of - governments	(3) process of decisionmaking	
(4) interchange of group roles	(4) creation of interdependencies	(4) elite complementarity	(4) control over means of violence	
(5) mutual predictability of behavior	(5) social-welfare agreements between states	(5) governmental purposes	(5) national political elites	
(6) flow of goods, information, population and symbols between states	(6) "technical self-determination"	(6) power of union	(6) government / citizen relationship	
		(7) decisionmaking style	(7) equity of governmental members	
		(8) rate of transaction	(8) constitutionalism	
		(9) adaptability of governments	(9) decentralization and diversity	
		(10) perception of governments		
		(11) external pressures		

Source: Compiled from Charles Pentland, *Integration Theory and European Integration* (New York: Free Press, 1973), p. 190; and Gerhard Mally, *The European Community in Perspective* (Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, 1973), p. 25-39.

be given authority by national leaders 'Build up' concept is somewhat similar to spillover. More autonomy is given in those areas in which there was some control. Here one actor is replaced by the other, that is why, it is called 'alternative actors strategy'. 'Retrench', 'muddleabout' and 'spillback'- are negative concepts. They are obstacles in the way of indifference. 'Encapsulation', the final strategy, is related to the 'zone of indifference'. Regional actors act within the 'zone of indifference'. If there is a crisis, 'encapsulation' is the response of the regional actors to that crisis. But their action is modified each time. As happened during the Euro-Arab dialogue in response to the Oil crisis of 1973. So Schmitter's expanded Neo-functional model, particularly his 'Alternative Actors Strategy' is used to explain and to analyze the role of non-state actors and the degree of integration brought about by the non state actors.¹²

Meaning and Classification of Non-State Actors- The simplest definition of non state actors can be - 'they are entities other than nation states that interact in the international system'. This definition is all inclusive type. It includes all type of actors. Despite of several diversities, all these groups share one common purpose 'pursuing goals by operating across the boundaries'. There are a number of grounds, on the basis of which non state

¹² See Phillip Taylor, *Non State Actors in International Politics : From Trans - regional to Sub - state Organizations* (Westview Press, 1984) , p. 38

actors can be classified e.g. size, membership, geographical location, purpose, functional importance, logetivity etc.

On the basis of geographical scope of membership, non state actors can be put into two categories - regional groups and supra-regional (global) groups. Another basis of classification can be functional. On the basis of the functions they perform, we can make four general categories - economic, security, political, cultural or ideological. Economic category includes the actors performing business activities as transnational corporations (TNCs). Security groups contain the members who come along for mutual security purposes. Political organizations are those which seek to increase inter-group communication, settle disputes through multilateral security means. Cultural or ideological task oriented groups reflect the ethnic, national or religious grouping. But the most common classification of non state actors is based on the nation states membership i.e. International Governmental Organizations (IGOs) and International Nongovernmental Organizations (INGOs). Today ninety percent of the international organizations in operation are INGOs and remaining ten percent are IGOs. The number of both types of organizations, i.e., IGOs and INGOs increased sharply during the later half of the nineteenth century due to growth in international commerce and new means of communication and transportation. On the eve of the first world war, nearly 50 IGOs and over 170 INGOs were there in existence. After that, there was a rapid growth and by the year 1990, the number of IGOs came

upto 300 and that of INGOs to 4600. This study is going to take up the role played by one specific category of actor, that is, International Nongovernmental Organizations (INGOs).¹³

Non State Actors and International Relations Theory- After the final consolidation of major states in Europe in modern times, states were considered as permanent and stable units. The first world war shook the stability of states and destroyed two large empires-the Austro Hungarian and the Ottoman. It created new states based on the principle of national self-determination. The second world war weakened the nation state further. After the second world war, there was a reaction against the traditional state centric approach in IR theory.

According to Arnold Wolfers, this reaction took two different forms - The first one was 'individual as an actor' approach, and the second one emphasized the existence of other actors especially corporate actors and international organizations along with the states. Wolfers writes, "...the term 'multi-state system' no longer would be fully adequate to describe the environment in which statesmen and other actors operate in the world today".¹⁴ Transnational relations and non state actors are not new and they were always there in the international politics. Raymond Aron was the first

¹³ Often designated simply as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). In this study, the focus is on International NGOs, but the acronym NGOs will be used.

¹⁴ From Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration : Essays on International Politics* (New York, 1962), p.68.

to introduce the concept of 'Transnational Society'. Aron talked about commercial exchanges, migration of people and organizations across the frontiers as the contributors in the growth of the transnational society.¹⁵ But he didn't give much importance to it. John Herz,¹⁶ while writing on the territoriality of the state, asserts that modern nation state system has undergone a drastic change. The technological revolution and increased economic interaction made the 'territoriality or impermeability' of the state obsolete. Kenneth Boulding derives more or less the same conclusion from his analysis of the impact of nuclear powers. He says that each nation continues to exist only with the permission of the other because each pair of nations is capable of destroying each other and does not have the capability to prevent its own destruction. This has led to the formation of new institutional devices like coalition blocks and regional organizations. These institutions (other than states) have become the major actors in the international arena.¹⁷ The growth of the idea of an 'integrated Europe' led Stanley Hoffman to conclude that the nation-states would remain the primary actor, but other non state actors would play a major role in the international system.¹⁸

¹⁵ See Raymond Aron, *Peace and War : A Theory of International Relations* (New York, 1966).

¹⁶ See John Herz, 'The Territorial State Revisited :Reflections on the Future of Nation - State', *Polity* (Amhurst), I, 1968, p. - 12 - 34

¹⁷ See Kenneth Boulding, *Conflict and Defence* (New York, 1962)

¹⁸ See Stanley Hoffman , 'Obstinate or Obsolete ? The Fate of Nation State and the Case of Western Europe'

In the 1970's, a body of academic writing came up which may be identified as a different theoretical school. The literature on the domestic sources of foreign policy, bureaucratic politics, transnationalism and interdependence has been referred to as the 'pluralist perspective' or more simply the 'international relations paradigm'.¹⁹ It is also referred as 'global polity paradigm'. The main writers of global politics paradigm are Rosenau, Keohane and Nye and Mansbach; They accept that both governments and nongovernmental actors are important and that both security issues as well as economic and technical issues are important. The argument about whether state is dominant or subordinate is not resolved and they think that it is a matter of empirical investigation and depends on particular issue process under consideration.

Keohane and Nye's book, *Transnational Relations and World Politics* is the most relevant work for the study of non state actors. They said. "the conclusion to this volume attempts.....to introduce our alternative 'world politics paradigm' as a substitute for the state centric analysis framework".²⁰ Further, they wrote, "the difference can be clarified most easily by focusing on the nature of the actors. The world politics paradigm attempts to transcend the, 'level of analysis problem' both by

¹⁹ See M. Banks, 'Ways of Analyzing the World Society' in A.J.R. Groom and C.R. Mitchell eds., *International Relations Theory, A Bibliography* (London, 1978) p. 195 - 215.

²⁰ See Keohane and Nye, *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge 1971) p. xxv

broadening the conception of actors to include the transnational actors and by conceptually breaking down the 'hard shell of nation-state'.²¹ According to Keohane and Nye, there are two reasons for the increasing importance of non state actors-Improved technology and Increased interdependence and there are two aspects of transnational relations - Transnational interactions and Transnational organizations. Some global interactions involve only governments of nation-states, which they call 'inter-state interaction' e.g. war.

But there are other interactions which involve nongovernmental actors - individuals or organizations -these are transnational interactions. Keohane and Nye define transnational interactions as "the movement of tangible or intangible items across state boundaries when at least one actor is not an agent of government." They have explained it with another figures.²² They feel that all the transnational organizations have not become important but the transnational organizations with social and economic goals have become more important than that of political organizations.

In a more recent book *Power and Interdependence*, Keohane and Nye offer 'Complex interdependence' as an ideal type, and explanatory model in which transnational actors are important and the distinction between high and low politics is irrelevant. However, they also say "sometimes realist

²¹ Ibid., p. 380.

²² Ibid, p. xxvi

assumptions will be accurate, or largely accurate, but frequently complex interdependence will provide a better portrait of reality".²³

James N. Rosenau talks of 'the relocation of authority'²⁴ in a shrinking world. He talks of five global dynamics which have made the world- politics dynamic. They are: (i) technological revolution and growing interdependence, (ii) global issues like atmospheric pollution, (iii) authority crisis (State have not been able to solve the growing problems), (iv) coherence of sub-systems and their effectiveness (v) consequences of feedback of all these. According to Rosenau, there is possibility of 'greater fragmentation' because the predominant trend is 'decentralization'. Rosenau, in his another work *Turbulence in World Politics* focusses on the chaos and turbulence in world-politics. He talks about the likely changes in the attributes of individual actors in the post industrial era. He talks about the change in 'political loyalties' with many other attributes like learning, analytic skills, legitimacy, sentiments, locus of control etc. He says that political loyalties will be changed from 'focussed on nation state' to 'variable foci'²⁵ He feels that a broad perspective is needed for the specification of actors in world politics. In his analysis, he provides two broad types - (i) micro level actor and (ii) macro level actor. There are

²³ See Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (Boston, 1977), p.24.

²⁴ James N. Rosenau, *op.cit.*, no.8, p. 35

²⁵ See James N. Rosenau, *Turbulence in World Politics* (New York, 1990).
See the Table 9.1 'Attributes of Individual Actors, p. 106

three types of actors at the micro level- citizens, officials and leaders, private actors. At the macro level, there are five types of actors - states, subgroups, transnational organizations, leaderless public, movements.²⁶ He says that there are changes in their structural, relational and orientational parameters. All micro and macro actors have a capacity for learning they acquire information and skill and use it when needed.

While talking about transnational organizations and transnationalisation of world politics, Rosenau says that greater interdependence has contributed most in the growth of these non-state actors.²⁷ Infact, the global issues like environment, human rights health and nutrition, demography etc. have contributed to the growth of these nonstate actors. The 'global commons' like migration, hazards of population growth, impact of global food security, pollution etc. have led to the emergence of these actors. W.F. Lloyed called it 'the tragedy of commons'. Paul Kennedy, in his famous work, *Preparing for the Twenty First Century*. (1996) says that the demographic, environmental and technological changes which are transnational in nature, pose a question mark on the future and also on the usefulness of nation-state. While talking about 'the relocation of authority', Paul Kennedy says that the new challenges which have come up

²⁶ Ibid., See Table 6.1 p. 119

²⁷ See James N. Rosenau, *The Study of Global Interdependence: Essays on the Transnationalisation of World Affairs* (London, 1980)

are global in nature and they can be dealt with successfully at global scale through transnational agencies and through commonly agreed policies.

From the above description, we find that so many scholars have departed from the state-centric view.²⁸ We also find that scholars like Keohane and Nye, James Rosenau, Ernst Otto Czempiel and Alexander Wendt dispute the assumptions of realism and neo-realism, but, nevertheless, hesitate to conceptualize a cultural frame larger than nation-states.²⁹ But some of the recent scholars like Richard Falk, Freidrich Kratchowil, Saul H. Mendlovitz, Harold J. Berman, Edith Brown Weiss, Michael Featherstone, Ulf Hannerz, Frank Lechner and Roland Robertson have adopted the world polity perspective to study the global structures and world culture in a different way.³⁰ This approach approves of the institutional character of

²⁸ Other scholars who have departed from state centric view are - William T.R. Cox ed. *Theoretical Aspects of IR*, John W. Burtonin *System, State, Diplomacy and Rules*, Karl Kaiser *Transnational Society V. State Sovereignty Politik* and Horst Menderhausen in *Transnational Society V. State Sovereignty*

²⁹ See Czempiel and Rosenau eds, *Governance without Governments Order and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge, 1992) Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of It' *International Organisation*, 46, 1992 Pg. 395 - 421

³⁰ See Michael Featherstone, *Global Culture, Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity* (CA : Sage, 1990) ; Ulf Hannerz 'The World in Creolization' *Africa* 57 (4), 1987, p 546 - 559; Frank Lecher, *Cultural Aspects of the Modern World System* p. 4 - 28 in W.H. Swatos ed., *Religious Politics in Global and Contemporary Perspective* (New York , 1989), Richard Falk, Freidrich Kratchowil, Saul H. Mendlovitz eds. *International Law : A Contemporary Perspective* (CO : Westview, 1985) Edith Brown Weiss, 'Legal Dimensions of Global Change : A Proposed Research Agenda' *International Social - Science Journal* 121, 1989, p. 399 - 421; Robertson Roland, *Globalization, Social Theory and Global Culture*; (London, 1992)

transnational realities and accepts the international organizations as the distinct level of social reality. They admit that culture is increasingly global. A transnational 'legal world order' operates with considerable independence from states. In fact, world- cultural principles and institutions shape the actions of states, firms, individuals and other sub-units.³¹ In numerous ways world-polity is not reducible to states, economic organizations and interest groups.³² So this perspective emphasizes the importance of cultural and institutional frames. Actors are not treated as 'given-units', but they are analyzed in the context of frames. The nature, purpose, behaviour and meaning of the actors whether individuals or organizations or states, are subject to redefinition and change as the frames change.

Nongovernmental Organizations and International Relations - If we make an empirical analysis from world-polity perspective, we find a striking structural homology across the boundaries (in education, women's right, child welfare, social security programmes, environmental policy, human rights, development etc.) This homology results from a world culture brought about by different NGOs. Contemporary scholars like Andrew

³¹ See Carrie McNeely, *Constructing the Nation - State; International Organization and Prescriptive Action* (New York 1995), David Strang 'From Dependence to Sovereignty : An Event - History, Analysis of Decolonization', *American Sociological Review* (55), 1990 p. 846 - 60 ; Thomas et . al, *Institutional Structure : Constituting State, Society and the Individual* (CA : page nA 87)

³² See Michael Maan, *The Sources of Social Power' Vol. 1* (Cambridge 1986), J.P. Nettle and Roland Robertson, *International System and Modernization of Societies : The Formation of National Goals and Attitudes* (London, 1968)

Alboti, Stanley Deviney, John Boli, W. John Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez, Edith Brown Weiss, David Strange try to explore this world culture through the analysis of international NGOs.³³ International NGOs have proliferated from about 200 active organizations in 1900 to about 800 in 1930, over 2000 in 1960 and nearly 4000 in 1980. These international NGOs are authoritative transnational bodies employing limited resources to make rules, set standards and propagate principles and broadly represent the humanity. These NGOs can't make or enforce laws like states do. They don't have massive economic resources like transnational corporations (TNCs). So how they have become one of the most important actors in the international system ? I think, a cultural analysis of NGOs would be necessary to understand this phenomenon. Like all cultures, world culture is also embedded in social organizations operating at global level. Because most of these organizations are NGOs, we can identify fundamental principles of world culture by studying structures, purposes and operations of NGOs.

