

**Our House in Shambles: Understanding the propaganda war and the relative deprivation of consciousness between CSOs of developed and developing countries with respect to climate change.**

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**Abstract:**

The ongoing debate about climate change should not be a contentious issue but rather an established historical fact. Climate change being a debate is largely due to corporate interests both in first as well as third world countries. The research paper focuses on the debate having a direct effect on the safety and sustainability of the third world countries. Scientifically, the third world countries are going to be the worst affected because the economic competition for growth boils down to this field. This detailed analysis seeks to understand the propaganda war that is going on between the “No-changers” and the “Pro-changers” with regard to climate change and how its interplay decides our future. In this debate, India occupies a chief position because the overall emphasis on or craze for economic growth has destabilized the environmental parameters of ecological system. However, one of the major emphasis would be to analyse the role that civil society can play with regard to climate change policy pressure in India. The analysis would be important to defunct the present context of this consumerist world in tune with the sustainable developmental goals embraced by the respective governments all over the world and how their impacts are limited.

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

The sole basis of this work is to conceptualize the rising trends of consumerism and how it arises and how in the long run, it is tantamount to environment as a whole. This paper is based on the underlying emphasis that consumerism represents a new trend or phenomenon in the stage of human-nature interaction and it takes us away from the earlier relationships we had with our natural habitat and its surrounding. This rise of consumerism represents a stage where the forces of consumption has taken prominence irrespective of sustainability and with due regard to natural resources ability to sustain itself. Hence, anthropogenic climate change is part and parcel of this era marked by consumerism. This world is in a state of equilibrium and if that state of balance is disturbed, then the mechanism which enables life would be disrupted. Anthropogenic climate change is an indication of that disruption that is going on. Even on Earth life hangs on a balance. Consumerism which is after all, one of the main reasons behind creating such state of disbalance, arises due to the dialectical conflict between the forces of no-changers and the forces of pro-changers. There is a psychological warfare that is going on through the means of propaganda. However, consumerism is an aspect of that warfare in which one force is dominating over its other competitors. In politics, there is a saying that money buys elections, so naturally the “no-changers” success so far can be attributed to the big corporate interests that back them up, stupidity on part of the believer doesn’t weigh in now. Hence, this psychological-propaganda warfare represents the current stage in the evolution of environmental history and climate change is a result of it. However, this symmetry between man and nature got into a context of asymmetry since the inception of the Industrial Revolution in Britain and since then, it has taken more vigorous roots. However, the psychological warfare is a product of the fear psychosis<sup>1</sup> among the vested corporate interests and its use of propaganda as a means to fortify its status-quo and position of dominance over the nature. Hence, it requires mention that the greatest trick the devil ever pulled was to make people believe that it was not the devil.

Awareness being a formative part of consciousness includes solution too. The battle between these two forces mentioned above can be solved by understanding the social dynamics and the

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<sup>1</sup> Fear psychosis to a large part stems from the fear of failing to survive. It has been a part of our culture that we want to amass as much wealth as possible to challenge our mortality. Thus, we want to become immortal by means of our unending wealth. Link to the documentary: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVuVlk2E\\_e4&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVuVlk2E_e4&t=1s)

structure of the system of which we are members. The structure can be categorized as being that of a civil society-state power structure continuum. The relationship needs to be balanced out by establishing a sustainable order<sup>2</sup>. This balancing requires a protracted effort from the pro-changers to develop the consciousness of the human beings. Civil society is an expression which defines the human beings aggregated into a body and coordinating its voice in the same context with others. If a democratic system is in place, the state for its survival requires the support of the civil society. The civil society moulded through various forces becomes the domain for action. Hence, making the civil society conscious as well as active would improve the dampened relationship between man and nature. Therefore, the solution lies within<sup>3</sup>.

However, there has been a relative deprivation in minds of the social thinkers of the third world countries because in an era of globalization when consciousness can be acquired through witnessing the various effects of climate change all over the world and the subsequent awakening of the first world countries to this issue, the third world countries especially India in this context (Our focus is India) have lagged behind and most importantly, we have acquired the wrong traits from the western model of modernization and has in affect shed the inherent characters of our fore-fathers. Hence, this sense of relative deprivation that erstwhile colonies attribute in terms of material possession to the developed countries has put the developing countries into a “rat-race” and subsequent, emptiness. This craze for economic growth, industrialization and foreign investment etc. is a phenomenon of this approach. What has happened in the long run is that economic growth has assumed prominence over human development, which was the ultimate goal of the erstwhile colonial countries. The apt tendency to imitate western developed countries irrespective of difference is bound to fail in the long run. The hidden motives and the historical forces of neo-colonialism needs to be understood and applied in this context. Most of the manufacturing process have been transferred or outsourced to the third world countries with the headquarters located in the first world countries. The larger share of the profit is siphoned off to the first world countries at the cost of third world lives and third world resources. Ultimately, we

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<sup>2</sup> I think in life balance is the most important thing both for our microcosmic survival as well as macrocosmic survival too. Further research is needed for understanding the equation of balance as a whole. My understanding of balance as a whole derives from studying geography and ecology.

<sup>3</sup> Every solution lies within if we introspect deeply. Things imposed from above will fail most of the time if there is not a seed within for its growth. Thaler, Richard and Sunstein, Cass R. , *Nudge*, London, Penguin, 2009, p 113-127

are the losers. We lose our home as well as our resources. We watch as silent spectators because the culture of consumerism has blinded us all. The problem that the tower of Babel<sup>4</sup> faced is not their anymore in terms of problem of communication, language, geographical proximity etc but still we are going the wrong way. Our sub-conscious have been occupied by the forces of consumerism.

The developed countries civil society have become conscious about their environment but the developing countries civil society is in a laggard state of affair. Developing countries like India and China in this race for achieving their desire state of economic well-being would lose the physical well-being required to survive. Hence, we will be left without our home. Economic riches wouldn't matter if we don't have oxygen to breathe. Therefore, the third world countries need to be active when it comes to protecting their environment in the long run by understanding the implications of their unsustainable way of living and their mad craze for materialism.

Indian Government has time and again tried to forge that relationship but it has gone in vain because the approach has been faulty. In this context, the emphasis on eco-tourism to boost man and nature relationship has been dubious because by creating dozens of resorts in a forest region, which requires severe cutting down of trees in abysmal proportion cannot be justified. This initiative doesn't fit in with the "wilderness idea"(Guha, Environmentalism; A Global History, 2016). This is so because if you want both the parties to shake hands on an issue, you cannot cut the hand of the other and expect them to shake hand on equal terms. Social movements are also a result of that consciousness or awakening of the civil society. Social movements are a mini-version of revolution and revolution brings change and transforms the society(Goodwin & Jasper, 2003). In order to live and let live, we need nothing less than a revolution because years of doing cannot be undone by a single strike. It requires a protracted state of being.

The concepts of consumerism, climate change etc forms an important part of this interdisciplinary environmental history because the current trend of human interaction with nature to a large extent is determined by the mindset that a human being has towards it.

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<sup>4</sup> This refers to the biblical problem of Babel city where they failed in their endeavour to construct a tower into the heaven due to complexities in terms of communication.

Therefore, to understand the crux of the matter it is important to understand the human mind too. Hence, Psychology, Economics, Political Science, History etc needs to be amalgamated in order to arrive at a complete understanding of the issue. Just like in Political Science, political sociology has taken prominence because it tries to understand the social aspects behind the interaction that takes places between the individual and the state(Faulks, 2011). If we try to ignore the social factors playing behind the scene, we will miss the whole point.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE: THE CONSEQUENCE**

Climate change as a process or phenomenon is not something new but takes place naturally over long periods of time<sup>5</sup>. The Earth is 4.5 Billion years old and during this time there have been significant changes in climate. The most recent climate change event has been the end of the Ice Age, at the end of the Pleistocene Age some 10,000 years ago. This was an entirely natural phenomenon as at this stage of evolution, human beings had little capability and capacity to influence the workings of the nature. Scientists are uncertain about the exact cause of climate change then, but many attributes it to the so-called Milankovitch cycle, which is when the earth tilts on its axis, causing shifts in how the Earth receives solar radiation. Therefore, in this context it wouldn't be so much as climate change but rather a natural phenomenon. Climate change was thus a natural phenomenon signifying the mechanism through which earth maintain its balance. However, the current face of climate change is a human induced one.

