THE CHIPKO MOVEMENT

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The canvass of the environmental movements in India is simply vast. In the eight-fold classification of the environmental movements that we have presented in the previous chapter following Andharia and Sengupta (1998), the forest and land based movements top the list. It is obvious, therefore, that the forest resources in particular and natural resources in general have become the sites of contestations between the marginalized livelihood communities and the developmental state, leading to the emergence of the environmental movements around the issues of natural resources. The contemporary era of world history contrasts the earlier ones in its immensely high rate of resource utilization pulled by intensifying industrial and agricultural production leading to a new pattern of resource utilization as opposed to the sustainable and limited pattern of indigenous modes of resource use. Moreover, the communities hitherto marginalized by the political dynamics of the Indian society have been put to further marginalization by the developmental state and its national project. Thus the conflicts over natural resources in general become manifest when the new patterns of resource use face challenges from the communities whose livelihoods are at stake, threatened by the destruction and over exploitation of their resources. These conflicts appear under the rubric of the environmental/ecological movements. Such movements have proliferated in India and elsewhere in the recent years.

India witnessed a radical shift in the pattern of resource use especially since the East India Company rule gradually coming down to the post - independent Indian nation state on the one hand, and, the state failed to remedy the perpetuating exploitation and marginalization of the marginal groups on the other, generating a series of people's movement against state failure to deliver social justice and its encroachment over people's livelihood resources, generating a deluge of discontent brewing in the minds of the communities so affected. As a result, several forest based environmental movements have been recorded in the

post-independent Indian history. Chipko is one major movement among such protest movements, which is built upon the state management of forest resources and their implications to the peoples' livelihood opportunities on the one hand, and the issue of exploitation of the local communities by dominant sections of the society outside the hills. The landscape of the movement represents a dialogical, agent-structural pattern of interaction between the state actions and the consequent peoples' responses in their struggle for securing their right to the sustainable livelihood resources in a given spatial-temporal specific.

In the sections that follow, a detailed study of the Chipko movement shall be presented. To this end, we shall begin our discussion in a narrative mode with a brief narration of the contextual background, evolutionary history, and the causes of the Chipko movement neatly presented under different heads. In the later part, we shall present an analytical discussion on the dynamism of and transformations in the Chipko movement as an environmental social movement.

5.2. THE CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

The Chipko movement originated in the Uttarakhand region. The Uttarakhand region is constituted of eight hill districts of Uttar Pradesh (presently in the newly created state of Uttaranchal) namely, Chamoli, Uttarkashi, Pithoragarh, Almora, Nainital, Dehra Dun, Pauri and Tehri (these districts have been slightly altered in present day Uttaranchal). It is a mountainous region with strikingly high mountains ranging from 1000 ft. to 25000 ft. above the mean sea level, and hardly with any visible stretch of plains. Populated mainly by Hindu and Aryan majority of Northern India with the exception of some small Tibeto-Mongoloid tribal groups of the Bhotias inhabiting the higher altitudes, Uttarakhand represents a unique geo-topographical characteristic with precipitous slopes, thin and fragile soils, and ample water and forests. Relatively an inaccessible land for outsiders, the Uttarakhand Himalayas had rich forests, which had long been central to the livelihood strategies of the mountain people. Terrace agriculture and animal husbandry constituted the dominant economic activity of the people. The forests provided essential inputs like leaf manure for farming, grazing and fodder for cattle, and fuel and foodstuff for household consumption, thereby meeting the basic subsistence needs of the local populace.

Given this situation, it is obvious that any encroachment to their livelihood resources was apt to generate resistances from the people.

The background of protest is provided by the degree of maldevelopment and deepening poverty and high level of illiteracy (see table 5.1 for details), and the continuous process of marginalization of the hill community.

Table 5.1
Literacy Rates in the Hill Districts of UP (1971)

District	Literacy (%)	Female Literacy (%)
Chamoli	28.13	9.00
Uttarkashi	28.13	4.89
Tehri Garhwal	19.05	4.34
Pauri	31.53	14.84
Pitoragarh	31.37	14.57
Almora	28.77	11.37
Naini Tal	32.51	21.05

Source: Tewari (1982).

A few simultaneous developments in the region ultimately led the people to protest. Firstly, the Indo-China border conflict of 1962 proved a landmark event in the ecological history of Uttarakhand in independent India. In its aftermath, an extensive network of roads was built throughout the region. Although the government's motive to this end was clearly military-strategic, yet it was big fallout for the region. The mountains weakened by the blasts during road construction witnessed a sudden opening to all kinds of traffic boosting not only the process of extraction of natural resources like timber and non-timber forest products, quarrying of lime stones and other minerals to feed the ambitious and profiteering entrepreneurial enterprises in the plains, but also the uncontrolled flow of pilgrims to the Hindu shrines of Kedarnath, Badrinath, Gangotri and Yamunotri. The increased traffic paved the way for the construction of concrete structures for hotels, restaurants and shops all throughout the pilgrimage routes. The rapid flowing rivers were too promptly recognized as sites for hydroelectric projects with a complete connivance at the seismic sensitivity (Uttarakhand region is said to be prone to seismic incidences owing to its very location, as has

been corroborated by the following table showing major earthquakes that have taken place over the years) of the region.

Table 5.2

Incidence of Major Earthquakes in Uttaranchal

Date	Year	Place	Measure (R. Scale)
22 May	1803	Uttarkashi	6.0
01 September	1803	Badrinath	9.0
28 May	1816	Gangotri	7.0
11 April	1843	Chamoli	5.0
14 February	1851	Nainital	5.0
14 May	1935	Lohaghat	7.0
02 October	1937	Dehradun	8.0
11 December	1943	Chamoli	5.0
28 December	1958	Chamoli/Darchula	6.25
06 September	1964	Darchula	5.3
27 July	1966	Kaphot	6.3
28 August	1968	Darchula	7.0
20 October	1991	Uttarkashi	6.6
29 March	1999	Chamoli	6.8

Source: Lokesh Nawani (2005). Uttaranchal Year Book 2005, Dehradun: Winsar Publications

All these activities and their cumulative impacts on nature amounted to a threatening disbalance of the Himalayan ecosystem, keeping at stake the survival of the people in the region.

On the other hand, the forest policy of both colonial and independent India was inimical to the livelihood opportunities of the people. Even with the collapse of the colonial structure the policy and praxis of resource use by the state continued along the colonial lines (Rawat: 1993) by designing the 1952 Forest Policy following the patterns of the Forest Policy of 1894, thereby reinforcing the state's right to exclusive control over forest resources and their management. The Forest Department resorted to the monoculture plantation of Chir Pine at the cost of far more productive trees for local agro-forestry (Singh: 1993). The commercial exploitation of forest by outside entrepreneurs with government approval resulted in indiscriminate felling of trees with devastating ecological consequences. The following Table shows the rate of deforestation in

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the region in the post-independent period up to the eruption of the Chipko Movement.

Table 5.3

### Rate of Deforestation over the Years

Sl. No.	Year of Felling	Block and No.		Area in acres
1.	1959-60	Dasholi	VIII-IX	6508
2.	1960-61	Mandakini	I	498
3.	1961-62	Mandakini	I	1659
4.	1962-63	Mandakini	I	1068
5.	1965-66	Dasholi	V	1872
6.	1966-67	Dasholi	VI	1500
7.	1967-68	Dasholi	VII	1421
8.	1968-69	Dasholi	VI	973
9.	1968-69	Dasholi	V	583

Source: C. P. Bhatt (1988). 'The Chipko Movement: Strategies, Achievements and Impacts' in S. S. Kunwar (ed.) Hugging the Himalayas: The Chipko Experience.

As a consequence of the rapid deforestation, among others, a notable fluctuation in the rainfall pattern was observed throughout the hilly region of Uttarakhand, and more specifically in the Joshimath area. The variation in the rainfall pattern in Joshimath area corresponding to the period immediately preceding the Chipko movement was so sharp that it indicated the ill effects of the process of rapid, commercial deforestation in the ecosystem of the region. The following figure highlights the changes in the rainfall pattern.

Figure 5.4

Graph Representing Rainfall Pattern in Joshimath over the Years
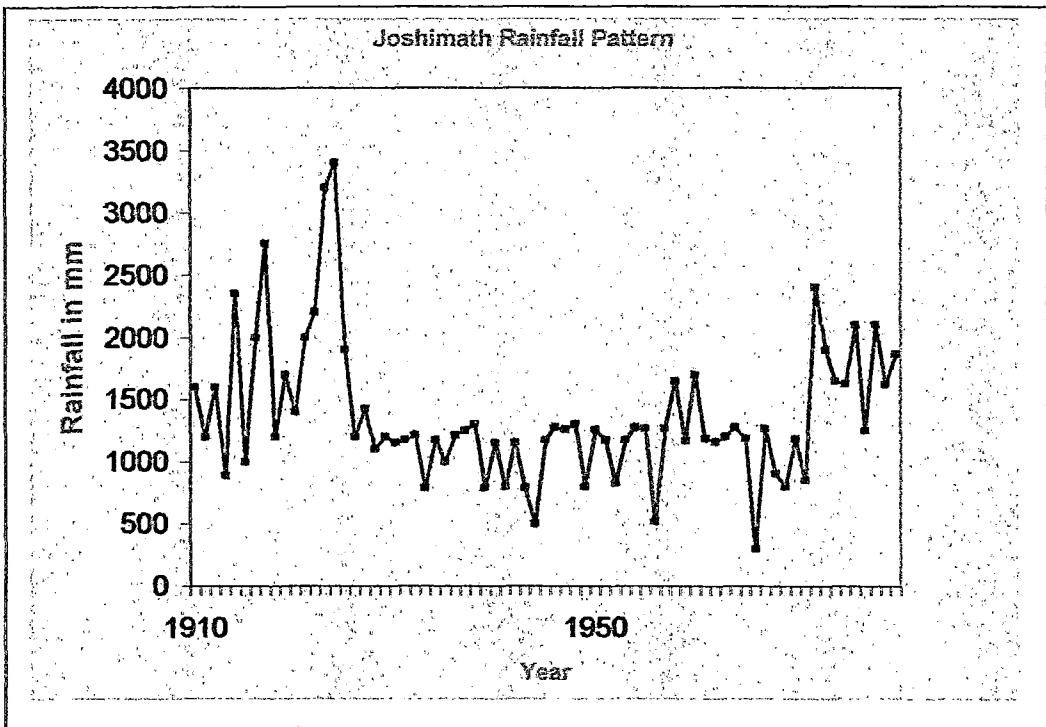
Source: N. Juyal, R. K. Pant and Omprakash Bhatt (1998). 'The Calamity Prone Central Himalayas: A Seminar Report', in The Calamity Prone Central Himalayas.

The figure above reveals the fact that the fag end of the colonial period and the entire period after independence up to the end of the 1960s experienced a decreased rainfall in Joshimath, which corresponds to the amount of increased deforestation during the said period. Moreover, the intensity of flood is said to have increased manifold in the period that corresponds to the commercial exploitation of forests in post-independence period. Although it as been acknowledged that it is difficult to correlate deforestation and flood incidents in the region, yet the people there feel that the intensity and magnitude of flood in the recent period (say the flood of 20 July 1970) is several times higher than the previous ones (say, of 1868 flood in the Alakananda River and the flood-led landslide of 1893 in the Birehiganga River). It is also contended that although there were rainfalls in the past higher than the normal (see the Chart above) yet the flood was less destructive vis-à-vis the July 1970 one, commercial deforestation, blast shock during road construction, and other construction and other activities may be held culprit behind the destructive nature of floods in the recent years. This angered the people against state's encroachment. The anger got

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a further impetus from the less analysed fact that the forest department and the private contractors who won the forest auctions preferred to employ cheap labour of the Nepalis and other migrants as against the local labour which was relatively expensive (Tucker: 1993); and little or no effort was made to set up processing stages in the hills for the timber and timber products (Rangam: 1996)- both against the employment interest of the hill people. Furthermore, it was perceived that the encroachment by the state via its forest department into the local community's livelihood resources and the department's forest practices were ecologically degrading (Mishra and Tripathi: 1978), a perception that was strongly reinforced by a series of disastrous floods in the region in the first half of the 1970s (Pathak: 1994). The combined effects of all these factors stimulated the people to rise to resistance in the form of a protest movement, which later came to be designated as a Chipko Movement.

5.3. THE MOVEMENT: WHAT IS IN A NAME?

The name of the Movement, that is, 'Chipko' comes from the word 'embrace' in Hindi. It is said that the villagers hugged or embraced or stuck to the trees in the forest to prevent them from being felled by the contractors. It is reported that the strategy of 'embracing' the trees to resist the felling of the trees was thought of by Chandi Prasad Bhatt in a meeting in the Mandal on April 1st, 1973. This strategy is said to have been agreed to after a deliberation which had to decide a method of resisting the axe-men from the felling of trees in the forests keeping in consonance wit the Gandhian ideology of non-violence as the entire programme was being espoused by the Sarvodaya workers (Dangwal: 1998). Thus the name 'Chipko' was derived from the consensual strategy of clinging on to the trees as a non-violent direct action.

Although the Chipko movement was experienced in the Uttarakhand Hills in the 1970s, historically, the Chipko movement is also said to have derived its name from a similar protest against the native king Ajit Singh of Jodhpur and his soldiers' attempt to take away the trees from the forest of Khejarli, a Bisnoi village in Rajasthan for use in the construction of a palace in 1731 (Dwivedi: 1988; Bijlwand: 1988). This movement was led by Amrita Devi in which around 363 people sacrificed their lives for the protection of their forests. This

movement was the first of its kind to have developed the strategy of hugging or embracing the trees for their protection spontaneously (Dwivedi: 1988; Bijlwand: 1988; Dangwal: 1998; Albert: 2003; Karnik: 2005).

But the proponents of the Chipko movement deny the Khejarli incident to be the historical antecedent of the Chipko movement. For instance, on June 18, 1989 in a meeting at the office of the Dasholi Gram Swarajya Mandal (DGSM) in Gopeswar, Chipko leader Chandi Prasad Bhatt categorically denied any link of the Chipko movement with the Khejarli incident and clarified that the Chipko movement had its independent and spontaneous birth in Uttarakhand and therefore it is wrong to take the incident as a source of inspiration or an appreciative reference point whatsoever for the present Chipko movement.

