CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL FRAME OF THE THESIS

Introduction

India has many achievements to her credit during the last fifty years of independence. It has increased its agricultural production manifold through the green revolution. It has built up an industrial base which has made the country one of the leading industrialised nations of the world. Democratic institutions have really taken root in India unlike in many other developing countries.

In spite of these achievements we have not been able to solve some of the basic problems of our people like mass poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and caste discriminations. "The majority of people in our society are illiterate, and suffer from malnutrition, hunger, lack of medical help... and safe drinking water". (Manohara, edit. Kananaiikal 1985:24)

According to the 1995 report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India ranks 134th, one of the lowest, among 174 countries, for human development under the criteria of literacy, life expectancy and per capita income. (Indian Express 20-8-1995)
This means that the fruits of the planned development have not percolated down to a large section of the population in our country.

Modernisation through mechanisation, initiated by the Five Year Plans, has benefited industries and, to an extent, agriculture, but its benefits could not be shared by a good section of the ordinary people. Besides, traditional sectors and industries have been weakened by the mechanisation process. "The unfortunate outcome of our development planning has been that it directly benefited only the upper strata of society. This left the majority of the poor, underprivileged without any means of income and opportunity of development." (Uke, edit. Kananaikal 1985: 157) Thus they have been left out of the mainstream of development and political process. Political parties and government institutions could not give the much needed relief and leadership to the marginalised groups. In response to such a situation experienced by the country already in 1970's many social action groups, non-party political organisations and social movements appeared in the Indian socio-political scene, to organise and empower the poor to get justice and basic human rights. They were based on ethnic, economic, gender and environmental issues affecting the ordinary citizens of our land. Fishworkers' movement in Kerala was one such social movement which organised the traditional fishworkers for their basic rights.
Kerala is one of the leading fish producing states in India with over eight lakhs of fishworkers who form 3.2% of the total population of the state. (Government of Kerala 1985) Fishworkers in Kerala were highly skilled in fishing by means of different crafts and gears suited to diverse species of fish in the Arabian sea. In the olden times they harvested fish for internal market, which provided them with sufficient means of livelihood.

As part of the modernisation of economy through the Five Year Plans, the government of India introduced mechanisation in the fisheries of Kerala in 1953 under the Indo-Norwegian Project. According to this collaborative project, the Norwegian government was to give technical assistance to modernise fisheries in Kerala with a view to raise the living standard of fishworkers and to increase fish production. But after several experiments in mechanisation of traditional fishing crafts, the Norwegians introduced mechanised trawling boats mainly to catch shrimp which was then in high demand in the international market. Attracted by the much needed foreign exchange through the export of prawns, the government of India encouraged also private capitalists to enter the fishing sector. They concentrated on prawns and exportable varieties of fish. As a result, fish production increased substantially. Thus the
overall share of mechanised sector steadily increased while that of the traditional sector decreased. It was a blow to the traditional fishworkers who did not benefit from the mechanisation.

After a steady rise in fish production due to mechanisation, it started declining in 1970’s due to fish depletion caused by mechanised trawling and purse-seining. The cone-shaped trawling nets fixed with iron chain on their open mouth, were hauled through the bottom of the sea by the mechanised boats to catch prawns, destroying everything on their way including the bio-mass of the sea. The purse-seine nets cast by mechanised boats worked as a purse trapping fish in large areas with the result of overfishing. Both techniques affected regeneration of fish leading to fish depletion and decrease in its production.

As a result of mechanisation productivity, income and quality of life of the traditional fishworkers declined considerably. The artisanal fishermen harvested 3.20 tonnes of fish in 1974 in the state, while their share declined to 1.62 tonnes in 1982. Their per capita income declined from Rs.630/ in 1974 to Rs.420/ in 1982. Compared to other states in India, Kerala has greater level of social development in the form of higher literacy, health, life expectancy, and low infant mortality and birth rate. But "the coastal villages of Kerala, even after three decades of planned development and increased
export earning, are far below the all Kerala standard with respect to quality of life." (Kurien, edit.F.C.O.1967:90)

The traditional fishworkers not only did not get any benefit from mechanisation but also lost what they had. It was against this injustice perpetrated by the mechaised boat owners and supported by the government, that the fishworkers organised themselves to protect their livelihood and fish resources. Their collective effort through agitations and struggles for seventeen years evolved itself into a social movement. This thesis studies about this movement in the state of Kerala. The first major issue addressed to by this study is how the fishworkers' movement can be categorised as a social movement. For this, the concept of social movement is defined and its basic components are explained.

The second problem the thesis tries to discuss is the role of the fishworkers' movement as a non-party political organisation in social transformation. The fishworkers' movement was led by Kerala Swathantra Malsya Thozhilali Federation,(KSMTF)a non-party political organisation, and its success depended on its non-party political character. Since many of the non-party political organisations in India are working at micro-level there is always the danger of their being suppressed or co-opted by the political parties and state machinery. As Sheth says, "the new groups and micro-movements, in the absence of a wide political cover of their own, are often
vulnerable to manipulative politics from outside." (Sheth, Economic and Political Weekly, 1984:262) So it is "quite possible that the groups and movements active at present may get absorbed by the present parties or other existing macro-structures." (ibid.1982:52) Besides, the non-party political organisations themselves have a temptation to join electoral politics at a certain stage of their growth, with the hope of achieving greater things through legislatures and parliament. Thus they form themselves into political parties or join existing parties. Therefore, the issue of the role of non-party political organisations vis-a-vis political parties for social transformation is very relevant and vital today not only for hundreds of such organisations working throughout India but also for the vast majority of the oppressed people for whom the non-party political formations can be a ray of hope in life.

The questions emerging from the above mentioned dilemma of non-party political organisations are the followings: Is there any relevance for non-party political organisations today, with the increasing dominance of political parties and government in all spheres of people's lives? If so, what? Should they withdraw from the scene after they have conscientised the people, leaving the rest to the political parties, or should they maintain their identity and continue to work for the people? If they are to continue, how should they function effectively? What should be their relationship with established political parties? To answer the above questions and to
examine the role of non-party political organisations for social transformation, certain theoretical framework is necessary. Antonio Gramsci, the Italian sociologist, wrote a lot about associations and councils, different from political parties in civil society, which were to work for the hegemony of the people as against that of state in a democratic system. This idea could be applied to various types of people's organisations including the non-party political organisations in our country. He also emphasised the need of organisation of subaltern classes for social change. Fishworkers could be considered a subaltern class in Gramscian terms. Again, his ideas about the vital role of intellectuals in organising subaltern classes can find resonance in the fishworkers' movement. Therefore, this thesis is making use of Gramsci's theories to answer the above mentioned questions. For this, a brief exposition of the relevant theories of Gramsci is a must.

The non-party political organisations like KSMTF which led the fishworkers' movement have been a common phenomenon throughout India. So to define their role in the particular context of India, the concept of non-party political organisations will be explained in the light of the opinions of social scientists in India. In short, the theoretical frame of this study has three sections: the concepts of social movements, and of non-party political organisations in India, and the theories of Antonio Gramsci.
II. The Concept of Social Movements

A social movement can be studied in its conceptual characteristics and classification. So this section includes definition, components and classification of social movements.

1. Social Movements: a definitional debate

Though there are records of revolts and rebellions in ancient times, the modern social movements are traced back to the French and Russian revolutions influenced by thinkers like Rousseau and Karl Marx. (Wilkinson 1971) The phenomenon of ‘mass society’ which emerged as an aftermath of industrial revolution and the nationalist movements gave further impetus to the rise of modern social movements (Gusfield 1970)

India witnessed a number of socio-religious reform movements with the independence struggle. There were also many movements of the weaker sections like those of peasants, tribals, backward classes and working class. The social movements which developed in independent India were mainly due to the economic stagnation and political instability of 1960’s and later. They were organised by the so called "action groups" who, as voluntary agencies, worked at grass root level among rural and urban poor. The ecological, Dalit, women’s, fishworkers’ and civil liberties movements belonged to this category. They are found throughout India today also. "In
contrast, the new social movements have the advantage of proximity to the grassroots. Unlike the 'political culture of social democracy'...they are able to represent the interests of groups excluded as deviant, or marginal by social democratic parties."(Scott 1990:26) "Moreover, the international and national ...burden of the present world economic crisis falls so heavily on these already low-income people as to pose serious threat to their physical and economic survival and cultural identity. Therefore, they must mobilise themselves...in the absence of the availability or possibility of existing social and political institutions to defend them." (Frank and Fuentes, Economic and Political Weekly 1987: 1506)

The definition of the concept attempted here is applicable to all types of social movements. Since there is no commonly agreed definition of social movements, definitions of some authors are given below. They can throw light on the various aspects of the movement.