Anthropogenic (or human-induced) climate change is different. It is caused by the release of so-called greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane, which act as insulation around the earth's atmosphere. Again, the greenhouse effect is not new. During the early stages of the earth's formation, many gases such as carbon dioxide were released through volcanoes or the decomposition of vegetal matter on the earth's surface. These gases then settled in the atmosphere around the earth and had the effect of preventing much of the earth's heat from escaping. Indeed, this level of the greenhouse effect has been beneficial, allowing temperatures to remain high enough for the earth's current lifeforms to

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<sup>5</sup> Climate change is a natural phenomenon usually but the human dominance has altered to natural phenomenon into a man-made one. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/nov/03/climate-change-report-us-government-contradicts-trump>

develop. But if there are too many of these greenhouse gases, the earth's temperature is likely to rise further. Human activities impact on climate change by releasing greenhouse gases. The most common of these activities is the conversion of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas to energy. The fossil fuels performed the process of carbon sequestration. Carbon sequestration refers to the process through which carbon is captured in solid and liquid forms in long term basis to defer global warming. For instance, we put convicted felons in correctional facilities to purify the society from such elements but if we let all of them go into the society, then the purpose of the justice system would be futile. Same goes on for human being's action, the Earth mechanism in order to control global warming stores carbon in the form of solid and liquid but we are impeding that process by letting those stored carbon go out into the atmosphere in gaseous form and accelerating the process of global warming. Many Climate change 'sceptics' say that CO<sub>2</sub> is good (Ringer & Avery, 2008), if CO<sub>2</sub> is good then there wouldn't have been a natural process of carbon sequestration to stop large amounts of carbon dioxide to go out into the atmosphere and increase the temperature of the Earth. These fuels contain large quantities of carbon stored from previous geological periods, which when released as carbon dioxide will increase atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations. It is to be pointed out that forests play an important role in the process of carbon sequestration. Other sources of greenhouse gases include deforestation (which has the impact of releasing carbon dioxide, as well as reducing the ability of landscapes to recover – or sequester – carbon dioxide), land-use changes and construction work (which releases nitrous oxide), and the decomposition of organic matter and fermentation in rice fields (which releases methane). Indeed, nitrous oxide and methane have significantly higher levels of impact on heating the atmosphere (also known as global warming potential) than carbon dioxide.

Climate change as already stated is the holistic outcome as a result of the process of extraction of these resources from the crust of the Earth and the process involved for extraction is not sustainable either as can be traced from the adverse effects of open cast mining, oil spills, dangerous sulphur mines of Indonesia, scumage for golds in poverty-stricken African

countries which engulfs thousands of lives every year<sup>6</sup>. Part and parcel of this process is the severe cost on human lives in terms of high pollution levels, forced rehabilitation and illegal way of acquiring tribal lands by MNCs and respective governments for extracting resources for their profit maximization.

Rising temperatures are the most obvious impact of anthropogenic climate change. But climate change is more than just 'global warming' –and indeed, that term is now no longer used in official scientific reports (No-changers in action). 'Global warming' implies a gradual heating up of the earth's temperatures, possibly in a uniform way across space. This image is now considered to be too simple. Rather, scientists represented on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have reported that climate change is most likely to result in a more erratic pattern (IPCC, 2014). This prediction means that there may be more storms and more unpredictable, higher-magnitude weather events such as cyclones and droughts. Some climatic zones will shift in geographical location over a gradual period (Parmesan, 2006, pp. 637--669). Yet, to achieve this change there may be associated events such as fires in landscapes that used to have trees and shrubs, but which are gradually becoming drier. These fires will also cause damage and disturbance to other ecosystems (WWF, 2018). Indeed, some observers claim that recent forest fires in Indonesia, or bush fires in places such as Australia and California are most likely evidence of long-term shifts in climate-vegetation zones taking place (Sykes, 2009). So, no matter we try to evade the term climate change and restrict its usage, it is in action everywhere and it will require a huge crisis for us to recognize it, maybe a crisis will also not let that conscience awake until and unless we are one of the victims.

- Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)

Fossil-fuel burning, wood fuel, deforestation, land-use change, cement manufacture

- Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>)

Gas/oil/coal production, enteric from ruminants (cows etc.), wetland rice cultivation, landfill waste, burning/decay of biomass

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<sup>6</sup> The real effect of climate change can be traced to the various fields of natural resource exploitation.  
URL: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp6\\_sDiup6U&t=131s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp6_sDiup6U&t=131s)

- Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)  
Solvents, refrigerants, aerosols etc.
- Nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O)  
Fertilisers, fossil-fuel burning, deforestation, new agriculture
- Also: nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide (fossil-fuel and biomass burning),  
non-methane hydrocarbons (solvents etc.) (Refer to fig 1.1)

Another concern is that climate change might raise sea levels by melting polar and land-based ice, or by heating the water and increasing its volume accordingly. These are serious concerns, and they might impact on coastal communities in various ways. For example, in Bangladesh, agricultural land near the coast will become more saline (salty) as the sea level rises. This requires local farmers to adapt by using crops that are tolerant of sea water. Coastal zones might also experience higher levels of tidal surges (the short-term rise in water) during storms. These events might impact on vulnerable populations in developing countries, as well as richer cities such as in Florida. Longer-term inundation of currently dry land on a permanent basis might take longer.

Changed climate patterns could impact on the distribution of disease vectors such as mosquitoes<sup>7</sup>. They could also lead to a relatively rapid decline in biodiversity if living conditions and habitats for some species have insufficient time for adjustments to take place. The main source of information about climate change comes from the IPCC, which was set up in 1988. Its objectives were not to conduct research itself, but to bring together all research and analytical discussions about climate change within academic and applied scientific bodies in order to reach a consensus about trends. Its first report in 1990 proposed that the global economy should reduce emissions by 60 per cent in order to avoid climate change. Follow-up reports were published in 1996, 2001 and 2007.

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<sup>7</sup> URL: [https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg3/WGIIIAR5\\_SPM\\_TS\\_Volume.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg3/WGIIIAR5_SPM_TS_Volume.pdf)  
, [https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/AR5\\_SYR\\_FINAL\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/AR5_SYR_FINAL_SPM.pdf)

Paaijmans, K. P., Imbahale, S. S., Thomas, M. B., & Takken, W. (2010). Relevant microclimate for determining the development rate of malaria mosquitoes and possible implications of climate change. *Malaria journal*, 9(1), 196.

Gas	Pre-1750 tropospheric concentration <sup>1</sup>	Recent tropospheric concentration <sup>2,3</sup>	GWP <sup>4</sup> (100-yr time horizon)	Atmospheric lifetime <sup>5</sup> (years)	Increased radiative forcing <sup>6</sup> (W/m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Concentrations in parts per million (ppm)</b>					
Carbon dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> )	~280 <sup>7</sup>	399.5 <sup>2,8</sup>	1	~ 100-300 <sup>5</sup>	1.94
<b>Concentrations in parts per billion (ppb)</b>					
Methane (CH <sub>4</sub> )	722 <sup>9</sup>	1834 <sup>2</sup>	28	12.4 <sup>5</sup>	0.50
Nitrous oxide (N <sub>2</sub> O)	270 <sup>10</sup>	328 <sup>3</sup>	265	121 <sup>5</sup>	0.20
Tropospheric ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	237 <sup>1</sup>	337 <sup>2</sup>	n.a. <sup>3</sup>	hours-days	0.40
<b>Concentrations in parts per trillion (ppt)</b>					
CFC-11 (CCl <sub>3</sub> F)	zero	232 <sup>3</sup>	4,660	45	0.060
CFC-12 (CCl <sub>2</sub> F <sub>2</sub> )	zero	516 <sup>3</sup>	10,200	100	0.166
CFC-113(CCl <sub>2</sub> CClF <sub>2</sub> )	zero	72 <sup>3</sup>	5,820	85	0.022
HCFC-22(CHClF <sub>2</sub> )	zero	233 <sup>3</sup>	1,760	11.9	0.049
HCFC-141b(CH <sub>3</sub> CCl <sub>2</sub> F)	zero	24 <sup>3</sup>	782	9.2	0.0039

HCFC-142b(CH <sub>3</sub> CClF <sub>2</sub> )	zero	22 <sup>3</sup>	1,980	17.2	0.0041
Halon 1211 (CBrClF <sub>2</sub> )	zero	3.6 <sup>3</sup>	1,750	16	0.0010
Halon 1301 (CBrClF <sub>3</sub> )	zero	3.3 <sup>3</sup>	6,290	65	0.0010
HFC-134a(CH <sub>2</sub> FCF <sub>3</sub> )	zero	84 <sup>3</sup>	1,300	13.4	0.0134
Carbon tetrachloride (CCl <sub>4</sub> )	zero	82 <sup>3</sup>	1,730	26	0.0140
Sulphur hexafluoride (SF <sub>6</sub> )	zero	8.6 <sup>3,11</sup>	23,500	3200	0.0049

Fig 1.1

There are several environmental challenges posed by the economic rise of India and China which include the threat of rapid and irreversible climate change due to the accumulation of greenhouse gases and the environmental impacts would be beyond their national borders and the third challenge would be in terms of domestic environment which would become unfit for habitation. Indian cities like Delhi and many more have witnessed recent changes in terms of severe breathing air quality which is highly hazardous to human health. Rivers such as Ganga and Jamuna are effectively dead. India and China, have recently witnessed large-scale depletion of groundwater aquifers, the loss of biodiversity, the destruction of forests and the decimation of fish stocks etc(Guha, Environmentalism; A Global History, 2016).