However, we do not engage here to suggest that the Chipko Movement of Uttarakhand has a historical link with the Khejarli movement; nor is it, unlike Guha (1989) and Dangwal (1998), to suggest that the Chipko movement had no connection whatsoever with the Khejarli incident. Recognizing the complexity that quite often than not stories become history, and history becomes folk history rendering it difficult at times to unravel the threads, we propose that probably the story could have had provided a solution in deciding the strategy of protest that would be effective and non-violent as dictated by the necessities of sarvodaya ideology and practice.

Whatsoever be in its name and strategy, the Chipko Movement is one of the best known, most studied environmental struggles that dot the Indian landscape (See for example, Bhatt and Kunwar: 1982; Das and Negi: 1983; Weber: 1987, 1988; Guha: 1989; Shiva: 1991; Shiva and Bandyopadyay: 1986, 1987; Mitra: 1993; Rangam: 1993, 1996, Rangam and Garb: 1996; Tiwari: 1997; Mawdsley: 1998). It is one of the first and frequently cited environmental movements of Independent India to attract global attention, and hence marks a watershed in the history of Indian environmentalism. It has taken an iconic status, seen as an inspiring example of local action against the alienating and destructive incursions of the modern developmental state (Redclift: 1987; Ekins: 1992; Escobar: 1995).

5.4. THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF THE CHIPKO MOVEMENT

It has been observed that there is a difference of opinion among the academicians, activists, leaders and the masses about the exact date of the origin of the Chipko movement. For instance, whereas the sarvodaya camp and its followers in Tehri Garhwal where Sunderlal Bahuguna took the leadership tell one story about the first incident of the Chipko movement, a diametrically opposed view is held by those in and around Gopeswar where Chandi Prasad Bhatt led the movement. Moreover, Kiran Dangwal (1998) shows that the local people, who were themselves the activists of the movement, differed significantly about the exact date of origin of the movement.

Although the date of the first Chipko incidence, as according to the most agreed position, is that the first Chipko action took place spontaneously in April 1973 in the village of Mandal in the upper Alakananda Valley in present day Uttaranchal (Jain: 1984; Weber: 1987; Bhatt: 1988; Shepard: 1988; Joshi: 1988; Guha: 1989; Dangwal: 1998; Pahari: 1988, 2005). However, some studies have located the yet earlier incidences of the Chipko movement. For example, Kunwar Prasun (2005) points out that the first rally protesting against the forest laws in Uttarakhand was brought out in Purola Bazar of Uttarkashi district on 11 December 1972. On 12 December of the same year another demonstration was launched in Uttarkashi town to this effect.

Thus there arises a difficulty in locating the first incidence of the Chipko and its date of occurrence. Hence, it constitutes a matter of further research. However, if we take the Mandal incidence (because of the consensual nature of the date with a few scholars agreeing to it) as the first Chipko movement to have taken place, it is held that the movement was sparked off by the government's decision to allot a plot of forest area in the Alakananda Valley to sports goods Company called the Symonds Company. This angered the villagers because their similar demand to use wood for making agricultural tools had been denied by the government earlier. With an encouragement from a local non-governmental organization called the Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh (DGSS), the villagers, chiefly women led by Sarvodayee Chandi Prasad Bhatt of the DGSS went to the

forest, embraced the trees and prevented them from being felled by the axe-man. Thus, the movement directed against the commercial logging in the Hills was born. However, it needs to be pointed out here that the incident of hugging trees has been controversial. During our field visits, despite sincere attempts, it was not possible for us to meet a single person who actually hugged the trees in early 1970s, and hence it remained far from being confirmed by the present study.

5.5. THE MOVEMENT AND ITS COURSE

The Chipko movement was sparked off by the government's decision to allot a plot of forest area in the Alakananda Valley to sports goods Company called the Symonds Company. The first Chipko action (as has been pointed out elsewhere in the foregoing discussion), is said to have taken place on 24 April 1973 in the village of Mandal (the description of the movement in greater detail has been presented in the earlier portions), although there have been differences of opinion as well (see for example, Prasun: 2005) in the upper Alakananda Valley in present day Uttaranchal. This movement set the ball rolling for the subsequent Chipko actions in the entire region. This is taken as the first Chipko protest because in the earlier ones, the name 'Chipko' was not used. It was in this that the term 'Chipko' was used for the first time.

Immediately after this it was learnt by the organizers of the Chipko movement that the Symonds Company had been allotted a new set of ash trees in the forest in Rampur Phata by the government (Shepard: 1988). The sarvodaya workers from Gopeswar under Bhatt's leadership rushed to the area, explained the people about the plans of the Symonds Company, and prepared the people for a Chipko Movement. The villagers formed an action committee and watched the approach to the forest and prevented the company from felling trees there. Bhatt organized a meeting where the company representatives were invited to present their opinion. The agents tried to intimidate the people with threats and insults but to no avail. However, immediately after the meeting a rumor was spread that the government was showing a movie to the people that night in a nearby town. People rushed to the town in the evening just to find that the film had been cancelled. However, there were no vehicles for the people to go back home. When they reached Rampur village they heard that axe-men were going

towards the forest. However, when the villagers marched towards the forest in a Chipko protest with bands, the labourers and agents had already gone away, felling a couple of trees. The villagers guarded the felled trees for some days. The company's permit finally expired and hence the movement too came to an end.

The Chipko action that took place in Reni is another event of historic importance in the chronological history of the movement. On March 26, 1974 a movement took place in Reni where it was led by Gaura Devi. This part of the Chipko movement was launched against the auction that granted a commercial company the permit the company to fell the trees in the sensitive area of Reni. A series of meetings were held at Joshimath and Tapovan and the proposal of holding a Chipko Movement in Reni was decided. People had agreed to this because they did not want their forest to be felled. It was also deliberately decided in the meetings that Gaura Devi would lead the movement. There, Mahila Mangal Dal was formed primarily for the Chipko Movement. But what had happened was that on that very day, that is, 26 March 1974, the people of Reni were called to Chamoli by the local administration to receive their compensation for the land that they had lost to army during the Chinese invasion. This was deliberately to avoid the men from being there in Reni to facilitate the contractors to fell the trees. All men folk were in Chamoli and this opportunity was taken by the Company to send the contractors and axe-men to fell the trees in Reni. However, the women of Reni under the able leadership of Goura Devi prevented the labourers from felling the trees with their Chipko Protests. After the Reni Chipko, in June 1975, women launched another Chipko movement in Gopeswar against the growing pressure of the Gopeswar Township.

This was followed by another long protest lasting for around four months in Chanchridhar in Almora district in 1977-1978. Again in 1978 itself in the lower reaches of te world famous Valley of Flowers, the Bhyunder Valley women resorted to Chipko to save their forest which was being cut to supply fuel wood to the holy shrine of Badrinath. In 1979, the Chipko activists protested against the tree felling by the Forest Department in Jola- Kalyani situated in the Pindar Valley.

In the early 1980s, there was another Chipko movement in Dhungri-Paintoli village in Pindar valley. In Dhungri Paintoli, the Horticulture department of the Government decided to clear fell the Oak forest and convert the area into a farmland for the potato and apple farming. The Gaon Panchayat of the area, which consisted of all male members, also had accepted the proposal willingly. Then the women felt that if their forest is clear felled, it will consequently make the life of the women more difficult. Hence, on the question of women's share in decision-making on questions of environment and forests, the women put up a brave protest to save their oak forest from being replaced by an orchard.

However, in the recent years the symbolic '*tree hugging*' strategy gradually disappeared with the ban on commercial tree felling. However, the focus of the activists shifted to the realization of women's empowerment and eco-development strategies as parts of the Chipko strategy of strengthening traditionally practiced harmonious man-nature relationship. Such activities are carried out even today by the Chipko activists and more particularly by the Dasholi Gram Swarajya Mandal.

From the brief overview of the environmental movements in India (Chapter 5, section 4.2.) and from the discussion on the course of the Chipko movement it is revealed that the environmental movements have been influenced in their course by the factors like culture, history etc in their respective structural contexts and tat they have shifted their stances in relation to the objectives, demands, and strategies, culminating in the transformation of the nature of the movement itself. Hence, in the sections that follow, we have attempted a detailed discussion on the various structural factors and agencies that form the various parameters of the movement, their interplay and the resultant dynamism and transformations in the environmental movements.

5.6. MOVEMENT PARAMETERS AND MOVEMENT DYNAMISM

The Chipko movement has been variously interpreted by researchers and scholars. Guha (1989) argues that the movement was basically an agrarian movement against commercial forestry in Uttarakhand. Some (Raghunandan: 1987) interpret the movement as a fight by the local people against te forest department for entitlement to forest resources which people felt belonged to

them. Shobita Jain (1984) calls it a feminist movement; and yet others like Vandana Shiva and J. Bandyopadhyay (1986) view the Chipko movement clearly as an environmental movement for saving the ecology of Garhwal. Lawrence Cox (1999) has argued that the established perspectives on social movements operate with an inadequately narrow conception of the 'object' that is being studied and thus tends to 'reify' "movements" as usual activity against essentially static backgrounds, and in its place, he advocates a concept of social movement as the more or less developed articulation of situated rationalities. The aforementioned interpretations of the Chipko movement, as they appear, tend to ignore the dynamic aspect of the movement by analyzing them as operating in essentially static backgrounds. Following Cox, therefore, the movement needs to be studied as articulation of situated rationalities by perceiving it as a tactical, dialectical response to the harsh realities of the political system. This would help us capture the essential dynamic and transformative aspects of the movement.

Environmental movements, like any social movement, have a life course. The movements are, therefore, dynamic and transform in course of their origin and development till their demise. By the dynamics of the environmental movements, we mean the progressive changes that take place in the goals and strategies of these movements, culminating in its transformation to a newer form with a new set of objectives and strategies. As the movement endures and grows, the objectives and strategies change- they are likely to become broader (generally) and hence more vague than they were at the beginning. A movement moves owing to the strategic relational interactions between its structural elements and agencies, which are the actors in the movement. In other words, the goals of the movement change in relation to the dialectical agent-structural interactions with the society, state and institutions. And, it goes without saying that the strategy and changes in it not only reflect the changes in the objectives of the movement, but are also strongly influenced by the relationship of the movement to the larger society and other movements as well. Hence, as a collectivity, the environmental movement is characterized by an emergent social structure and culture. The social structure is reflected in the relationship between the leaders and followers. The culture of the movement encompasses both norms-that is, the standardized expectations of behaviour developed by the members of the movement, and

values, which include programme-the scheme of change, and ideology- a body of ideas justifying the programme and strategy of the movement.

Thus the social-structural elements like caste, religion, culture, history and institutional changes in their interactions with the agencies like the supporters, activists, leaders, political parties, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) produce a dynamism and transformation in the movement. This dynamism and transformation affects the state, the society and their interrelationships as well, in turn bringing about a desired social reform in the form of a change in public policy etc. Since the environmental movement continued to move, grow, change and promote change since its inception, the exercise that follows attempts an analysis of the interactions of structural parameters and the agencies of the movement and the consequent transformations of the movement in its life course, affecting the domain of public policy and hence social reform.

It is the movement dynamism that leads to shifts and transformations in the movement. The dynamism of the movement is produced by the dialectical interaction of the movement with the different parameters of the movement. Let us briefly explore the different parameters of the movement, both agencies (like Parties, NGOs, Leaders etc) and structural (relational such as caste relations and religious affiliations, embedded such as cultural and historical legacies, institutional such as international environmental agreements, legal and constitutional framework etc).

Thus the dynamics of the Chipko movement over the last-thirty years or so produced by the parameters of the movement and the changes thereof, its gradual evolution and metamorphosis, the state response to the movement and movement dynamics at different stages of the movement, and the broader impacts of the public perceptions of the movement have been discussed below.

5.6.1. Caste and Religious affiliations and Movement Dynamics

Gadgil and Guha (1992) see the caste system as a form of ecological adaptation. Contrarily, from the perspective of movement analysis, we believe that if there is a hierarchical social order based on exploitation, the obvious

differences that germinate between those belonging to different strata of the hierarchy is likely to mar the efficiency of mobilization. In other words, we believe that the structural relational factors like caste cleavages and religious differences are likely to bear an impact on the movement organization and mobilization. Hence we explored the influence of these social structural elements and their impact on the movement first through secondary research, followed by interviews and attitude scaling of the people who were associated with mobilizing for the movement.

The attitudinal scaling on the question showed the following: Some 50% of the respondent felt that caste cleavages and religious differences have made some impact on the movement; but another about 40% of the respondents had to say that these social factors had no influence whatsoever on the movement and its course (see figure 5.6 below for details).

Figure 5.5
Attitude Types on the Statement: Caste and Religious affiliations have influenced the Movement and its Course
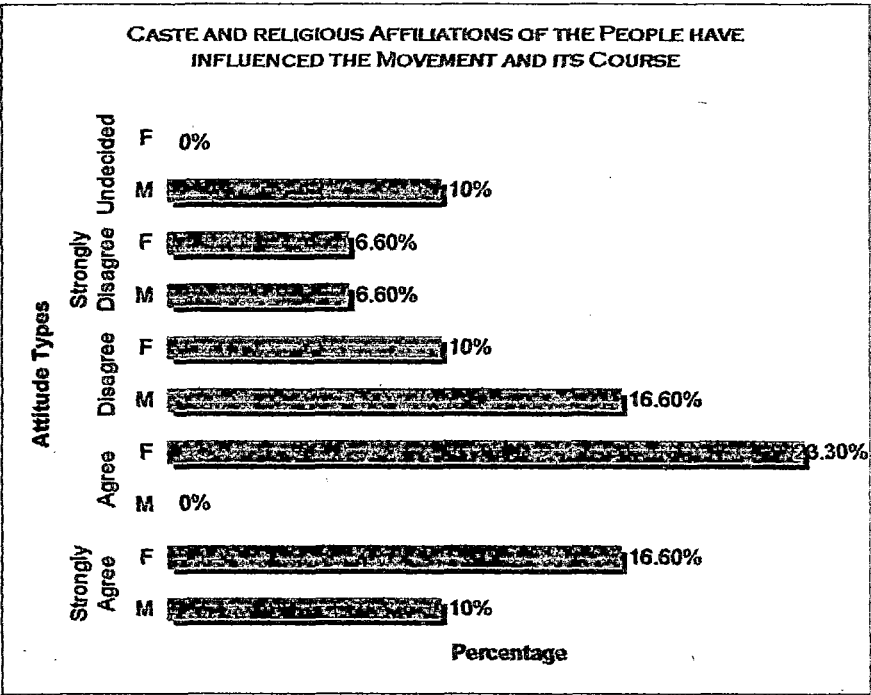
This gave us the impression that the socio-religious differences might have had a significant impact on the movement. Hence, to retest the findings, we

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took on to the analysis of the Census data and also to the interviews conducted on the movement with the movement activists, media persons etc.