The word 'politics' has two meaning : Firstly, politics is the process by which groups take decision which is binding for all. A decision taken by the due process has legal authority. A second meaning of politics covers the process by which groups allocate moral values and hence derive preferences

³³ See Alboti and Deviney, 'The Welfare State as Transnational Event : Evidence from Sequence of Policy Adoption' *Social Science History* (16) 1992 p. 245 - 274, Thomas and Lauderdale State, Authority and National Welfare Programmes in World - System Context' *Sociological Forum* (3) 1988, p. 383 - 399.

for different patterns of social relationships. This is related to 'legitimacy'. This distinction between the two meanings of word 'politics' is necessary because governments may have high authority but low legitimacy. Alternatively the non-governmental activist groups like NGOs may have low authority but high legitimacy. Realists concentrate on the authority aspect of governments at the expense of its role for the mobilization of legitimacy. When we move from 'politics as the exercise of authority' to the second meaning of politics as 'the mobilization of legitimacy', the nongovernmental organizations and other groups are involved. They have a high degree of legitimacy. Amnesty International, for example, has greater power than any single government. It derives global legitimacy both from its very high status and from the high moral value that so many people attach to the politics it is pursuing.

Many scholars perceive the growth of NGOs as the result of the collapse of statism and state provided development throughout the world. From a positive perspective, NGOs, are also seen as strengthening the 'civil society' against state dominated development by providing social structures through which people can develop themselves. Ofcourse both the perspectives are interconnected. Though the idea of civil society is not a new one. Its an age-old concept. Nation-state is, somewhat of recent origin. In most of the African and Latin American societies, the state is regarded as alien to civil society either because it has been imposed by colonization or

because it is a product of revolutionary movements. Civil society, here undermines the foundations of the state. That is why, state power is relative and specific to different regions. Alain Labrousse while writing about Andean America, Bernard Badie about the Muslim Arab World and John H. Hamer and Michael Bratton about Africa, have drawn the same conclusions.³⁴ Though these sentiments and sensitivity about civil society has been rejected by 'rationalist-reductionist' scholars as 'ethno centric' or as rooted in ethnic, cultural or religious traditions. But today with the emergence of NGOs, the idea of civil society again comes to the forum, and this time it can't be rejected as ethno centric. In fact, the disorder and instability of contemporary world demands some alternative - a new social order - a new world culture. The non-reductionist sociological perspective perceives NGOs as enactors and carriers of new world culture. The aim and objective of these organizations are based on the five basic world cultural principles - universalism, individualism, rational voluntaristic authority, human purpose of rationalizing progress and world citizenship.³⁵

International NGOs, according to the most common assumption, are understood as transnational pressure groups which gain political relevance to

³⁴ See M. Bratton, 'Beyond the State : Civil Society and Associational life in Africa' *World Politics*, April 1982 p. 407 - 30, Hamer J.H. 'Preconditions and Limits in the Formation of Association : The Self - help Movement in Sub Saharan Africa' *African Studies* (No.5) 1984.

³⁵ From Boli and Thomas eds. *World - Polity Formation since 1875 : World Culture and INGOs* (Stanford, 1996) p. 125.

the degree they influence state action. That is, NGOs matter in world politics, to the extent they challenge states policies. Most of the studies on NGOs aim to demonstrate and measure NGOs influence on state - behaviour. As a result, in the beginning, NGOs were not considered as significant actors. Reynolds and Mekinlay write, "As far as INGOs are concerned it is evident that the consequence of the activity of many of them are trivial they may serve in some degree to alter the domestic environment of decision - makers, but with some exceptions their effect either on capabilities or on objectives is likely to be minimal, and in no way can they be seen themselves as significant actors."³⁶

Sustainable debate on NGOs began in the 1960s and early 1970s. At that time scholars argued that these non state actors are growing in number and power, so students of world politics should pay attention to international NGOs. The surge in transnational activity suggested that the state might not be the only important variable for the understanding of world events. The debate over the relative importance of the state in world affairs had an impact, in so far as it convinced the political realists that NGOs do matter. So by the 80's scholars began to take NGOs seriously. They became important objects of study. Defenders of the state centric model argued that

³⁶ From Reynolds and Mckinlay, 'The Concept of Interdependence : Its Uses and Misuses' in Goldmann and Sjostedt' *Power Capabilities & Interdependence Problems in the Study of International Influence* (London 1979), p. 154.

the proliferation of NGOs was a function of hegemonic stability and thus derivative of inter state behaviour.³⁷ Furthermore, many claimed that the number of non-state actors was rising significantly but NGOs were not involved in the 'most consequential world events' at that time. So compared to nation-state they were marginal and irrelevant. Unfortunately scholars analysed NGO significance in terms of state - power. That is, in most of the subsequent studies, NGOs gained prominence to the degree that they affected state policies. Scholars saw the controversy as a 'unit of analysis' problem. What should be the object of research in world-politics - the state, the transnational corporations (TNCs) or international NGOs. Transnationalists were associated with 'sovereignty at bay'³⁸ model of world politics, which claimed that NGOs were eclipsing the states as the key independent actors in world affairs. Unfortunately, the debate took the shape of either/or proposition -either the state was primary mover or it was not. This debate was bound to result in advocacy of the superiority of state agency. In the words of John Ruggie, it could be said that the debate died down because scholars studied the international NGOs with an eye towards

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³⁷ See Robert Gilpin 'The Politics of Transnational Economic Relations' in Keohane and Nye eds, *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge 1971) and Robert Gilpin, 'Three Models of the Future' in George Modelski ed., *Transnational Corporations and World Order* (San Francisco, 1979)

³⁸ The Term 'Sovereignty At Bay' comes from the title of Raymond Vernon's book of 1971. Though Vernon was not an advocate of non - state actors / NGO's challenge. His book was on TNCs. But scholars use this phrase because its catchy. See Raymond Vernon, 'Sovereignty At Bay : Ten Years After' *International Organization* (35) No3, 1981.

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'institutional substitutability'. If NGOs could not substitute for the state as an institutional entity, then, they become politically irrelevant. Ruggie argues that such mind set forgets the importance of other actors in international arena which are responsible for long term changes.³⁹

Recently a resurgence of interest in international NGOs led to the efforts to conceptualize them outside the 'unit of analysis' problem. Most of the efforts are part of a broader set of concerns associated with the so-called 'Third-Debate in International Relations Theory' i.e. the debate over the proper paradigm for studying international relations.⁴⁰ Interest in NGOs has emerged on the rubric of the third debate in so far as scholars have raised several propositions regarding how, why and to what extent NGOs matter in world affairs. Notable efforts in this regard are Rosenau's notion of 'sovereignty free actors' and the influence of micro-processes on macro phenomena,⁴¹ Walker's insights concerning the critical component of social movements,⁴² and Falk's understanding of the anti-statist logic of activist groups.⁴³

³⁹ See John Gerald Ruggie, 'Territoriality and Beyond : Problematizing Modernity in IR' *International Organization* (47) no - 1 (winter 1993).

⁴⁰ See K.J. Holsti, 'Mirror, Mirror On the Wall, Which is the Fairest Theories of All' *International Studies Quarterly* (33), no. 3, September 1989, Yosef Lapid, 'The Third Debate : On the Prospects of the International Relations Theory' *International Studies Quarterly* (33) no.3 Sept. 1989, One of the important book on the Third Debate is RBJ Walker' *Inside/Outside : International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge, 1993).

⁴¹ James N. Rosenau, op.cit., no. 25, p119.

⁴² See RBJ Walker, *One World /Many Worlds* (Boulder, 1988)

⁴³ See Richard Falk, *Explorations at the Edge of Time : Prospects for World Order* (Philadelphia, 1992)

In fact, the conception and meaning of NGOs in world affairs is not settled and it will remain problematic as long as scholars continue to focus on relationship between NGOs and the state and ignore the civic dimension of NGO effort. This is the negative approach towards NGOs. NGOs are significant in world affairs not only because they influence states but also because they effect the behaviour of larger collectivities throughout the world. They do so by manipulating governing structure of global civil society. The phenomenal growth in the number of NGOs and their often intervention in different parts of the globe have promoted further talk of international civil society. NGO activity within and across the societies is a proper object of study and only by including them one can render an accurate understanding of NGOs and world civic politics. World civic politics works underneath, above and around the state to bring about widespread changes. The idea of world civic politics is embedded in the activities of transnational social and cultural organizations especially NGOs and they demonstrate that states do not hold the monopoly over the instruments that govern human affairs but rather that non state forms of governance exist and can be used to effect widespread changes. This study will address the question - what role do the NGOs play in this whole fabric of state and international civil society? Are NGOs changing the relationship between the two - the state and civil society? Are NGOs strengthening the

civil society and world civic politics? Are NGOs the carriers and enactors of new world cultural principles?

Having introduced the theoretical argument in this chapter, the basic empirical questions regarding NGOs e.g. meaning, growth, funding etc. will be discussed in the next chapter (NGOs in International System). It also includes the debate on autonomy and accountability of NGOs. The following chapter (NGOs, State and the Civil Society) deals with the important problem of NGO-state relationship and ultimately what role NGOs play in strengthening the global civil society. The chapter tries to conceptualize NGOs beyond the 'unit of analysis' problem and argues that NGOs are the carriers and enactors of new world cultural principles. In the next chapter, OXFAM India would be presented as a case -study. OXFAM is an international NGO. Its a funding agency and works with the help of local NGOs. It provides emergency relief and is also concerned with sustainable development. This chapter is divided into two parts - first part is based on empirical data and second part tries to interpret it in terms of its relationship with the Indian state and it also explores the civic dimensions of its activities. The last chapter deals with conclusion.

CHAPTER II

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Pursuing interests in almost every segment of human life, the Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) have proliferated immensely in the latter half of the twentieth century. The purpose of this chapter is to address the basic issues regarding NGOs like its meaning, evolution funding etc.

During the past few decades, nongovernmental organizations have increased in number size and scope. The Union of International Associations maintains comprehensive up to date information about NGOs. According to the Year Book of International Associations, the total number of internationally recognized NGOs is well over 16000.¹ It categorized 9% of these NGOs as having universal membership and remaining 91% as intercontinental, regionally organizations. The Human Development Report 1994 estimates about 50000 local NGOs operating in the south.² These organizations provide assistance to millions of people around the world. The local, regional and global networks, organized by NGOs function as new venues for dialogue on social transformation and for influencing forums that are traditionally dominated by state actors. The visibility and impact of NGO

¹ Year Book of International Associations (Brussels: Union of International Associations (1993-94)

² United Nations Development Program, Human Development Report 1994 (New York : Oxford University Press, 1994)

movement was evident at the Other Economic Summit (1984), organized parallel to the annual summit of the G-7, and also at the Conference on Environment in Brazil 1992, the Population Summit in Cairo (1994), the Social Summit in Copenhagen (1995) and the International Women's Conference in Beijing (1995).

Meaning of Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) : Organizations similar to NGOs and the debate surrounding the meaning of the term go back at least to the middle of the nineteenth century. Most of these associations were known as public associations, voluntary associations, social welfare organizations, charities and missions during the colonial period. The term NGO was first used by the United Nations in 1949. During this early period, the term became widely applied to a broad spectrum of organizations. Since then, terms used to identify these organizations have multiplied. Some of these include 'voluntary associations', 'nonprofit associations', 'international nongovernmental organizations', 'nongovernmental development organizations', 'new social movement organizations', 'people's organizations', and 'membership organizations', 'grassroots support organizations' and 'membership support organizations' to name but a few. These terms embrace a broad range of organizations varying in terms of ideology, organization and operations. They include schools, hospitals, charities, clubs, religious fraternities, development agencies, professional

associations, co-operatives, mutual aid societies, foundations and lobby groups. One might make a reasonable claim that international crime rings, terrorist and separatist organizations, secret societies and trade associations could be classified as NGOs.

Despite the lack of consensus about the meaning of the term 'NGO', a heavy literature has been produced on NGO phenomenon. A difficulty with the present definitions is that the same organization can be referred to by different names in different contexts. Moreover, organizations themselves change their identities. An organization may change its identity from a welfare association to a voluntary association, to a nongovernmental organization, to a private development organization according to its own interests. NGOs are generally defined in opposition to the state and for-profit organizations. The legitimacy of the claims made about NGOs is derived from the criticism of the state and the private sector, the mission and practices of NGOs are considered to be radically different from the other two sectors. But NGOs function within the boundaries set by the state and are subject to various laws and regulations. Moreover, there is more and more evidence of increasing collaboration between governments and NGOs. Then, the distinction between for-profit and non-profit also continues to become blurred. In their drive toward financial self-sufficiency, NGOs, at times, function as for-profit organizations. For example, the Micro

Enterprise Summit, held in February, 1997, involved all major NGOs in developing countries along with the international financial agencies. The tendency to blur boundaries is further reinforced by the drive toward professionalization and standardization of organizational practices. This relationship between NGOs and the for-profit sector in developing countries has received scant attention, despite the fact that expansion of the NGOs' activities began to take place within the context of developing countries that began pursuing market-oriented reforms.

Voluntarism is another important characteristic which often distinguishes NGOs from the commercial and government sectors. The incorporation of voluntarism into NGO programs helps to make the programs sustainable. Most researchers agree that there are difficulties associated with the definition of NGO. Some scholars reject the term 'NGO' itself. For example, R.L. Stirrat finds it 'false' and Norman Uphoff uses the word 'fuzzy' for it. In fact, many scholars view that it is more important to understand the social role of NGOs than to reach an agreed upon definition of the term. In this regard the relationship between NGOs, state and the society in different contexts is regarded as of crucial importance (It will be discussed in detail in the next chapter).

The Growth of Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) - International
NGOs are generally assumed to date back to 1846 when the world's

Evangelical Alliance was founded. According to Lyman C. White, the first international NGO was founded in 1855 and was the World Alliance of the YMCA. White contends that Evangelical Alliance was not an NGO in true sense because "its so-called memberswere mere subscribers to its publications without any voting rights."³ Others believe that the Rosicrucian Order founded in 1674 is the first international NGO.⁴

There was a dramatic growth in the number of international NGOs from 1860 to 1970. The increase in the number of NGOs are especially found in the period of major wars (For Example, the Russo-Japanese war and World Wars I and II) and their growth slowed down during the periods of conflict and wars such as a time span from 1911-20 and 1931-40. This suggests that international strife and turmoil impede the establishment of international NGOs, while the settlement of devastating wars coupled with the bitter memories of misery and deprivation seem to stimulate the formation of international NGOs reflecting a revived spirit of border-crossing cooperation.⁵ It is interesting to note that very similar situation prevails in the growth pattern of International Governmental Organizations (IGOs) also. In fact, the growth of both entities show a certain degree of

³ See Lyman C. White *International Nongovernmental Organizations* (New York : Greenwood Press 1968) p. 279.