According to Cameron (1966:7) "a social movement occurs when a fairly large number of people band together in order to alter or supplant some portion of the existing culture or social order." This definition sees social movement as a collective action for social and cultural change. The emphasis on cultural change is very pertinent for traditional societies in developing countries. Turner and Killian (1957:308), define it as "a collectivity acting with some continuity to
which it is a part." These authors see social movements as a sustained collective action to promote or resist change in the society or in a group. Resisting change can also be a function of social movements.

Collective belief is added to collective action in a social movement by Gusfield. A social movement is "socially shared activities and beliefs directed towards the demand for change in some aspects of social order". (Gusfield 1970:2)

Commonly held vision and values of the members of a movement can inspire them to work for their realisation.

Wilkinson (1971: 27) gives a lengthy but comprehensive definition: "A social movement is a deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution or withdrawal into 'utopian' community... A social movement must evince a minimum degree of organisation, though this may range from a loose, informal or partial level of organisation to the highly institutionalised and bureaucratic movement and the corporate group."..."A social movement's commitment to change and the raison d'être of its organisation are founded upon the conscious volition, normative commitment to the movement's aims or beliefs, and active participation on the part of the followers or members." Wilkinson brings out the following additional components of the movements. A social movement can use violent or non-violent, legal or illegal means to achieve
its objectives. A minimum level of organisation is a must for a social movement. It could either be informal or institutionalised. The followers should voluntarily join a movement and should be actively committed to its objectives and ideals.

Herbele differentiates social movements from mobs and crowds with sustainability and group cohesiveness which are fostered through a sense of belongingness among the members. For him, "Social movements are a specific kind of concerted action groups; they last longer and are more integrated than mobs, masses and crowds, and yet are not organised like political clubs and other associations...Group consciousness, that is, a sense of belonging and of solidarity among members of a group, is essential for a social movement, although empirically it occurs in various degrees." (Herberle quot.Banks 1972:439)

Rao ((1984:2) defines a social movement as "an organised attempt on the part of a section of society to bring about either partial or total change in society through collective mobilisation based on an ideology." A new dimension added by Rao to the earlier definitions is ideology which can be the basis of solidarity and unity among members. Shah (1990:18) gives a working definition for social movements as "...non-institutionalised collective political action which strive for social and political change." Mobilisation and rapid social
transformation are emphasised by Oommen in his definition of a social movement. "Movements are conscious collective actions informed of an ideology, aided by an organisational weapon and initiated by a core person/group to bring about change in any direction (past/future) using any means (violent/non-violent). That is, movements are deliberately initiated and guided collective mobilisation to bring about relatively rapid social transformation." (Oommen 1990: 146) Mobilisation is more than collective action in the sense it involves awareness of the group and deliberately planned strategies. Rapid change in socio-economic structure is aimed at by a social movement.

The above definitions bring out the important aspects of a social movement. It is basically a collective action for rapid social or cultural change which could be partial or full. The action should be sustained for a time unlike mob action or a riot. A social movement can also be for resisting change and for maintaining status quo. It should have an ideology. The method used by a social movement can be either violent with a sudden bloody revolution or non-violent with peaceful means. An organisation is a must for a movement, though it could be formal or informal. The members freely join a movement. They have a sense of belongingness and esprit de corps which make them committed to the group and to the ideals of the movement. A social movement may or may not be affiliated to an established political party.
Based on the above explanation certain basic components of a social movement like collective action, social change, ideology and strategy could be pointed out. They are treated in details in the next section.

2. Components of a Social Movement

A. Collective Action

A social movement is not an individual action but a group action of a sufficiently large number of people. It is not a sporadic action like a riot or a mob attack but is a sustained action which is extended over a period of time.

Turner (1957) describes four stages of collective action in a movement: The preliminary stage of mass excitement and unrest, the popular stage of crowd excitement and unrest, the formal stage of the formulation of issues and formation of the publics, the institutional stage of legalisation and societal organisation. Thus the movement "acquires organisation and form, a body of customs and tradition, established leadership, and enduring division of labour, social roles, and social values; in short, a culture, a social organisation, and a new scheme of life." (Turner 1957: 318-319)

In general, there should be members of diverse talents and interests in a movement. The diversity may be based on age, sex, occupation, race, education, class, language and religion. On the one hand it enriches the functioning of the movement.
while on the other it fulfils as many needs of the members as possible. "As a general proposition we may assert that a social movement which seeks to become large must include people with diverse interests, and include them on a segmental basis, so that each finds something within it although few will be in total agreement with all policies and practices" (Cameron 1966:16) Support of prominent people in the society gives respectability and acceptance to the cause of a movement. As for example in Black Civil Right movement in U.S.A. the support of clergy and the university professors gave it credibility before the public. (Gusfield 1970)

There are different levels of participation in a movement. A core group of members which often form the leadership, will be responsible for the policies and programmes of the movement. A second level of members will work constantly to implement the programmes. A third level of participants will be those who will be available for occasional mass actions of the movement. People who are not formal members of the movement can also be included in the category. The success of a movement depends on the training of the various layers of participants and systematically engaging them to achieve the common goal. There should be different ways of dissemination of the ideals of the movement among the members like leaflets, newsletters and oral communication. (Gusfield 1970)
Collective action has two important aspects-organisation and leadership. A little explanation of each is in place.

**Organisation**

Since a movement is a sustained and self-directed process it needs an organisation. "However...it needs to be simply asserted that all effective action demand 'structure or stable organisation; and action directed at change demands more self-conscious organisation than actions which merely repeat well established cultural process." (Cameron 1966:111) The organisation will mean different roles to be played by the members.

Organisation of people for a movement starts with their basic awareness about the unjust situation which oppresses them. The critical consciousness of the victims of injustice should lead to collective action to change the unjust situation. When the action is completed, there should be reflection over the action. This process of awareness, action and reflection should be continuously followed to ensure people's participation. Intellectuals have a special role to play in this process which is technically termed as "conscientisation", a word popularised by Paulo Freire.(Freire 1972) It is an educational and mobilisation strategy suggested for people's organisation in developing countries.
People's consciousness of their rights in society is an important requirement of a social movement. "Studies indicate that an essential element for radical change (revolt) is consciousness of one's - the individual's or the group's - degraded position i.e. not only of hunger as such but also awareness of having to suffer inhuman treatment." (Malik 1977:22) Turner explains it in terms of justice. When a person is ill-treated by authorities, he should seek its remedy not as a favour or a charity but as a right. Creating awareness about inhuman treatment as injustice is an important element of a people's organisation. "A movement becomes possible when a group of people cease to petition the goodwill of others for relief of their misery and demand as their right that others ensure the correction of their condition." (Turner, British Journal of Sociology 1969:391) "Consequently, the basic requirement for bringing about change is to create awareness of the social ills, particularly among those who stand to suffer by them." (Damle, edit. Malik 1977: 29) This was the experience of Ambedkar also. "In order to bring about the uplift of outcastes it is first necessary to awaken them. Any community before it can progress must first develop a consciousness. As someone has put it while the poor are certainly handicapped by their poverty, the real obstacle in their path is their inertia and their indifference. To overcome this inertia and indifference it is necessary they should become charged with resentment of the injustice of their own condition. Without it they cannot get
rid of the factors that obstruct their progress. And even this is not enough. While on the one hand the obstructions should be removed, one must also simultaneously promote conditions which will ensure their prosperity." (Ambedkar quote. Gore 1993: 84)