A brief look at the census figures on the population structure of the region in terms of the population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and their proportion to the total population of the region shows that the region is predominantly inhabited by upper castes Hindu population, with hardly twenty percent of the population belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Communities. The people of Uttarkhand comprise basically of two indigenous groups. First are the Hindu and a few Muslim subsistence farmers, artisans and other service castes and specialist castes who live in the lower Himalayas (up to about 7,000 feet above sea level) and who speak an Indo-Aryan language closely related to the Hindi of the plains but not mutually intelligible with it. These people and their language are referred to as 'Pahari'. The Hindu population includes two closely allied landowning high castes, the Brahmin farmers and priests and the Rajput farmers, who comprise 8 percent and 68 percent of the population, respectively (Berreman, 1983), and Scheduled castes, who comprise 16.8 percent of the rural population (Singh, 1983). Second, and much less in number, are the Tibetan-speaking Buddhist farmers, herdsmen and traders who live at higher elevations and generally to the north, called Bhotiya, who are the Scheduled Tribes.

Hence, the lower castes and tribal groups form a very small fraction of the total population of Uttarakhand. The district wise breakup of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population and their proportion to total population would provide us with some insights on the possible impact of caste on the movement in the region. The Table below gives us a bird's eye view of the population structure in the region (See figure below for details).

The Proportion of SC and ST Population to Total Population in the Eight Hill Districts of UP, which presently forms the Uttaranchal State.

District	Total Population	Scheduled Caste (SC) Population	% of SC Population to Total Population	Scheduled Tribe (ST) Population	% of ST Population to Total Population
Uttarkashi	239709	54594	22.77	2300	0.95
Chamoli	454871	79572	17.49	10273	2.25
Tehri Garhwal	580153	82384	14.20	615	0.10
Dehra Dun	1025679	137464	13.40	84876	8.27
Garhwal	682535	92261	13.51	1502	0.22
Pithoragarh	566408	115832	20.45	18313	3.23
Almora	836617	184237	22.02	2739	0.32
Naini Tal	1540174	243314	15.79	12660	0.82
TOTAL	5926146	989658	16.69	133278	2.4

Constructed on the Basis of State Primary Census Abstract for SCs and STs, Census of India 1991

However, in the areas where the Chipko movement was active, for instance, in Uttarkashi, Tehri Garhwal and Chamoli region, the population of the scheduled castes communities somewhere between 14 to nearly 23 percent. Our interviews wit the movement activists revealed that the hill community believed in caste-based differences. For instance, Ramesh Pahari, spokesperson of the Chipko movement associated with the DGSS explained,

"From our heart and mind, we want to do away with the caste differences in our society. But no one has the courage to begin the process from one's home. We may share bread together, but when it comes to the question of marriage and social relations, things are not easy; people are not ready to accept inter-caste marriages" (Personal Interview with Pahari).

But when we come to the question of movement mobilizations, theactivists interviewe held tht the movement was not influenced adversely despite caste divisions prevalent in the region. In this connection, Pahari says,

"However, in the course of the movement the caste hierarchy and difference, which is quite rigid here, had no impact on mobilization of the movement whatsoever. This is because of the ideology of Sarvodaya, which bound together all the activists. Therefore, caste factor had no impact the movement and its course" (Personal Interview with Pahari).

Yet the movement was not adversely impacted by the caste factor primarily because of the movements' ideological orientations Gandhian Sarvodaya, which treats every one as equals. This is what Murarilal, another activist who belonged to the Scheduled Caste community also opined. According to him,

We are the Sarvodaya Brothers. You know, we, Bhattji, Chakradharji, Shishupalji, myself, and many others used to sit and eat together. We, bound by the ideology of Sarvodaya, are all equals. The food that was prepared was common for all…" (Personal Interview with Murarilal).

From this it is evident that the results we obtained through the attitude scaling pertained to a very small group of respondents, spread over a large part of the region, and that, it might not clearly reveal the true nature of the affect of caste factor on movement dynamics. Contrarily, the group of the activists we interviewd comprised of high caste people like Ramesh Pahari, Sanjay Kothiyal, Chakradhar Tiwari on the one hand and like Shishupal singh Kunwar and Muralilal who belonged to the lower caste groups on the other. The interviews with all these people assert the single idea that caste differences existed but the people rose above the caste differences, united by the Gandhian ideology of Sarvodaya, in their protests against exploitation and marginalization of the Hill people and the denial of their customary rights over their livelihood resources. Hence, as revealed from our interviews, observations and the census data, we realized that there were at least three factors that eased the movement in its mobilizations despite caste differences. First, in all those districts where the movement was active, the scheduled caste groups comprised in an average less than twenty percent of the total population. Secondly, the movement adopted a

predominantly Gandhian ideology which acted as a social leveler, cutting across caste boundaries. Thirdly, it was also observed that the movement emerged against the deprivation of the peoples' usufructus rights over the forest resources, which affected everybody irrespective of the caste differences. Thus, every individual saw the movement as a vehicle through which they would restore their customary rights over their livelihood resources. Hence, the present researcher is under the impression that the movement was not so much affected adversely by the caste differences prevailing in the region. However, a rigorous further research to this end, focusing exclusively on the caste affiliations and its impact on movement dynamics may reveal the magnitude of impact of caste on movement and its dynamics, which, of course, is beyond the scope of the present study.

The region is a multi religious one, inhabited by people belonging to different religious denominations. However, a majority of the population of the region belongs to Hinduism.This is because the non-hindu tribal groups form a very small fraction of the population, occupying the northernmost part of the region bordering Tibet; and other religious groups, specially the Jains, Sikhs, and Muslims are spread mostly in the urban and semi urban areas. The Table below shows the population of different religious groups in different districts/tehsils of Uttaranchal.

Table: 5.7

Religious Distribution of Uttaranchal Population

Religion	Persons				Total
	Rural		Urban		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Hindu	2717064	2785304	929496	780396	7212260
Muslims	332066	293866	207674	178535	1012141
Christians	5885	5498	7948	7785	27116
Sikhs	82566	75524	29157	24778	212025
Buddhists	4753	3488	2239	1954	12434
Jains	579	503	4212	3955	9249
Others	275	225	162	108	770

Source:
Constructed on the Basis of the Basic Population Data, Census of India, 2001

As in the case of caste differences, neither was the movement affected adversely by whatever little religious differences that exists in the population. This owes primarily to the fact that the bulk of the society in Uttaranchal belongs to the Hindu religious denomination (see the table above for details). This was also corroborated by pur interview with Shri ramesh Pahari, the spokesperson of the movement. Explaining the role played by the rligious differentiation in the movement, Pahari added,

"...On the religious front basically most of the people of the region are Hindus. There are a few Muslim fundamentalists but they did not have any negative feeling towards the movement organization and movement mobilizations. Hence, although there may be some negligible amount of religious differences in the population, it had no impact on movement and its course" (Personal Interview with Ramesh Pahari, May 2005).

Hence, the present study developed the impression that there were caste and religious differences in the Uttaranchal population, which, however, did not have much of its impact in the movement and its course, because of the factors like the issue raised by the movement to which every inhabitant of the Hill was concerned, because of the negligible amount of the scheduled castes and tribes population, because of the region being dominated by the hindu population and because, above all, the movement's ideological orientation to Gandhian Sarvodaya, which saw everyone as a member of a family and acted as a cementing force, cutting across caste and religious differences.

5.6.2. Influence of Cultural and Historical Legacies and movement Dynamics

Analysis of culture helps explain why certain ritual acts are successful in mobilizing the environmental movement while others are not. In addition, cultural analysis reveals how discourses and ritualisation impacts the solidarity, identity and consciousness of movement participants, which also helps explain why a movement is successful (Hsiao, et al: 1999). It is useful to invoke Norgaard's (1994) proposition of co evolution in which he describes development as a mutually interactive co evolutionary process between a social

system and its environmental system. The co- evolutionary theory emphasizes that the key to sustainable development is not simply a matter of choosing different technology for intervening in the environment, but also the mechanism of perceiving, choosing and using technique that are embedded in culture and social structure. This theoretical perspective is often applied in examining the environmental movements using cultural symbols, etc. as it argues that cultural production in the form of using cultural symbols and construction of identities and the creation of new meanings and values play an important instrumental role in facilitating the movements. Finally, the social movements are shaped by broad set of political constraints and opportunities unique to the given context in which they are embedded. This perspective also contends that cultural production in environmental movement also takes a transformational role by facilitating the internationalization and values at the local level. Through actions involving activists, residents and outsiders, these new values have been constructed and reinforced. Thus, it becomes imperative to explore the role of ·culture in movement mobilization and its successes and failures, which we attempted in the present study.

The entire of the Garhwal Himalayas is an abode of cultural diversity. Culture seems to have played a significant role in the Chipko Movement. The Chipko people believed that the trees were living and breathing carbon dioxide, the same as they were. In essence, the trees should be respected. The extensive forests were central to the successful practice of agriculture and animal husbandry. In addition, medicinal herbs were used for healing powers. The hill people believed that the jungle of fruit, vegetables or roots were used as aids in the times of scarity. The dependence of the hill peasant on forest resources was institutionalized through a variety of social and cultural mechanisms. Through religion, folklore and oral tradition, the forests were protected by rings of love. Specially in Kumaon region, hilltops were dedicated to local deities and the trees around the spot regarded with great respect. Many wooded areas were not of spontaneous growth and bore marks of the hillfolk's instinct for the plantation and preservation of the forest; indeed the spacious wooded areas extending over the mountain ranges and hill sides testimony to the care bestowed upon them by the successive generations of the Kumaunies.

Particularly in eastern Kumaun and around temples, deodar plantations are preserved. Hindus consider this magnificent tree superior to most trees. In such sacred groves, the traditonal form of forest preservation, and one found all over India, no villager would injure the vegetation in any way. In parts of Tehri, leaves are offered to the goddess known as *Patna Devi*. This is only one example of the Hindu's fascination of vegetation association with gods. According to one elder man, in the Ton's valley, roots the peasantry's food during times of scarcity are used only during culturally specified times to inhibit overexploitation. Although the sacredness exemplified in the preservation of the forest, it was also the informal management practices regulated the utilization of forest produce by the community.

Having this pre-understanding of the hill peoples' cultural ethos relating to forest conservation, we conducted the attitude scaling of some thirty people in connection with the role of culture in movement dynamics. Our analysis of the attitude pattern of the respondents on the role played by culture in the Chipko movement reveals the following results (see figure 5.8 below):

Figure 5.8
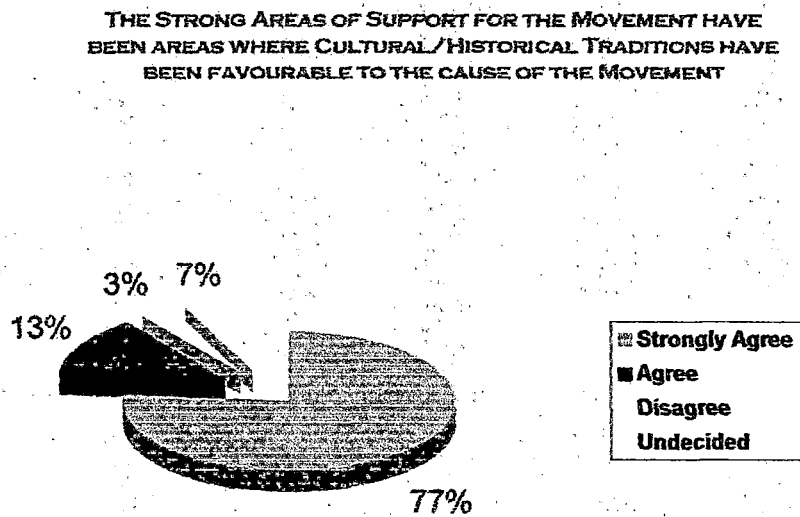**Attitude Types on the Statement: Culture and History has Shaped the Movement and its Course**

CULTURE AND HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE AND THE REGION HAS SHAPED THE MOVEMENT AND ITS COURSE
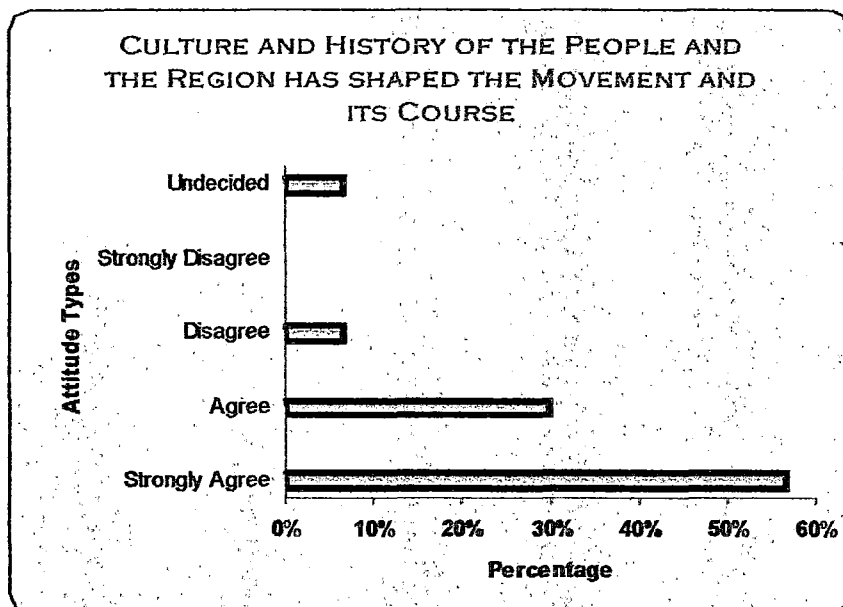
The figure above points out that the people feel that the embedded factors like culture and history of the people have shaped, the movement positively. The positive impact of the local culture on the movement was further corroborated by the interview with Ramesh Pahari. To quote Pahari:

"During the movement, the culture had its impact. Women, who were the chief actors of the movement, said that forests are their 'Maika' (Parent's House) from where a daughter derives helps to solve their problems and make a good living and that is why we are trying to save the forests. There is also a tradition here in the hills to worship the trees and the water sources. Thus the movement was positively influenced by the local culture and traditions" (Personal Interview, May 2005).

