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Bachelor Thesis

‘Struggle is our Slogan’

Subaltern Expressions of the Movement to Save the Narmada River

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Abstract

Relating to Gayatri Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988), this thesis revolves around the question of how subaltern struggles are taken up by movements that claim to defend or even represent subaltern groups. Since Spivak concludes that the subaltern cannot speak, I ask how their silenced voices can be made heard by movements defending them. More specifically, I examine the different material, political, and ideological expressions of the subaltern tribal people involved in the anti-dam protests of the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* (NBA) in India to contrast them with the expressions of the NBA as a whole. The aim is to identify subaltern roles in movements that mobilise people around world-cultural principles of human rights and environmental protection to trace the boundaries of subaltern possibilities for action. I show that movements like the NBA operate within structures of world society that silence the subaltern. They cannot make the silenced voices of the subaltern heard. Yet, their activists can explore and assert forms of subaltern agency in local struggles against subalternity.

1 Introduction

Three kilometres upstream from India's 182-metre-tall Statue of Unity is the equally immense Sardar Sarovar Dam (SSD), the most controversial structure on the Narmada River. As part of the country's largest river basin development scheme, the vast reservoir of the 1,210-metre-long and 163-metre-high concrete gravity dam has flooded hundreds of villages in an area of 350 square kilometres; another 16 tribal villages have been displaced to construct the adjacent statue (Overdorf 2018). Several social, economic and cultural problems arise from this large-scale displacement, adversely affecting the life of tribal populations in particular (Mahmood et al. 2019). In reaction to this, the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* (Save the Narmada Movement; NBA) arose in the late 1980s and started to organise local communities, mobilising them against the construction of large dams (Wade 2011). Together with domestic subaltern groups, most notably tribal people, and with a narrative of dams as destructive development, the NBA soon attracted the support

of international organisations, which helped to put pressure on foreign funders of the multipurpose hydroelectricity project (Khagram 2004). Despite decades of protest and a cancelled loan of the World Bank (WB), the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the SSD in 2017 (Ranjan 2018), one year before the Statue of Unity added another symbol of development to the former tribal land (Bavadam 2019).

Relating to Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988), an essay that examines the role of intellectuals in the process of translating silenced struggles of the subaltern, this thesis revolves around the question of how subaltern struggles are taken up by movements that claim to defend or even represent subaltern groups. Since Spivak concludes that the subaltern subject, deprived of the possibility of response and responsibility (de Kock 1992, p. 46), cannot speak, I ask how the silenced voices of the subaltern can be made heard by movements defending them. Considering a movement against efforts of the UK-based Vedanta company to mine bauxite on a mountaintop in the East Indian state of Odisha, Borde (2017) critiques Spivak's remarks on the impossibility of subaltern representation by intellectuals and activists. The author observed that most non-tribal activists were "differentially subaltern", referring to a relative spatial and economic marginalisation (Borde 2017, p. 573f.). Besides, she noted a paradigmatic shift, from 'environmental justice' to cultural rights, and highlighted its strategic use "to attract sympathy and support abroad." (ibid., p. 578) Moreover, Kumar (2014) revealed that rigid ideologies among the various actors of the movement made collective action more difficult, but pragmatic key actors contributed to its relative success.

With regard to the NBA's mobilisation and organisation of communities in the Narmada Valley, this thesis shows that the strategic use of narratives as well as transnational support for a major anti-dam campaign were also essential resources of the local movement. In comparison with Borde (2017) and Kumar (2014), I take a more differentiated look at the different material, political, and ideological expressions of the subaltern tribal people involved in the protests to contrast them with the expressions of the NBA's mostly urban and intellectual activists and movement leaders. In the course of this, I locate tribal people within the dominant world-cultural model of 'national development', which expands the authority and responsibility of nation-states (Meyer et al. 1997). The aim is to identify subaltern roles in movements that mobilise people around world-cultural principles of human rights and environmental protection to trace the boundaries of subaltern possibilities for action. Pointing out that tribal life is shaped by a centuries-old history of marginalisation by culturally and politically dominant groups (Baviskar 1997; Ramachandra Guha 1983; Ramachandra Guha and Gadgil 1989), I demonstrate that movements, trying to address specific audiences to affect the protest target, use a specific 'vocabulary of protest' that differs from the silenced expressions of the subaltern.