Though the organisation of a movement could be formal or informal, its structure and function are important for the success of a movement. Normally a social movement will have a loose federal structure with a lot of autonomy for the local units. The common interest, goals and premodial ties keep the members united (Rao 1984) The activities of the organisation will be visible to the public. So the membership, financial reports and minutes of the meetings will be open at least to the members. The organisation will have its identifying name, flag and badges. The participants join the movement by taking membership and promising to adhere to the goals and programmes of the organisation. The organisation should find source of finance for its day to day running and programmes. (Cameron 1966) The survival of a movement depends also on the resources obtained "free or through social exchange, from organisations in the community, from higher levels of hierarchies, and from the personal networks and multiple positions of their members." (Pickvance, Sociological Review 1975: 46)

Once the organisation of a movement gets routinised it may get institutionalised. Some authors feel that once a movement is institutionalised, it ceases to be a movement. For
them a movement is primarily a process, and not an institution. But authors like Dommern (1990) will hold that certain institutionalisation is inevitable and even a must to sustain the momentum of a movement. "Without institutionalisation no movement can attain its stability; yet the logical corrolary of institution may be the very demise of movements. They may become mere organisation or association." (Dommern 1990: 47) In fact, mobilisation and institutionalisation coexist, and the latter may provide possibilities for mobilisation. Therefore, "...mobilisation is not 'displaced' by institutionalisation but go hand in hand." (Dommern 1990:140) The institutionalisation process takes place through the organisation which helps to stabilise the fruits of mobilisation. So the existence of a strong organisation need not mean that the movement has ceased to exist. "But to consolidate and stabilise the gains of a movement one needs the instrumentality of the institution. Often the organisational core of the movement provides the nucleus of the institution. That is, the movement contains within it the embryo of an institution." (Dommern 1990:146) Thus the ultimate criterion of the vitality of a movement is whether it keeps the mobilisation aspect alive together with the organisation. In other words, the momentum of the movement is kept alive by taking up collective actions to achieve its objectives.

The evolution of a movement can be on various directions. After achieving its goals, a movement can face a natural death
or it can continue as a structured organisation or a party. When the society accepts the ideals and goals of a movement and brings about necessary changes accordingly, the movement may lose its relevance. A movement can revise its original goals or set new goals adapted to the new needs of its members and society, and thus continue with vigour and vitality. The members and strategies also get changed periodically. Sometimes a movement may be relevant to keep pressure on the public authorities to implement the enacted legislations containing the demands of the movement. (Gusfield 1970, Rao 1984) "Thus a movement which has shown a facile and sensitive responsiveness to changing conditions around it, and which has altered its structure or policies or personnel so as to keep up with times, has a better prospect in the face of future demands which general social change may make upon it than one which has rigidly adhered to obsolescent formulas and senescent leaders..." (Cameron 1966:32)

In the evolutionary process a movement may also remain dormant for some time and reactivate itself in a congenial atmosphere. Finally in a stagnant stage, a movement can split into different splinter groups due to ideological or personal differences. The offshoot group may turn out to be more radical in its ideology and structure than the parent organisation.

The organisation of a movement can either be affiliated to a political party or be independent of it. (Encyclopedia of
The land grab movement in Kerala for speedy land reform was spearheaded by Marxist party (Dommen 1985). The Kerala Swathantra Malsya Thozhilali Federation of fishworker's movement is an organisation which is not affiliated to a political party. Many of the movements initiated by 'action groups' in India are non-party political organisations. Thus there is a new phenomenon of non-party political organisations in India which will be discussed later.

Leadership

Like in any other organisation leadership is an important factor for the success of a social movement. "Leaders are responsible for translating objective causes into subjective consciousness and mobilising peasant." (Shah 1990: 61) There can be two types of leadership: charismatic and collective. Charismatic leaders with their inborn qualities and capacities command respect and following from the members. Bhoothan movement had a charismatic leader in Vinoba Bhave. Many of the millenarian movements had such leadership. In the charismatic leadership the organisation tends to be informal. "...A charismatic movement cannot be an agent of any sustained change process, as its ideological appeal cannot be uppermost and its organisational base is necessarily weak." (Dommen 1972: 182)

In a collective leadership it is the ideology which attracts the followers and keeps them together. The functioning of such organisation will be democratic with periodic elections.
of its leaders. (Dommen 1990) But there is less likelihood of a democratic functioning in a revolutionary movement. (Gusfield 1970) In a collective leadership there will be specified division of labour. The intellectuals who often form the office bearers or core group formulate the ideology and the strategy of the movement. Others perform assigned tasks as volunteers. There can have business elites who support the movement with finance. Depending on different roles the leaders take, there can be different levels of commitment. Assimilation of the ideology, willingness to perform different tasks, readiness to take risks are expressions of commitment. It is rewarded by status and honour provided by various leadership positions. (Rao 1984)

Banks (1972) gives two types of leadership in a movement: 'innovators' and 'adopters'. Innovators are those who start a movement and so are characters of vision and ideals. 'Adopters' are those who give organisational shape and form to the movement. Their role is important for the functioning of the movement. So both these types of leaders are needed for a social movement and, in fact, often they can complement each other.
8. Social Change

The effect of a social movement is social change, which is an important component of a social movement. "The main characteristic of a social movement is that it seeks to change the culture or change the social structure or redistribute the power of control within a society." (Cameron 1966:9) A movement is meant for partial or total change in social structure and in existing system of relationship, values and norms. The change could be for the members of the groups or for the wider society.

There could be mainly four types of changes, as enunciated by Rao. (1984) Some movements aim at maintaining the status quo. They are often launched by those who support the existing establishment. Khatriya Mahasubha of Rajputs and Kanya Kubja of Brahmins are examples of such movements. These organisations try to reform themselves and to maintain their privileges in the face of radical movements of the depressed classes. They can be termed as "restorative movements". There are other movements which aim at partial changes in beliefs, values, world-views, symbols and styles of life. The bhakti and socio-religious movements of 19th century India are examples of this category.
of change. They are termed as "reform movements". A third category of movements aim at radical changes in terms of overall changes in socio-political systems. They are often violent and sudden changes brought about mostly by political parties. Russian and Chinese Revolutions are examples of this types of movements. They are called "Revolutionary movements". The fourth type of change is called "transformative movements" which aim at "middle level structural changes in the traditional distribution of power and in the system of differentiated allocation of resources, rights and privileges by attacking the monopoly of the upper classes and castes in different areas of life including religion." (Rao 1984: 13)

Judge (1992) speaks of three types of consequences of social movements. It may bring about intended change, it may not bring about change or it may be suppressed by the establishment. Though a social movement is suppressed, its ideas and ideals may be indirectly co-opted to the policies of the system. "For even if a movement did not achieve all its goals, parts of its programmes were accepted and incorporated into the ever changing social order. This has been the main or manifest function of these movements." (Encyclopedia of Social
So a movement may not be totally unsuccessful. "That a particular movement can disappear without affecting society seems to be remote possibility." (Judge 1992:10)

According to Oommen (1990) the ideals of a movement can be realised only by legislations of a responsive government. Thus both a movement and the legal system can complement each other for social change. "However, available evidence indicates that legislation and movements operating independently cannot bring about social change in a desired direction: it is only when a responsive political elite responds to the aspirations of the people, as articulated through social movements by passing and vigorously implementing radical legislation which reinforces the ideal of the movement that desirable social change can be institutionalised." (Oommen 1990: 74) The author has substantiated this point from the land reform legislations in Kerala which were implemented very much due to the land grab movement led by Marxist party. (Oommen 1985)

Other consequences of social movements are formation of public opinion and training of leaders for political parties. (Encyclopedia of Social Sciences 1968) A social movement also makes the people subjects and objects of a democratic system. They become active participants in the political life of a nation (Kothari 1990)
C. Ideology

Ideology is the third component of a social movement. It is the rationale and goals of a movement together with the practical means of achieving them. (Cameron 1966) According to Rao, "it interprets the environment and project self-images. It codifies and organises beliefs, myths, outlook, and values, defines aspirations and interests and directs responses to specific social situations. Thus it is not only a framework of consciousness but also a source of legitimising action." (Rao: 1984:7) "Ideologies thus are ideals, values and visions which give legitimation and justification for collective actions for change of the existing values and deals. Thus it is a criticism of existing values and relationship and proposal of action to replace them with new ones. Ideologies thus entail the enunciation of values in terms of which systems of social relationships are to be judged and a negative evaluation or justification of an existing structure of relationships and the indication of a preferred course of action." (Gore 1993:30)