**The Bangladesh Model:**

The transnational character of climate change can be traced to this particular model. The Bangladesh model is a typical model which highlights the problem that low-lying areas will face due to sea-level rise which have been described as one of the main outcomes of climate change due to melting of the glaciers in the Greenland and the Antarctica. This melting of glaciers is due to the rise of the temperature of the atmosphere of the earth due to high levels of Greenhouse gases. The melting of Antarctica will change the global map as a whole. The British Antarctica Survey highlights that Antarctica is the fastest warming regions in the planet. The IPCC has predicted that by 2050, the sea level would rise by 1 Metre. Dr Andrew Clark has stated that countries like Bangladesh would become virtually inexistent (Clarke, 2014). IPCC predicts that by the end of the century, 17% of the landmass of Bangladesh would be inundated<sup>8</sup>. The subsequent inundation due to sea level rise would push the people living in those areas to the inner parts of the country and making these people as the “Climate Change refugees”. Hence, when Bangladesh being an already overpopulated country with a density of population at 19,447 people per square mile would be boosted further. Hence, the resource-population demand would be inadequate for human beings to rely and survive on. This would create a situation of conflict. This conflict wouldn't be restricted to the borders only but rather would affect its neighbouring countries and India would be the most affected by it because of its large and porous border with Bangladesh (4097 KM), the situation can easily be understood due to the recent complexity that arose due to the influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar via Bangladesh. The problem would be more complex for India because than most of the Indian peninsular low-lying regions would get flooded and these regions include most of the important cities of India like Mumbai, Calcutta, Chennai etc. These inundated places would create its own set of climate change refugees who would migrate to the central and northern parts of India. The northern plains of Indian are already one of the most densely populated regions of the world. Hence, refugees of its own coupled with refugees from outside would pose a challenge that would be beyond measure and beyond the capacity of the global administrative system to handle. It will be one of the greatest strategic challenges that the mankind has ever seen. (Refer to fig 1.2)

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<sup>8</sup><http://icccad.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/IPCC-Briefing-for-Bangladesh.pdf>  
<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/jan/04/bangladesh-climate-refugees-john-vidal-photo-essay>  
<https://cdkn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Report-on-IPCC-outreach-events-Bangladesh-.pdf>

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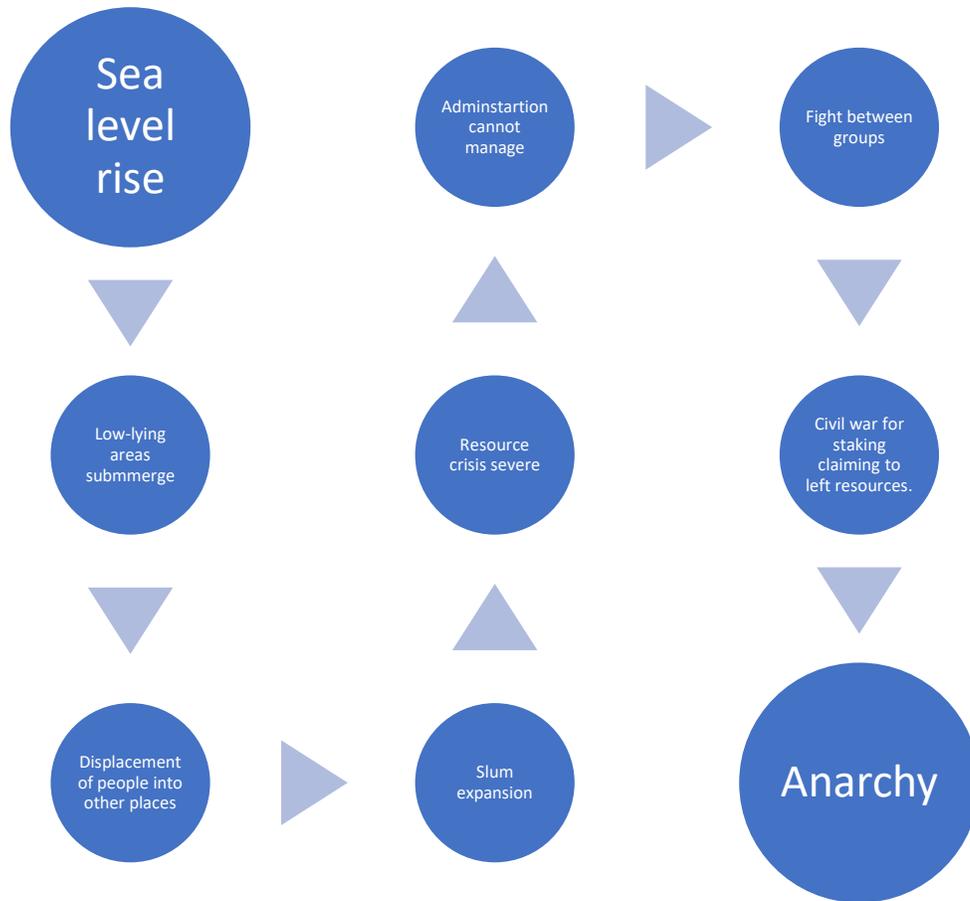


Fig 1.2

In Florida, the city of Miami is going through a construction boom with large-scale infrastructure projects cropping up but the recent Hurricane Sandy revealed the impending disaster ahead as most of the parts of the city was water-logged due to rise in the sea-level. Technology was sought as the possible solution. But, it failed to restrict the forces of nature. It is estimated that the subsequent sea-level rise due to Hurricane Sandy created damages worth \$350 billion (Stern, 2008).

The geo-political scenario would change as major cities of India would be flooded and cities like Hyderabad, Bangalore and Delhi already facing water crisis and it is estimated that their groundwater table would be completely depleted by 2050. So, majority of the cities wiped out

and major administrative centres flooded and uninhabitable, what will happen? The economic growth is devoid of any moralistic principle and that, isolation from the happenings in the environment is destructive. Bangladesh is a third world, low lying country which has gone through colonialism and is going through a period of high-economic growth 7.11%, and it has the same problems that a typical developing country has in terms of high population, resource crisis, social instability in terms of radicalization of population on religious lines. Dr Atiq Rahman, a Nobel laureate, argues that Bangladesh is the most vulnerable country in the world to climate change (Rahman & Mallick, 2004). This vulnerability is not only to Bangladesh but to India also. (Refer to fig 1.3)