The following chapter outlines the theoretical approach of this thesis, first examining Spivak's concept of subalternity and her conclusion that the subaltern cannot speak. The chapter then takes a neo-institutionalist perspective before it continues with an

investigation of the nature of the environmental movement in India. The debate about the Narmada Valley Development Project (NVDP) is at the centre of chapter three, which first outlines the historical genesis of the dam projects and then describes the emergence and impact of resulting counter-movements in two steps. The following chapter contains the findings of my research. It differentiates between the material, political, and ideological expressions of a movement and investigates these expressions both in terms of the NBA's subaltern groups and the movement as a whole. Revisiting the theoretical insights from chapter two, chapter five discusses the findings obtained, distinguishing between three different audiences: the state and relevant funding agencies, their urban and transnational reference publics, and dam-affected people in the valley. The final chapter summarises the lessons learnt and connects the dots to draw a conclusion underlining that movements like the NBA cannot make the silenced voices of the subaltern heard.

2 Subaltern Struggles

The theoretical project of postcolonialism offers alternatives to Western ways of knowing that inform development theory and practice of the post-colonial period. With its main emphasis on 'the cultural', postcolonial studies add to development theorists' focus on material conditions a further dimension that accounts for 'indigenous knowledges' and subaltern understandings of the world (Sharp 2008). And yet, "development studies does not tend to listen to subalterns and postcolonial studies does not tend to concern itself with whether the subaltern is eating." (Sylvester 1999, p. 703) To bridge this gap, this chapter connects postcolonial insights grounded in Spivak's seminal essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) to patterns of development and resistance in world society and India in particular, moving from academic accounts to actual political practices.

2.1 Subalternity and Silence

The notion of "the subaltern" emanated from Antonio Gramsci's Marxist writings on the "subaltern classes", which deal with the role of the intellectual in the cultural and political struggle of the subaltern (Spivak 1999, p. 283). Ranajit Guha later redefined Gramsci's term 'subaltern' in the context of postcolonialism as "*the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the 'elite'*", whereby 'elite' refers to dominant foreign and indigenous groups (Ranajit Guha 1988, p. 44). In addition to this, regional economic and social developments create what Spivak calls "the floating buffer zone of the regional elite-subaltern", which includes ambiguous groups extending from impoverished landlords to rich or upper-middle peasants (Spivak 1999, p.

284f.). Conscious of the “essentializing language” used by Guha, Spivak resists an explicit definition of the subaltern in her 1988 essay (Spivak 1999, p. 285). Instead, she introduces the concept of epistemic violence to describe the violence towards non-Western ways of knowing used in the “project to constitute the colonial subject as Other.” (ibid., p. 280f.) In this context, Spivak locates the subaltern subject at “the margins (one can just as well say the silent, silenced center) of the circuit marked out by this epistemic violence, men and women among the illiterate peasantry, the tribals, the lowest strata of the urban subproletariat.” (ibid., p. 283)

To clarify the consequences of epistemic violence, Spivak draws on the example of the British abolition of widow sacrifice in India under East India Company rule, laid down in the Bengal Sati Regulation of 1829, which banned “the practice of *suttee*, or of burning or burying alive the widow of Hindus” (Harlow et al. 2003, p. 361). The fact that the Sanskrit word *sati*, misspelled by the British as *suttee*, describes a good and virtuous wife, already traces the bottom line of Spivak’s critique in an ironical way, for “white men, seeking to save brown women from brown men, impose upon those women a greater ideological constriction by absolutely identifying, *within discursive practice*, good-wifehood with self-immolation on the husband’s pyre.” (Spivak 1988, p. 305) The female subaltern subject in this discourse can either be a victim or the *sati* who “actually wanted to die” (Spivak 1999, p. 297), but there is no space from which she can speak (ibid., p. 307).

Spivak then presents the suicide of Bhuvaneshwari Bhaduri as “an unemphatic, ad hoc, subaltern rewriting of the social text of *sati*-sucide” (Spivak 1988, p. 308). The author relates that, in the year 1926, the sixteen- or seventeen-year-old Bhuvaneshwari was a secret member of a group involved in the armed struggle for Indian independence and, unable to commit a political assassination, she hanged herself to safeguard the group (ibid., p. 307). Convinced that her death would be reduced to “the outcome of an illegitimate passion”, she waited for the onset of menstruation to disprove an illicit pregnancy (ibid., p. 307). Spivak, who reads this gesture as “a reversal of the interdict against a menstruating widow’s right to immolate herself”, points out that Bhuvaneshwari’s family eventually diagnosed her death as a case of illicit love (ibid., p. 308). The young woman’s (political) attempt to resist misreading—to speak—met with an absolute negation of female agency (Morris 2010, p. 5f.). It is this experience of epistemic violence, grounded here in the British codification of Hindu Law, which makes the subaltern by (non)definition a not necessarily silent but silenced subject (Spivak 1988, p. 307f.).