A social movement is often differentiated from other mob actions by its ideology. Blocking the train by commuters to protest against its late running is not a movement as it does not have an ideology. The theory of class struggle is an ideology for several movements. Leaving Hindu religion and adopting Buddhism was the ideology of Mahar movement. Millenium ideology was adopted by many tribal movements in India, while
past glory was the motivating force and ideology for Yadava movement. Ideology is also a source of identity of the group in relation to other groups especially the ones they are in conflict with. Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana movement in Kerala was opposed to Brahmin domination but adopted many of their customs and practices with legitimacy from their own priests and leaders. (Rao 1984)

According to Banks (1972) an ideology of a movement keeps changing to meet the new needs and situations. It also should be able to satisfy varied interests and needs of members and groups. "The notion of a social movement as a collection of persons acting to bring about consciously willed social innovation entails that its ideology be examined step by step in relation to the circumstances it faces throughout its history and its interplay of the actors in the role net work which comprises the structure of the movement as a viable collectivity. From this point of view a social movement has not one ideology but many, at different points of time and by reference to the various groups of which it is composed and the various publics to which it addresses its appeal." (Banks 1972:40) The formulation of an ideology which is an important aspect of a movement is often done by the leaders and intellectuals of the movement.
D. Strategies

The fourth component of a social movement is strategies which are means to achieve the goals of a movement. Appropriate strategies are very vital for a movement to bring people together, to put pressure on the opponents, and to bring about changes in the society. Thus success of a movement very much depends on its strategies of action. "Success is measured by how effectively a movement devices tactics which advance the group towards its goal." (Wilson 1973: 226) Therefore, strategy can be considered an important characteristic of a movement.

A strategy of a movement, in general, "implies a process of protest, confrontation and even conflict—whether of constructive or destructive nature. The members of a social movement... want... to challenge and wrest away their monopoly of economic, political, educational, cultural and religious goods and services." (Desrochers 1991: 17) Conflict is thus an important element of a social movement, though there can be some movements which function without open conflicts. "An attempt to canvas new values, new relationships, new subjective motivational patterns results in the emergence of a situation of varying degrees of confrontation or conflict since any existing system of relationships has proved to be advantageous to some section, some groups or some stratum of population." (Gore: 1989: 16)
Cameron (1966) speaks of five methods of social movements. They are violent, quasi-violent, non-violent, riots and demonstration methods.

Wilson (1973) gives an elaborate illustration of strategies. "Tactics mean both the set of principles concerning the methods and techniques of action and those concrete activities intended to further the aims of the movement." (Wilson 1973:227) They are thus both principles of action and action itself. There is relationship between these two and they interact with each other. A social movement is often remembered for its methods than its objectives and principles. For the public come to know of a movement through its strategies like demonstration and marches. "Tactics accordingly play an important part in establishing the identity of a movement." (Wilson 1973:226) So it depends on the ingenuity of the movement to devise and use strategies which attract the followers and the public.

Based on the ideas of Turner, Wilson (1973) mentions three strategies: persuasion, bargaining and coercion. Persuasion involves dramatisation and symbolic actions to bring the opponents to its own side. Bargaining takes place when the movement can offer something in exchange for the values held by the opponents like votes and consumer support. Coercion is negative bargaining by which the position of the opponents is
threatened. It is usually only a 'threat' of harm if its demands are not met, and not the harm itself.

Wilson (1973) himself makes two categories of strategies: 'politics of order' and 'politics of disorder'. The former consists of tactics which are constitutional as part of the democratic process, like memorandum, use of legislature and judiciary. The latter consists of direct action such as 'dharna', demonstration, boycott and violence. A movement will have to use other methods depending on the circumstances. If the issues are not solved by the first method as is often the case, the movement invariably resorts to the second method. The ideals and objectives of a movement often will not be acceptable to the authorities and establishment. So the channels of 'politics of order' will not be effective. If the cause is of the poor, the ruling class will have its class interest to ignore them. In such cases the poor will be forced to use the only weapon they have namely the power of numbers by means of 'politics of disorder'. It is said that peace movement in U.S.A. in 1950 was not effective when they used constitutional channels. Later when they resorted to militant tactics like occupying a missile base, the issue was taken note of seriously by the authorities.

There is the possibility that even the second method of boycott, sit-in and strike become institutionalised and routinised, as they are used by variety of groups and political parties. The movement leaders should make sure that they are
not boring their 'audience', instead are constantly devising innovative, appealing and effective tactics.
(Wilson 1973:232)

Wilson (1973) gives certain requirements for successful strategies. They are: breadth, simplicity and flexibility. Breadth: Tactics should not be confined to one aspect alone, they should cover as far as possible all aspects of life, though they need not be used simultaneously. Political tactics like petitioning and boycotting election could be used at the time of election while strike could be used at the time of economic crisis.

Simplicity: The tactics should be viable and easy for the capacity and resourcefulness of the members. They should be symbolic and pragmatic. Financial aspects also should be taken into account. Gandhiji's salt 'satyagraha' fulfilled the above requirement. It was both an economic and political weapon. At the same time, it was symbolic and simple for people to understand and participate in.

Flexibility: Tactics should not be exhaustive. A few tactics should always be kept as reserve. It also means the ability to foresee the response of the opponents to the tactics. They should be resilient against opposition and suppression.

Since the social movement aims at social change it is important that it gets certain support from the society and the
public in general. So its tactics should create supportive public opinion. "No social movement will succeed in bringing about large scale social change unless it wins sympathy or at least acquiescence for its activities." (Wilson 1973: 251) If too much of violence is used, the movement will be forced to go underground too quickly and it will be suicidal. So also too much of destruction of public property, and attack on national flag can have adverse emotional repercussions on the public opinion. "The leader is typically then, both inventor and salesman, constantly developing and marketing new tactical ideas." At the same time he should see that "they do not overstep the limits of what the public and authorities will tolerate." (Wilson 1973: 233) In short, a movement should be able to legitimise and justify the tactics in the light of the values and ethos of the people.

Though a social movement is rationally planned action unlike a riot or a mob violence, there is a place for spontaneous action also. Sometimes it is such action which gives a new direction to the whole movement. In American Civil Rights Movement the arrest of a black woman for travelling in a bus meant for white people triggered off black agitation in many cities and changed the course of the movement. The leaders of a movement should be open to such spontaneous and unpredictable actions while planning its strategies. (Killian, American Sociological Review, 1984) While organisational and rational
planning are key variables, social movement theory must take into account spontaneity, emergence and forces which generate them. It must include as an essential part of its analysis how social movement organisations and their leaders deal with changes in the course of a movement which unpredictable and spontaneous actions introduce, and how they themselves are transformed or even superceded in the process. (Killian 1984:782)

3. Classification of a Social Movement

Classifications of a social movement is part of a definitional problem. Authors have attempted several typologies of social movements using one or the other criterion of a social movement. Some of the classifications are highlighted in this section.

Rao (1984) categorises three types of social movements based on its social consequences—reformative, transformative and revolutionary. As explained above, he also has classified them on other criteria. Based on locus it can be linguistic, religious, peasant, tribal etc. Based on scale and space it can be local, regional and national. Based on issues it can be women’s liberation and prohibition. He also speaks of acquiescent and protest movements. The former is non-confrontationist trying to get certain benefits from the
opponents without opposing or challenging the existing system. E.g. Chambers of Maharashtra. The latter opposes the dominant group and the existing system e.g. Mahar movement under Ambedkar. Based on the social consequences Shah (1990) also classifies movements into revolt, rebellion, reform and revolution. Revolt which attempts at partial change within the system aims at overthrow of a government. A rebellion is an attack on the authority without the intention of seizing the state power. Revolution is organised struggle to change the socio-economic system and to usher in a new social order.

Cameron (1966) gives a typology based on the criterion of purpose. They are reactionary, conservative, revisionary and revolutionary. Reactionary movements stand for goals which were held by the people but set aside later. It is a kind of going back to the 'good old days.' A conservative movement seeks to maintain the status quo. A revisionary movement seeks to modify the existing order by improving it. A revolutionary movement stands for radical change and a new social order.