Similarly, history of the region is a history of protests. The entire of the Garhwal and Kumaon Himalayas have seen protests of different kinds both in the pre-independent period as well as after independence. Some notable movements in the history of the region prior to the Chipko Movement include the 1857 uprising, the forest uprising in Chandrabadni (1906-07), the Rawain protests (1927-28), the Tehri Movement of 1946, the Saklana Uprising (1946-47), and the Kirtinagar Movement of (1948), and the Anti-Alcohol Movement (some of these movements have been briefly discussed below). Most of these movements have emanated from the feeling of relative deprivation by the people of the region vis-à-vis their counterparts in the plains. Thus, the culture of protests is historically engrained in the minds of the people, and it is this internalization of the protest culture by the people, which helped the Chipko to emerge as a strong protest with a wide support base of the masses. This may be further corroborated by the following findings from the attitude scaling:

Figure 5.9
Attitude Types on the Statement: The Strong Areas of Support have been where Cultural and Historical Traditions have been Favourable.

THE STRONG AREAS OF SUPPORT FOR THE MOVEMENT HAVE BEEN AREAS WHERE CULTURAL/HISTORICAL TRADITIONS HAVE BEEN FAVOURABLE TO THE CAUSE OF THE MOVEMENT

3% 7%

13%

Strongly Agree
Agree
Disagree
Undecided

77%

The Chipko Movement lies in a path of continuity with the earlier forest based struggles in Uttarakhand. Shivaramakrishnan (1995) is of the opinion that forests in India are at the centre of highly charged conflicts. Use of the past by different historical subjects engaged in these contests over forestlands in India results in several threads intertwined across a shared frame. Therefore, a proper analysis of the dynamics and transformations of any forest based conflict, and for that matter, the Chipko movement necessitates situating of the movement in a broader historical perspective of forest conflicts in the region. This is because the Uttarakhand region has historically been a terrain of forest resistances and uprisings since the precolonial days. Ramachandra Guha (1989) neatly presents a series of struggles by the people of the region asserting their forest rights, by invoking the concept of 'dhandak', a right to revolt traditionally sanctioned by custom. Instead of delving into the concept of dhandak which is beyond the scope of the present work, we shall quickly explore, although very briefly, the

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chronological history of forest uprisings by the people in the region as a result of the state interference in the arena of forests that is regarded as the village communal property by the local inhabitants. These protests were intimately tied to the history of forest and forest management itself, and therefore, throw some light on the dialectics of state-movement interactions in the evolution of newer forest management and regulations regimes and the livelihood rights of the people. Hence, a cursory reference to the historical antecedents of the movements is necessitated by the purpose of the study, which attempts to explore the dynamism and transformations of the movement.

The history of forest and forest management in Uttarakhand in general and in Tehri Garhwal in particular prior to 1840 is shrouded in oblivion. The commercially motivated forest management began with the then Maharaja of Tehri Garhwal state leasing out his forests to some Wilson on a paltry *'nazrana'* or gift, who acquired the right of exploiting forest produce like musk, munal, hides of wild animals and timber. Although the first lease ended in 1850, it was renewed the same year for just an amount of Rupees four hundred per annum. Wilson ventured the massive commercial exploitation of forest resources particularly timber to feed the growing needs of wooden sleepers for the rapidly growing railways under the British colonial administration in the plains. The figure 5.10 below shows the trend of expansion of the Indian railways since its inception to the early 1900s. This is expected to give a birds eye view of the timber demand by railway expansion acting as a *'pull factor'* for the commercial exploitation of the forests in the region which led to the deprivation of the people to their local resources and develop in them a sense of derivation, helping the movement to emerge and develop. The commercial exploitation of the Uttarakhand forests for the expansion of railways also implies that the region had been continuously drained off its resources to leave the population all the more marginalized in terms of economic benefits accruing of such resources.

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Figure 5.10

Expansion of Railways over the Years
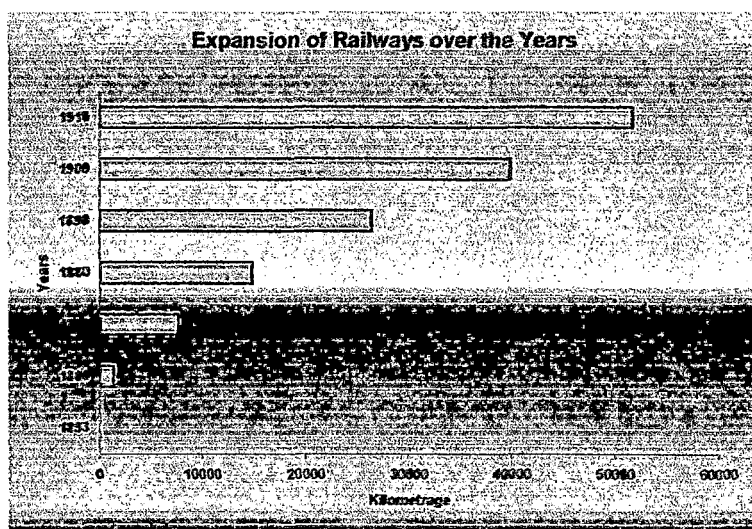
Constructed on the basis of the figures obtained from 'History of Indian Railways', Government of India, Delhi (1964), p. 214

The information provided above on the expansion of Indian railways makes sense in the present context in that what was happening in the forestry sector with the colonial intrusion was to some extent a manifestation of the larger orientalist colonial project of constructing India as knowable by representation, laying down taxonomic structures to represent biotic communities. The consequent massive development projects materialized in railway expansion, resulting in extensive deforestation (Witcombe: 1972) and the consequent alienation of the forest dwellers from their forest rights, was a process that continued throughout the colonial era and even in its aftermath, producing disharmony not only between man and man but between man and nature, ultimately to generate conflicts as manifested in the Chipko movement.

Wilson's lease finally expired in 1964 after which, immediately in 1865, Maharaja Bhawani Shah leased his forests of the Gangotri valley at a rate of Rupees ten thousand a year to the British government for twenty years. In these forests the people had become slaves of the forest department. To stop this oppression, the then native king Pratap Shah took back a part of the leased forest in 1885. However, much like under the colonial management, the forest management under the Raja too produced similar results as regards peoples' access to forest produce and pastures. Since a significant contribution to the revenue of the Tehri durbar came from the rich forests, the Raja introduced the

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measures of stricter forest conservancy modeled on the British colonial forest management system, inviting resistances from the Rawain pargana of northwestern Tehri. This was the first incidence of forest uprising in the Tehri Garhwal region. However, the demise of Pratap Shah compelled the people to end up their resistance for forest rights (Negi: 1947).

The second recorded forest uprising is said to have occurred around 1904 in the Patti of Khujni to the south of Tehri. In this incident, heavy taxes were levied by the government on cattle for which the forests were the main source of fodder. As the people refused to pay these excessive and unjustified levies, they were inhumanly treated by the government. Thus the people resented against it through a protest assaulting the then conservator of forests Keshavanand Mamgain and his staff. Immediately following this was the Chandrabadni movement.

Chandrabadni uprising took place sometimes in 1906-1907. It is said that on 27 December 1906, the forests surrounding the Chandrabadni temple about 14 miles away from the Tehri town were being inspected by Pandit Sadanand Gairola who had succeeded Mamgain as a conservator of forests, for bringing them under reservation. The same day, about 200 villagers armed with sticks assembled at the camping ground where the official tents were pitched and objected to state interference in the forests over which they claimed full and extensive rights. They attacked the forest conservator for introducing forest regulations infringing upon their right to access to the forest resources. However, the fire of discontent died down soon following the armed assistance the Raja got from the British government to quell the rebellion.

Rawain Incident of 1930 is one of the most talked about forest uprisings in pre-independent India. It is said that in 1927-28, the village folk of pargana Rawain reinvented the Rawain incident as an opposition to the new forest settlements developed based on the recommendations of the German expert Franz Heske. The new forest settlement further restricted peoples' customary rights in forests in sharp contrast to the extravagant spending in the durbar. The prescriptions of the settlement are said to been such to disallow a family from keeping more than 10 heads of sheep, one cow and one buffalo, and taxes were levied on herds exceeding the prescribed limits. Moreover, very little wasteland had been left outside the reserved forests for the villagers to meet their needs. This brewed discontent in the minds of the people; fuel to the fire was added by

a ban on puppy cultivation, leading to the eruption of the resistance under the leadership of Baij Ram. They rejected the new forest limits and on 20 May 1930 put fire to a part of the forest. The uprising was finally ravaged by military firing on 30 May 1930 at Tiladi.

These apart, there were also other incidents of forest uprisings in different parts of Uttarakhand at various points of time including the Kumaon Movement of 1921, under the Kumaon Association voicing the popular demands of the inhabitants of the region regarding their rights and concessions in the forests (Guha: 1989). In all these movements, people protested peacefully but at times they turned violent too, as has been pointed out in the Tiladi incident of 1930.

Hence, history, like culture, has positively influenced the movement and its course. Wherever there had been protests in the past and wherever the man-nature relationship had been reinforced by cultural traditions, there the mobilization and support has been strong, and vice versa. Therefore, it is found that the movement had been strongly influenced in its course by culture and history of the region.

5.6.3. International Regimes on Environment and Movement Dynamics

Since the nature of the environmental problems is such that the globalization of the ecological issues has become inevitable, the governments of various countries are forced to come together to address these problems and agree to provisions for common interest. The Government of India, in this spirit, signed many international agreements relating to environment on Marine Wealth, Open Space, Air Pollution etc. India is a signatory of the Montreal Protocol, Biodiversity Convention, Antarctica Treaty and the Climatic Convention, among many others. These conventions and agreements have brought not only the national governments together, but also have facilitated the networking between and among the environmental NGOs throughout the globe. India is also home to a complex and diverse environmental movement in the nongovernmental sector. Though the most widely discussed issues have been extent and quality of forest cover, and the impacts of large dams, other concerns include biotechnology, genetic and biotic diversity, organic vs. high-input farming, and the preservation of wildlife and natural habitats. Thought and action have evolved together in the Indian citizenry's response to the state's vision of environmentalism. The array of citizen's actions range from grassroots activism to advocacy at international

levels, and have in common some commentary on development and the motivation to alter government policy in some way. The earliest citizen's groups formed around environmental issues in India were based on elite and aesthetic sensibilities. These elite groups worked together with the state to protect particular areas and species. A constituency of 'preservationists' still exists, though their agenda is increasingly linked with the wider environmental movement. Two other main strands of thought stand in opposition to the species based conservationist approach. One perspective holds industrialization and the existing development paradigm responsible for the environmental crisis, and espouses pre-colonial, pre-industrial rural India as the social and ecological ideal. The second strand of thought is also critical of contemporary development processes. In addition, the social relations of production are invoked while explaining the occurrence and experience of environmental crisis.

In the contemporary setting, environmental movements pose a critique of the established model of growth, and simultaneously constitute a demand for redefining development. In all, the environmental movement tends to combine a Gandhian and a Marxist perspective, with respect to numerous human rights issues and even democracy being a part of the conservation imperative. At the same time, the species based approach to conservation is also taking into account the need to include local human populations, albeit only as part of a management strategy. This diverse movement has contributed in a large way to the implementation of conventions related to biodiversity, at the ground level and at the conceptual level, and has also contributed to the stand that India has taken at the international negotiations relating to these conventions. Non-governmental organizations have been invited by the Ministry of Environment and Forests time and again to contribute to the evolution of policy relating to the environment/ biodiversity. At the same time, it has to be noted that a portion of the conservation work at the ground level done by NGOs is critical of the state's policies or positions.

Secondly, the transboundary nature of the environmental crises has led to the emergence and growth of a host of environmental organizations. There are some common features of environmental campaigns made by different environmental NGOs associated with different environmental movements around the world, and the forms of activism, demonstration, and campaign may seem very alike. The NGOs utilize global discourses in the form of environment, development and human rights. Thus, they make references to discourses outside

the state to criticize policies of the government. A dialectical relationship exists between state environmentalism, international environmental agreements, international environmental organizations and the environmental movements in a given country.

Therefore, these international instruments pertaining to environment, therefore, have had their impact on the movement and its course. This was established through the results of the measurement of attitudes of the people in the area of our study. The detailed pattern of the response received from the respondents as been reported graphically in figure 5.11 below.

Figure 5.11

Attitude Types on the Statement: International Environmental Regimes and National Legal-Constitutional Framework have Influenced the Movement
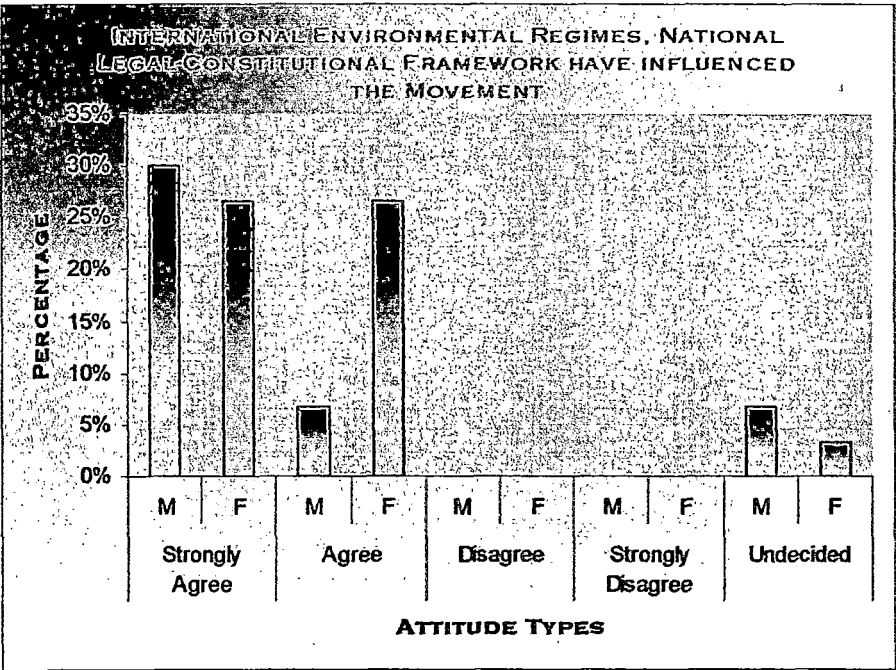
The data reveals that the people in Uttarakhand believe that the international agreements on environment have had their impact on the Chipko movement. However, our interview wit some of the activists showed that the movement had no influences whatsoever from such international agreements and regimes for international environmental governance. For instance, the present researcher's discussions with Ramesh Pahari in Gopeswar made things much fuzzy on the subject. When asked whether the developments in environmental

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policy front, agreements etc at the national and international level influenced the movement, Pahari said,

> "During the movement we did not get so much support from the NGOs but we got support from Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi and Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi. Anupam Mishra from Gandhi Peace Foundation and Anil Agarwal from CSE regularly visited the place and helped us to raise the consciousness in the people. Moreover, it was they who propagated the movement outside the region. We got support from the awards Bhattji got from the Magsaysay fund. Once, for specified purpose, Planning Commission contributed some fund but it was not used for the movement. There was no other influence from any other organization, policy or agreement on the movement" (Personal Interview With ramesh Pahari).