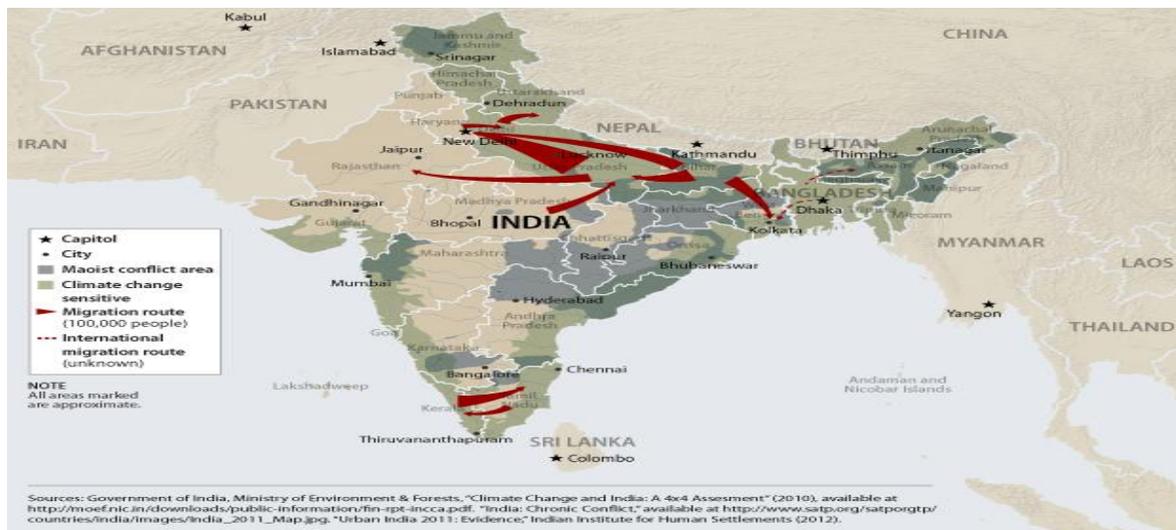


Fig 1.3

### **The process:**

1. **Sea-level rise:** With possible sea-level rise in Bangladesh's low-lying regions and subsequent inundation of Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong; most of the population would migrate to areas of Dacca, Mymensingh, Rajshahi etc. Currently, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong have a population of 52,436,444. So, this 52 lakhs people would migrate to already filled up town and regions. In India, due to inundation of cities like Bombay, Chennai and other low-lying areas, India will have its own share of climate change refugees who will migrate to the rest of the regions. India will be faced with migrant population from both within and outside its borders.
2. **Administrative mechanism stress:** Due to influx of migrants from Bangladesh and within Indian submerged regions into Northern Plains (Uttar Pradesh= 2,140 /square mile, Bihar

= 2,850/ square mile, West Bengal= 2,670/ square mile) and Assam in the north-east with a population density of 1,030/ square mile. This influx of migrants in huge number would lead to disintegration of the Indian political system as North-eastern states which have preserved their identities based on separation and agreement with the Indian Union would become redundant to preserve the unity of the nation as the democratic mechanism would become futile and unaccommodating. Hence, the survival of the Indian state would be in jeopardy.

3. **Dystrophy:** When survival is at stake, no amount of agreement will work and the body will go its different way. This will be marked by disintegration and dystrophy of the political setup. Dystrophy will be required to survive. The situational context would require particularism. If the regional organs fail then chaos would ensue. The population scourging over each other for getting the already depleted less resources would be beyond control or management. It will be characterized by a civil society highly mobilized, unconscious, and if armed, then civil war would start and if not armed then alienation would lead to starvation and death. It will be divided into particularistic social, cultural or ethnic lines and contest with other societies to acquire power. The state would be fail to accommodate and force use would become useless because democracy wouldn't be democracy anymore. Dystrophy in Indian setup is inherent and is more inherent in context of the North-Eastern states because small issues can flare-up secessionist claims. Assam has been a boiling point when it comes migration and the push-factors in half submerged Bangladesh would provide a fertile ground for outfits like ULFA to acquire power and influence. Even the NRC (National Register of Citizens) issue has indicated the fractures within indicating the diastrophism that can take place, altering the Political map of India. Historical understanding states that, so far, Indian Union has accommodated to claims of the North-Eastern states but they have adjusted to the demand in terms of their suitability and benefit. When that benefit doesn't flow anymore but association with the Union becomes a burden tantamount to their development, fracturing of Indian political setup in ethnic, regional, linguistic lines would be more easy and beneficial to them. Therefore, Balkanization would be the norm in such a context of difference. Hence, with climate change the odds are high and everything is at stake here.

Former President of the United States of America stated that “No challenge poses a greater challenge to human race than climate change” (State of the union address: 2015)

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There is a big difference between man-made disaster and natural disaster. Man-made disaster can be controlled but natural disaster cannot be controlled. Climate change is a man-made disaster till now and hence can be curtailed but if it turns out to be human assisted natural disaster, it would be beyond our control. For instance, the present Rohingya problem is a man-made one and can be halted by means of force or negotiation but in the context of climate change, who will we negotiate with?

Human beings being unaware or being aware but feeling helpless to do something about it stems from our respective consciousness and dilemmatic position of our status mentis can be attributed to the dialectic psychological warfare between the no-changers and the pro-changers(Thaler & Sunstein, 2009). Our status mentis at a particular period of time indicates the dominance of either one of these forces over the other. The resultant belief in consumerism being an indication of the overpowering aspect of the no-changers over the pro-changers<sup>9</sup>.

### **THE PROPAGANDA WAR; NO-CHANGERS VS THE PRO-CHANGERS: THE CAUSE**

Dialectic is the norm of human life and society. Dialectic is a means to establish stability or balance. The timeframe from which we will trace the evolution of environmental movements can be understood in the context of the structure provided by Ramachandra Guha in his work *Environmentalism: A Global History*. According to Ramachandra Guha, environmentalism must be viewed as a social program, a charter of action which seeks to protect cherished habitats, protest against their degradation, and prescribe less destructive lifestyle and technologies(Guha, *Environmentalism; A Global History*, 2016). According to Ramchandra Guha, most accounts of the American movement date it's beginning to Rachel Carson's book on pesticide pollution, *Silent Spring*, published in 1962 and variously described as the 'bible' and founding event of modern environmentalism(Carson, 1962). It is only in the 1960's that environmentalism emerged as a popular movement, successfully influencing public policy through a mixture of protests in the streets and the lobbying of legislators in the corridors of power. However, an intellectual

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<sup>9</sup> No matter how rational economic beings we are assumed to be, we are not that perfect when it comes to taking decisions and several underlying factors influence our decision-making abilities. The difference is that of humans and econs. Thaler, Richard and Sunstein, Cass R, *Nudge*, London, Penguin, 2009, p 113-127

awakening to protect and conserve nature goes back at least to the last decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The growth of environmentalism in most countries has followed a broadly similar pattern; an early period of pioneering and prophecy, culminating in recent decades in widespread social movements. (Refer to fig 1.4)

However, the no-changers and the pro-changers are evident in all this structural framework because the party on the other side of the debate has always tried to win over the populace by means of propaganda and till 1950's the war was even but after the second world war, the table has turned in favour of the no-changers force because they have outdone the pro-changers in the context of winning over the mass by means of their propaganda through mass media. Hence, the recent debate within the fold of environmental history has been assumed by the no-changer and the pro-changers i.e., between the climate change deniers and the climate change proponents. Thus, environmentalism can be attributed to have gone through two waves: the first wave of environmentalism and the second wave of environmentalism. The first wave of environmentalism was in the form of an initial response to industrialization, whereas the second wave can be seen in the context of a largely intellectual response which was given shape and force by a groundswell of public support. These three phases represent the three generic modes of the first wave of environmentalism. (Refer to fig 1.4 and 1.5)

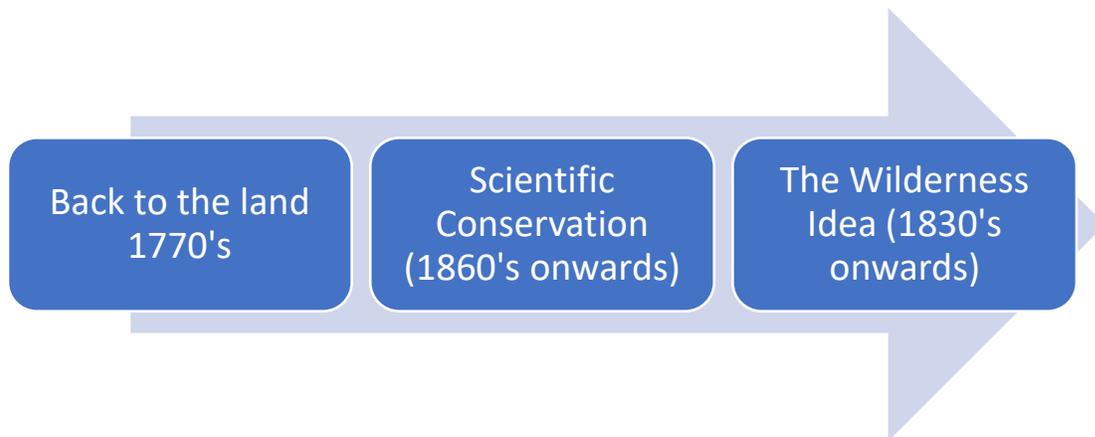


Fig 1.4

Ramachandra Guha also highlights the two phases of the second wave of environmentalism into the age of ecological innocence and the age of ecological affluence, however, he argues that India is going through an age of ecological arrogance, this can be attributed to the fact that

politicians with few exceptions are bitterly hostile to environmental concerns because they think only of a five-year electoral cycle, in part because they are beholden to mining and energy magnates. This problem is due to the fact that India like China is trying to ape the West, attempting to create a mass consumer society whose members can all drive their own cars, live in their own air-conditioned homes, eat in fancy restaurants and travel to the ends of the earth for their family holiday. Mahatma Gandhi warned that if India took to the British or American model of industrialization, it 'would strip the world bare like locusts.' In this context, the conflict between the no-changers and the pro-changers assume prominence as the recent lull in environmental consciousness can be attributed to the workings of these forces with each other.