Banks (1972) explains three types of movements: self-help movement, cause group movement, and revolutionary movement. Self-help movements are run by people themselves based on common ownership and decision-making. The cooperative movement in Britain in 19th century is an example of this type. Cause groups are the groups who "represent some belief or principle and who seek to act in the interest of that cause." (Banks 1972: 33)
They try to influence or pressurise the government to change legislations and policies in view of social change. Revolutionary movement attempts to establish a new social order.

Smelser (1962) speaks of norm-oriented and value-oriented movements. The former is "an attempt to restore, protect, modify, or create norms in the name of a generalised belief." (Smelser 1962: 270) Norm can cover all aspects of life, and the change can be innovation in customs, law and association. Agitation to prevent cruelty to animals is such an example. A value-oriented movement is "a collective attempt to restore, protect, modify or create values in the name of a generalised belief." (Smelser 1962:313) Values can be from 'indigenous' or outside culture. Nativistic, messianic and charismatic movements come under this category.

Gusfield (1970) classifies social movements into five categories: A movement of withdrawal which aims at conversion of persons based on the values and ideals of the group without trying to change the social system. Various religious sects, nature cults come under this category. Episodic protest refers to occasional unplanned riots or strikes for a particular goal. Reform movements try to bring about changes within the system. Women's suffrage and protection of minorities are issues for such change. Regressive movements attempt to restore an idealised past. Revolutionary movements aim at radical change for an alternate social order.
Based on leadership there are three types of movements: millenarian, messianic, and chiliastic. Millenarian movements visualise an imminent, total, ultimate and collective liberation with religious faith. It is restorative of lost culture and tradition of an indigenous people. Messianic movements are led by leaders who with their prophetic and supernatural powers, are believed to restore the "good old days" and to establish a golden age of justice, equality and peace. In chiliastic movements a charismatic leader with extraordinary and divine qualities is supposed to establish a paradise on earth. Many of the Millenarian movements are messianic and even chiliastic and so are related. (Rekhi 1988)

Based on goals, ideology and methods of organisation Dhanagare (1983) gives six categories of peasant movements in India. They are nativistic or restorative, religious millenarian, social banditry, mass insurrections, terrorism and liberal reformist agitation. The first two are transformative movements aimed at total change, while the last four are basically reformative movements aimed at partial change.

According to Oommen (1992) there are three types of social movements based on their components: charismatic, ideological and organisational. A charismatic movement is one led by a charismatic leader. Examples are religious and messianic movements. An ideological movement is the one which gives
primacy to an ideology which has to be accepted by the followers. As for example, socialist and nationalist movements. An organisational movement gives emphasis on organisational structure of a movement to meet the needs and demands of its members. Trade union movements and cooperative movements come under this category. All these three or any one of them can be found in a social movement. So "a movement will not be 'purely' ideological, organisational or charismatic movement but will be predominantly so." (Oommen 1992:22) He (1992) also distinguishes between a religious movement which is confined to religious sphere and a secular movement which is confined to the secular sphere.

In the context of the clarifications and classifications of social movements, the phenomenon of fishworkers' movement is studied in this thesis, on the basis of the following questions. Does the organisation and struggle of the fishworkers in Kerala fit in with the concept of a social movement? If so, how does it fulfil the four basic components of a social movement, viz. collective action, ideology, strategy and social change? What type of a social movement is the fishworkers' movement? This study makes an effort to answer these questions.
One of the objectives of this study is to examine the role of non-party political organisations like KSMTF for social transformation in India. This section tries to define the concept of 'non-party political organisations' (NPPO). Already during the freedom movement there were voluntary organisations which took up welfare and educational programmes for people. There were also larger macro-formations which developed into various movements like those of peasants, tribals, backward class, and trade unions. But it is in the background of economic stagnation and political instability of late 1960's that the phenomenon of non-party political organisations appeared in various parts of India.

The origin of non-party political organisations could be traced back to the voluntary agencies or non-government organisations who worked among the rural and urban poor to alleviate their poverty and misery. They started with relief work, and later, finding it inadequate switched on to developmental programmes. In the light of their experience and social analysis, they slowly realized that, more than poverty and unemployment, the real problem of India was structural injustice based on exploitation and inequality. The solution, therefore, was social justice for the poor and marginalised by means of fight against injustice and exploitation. Accordingly,
some of these organisations and individuals comprising mainly of educated middle class youth started the work of conscientising and organising the poor on issues vital to their life. Such groups known as 'action groups' formed organisations of people at grass-root level among dalits, tribals and other weaker sections throughout India. Some of these organisations developed into modern social movements. Since the activities of these organisations were not part of the political parties they were given various names like non-party political process, non-party political formation and action groups by social scientists. (Sethi edit. Wignaraja:1993)

Various definitions have been given for this new social phenomenon:

According to Kothari (1990) non-party political process is neither non-political nor anti-party. Voluntary activists deal with a new space, a non-party democratic process by which the needs, aspirations and rights of the marginalised are focussed and they are also participants of their own development. "...They stride across the party and non-party spaces, and thus provide a broader political space to the struggle for transformation." (Kothari, Economic and Political Weekly 1984:222)

Sharma defines non-party political process as "social action which is essentially non violent, though it may be
militant." It is "a conscious collective action against exploitations and oppression at local level." (Sharma, Economic and Political Weekly 1992:2557) Sharma also points out that it can have either Marxist or Gandhian ideology with the aim of empowerment of the poor and, social transformation and egalitarian social order. They use the method of mobilisation and struggle of the people to achieve their goal. (Sharma 1992)

According to Sheth, "...Unlike the established Left parties these activist groups work directly with the people, take up concrete issues of oppression and exploitation and in the process develop their consciousness of the structure that exploit and oppress." (Sheth, Seminar 1982:52) These grass- root organisations, he observes, "are devising new forms of political action through peaceful protest, sustained sensitisation, mutual learning and training of cadres..." (Sheth, Economic and Political Weekly 1984:261)

Sethi observes that "these groups are organisations composed mainly of sensitised/radicalised middle class youth, working for and with the oppressed and exploited strata with a view to transform society. They are involved in a range of activities from development with a political perspective to militant organisation of the masses. These activities take place outside the control of the government and political parties." (Sethi, edit. Wignaraja 1993:231) Dhanagare defines action groups "as groups working at the micro-level in a
localised setting for and with the poor, marginalised and oppressed sections of the society—whether rural or urban. The groups educate, conscientise and organise each section towards social action aimed at transforming their lives qualitatively.” (Dhanagare, Indian Journal of Social Sciences 1988:416)

Based on the above definitions we can conclude that non-party political process is a non-party political organisation of mainly marginalised people which take up issues of justice and human rights with the ultimate aim of social transformation towards an egalitarian social order. They are neither voluntary organisations nor are they affiliated to any political parties. They involve themselves in political action for justice mostly by non-violent means. They may have Gandhian or Marxist ideology. They may also take up developmental programmes like cooperatives, health care and education.

Though the authors have given various names to this social phenomenon, in this thesis I would use the term “Non-Party Political Organisations” for the following reasons:

1. In my opinion the affected people should be the real participants of these organisations, though middle class youth or intellectuals could be part of the process as animators and facilitators.

2. When the phenomena started, probably it was action groups consisting of mostly middle class intellectuals who took the
initiative and leadership in these organisations. But at present in India many such organisations with active involvement and leadership of the affected people have emerged and still are emerging. With the rise of general awareness and education among the masses it is possible that leadership emerge among the affected community itself.

3. The term 'organisation' can include not only organisation forming part of a social movement but also a non-party people's organisation that works for justice of the people. Civil right organisations belong to such a category.

4. In a broader sense, non-party political organisations can also mean, in this thesis, social movements with their own organisation.