⁴ See Kjell Skjelsabaek, 'The Growth of International Nongovernmental Organizations in the Twentieth Century', *International Organization*.xxv, 3 (summer 1971) p. 424.

⁵ Ibid p. 425.

parallelism. If we observe the growth of the NGOs in terms of the theme or the goal they are pursuing, we find that the NGOs, in economic sector show a much higher growth rate than other groups. Commerce and industry groups lead the field followed by health and scientific organizations. The number of development NGOs registered in the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries of the industrialized 'North' has grown from 1600 in 1980 to 2970 in 1993, and over the same period the total spending of these NGOs has risen from US \$2.8 billion to US \$5.7 billion in current prices. The 176 international NGOs of 1909 had blossomed into 28,900 by 1993. Similar figures have been reported in many countries in the 'South' with a particularly rapid increase over the last few years.

The geographical distribution of NGOs by continents and international regions should also be observed. A substantial majority of NGOs draw their members from 25 or fewer states while only a small number of NGOs have members from 75 or more states in the world. As to distribution by continent, initially, a large number of NGOs draw members from Europe. Of course, many NGOs have members on more than one continent. Roughly one quarter of the NGOs cover all the five continents, and may therefore be considered as truly universal. On the other hand, there are NGOs limiting themselves to only one continent and in view of the large number of European IGOs, it is not astonishing that a good number of this

category of NGOs are operating exclusively in Europe. Very few NGOs confined themselves to Africa, Asia and Australia. But in recent years, we find a change in this attitude and there is an increase in the number of NGOs working in these continents. There is a trend towards increased activity in the Third World. Most of the organizations operating there have links with other continents, in fact, a large majority of them are in the four or five continents category, because of international linkages e.g. economic issues, which are necessary for the pursuit of their overall goals.⁶

Instead of using continents as units of geographic distribution of NGOs, Kjell Skjelsbaek has focused on international regions whose boundaries are determined on the basis of economic and political similarity rather than territorial or geographical proximity. He distinguishes eight distinctive regions: North West (North America; Western Europe, Israel, Cyprus, Australia, Newzealand, Japan and South Africa) ; Latin America, Arab World, Western (Non-Communist) Asia, Communist Asia, Eastern Europe, Black Africa, plus assorted remaining countries. If we see the growth of NGOs in the regions we find a slow pace in western industrialized countries during the period between 1951-1966 : Same is true in the case of third world regions, with the exception of Black Africa which saw a

⁶ Feld J. Werner *Nongovernmental Forces and World Politics. A Study of Business, Labor and Political Groups* (Praeger Publishers, New York, 1972), p.182.

dramatic growth in this period. Communist Eastern Europe, on the other hand, showed a remarkable stability. It should be pointed out that continental or regional distribution of representation in NGOs by citizens of various countries says nothing about the strength of this representation which may be very small or very large in individual countries. But one can observe that most NGOs have a very small membership roll and that only in the Northwest region and communist and neutral countries are there significant number of NGOs with large membership.⁷

In keeping with the distribution of headquarters of NGOs by continent, Europe is the undisputed leader, France heads the list followed by Belgium and the United Kingdom. Former Soviet Union was the headquarters of only 4 NGOs but its citizens were members of about 200 NGOs. There is an increase in number of headquarters in countries of Africa which is not surprising in view of the sharply rising African representation in NGOs. Also, there is an increase in headquarters in Latin America, the Arab countries, Western Asia and Eastern Europe with a corresponding percentage decline in Eastern Europe and North America.⁸

⁷ Kjell Skjelsbaek, *op. cit.*, no.4, p. 426

⁸ Based on the data given in *Year Book of International Associations* (Brussels : Union of International Associations 1993-1994)

Different Type of NGOs : Some Popular Issue Areas- Today the NGO community is involved in virtually every aspect of development NGOs work as relief and welfare agencies, as public service agents for governments, self help and empowerment movements. They even produce and implement technological innovations. NGOs are also active in information and advocacy work. Many are secular organization and others are inspired by faith traditions. Today we find NGOs at pivotal point in history. There interventions for and against the economic policies, human activities on the environment and motivating women for empowerment have created a world in which the nation- state no longer remains the pre-eminent source of security, but individual rights and security are to be found in satisfactory global relationships.

We have seen that for every UN conference since 1992 i.e. Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, Human Rights Conference in Vienna in 1993, the Population Conference in Cairo in 1994, Conference on Social Development in Copenhagen and Conference on Women's Development in Beijing in 1995, atleast 1500 people's organizations mobilized in an effort to influence the official governmental negotiations. Infact it has become customary now that every official global conference is flanked by an NGO forum. This global network by civil society has stimulated the creation of new forms of association ranging from

ad hoc conditions to constituencies, to Caucus for the World Summit for Social and Women's Development. Jule L. Fernando and Alan W. Heston write. "The profile of NGOs that emerges from the engagement in the global conference process is that civil society tends to be increasingly organized in terms of almost seamless networks rather than simply quantifiable group of territorial NGOs."

The economic informational and intellectual resources of NGOs have helped them to gain enough expertise and influence to assume authority in matters which, traditionally, have been solely within the purview of state administration and responsibility. NGOs' influence has grown in recent years precisely because they are different from state. Firstly, NGOs focus on single issue or sets of issue to the exclusion of others, while states have to perform many functions, with national security as a top priority. Second, in taking up principle based issues, NGOs commit themselves to causes that states' priorities frequently subordinate to other foreign policy interests or ignore entirely. Third, in contrast to states, the commitment of NGOs to their issues is intense. State agencies deal with varied and competing policy concerns. While NGOs specialize on one or few issues.⁹ These NGOs deal with several issues. Some popular issue areas are like this.

⁹ Ann Marie Clark "Non Governmental Organizations and Their Influence on International Society" *Journal of International Affairs*, 48, no. 2, Winter 1993, p. 507-525.

HUMAN RIGHTS has been one of the popular issues in which NGOs have been very active. The most popular human rights group is Amnesty International which began in 1961 with letter writing efforts to free individuals imprisoned for the non violent expression of opinion. Since then, Amnesty International has developed the capacity to research, report and analyze global patterns of human rights violations. Moreover, Amnesty International is only one of many international and national NGOs active in human rights. Others include the International Commission of Jurists, the International Committee of the Red Cross and Human Rights Watch, all of which attempt to influence governments by applying general human rights principles to particular situations. These Human Rights NGOs have worked to make the states accountable for human rights practices in this century. International and regional human rights norms have been elaborated. Human rights NGOs have become skilled at mounting pressure on states. The norms set by these NGOs become formalized and develop meaningful impact. This process changes the scope of state sovereignty as it "reconstitutes the relationship between the state, its citizens and international actors".¹⁰

Environment is another very popular area of NGO activity. Over the past few decades a host of nongovernmental groups have arisen with the aim

¹⁰ see Kathryn Sikkink 'Human Rights, Principled Issues Networks and Sovereignty in Latin America' in *International Organization* 47, no. 3 Summer 1993, p.- 411-41.

of protecting the earth. It is estimated that thousands of NGOs are working for environmental protection. The scope and power of these environmental activist organizations have dramatically increased. The membership in these organizations has grown over the last two decades. Millions of people are currently members of various transnational environmental groups. The best known of these organizations include: Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth (FOE), the Chipko Movement, Conservation International and World Wildlife Fund (WWF). These activists lobby governments in various countries to adopt the environmental protection measures. The examples of such efforts are numerous e.g. strengthening the London Dumping Convention, establishing an international ban on elephant ivory trading and enforcing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). They not only lobby the governments but also take initiatives and carry out efforts on their own. In this way, these transnational environmental groups practice world civic politics.

Many NGOs have placed much of their emphasis on participation and empowerment. The direct purpose of a program may be improvements in health or literacy or agriculture or credit, but these NGOs are often more concerned with how much these projects enhance people's power and meet their needs. They have been particularly determined to empower the poor, the weak and the marginalized, to encourage people to take decision

themselves, to become agents, rather than treating them as target groups or passive recipient of benefits. Frequently, there has been tension between the desire to deliver services and to encourage participation. The former is visible, quantifiable and short-run, the latter takes long and can not be quantified or subjected to cost-benefit analysis. The former is encouraged by donors, the latter by the best NGOs themselves. Numerous examples can be cited in which NGOs have encouraged the 'self-help' or 'grassroots participation' e.g. In the Dominican Republic, small coffee farmers have pooled their resources and formed the Nucleus of Coffee Farmers Association. They do their own marketing and provide credit and training. They are supported by Oxfam, an international NGO. One of the most successful self-help projects in Africa is the Malawi Rural Water Supply Project. The South Korean experience of financing universal primary education is another example of people's participation with the help of NGOs.

Religion played an important role in the evolution of NGOs. The antecedents of NGOs can be traced back to nineteenth century Christian missionary organizations. Mission agencies can be considered as the first organizations of civil society as they located themselves in the space between the state and society. Practices such as community development, self-sufficiency, self-reliance and social reforms were necessary attempts to

transfer both the state and the society in accordance with the missionary world-view. Native associations then known as public associations not only cumulated the missionary organizational models but also used them to undermine the interests of the missionaries and to serve their social economic and political objectives. In situations where religion continues to be a powerful force in articulating people's individual, cultural and group identity, it continues to play an important role in shaping not only the internal practices and legitimacy of the claims made by the NGOs but also their relationship between state and society.

Philanthropy has played a crucial role in the evolution of NGOs. Though the concept of charity is based on universalistic ideals of humanity as well as recognizing and maintaining the difference between the giver and the receiver, which in turn, reproduces the dichotomies between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the powerless. Leonard Gordon has examined the foundation of philanthropy by looking at the activities of the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation in India. He demonstrates the transition in the ideology of these foundations from religious to secular. Although these foundations were not entirely isolated from the foreign policy interests of the United States, they were able to maintain some degree of autonomy.

Some NGOs work through funding the local groups and organizations. Such NGOs establish economic development projects and

administer economic and humanitarian aid with funding from the pockets of private contributors. The most famous international NGO in this context is Oxfam. It is a development and relief agency. It provides emergency relief in times of crisis, it is also concerned with long term sustainable development. By funding local groups, Oxfam supports people's struggle to survive and improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.

Autonomy and Accountability of NGOs - A thorny issue related to NGOs is their demand for greater autonomy. Related to it is the other important issue of accountability of NGOs. The general assumption is that NGOs must be relatively autonomous of both state and market institutions, in order to be effective.¹¹ This assumption is based on the following logic. The organizational priorities of NGOs are very different from those of state and the market institutions which are primarily motivated by the need for social coercion and profit respectively. In contrast, NGOs are interested mainly in building communities, for which they do not rely upon either coercive forces or profit making. Rather, NGOs rely primarily on solidarity between the members of civil society, and this solidarity is nurtured by NGOs through decentralized internal management sustained by voluntary local participation. Because NGOs priorities and operational mode are so different

¹¹ Norman Uphoff, "Reflections Between Governmental and Nongovernmental Organizations and the Promotion of Autonomous Development" (paper delivered at the Conference for Autonomous Development, Netherlands, 1986)

from those of state and the market institution, NGOs should avoid working closely with them- this is the conventional approach. There are many arguments for this assumption.¹² First, and perhaps the most popular argument is that state institutions are primarily interested in co-opting NGOs so as to make them yet another arm of the state; Second, by cooperating with the state, which is marked by bureaucratic procedures, NGOs are likely to lose their non bureaucratic management style and become ineffective, much like the state. Third, by engaging with state institutions, NGOs are likely to become engulfed and tainted by the wheeling and dealing of the usually corrupt political process. This would adversely effect the NGOs legitimacy and their effectiveness in working with civil society. Fourth, continuous state assistance for NGOs would encourage their dependence on the state and the loss of their innovative and enterprenurial qualities.

As for cooperation with market institutions, NGOs are fearful but to a lesser extent.¹³ The fear of the market is primarily a fear of exploitation. The argument is somewhat like this. Being driven by the profit - making motive, market institution, while working with NGOs, are likely to divert them from their central mission, which is community building. Profit making and

¹² See Hendrik Van der Heijden, 'The Reconciliation of NGO Autonomy, Programme, Integrity and Operational Effectiveness with Accountability to Donors' *World Development* (15) 1987, p. - 103-12.

¹³ Severyn T. Bruyn and James Meehan, eds. *Beyond the Market and the State* (Philadelphia Temple University Press, 1981) p. 3-27.

community building are antithetical goals. In working market institutions, NGOs would be both tempted and exploited by market forces, gradually losing their unique identity and legitimacy in civil society. These arguments have led to the populist perception that NGOs must remain relatively autonomous of state and the market institutions and their relative autonomy may be best protected and nurtured by consciously avoiding institutional linkages with state and the market institutions.¹⁴ Contrary to it, other scholars argue that the quest for autonomy hurts the NGOs effectiveness instead of strengthening it, particularly when NGOs are engaged in poverty-alleviation efforts in developing countries.¹⁵ Another scholar says that for non revolutionary activism, autonomy means only relative autonomy from the polity and economy and such autonomy has to be won through acts of power, protest and struggle.¹⁶

Other related issues are: Sources of funds and accountability, Audit of accounts and transparency in their activities. In order to function as a truly voluntary body, an NGO is expected to draw at least half of its resources (funds) from voluntary sources as donations etc. In most, if not in all cases they are dependent on the government's grants in aid or donations from

¹⁴ Walter Fernandes, *Voluntary Action and Government Control* (New Delhi: Indian Social Science Institute, 1981).

¹⁵ Bishwapriya Sanyal, 'NGOs' self-defeating Quest for Autonomy' *Annals of the American Academy*, 554 Nov. 1997, p.- 21-32.

¹⁶ Upendra Baxi, 'Activism at Crossroads with Signposts' in Noorjahan Bava ed. *Non-Governmental Organization in Development* (New Delhi 1996), p.-55-67.

foreign donors like World Bank or International NGOs. Lack of financial autonomy results in their easy co-optation by the funding agencies- be it domestic or foreign and such NGOs cease to be truly voluntary or non-governmental agencies. They become agents of the donors, carrying out the programs or activities according to the directions and guidelines of the funding authority and not according to their normative or ideological principles.

Since activism and voluntarism is a function of creative self commitment, the question of accountability is really problematic. Some Indian activists have advocated stricter bureaucratic legal accountability to the state (see Baxi, 1986). But such ventures lack historical understanding of activism and voluntarism, which by definition, is a struggle against the state. But even if we reject it, the problem of accountability remains the same. Even if we grant that the activists conscience is superior to that of power-politician or state, the problem of the formation of that conscience and its functioning remains. So this question needs introspective dialogue uninfluenced and undeterred by uncreative proposals for state mechanism for souring the accountability of activists.

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) and Donar Agencies - NGOs are getting close to northern donors day by day in terms of interests, values, methods priorities and other factors. It has weakened the NGOs' potential

contribution to development because they have now been socialized into the establishment- the 'development industry'. This phenomenon has given birth to the question - Are NGOs losing the special relationship with the poor and with the radical ideas that they have claimed in the past?