On the whole, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” is a critique of the position of Western intellectuals like Foucault and Deleuze, who, according to the author, ignore the epistemic violence of imperialism when they express that “the oppressed, if given the chance [. . .] and on the way to solidarity through alliance politics [. . .] *can speak and know their conditions.*” (ibid., p. 283) For Spivak, however, to confront the subaltern, the heterogeneous Other, “is not to represent *(vertreten)* them but to learn to represent *(darstellen)* ourselves.” (ibid., p. 288f.) This theoretical discourse is broken down in this thesis into an empirical approach

to the case of the NBA in order to analyse the anti-dam movement's interaction with subaltern groups via often urban and intellectual activists and to discuss the movement's ways of re(-)presenting itself and the subaltern. In this context, I consider the tribal or *adivasi* population[1] in the Narmada Valley as subaltern, for adivasis experience epistemic violence in various forms. An example can be found in the pathway for 'tribal development' prescribed by the post-colonial Indian state (Das Gupta 2020).

2.2 World Society and 'the Powerless'

Goals falling under the general rubric of 'development' are described by Meyer et al. (1997) as embedded in world-cultural models, which shape world society of the post-colonial era. Following these authors, I make use of the concept of world society to illustrate the global spread of norms and principles that gave rise to conflicts over development in the Narmada Valley. In this view, the institutionalisation of world-cultural models leads to structurally similar, rationalised nation-states as responsible actors in a stateless world society (Meyer et al. 1997, p. 145). Scientists and professionals, seen as "disinterested rationalized others", are the mediators and cultural innovators of this society, enabling nation-states to implement advanced models like sustainable socioeconomic development (ibid., p. 165). Confronted with often conflicting principles from a variety of dominant models, such as economic growth and environmental protection, rationalised actors like nation-states tend to decouple formal models from actual practices (ibid., p. 153). In consequence, international organisations, together with activist groups and other domestic actors, call attention to gaps and failures in the implementation of world-cultural scripts to enforce conformity of nation-states with "world-approved policies" (ibid., p. 160).

By asking why only a small number of conflicts attract the attention of an international audience, Bob (2002) extends the conclusion of Meyer et al. (1997) that "the growing list of perceived 'social problems' in the world indicates not the weakness of world-cultural institutions but their strength." (ibid., p. 175) The author argues that non-Western local movements must conform to the needs of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to attract support of "potential backers in Western nations" (Bob 2002, p. 40). Accordingly, I assume that the NBA simplifies and universalises the voices of the subaltern

[1] The Hindi word *ādivāsī* translates to "Original Inhabitants" and refers to groups termed as Scheduled Tribes in the Constitution of India. The term 'tribe', however, remains undefined in the Constitution, and "[n]o standard term has been accepted to denominate the people who are classified as of tribal origin." (GOI 1961, p. 1) Baviskar (1997) discusses the applicability of the concept of 'tribe' in India and points out that the notion "has been hard to pin down because of the porosity of the boundary between 'tribe' and 'non-tribe', both of which have existed side-by-side for centuries." (Baviskar 1997, p. 86) Chatterjee (2016) maintains that the neologism 'adivasi' describes the same concept as 'tribe' and suggests to consider such labels "as marks of a savage coloniality" (Chatterjee 2016, p. 34). Aware of the problems associated with these terms, I use both the widespread terminology of 'tribe' as well as the specifically Indian 'adivasi' to refer in this thesis to the subaltern groups outlined above.

to make them relevant to a wider audience (Bob 2002, p. 40). Yet, Lipsky's (1968) work on protest as a political resource of relatively powerless groups adds to this assumption a more nuanced understanding of movements' audiences. In this regard, the problem of "the powerless"—groups that do not possess sufficient resources to directly confront their target—is "to activate 'third parties' to enter the implicit or explicit bargaining arena" of an objected policy (Lipsky 1968, p. 1145). 'Third parties' refers here to the reference publics and interest groups of a protest target, who interact with the protest constituents through communications media (ibid., p. 1153). In the Narmada case, I identify the urban 'elite'—scientists and professionals who influence public opinion in India's cities—and international NGOs, embodying the authority of sciences and professions, as the dominant third parties. Both act as the reference publics of the NBA's protest targets, namely the Indian state and global institutions like the WB. Third parties may also form alliances with a protest group if their value orientation in the conflict is similar (ibid., p. 1146). As will be seen in later chapters, such alliances between the NBA and urban and international actors were the movement's key to critical bargaining arenas.