Thus, despite the question being clarified several times, Pahari tended to avoid saying anything on the influence by the developments in international agreements etc on environment and stressed on the contributions of the Indian NGOs/Foundations like Centre for Science and Environment and Gandhi Peace Foundation. At one instance only he pointed out that the awards received by Bhatt like the Magsaysay Award helped the movement by the funds they entailed.

This compelled us to further probe the issue through informal discussions with different people especially in Tehri and Gopeswar, interviews with media persons, and the secondary research on the question. It revealed that the movement was influenced, although indirectly by the international agreements and regimes on environment. One Sanjay Kothyal, editor of the local daily (Yugvani) from Dehradun vocally stressed the influence of the international environmental agreements, global environmental regimes and environmental NGOs on the movement. Kothyal had the opinion that,

> "Basically the Chipko movement was initiated by the Left, that is Communist Party of India with an objective of creating its stronghold in the region, which had faced devastation by the Indo-China War of 1962. In the early years of the movement, the movement concerned itself with the issue of

Jal, Jungle and Jamin (Water, Forests and Soil), the fundamental necessities

of the people to sustain. In course of time the movement turned to the issue of

ecology and environment... "(Personal Interview with Sanjay Kothyal,

Editor, Yugvani, Dehradun-May 2005)

In fact, the mobilizations for Chipko movement began much before the Stockholm Conference (1972), somewhere in the fag end of 1969 itself. Stockholm Conference, which is one of the most significant developments in the environmental front, took place in 1972, immediately after which one sees the emergence of the Chipko movement as an environmental protest in 1973 (as formally recognized). Thus the Chipko movement has two faces: as a peasant resistance (Guha: 1989), and as an environmental movement. Although as the peasant movement, it might not have been influenced much by the international agreements, the popularization of the movement as an environmental movement of world repute took place much later, and has been certainly influenced by the international developments.

5.6.4. National Constitutional Legal Framework and the Movement Dynamics

The goal of the social movement is social change and quiet often than not the movements take constitutional law and law reforms as means to realizing the goal. Hence, social movements, constitutional legal framework and society interact in a dialectical way. Social movements seek to secure law reforms; in turn, changes in the legal constitutional framework bring about changes in the society. The emergence of the environmental movement like the Chipko movement in India has had significant changes in the Indian society and law.

The constitution of India commits itself to save the environment. Some important constitutional provisions pertaining to the environment include the following:

Article 48-A under Part IV of the Constitution reads,

"The state shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country"

Later on, the forty-second amendment to the Constitution (1976) added Article 51-A (g), which enshrines a fundamental duty that commits the citizen to environmental protection that reads that it shall be the (fundamental) duty of every citizen of India

> *"To protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes,*
> *rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures".*

Further more, the 73rd Constitution (Amendment) Act 1992 on the revitalization of the Panchayati Raj adds Schedule XI to the Constitution. The Schedule has eight entries, which are linked to environmental protection and conservation.

Gradually, from the Directive Principles of State Policy to the Constitutional Amendments, increasing importance is given to environmental protection and promotion. Around the time of the origin and hay days of the Chipko movement in the 1970s and the 1980s, the environment secured a pretty significant position in the national policy agenda with the press coverage multiplying on the issue. Several Acts pertaining to the environment were passed during this period like the Insecticide Act of 1968, Wild Life (Protection) Act (1972), Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1974. However, the most remarkable change that had an immediate effect on the Uttarakhand society was the amendment of the 1927 Forest Act and the coming into force of the Forest Conservation Act in October 1980.

A review of the list of the Constitutional amendments and the Acts pertaining to the environment portray a very startling message. Most of the amendments have been made in the 1970s when the environmental issues were at a high pedestal. This point to the fact that the Movement and these developments were taking place almost simultaneously in India. The legal-constitutional framework provided a ground for the movement to crystallize; and in turn, the movement led to the series of amendments in the constitution and the passing of the Acts as stated above. For instance, The Forest Conservation

Act (1980) came in the form of a response to the demands of the Chipko Movement.

Hence, there had been a strong relationship between the development of environmental consciousness, emergence of the environmental movements like Chipko, and the evolution of public policy pertaining to environment within the legal constitutional framework of the country. However, although to some extent the environmental agreements at the international level contributed to the strengthening of the Chipko movement as an environmental movement, the current of the national legal constitutional provisions have had a more profound impact on the movement dynamics vis-a vis the international agreements and vice versa.

5.6.5. Ideology and Movement Dynamics

Ideology is considered as one of the most important components of a protest movement. This is because the ideology is the legitimizing force of a movement and it is the ideological orientation of a movement that determines the objective of protest, and the strategy it needs to adopt to secure the goal so defined. Therefore, every social movement is characterized by a set of ideology or sets of ideologies. The Chipko Movement, like any other social movement has its own ideological premise based on which it develops its movement strategies and techniques.

The ideological premise of the Chipko movement is not a smooth terrain. The ideological orientation in each phase that it passed was determined by the kind of force involved in it although its ideology is claimed to predominantly the extension of the traditional Gandhian Sarvodaya. In other words, it rather represents a resultant of the forces involved therein. Ideology, and for that matter, the differences thereof, constitute a major factor responsible for movement dynamics, even bringing about a transformative shift in the nature and content of the movement. The ideological orientations of the movement and its influence on movement dynamics have been analysed below.

An attitudinal scaling was conducted among some thirty respondents randomly selected from different sections of the people in the Garhwal Himalayas. One of the statements made (in Statement No.3) was that there is an ideological difference among the leaders. The response pattern has been graphically presented in figure 5.12 below:

Figure 5.12

Attitude Types on the Statement:

The Leaders Have Ideological Differences
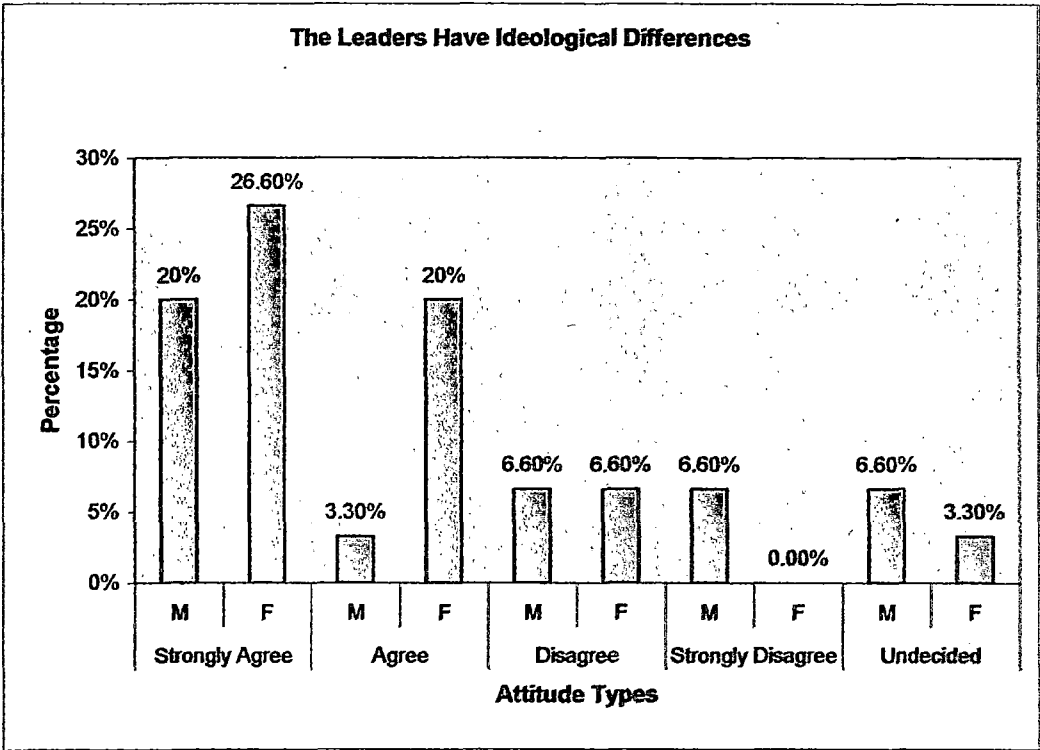
From the table above it is revealed that approximately 70% of the responded had the view that there is an ideological difference among the leaders of the Chipko movement. Hence, this was the starting point to explore the different strands of ideologies within the movement, and the impact of the differences on the movement.

We began to explore the different ideological strands of the movement through our secondary research. The study revealed that despite the movement

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commiting itself to the Gandhian ideology of Sarvodaya, yet the movements' ideology reflected an amalgam of atleast two different ideological orientations—gandhism and Marxism. Owing to the differing ideological commitments, the exponents of the movement in the three regions of Uttarakhand were divided into three streams. One group of the activists were influenced by Sunderlal Bahuguna and was active in the Bhagirathi Valley; the second group under the ideological influence of Chandi Prasad Bhatt was active in the Alakananda Valley; and the third stream was the *Uttarakhand Sangharsh Vahini* active in the Kumaon region. Whereas Bahuguna's stream in Bhagirathi valley was committed to Gandhian Sarvodaya ideology as practiced by Vinobha Bhave, the ideological underpinning of the Alakananda group represented a sort of synthesis of Gandhianism and western socialism as practiced by J. P. Narayan and R. M. Lohia. However, the ideological commitment of the Uttarakhand Sangharsh Vahini was strongly influenced by Marxism, and was more proximate to the radical Maoist ideological orientation.

In terms of the mode and ideology of works, the three wings of the Chipko movement had sharp differences but the one between the Alakananda group and the Bhagirathi group was more pronounced. Owing to the ideological differences, there were perceptual differences between Sunderlal Bahuguna and Chandi Prasad Bhatt on the causes of deforestation, the emergence of the movement, and their methods of working. Whereas Bahuguna blames modern industrialization as the underlying cause of deforestation, conversely, Bhatt feels that it is the development policy biased towards city and big industry and against local economic and ecological self-reliance as the cause of the movement.

The differences in the ideological commitments of the three wings of the Chipko movement has resulted in the differing social actions towards the use of the natural resources, perspectives of development, and on the movement strategies and actions. Each ideological strand led to the development of a particular type of social action to be advocated by the movement in the three regions of Uttarakhand. The spectrum of possible social actions flowing from the different ideological premises of the movement as developed by Tiwari (1997)

has been presented below to facilitate our understanding of the influence of ideology on movement dynamics.

Figure 5.13

The Spectrum of Possible Actions Flowing from Different Ideological Premises of the Movement
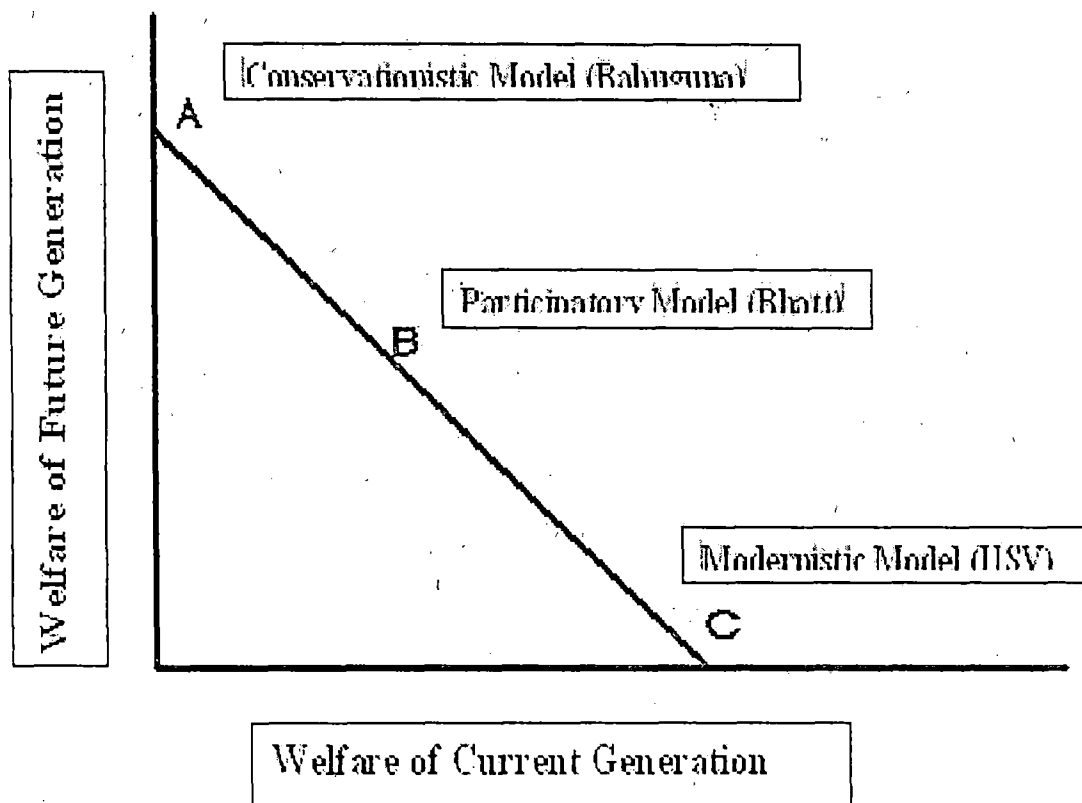
Adapted From D. D. Tiwari (1997)

D. D. Tiwari (1997) classifies the possible modes of social action into three categories: the Conservationist model of Sunderlal Bahuguna's camp, Chandi Prasad Bhatt's Participatory model and *Uttarakhand Sangharsh Vahini's (USV)* Modernistic model. The conservationist model of social action as espoused by Bahuguna envisages a no growth economy and advocates a complete ban on tree felling. His advocates a completely nature-based living in a pre-industrial economy, resembling the ideas of Lynn White. His model strongly advocates the welfare of the future generation at the cost of the welfare of the current generation. Bhatt's, Participatory model strikes a balance between the

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welfares of the current and the future generations as it advocates a slow but sustainable model of economic growth. It envisages a development model, which must proceed without depleting local natural resource base, and favours a joint forest management by the government and the people. This group of the Chipko believed in reviving the local economy through a judicious extraction of the forest resources. At the other extreme vis-à-vis the Conservationist wing of Bahuguna is the USV's Modernistic model which concerns exclusively with the welfare of the current generation, aiming at such a rate of economic growth which may not be sustainable. They emerged as a reaction to the thousands of uncleared development projects owing to the forest related disputes in the region, and hence shouted slogans like "Fell Trees". Thus, there is no agreement among the groups on what the system should be.