### **The dialectic:**

The nature of inquiry where we assume originality can be traced to the second wave of environmentalism and how the dominance of the no-changers over the pro-changers have ushered in the subsequent age of ecological arrogance. The actual domain of warfare is the psychological domain of human being's mind. This is the place where the forces of no-changers can be defeated. Just like Antonio Gramsci projected that in order to control the state it is important to control the civil society (Buttigieg, 1995). By defeating the no-changers, consumerism can be controlled and subsequently climate change in its disruptive aspect can be controlled. If we want long-term solutions to the problem of climate change, it requires deep-entrenched process of transformation. This transformation has to do with an overall change of human being's lifestyle from that of unnecessary affluence to that of a minimalist life. Consumerism in all its forms and unsustainable practises of MNCs, in terms of extracting resources from the earth's crust, requires a deep-seated effort to quench the desire of human beings. Consumerism or a materialist lifestyle is a by-product of the post-second world war reconstruction, in which greater production was understood to be the key to prosperity and peace (Guha, Environmentalism; A Global History, 2016). Hence, the economist John Kenneth Galbraith termed the 1950's America as that of affluent society. He termed the American society as affluent not only in the context that it was able to satisfy its basic needs and the members of this society were highly prosperous reckoned with other societies but rather this was a society so dedicated to affluence that the possession and consumption of material goods became the exclusive standard of individual and collective achievement (Galbraith, 1958). According to the

anthropologist, Geoffrey Gorer, (Guha, Environmentalism; A Global History, 2016) this became a culture, in which ‘any device or regulation which interfered, or can be conceived as interfering, with the supply of more and better things is resisted with unreasoning horror, as the religious resist blasphemy or the warlike pacifism.’ This trend becomes ever more important for third world developing countries like India because we are going that way too and we are blindly following this trend towards achieving affluence at the cost of environmental degradation. This apathy towards anything that restricts our consumption has resulted in a state of ‘ecological ignorance’. Therefore, the ‘no-changers’ triumph over the ‘pro-changers’. However, this victory of the no-changers is only over a battle and we cannot let them escalate over the full war. They must be defeated if we are to survive.

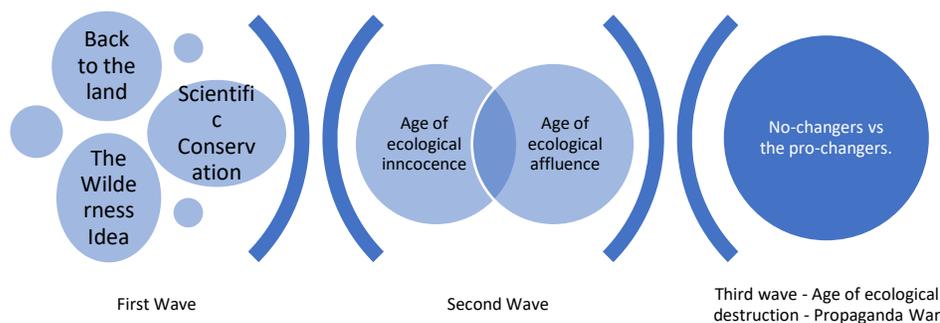


Fig 1.5

Consumerism is the culture of buying goods and services influenced by various factors in the larger economic environment. It has become a disease however in the current era because human consumption has crossed the threshold of needs<sup>10</sup>. MNCs in order to increase profit, produce more goods and in order to sell these goods to people they create artificial demands by means of advertisements. Hence, material satisfaction has overpowered other forms of satisfaction. This material desire creates aloofness between human beings and nature. Hence, human beings become irrespective to the dangers of environmental degradation. For instance, the break-up of joint families into nuclear families, is largely responsible for the increasing segregation between

<sup>10</sup> Needs can be divided into actual and artificial needs. Such divisions are usually based on a system of understanding which is hard to establish as an universal truth because it varies from person to person but its larger utility is understandable. Read Schumacher, EF, Small is beautiful: A study of Economics as if people mattered, Vintage Publications, 1993, p 248-251

parents and child. This leads to social instability as family breaks apart and parents are forced to live their old age in retirement homes. The same logic can be applied to mother earth too, as she is getting separated from her progenies and consequently, the result is catastrophic. A mother nourishes her child and nature is that mother which nourishes us always. So, if we separate ourselves from nature, we put our lives in danger. Our desire, expressed in a larger symptomatic way as consumerism is a product of sub-conscious. Consumerism is different from our basic survival needs and wants. Consumerism is like obesity. Consumerism refers to our unending desire for goods irrespective of whether we have the means to satisfy our rising unnecessary demands. For instance, buying clothes when needed and buying groceries cannot be termed as consumerism, though it is a part of that culture. But, if we go on buying clothes, every now and then, even if we have cupboard full of clothes, that would be consumerism in its extreme condition. This argument can be well understood by using the words of Mahatma Gandhi, who said that, “this world has enough to satisfy every man’s need but not enough to satisfy man’s every man’s greed”. (Refer to fig 1.6)

Greed and envy breeds a competition which if not stopped will lead to our extinction. The dialectical interplay between the ‘no-changers’ and the ‘pro-changers’ assumes prominence in this regard because this interaction breeds consumerism and artificial viability in the minds of the people.

### **The No-changers vs the Pro-changers:**

The no-changers are those people or group of intellectuals who are proponents of consumerism and base their belief on the assumption that climate change as described as an environmental threat is not real and a man-made event rather it is not harmful and is a natural event. They are proponents of the consumerist lifestyle and of the fossil-fuel industries because they see no threat to environment from the fossil fuel industries like Petro-chemical, Coal industries etc. Their main means of influencing the society is through advertisement i.e., Propaganda is a tool for them to influence the society. Influencing the society is important because if people become conscious, then who will buy their patrons products and how will they earn their profits?

If people became aware of the huge environmental costs involved in such process or if the civil society decides to reorient the structure, it will become detrimental to their motive and interests.

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The state in a highly democratic country relies on the support of the civil society and voices its concerns in the form of legislations too. In a democratic setup where free and fair elections is the norm, a government not paying heed to civil society, suffers from threat to its chances of staying in power. Hence, there is a relationship between the civil society and the state, in which the legitimacy flows from the civil society and the power concentrated to the state becomes authority. If this balance is disturbed then the survival of the democracy is at stake. However, influencing the state mechanism as well as the civil society becomes important for them. The no-changers are not only academics but also involves corporate entities who have vested interests behind the usage of fossil fuel industries.

The Pro-changers, on the other hand, involves those who understand the real dynamics and predict the rise of temperature and consequent melting of glaciers in Antarctica and Greenland due to the high emission of greenhouse gases by the production units to be ultimately responsible behind the consequent sea-level rise. The pro-changers usually involve scientists, activists and political leaders. However, political system is a variable depending upon the influence of lobbyists. The pro-changers try to influence the civil society through media, journals, seminars, conferences and through transnational organizations. However, they appeal to human consciousness per se whereas the no-changers appeal to the sub-conscious of human beings. According to Sigmund Freud, human decisions are mostly consisted of sub-conscious mind where they occupy 90% of the human thinking and the rest 10% is occupied by the conscious mind(Freud, 2005). (Refer to fig 1.7)

Human beings are same everywhere and they are influenced alike. The dialectic interplay that is going on between the no-changers and the pro-changers are same everywhere and it has assumed a global outlook marked by the forces of globalization. However, in some places it is getting challenged by the forces of pro-changers and in most places, it is dominating over all the fronts. In third world countries, the dialectic interplay has favoured the no-changers because of the fertility of the ground for booming consumerism and government and people's alike desire to consume more and more and become affluent in terms of the American and the Western European societies.