2.3 Environmentalism and Development

As an alternative to Tilly's (1986) concept of the "repertoire of contention", Guha and Martinez-Alier (1997) offer what they term the "vocabulary of protest" to allow for a better description of the NBA's direct and traditional forms of action. In this way, they add to Tilly's solely instrumental understanding of direct action an expressive dimension, which emphasises that social protesters not only intend to effectively defend their economic and political interests with their strategies but also to pass judgements in "struggles over meaning" (Ramachandra Guha and Martinez-Alier 1997, p. 13). With reference to Lipsky (1968), I suggest that statements of this expressive dimension are also indirect forms of action, used by the NBA to convey information to third parties via communications media. Furthermore, this concept allows me to identify subaltern statements of purpose *and* belief in local forms of protest that are seldom part of a larger media campaign. By learning to interpret the protest groups' vocabularies, it becomes possible to gain a better understanding of their definitions of and positions in the struggle.

In order to compare the expressions of the NBA and adivasis involved in the movement, I use a structure developed by Gadgil and Guha (1994), who analysed the environmental movement in India—including anti-dam movements like the NBA—with regard to its material, political, and ideological contexts. By and large, the authors argue that the country's economic development (colonial exploitation and planned development) and the social origins of the movement (threats to survival and livelihood options) resulted in an "environmentalism of the poor" specific to India (Gadgil et al. 1994, p. 131ff.). In comparison with its "rich" counterparts, this type of environmentalism is characterised by direct action and traditional forms of protest, a less scientific debate, and more serious

consequences of the environmental degradation for human populations. The material, political, and ideological expressions of traditional Indian environmentalism thus emphasise a struggle for livelihood options that is missing in Western movements, which are primarily concerned with the conservation of 'wilderness' (Gadgil et al. 1994, p. 130ff.). And yet, I maintain that the authors fail to distinguish between a movement and its subaltern constituents, an imbalance which this thesis seeks to redress.

3 Dams and Development in the Narmada Valley

As part of irrigation or multipurpose hydroelectricity projects, large dams experienced a rise and fall in the last century, with the rate of project completions worldwide culminating in the 1960s (Khagram 2004, p. 9). At the same time, opposition to major schemes started to grow in the United States and in many European countries, so that "big dam proponents progressively moved their activities to countries where the demand for these projects was still high, anti-dam opposition was muted, and democratic and environmental norms less institutionalized." (ibid., p. 179) In line with this, most of India's large dams[1] were completed in the 1970s and 1980s, when domestic public resistance was still manageable (CWC 2019b, p. 31). But the decades of large-scale dam building in India already began with the country's independence in 1947 and an overriding policy of modernisation and rapid industrialisation (Khagram 2004, p. 68). This path was marked by the vision of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, of dams as "the temples of modern India" for which tribal people facing displacement "should suffer in the interest of the country." (De 2014, p. 3f.) Today, the total number of large dams in India amounts to 5,745, with 411 still being under construction (CWC 2019b, p. 11). Among 70 completed dams of national importance, six are located in the Narmada Basin (ibid., p. 21ff.).[2]

3.1 Narmada Valley Development Project

The Narmada River originates 1,057 metres above sea level in the Maikal Hills of Madhya Pradesh, the geographic heart of India. On its 1,312-kilometre-long way to the Arabian

[1]The Central Water Commission (CWC) of the Government of India uses a different definition of large dams than the International Commission on Large Dams. According to the CWC (2019), large dams typically exceed a height of 15 metres. Moreover, dams with a height between 10 and 15 metres are classified as large if they comply with at least one of five additional conditions.