The rise of NGOs is not an accident, nor is it solely a response to local initiative and voluntary action. The increasing popularity of NGOs with governments and official aid agencies are equally important. Official aid agencies are those which are funded by northern governments either directly (bilateral agencies such as the British Overseas Development Agency or Swedish SIDA) or indirectly (multilateral agencies such as the World Bank and the European Union). Over the last fifteen years, and particularly since the end of the Cold War, development policy and aid transfers have come to be dominated by what Robinson (1993) calls a 'New Policy Agenda'. This agenda is not monolith, its details vary from one official aid agency to another, but in all cases it is driven by beliefs organized around the twin poles of neo - liberal economics and liberal democratic theory. (Moore, 1993).

Official agencies support NGOs in providing welfare services to those who can not be reached through markets (Fowler, 1988, Meyer, 1992) Of course, NGOs have a long history of providing welfare services to the poor people in countries where government lacked the resources, the difference is

that now they are seen as the preferred channels for service provision in deliberate substitution for the state. Under the New Policy Agenda, NGOs are seen as vehicles for democratization and essential components of a thriving 'civil society'.

Published OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) data indicate that the volume of its members aid going to NGOs increased from 0.7% of the total in 1975 to 3.6% in 1985 and 5% in 1993-94. However these published figures grossly underestimate the true volume (Overseas Development Institute 1995: 1) as they exclude NGO funding from the US government (perhaps US \$ 1 to 2 billion in 1993-94), multilateral donors such as the World Bank, European Union, UN agencies and the like, and Official aid projects that are implemented by NGOs (estimated at US \$ 640 million in 1994). The OECD estimate of US \$ 5.7 billion for 1993, mentioned earlier, is certainly and underestimate, perhaps by as much as US \$ 3 billion according to the World Bank estimate.

This growth in official support has transformed the composition of NGO finances. The World Bank estimates that in the early 1970's about 1.5% of the total income for development, NGOs derived from the donors. By the mid-1990's this had risen to around 30% (Overseas Development Institute, 1995: 1). In the UK, the five largest development NGOs are all increasingly dependent on government funding, with ratios varying from 20

to 55 percent in the mid 1990s. Figures vary greatly from country to country, however, depending upon bilateral aid agency policy. In Africa around 10% of NGO income is from official sources. The figure increases to 34% for Australia, 66% for the USA and 70% for Canada. For Sweden, the figure reaches at staggering 85%.

Comparative figures for Southern NGOs are not available, but all the evidence points to even higher rates of dependency on official funds, particularly for the larger NGOs in the South. NGOs in Nepal, Bolivia and Tunisia have grown rapidly in numbers in the early 1990s because of a donor 'spending spree' (Radmacher and Tamong 1993). In Bangladesh, BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) and Proshika have negotiated aid packages with donor consortia in excess of US \$ 50 million at a time and the Working Woman's Forum in India is funded mainly by UNFPA. The recently announced Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest, housed in the World Bank, will provide US \$ 200 million or more from bilateral and multilateral donors to NGO micro-finance programs in the south. In Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Kenya and Nepal, the data indicates that a dependency of 80 to 95% on official funds is common, though often at second or third-hand as funds are channeled via Northern NGOs or other institutions.

If we evaluate the whole scenario of NGO funding, we find that NGOs' contribution to development is under threat. The acceptance of increasing volumes of foreign aid involves entering into agreements about what is to be done and how it is to be reported and accounted for. It involves an emphasis on certain forms of activity at the expense of others. Not surprisingly, as NGOs get closer to donors they become more like donors (see Jorgensen et al 1993). They adopt donor ideas norms and methods which is generally incompatible with the proclaimed vision of the vast majority of NGOs who conceptualize participation as a means to empower the poor and disadvantaged while NGOs remain diverse, there is clear evidence that this diversity is being reduced by donor policies. The donor influence on NGOs has contributed to the identification of the private sector as the main provider of essential goods and services to the poor and disadvantaged. The attitude views poor as consumers whose needs can be most efficiently met by the private sector. NGOs are analyzed as non-profit private agencies accountable through the forces of competition in an open market. Beneficiaries become customers (as BRAC in Bangladesh now terms the poor) and claims to be strengthen civil society becomes redundant.

There is ofcourse a counter-case to all this. NGOs can claim to use their increasing closeness to donors to expand effective operations and influence official approaches and concepts. They should carefully handle the

theoretical incompatibilities between donor rhetoric and donar practice. Claims that donar funding can be used to expand effective NGO operations without compromising quality rest on the degree to which NGOs can manage growth programs independently. There are very few studies which have evaluated these claims. These studies conclude that it is certainly possible to avoid undesirable side-effects but this requires a very well-developed managerial capacities, a favourable context and a quality of relationships with donors, that are rare in practice (Howes and Sattar 1992, Wils 1995). However, the most comprehensive review of these dilemmas to date concludes that such an ideal scenario is much more difficult to achieve than the theory suggests (Edwards and Hulme 1995)¹⁷.

In fact, this debate turns on a confusion over the position and function of NGOs in society. Paradoxically, however, the lack of clarity about whether NGOs are best viewed as the structures of civil-society or market-based institutions does provide some positive indicators for the future. It reveals that NGOs still have strategic choices open to them: they have to decide how close they get to doners and to examine how extensively they are promoting market based strategies or society based strategies for developmental goal. The chapter that follows will conceptualize NGO phenomenon in context of state and the civil society.

¹⁷ See David Hulme and Michael Edwards. *NGOs, States and Donors. Too Close for Comfort* (1995), p.18.

CHAPTER III

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, STATE AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY

Human wisdom, over the centuries, has devised certain social orders and structures to regulate the diverse aspects of complex human life. The basic social orders which the homosapiens have devised include the Society, State, Market and Associations. Public activity both within countries and beyond their borders is not completely organized by the institutions of the state. State's military, legal, police, administrative organs penetrate only certain domains of collective life. There are also other spheres of public life. Additional mechanism exist throughout and across the societies in the form of social and cultural networks. These voluntary associations structure the collective behavior and influence widespread practices. The underlying character of these non-state arenas is that they take place in the civic dimension of world collective life. Civil society is understood to be the arena of social engagement existing above the individual yet below the state. It is complex network of economic, cultural and social practices based on friendship, custom, the market and voluntary affiliations. Although the concept arose in the analysis of domestic societies, it is beginning to make sense at global level. This chapter argues that the proliferation of transnational collective activity in form of NGOs marks the formation of global civil society. This global civil society is that slice of associational life

that exists above the individual and below the state but also across the national boundaries of the states.

Non-governmental Organizations and the State

There is a tendency in the study of international relations to see politics as a practice solely associated with national governments. There are good historical and intellectual reasons for this. Since the Peace of Westphalia of 1648, nation-states have emerged as the prime units of international system. The state commands widespread authority and thus is capable of directing large-scale human activity. Nation states are so important in world affairs that we tend to associate their activities with the meaning of world politics itself. National governments are considered as the sole authoritative mechanism that fulfills the needs of society.

But protagonists argue that the increasing influence of NGOs is evidence of a historical break from the conventional wisdom that social development is primarily the responsibility of the state and the markets. It is said that NGO activity presents the most serious challenge to the imperatives of statehood in the realms of territorial integrity, security, autonomy and revenue. Lester Salmon, describing the phenomenon, comments that NGOs may constitute the significant economic and social development of the twentieth century, much as the nation-state was of nineteenth century.¹

¹ Lester Salmon. 'The Rise of the Non-profit Sector' *Foreign Affairs* 73 (4): 34(1994).

The fundamental issue related to NGO action on the international scene consists in questioning the function of state or inter state institutions. In other words, they are directly challenging the foundations and legitimacy of states and their organizations. Most students of International Relations privilege the "State" in their analysis. In fact, we are politically preoccupied with the modern-state. At present, all people live within the jurisdiction of state and the interaction between the states are the most important subject of world politics. This has led to the belief that state is the single most effective mechanism for dealing with people's problems. But there are many scholars who doubt the ability of the state to sufficiently address the issues like environment, human rights, women welfare, etc. They feel that the state as an institution is ill-equipped and its bureaucratic, hierarchical character prevents it from working for the welfare of the people. But the problem with this thought is that, it presents itself as critical of state-centric approach and understands itself as radical as it challenges the foundational structure of world politics- it, nevertheless, still privileges the state. Scholars studying the environmental issues can be cited as an example. They can be put into three categories- **Statist, Supra-statist and Sub-statist.**

Statism is the position that environmental problems can best be addressed by the existing nation-states. States as the main actors in international affairs, are the primary mechanisms for undertaking environmental protection. According to statist, NGOs play a role in this

context but they do so by influencing the states. They cite the agreement such as CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) and the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer as instances of successful multilateral accords and use them as models to argue that states, themselves can and will address global environmental problems.

But a sizable number of scholars express disappointment with the ability of states to address successfully the environmental dangers. For these thinkers, states will never be able to secure environmental well being as long as they operate in the context of the state system. They talk about a reformed world order-where the size, scope, character of the existing states are radically changed. Essentially there are two schools of thought promoting a radical restructuring of the state-system : Supra-statism and Sub-statism.²

Supra- Statism maintains that the problematic character of the state system can only be overcome by creating a world government to generate legislate and enforce environmental regulations Supra-statists argue that the mismatch between the unitary character of environmental issues and the fragmentary structure of the state system will always lead to insufficient environmental protection as states undertake inadequate domestic measures, negotiate weak accords and comply with international mandates only when it

² This categorization has been cited from David Orr and Stuart Hill, 'Leviathan, the Open Society and the Crisis of Ecology' in David Orr and Marvin Saroos eds. *The Global Predicaments: Ecological Perspective on World Order* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979)

best-servers their interests. So a world - government would transcend the narrow-aspirations of independent states and protect the entire earth by enacting consistent and comprehensive environmental measures worldwide.

Sub-statists, also feel that state system is not capable of solving the environmental issues but argue for a different type of remedy. Instead of building a supra-state to address environmental issues, this second school of thought calls for breaking up existing ones. According to sub-statists, what is needed, is decentralization of power. They talk about small governing units who are responsive to the practices which damage the environment.

The key characteristic of statism, supra-statism and sub-statism is that all three orientations conceptualize environmental problems in the context of the modern state. The state-system is either the answer to environmental challenges or the root cause of them. In the case of statism and supra-statism, they don't question state as an institution per se but rather assume its efficacy and simply suggest to change its size, scope or activities to address environmental problems. Statists, for instance, see the present system of sovereign units capable of addressing global problems through international co-operation, regional agreements and the United Nations. Supra-statists also refuse to question the political efficacy of the state. For them, problems arise solely because existing states govern only segments of the planet. The idea is not to get rid of the state per se, but to create a single world state.

Of the three approaches, only the sub-statists position comes closest to questioning the ability of the state as an institution. But, even here, the fundamental starting point is that the size of the contemporary states is too big to respond to environmental issues and thus states need to be broken up and power decentralized for genuine environmental protection.

There is nothing wrong with being state-centric per se. The state is the predominant political institution on the planet and deserves significant attention and scholarly analysis. But, in so far as the state, is unable to address the global problems in a successful way, it is fruitful to conceptualize alternative political institutions and structures. It has become clear to many politically minded individuals that state-centric notion of world-politics is not legitimate one now. Scholars have started recognizing the shortcomings of this approach and they have been exploring alternative approaches. There is an increased understanding of the fact that politics is not simply officially sanctioned activity associated with a government. In its most general sense, politics is about directing and ordering the collective life in matters of common concern and involvement. It is about governance of public affairs. This attitude has led to the recognition of transnational activists especially NGOs and their efforts for public welfare. Susan Strange, while talking about the erosion of the state authority says that there are three main areas in which state authority has declined- (a) Defence, (b) Finance

and (c) Provision of welfare.³ The third one, that is, provision of welfare, has largely been taken over by the voluntary organizations. This has marked the transformation of the nation-state into competition state.

These voluntary organizations are challenging not only states but also inter-state organizations. One of their targets are IGOs (International Governmental Organizations) also. In 1973, the Canadian academics MacDonald Morris and Johnson proposed the establishment of two chambers at the United Nations, one being an executive body of technocrats and the other an assembly representing the deprived social groups of the affluent countries and the anti-imperialist movements of the poor countries. The idea was taken up again in 1982 by a group of associations and individuals banding together as the International Network for a United Nations Second Assembly (INFUSA). A similar proposal was made by Marc Nerfin, Secretary General of the International Foundation for Development Alternatives (IFDA). His suggestion is that the United Nations should have a tricameral structure representing the Prince (government) the Merchant (multinational corporations) and the Citizen (non-profit making transnational forces). These various proposals aimed at introducing 'intermediate bodies' between states and individuals. They might be considered as being

³ Susan Strange, 'The Erosion of the State' *Current History*, Nov. 1997, p.- 365-369.

overoptimistic but some of the nongovernmental initiatives have, however, yielded tangible results. ILO, UNESCO, UNHCR can be cited as examples.⁴

NGOs in Competition with state governments- The last two decades witnessed the prolific growth of NGOs as agents of development throughout the third world. Some NGOs are part of the small independent service organizations. Some NGOs have established a positive track record in development work supported by various international donors. Indeed donors and governments are increasingly recognizing NGOs vital contribution in building up democratic space in civil society. The 1990's are characterized by some other trends e.g. there is greater stress on efficiency and privatization, there is also the erosion of state power in favour of the private sector and the growing role given to NGOs for service delivery. The dramatic spread of NGOs over the last two decades is a response to a number of factors: "inactivity or neglect by government in dealing with issues that affect the poor, the increasing awareness that poor communities suffer disproportionately from many macro-level decisions that affect the directions of development, the growing inequality and the cleavages and

⁴ The origin of ILO (International Labour Organization) is directly related to the transnational trade-union movements. As early in 1897 Zurich Congress on Labour Protection invited governments to establish labour legislation and set up an international labour office. After a series of meetings attended by trade union representatives, parliamentarians, intellectuals and government representatives, the International Association for Labour Legislation was set up. This INGO is the direct predecessor of ILO. The cases of UNESCO and UNHCR are different but a decisive role was played by INGOs in their establishment also.

tensions arising from these trends, the call by development thinkers for people's participation in their own development; and the desire to create alternative organizations in response to the frustration in dealing with formal structure".⁵ So these factors call for a greater political role for the NGOs. Traditionally NGOs have been perceived as playing a service delivery role supplementary and complementary to governments but now they are also perceived as performing a 'transformational role, whereby the structures of economic and political power become more responsive to people and the environment'.⁶

The rise of NGOs as a strong institutional alternative reflects the growing recognition that the state government and the private sector lack sufficient capacity to respond to the challenges of poverty alleviation. With declining economic resources available to third world governments and increasing austerity measures, governments face the challenge of addressing the needs of their societies in an effective way. Here, two questions arise: (i) How effective can the government be for meeting the development needs of the people? (ii) What role may NGOs play in the process? Luke talked about three challenges which post colonial state faces in managing development. They are : (i) building effective administrative capacity that is

⁵ From Neoleen Heyzer, 'Toward New Government-NGO Relations for Sustainable and People-centred Development' in Neoleen Heyzer, et. al., eds., *Government -NGO relations in Asia, Prospects Challenges for Peoples-centred Development* p. - 1-13.