Because the action groups are generally established to achieve a given short term goal, failure to realize that goal is apt to cause the group to lose relevancy and hence fade away or concentrate their efforts to the realization of te secondary goals. Even if the primary goals are realized, the same process is likely to occur. This may happen to the group as a whole or only to sections of it, resulting in possible fragmentation, thereby providing some energy for movement dynamism. In the present case, the Conservationist wing faced severe reactions from the people within a short time because it created discontent among the people as it deprived them of the forest resources. Hence, there developed a split in the wing with Ghanshyam Raturi leading the new faction. The split and gradual fading away of the wing is the price it had to pay for being more ecocentric than anthropocentric. Similarly the influence of the Modernistic wing waned for taking a radically extreme position. This led to the movement moving its epicenter towards the Alakananda Valley, and it almost has become synonymous to Bhatt's Dasholi Gram Swarajya Mandal. With the shrinking base of the Chipko movement owing to this ideological difference and the consequent differences on modes of social action, the movement has not only witnessed a shift in its nature moving towards anthropocentrism from ecocentrism but also as faced a supposed demise (Chakraborty: 1999). Weber (1988), however, feels that despite the splits and fragmentations, the Chipko survives as a perception in the minds of the people, even if it has demised as a movement.

5.6.6. Funding Problems and the Movement Dynamics

Fund is an essential component necessary for movement organizations. Sufficiency or otherwise of the fund is likely to determine the effectiveness of movement mobilizations and hence its nature and course. To this end, it was thought desirable to explore the sources of fund of the movement and its impact in movement dynamics. Our interviews with the Chipko activists including Chakradhar Tiwari, Murarilal, Sishupal Singh Kunwar and Ramesh Pahari revealed that the chief sources of the fund for the movement came from the revenues obtained by DGSS from its earlier activities as a self-help organization. The awards won by the pioneer of the movement, Shri Chandi Prasad Bhatt also constituted the source of movement funding. In this context, Ramesh Pahari, the spokesperson of the movement says,

> *"Chipko is the first movement in which no money was involved. For example, people supplied with food for the activists, the bus owners did not charge any fare to the activists. This is how people helped the movement. The DGSS had some fund; the Magsaysay Award that Bhattji won was invested in the DGSS. This is how the movement managed its funds. There was no fund from outside"*. (Personal Interview with Ramesh Pahari May 2005)

Moreover, the movement also derived support from the villagers in kind. The activists clearly denied the flow of any fund from outside. The fact that the movement did not derive any financial support from international organizations was further established through discussions we had with the scholars who had previously researched on the movement (for instance, the present researcher had a series of internet communication with Amit Mitra who had researched on the movement and published his report in *Down to Earth* in 1992).

However, in the recent years the movement is receiving government funds for its various ecodevelopment projects and camps. This has led to the movement getting passive, collaborating with the state, abandoning its earlier position.

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5.6.7. Leadership and Movement Dynamics

Although the movement denies any formal hierarchy, the particularly influential leaders of the movement included Chandi Prasad Bhatt and Sunderlal Bahuguna. Gaura Devi, Dhoom Sing Negi, Bachni Devi and Ghanshyam Raturi are some important figures associated with the movement. But the two important leaders of the Chipko Movement are undoubtedly Sunderlal Bahuguna and Chandi Prasad Bhatt. However, the movement was a fractured movement, organized by different people at different places in different phases. Flowing from the ideological differences they (Bahuguna and Bhatt) shared and the consequent differences in their attitude towards the nature of the system they sought for, there emerged a sort of personality clash between the two important leaders of the Chipko Movement: Sunderlal Bahuguna and Chandi Prasad Bhatt. The existence of the clash between the leaders was established from the result of the attitude scaling that was conducted (Statement No. 2: There is a Personality Clash among the Leaders), which has been presented below.

Figure 5.14

**Attitude Types on the Statement: There is a Personality Clash among Leaders**
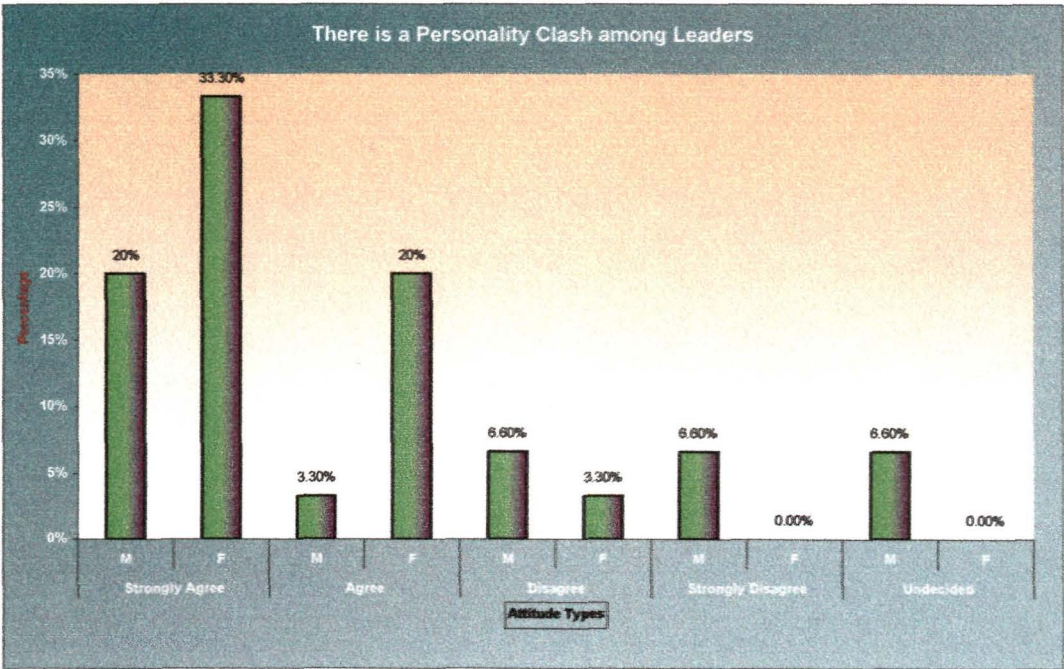
Around 76.6% of the respondents felt that there is a personality clash (53.3% strongly agreeing to it and 23.3% agreeing, summing up to 76.6%). However, it needs to be noted that it was the ideological difference between the two strands of environmentalism as espoused by Chipko under the influence of Sunderlal Bahuguna and Chandi Prasad Bhatt that in fact brought a clash of personalities between the two groups. Ramesh Pahari also pointed out to the fact that there had been a series of exchanges of letters between Bhatt and Bahuguna after having developed differences. The personality clash has led to some sort of a character assassination of Sunderlal Bahuguna from within (see, for instance, Jagdish Prasad Vyas: 1992). Apparently the leadership conflicts are not regarded as influencing the objectives and strategies of the movement (see figure below) since a total of 46.6% of the respondents disagree (disagree and strongly disagree put together) on the question that the conflict in leadership as brought about a change in objectives and strategies of the movement.

Figure 5.15

Attitude Types on the Statement: The Objectives and strategies of the Movement Have Changed Due to leadership Conflicts

ATTITUDE TYPES ON THE STATETEMENT: THE OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES OF THE MOVEMENT HAVE CHANGED DUE TO LEADERSHIP CONFLICTS

Undecided
Strongly Agree
Strongly Disagree
Agree
Disagree
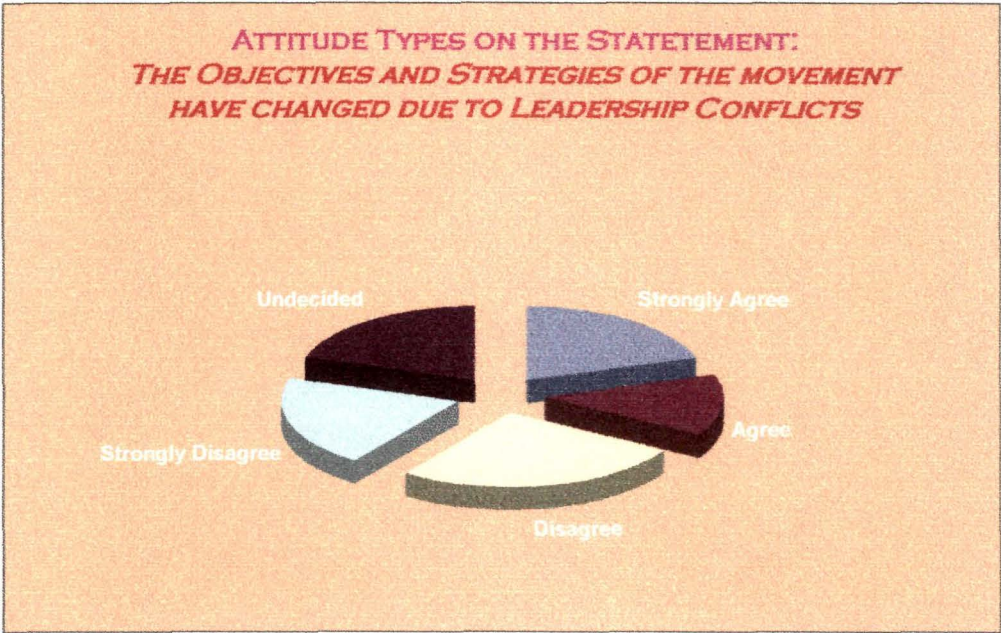
Yet the clashes and conflicts among the leaders exist, which have weakened the movement. Ramesh Pahari says:

"...After the Birendra Kumar Committee Report on the movement saying that movement is not wrong, Bahugunaji took up to Chipko and definitely he also contributed significantly to the movement because he himself was a reporter of the Hindustan and got a wide media coverage for the movement. He also got wide coverage and got renowned (you know this is the age of self exposition) as he said that he ran the movement... In 1974 when Forest Corporation was formed, there were protests in this area, and in Reni. During that time Bahugunaji fasted for eleven days and he worshipped the weapons of felling like axe and the saw. He told the people that the trees need to be felled. Bhattji has all documents pertaining to this. This is one of the reasons for the failure of the movement". (Personal Interview with Ramesh Pahari at Gopeswar, May 2005)

Therefore, it is evident that at least in the Bhagirathi valley and Alakananda valley could not emerge as a united force, owing primarily to the differences between the two leaders of the movement, that is Sunderlal Bahuguna and Chandi Prasad Bhatt.

Therefore, it may be said that movement has been influenced to some extent by the clashes and conflicts between and among leaders, thereby, impacting to some extent negatively on movement course and movement dynamics, although not directly bringing about a significant change in the objectives and strategies of the movement.

5.6.8. Party Politics and Movement Dynamics

Political parties are the important agencies of interest articulation and aggregation. In the recent years there has been a proliferation of 'Green' political parties throughout the globe, and most with a good repute in electoral performances. In India too, recently the Indian National Green Party (http://www.ecology.edu/greens) is born (it was registered with the Election Commission of India on 7 January 1999). However, the Green Party has little or no room in Indian political dynamics as of now. Green issues have been taken over by the mainstream political parties in India. Most of the political parties have come out with manifestos containing wide lists of ecopolitical issues. Since

1997, the manifestos of parties like Janata Dal, Janata Party, the Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India (Marxist) are pregnant with issues pertaining to ecology and environment, but the most elaborate list of environmental issues is found in the manifesto of the Bharatiya Janata Party (Mahalanabis: 1997).

In case of the Chipko movement, people opine that the groundwork for the emergence of the Chipko movement was prepared by the left parties by mobilizing the downtrodden of the Uttarakhand region immediately after the 1962 Indo- China war (Personal Interview with Sanjay Kothyal, Editor, Yugvani, Dehradun, May 2005). Hence, one of the objectives of the present work is to analyse whether or not the political parties were involved in the movement and how such involvement or otherwise affects the movement and its course. To this end, we started with the result of the attitude scaling and subsequently, we began our secondary research to map the relationship between the movement and the political parties in the region, and to analyse the possible impact of the political parties on movement dynamics. We took the result of the attitude scaling as a benchmark to start of investigation in this direction. The outcome of the attitude measurements yielded the following results:

Figure 5.16

Attitude Types on the Statement: The Movement is Free from Influence of Political Parties
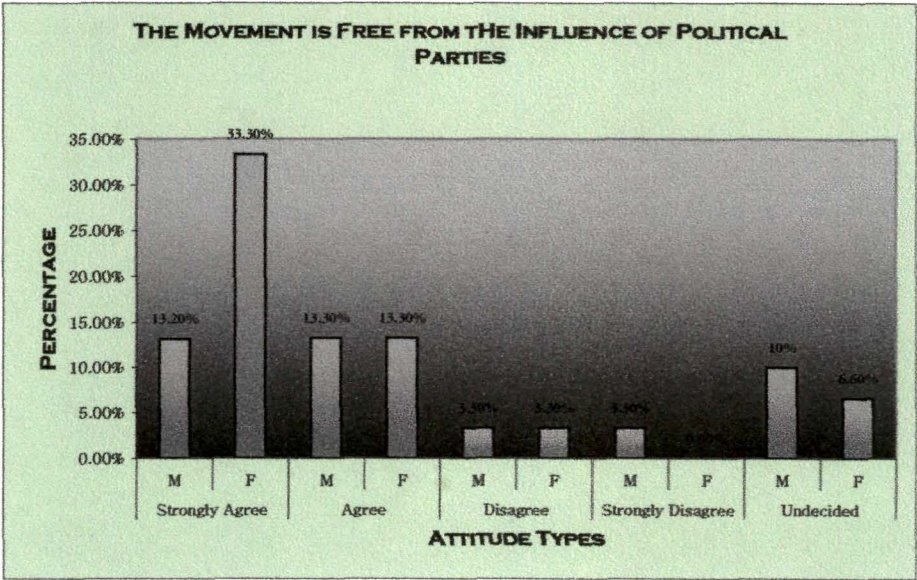
Having found that there been practically no influence exerted by the political parties in the movement as revealed by the attitude scaling, we began exploring the contents of the interviews conducted and the secondary data available on the subject.