[2]Dams with a height of 100 metres and above or with storage capacity of one cubic kilometre and above are classified by the CWC (2019) as "of national importance". Ordered by year of completion, the six dams are Tawa Dam (1978), Karjan (1987), Rani Avantibai Lodhi Sagar (1988), Tawa (2001), Indira Sagar (2006), and Sardar Sarovar (2017).

Sea, the country's fifth-largest river is fed by 41 major tributaries. In three riparian states, the resulting drainage basin covers a total of 98,796 square kilometres. About 87 percent of the Narmada Basin is located in Madhya Pradesh, where India's largest west-flowing river winds its way through the Vindhya Ranges in the north and the Satpura Ranges in the south. The Narmada then touches Maharashtra, which is covered by only 1.5 percent of the river basin, before it enters Gujarat to meander the last 159 kilometres to the Gulf of Khambhat (CWC 2019a). Among the three riparian states, Madhya Pradesh has the largest proportion of tribal people in the population, which was about one fifth in 2001 (GOI 2001). According to census data for the state's districts, more than one third of the population in the main part of the basin can be considered tribal (Neuß 2012, p. 10). Especially the forests in the hilly areas are home to major tribal groups (Gond, Baiga, Kol, and Korku in the upper and Bhil in the lower basin), many of whom left the plains due to the extension of agriculture and large-scale deforestation (ibid., p. 8ff.).

On the whole, the Narmada Basin is extremely fertile, as highly moisture-retentive black soils of considerable depth are found particularly in the middle and lower basin (CWC 2019a, p. 52). Between June and September, this area receives almost its entire annual rainfall, when the southwest monsoon winds blow over the Indian subcontinent. The Narmada is also of particular cultural importance, since it is perhaps the most important river "of Hinduism as a whole." (A. Kothari et al. 1984, p. 907) Every year, a considerable number of pilgrims perform the 2,600-kilometre-long Narmada Parikrama, which is a clockwise circumambulation of the river that involves locally specific rites at the valley's numerous sacred spots (Neuß 2012, p. 17). In recent years, however, a large number of temples and shrines have been submerged by the NVDP's series of dams (ibid., p. 17). Aside from that, almost one sixth of the old pilgrimage path has disappeared because 428 kilometres of the so-called *parikramāpatha* fall in the submergence zone of the SSD, the largest structure of the development project (ibid., p. 13).

Overall, the master plan of the NVDP envisages the construction of a network of dams in a total of 30 major, about 135 medium, and more than 3,000 minor projects on the Narmada and its tributaries (A. Kothari et al. 1984, p. 908).[3] This scheme is the result of a decade-long dispute over water between the riparian states (and drought-prone Rajasthan), settled under the Interstate River Water Disputes Act, 1956 by a specially appointed tribunal (Wood 2007, p. 106ff.). After ten years of deliberations, the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal gave its revised, final award in December 1979, allocating to the states

[3]The classification of dams into major, medium, and minor projects is based on the culturable command area (CCA) of the associated irrigation schemes. Major projects have a CCA of more than 10,000 hectare, medium projects of 400 to 10,000 hectare, and minor schemes of below 400 hectare (A. Kothari et al. 1984, p. 908). Furthermore, the number of projects included in the NVDP varies from one document to another. In 1985, for example, the WB mentioned that "[p]resent plans call for the construction of 30 major projects [...], some 400 medium irrigation schemes, and several thousand minor schemes" (World Bank 1985).

their respective shares of the utilisable quantum of Narmada waters and determining the distribution of related costs and benefits. Besides, the Tribunal limited the height of the SSD by setting its full reservoir level at almost 139 metres, allocated the shares of hydroelectric power generated at the dam site, and laid down rules for the acquisition of land and the rehabilitation of the SSD "oustees" (displaced persons) in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh (IELRC 2009a). Thereby, the 1979 Award paved the way for development plans that were first unfolded after an initial basin-wide investigation in 1946 (Wood 2007, p. 94). In 1961, fifteen years later, Prime Minister Nehru inaugurated the most promising dam site at Navagam in Gujarat (ibid., p. 96). However, it took another 56 years to complete the Navagam Dam, later renamed Sardar Sarovar in memory of India's first Home Minister Sardar Vallabhai Patel, who is also depicted by the world's tallest statue, towering slightly downstream from the SSD (Khagram 2004, p. 238).

