



TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS AND WORLD POLITICS

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- The end of the Cold War and globalization have led to renewed interest in the study of transnational relations and the impact of non-state actors on world politics. Some authors praise the emergence of a global transnational civil society (Boli and Thomas, 1999; Held et.al., 1999), while others denounce an increasing transnational capitalist hegemony (Gill, 1995; Altvater and Mahnkopf, 2002).



- Both positions ascribe to non-state actors an extraordinary influence on outcomes in international politics. It is certainly true that transnational actors – from multinational corporations (MNCs) to international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) – have left their mark on the international system and that we cannot even start theorizing about the contemporary world system without taking their influence into account.



- 1) Why the non-state actors are important for a transnational world system?

- 2) Explain the Multinational Corporations as a transnational actor.



- Rather than analyzing transnational and interstate relations in zero-sum terms, however, it is more useful to study their interactions. This point concerns a shift in the study of transnational actors and world politics. Up to the early 2000s, the main thrust of scholarship on transnational actors focused on the question how and under what conditions non-state actors influenced international affairs in terms of *interstate* relations, be it international governmental institutions (IOs) or be it the interests or preferences of individual states, including major powers.



- 1) Discuss the interests of the major powers and the functioning of the transnational world system.
- 2) Is there any transnational structures independent from state interactions?
- 3) Why transnationalism is against an understanding of the world politics as a zero-sum game ?



- Currently, research is increasingly concerned with transnational governance, that is, the direct involvement in and contribution of non-state actors to rule-making, on the one hand, and the provision of collective goods, on the other hand. Transnational governance ranges from “governance with governments” (e.g., public–private partnerships [PPPs]) to “governance without governments” (e.g., private self-regulation; see Zürn, 2000, on these distinctions). This reflects a major departure from a still state-centered view according to which states are the only “governors” in international relations.



- What is governance ?
- Is there any chance for a viable model of governance in world politics ?
- Discuss the challenges of governance models toward State-centric approaches.



- Neither transnational relations nor theorizing about them started in the post-World War II era. Multinational corporations with dispersed investments and transnational production lines across several political jurisdictions date back at least to the medieval era. During the Renaissance era, “family businesses” such as the Medici in Florence or the Fugger in Augsburg held huge investments and production facilities across Europe and had agents in India and China by the end of the sixteenth century (Krasner, 1999, 221). From the sixteenth century on, the trading companies of the imperial powers such as the British East India Company and the Hudson Bay Company operated across continents (Held et al., 1999, 238–239).



- Make a research on the precursors of the transnational groups in history and discuss their similarities and differences with modern examples.