⁶ Ibid. p.-10.

(ii) responsive and accountable (iii)and equitable.⁷ At the same time the experiences of NGO-performance in various regions of the world have been diverse and varied while NGOs have generally applied a similar range of principles and approaches to promote development at local levels across national settings, their prospects as effective channels or vehicles for promoting development have differed from one political context to the other. Several analysts studying Sub-Saharan Africa have stressed the critical role that NGOs can play in addressing the persistent rural and agricultural crisis that affects this region. (Hyden 1983, Bratton 1986, Timberlake 1986, de Graf 1987, Harrison 1987, Rehman 1987). Within Latin America, NGOs have contributed to advancing the development process at the micro-level. (Tendler 1982, Hirschman 1984, Altieri 1986, Frantz 1987, Jatoba 1987, Landim 1987, Padron 1987,88, Annis and Hakin 1988). In Asia, NGOs have played significant role in micro-level development and human assistance. State governments within the region have delegated formal responsibility to effective NGOs to plan, implement and coordinate selected development programs at local, regional and sometimes at national levels. (Alliband 1983, Sheth 1984, Shepard et al 1986, Fernandez 1987, Mehta 1987, Korten 1987) NGOs throughout Asia have played a critical role in giving greater voice to environmental concerns (Agrawal 1986, Shiva 1986 , Durning 1989), human

⁷ D.F.Luke, 'Trends in Development Administration: The Continuing Challenge to the Efficacy of the Post-colonial State in Third World' *Public Administration and Development*, 6(1), 1986 p.-73-84.

rights (Desai 1987) and women issues (Omvedt 1986, Rao 1990) and to more accountable and democratic institutions (Sheth 1983, Eldridge 1984, Sethi 1984, Prasarsset 1989). They have also made significant contributions to family planning primary health care and income generating projects at local levels. (Tongsawate and Tips 1985, 1988, Gohlert 1986, Rao 1990).

Whether NGOs are international or communities based, all have to operate within the boundaries of nation-state and at the pleasure of a sovereign government. By their very existence, NGOs help to pluralize the institutional environment and to the extent that they encourage participation in decision making, they promote a democratic political culture. Bratton writes, "Government and NGOs, therefore, find themselves in a new and challenging juxtaposition that requires leaders on both sides to ponder the potential for conflict or complementarity between their institutions".⁸ So the most interesting question relating to NGOs is their relationship with state government. Whether they are partners or adversaries? James V. Riker talks about five distinct perspectives on how NGOs should proceed in promoting development in a political setting. These include:⁹

⁸ Michael Bratton, 'The Politics of Government-NGO Relations in Africa' *World Development* (April, 17 (4) 1989, p.-569-87.

⁹ These perspectives have been borrowed from James V. Riker 'Contending Perspectives for Interpreting Government -NGO Relations in South and South- east Asia in Neoleen Heyzer et. al. eds. *Government -NGO Relations in Asia* (Kualalampur 1995) p.-15-54.

(1) Autonomous Development- A number of analysts have emphasized that NGOs are the most appropriate vehicles for promoting autonomous development, that is, development which is independent of the state government. But this perspective fails to consider the constructive role that government can play in promoting the development. This perspective also forgets the coercive capability of the state government to inhibit the autonomous or independent nongovernmental development initiatives. For instance, Eldridge writes, "While community organizations and people's movements can certainly enhance poor people's bargaining position and overall status by developing independent resources and capabilities, strategies based on the assumptions that they can replace the role of the state in any absolute sense appears to be wide of the mark".¹⁰

(2) Partners in Development- This perspective visualizes state government and NGOs as partners in development. According to it, as partners, NGOs and state governments can strengthen and enhance one another by minimizing duplication of efforts and conserving the limited resources. The recognition that NGOs possess comparative advantages in addressing certain types of problems over government and governments in turn may be more effective than NGOs in other areas of development, leads to a co-operative and complementary relationship between government and NGOs. But this

¹⁰ Philip Eldridge, 'The Political Role of Community Action Groups in India and Indonesia' *Alternatives* 10(3) 1984, p.-401-34.

perspective is also criticized on the ground that co-operation is always a very delicate issue. NGOs efforts often be redirected to serve the government's ends. At the same time, NGOs temptation to expand efforts beyond capabilities in such a partnership, is another weakness. Samuel Paul says that 'partnership with government may encourage grassroots agencies to over-extend themselves and lose sight of their primary mission for the sake of augmenting resources.'¹¹

(3) Competitors in Development- This viewpoint is based on the assumption that there is rivalry between government and NGOs in development activities especially at local levels. According to this perspective, conflictual situations between the two arise when NGOs and local government try to build local bases of support instead of building local capacities. They fail to perceive the potential points for consensus and the complementary role that each can play in promoting the development process. This perspective is the most debated perspective. A good number of scholars have discussed it. In fact, this perspective gave birth to the 'unit of analysis' problem in IR (discussed in the introductory chapter), that is, state or NGOs -which one of the two is the unit of analysis in IR. But it is far from the reality. Other dynamics related to this issue will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹¹ Paul Samuel 'Governments and Grassroots Organizations- From Co-existence to Collaboration' in J.P. Lewis eds., '*Strengthening the Poor : What Have We Learnt?*' p.-61-72.

(4)NGOs as Advocates for Government Accountability- This perspective perceives NGOs as the advocates for government accountability. According to this viewpoint NGOs can serve as watchdogs of government programs. They can influence the government behaviour by bringing out the truth and real state of situation. NGOs are generally aware of the local conditions and demands so they can be policy advocates also and by applying their grassroots knowledge of development, they can influence government's priorities and programs. But this is easy for local or indigenous NGOs not for foreign based NGOs.

(5)Bypassing the State- This is the most radical perspective. This viewpoint criticizes the excessive government intervention and argues for bypassing the state. According to it, state is an obstacle in the way of development. A lively example of this approach was illustrated in Haiti when under Agroforestry Outreach Project, foreign and indigenous NGOs made a remarkable reforestation and tree planting effort and bypassed the Duvalier government in Haiti. This project was a success exceeding over all tree planting goals within two years of the five year project.¹² But the problem with this approach is that NGOs operate under the governments rule, at all

¹² GERAL F. MURRAY, 'Seeing the Forest While Planting the Trees. An Anthropological Approach to Agroforestry in Rural Haiti' in D.W. Brinkenhoff and J.C. Gracia-Zamor eds., *Politics, Projects and People: Institutional Development in Haiti* (Boulder: Co : Westview Press, 1986)

time and a refusal to recognize state power may generate problems for NGOs.

The political space in which NGOs operate is determined by the interaction between the state and NGOs. All the grassroots organizations operate within the parameters set by the state. The state may encourage, tolerate, interfere, discourage or abolish NGO activity through legal or coercive means. However, NGOs may influence these parameters by bringing salient issues to public attention, advocating certain policies or development priorities and pushing the state to expand the parameters.

In conceptual terms, political space refers to the arena in which non state actors may undertake initiative independently vis-à-vis the state. To what extent these NGOs enjoy freedom? Bratton writes, "It is a dynamic, ever-changing balance between two, where the contrasting principles of autonomy and control define government - NGO relations."¹³ Unless a government is particularly weak, it generally possesses the capacity to define and condition the NGO activity. NGOs seek to expand the political space in which they can operate freely while the governments seek to contract the political space and to limit the activities occurring outside their control. This level of political space differs from one polity to another. According to a World Bank assessment of government - NGO relations, the most promising

¹³ Michael Bratton, *op. cit.*, n. 8, p. - 571.

NGO- government linkages have occurred in Asian countries where governments are relatively strong and less threatened by NGOs. In contrast, Latin American governments largely give lip-service to NGO engagement and are characterized by adversarial government-NGO relations. Weak African governments, suspicious of NGO intentions make NGO - government tensions more difficult to reconcile in this region. But the key to the state society nexus as characterized by government NGO relations, is not to reject patently one side of the equation or the other but rather to assess the prospects for promoting the welfare activities through the combination of the two.

Moreover, challenging the state governments is not the aim of NGOs. These transnational activists affect world politics in different ways, but they are not oriented towards merely influencing states. In fact, there is a civic dimension of their activities and they are part of the structures of civil society. Transnational activist groups work at global, local and at the state level to change widespread behaviour through existing mechanisms within global civil society rather than the governing structures of state. The proliferation of NGOs has brought up the global civil society debate again to the forum.

International Nongovernmental Organizations and the Global Civil Society- This study on nongovernmental activist groups intends to demonstrate that states do not monopolize world political activity. They share the international stage with other actors. While not as powerful as the states, these nongovernmental activists play an important role in contemporary world politics. Problems arise, however, when one seeks to understand exactly how activists effect change. The conventional understanding is that these nongovernmental activists are politically effective only when they influence the state-behaviour. That is, they bring about change by lobbying the states. They serve only as pressure groups that shape governmental policy. The main aim of this study has been to show that this view, if not wrong, is partially correct. Nongovernmental activist groups not only lobby the states but also directly shape the activities of other institutions, collectivities and individuals. They do so by manipulating the mechanism that exist outside the realm of state to state relations. These include economic social and cultural practices that traverse countries and have an impact on public life. In fact, they politicize global civil society and thus engage in world civic politics.

World civic politics is parallel type of activity. It does not replace statism. Rather, it represents a qualitatively different approach to global environmental governance. It takes place in global civil society and it has its own role to play and has already brought about changes with regard to

several issues e.g. Human rights, environment, women's welfare. In his book *Green Political Thought*, Andrew Dobson talks about 'extra parliamentary activities' of nongovernmental activists.¹⁴ He points out how their political activities and their means and methods are often outside the formal channels of state power. While Dobson refers predominantly to domestic activists but his insight is helpful for understanding the politics of nongovernmental activists in international arena. This 'extra-parliamentary' mode of activity, implicitly suggests that there is an arena of collective life that falls outside of state constraints and yet plays a part in political affairs. In domestic politics, this is recognized as the sphere of civil society. Civil society is that layer of collective life which takes place above the individual yet below the state. It is the sphere of economic, cultural and social interactions as opposed to state activity. Although this concept of civil society arose in the analysis of domestic societies, it is beginning to make sense at global level. The use of civil society concept in international arena is directly related to the transnationalist agenda in IR. A good number of scholars use the term 'International Civil Society' to describe that 'space where international social movements pursue their political goals'.

The idea of civil society has passed through the hands of virtually all western political philosophers. There are two common assumptions- firstly, it has always been presented in relation to the state, Secondly, most of the

¹⁴ See Andrew Dobson, *Green Political Thought* (London, 1990)

theorists define it as a particular stage in the evolution of human societies. By the time the Enlightenment approaches, the concept of civil society is found in an evolutionist philosophy of history. In the writings of Hobbes and Locke, civil society is synonymous with the state. It is used to denote a particular form of government and is distinguished from the 'state of nature'. But the identification of civil society with modernity is consolidated finally in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. Hegel's main contribution is that he defined civil society in contrast to the state. According to Hegel, civil society exists above the family and below the state. For Hegel, civil society is a sphere or 'moment' of political order where in free associations take place between individuals. It is an arena of particular needs, private interests and divisiveness but within which citizens can come together to realize joint aims.¹⁵ Civil society is the arena in which people engage in spontaneous, customary and non legalistic forms of associations with the intention of pursuing, as Tocquville calls it, 'great aims in common'. The state, on the other hand, is a complex network of governmental institutions including the military, bureaucracy and executive offices that constitute a legal or constitutional order. This order is animated by formal official authority and aims to administer and control a given territory.¹⁶ Antonio Gramsci adopted the Hegelian understanding of civil society in his interpretation of the failure

¹⁵ T.M. Knox, trans. *Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (Oxford University Press, London 1967)p.-61.

¹⁶ David Held, 'Introduction: Central Perspective on the Modern State' in David Held ed. *States and Societies* (New York, 1983)

of proletarian revolutions in Europe during the aftermath of World War I. According to him, civil society is not wholly autonomous or completely separate from the activities of the state. State rule often permeates throughout civil society to consolidate power. He explained the hegemonic role played by the independent institutions of civil society which complement the coercive rule of the revolution rule of the state with sophisticated cultural mechanisms of consent. Gramsci suggests that the revolutionary forces embodied in social-movements and cultural associations must occupy the space of civil society created by western capitalists society.

In a different fashion, contemporary thinkers such as Jurgen Habermas¹⁷ or Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato place considerable emphasis on the role of social movements in the construction of a democratic public sphere. Here civil society has been associated with the political activism displayed by different social movements. A. Colas writes, 'This conception of civil society situates the rise of social movements within the context of capitalist modernity and often in opposition to the encroachments of the expanding state machinery'.¹⁸ Civil society is ultimately made and unmade by the collective action of conscious individuals organized around social movements. According to Melucci, Offe and others, contemporary domestic

¹⁷ See Jurgen Habermas, 'What Does A Crisis Mean Today? Legitimation and Problem in Late Capitalism' in Steven Seidman ed. *Jurgen Habermas on Society, 'Politics'* (Boston, 1989)

¹⁸ From A. Colas, 'The Promises of International Civil Society' *Global Society* vol. II, No.3, 1997, p.-261-277

peace, human rights, women's and human potential movements in the developed world both lobby their respective governments and work through their societies to affect change.¹⁹ These movements identify and manipulate nonstate levers of power, institutions and models of action to alter the dynamic of domestic collective life. Sidney Tarrow defines these social movements as "collective challenges by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities".²⁰ The French anti-nuclear movement, the early years of the German Green Party and the feminist movement in the United Kingdom represent the significant attempts to politicize various arenas to bring about change. All the present day grassroots organizations target the state governments at the same time they nurture the other modes of expression outside the state-control. These nongovernmental activists do not ignore the state but they explore unofficial realms of collective action. This collective action takes place in the realm of civil society. So Cohen and Arato maintain that "modern civil society is created through forms of self construction and self mobilization".²¹

¹⁹ See Alberto Melucci, 'The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Movements' *Social Research* (52) no.4, Winter 1985, and Clause Offe 'Challenging the Boundaries of the Institutional Politics: Social Movements since the 1960's' in Charles Maier ed. *Changing Boundaries of the Institutional Politics* (Cambridge, 1987)

²⁰ From Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement : Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (Cambridge 1994) p.-3-4

²¹ From A. Arato and J. Cohen, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge 1992) p.- IX.