3.2 Displacement of Tribal Populations

Since the Tribunal's 1979 Award, only twelve major projects of the NVDP have been completed.[4] Delays in the formulation and implementation of these projects were in part due to a political and administrative framework at union and state level that complicated decision-making processes; another relevant factor was the growing opposition to large dams (ibid., p. 38ff.). Already in 1976, grassroots mobilisation by the people's science movement *Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad* resulted in India's first successful campaign against a large dam. Together with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), this movement to protect the Silent Valley succeeded in sparking transnational criticism of the hydroelectric power scheme in Kerala's tropical forest. In 1984, its campaign finally convinced the state authorities to incorporate the project area into a national park (ibid., p. 42ff.). Inspired by this victory, anti-dam movements across India gained momentum during the 1980s. In a primarily tribal area of Chhattisgarh (then part of Madhya Pradesh), opponents of the Bodhghat Project made use of the newly passed Forest Conservation Act, 1980 to bring the construction work at the dam site to a halt. Moreover, domestic as well as foreign NGOs, such as the WWF and Survival International, urged the WB to withdraw its funding offer for the dam in 1988 (ibid., p. 49f.). Even though the state government at that time abandoned Bodhghat in 1995, the current Bhupesh Baghel government moves ahead to resurrect the irrigation scheme (John 2020).

In the Narmada Valley, much attention was focused on Gujarat's SSD, as the backwaters of its reservoir cause displacement in all three riparian states.[5] Thus, the first episode of

[4]Three major projects are currently listed as "ongoing" while half of the 30 major projects have been "proposed" (CWC 2019a, p. 55). Barna (1975) was the first to be completed on one of the Narmada's tributaries; on the main river it was Rani Awanti Bai Sagar (1988) (CWC 2019b).

[5]According to the Independent Review of 1992, "[a]t least 100,000 people, in 245 villages, live in the area affected by submergence. In Gujarat and Maharashtra almost all are tribals. A great many of

domestic resistance occurred when the Government of Gujarat entered into negotiations with foreign funding agencies in 1978. Khagram (2004), who highlights the transnational links of the Narmada movement, notes, however, that this resistance "was ultimately unsuccessful because of the weakness of the tribal groups and local nongovernmental organizations involved." (Khagram 2004, p. 83) Soon thereafter, Arjun Singh of the Congress Party in Madhya Pradesh began to mobilise merchants and middle-class farmers in the severely affected Nimar region against the first orders of the Tribunal, but the resulting movement to "save Nimar" collapsed shortly after Singh won the state elections that same year (Baviskar 2005, p. 202). Another episode of domestic resistance followed in the early 1980s against a Gujarat resolution of June 1979 that—in accordance with the Tribunal's rulings—excluded oustees without legal titles to their lands from compensation claims (Khagram 2004, p. 87f.). Since this mainly concerned tribal people who lived as "encroachers" on state-owned forest and wastelands, several groups emerged to provide various forms of assistance to affected tribal communities (Wood 2007, p. 133ff.).

One of these groups is ARCH-Vahini, an NGO that was formed in 1980, when Anil Patel, founder of Action Research in Community Health (ARCH), teamed up with young activists of the *Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini*, who worked on rehabilitation issues in 19 Gujarat villages (ibid., p. 135). According to Patel, ARCH-Vahini first approached tribal villages in July 1980. At that time, "[t]he tribals knew nothing about the project and their imminent displacement. The landowners among them were served Land Acquisition notices, but they knew little about their entitlements, or about the place they were going to be resettled." (Jean Drèze 1997, p. 70) Hence, the activists started to build a campaign for improved resettlement and rehabilitation (R&R) of Gujarat's tribal people. In 1983, they sent a letter to the WB, which was to finance the Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP) with credits and loans totalling US $450 million. The NGO argued on behalf of the tribals without land titles and thus drew the bank's attention to a hitherto unknown problem. By mid-1984, ARCH-Vahini extended its campaign to the transnational sphere, with Oxfam-UK becoming the "major link between the concerned officers and executive directors of the World Bank and the tribals." (ibid., p. 75) Much of this exchange found expression in the 1985 loan agreement, in which the WB set out a resettlement policy that required Gujarat to "give a minimum of two hectares of land to each encroacher and each major son." (ibid., p. 77) Two years later, ARCH-Vahini's strategy finally paid off, when Gujarat announced the valley's most comprehensive R&R policy (Wood 2007, p. 139).