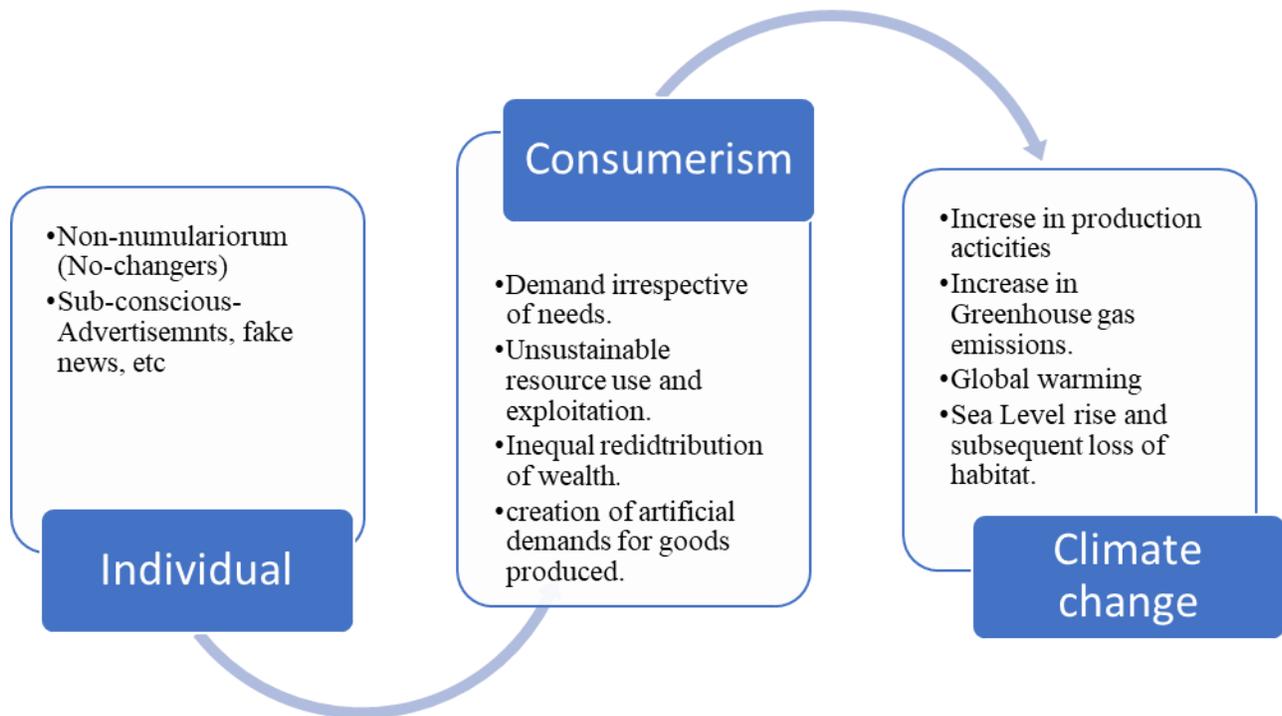


Fig 1.6

The no-changers influence us through media, which is termed as climate controversy because there is no unanimous decision among scientists regarding climate change. They tap into that controversy or logjam and provides us with alternatives. That alternative principles provides us with propaganda mechanism. According to Dr Naomi Oreskes of Harvard University, climate change deniers want to persuade us that the science climate change is unsettled and that unsettlement provides them with the opportunity to exploit it. Private recognition is different from public recognition(Oreskes, 2016). Though, the ExxonMobil Internal Draft memo of 1998 signifies that there will be a possible increase in global surface temperature due to an increased rate of build-up of GHG to around 2 to 3 Degree Celsius. They didn't recognize their findings publicly and still claimed that the science behind climate change is unsettled. The famous Cigarette-Nicotine controversy with regard to the harmful effects of nicotine for smokers in USA during the 1990's which lead to the framing of the tobacco master settlement agreement(Brownell & Warren, 259--294). Till a certain point of time, big cigarette companies

vociferously advertised for smoking cigars to be good and without ill-effects to human beings and that was the moment when the “no-changers” dominated over the “pro-changers” but the 1990’s saw tide changing in favour of the pro-changers and subsequent awakening of the people to the ill-effects of smoking and consequent inquiry and action by the government.

The MNCs who profit from current use of resources tries to turn the table by influencing people by combining facts with persuasion (Dangerous combination).

In a democracy, public opinion is everything. They try to shape public opinion by “manufacturing consent” through media. The corporate interests heavily fund research institutes to debunk the claims of the pro-changers and influence public through media advertisements appealing to their sub-conscious. They fund campaigns of politicians who yield real powers in terms of framing policies.

In India, environmentalists are being attacked nowadays because, with the dismantling of state controls, they only ask hard questions with regard to the sustainability of the new industrial projects in fragile ecosystem.

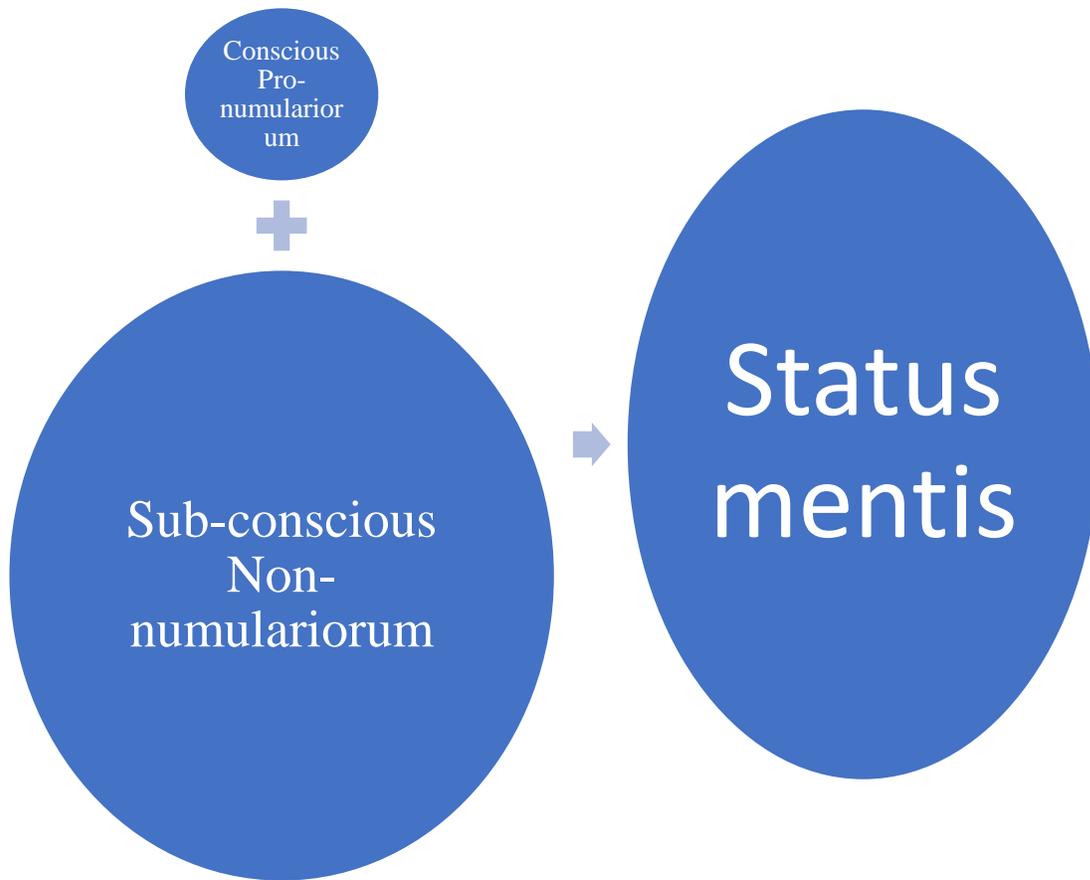


Fig 1.7

Dr Fred Singer, one of the prominent no-changers have argued that “Co2 is not a pollutant and is good for us”(Ringer & Avery, 2008). Hence, no-changers benefits from doubt and thus are sometimes called “merchants of doubts”. Over the course of time, the “no-changers” have become a prominent force because scientists provide reason and facts and by using media too, they have been able to successfully wield the public opinions to their favour. The influence of media in this regard can be traced to the Propaganda Model framed by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. In the Propaganda Model traces the routes by which money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize, dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public. The Propaganda Model has certain elements which are as follows(Chomsky & Herman, 1998):

- 1) The Size, Concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms;
- 2) Advertisement as the primary income source of the mass media
- 3) The reliance of the media on the information provided by the government, business, and “experts” funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power
- 4) “flak” as a means of disciplining the media; and
- 5) “anticommunism” as a national religion and control mechanism.