IR theorists have not paid much attention to the interplay between civil society and the state in the genesis of the modern states-system. It is only recently that IR theorists have started investigating the nature of this relationship between state and civil society and its relevance for an understanding of the international system. Justin Rosenberg has laid special emphasis on the place of civil society in addressing the historical origin of the sovereign state. Rosenberg writes, 'The structural specificity of state sovereignty lies in its 'abstraction' from civil society - an abstraction which is constitutive of the private sector of the market.'²²

The extension of the capitalist social relations explains the emergence of modern social movements across the world. The debate on civil society is directly related to it. Most political expressions of modern civil society, be they liberal pressure groups, women's movements or socialist organizations, arise out of class relations present only under capitalism. This does not mean that capitalism necessarily produces these forms of organizations nor it is the only force responsible for their emergence. It does mean, however, that historically the forms of modern political agency typical of civil society spring from the socio-economic transformations brought about by capitalism. When civil society is identified as an arena dominated by capitalist relations of production, the international ramifications of the concept become even

²² From Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society : A Critique of the Realist Theory of International Relations* (London, 1994) p. 123

more apparent. If we see it from an orthodox Marxian perspective, international civil society becomes synonymous with global capitalist market; the organizations and corporations of capitalist production and exchange embody the 'economic' space of a borderless civil society which underscores the 'political' system of sovereign states.²³

International dimension of civil society is threefold.²⁴ Firstly, civil society is a constituent of the modern system of states; Secondly, civil society is considered as an international phenomenon when it is seen as the expression of capitalist market relations; Finally, civil society is viewed as a political and ethical space occupied by modern social movements. The combination of these three elements produces the following tentative definition of international civil society: "International civil society is the international space created by the expansion of capitalist relations of production where modern social movements pursue their political goals".²⁵

At the ideological level, all modern social movements have been 'international'. If we make a survey of the history of these social and political movements, we find the message behind each movement has always been international. The manifestoes, proclamations, banners and programs of

²³ Rosenberg takes the same position when he uses the term 'the empire of civil society'. In a recent article Rosenberg has explained it in detail. See Justin Rosenberg 'Issac Deutscher and the Lost History of International Relations' *New Left Review* vol. 209, (Jan./Feb. 1996)

²⁴ A. Colas, op. cit., n. 18, p.-267.

²⁵ Ibid. pg. 267.

modern social movements reflect the international dimension of a particular struggle and also a need for extending solidarity across the boundaries. The most solid evidence in favour of the idea that modern social movements constitute an international phenomenon, is found in their modes of organizations. They espouse universal ideologies. Consider the women's movement, for example. Since the mid-19th century, women have organized internationally with the intention of furthering their common interests across the globe. Same thing can be said about other liberal, pacifist socialist and even environmentalist movements.²⁶ By espousing and promoting universal ideologies, by providing examples of how collective action can be politically meaningful at global level and most importantly, by organizing internationally, modern social movements have been extending the boundaries of political action beyond the territorial state. Seen in this light, international civil society represents a political space which has been constructed over the past three centuries by the international activity of modern world movements. It is in this sense that civil society becomes the relevant site of international politics.

The phenomenal growth in the number of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) and their often spectacular interventions in different parts of the globe have prompted further talk of

²⁶ See A. Colas, 'Putting Cosmopolitanism into Practice : The Case of Socialist Internationalism' *Millennium* vol. 23, No. 3, Winter, 1994, p. 513-534.

“civil society and its transnational networks embodying the universum which competing nations have never succeeded in creating”.²⁷ From this perspective, international civil society represents the space occupied by association which, although working in collaboration with the different tiers of the state and international organizations, are officially independent and ultimately only accountable to their international membership. Further more, since they pursue specific political goals across the boundaries, they hold the promise of a new type of world politics. As Mark Hoffman has pointed out, INGOs informed by notions of “International Citizenry” may provide a basis for forms of intervention which seek to extend the boundaries of political community while understanding systems of exclusion”.²⁸ In these two respects, the increasingly complex web of INGO activity often receives the label of ‘international civil society’.

Some scholars have raised few questions against INGO perspective of international civil society. Firstly, they say that NGOs are fundamentally pressure groups and they merely seek to alter a particular policy (on human rights, environmental law, women’s right and soforth). Secondly, they say that there remains a degree of ambiguity about the accountability of NGOs. The fact that NGOs are nongovernmental does not mean that they are

²⁷ From Paul Ghils, ‘International Civil Society : International Non-Governmental Organizations in the International System’ *International Social Science Journal*, vol.44, no. 133, (Aug., 1992), p. 417-429.

²⁸ From Mark Hoffman, ‘Agency, Identity and Intervention’ in Forbes and M. Hoffman eds. *Political Theory, International Relations and the Ethics of Intervention* p.-203.

'nonpolitical'. I think, these two points are not valid. If civil society is identified as a political space for the 'grand narratives' then definitely international NGOs are agents of international civil society because they are setting up international norms through their activity. They are enactors of new world cultural principles. John Boli and George M. Thomas write, 'INGOs are loci of transnational contextual knowledge. World level conceptions constitute the locally situated individual as someone who can, may and should act globally; they supply the purposes and meanings of action; they provide models for global organizing, forms of discourse and communication and avenues for influencing states and other actors. They (Boli and Thomas) have narrated five basic world -cultural principles that underlie NGO ideologies and structures : universalism, individualism, rational voluntaristic authority, human purposes of rationalizing progress and world citizenship.²⁹

²⁹ From John Boli and George M. Thomas, 'World Culture in the World Polity : A Century of International Non-Governmental Organizations' *American Sociological Review*, vol. 62, April 1997, p.-171-190.

CHAPTER IV

OXFAM INDIA - A CASE STUDY

In the sphere of overseas aid there are many and varied non-governmental organizations. Some of them specialize - working with children, with the blind or other needy groups. Some of them are operational putting their own staff into the field and running their own programs. But most of them were started in the time of crisis when 'the only way to get anything done is to do it yourself'. Some started as relief groups during or after a war coping with refugees. Oxfam is one of them.

Oxfam is an international aid agency working with grassroots organizations in 120 countries to combat poverty and injustice. Its a development and relief agency. It provides emergency relief in times of crisis, but is also concerned with long-term sustainable development. By funding local groups, regardless of race, sex, religion or politics, Oxfam supports people's struggle to survive and improve the quality of life. This organization is independent of government and depends largely on voluntary work and donations from the public and works for those people most acutely afflicted by poverty.

Oxfam, A Historical Overview¹

Oxfam's genesis lies in concern for European victims of war and the victims were those not only of Hitler's war policies, but also those of the 'total war' policy of the Allies. In the autumn of 1941, Greece began to suffer famine. At its height, people died at the rate of over 1500 a day. Some people in Britain began to protest that the starvation of Greece was not justifiable and the blockade should be removed. In this connection, a group of people in wartime Britain from church, university and city backgrounds met at the Friends Meeting House² in Oxford in September 1942 to discuss the reports of starvation among the civilian population. At the subsequent meeting in the university church in October 1942, a famine relief committee was formed and it was called "**Oxfam Committee for Famine Relief**". The immediate task was- the organization for saving funds and supplies and the methods of getting the aid to those in need.

This committee decided to respond to an appeal from the Greek Red Cross. An appeal was launched within Oxford University and extended to the city in the autumn of 1943. A deputation was sent to the Ministry of Economic Warfare, followed by a petition with 800 signatures. The plea was for the blockade to be lifted so that supplies could be shipped into Greece.

¹ See Maggie, *A Cause for Our times : Oxfam The First Fifty years*. Oxford, 1992 p. 292

² A Friends Meeting House was a building used by the members of the society of friends (Quakers) of a locality for religious and other meetings.

The Hague Convention of 1907 was cited that an occupying power was responsible for care of civilians under its control. But it was flatly refused. Churchill suggested that hunger might help them to rise against the forces of Third Reich. So the committee decided to work through the Red Cross. It raised an impressive sum of 12,700 pounds and handed it over to the London representative of the Greek Red Cross in exile. Since then this small committee has grown into the multi-million pound aid agency- **Oxfam**. But in those early years there was no thought of establishing a permanent organization.

With the end of the war the focus of activity switched to the main continent of Europe where refugees, displaced people and local citizens were suffering from cold and hunger. Appeals were made for clothing, food and medicines as well as money and distribution was entrusted to the Friends' Relief Service. At the end of 1946 the first paid member of staff was recruited - a part time organizing secretary. The committee, however, was not clear over its future. Should they close down - as the needs in Europe were increasingly being met by other organizations and governments- or should they continue? Then, a new problem erupted. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arab refugees were displaced by the creation of the state of Israel. The committee immediately agreed to try and help. The registered objects of the charity were widened to read 'the relief of suffering arising as

a result of wars or other causes in any part of the world'. From then on, any idea of closing down faded into the background.

A permanent Gift Shop Manager was appointed at the end of 1949, and in 1950 the committee obtained the services of a Quaker advertising man who was to guide publicity for many years and who pioneered national charity press advertising. That year Professor Gilbert Murray, one of the founding members made the week's Good Cause appeal on the BBC radio which raised over 9,500 pounds, a step to make the committee's work known more widely. But probably the most significant development was the appointment of Leslie Kirkley, a Leeds businessman and Quaker as General Secretary in 1951. He was to provide leadership for Oxfam for twenty-three years, until his retirement in 1974. From then on the appeals for help multiplied due to a famine in Bihar and the Korean war in 1951, a major influx of Chinese refugees into HongKong in 1952, an earthquake in the Ionian islands in 1953, during Algerian war when refugees started pouring into neighboring countries in 1957, the Oxford Committee was the first relief agency to send help. Mervyn Jones in his book about Oxfam, wrote, "It was all useful work, yet in significant respects the effort was still a limited one. Although the horizons were widening, the bulk of the aid (52 percent as late as 1957) went to Europe.....the great majority of the aided were refugees

or the victims of disaster, rather than people for whom poverty was the lifelong environment”.³

Later on, Oxfam’s contribution in World Refugee Year (WRY) in 1959-60 and in Congo Famine in the following year can be seen as the end of one era and the beginning of another. With the independence of some colonies, and the launching of the Freedom from Hunger Campaign by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in 1960, Oxfam decided to turn towards ‘development’, and a deeper concern with the root causes of poverty. Throughout Oxfam’s history, the principle of humanitarian neutrality- ‘human need above politics’ is a constantly recurring theme : in the Congo and Biafra in the 1960’s, in Southern Africa and Cambodia in the 1970’s, in the West Bank and Ethiopia in the 1980’s and 1990’s.

Oxfam India, An Introduction

Oxfam began its work in India as early as in 1950’s at the time of Bihar Famine. A serious famine threatened lives in Bihar in 1951. Oxfam responded with food and clothing. Over the years its involvement with grass-roots communities has grown to a point where it now operates in most states of the country through field officers⁴ and over 350 local ‘partner’ NGOs and

³ Mervyn Jones, *Two Eras of Corn. Oxfam in Action* (London. Hodder and Stoughton, 1965) p. -35

⁴ Oxfam works in India with regional programs managed by local teams based in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Bhubneshwar, Calcutta, Hyderabad, Lucknow and

community based organizations. It has evolved from short term relief program to a longer term development approach. Today Oxfam still responds in times of crisis (as recently in Kandla Cyclone) but its emphasis is on helping poor people to find out their own solutions to poverty. Oxfam in India is working for the vulnerable groups such as dalits, tribals and women. So it is concerned not just with material poverty but with social inequality of caste and sex, unequal access to health care, legal rights and education.

Although Oxfam has been working in India since 1951, but there was a long debate on the question - Does India need its own Oxfam, an independent Oxfam India? In October, 1991 Oxfam's national directors met in New Delhi and discussed whether there should be an independent Oxfam India raising its own funds from Indian donors. The issue evoked strong feelings. Arguments were given for and against the proposal.⁵ The arguments given for the proposal were like this:

First, how can Oxfam call itself a Third World charity, when all its national directors are white men from rich countries? It always talks about learning from the people, it is trying to help. So it needs a third world perspective at this level too.

Nagpur. Recently the Bangalore base was closed due to some problem. Now Oxfam is working with an organization NESAs (New Entity for Social Assistance) in Bangalore.

⁵ Based on report on Oxfam's National Directors Meet, New Delhi Oct. 1991.

Second, A comfortable sophisticated middle class has come up in all the developing countries. Their generosity is to be tapped as its counterpart in the North. Fund raising from the Indian middle class can be done by an independent Oxfam.

Third, An autonomous Oxfam India would have more freedom to campaign on development issues and persuade the Indian Government and establishment to take notice. At the moment, Oxfam campaigns in the West on issues like Narmada Dam (lobbying the World Bank, for example) but has no channels through which to approach the Indian Government.

Fourth, As long as, Oxfam's work in India is funded from outside its staff will not be able to think independently, they will retain negative, passive casts of mind that date from the time of the Raj.

Fifth, Indians understand their own country far better than foreigners sitting in Melbourne or Boston. How can they use that knowledge properly if they always have to refer back to committees overseas?

Sixth, If independence and autonomy are what the Indian people want then we shouldn't refuse it. Let them have it.

The arguments given against the independent Oxfam India are like this-

First, Oxfam India would be just a pseudo Indian agency, it would still have a northern slant. Why not just continue to support all the existing campaigns and organizations that are genuinely indigenous?

Second, It will never be able to raise funds for long-term development from the Indian middle class. One can do it for the ten percent of the funds that go on straight welfare, but what about the work with scheduled castes and the landless? One can not raise funds for them from the higher castes and landowners.

Third, Questions were also raised on Indians' conservative attitude, They are not at all radical so God knows what Oxfam India will come up in terms of campaigning material.

Fourth, its megalomaniacal to think that Oxfam has unique idea worthy of export to developing countries. It should stop indulging in a new form of imperialism.

Fifth, If the point is to have a national organization which can speak out and campaign more freely, why call it Oxfam at all? Would not it be better still to have its own independent name and identity to avoid the suspicion of foreign string-pulling?

Sixth, If independence and autonomy are what the Indian people want then let them have it. But of course, they will have to raise all their own

funds and Oxfam organizations overseas will be released from all responsibility.

If we analyze the arguments given against the proposal, we find that most of the arguments are weak. They are based on wrong notions and are pessimistic, conservative and suspicious. Finally, the international meeting gave its support to the goal of an autonomous **OXFAM India**. They asked the staff of Oxfam UK, Oxfam America and Community Aid Abroad to work on how a genuinely indigenous organization could be most effectively created. They wanted it to be an initiative taken from within India and not a seed sown by the Northern Oxfams. The next step was for some exhaustive market research to be done to establish just how much money might be raised from the Indian middle class and for what kind of projects. There were precedents: Helpage India, for example, is an independent partner of Helpage International which has entirely Indian staff and raises sixty percent of its money from within the country. So the prospects for Oxfam India was also bright as far as funding was concerned. In this way Oxfam India came up.