them are encroachers [...]. There are thousands of tribal people in the submergence area of Madhya Pradesh as well, many of whom are encroachers." (IELRC 2009b, p. 1) Baviskar adds that "19 [of the 245 villages] lie in Gujarat, 33 in Maharashtra, and 193 Madhya Pradesh." (Baviskar 2005, p. 200)

3.3 Dams as 'Destructive Development'

While ARCH-Vahini and other like-minded NGOs in Gujarat started to provide critical support for the implementation of the new R&R policy, similar organisations in the neighbouring states were sceptical about the plans (Dwivedi 1998, p. 146). Moreover, newly formed groups like the *Narmada Dharangrastha Samiti* in Maharashtra and the *Narmada Ghati Navnirman Samiti* in Madhya Pradesh also raised environmental concerns, thereby drawing attention to a wider set of issues (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2007, p. 433). Already in mid-1983, a team of Delhi University students around Ashish Kothari, a founding member of the environmental action group Kalpavriksh,[6] conducted the first independent study of the NVDP's likely environmental impact. In their report, the authors questioned not only the possibility of R&R but also "whether the project as a whole [...] and the broad policy behind it, are really 'development' in the true sense of the word or whether they may not lead to a chain of environmentally destructive consequences which could negate all the short-term gains made by the project." (A. Kothari et al. 1984, p. 907) This fundamental critique of the scheme was the first step towards a strategic split between the groups in the Narmada Valley that occurred in 1987 and manifested itself in the formation of the NBA between summer 1988 and 1989 (Babu 2010; Wood 2007).[7]

Medha Patkar, who left her PhD position at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences to work with tribal people on the Maharashtra side of the Narmada, soon became the leading figure of this movement that demanded a complete re-evaluation of the NVDP (Baviskar 2005, p. 202f.). Similar to activists like Patel, Patkar's work in the valley began on the issue of R&R in the submergence zone of the SSD, where she exchanged information with WB consultant Thayer Scudder as early as 1984 (Khagram 2004, p. 92).[8] In 1986, she met with activists of Survival International and the Environmental Defense Fund, who connected her to WB senior officials in Washington, D.C. (ibid., p. 108f.). During that time, Patkar was also involved in the formation of the *Narmada Dharangrastha Samiti* and the *Narmada Ghati Navnirman Samiti*, which—unlike ARCH-Vahini—"announced total opposition to the SSP on environmental, social and economic grounds" in 1988, before joining forces under the banner of the NBA (Dwivedi 1998, p. 147). Added together, the formation of the movement in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh was the expression of a split that loomed since 1987 for three location-related reasons: (i) the environmental

[6] The author of this thesis worked as an intern at Kalpavriksh in Pune, Maharashtra, from 19 June to 11 October, 2019.

[7] The NBA celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2010, declaring that its seeds were sown in 1985 (M. Kumar 2010). But the rather loose formation of the mid-1980s only took on a more formal character towards the end of the decade.

[8] Khagram remarks that "Scudder met local villagers and activists during this field visit, stating: 'Tell me whatever you want, give me in writing whatever you need (with respect to resettlement and tribal rights) because there is going to be a loan agreement with the World Bank and all the governments in India, and I am going to write that part of the agreement.'" (Khagram et al. 2002, p. 213)

impact of the project would be felt mainly in the two upstream states, (ii) many tribal communities there were dependent on the forests that would be submerged, and (iii) the activists considered the R&R of those communities an impossible task due to a scarcity of usable and nearby forest land (Wood 2007, p. 141). This stance was further underpinned by the fact that the right to information and participation of the most adversely affected (tribal) populations was denied, while basic project information was either incomplete or did not exist (ibid., p. 140).

In its initial years, the NBA organised numerous mass protests, with the number of participants rising from 8,000 in February to up to 60,000 in September 1989 (Baviskar 2005, p. 206). One month after this massive National Rally Against Destructive Development in Harsud, Madhya Pradesh, Patkar and two other Indian activists gave a testimony in a subcommittee hearing of the United States House of Representatives on the "serious social and environmental issues which surround the construction of the Sardar Sarovar dam" (USGPO 1990, p. 1). This increased pressure on the WB and other foreign funders of the SSP, since a growing number of activists and politicians from all over the world called for the suspension of project funding (Khagram 2004, p. 119). In response, the WB sent an Independent Review team to the Narmada Valley. It recommended the Bank in a report of 1992 "to step back from the Projects and consider them afresh." (IELRC 2009b, p. 8) The Indian government decided in March 1993 to cancel the WB financing to avert further damage to the NVDP in the international sphere (Wood 2007, p. 160ff.).