The investigation from the interviews revealed that the political parties in themselves were not involved in the movement but different people belonging to the different political parties individually supported the movement. Our interview with the people in the Bhagirathi valley created an impression tat the movement was apolitical. One Satish Kumar, a man in his early thirties from Uttarkashi, who had not seen the live movement himself expressed:

> "The movement was basically, as far as I know, apolitical. This is because all people, irrespective of their political backgrounds are said to have participated in the movement" (My Personal interview with Satish Kumar at Gandhi Foundation School, Silyara, Ghansali, May 2005).

However, the differences shared by the Bhagirathi Valley Chipko movement and the Alakananda group developed a temptation in the present researcher to further explore what the people in the other part of Uttarakhand had to say on the issue. Hence, this curiosity culminated in the interviews with the people in Gopeswar. Ramesh Pahari, a vocal spokesperson of the DGSS and a media person by profession in Gopeswar also expressed a similar view on the influence of political parties. According to Pahari,

> "There were many political leaders who were associated with the movement in the beginning, especially from the left. The support was more from the Communist Party. Govind Singh Rawat was the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, who was closely associated with the movement. The chairman of the District Council was the chairman of the congress too, and people of that stature were also participating in the movement. But none of the political parties specifically was associated with it. But all the political parties whoever was called came and supported the movement. Therefore, although there was a support from all the political parties, yet the movement

did not subscribe to any political party, it remained thoroughly apolitical..."

(Personal Interview with Ramesh Pahari, May 2005).

The fact that the Chipko Movement did not identify with any political party whatsoever has also been asserted by Guha (1989) and Tiwari (1997). Thus, apparently the Chipko movement and its dynamism cannot be attributed to the involvement of any political parties, as the movement was non-political in nature. However, this stand needs to be substantiated by the electoral results of the state of Uttaranchal as provided below.

Table: 5.17

Uttaranchal Assembly Elections 2002: Electoral Performance of Different Political Parties

Political Party	Seats Won
CONGRESS	36
BARATIYA JANATA PARTY	19
BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY	07
UTTARKHAND KRANTI DAL	04
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA	01
JANATA PARTY (UNITED)	01
INDEPENDENTS	02

The Assembly Elections 2002 was the first assembly elections for the newly created Uttaranchal state. The results of the elections do not show much of a difference with the results in other states (see section on Political Parties and Movement Dynamics in Chapter 6, with reference to the election results of te states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharastra and Gujarat for instance). The Left parties which are said to have initiated the Chipko Movement in its initial years have made no significance in the assembly elections; neither has the Uttarakhand Kranti Dal which was formed to struggle for a separate state of Uttaranchal.

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Table: 5.18

Parliamentary Elections 2004: Electoral Performance of Different Political Parties

	SEATS WON		TOTAL SEATS
Party	Gen=4	SC=1	=5
BJP	03	-	03
INC	01	-	01
SP	-	01	01
TOTAL	04	01	05

Source: M. S. Rana (2006). *India Votes*, New Delhi, Sarup and Sons.

In case of the Parliamentary Elections 2004, which too was the first in case of Uttaranchal after its creation as a separate state, the results were not so much different from the one of the assembly elections of 2002. Still the two contending parties are the BJP and the Congress in the state. In this case too, it is seen that the Left could not fare well. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPM) contested the Garhwal seat for the first time and got only 4360 votes.

But what can be seen here is, although the movement was not directly influenced by any political parties in the beginning and all parties lent support to it, in the recent years, political parties have been trying to involve with the issues on environment. This is mpore true in case of the BJP which is resorting to the environmental issues as a part of its electoral strategy in the state. Whatever remains of the Chipko Movement today remains mostly in the form of the anti-Tehri Dam Movement. Scholars (Mawdsley: 2005 and 2006, Williams and Mawdsley: 2006) have pointed out that the Hindu nationalist parties like the Vishva Hindu Parishad and the BJP among others have in the recent years been involved in the anti-Tehri Dam protests. Probably it is this involvement of te BJP that fetched to it a return in the 2002 and 2004 elections in the state. Hoewver, it is a matter that needs a further probe.

Moreover, the time of the Chipko Movement coincided with the time of the emergence of the movement for a separate Hill state based on similar issues

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as espoused by the Chipko Movement, most of the Political Parties, notably the Congress Party, the Bharatiya Janata Party and te Communist Party of India were involved with the issue of statehood and paid little attention to influence the movement as such. The movement got displaced by the Uttaranchal Movement, even displacing it from the agenda of the political parties (see Emma Mawdsley, 1998; Somen Chakraborty, 1999; Trilokchand Bhatt, 2001; Satyaprasad Raturi, 2004 and Kedar Singh Fonia, 2005 for details).

5.6.9. Role of the NGOS and Movement Dynamics

Most of the environmental movements around the globe are espoused and led by environmental non-governmental organizations. Moreover, it is the networking among the NGOs that helps a local movement develop in to a movement of international repute. The Chipko Movement was also spearheaded by the Dasholi Gram Swarajya Mandal (DGSS) with its headquarters in Gopeswar, district Chamoli, Uttaranchal. However, it was the contributions of other national NGOs and Foundations that helped the movement gained prominence and recognition both at home and abroad. Ramesh Pahari, an active activist of the Chipko movement says,

> "...but we got support from Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi and Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi. Anupam Mishra from Gandhi Peace Foundation and Anil Agarwal from CSE regularly visited the place and helped us to raise the consciousness in the people. Moreover, it was they who propagated the movement outside the region." (Personal Interview with Ramesh Pahari, May 2005).

However, the national NGOs and Foundations, which were involved with the propagation of the movement within and outside the country, despite giving the movement a peculiarly environmental dimension, have had little or no effect on the objectives and strategies of the movement. This is further clarified by the following figure (figure 5.19) on the attitude types on whether the movement's objectives and methods were influenced heavily by the NGOs involved in it.

The Objectives and Methods of Movement are Influenced by the NGOs involved in It
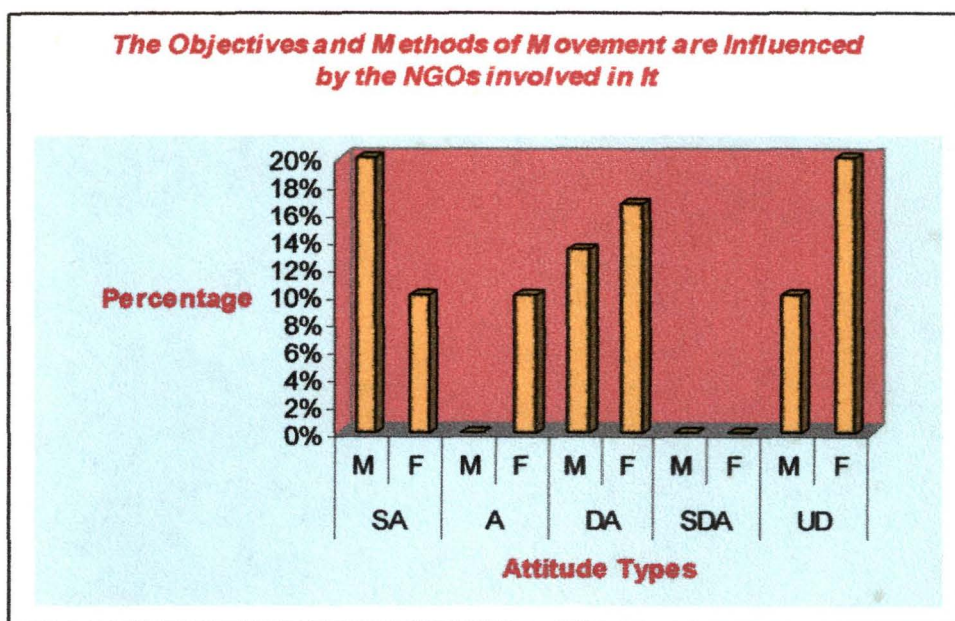
From the figure it is seen that 40% of the respondents feel that the movement is influenced by the NGOs involved in it, but next 30% do not agree to it and the lat 30% is undecided. Hence, the role of the NGO could not e ascertained in bringing about change in the nature of the movement and its objectives and methods. It can therefore be said that themovement has been influenced by these organizations but the influence is not as strong to determine its method and character. The only big influence of the NGOs was that it projected the environmental face of the movement outside, conspicuously hiding back its face as a peasants' movement.

5.7. TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE MOVEMENT

By transformation in the environmental movement, we refer to the shifts in the objectives and issues of the movement, gradually distancing from the original objectives and issues framed by the movement, the qualitative alterations that takes place in the nature and content of the movement, change in the nature of the strategies of the movement, and, finally, the movement's direction of movement, say for instance, fragmentation and demise, or unification, and

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bolstering of its strengths. Whereas a movement may move towards stagnancy, or towards demise, contrarily, it may also involve success stories, leading to the continuation of the movement with new but seemingly a bifurcation in its objectives, reappearing with a renewed vigour. However, in both these cases, the movements undergo changes, bringing about a metamorphosis in the nature and content of the movement as a whole.

In the present case, the movement's major transformations occurred as shifts in the objectives and issues of the movement over the years and the qualitative change in the nature of the movement from economic to ecological and finally political. These shifts or the transformations of the movement have been dealt with individually as under.

5.7.1. Transformations of objectives / issues

Ramesh Pahari, the spokesperson of the Chipko Movement, when interviewed expressed that the issues and objectives of the movement have not changed, because all the six points of objectives framed during the course of the movement are regarded as fundamental, which simply can not be changed. According to Pahari (2005), there has not been any change in the objectives of the movement. Asked whether the objectives of the movement have changed over the years, Pahari says:

> *"No. Not at all. They are the basic objectives and are to be regarded as fundamental. There is no question of these fundamental principles changing. This is because we accept that forest and man, forest and animals, and forest and water by nature have close interrelationship. If you leave out one, you cannot think of the other. So, if you separate the forest from these ill people, the people cannot simply tolerate the situation because they will be then left with nothing. This is because the people here are dependent on agriculture and animal husbandry, and they get the only support in this regard from the forest to earn their livelihood. The fundamental principles that we have outlined points out to the need to survey our forest and develop a fact sheet of its situation: where the forest is degraded, where the forest is rich and to strengthen the traditionally existing harmonious relation of the local people*

with their forests. Thus, there is simply no question of these fundamental objectives changing at all" (Personal Inetrview with Ramesh Pahari, 2005).

However, our study on the Chipko movement led us to a conclusion which differs from what Pahari says. The Chipko movement made a six-point charter of demands in 1973 at a meeting of the sarvodaya workers at Garud in Chamoli district of Uttaranchal. They are:

1. Abolition of the auction/contractor system and the formation of forest labour cooperatives.
2. Institutionalization of Peoples' participation in forest management through Gram Sabha, forest panchayats, district councils etc.
3. Establishment of local small-scale forest based industries to generate employment.
4. New forest settlement to determine the people's rights to forest produce such as fuel wood and fodder.
5. Assistance to village efforts for afforestation.
6. Ban on felling green trees in areas critical for the protection of water sources and the prevention of landslides.

Four out of the total six points of the demand were economic in nature. The central focus was the replacement of the contract system by the forest labour cooperatives and the setting up of small-scale industries, as emphasized in several public gatherings at Gopeswar and Uttar Kashi during the course of the movement (Kunwar: 1988; Shepard: 1988). It influenced the emergence of other movements of similar nature both in India and abroad.

However, in November 1986, the Chipko Movement outlined its six points principles in a meeting of the national and international environmental activists at Surajkud near Delhi through the Chipko leader Chandi Prasad Bhatt (Bhatt: 1977a). The new set of principles includes:

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1. To understand what the forest itself wants and to analyze socio-economic condition of the peoples in order to establish the type of forestry required.

2. To identify the reserve areas affected by landslides and erosion, or crucial for the conservation of water resources.

3. To establish the minimum needs of people living next to forests and an administration such that these rights may be easily exercised.

4. Complete stoppage of the contractor system and organization of the people to undertake conservation, development and exploitation work in the forests.

5. Plantation of trees of use to the villagers so as to avoid the entry of the people into the reserved forests.

6. Setting up of industries based on minor forest products to prevent migration.

It is interesting to note at this point that although a bulk of the original six points charter appeared in these principles, yet it is true that the emphasis shifted from dominantly economic to more ecological; from the political question of people's rights to the quasi-academic orientation of understanding the socio-economic conditions of the people. Hence, from 1977 onwards, the Chipko movement completely shed its old demand for higher allocation of forest products to local industries and has turned its major focus on environmental concerns.

The issue of the movement further transformed in the 1980s. The strongest Chipko movement of the 1980s is the movement in Dhungri Paintoli village. As discussed above, the issue in this movement was not much ecological but it focused on the rights of women to participate in the decision-making process in matters pertaining to their domain of work, that is, concerning forest and environment. Hence, a shift took place in the movement issues and objectives from ecological to political.

In the 1990s and its aftermath, the movement seems to have disappeared and scholarships on the movement have even questioned its existence today (Weber: 1997). However, activists in the movement still feel that the movement is on but the issues have changed (Pahari: 2005). The NGOs associated with the movement, particularly the DGSM is now conducting forestry and environmental conservation camps, eco-development camps etc. and raising peoples' consciousness and mobilizing their power in keeping with te fundamental principles of the Chipko movement.