Kerala Swathantra Malsya Thzhilali Federation, which spearheaded the fishworkers' movement was a non-party political organisation. Since such an organisation succeeded to make a marginalised group an organised force, the question of the importance of non-party political organisations for organising other marginalised groups in India becomes very relevant. An attempt is made in this thesis to answer this question which is vital not only for non-party political organisations but also for the vast majority of the people who are still outside the political and developmental process in India.
Antonio Gramsci who reinterpreted Marxian thought can provide a theoretical frame to understand the phenomenon of grass-root level social movements such as the one under study. An attempt, therefore, made here to make a brief sketch of Gramscian theories which can be relevant for this study. Marxism is not a monolithic theory which was applied uniformly to all situations. There is the Chinese, Russian and European version of Marxism. This means different interpretations were given to Marxism by Marxist thinkers depending on the specific conditions of each country. Antonio Gramsci is one such prominent thinker who interpreted Marxism in the light of the specific democratic situation of western Europe especially Italy. In a democratic country like India, Gramsci's interpretations of Marxism could be suitable to explain the phenomena of non-party political organisations of social movements.

Antonio Gramsci is "the most original Marxist thinker of the twentieth century." (Salamini 1981:1) He reinterpreted the classical marxism in such a way that its mechanistic and deterministic character becomes flexible to absorb the new realities of the world. "His originality lies in having laid the foundation for a Marxist theory of specific Western transition to socialism." (Salamini 1981:1) The Euro-communism
was developed as a result of the work of thinkers like Gramsci. In this effort he is said to have gone one step ahead of Marx and Lenin. "Indeed, he can be credited with being the real successor of Marx and Lenin." (Misra 1991:239) We can see mainly three areas in which Gramsci has contributed to the Marxist thinking: structure-superstructure, law of history and the idea of revolution.

The most important contribution of Gramsci is his analysis of superstructure comprising of socio-political and cultural sphere. According to Karl Marx the basic economic structure of society determines the nature of its superstructure comprising of socio-ethico-political spheres. Superstructure is a reflection or expression of the base structure, and they work on a dialectical relationship. This was substantially accepted by the later Marxist thinkers. But Gramsci held that superstructure can also influence base structure and be a determining factor. "Therefore, the structure is no longer the subordinating moment of history, but it becomes the subordinate one." (Mouffe 1979:34) He played down the dogmatic economic-determinism of classical Marxism, though he accepted the significance of base structure. He explained superstructure in terms of state and civil society and their mutual relationship. Thus Gramsci probably enhanced the classical Marxist theory. Marx, Luporini states, "always operated with two diverse and
non-unified conceptual ‘couples’ which he never managed to integrate. On the one hand the structure/superstructure couple in the analysis of the mode of production in "Capital" and on the other the state/civil society couple in the historical and political analysis... But this second couple always remains descriptive in Marx and he never manages to integrate the two types of analysis at the conceptual level in articulating the analysis of the mode of production with that of social formation. This explains for Luporini why the question of state remained conceptually unresolved in Marx, constituting an absence at the heart of his theory... Gramsci's great originality, therefore, lies in his attempt to answer these questions and to conceptually unify Marx's two oppositional couples by establishing a link between 'politics-class-state' and 'people-nation-state', thereby recuperating within Marxist theory a whole series of elements which has been excluded from it." (Mouffe 1979:9)

Gramsci added a new dimension to the interpretation of historical materialism. According to the dialectical materialism which is a basic conceptual tool in Marxism, socialist revolution is inevitable once capitalism, through its own internal contradictions, reaches its maturity. Bolshevik tradition held by Marxist thinkers like Karl Kautsky, Plekhanov G.V. and Nikolai Bukharin, and expressed in the Second International, considered this idea of history like a
strict mechanistic law. Though Lenin, Rosa Luxenberg, George Lukacs and Karl Korsch tried to give certain flexibility to this law, the dogmatic character still prevailed, leading to weakening of socialist revolution in many countries. Gramsci radically challenged this orthodox position and gave a new interpretation to the historical materialism. He held that subjective condition of revolutionary consciousness among the masses was a sine qua non for revolution together with the objective conditions. Revolution failed in western Europe, mainly because of the absence of this subjective condition. Proletarian consciousness and collective organisation have to be developed by conscious effort especially of the intellectuals. (Salamini 1981) "It is precisely the insistence on such subjective aspects of Marxist theory that differentiates Gramsci from Lenin. Gramsci's task in the West is comparable to that of Lenin in the East." (Salamini 1981:6) Gramsci thus has recently been called the "theoretician of revolution in the West." (New Left Review 1977:175)

Flowing from the theories of superstructure and laws of history is the idea of revolution. It was Lenin who elaborated a theory of revolution based on his experience of Russia. He emphasised the dictatorship of the proletariat after the capture of state power. Gramsci further developed this theory by focussing on the concept of "ideological hegemony".
According to him consciousness of the masses should be developed and they should be organised into a force to pave the way for revolution. He termed it 'ideological hegemony', which is more important than 'political hegemony' or dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus for him superstructural elements like consciousness, ideology and culture are determining factors for a revolution. They vary from country to country. So specific socio-political conditions of each country should be taken into account in formulating strategies for a revolution. Based on this theory he suggested different strategies of revolution for western Europe than those used in Russia.

A broad outline of the theoretical propositions of Gramsci is presented here under four headings - definition of concepts, role of people’s organisations, its objectives and means, and the role of the intellectuals in this process.

I. Definition of Concepts

To understand Gramsci’s theories we need to explain the basic concepts he has used in his writings. The concepts are: civil society and state, hegemony, and subaltern classes.

A. Civil Society and State

This is one of the basic concepts used by Gramsci throughout his writings. Though precision is lacking about the concept of civil society we can get an idea about it from his writings
on various occasions. "Civil society in Gramsci does not belong to the structural moment, but to the superstructural one." (Mouffe 1979:30) Unlike in Marx who uses it as part of the infrastructure. It is "the political and cultural hegemony of a social group on the whole of society, as ethical content of the State." (Gramsci, quote. Mouffe 1979:31) This means spontaneous or voluntary forms of organisations, groups and corporations in the superstructural level which has hegemony over the whole society and which forms the basic foundation of any state. (Mouffe 1979)

Though Gramsci has defined the State in different ways we can get the main thrust of this concept from his writings. About the relationship between state and civil society Gramsci writes, "What we can do, for the moment, is to fix two major superstructural "levels": the one that can be called 'civil society', that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called 'private', and that of 'political society' or 'the State'. These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of 'hegemony' which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of 'direct domination' or command exercised through the State and 'judicial' government. (Gramsci, edit. Hoare 1971:12)

There are two levels for any society - political society and civil society. The state consisting of judiciary and
military apparatus makes use of coercion and consent to safeguard the interest of the socio-economic structure. It can also control and make use of other institutions to get the consent of the people. The civil society consists of various organisations and associations which come under the 'private' sphere of life. It uses ideology and various organisations to achieve its goal. "Civil society is characterised on the conceptual level by an ideological sphere which permeates and directs the entire social body, and on the organisational level by groups and organisms in charge of the maintenance and development of the ideological front, church, schools, army, courts, and all the media influencing public opinion." (Salamini 1981:139) What constitutes civil society is private groups and associations. "Private organisms are the content of civil society." (Salamini 1981:141) "In this multiplicity of private associations... one or more predominates relatively or absolutely—constituting the hegemonic apparatus of one social group over the rest of the population (or civil society): the basis for the State in the narrow sense of the governmental coercive apparatus." (Gramsci, edit. Hoare 1971:264-5) In other words, hegemonic class exercises power over its subordinate class directly and through the state apparatus. "A hegemonic class exercises power over subordinate classes in civil society in addition to the state power which exercises
through its predominance in the state. Power is diffused through civil society as well as being embodied in the coercive apparatus of the state." (Simon: 1982:72)

Though political and civil society often complement each other, the latter is given primacy over the former by Gramsci. "In addition, civil society and not the state is the most positive element of the historical process." (Salamini 1981:140)

In western democratic countries the civil society has a greater role than voting in elections. "In these systems of government the people's consent does not end at the moment of voting, quite the contrary that consent is to be permanently active; so much so that those who give it may be considered as 'functionaries' of the state." (Gramsci, edit.Hoare 1971:193)

Civil society has to be active participants in the affairs of the state. It has to work to weaken the hegemony of the bourgeois regime, until the civil society takes the place of political society. For this, the initiative of the individuals and groups become very relevant. "This 'statolatry' is nothing other than the normal form of 'state life', or at least of initiation to autonomous state life and to the creation of a 'civil society' which it was not historically possible to create before the ascent to independent state life...It must be criticised, precisely in order to develop and produce new forms
of state life, in which the initiative of individuals and groups will have a 'state' character, even if it is not due to the government of the functionaries." (Gramsci, edit. Hoare 1971:268-9)

The primacy of civil society over political society, as asserted by Gramsci, has many implications in a democratic country like India. If the civil society is more important than political society, its hegemony or power should be more and more asserted. The hegemony of government apparatus should be constantly controlled and kept under check. It is to be done, as mentioned by Gramsci by various people's organisations, associations and groups. Since they are not part of the government apparatus and since they are 'private' sphere of citizen's life, they can also be taken in terms of non-party political organisations. Thus from the concept of civil society of Antonio Gramsci we can derive the role of non-party political organisations like KSMTF in India.