Oxfam India, Policies and Projects

Oxfam philosophy in India has evolved from one based on short-term relief to longer term development approach. Its approach is based on the involvement of local communities by strengthening their capacity to address

the range of problems they face. However, the importance of the state can not be overlooked. So Oxfam is also actively involved in working closely with governmental institutions to facilitate a policy environment which allows the capabilities and potentials of local communities to flourish. At present, Oxfam India supports over 400 grassroots development projects across the country, focusing on the groups which it feels are the most vulnerable in the current economic, social and political context.

Oxfam India works with forest dependent tribal communities, marginalised rural communities, particularly, landless labourers, small and marginal farmers, bonded and child labourers with an emphasis on dalit communities. It also works for traditional artisans, particularly, fishing communities, traditional crafts producers with an emphasis on women, groups vulnerable to emergencies, particularly, drought prone rural communities, flood and cyclone prone communities, religion/ethnic/linguistic minorities and dalits effected by communal or ethnic violence. Oxfam also works for groups employed in unsafe and exploitative small scale industries, mining activities, particularly, women, children and bonded labour. At present, Oxfam is trying to intervene in some new areas which can pose serious threats in the future e.g. women vulnerable to violence, sex-workers vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

Oxfam's development projects focus on two broad aspects faced by poor communities: their basic rights and their sustainable livelihoods. Oxfam believes that only focusing on economic aspects of poor communities is not enough. For example, on the issue of sustainable livelihoods for forest dependent tribal communities, Oxfam works not only to enhance agricultural productivity, forest produce marketing and natural resource management but also at a policy level to ensure that inputs such as primary health and education come from the government and that major decisions are taken such as the location of a major dam are taken in consultation with communities, so that their efforts of years are not disrupted overnight. This holistic or integrated approach is central to Oxfam's philosophy for sustainable development.

It also works for ensuring freedom from violence, intimidation of local communities and social justice. The emphasis, therefore, is not only on transferring financial resources to poor communities but to empower them with rights which will enable their advancement. As already said, 'Oxfam is committed to maximise their well being through promoting sustainable livelihood. This includes support for projects such as : sustainable natural resource management (land development, water harvesting, forest management), improving agricultural productivity (technical and input support), promotion of alternative employment opportunities (credit schemes, income generating programs, handicraft promotion etc.). Oxfam

has also worked for community-based preparedness for emergencies and health care.

Oxfam's policy towards the current development context in India should also be mentioned. Today, the free-market ideology seems to be unchallenged and many assumptions regarding the role of the state have been questioned. There is a feeling that the failure of welfare programs of the past justifies a growth-oriented approach and also that the new approach serves every one's interest. But, in the process a huge social and economic underclass is being created. They neither have access to the now discredited 'welfare transfer role' of the state nor do they have access to the opportunities of the market. This new development paradigm has reduced the social, political and economic space of this class. India now stands at a watershed in terms of creating a large group who may suffer from permanent and chronic poverty. The trends which threaten the poor are emerging very clearly as displacement of people from land and livelihood due to increased large scale development projects, land consolidation for commercial cultivation, land purchase for industry and denial of traditional rights and common property resources, economic marginalisation of labour and livelihood due to increasing deregulation of employment and removal of traditional livelihood sources, declining food security due to pressure to convert the staple crop into cash crop production, worsening physical environment in terms of water access, air pollution, land degradation and

forest-depletion, increasing vulnerability to disasters such as drought, flood, cyclones and earthquakes.

After a discussion on Oxfam's policy, a survey of the projects done by Oxfam India is a must. As already said, it is in the field of disasters and emergency operations that Oxfam started its work. So Oxfam in India also made its debut with relief work in 1951 during Bihar Famine. Since then it has been supplying relief work. Recent examples are earthquake at Latur and cyclone hit Kandla. In Latur, Oxfam did really well. It was a good coordinated relief work along with the government. Oxfam could do it because of cooperative bureaucrats. From relief work let's switch over to Oxfam's social welfare and development work in terms of particular projects.⁶

Encouraging employment through handicrafts production is an important area covered by Oxfam in India. **Oxfam Bridge** is fair trade program. Under this program Oxfam imports handicrafts from a number of producer groups through the Bridge operation of its subsidiary trading company. Grants are also made to groups for staff salaries and working capital where markets are available locally. So it works to link traditional food and craft producers with the market for their produce. These include local and metropolitan markets and the export markets. The Bridge program

⁶ Based on the assessment of reports of various projects done by Oxfam India.

extends all over the world - in the UK alone, about 25% of the handicraft sold, come from India. Among those who gain fair prices for their produce and thereby enrich their lives are the weavers of Andhra Pradesh, Potters from Rajsthan and appliqué-workers from Gujrat and many others from all over India. In Bihar Oxfam Bridge works with an organization called **Adithi** which works with the women of poor communities, encouraging them in activities which will give them more control over their own lives. In the forests and hills of Santhal Paraganas Sal leaves and Palas leaves are available in large quantities. Tribal women go deep into the forest to collect this cheap raw material. These leaves are stitched with tiny sticks into plates and cups, for which there is large local market. Adithi supported by Oxfam Bridge works with these tribal women to make sure that they earn fair income for their work.

Oxfam launched various projects for good health services. Manipur which had 0.2% of India's population, accounted for almost 14% of all AIDS cases in India in 1995. The Golden Triangle which includes Laos, Thailand and Burma is the epicentre for large scale drug trafficking into the neighbouring countries including India. The youth of Manipur fall prey to drug injecting habits due to easy availability of drugs at affordable prices. Moreover, high levels of unemployment and poverty also lead them to become petty drug dealers. These youngsters use common needle to inject the drug and this becomes the medium for the spread of HIV. 60-70% of

injecting drug users are found to be HIV positive in Manipur. Often the young widows of the AIDS victims are forced into prostitution and they also get HIV and die. So Oxfam decided to do something. Oxfam supported a project '**Social Awareness Service Organization**' (SASO) in Manipur. Under this project such youngsters are counselled and supported to give up this drug injection habit. SASO trains youth and encourages them to build public awareness against drugs and AIDS. Another Oxfam project, **Continuum of Care Program (COCP)** is engaged in ensuring that the government's medical services are available to help those having AIDS and that they are not stigmatized and treated differently.

In Kethanaikatty, Tamil Nadu eleven children died in one year- they were victims of malnutrition, water contamination and bad sanitation. **Speech**, an Oxfam funded local group educates the villagers for better hygiene and sanitation. It gives immunization to pregnant woman. It helps the villagers to dig soak pits, to build wall around the village well and keep it clean by using chlorine.

Oxfam has also funded the projects for replanting the forests. The local people in Puri, Orissa decided voluntarily to replant the forest. A society '**Bruksho O' Jeebra Bandhu Parishad**' (Friends of trees and living beings), funded by Oxfam, helped the villagers in this work. Over a thousand villages are part of this society. The hills are green again. The society, which

has managed to create this miracle with funds from Oxfam, now manages a seed bank so others can do the same.

Twelve percent of India's population lives in drought prone areas. When there is not enough rain, there is often not enough food. Men and Women often migrate to cities in search of jobs. The social fabric of an entire community begins to disintegrate. In Maharashtra, an Oxfam funded agency called **Manavlok** provides clean drinking water to drought struck villages. This has made it possible for 1150 families to stay in their homes instead of uprooting themselves. Oxfam along with the government and other agencies, supports long term drought prevention work such as reforestation programs, hand pump repairs and water storage mechanisms.

At the end of May 1997, Oxfam held a press conference in Delhi denouncing the governments attitude towards the recent starvation deaths in Orissa and the water scarcity and subsequent migration taking place. This came at a time when Orissa government was facing intense pressure from NGOs and the central government, particularly in the light of an ongoing investigation by the National Human Rights Commission. The current spell of drought in Orissa is a man-made disaster, the result of consistent neglect of traditional irrigation system, inappropriate policies relating to food and agriculture, inefficient administration of government welfare schemes. In a survey conducted by Oxfam, it was found that, except for a few places,

water was available at a depth of between 8 to 10 feet in most of the drought affected areas, indicating that there is no reason for State to be reeling under such severe drought like conditions. The undivided districts of Klahandi and Bolangir, which have become synonymous with poverty and hunger, have consistently been producing more food grains per capita than the national and Orissa averages, yet people are going hungry. A survey conducted by two of Oxfam's partner NGOs in the drought affected areas revealed that nearly hundred percent children in the age group of below five-years were malnourished. The area of agricultural land covered by some form of irrigation has fallen from 48% at the time of independence to just 11% today. Traditional irrigation systems have been nationalized and then neglected. While the government guarantees 100 man-days of employment per annum to each family under the Employment Assurance Scheme, in most blocks of Kalahandi and Bolangir the average number of days of employment actually received last year was under 15 days. The neglect of the government has forced poor communities into a vicious circle of poverty. Oxfam feels that a strong movement for effective government program and policies is required to ensure that farmers in western Orissa get a better deal. Specifically Oxfam has called for: decentralization of programs and devolution of financial resources to panchayats and Gram Sabhas, ensuring fair prices to tribal communities for minor forest produce, government action to honour their commitment to provide 100 man-days of employment per

annum for each family, promotion of agro based industries and effective marketing structure to ensure that poor farmers are able to secure the minimum procurement price for their produce, diversification of the crop base and provision of cold storage facilities for crops such as potatoes and onions to strengthen the bargaining power of the farmers in getting better prices, revival of cottage industries and handlooms, the right to information regarding government policies and programs to ensure greater accountability in relief and development programs.

Oxfam has also worked to eradicate the age-old evil of bonded labour. Bonded labour is a system of forced labour where either because of some advance of money from landlord or because of ancestral indebtedness, a person or one of their dependents is made to work for the landlord for some nominal wage, or for no wage at all, until he or she has repaid the loan fully. Because of their impoverished state and low wages, victims are often unable to repay the debt. They continue to be perpetually in debt and get bonded for life to these landlords. **Jeevika**, an Oxfam supported organization is working against bonded labour in 48 Taluks of Karnataka. It believes in empowering the bonded labourers by releasing them and then using them as agents of change to reach out to fellow bonded labourers.

Samskar, an Oxfam funded NGO in the Nizamabad district of Andhra Pradesh, has been working with socially oppressed Harijan women

who are sexually exploited both by rich landlords and men of their own community under Jogin system. The organization supports education for the Jogins and their children and promotes income generating activities such as horticulture. It aims to eradicate the practice of Joginism by rehabilitating the Jogin women into society. There are examples in which Samskar has given pensions to old Jogins and also made the state government to give some land for their living.

Oxfam has also worked for street children. **Rural Literacy and Health Program (RLHP)**, is an Oxfam funded project. Under this project, a 'Shelter', a home for street children is run in Mysore. It arranges food clothing and education for these street children and also some vocational training so that they can earn their livings. **Srida**, another NGO supported by Oxfam, brought works for tribal children in Bijanidhi block of Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh. Srida has opened an "Anganwadi" (a school for children less than five years) in Mazgaon village of the same Bijanidhi block for the children of 'Gonds', the tribal community which lives here. This 'anganwadi' has adapted a system of education keeping in mind the tribal background and limited exposure of these children. The learning aids are creative adaptations of inexpensive thermocole, cardboard and wooden blocks, due to financial constraints. Every attempt is made to provide maximum mental and physical stimulation to these children. It provides

nutritious lunch for the children. This works as an incentive for parents to send them to school.

An Evaluation of Oxfam's Performance

As a non operational, non specialist agency working with so many local groups and organizations, Oxfam India is in a singular position. Its flexible wide ranging programs provide contacts at all level from the government to India's poorest small groups. It is not tied to any single political ideology, to any one specialist field, to any one type of operating agency, nor to any rigid constitution. This has enabled Oxfam India to be involved with an extremely wide range of initiatives in different parts of the country.

Oxfam believes in the idea of self-help. So it has always supported the local groups and communities in solving their problems. Projects supported by Oxfam are generally small. The annual grants list of Oxfam India shows that the small grants given for self-help is increasing day by day. It has brought many unknown suffering communities and villages to the public notice and also has tried to solve their problems. Disaster relief and rehabilitation is a costly affair, but this has been one area on which Oxfam has been spending huge sums.

Development does not necessarily require massive funds. Indeed, outside expertise and material aid may swamp local initiative. At best, aid should be sufficient to encourage self-help. This is what Oxfam believes in. Often the Field Director can give encouragement by just being there, representing an organization of ordinary people. Much of government aid and other international aids have been devoted to large industrial projects and infrastructure. Some of it has been useful, some not, but much of it has been relatively high cost for relatively few direct beneficiaries. Building a large dam, a highway or an airport represents a tidy package to donor and recipient alike. It is hoped that some of the benefits of this 'easy aid' would trickle down to the poorer members of society. But too often the trickle never reaches them. Oxfam had never funded such projects. It has always seen these areas as inappropriate for it.

For all the third world governments, planning has become an accepted and common practice. India is no exception and has adopted the system of Five Year Plans. It is important to remember that government services rarely reach satisfactorily to rural areas. Health services are few or non-existent. Quality education for children is a costly affair. Four out of five people in rural areas have no access to clean water. In other words, government barely exists in large parts of rural India. It is so either because the resources are not enough or because government is not particularly concerned with welfare services or a combination of both. Some governments have taken

interest to bring development to the rural poor. They are prepared to discuss with aid donors the provision of 'basic needs'. The aid concept, which was adopted during the late 1970's implies rejection of large projects and the 'trickle down' approach. But government ministries and departments are often ill-organized to meet the needs and generally the services never trickle down to the grassroots level.

For this reason like other voluntary agencies, Oxfam India also prefers to work at the 'grass-roots'. Each situation, physical and human, is different from what has been experienced before, so each situation demands a specific approach. An approach that is rarely possible in large government schemes. Oxfam prefers to work with small communities and tries to handle a specific problem in a specific way. Oxfam has the privilege of working with thousands of groups of people - on the principle of 'trickle up' rather than 'trickle down'. Its real contribution can not be measured just in terms of the funds involved. It is often the advice, encouragement and support which are important. In the words of an 'Interpretation of Oxfam's Objectives' "All people whether they be rich or poor, strong or weak, privileged or deprived, are interdependent and should share in the common task of seeking to achieve mankind's full potential". "Oxfam provides people..... with the opportunity of playing a small part in a much larger struggle to eliminate poverty and to help mankind develop in a spirit of partnership and brotherhood".

Oxfam India, A Link Between Indian State and the Civil Society

The most interesting debate related to NGOs is the relationship between state and civil society. The state in developing countries like India has the greatest responsibility to bring about planned socio-economic development and nation-building. As no state is self-sufficient, it has to cooperate with other institutions. It respects and recognize the functional autonomy of the structures and rights of civil society.