The fifth element of “anticommunism” is a typical feature of the American Society especially after McCarthyism. In India, however, the fifth element has a different orientation based on a notion or trend of populism to attract as much viewers as possible and increase the television rating point. These elements interact with and reinforce each other. They fix the premises of discourses and interpretation, and the definition of what is newsworthy in the first place, and they explain the basis and operations of what amount to propaganda campaigns.

A great example of pro-changers action in this field has been in the U.S.A, where Attorney Generals of several states have united for promoting clean energy and have subsequently initiated lawsuits against ExxonMobil. This signifies the clash between the no-changers and the pro-changers.

A significant action on part of the pro-changers was the People’s Climate March in New York which advocated against the U.S. Government’s decision to open the Keystone XL Pipeline in the Dakota province. Climate change has thus become a major determining electoral factor in USA.

A typical no-changers organization would be the Heartland Institute which organized the International Conference on Climate Change (ICCC), It is an international conclave of climate change deniers. ICCC is funded by big corporate houses. The think-tanks who deny climate change involve the Ayn Rand Institute, Illinois Coal Association, Hubbard Broadcasting etc. The Heartland Institute is funded by ExxonMobil, Koch Industries etc.

Dr Eric Rignot (Pro-changer) is a scientist based in Antarctica, who says that climate change is real because he is a witness to it (Allison, et al., 2011). On the other hand, Marc Moreno (No-changer) is a self-proclaimed climate change expert who appears in TV debates and argues that climate change is not real. He argues that there is an expansion in Antarctic Ice, however scientists like Eric Rignot claim that this expansion is a misconception arising due to the difference between land ice and sea ice, when glaciers melt the sea-ice is floating and hence, it makes people believe that ice as a whole is expanding.

In India, ethical guidelines are rarely followed as most of the mainstream media outlets are wholly concentrated on issues which have little relevance to making people aware about climate change. The nexus between corporate houses and media networks is huge. In India, media outlets don't usually tend to alienate corporate houses. The typical Indian consciousness with regard to an issue is one or two days, if it doesn't concern them directly as can be witnessed by the 2 hours debates of issues which require protracted debates and consciousness building (Gadgil & Guha, 1995).

The no-changers owe their success to repetition, which is considered to be of fundamental importance for the success of advertisement. Advertisement occupies the main force as we are subjected to it 24/7. Reason fails in front of fantasy and that is where advertisement, the main tool of the no-changers triumphs. Advertisement influence 90% of consumers in their purchasing. An average MNC spends about \$450 Billion in advertisements. Advertisements have a global reach which scientists often does not have. Reason is for reasonable people, fantasy is for all. Advertising companies are doing what religion did, i.e. moving a series of images through a culture promising pleasure in this world and not the after world, which religion does. Consumerism has thus posed a challenge to religion. This emphasis on pleasure in this life has given a threat to sustainable development. Sustainable development to come to fruition requires a broader ethical mindset not restricting oneself to oneness but to a feeling of belongingness to the present as well as the future generations.

This debate and its interaction with the civil society is so important in the context of the third world countries because most of the MNCs based in the first world countries has outsourced

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most of its production activities in the third world countries. The third world countries become an attractive destination for assembling, recycling and production because of the cheap labour supply and the cheap raw materials that they are able to extract. Most of the first world countries has reached an advanced stage of consciousness where severe environmental pollution has been a matter of great concern. It is hard to establish an old-smog generating industries but the third world countries government with the huge tasks of generating employment opportunities and economic growth to its people become easy available destinations for MNCs with less accountability mechanism in place. This process of extracting resources with no accountability or meagre cost for resource extraction due to inefficient state-administrative infrastructure in place provides huge margin to reap exorbitant profit. This phenomenon can be easily traced in most unstable African countries engaged in deep unending civil wars. Instable political situation created due to huge ethnic social cleavages provide the best opportunity for MNCs to extract resources. However, in a country like India, though the state-administrative structures are in place, there is a deep politics-corporate nexus. This politics-corporate nexus requires the strengthening of the civil society front to challenge or check the malaise of the state. Highly successful democracies have vibrant civil societies structure in place. In highly democratic countries elections are often synonymous with civil society mandates. Third world countries resources are subject to two types of demands: International and national demands, International demands refers to the demand of that country's own population and International demands refers to demands from people outside that country. Satisfying both demands are important in order to get investments, capital and technology for the industries to function, which would in turn provide the large population with employment. There is nothing wrong with this business model but ultimately the environmental costs involved is tremendously high which would lead to unsurmountable ecological challenges for us to survive, sea level rise is part and parcel of that challenge. So, the conundrum that arises is that whether our economic boom will bring in prosperity in the long-term or will it flourish as long as the natural resources are not depleted and creating an environmental catastrophe of seismic proportion? Hence, the economic model based on the neo-liberal mindset that we pursue is sustainable or not, is open to enquiry.

This prevail of the no-changers over the pro-changers in the third world countries has created a sense of relative deprivation<sup>11</sup> in the minds of the activists who find people getting lured into consumerism more and more and becoming blind to the real issues that will harass them in not so distant future.

### **THE CIVIL SOCIETY-STATE POWER CONTINUUM MODEL:**

Our life hangs on a balance as our existence is a matter of equilibrium. Therefore, every system for its survival depends on maintaining a balance. All political system has to maintain a balance for its survival. It is not only about accommodating inputs and transforming them into outputs that sustain a system but it is a matter of maintaining power dynamics within the society so that the function of a state is not taken over by other fractions within the society, if fractions within the society vis-à-vis Civil society gets disconnected with the state structure than the survival of the latter becomes doubtful and requires co-option or accommodation by the former to the latter. Hence, in a democracy transformation is a function of the civil society more than that of the state. The real change requires change in the domain of civil society. Therefore, change in civil society power dynamics and its rising consciousness with regard to environmental dynamics can bring in real change with respect to our current social distress in the form of climate change.

### **The Afghanistan Model:**

In Afghanistan, the civil society is fractured into several elements based on ethnic divisions on tribal lines. The Taliban has co-opted the civil society for its benefits. Hence, an armed civil society characterized by low consciousness but high mobilization rate based on religious and ethnic lines. Thus, a highly powerful civil society but with a low consciousness marked by lack of literacy and educational levels has challenged the state power and hence, democracy which is an act of maintaining balance has become impossible to achieve due to marked instability. In order to create stability, the Afghanistan Government which is of low capacity in terms of controlling and influencing larger swathes of Afghanistan. Hence, they are trying to ensure an operational stability by co-opting the Taliban themselves, so that it becomes an element of state

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<sup>11</sup> Guha, Ramchandra, Environmentalism: A global history, Penguin Random House India, 2016, Preface

power(Yusufzai , Bruton , & Givetash, 2018). Hence, in a democracy maintaining balance is very important. Refer to Fig 1.9