B. Hegemony

Though the term hegemony was already used by Marx and Lenin, it was Gramsci who analysed the term in depth. He is known as the "theoretician of hegemony" (Mouffe 1979:237) He uses the term in two meanings: 'collective will' which denotes political leadership and 'moral and intellectual reform' denoting cultural leadership. (Mouffe 1979:39) While Lenin gave importance to the former, Gramsci emphasised the latter. " In
Gramsci's formulation, hegemonic direction is by moral and intellectual persuasion rather than control by the police, the military, or the coercive power of the law." (Entwistle: 1979:12) "By hegemony Gramsci meant the permeation throughout civil society - including a whole range of structures and activities like trade unions, schools, the churches and the family - of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs, morality etc. that is in one way or another supportive of the established order and the class interest that dominate it. Hegemony in this sense might be defined as an "organising principle", or world-view that is diffused by agencies of ideological control and socialisation into every area of daily life. (Boggs 1976:39) For Gramsci hegemony thus includes not only coercive power of state apparatus but also that of other institutions of civil society where collective will of the people is expressed and given shape. These institutions include, apart from the proletarian party, "any social group" in a society (Salamini 1981:135) It is in this sense, any people's organisations or movement outside party and government becomes relevant in a democratic state (Mouffe 1979)

Hegemony is also power of the people consciously and progressively developed with the aim of sharing the power of the state apparatus. It is "the attempt by a class to become a national force, capable of providing cultural and political direction to subaltern classes and of obtaining a vast social consensus before the assumption of state power." (Salamini
"Thus hegemony is the leadership and domination of a group over its allies; ...it is consensus over allied classes." (Misra 1991:208) The ultimate aim of such collective organisation of subalterns is to attain hegemony over structure and superstructure as a whole. In short, hegemony "designates the intellectual and moral direction of a combination of social groups struggling to attain political and cultural autonomy." (Salamini 1981:133)

C. Subaltern Classes

It is a concept which was popularised by Gramsci. "Subaltern classes are those which either are excluded from participation in hegemony of dominant classes or passively consent to it...The degree of passivity or political consciousness of subaltern classes is the criterion by which the regressive or progressive character of hegemonic systems can be assessed." (Salamini 1981:80) They do not have active or passive share of participation in the state hegemony. They are the powerless and neglected masses in the society. They normally live in a state of indifference and fatalism. They have to be helped and directed to become "creators of historical and institutional values, of being founders of a state." (Gramsci edit. Hoare 1971:198) It is through socialist revolution that subaltern masses attain political autonomy and hegemony.
2. Importance of Collective Organisation

Collective formation of masses is proposed by Gramsci as a means of facing the capitalist hegemony. "In contrast, only organic movements, organised, politically conscious, equipped with an ideology, and hegemonic in their aspirations, can resolve organic crises in favour of subaltern classes."

(Salamini 1981:60) Party or organisation for Gramsci represent collective will which takes concrete form in praxis. It should express popular feeling. There should be, thus a dialectical relationship between the party and the masses. "In sum, the mass organised as a collective will, is the basis of historical transformation and the creator of new historical blocks."

(Salamini 1981:67)

Speaking of the role of masses in the development of history Gramsci points out the need of plans and programmes for the collectivities to bring about social changes. "The answer to these questions is to be sought in the manner in which men organise into a political collectivity and develop concrete programmes." (Salamini 1981:78) Consciously planned strategies carried through by subaltern masses become crucial for creating a new socio-economic world.

Gramsci speaks of 'disjoined' history of subalterns which aims at creating new political forms like councils, unions and parties. It has to be understood in the context of the general strategy of his emphasis on the importance of
spontaneously evolved organs of struggle and power like factory councils. (Sen, Society and Change 1991-92:96) In fact, he wanted those associations of people to play a greater role than the proletarian party. "It follows that, in Gramsci's model, extra-party structures and activities (e.g. media, educational groups, counter-hegemonic bodies such as worker's councils and soviets) play a far greater role than the party itself during the 'organic' phase of transformation" (Boggs 1976:118) These organisations have to function in a dialectical process with the modern parliamentary democracy so that the subaltern groups share the hegemony of the state apparatus. "In this perspective, the Gramscian theory of passive revolution is more than a critical correlate of the Marxian problematic of transition: it offers a theoretical and political instrument of relevance to our present situation." (Mouffe 1979:234)

Various liberal values like freedom and human right, and the democratic forms to achieve them are helpful in curtailing and limiting state power in a democracy. So they can be strategically used to strengthen the hegemony of the subaltern classes. The relevance of various people's forums and organisations is once again hinted at by Gramsci. "Liberal values relate, therefore, not to the question of democracy but to the problem of limiting the state and, as such, they can only contribute positively to the development of a socialist
democracy when the introduction of liberal rights and freedom serves to 'strengthen' the collectivist discipline of a planned society. Attempt either to delay or artificially hasten the implementation of what Shahnazarov has called 'various democratic forms' may be highly detrimental to the task of consolidating socialism" (Shahnazarov, quote. Hoffman 1984:206)

**Factory Councils:**

Factory councils were one type of political association experimented in certain factories of Italy under the guidance of Gramsci. It consisted of organisations of workers in factories which could get control of production and management of the factories. The workers would take direct responsibility of productive process and thus become creators of history. "The proletarian dictatorship can only be embodied in a type of organisation that is specific to the activity of producers, not wage-earner, the slaves of capital. The factory Council is the nucleus of this organisation... Factory Council is the model of the proletarian state....Once the Councils exist, they give the workers direct responsibility for production, provide them with an incentive to improve their work, instil a conscious and voluntary discipline, and create a productive mentality - the mentality of a creator of history." (Gramsci, edit. Hoare, 1977:100-101) Hundreds of Councils with thousands of workers were formed in Turin, and functioned for about two years
before they were suppressed by the government. The reason behind this novel experiment was the inadequacy of political parties and trade unions to prepare people for socialism. "On the one hand, the dominant institutions—parliament, state bureaucracy, parties, trade unions etc. originated within bourgeois society and could only function with its logic,...these structures were strategically very limited...and hence would have to be transcended in the form of prefigurative bodies such as the Councils" (Boggs 1976:86) Since parties and trade unions are part of liberal democracy, they are structurally limited in their functions. They are bound to be preoccupied with elections, parliament and administration. So there is need for other structures to organise the masses.