5.7.2. Transformations of the Strategies

The symbolic strategy that Chipko adopted was the Hugging of the trees. It stemmed from the Sarvodaya ideological foundation as espoused by Gandhi. Gandhian idea of Satyagraha and non-violence that the leaders were attached to helped them carve out a strategy that was at the same time non-violent and effective. This was the hugging of the trees. However, it needs to be clarified that the actual hugging of trees did not take place in the Chipko movement. The field study of the present researcher at different places of the Chipko movement, especially in the Bhagirathi Valley and the Alakananda Valley did not come across any one who confirmed any single instance of physical 'hugging' of the tree. A detailed survey of the past research works further confirmed it. Jayanta Bandyopadhyay (1999) corroborates the fact that 'hugging' or 'embracing' was verbal symbolic, non-violent methods, which were adopted but the physical embracing did not take place. To quote Bandyopadhyay,

> "...*Contrary to all the unfounded greenish journalistic attempts in the international media, to garner the glory of the Chipko Movement, there has so far been only one reported clear instance of actual use of the method of embracing trees, and that too by a male activist. In the year 1977, Dhoom Singh Negi, a courageous and less known Gandhian activist from the village Pipleth, successfully prevented felling by embracing trees in the Salet forest area in the Garhwal Himalaya, as has been reported by Shiva and Bandyopadhyay (1986). In all other instances of Chipko movement, resistance was expressed in other non-violent forms. In most cases, the presence*

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of a large number of angry villagers was enough to discourage the contractors from trying to fell trees.

All photographs of 'Chipko Actions' represent enactments. When the only reported incidence of embracing trees to protect them from felling occurred in Salet forests in the Garhwal Himalaya, and human life was at risk, there was no photographer around in the remote mountain forests".

Although, it was only verbal in nature, the symbolic strategy of 'hugging' did not take place, yet it served as an important strategy for the movement. However, the strategy gradually lost significance owing to the absence of felling and absence of such a necessity to pose a symbolic threat. With the passing of the Forest Conservation Act of 1980, there was a ban on felling of the trees. The strategy was adopted in the beginning to protest against the commercial felling. Therefore, under the impression that the strategy might have become obsolete, we probed the issue with the help of interviews. Ramesh Pahari felt that the strategy is still relevant. Pahari says,

No, it did not end. Nothing happed without Chipko. The strategy of clinging, as a symbolic threat did not come to an end after the ban on felling. It continued and still it continues. The movement continued on the issue of necessities of the people and ecological needs. Thus symbolic Chipko held the twin necessities of Ecological Needs and Local Needs. Therefore, since there are no fellings, there is no need to hug, or cling to the trees. But wherever and whenever the situation necessitates, the strategy shall be employed (Personal Interview with Ramesh Pahari, 2005).

Another interview at Silyara, Ghansali with one Trilochan Ghildiyal revealed a different picture. According to him,

"Chipko strategy is still alive. ...It exists today but not in the direct action form. It has imprinted a new message in the minds of the people. It exists today in the form of an ideology; it exists in impression, not in action of

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hugging the trees" (Personal Interview with Trilochan Ghildiyal at Silyara, 2005).

Thus there has been a transformation in the strategies of the movement. Whereas at one end the hugging strategy has now transformed itself to a sense impression from direct action in the past, the movement activists (Gopeswar) have adopted the strategy of ecorestoration practices as a new mode of movement action and conduct a variety of such orientation and training camps. Thus there has occurred a shift in the nature and content of the strategy of the movement.

5.7.3. Transformation in the Nature of the support base

The support base of the movement has transformed in the recent years. Whereas there was efficient mobilization and a wide support base of the movement in the past, it has dwindled. Jayanto Bandyopadyay (1999) says,

> "*The movement got its initial start in the conflicts over mountain forests between the economic interests of the mountain communities and the economies of the plains. However, this fundamental basis of the movement got substantially reduced with the contract system of felling being stopped and the establishment of the public sector Forest Development Corporation. The fellings were then onwards undertaken with the help of local village cooperatives*".

Probably because of the neglect of the villagers who had actively taken part in the movement in the felling and allied activities by the local cooperatives, the people have been gradually distancing themselves from the movement. This has led to the gradual erosion of the peoples' support by the movement.

However, the leaders of the movement feel that the apparent loss of the support base is simply not real. It appears so because the most important objective of the movement, that is ban on commercial felling is achieved and the people are busy at their own work. When asked whether the support base is still strong or it has waned away, Pahari says,

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"Yes, the support base is still strong. But since the work has decreased, the support base as obviously shrunk. In the beginning there was the need to prepare the people for the movement. People used to gather in the public meetings etc. But now, people are busy with their own work. If the movement demands, the people will be ready for the movement ant any time". (Personal Interview with Ramesh Pahari, May 2005)

However, the people feel that the movement has alienated the people in the recent years. The following figures would illustrate the case. An attitude Scaling of the respondents on whether or not the movement has alienated the people in the recent years, thereby leading to the erosion of the support base of the movement revealed the following as presented in figure 5.20 below; which makes it evident that there has been the alienation of the people from the movement in te recent years.

Figure 5.20
Attitude Types on the Statement: The Movement in the Recent Years has Alienated itself from the Affected People.
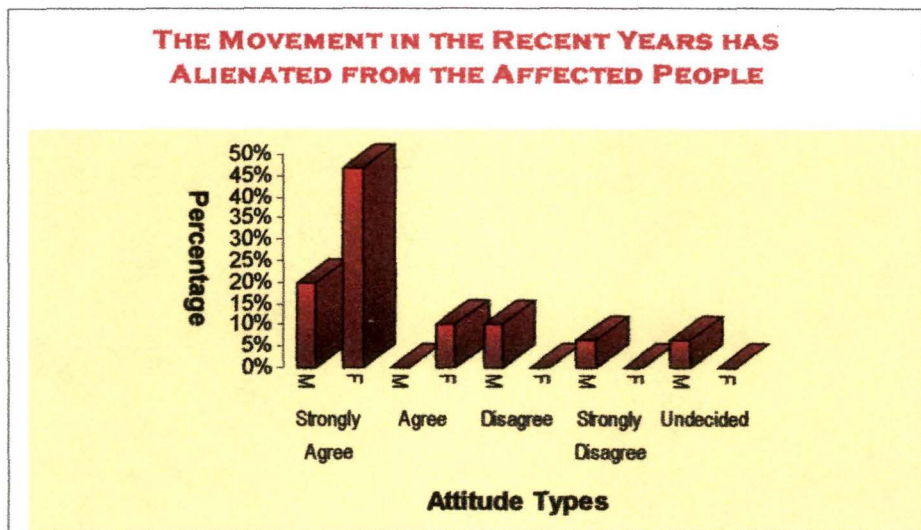
The people feel that they are alienated by the movement. Hence the support base might have shrunk owing to the movement alienating the people from the movement in the recent years. This may explain why the movement seems to have lost its vigour in the recent years. Thus there has been a sort of transformation in the support base of the movement from a wide base in the hay days of the movement to apparently absence of popular support in the recent

years. This fact can be explained in another way as well. People today perceive the movement as have failed to meet their aspirations. This is because the Forest Conservation act of the 1980 not only put a ban on felling, but it also made it difficult for the people to meet their daily needs from the forests. Sanjay Kothyal, Editor, Yugvani, asserted this fact. He says,

> *"The people have felt an adverse affect from the movement. They feel, after the implementation of the Forest Conservation Act 1980 their forest rights have been taken away by the government, for which the movement itself is responsible."* (Interview with Sanjay Kothyal, May 2005)

Thus, probably the feeling of alienation from te movement and the erosion of the support base of te movement may owe to the Forest Act which came to te people as a response to the Chipko Movement.

5.7.4. Transformation in the Nature of the Movement

Not only the issues, objectives, support base, and strategies of the movement transformed in the recent years, there has been a qualitative change in the movement too. Although from te beginning the movement represented a duality: as a peasant movement and as an environmental movement, in course of time, despite the participatory framework of Bhatt, the movement transformed from primarily a movement with economic orientations to the environmental movement, just to gradually fade away starting the second half of the 1990s. Today, the movement has died out as a direct action and only feebly exists as a mental impression in the minds of the people. For instance, Prasun's February 2003 article makes some explicit and certain other implicit statements. The article entitled in Hindi reads: *'Kya Chipko KA Garbpat ho gaya Hae'* ('Is Chipko aborted?'). The connotation is implicit. The former Chipko activist believes that the success Chipko had in its formative stage is not visible now. Prasun constructs two power centers-one being 'state power' that we may qualify here as 'legitimate power', enjoyed by the democratically elected government and its representative institutions for instance law courts in this case. The other power that he talks about is 'power of the people' expressed in 'collective action' in the form of protest. Prasun's argument is that in 1978, it was 'people's power' that won because the provincial police was forced to withdraw from the scene.

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According to Prasun, success achieved by the people's movement met its objective in 1978, because peoples' will, ultimately ruled. But the movement was aborted in 2003, as people were not able to achieve what they desired at the outset of the agitation. Partial success in restricting the number of trees to be axed or minor diversion in the route of overhead cables was not enough from the point of the local people. What one notices here is the insider's view on the movement, which says that the movement as transformed its nature from an active movement as it was in the past to a dead movement today.

However, despite these transformations, the movement contributed to the development of environmental consciousness and adoption of sustainable model of development in the region.

5.8. IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The movement has gone a long way in developing environmental consciousness in the region. This has been highlighted by Pahari thus:

"...specifically women have become very conscious. In the past, they did not even used to go outside the village. But now they even go to Hyderabad and Bengal to deliver speeches. People are conscious and can feel what will make their village better. We have also study centers for sustainable development. However, the development in the region has not turned to be fully sustainable (for example the multi-storied complexes being constructed in the seismically fragile zone of Uttaranchal) basically for some economic reasons. When people earn something outside, when people retire, they invest their money into these types of works to multiply their money. However, there is a need to educate the people on this issue. We have not been able to oppose these developments strongly" (Personal Interview with Ramesh Pahari, May 2005).

Moreover, the importance of the movement lies in the fact that the movement has stopped the unprecedented destructive development the hills and made the government feel the necessities of sustainable development in the mountainous and fragile region of the country. One of the policy changes as a consequence of the CXhipko Movement is the passiong of the Forest

Conservation Act of 1980, which bears implications to the experience of sustainable development. In this connection, Pahari says,

> *"In the past when the forest-working plan used to be made, their policies were first fell the trees and plant the trees. The Chipko movement convinced the government that it is not necessary to fell trees in all places. It pointed out that the government should see as to what will be the effect of felling on that piece of land, will it be saved or will it be destroyed. It also needs to evaluate the effect on the rights of the people in that area to the access to forest resources. Any policy so designed should be designed in a way that will adjust the local problems of fuel, fodder and employment. The government passed the Forest Conservation Act in 1980. I don't say that it was a wonderful piece of legislation. In fact, I myself opposed it then. This is because the Act did not fully address the issues raised by the Chipko Movement. It definitely put a ban on felling. But we need to raise the trees and simply banning felling is not enough. This is because we treat the forest as a crop, not as a God to be worshipped. It is here that our Chipko differs from Bahugunaji's Chipko, who advocated a complete ban on felling. We do not propose a complete ban on felling keeping in mind the necessities of the people. Otherwise, wherefrom will the people get their farm equipments, fodder and firewood? Therefore, policy formulation needs to keep in mind the basic needs of the people. Unlike Bahuguna's advocacy of conserving Bears and Tigers, we stress on the local minimum needs of the people that need to be safeguarded by any policy that pertains to forest resources* (Personal Interview with Ramesh Pahari, May 2005).

That the movement has contributed towards the understanding and need of sustainale development is also evident from a centre that is run by the DGSS under the support of the central government. The following may be summed up as the achievement of the Chipko Movement.

Firstly, in February 1980, the Uttar Pradesh forest department sent directives to revise its working plans with a view to harmonizes them with the notion of the *'sensitivity'* of these areas. Though their definition of sensitivity is at

variance with those of the people concerned, but at least this incidence marks the beginning of realization on the part of the government this very crucial fact concerning the Himalaya.

Secondly, a recent satellite remote sensing study conducted by the Space Applications Center, Ahmedabad show that the forest cover which was lost due to commercial felling between 1959-1969 has nearly been regained in the sensitive catchment of the Upper Alakananda river. This could have been achieved due to the motivation and participation of the local people

Thirdly, Commercial forest felling is completely banned not only in the Alakananda basin from where the Chipko movement was started but also in the whole Central Himalaya. This ban continues till today

Fourthly, in 1975, the Alakananda Soil Conservation Division of the U.P. forest department came into existence in Chamoli in order to undertake the Himalayan task of rejuvenating the barren slopes. The next five years witnessed functioning the Civil Soyam Forest Division in the entire Central Himalaya. In order to intensify such steps in Chamoli, the Upper Ganga catchment has been established with the objective of evolving planning for the security and safety of the small rivers and rivulets against soil erosion and landslides as also in afforestation drive.

Another important aspect of the Chipko movement, which contributes to the development of a sustainable development experience in the region, is the active reforestation program that has continued since its inception in 1974. This was inspired by the movement ideology, which stresses the ecological dependency of the local people upon the forests and the need to sustain and replenish the local forest environment. In Chamoli district, under the aegis of the DGSM, over 1 million trees have been planted since 1974, of which 73 to 88 percent have survived (Center for Science and Environment 1988). This success was achieved largely through the work of ecodevelopment camps, which were set up by the DGSM to impart environmental education to the population of Chamoli district. One of the important features of the camps is the joint

participation of the poor and rich alike, DGSM workers, college and university students, teachers, and personnel from scientific institutes, government officials, voluntary organization workers and local villagers. The camps are organized around a schedule of education, discussions, plantation work via *shramdan*, or donated labor, communal eating where all castes eat together, and communal folk singing. At the environmental camp in Bachher, some 18 kilometers from Gopeswar, which was held in October 1989, approximately 75 percent of the participants constituted of peasant women from villages scattered across Chamoli district. Of the total participants, approximately 20 percent were Brahmin caste, 50 percent Rajput caste and 30 percent Scheduled castes. The DGSM organizes six to nine camps every year. The camps are funded through the DGSM funds via its local cottage industries. However, in the recent years, it also has been receiving some assistance from government funding agencies.

The DGSM also started an Integrated Watershed Development project with the help of the Planning Commission and the Department of the Environment of the government of India. The project is concerned with the socioeconomic and environmental development of a 27-village area in the catchment area of the Alakananda River, involving the participation of the local villagers. In Tehri Garhwal, Bahuguna and other Chipko activists are also involved in various afforestation and conservation schemes. Chipko activists have helped set up *Mahila Mangal Dals* and *Mahila Mandals* in many villages to coordinate the regeneration of the forests, act as forest guards to prevent felling and plant new species of tree for fodder, fuel and etc. in cooperation with the local forest department.

All these speak of a development model moving towards sustainable development in the mountain areas. This is often regarded as an achievement of the Chipko Movement. Thus, the transformation in the nature of the movement too speaks of the positive contributions to sustainable development by the movement.

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