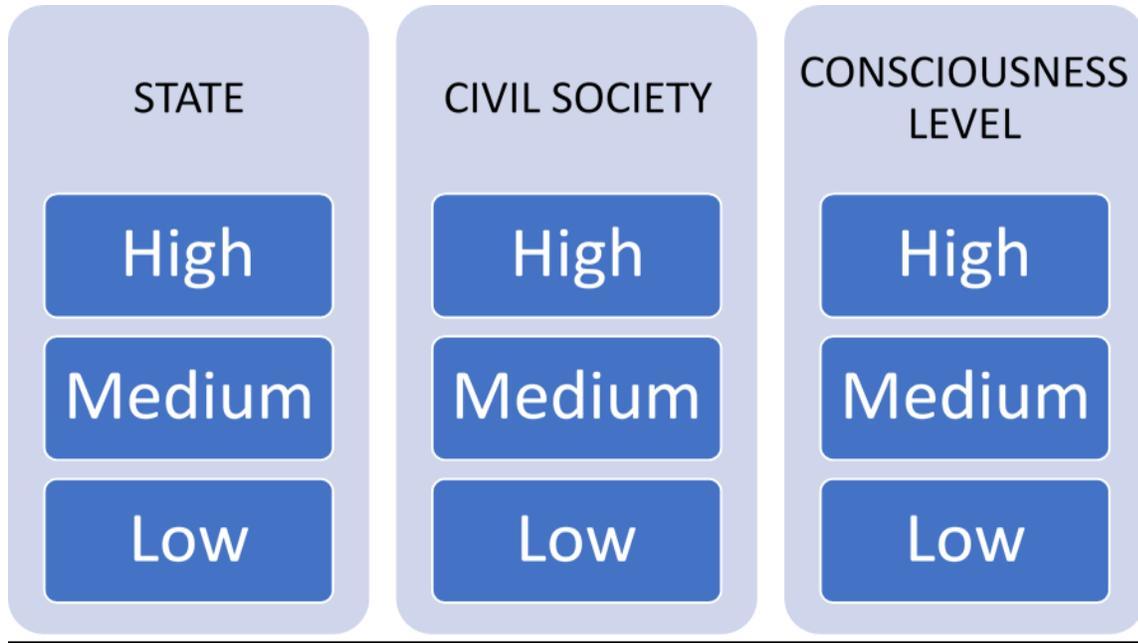


Fig 1.8

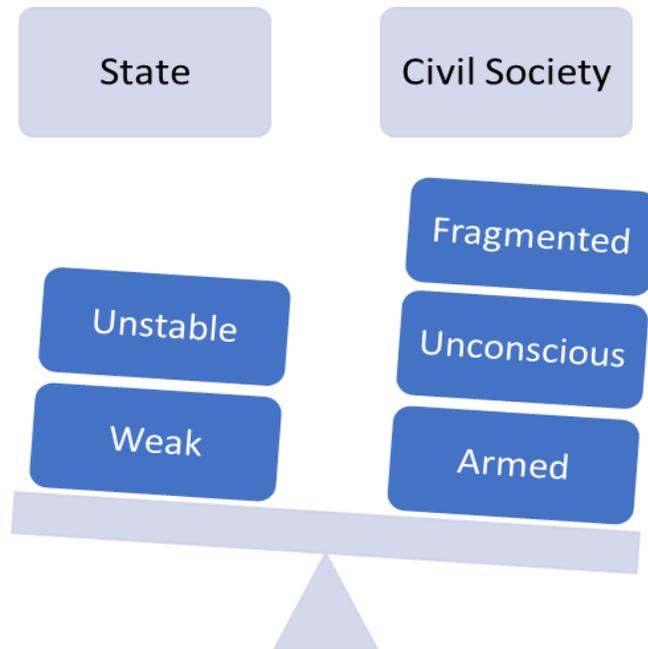


Fig 1.9

Therefore, the solution to the current problem lies in challenging the status-quo of the no-changers that they have been able to successfully ferment in the form of consumerism. The people's level of awareness and consciousness needs to be raised and it needs to be highlighted that their survival is at stake. The pro-changers need to use every weapon they have in their armoury in terms of massive campaigns, mass demonstration, scientific research etc. However, the real change would come from within the mass when they understand the huge challenge that is ahead of them. The journey to conscious effort is a huge task and requires tremendous efforts but nothing is beyond our achievement. Nothing sort of revolution is required. Civil society needs to be mobilized and strengthened. The environmental social movements that came up in the form of Silent Valley and Chipko Movement in the 1970's form requires the same reawakening but should be three-fold in strength than its earlier types or forms.

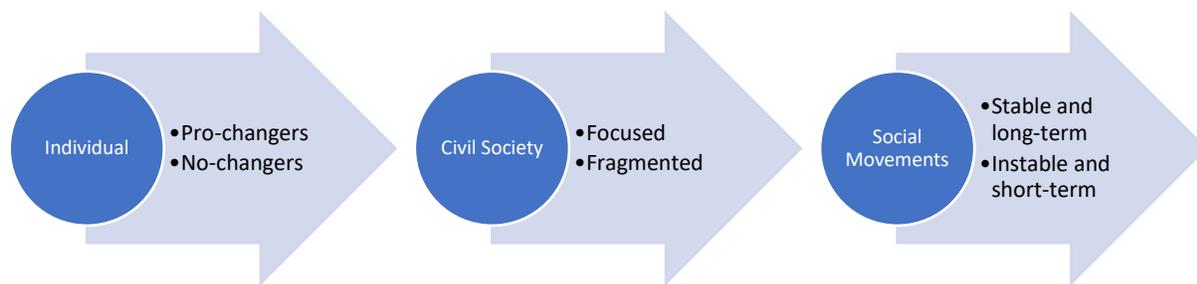


Fig 2.0

The state has become all-embracing and powerful with tremendous scope. So, the civil society should also strengthen itself with the power to influence and pressurize the state. If the civil society lags behind, the state will become omnipotent and in a democracy the state should not become omnipotent. Just like the separation of powers within the political institutions provide for effective check and balances, the civil society should check the wrong tendencies of the state. If the state assumes unlimited power without paying heed to the civil society, sooner or later it will wither away and a new power structure will replace it. To effectively curb climate change, a national movement should emerge in every country which should be characterized by focused, stable and long-term efforts. Civil societies characterized by fragmented, instable and short-term characteristics bring only voluntary and piecemeal solutions which cannot effectively resolve

climate change. Hence, nothing sort of a revolution is required and a revolution first begins within oneself and then assumes an aggregated form manifested in the society.

This human transformation required for survival requires giving up greed and living a minimalist life characterized by the notion of equal redistribution of wealth and conscious human action(Schumacher, 1993). The governments need to play an important role by providing effective services to man. For instance, Indian Metropolitan cities are characterized by huge traffic congestion problem, if people start using more of public transportation system and less of their own vehicles, it may solve the problem of huge traffic congestion. A billion dollar allows a person to survive for 243 years. In India, we have 101 Billionaires and the 1% population controls 70% of the wealth. Capitalism maybe the best system in place but it is not a panacea to all our problems. There are limited resources in this world and if 1% controls 7-% of the wealth, questions should be raised about the way this system works. A conscious minority populace can do less but a conscious majority population can turn the system upside down. The no-changers told us all about the benefits of capitalism but they didn't tell us about 23 things about capitalism which we need to know in order to enlighten ourselves(Chang, 2011).

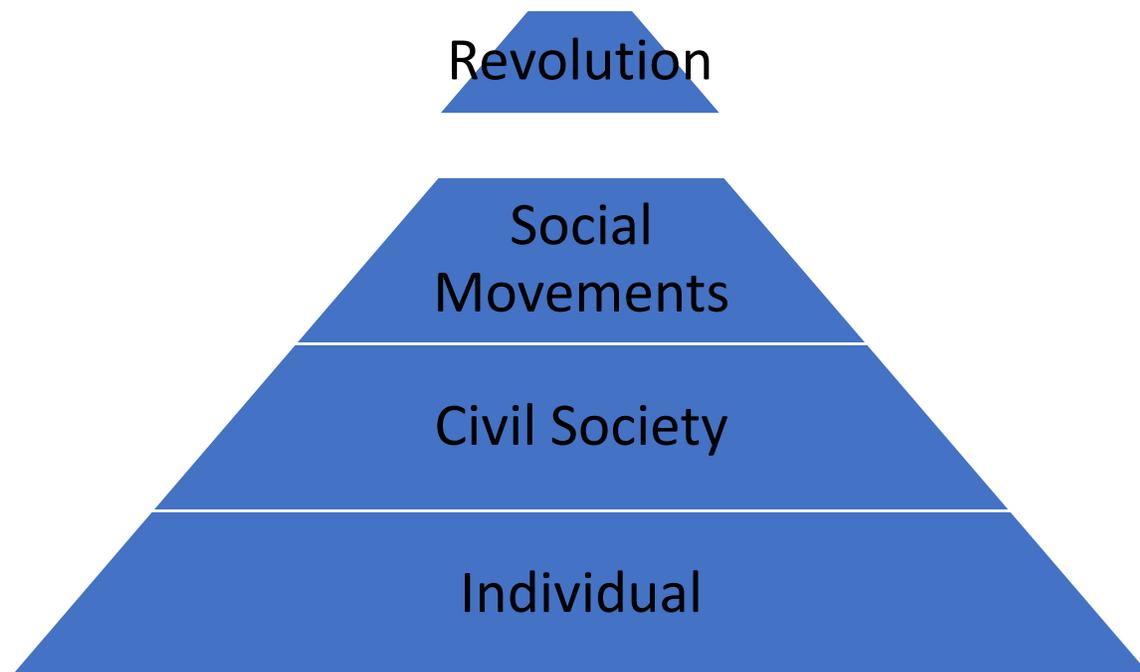


Fig 2.1

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