Though the factory councils were concerned with factory workers their rationale is relevant for us today. First of all, Gramsci's critique of political parties as inadequate to educate and organise the masses is found correct in our democracy. "All social democratic parties also function outside the electoral framework, just as all Marxist parties work for aims other than the ultimate revolution. But both the visions focus on the capture of state power, without controlling which it is considered impossible to effect social change. Little, if any, importance is given to spontaneous and autonomous action of individuals, groups and strata."" (Wignaraja 1993:250) Secondly, there is need of creating alternate people's forums. Since these forums are independent of political parties non-
party political organisations could be one such forum. The forums are not only to get people organised but also to give them an experience of democratic participation and of socialist culture. The Councils, rooted more firmly in the grass-roots existence of the masses, would constitute a far stronger bulwark of democratic participation than any other political form. (Boggs 1976:94)

3. The Objectives and Means of Collective Organisation

The purpose of collective organisation is to influence and control the programmes and policies of the party and finally to assert the hegemony and autonomy of the subalterns. To achieve this objective the masses should be conscious of their responsibility to shape the history of their society. This does not happen spontaneously and suddenly but progressively with political education. "The growth of the Nazi and Fascist movements, and the ineffectualness of working class resistance to them, seemed to confirm the view that it was erroneous and dangerous to envisage the spontaneous development of a socialist outlook in the working class...or an inevitable transition to socialism." (Bottomore 1975:34) Social and political change can take place only by collective and conscious praxis of the people. In this way man is to shape and create history. "The progressive acquisition of proletarian consciousness and the
attainment of the active consensus of subaltern classes are the innovative ideas in Gramsci's theory." (Salamini 1981:18)

According to Gramsci there are two strategies to achieve socialist hegemony and proletarian revolution: 'the war of movement' and 'the war of position'. The former is conquest of power through direct confrontation or frontal attack while the latter is conquest of power through gradual and prolonged struggle in civil society. In countries like Russia where the civil society was weak and state strong, a war of movement was appropriate. The hegemony of subalterns could be established afterwards. But in western countries like Italy where the civil society is powerful with its wide network of private institutions like church, schools, and trade unions, the war of position is suitable. In India also state apparatus is strong. "In the post-independence period ..there was no breakdown of civil authority. The coercive apparatus of the state to suppress any kind of insurgent threat has been quite effective. It could be seen in the cases of Naga and Mizo insurgencies where the Indian army effectively countered the insurgent forces despite the fact that the local population was supporting them." (Judge 1992: 173) Capture of state power without the hegemony and support of the civil society will invariably fail. So the proletarian hegemony should be established by people's struggle before the conquest of state power. "It seems to me that Ilitch understood that a change was necessary from the war of
manoeuvre applied victoriously in the East in 1917, to a war of position which was the only form possible in the West, where... the social structures were of themselves still capable of becoming heavily-armed fortifications." (Gramsci, edit. Hoare 1971:237)

The war of position will mean struggle of people at intellectual, cultural and political level. They should be prepared for this by the intellectuals. The bourgeois intellectuals should be also influenced and won over. (Misra 1991) Thus Gramsci held that only war of position was appropriate for western countries and that the consciousness of the subaltern masses should be raised for this task by the intellectuals. The strategy of war of position is very relevant for a democratic country like India where civil society is strong with its caste, class and semi-feudal structures. A socialist reconstruction can possibly take place only through the conscious and collective effort of the subaltern classes and the intellectuals.

The organised collectivities, are relevant even in a socialist state. Gramsci mentioned this in reference to the Stalinist dictatorship in the socialist countries. According to him even long time after the revolution, the hegemony is concentrated in the state in these countries. The hegemony of masses in civil society is not realised. It is here that the subaltern organisations have a role to play in...
state dictatorship and appropriating the state power to itself. (Salami 1981)

The ultimate goal of subaltern organisations is to achieve the Marxist vision of stateless society which is not exactly the same as classless society of Marx. Gramsci speaks of "reabsorption of political society in civil society" (Gramsci, Hoare 1971:253) and "regulated society" (quote. Mouffe 1979:41) The withering away of state is to be seen within the gamut of civil society and hegemony.

The social class will enlarge its hegemony to such an extent that the political society and its dominion will be removed. It will be a 'regulated society' freed from political society and its coercion. In such a society the individuals of a social group will be capable of self-government. There will be no need of force to regulate the lives of the citizens. (Salami 1979) If in Marx and Engels the withering away of the state is a structural one, in Gramsci it is super-structural one. If it is classless society for the former it is civil society without political society for the latter. (Mouffe 1979)

4. Role of the Intellectuals in the Organisation of Subaltern Classes.

In the organisations of the subalterns, Gramsci gives a substantial role for the intellectuals as agents of social change. "Gramsci's theory of intellectuals was recognized as
his most original contribution to Marxism." (Salamini 1981:16) He was the first Marxist thinker to give a theory of intellectuals.

In Marxist literature intellectuals are characterised by the nature of their work or their ideology. They are"... in a broad sense, all those who have an organising and educative role." (New Left Review 1977:148) Gramsci described them in terms of their role in the development of hegemonic systems. He identified two types of intellectuals: traditional and organic. Traditional intellectuals are those who are recognised from historical past and who have an apparent interclass representation. The clergy, teachers, philosophers and artists belong to this category. The organic intellectuals are those who belong to a particular class and articulate its interest and aspirations. (Gramsci, edit. Hoare 1971) In a capitalist society they provide the ideology to sustain its production and productive relations. As technocrats and professionals they help to maintain the hegemony of the ruling class and the state. They keep a distance from the masses who are denied the knowledge and its power.

In a socialist struggle against capitalists, the intellectuals who can identify themselves with the masses and their cause can help to create critical consciousness among them. Though there is an intellectual dimension to the lives of the subalterns, which is called 'common sense' by Gramsci, they
are not able to articulate it. Very often the ideology of the capitalist class is imposed on them so that they are forced to remain in a passive and folklore culture. It is the role of the intellectuals to break this passive culture and to create awareness among them. The subalterns by themselves are not able to achieve this. (Salamini 1981)

According the Gramsci there should be a dialectical relation between the masses and the intellectuals. The subalterns are not to be kept low in their intellectual level. Rather they are helped to raise their intellectual standard and critical thinking. (Salamini 1981) "The popular element 'feels' but does not always know or understand; the intellectual element 'knows' but does not always understand and in particular feel." (Gramsci, edit. Hoare 1971:418) The 'feeling' of the subalterns and the 'knowing' of the intellectual should come together and complement each other for the praxis of radical transformation.

Relevance of Gramsci for this study

Antonio Gramsci reinterpreted Marxism in the light of democratic system of the western countries. So it can be relevant for a democratic country like India. His idea of subalterns as those "excluded from the participation in the hegemony of the dominant classes" (Salamini 1981:80) is very true of the majority of the people of India who are outside the process of economic and political hegemony. Poverty,
illiteracy, and caste and other exploitative factors force them to live a passive and indifferent life. It is in this context that the organisation of these subaltern classes becomes relevant. As Gramsci said, various types of organisations and councils for different needs of people should be formed so that their basic needs are met and they progressively get a share in the socio-political sphere of the state.

The means suggested by Gramsci for the organisation are also applicable for the subaltern classes in India. Their critical consciousness should be aroused so that they become aware of the exploitative situation around them and respond to it by collective action. "The development of class consciousness takes place in the immediate context of and in intimate relation with a social movement and within wider context of social historical transformation." (Saldanha EPW, 1988 p. pe-17) Referring to the 'passive' resistance of Gandhi, Gramsci says that "this type of struggle is suitable for a country that is technically disarmed and militarily inferior, being dominated by technically developed and superior countries." (Gramsci, quot. Misra 1991:221) He thus recognises the appropriateness of Gandhian method for the people of India, which can be extended to even the post-independent Indian situation. The role of intellectuals as propounded by Gramsci is also crucial for facilitating this social process among the people. This has been already found true from the experiences
of various movements and organisations of the poor organised by the educated youth all over India during the last few years. (Fernandes 1985, Kothari 1990)

Gramsci's idea of various types of councils and organisations and of the development of hegemony of civil society points to the great importance of people's organisations and associations. In India, the political parties are centred on state hegemony which is not sufficiently responsive to the hegemony of the subaltern classes. Therefore, the political parties by their very structural existence are not able to work for the radical transfer of hegemony to the masses. "In this sense the strategy of the working class in the West must be a strategy of 'anti-passive revoltution', that is we must realise and effect an active, democratic revolution in which the masses and not the state, play the fundamental role." (Mouffe 1979:13)

It is in this political context analysed by Gramsci that the role of non-party political organisations becomes relevant. The work of such organisations during the last two decades has had considerable impact on the subaltern groups in India. Fishworkers' movement in Kerala is such a non-political organisation. One of the aims of the present study is to examine the role of non-party political organisations for social change in India, in the light of the empirical study of the organisation and movement of the fishworkers' within the theoretical background of Antonio Gramsci.