India has a great tradition of social service, social reform and voluntary community based service from time immemorial. After the colonial rule, Indian state assumed the major responsibility for promoting development and welfare, the bureaucracy acquired enormous power and function as the agent of social change, thus laying the foundation for a strong administrative state. The command model of development with strong doses of centralization and top-down planning as its hallmarks left little room for people's involvement in development through participation in the decision making process. Bureaucratic apathy and inefficiency coupled with corruption in the high echelons of administration and political leadership, lack of confidence on the part of the government in people's involvement and participation in development activities and central government's 'witch-hunting' role against voluntary agencies and social workers sent shock

waves to the pluralists like Rajani Kothari⁷ on the one hand and to the social activists and NGOs on the other.

The planners and policy makers in India realized the importance of involving the voluntary sector in the country's decentralized development only in the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85). Earlier the tendency of political decision makers and the development bureaucracy was to equate the work of voluntary agencies with only welfare activities and charity work⁸ or the government sponsored cooperatives. The VI plan identified 'new areas' in which NGOs as 'new actors' could participate in development. These areas included : (a) optimal utilization and development of renewable source of energy including forestry through the formation of renewable energy association at the block level, (b) Family welfare, health and nutrition, education and relevant community programs in the field (c) health for all programs (d) water management and soil conservation (e) social welfare programs for weaker sections (f) minimum needs programs (g) disaster preparedness and management (h) promotion of ecology and tribal development and (I) environmental protection and education. The voluntary sector has received a big boost in the 8th plan (1992-97) also.

⁷ See Rajani Kothari, 'The NGOs, the State and World Capitalism' *Social Action* 36, n. 4 Oct/Dec, 1986

⁸ Fourth Five Year Plan, 1969-74, Planning Commission, Government of India, 1970, p.-420-21.

Over the years, Oxfam India has worked as a link between Indian state and civil society by strengthening the local groups and communities. First, Oxfam's relationship with Indian state should be discussed. At times, it has worked in close cooperation with India state, there are also occasions when Oxfam has openly criticized government's policies and its failure in solving a particular problem. There are also examples when it has preferred autonomous work and sometimes it has bypassed the state.

Because of being a Foreign agency, Oxfam has been put under extra-scrutiny and has always been looked upon with great suspicion. Its activities are covered by FCRA regulations. But Oxfam's relationship with Indian state has evolved over the years and it varies from one state to other state in Indian union. At the central level, the relationship depends on contacts and public relation activity. The relationship between Oxfam and Indian state has been very good during the emergencies. Disaster-management and relief work has been one area in which there has been good cooperation. Right from the Bihar famine of 1950's to the recent Kandla cyclone, Oxfam India worked in closed cooperation with Indian state. The best coordinated relief work of Oxfam India with Indian government was during Latur earthquake. It was a good coordinated work because of the presence of a progressive bureaucrat at the right time.

Not only disaster management but there are examples of development work also when Oxfam India and governments of various states worked together. An example of fantastic cooperation with a state government is Oxfam's project for HIV/AIDS cases in Manipur. Manipur government cooperated with Oxfam India in launching the two projects SASO and COCP. Mention should also be made to the Western Ghat Forestry Projects. In this project, Oxfam India worked with the help of Karnataka government and local NGOs. There was good cooperation between Oxfam and Orissa government in launching a program on health and education. But there are occasions when Oxfam India has openly questioned the government's policy. The best example is the survey done by Oxfam during Orissa drought and starvation deaths in Kalahari. This survey displayed shocking facts and Oxfam severely criticized the Orissa government and demanded several things from the government.

Sometimes ideology also plays a role in determining the relationship between NGOs and government. In case of Oxfam India we can observe its relationship with West Bengal government. West Bengal government has never cooperated with Oxfam. The experience of Oxfam in west Bengal has been really bad because of ideological differences. As far as BJP ruled states are concerned, the scene is not very clear. There is ambiguity. Theoretically speaking, again NGOs are fearful but Oxfam's experience is not so bad. Probably they (BJP ruled states) have a particular strategy and they want to

turn NGOs into a service providing vehicle. This is what Oxfam authorities feel right now.

But the major work which Oxfam has done in India is its autonomous work by funding and supporting the local groups and grassroots communities. It is in this context, that Oxfam seems to be strengthening the civil society. By working for the basic needs of the poor and suffering communities, Oxfam India works as a link between Indian state and the civil society. By working for the destitute and downtrodden, it has made a place for it in Indian civil society. At the same time it has also worked with government. It is in this way, that it has worked as a link between Indian state and the civil society. It has been strengthening the collective life by working with local groups. It has worked as an agent of civil society by solving the problems of oppressed and by supporting the small collectivities. As already said, it has targeted the state government on various issues but at the same time it has nurtured the other modes of expressions outside the state control. It does not ignore the state but it also explores the other realms of collective action. This collective action takes place in the realm of civil society. Here Oxfam India, like many other voluntary organizations becomes an agent of civil society.

Oxfam India, like other Oxfams, believes in constructive engagement without compromising its position. It works in partnership with state

governments, but it has never been a 'silent partners'. Its chief concern has been the welfare of the most oppressed communities of India. By working with these grassroots communities, it has managed a space for it in civil society. Thereby, it has worked as a link between Indian state and civil society.

CHAPTER - V

CONCLUSION

Nation - states are so important in world affairs that we tend to associate their activities with the meaning of world politics itself. States have the ability to influence the lives of their citizens. Nonetheless, this study on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) demonstrates that states do not monopolize world political activity. They share the international stage with other actors. While not as powerful as states, the nongovernmental groups significantly shape widespread behaviour. They play an important role in the contemporary world.

Problems arise, however, when one seeks to understand exactly how these non-governmental activists effect change. As already discussed in chapters one and three, the conventional understanding in IR is that these nongovernmental groups are politically effective only when they influence state behaviour. i.e., they bring about change by lobbying states to enact policies. According to this view, widespread human behaviour shifts because of states. They are the political agents; and activists serve only as pressure groups that shape governmental policy. A central aim of this study has been to show that this view is not so much wrong as incomplete. Nongovernmental groups not only lobby states but also directly shape the activities of other institutions collectivities and individuals. They do so by manipulating

mechanisms of power that exist outside the realm of state to state relations. These include economic, social and cultural practices which have an impact on public life. To use the conceptual language, they politicize global civil society and thus engage in world civic politics. The nongovernmental agency like Oxfam which works with local NGOs and small communities, politicizes the institutions of civil society in various countries and thus practices world civic politics. The aim of this concluding chapter is to pull together the diverse themes presented along these lines in different chapters.

Nongovernmental politics is a parallel type of activity. It represents a qualitatively different approach to global governance. This approach is related to the politics of 'legitimacy mobilization.' State practices the politics as the exercise of authority. States have high authority and low legitimacy. However, nongovernmental groups have low authority but a higher degree of legitimacy. This legitimacy comes from their power of high moral values. In this study, I have tried to present this approach of world civic politics by differentiating it from statism, supra-statism and sub-statism (chapter-III). This approach has been described as a particular form of politics practised by nongovernmental groups. The main efficacy of state power emanates from its ability to set up laws and ensure compliance through force. Nongovernmental activists use a different type of power. They work through persuasion rather than coercion. They aim to change the consciousness,

empower local residents and create mechanisms of accountability. This form of power will be familiar to readers acquainted with the thought of people such as Russell, Foucault or Lukes. These authors emphasize the constitutive character of dominant discourses, norms, moral codes and knowledge. These conditions exert pressure on people and by instilling certain understandings, determine human practices.¹

Throughout this study, there has been an emphasis on how scholars in IR privilege the state in their analyses of world political events. This is particularly true of political realist, but is also the case with other intellectual traditions within IR. As mentioned in the 'Introduction' (chapter-1), numerous scholars questioned it in 1970's. The key argument of these scholars like Keohane and Nye, Mansbach, Ferguson, Lampert, Vernon and Feld etc. was that non state actors were growing in number and importance and that some of their actions were having an equal or larger impact on world affairs than nation states. At a minimum, they claimed that transnational relations play into the calculations of states and force them to change their policies. At the extreme, they argued that NGOs, such as multinational

¹ For example, Bertrand Russell, *Power: A New Social Analysis* (New York 1938), Michael Foucault, *Power/Knowledge : Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-77*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York, 1980), Steven Lukes, *Power : A Radical View* (London, 1974)

corporations (MNCs), would eventually eclipse the state as the pre-eminent political force in the world.²

One of its most significant contributions was to raise the issue of the meaning of 'politics' itself. In their edited volume, *Transnational Relations and World Politics*, Keohane and Nye offer the following definition of politics, which reflects their sensitivity to transnational actors. Politics "refers to relationships in which atleast one actor consciously employs resources, both material and symbolic, including the threat or exercise of punishment, to induce other actors to behave differently than they would otherwise behave."³ They go on to emphasize that such actors need not be states. This is their most significant contribution to IR theory. In the introductory essay, Keohane and Nye pose several themes. The first and the most important one is to assess the net effect of transnational relations on the ability of governments to operate. That is, transnationalism must be understood in terms of its effects on state behaviour. Scholars call it 'minimalist position'. Like much of the early transnational work, Keohane and Nye also "raise the 'minimalist position', i.e., transnationalism is meaningful to the degree it plays into the calculations of states and induces them to modify policy". Their next question is related to the importance of transnationalism for the study of IR.

² For a discussion on this literature see chapter - 1.

³ Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction" in *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, 1972) p.XXIV

Keohane and Nye want to know if an increase in transnational activity calls sufficient attention away from the state as the 'primary unit of analysis'. Should scholars shift from a focus on states to nongovernmental activist groups, multinational corporations, the Catholic Church and so forth? Here the debate is reduced to either /or proposition - either state is the primary mover and shaker of world affairs or not. This reflects the 'maximalist position' i.e. that NGOs have replaced the state as the most important actor in world affairs or not.

By raising the issue of transnationalism in terms of minimalist and maximalist positions, scholars in general, and Keohane and Nye in particular, unnecessarily restrict their understanding of politics. They set up the debate in terms of the 'unit of analysis'. Setting up the debate in terms of the unit of analysis issue is problematic because it could be easily beaten back by state centric thinkers. It is very easy to prove the superior efficacy of the state to dismiss the transnationalist challenge. As it was mentioned in chapter -III, this is exactly what happened. Gilpin, Waltz, Sullivan⁴ and others argued successfully that the state was not going away as the central unit of analysis

⁴ See Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York, 1979), Robert Gilpin 'Three Models of the Future' in George Modelski ed. *Transnational Corporations and World Order* (San Francisco, 1979), Michael Sullivan, 'Transnationalism Power Politics and the Realities of the Present System' in Ray Maghroori and Bennett Rambergd, *Globalism versus Realism: International Relations' Third Debate* (Boulder, 1982.)

and still very much dictates the world politics. This brought the defeat of transnationalist critique in IR.

This study, instead of getting into the debate about relative impact of units, it examines the nongovernmental activities for their own richness and effectiveness. In 1970, commenting on the scholarship of transnationalism, Peter Evans claimed that, "It is not interesting to exclude traditional state behaviour and then study the residual study".⁵ Here, this work differs. This is the point of departure. I think, it is extremely interesting to bracket the state activity and explore the actual work of nongovernmental groups (NGOs) to appreciate the full spectrum of world politically relevant activity. Otherwise, all activity becomes obscured in the shadow of the state. This study concentrates on the alternative forms of political activity as practised by the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), instead of discussing the unit of analysis debate. It uses the transnationalist critique as a basis for inquiry but assumes a different orientation. It emphasizes on the nongovernmental forms of world politics which takes place in the realm of international civil society and which is related to world civic politics. It is related to the 'politics of global responsibility.' I would like to quote Martin Shaw who writes, "A politics of global responsibility is overwhelmingly a politics which will find its basis in civil society, in the articulation of interests and solidarities, rather

⁵ Quoted in Keohane and Nye, 'Transnational Relations and World Politics' p. XXIV.

than directly in the arena of states. It is a politics which will be characterized, sometimes disparagingly, as utopian, although it is based, I hope to have demonstrated, on real trends and possibilities.”⁶

This work has tried to demonstrate the limitations of the traditional understanding of world politics including the transnationalist theories of 1970’s. Firstly, The world, in a political context, is more than a group of nation-states and international organizations. States represent the most important components. Indeed, understanding world simply as a configuration of states is like believing a university is made up of solely students and professors. Such an understanding does not provide an accurate account of the institutions overall character. Emphasizing world civic politics, it highlights the importance of nongovernmental activity and challenges the traditional understanding of world politics. The activities of NGOs are directly related to the concept of world civic politics. Secondly, an appreciation of the activities of the nongovernmental forces (NGOs) adds depth to the notion of politics. Traditionally, politics is associated with the governing capabilities of government. Governments are endowed with the authority to make binding decisions i.e. law backed by force. But there are forms of power associated with norms, rules and discourses that actually shape people’s desires, conceptions, understanding and behaviour without

⁶ From Martin Shaw, *Global Society and International Relations* (Cambridge, 1994) p.187.

taking recourse to law or the threat of physical coercion. This work on nongovernmental forces (NGOs) demonstrates that the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have the power of moral value and they work in the realm of international civil society along with the states. This subtle form of power (which NGOs have) has political consequences and one should take them seriously. It is politicizing the civil society and world collective life. Thus, it is imperative to expand our notion of politics itself in the phrase 'world politics' to include the nongovernmental mode of governance.

The field of International Relations is not blind to the importance of redefining world politics. An appreciation for the host of non-state activities has led to several formulations that reflect such a sensitivity. James Rosenau suggests referring to the field as 'Post International Relations'. Richard Ashley offers the term. 'Post Modern World Politics', Richard Falk talks, at times, of 'Post Realism'. This study supports these efforts and it gives voice to a politics that is relevant in a world context but that takes place outside the grasp of states.

The nongovernmental activity is often conditioned by states but it hardly makes a difference in the politics they are pursuing. As my case study on Oxfam India suggests, this international NGO works with the help of local activists and communities in various parts of India and, at times, it has also worked with the Indian state (as during various emergency relief works) but it

has never compromised its position. It has worked as an agent of civil society. Not only in India, Oxfam works in 120 countries and is concerned for the poor of the world, no matter, which nation-state they belong to. It practises different kind of politics which has a civic dimension. This is related to the world civic politics.

By expanding the notion of world politics through an appreciation of its civic dimension, my work tries to fashion the concept of global civil society. The nongovernmental groups (NGOs) work in global civil society without really knowing it. They engage in world civic politics often unaware of the dynamics involved. This dissertation tries to provide some insights along these lines. It suggests that, in addition to existing efforts, the dynamics of global civil society can be further explored. The instruments of power available in this realm are used by the nongovernmental forces (NGOs) in places, where states can not go and the work done by them (NGOs) shape widespread behaviour in a different mode from the instrumentalities of states.

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