Meanwhile, the NBA continued its protests at the national level, with major events like the day-long blocking of a highway bridge over the Narmada with 10,000 people. In December 1990, a six-day march of more than 8,000 people to the SSD site culminated in a month-long *satyagraha* and an indefinite hunger strike by seven movement leaders (Baviskar 2005, p. 207f.). From then on, annual monsoon *satyagraha* led to extensive press coverage and solidarity support from the urban middle-class and intellectuals (Dwivedi 1998, p. 153). International recognition followed in the form of the Right Livelihood Award for the NBA in 1991 and the Goldman Environmental Prize for Patkar in the year after (ibid., p. 156). After an increase of the dam height against existing orders, the movement filed two writ petitions in the Supreme Court of India in 1994 seeking a stay order on the SSD construction and a comprehensive review of the entire project (Khagram 2004, p. 133f.). As a result, work on the already 80.3-metre-high dam remained suspended from 1995 to 1998.[9] The Supreme Court gave its final judgement in 2000, permitting to raise the dam to a height of 90 metres and making further raising conditional on the implementation of an action plan providing for environmental safeguards and reviewed R&R measures (NCA 2019, p. 11). Although the NBA upheld its protest in the valley as well as in court, the SSD reached its full height of 163 metres in 2017. Following an

[9] Construction work on other parts of the project, such as the almost 460-kilometre-long irrigation canal or the powerhouse, continued unimpeded (Wood 2007, p. 172).

unsuccessful hunger strike of Patkar in September 2019, the reservoir reached its highest capacity, flooding the remaining villages in its submergence zone (Yadav 2019). Just one year later, people in low-lying areas of South Gujarat faced an avoidable flood disaster caused by SSD operators who failed to gradually release water from the dam's overfilled reservoir after increased rainfall in the upper Narmada Basin (SANDRP 2020).

4 Expressions of the Protest

Dam projects account for 38.5 percent of the tribal displacement between 1951 and 1989 and have displaced 6.321 million adivasis, not including oustees of the more numerous small-scale dam projects (GOI 2004, p. 163). Another challenge to tribal life in Central India is related to the state alienation of forests and tribal land and the associated commodification of natural resources in recent centuries, which pushed a large number of adivasis into the market economy (Baviskar 2005). This marginalisation of traditional livelihoods gave rise to a series of nature-based conflicts, ranging form struggles over fish stocks or forest produce to larger movements against dams or mines (Gadgil et al. 1994). Gadgil and Guha (1994) and Guha and Martinez-Alier (1997) see the resistance of subaltern groups to the process of resource capture by the 'elite'—embodied in movements like the NBA—as a defining characteristic of the "environmentalism of the poor". Yet, by distinguishing between the material, political, and ideological expressions of the Indian environmental movement, the authors conflate subaltern and non-subaltern experiences (ibid.). For this reason, a distinction is made in this chapter between the tribal constituents of the NBA and the movement as a whole, drawing attention to the different contexts of subaltern struggles in rural India and the activism of urban and intellectual activists.

4.1 Adivasis and Subaltern Expressions

> They told us to leave, "you have no right to stay here" they said. They told us to go anywhere we could. Out of fear we all left. They said they would give us land, but they did not. [. . .] I used to cultivate 20 acres of black fertile land and the produce used to sustain my entire family for the whole year. I had 6–7 heads of cattle; half the land was left for them to graze. After we were driven out, the cattle did not have enough to eat so they died. With the compensation I got I bought 4 acres of land. But the land is not good, I can barely manage to produce enough for 2–4 months. (CAISA n.d.)
>
> *Balu, 70, marginal farmer, Ghatakheri (Madhya Pradesh), Bhilala Tribe—1987*

4.1.1 Colonial and Nation-State Domination

Scheduled Tribes are in the process of integration into the general population. Ten percent of the Indian tribal population live in urban areas. The literacy rate of adivasis increased from 8.53 percent in 1961 to 58.96 percent in 2011 (GOI 2013). At the same time, tribal people "form the bottom socio-economic deciles of the Indian society." (GOI 2004, p. 1) About 44 percent of rural tribal households derive their livelihood from agricultural self-employment, yet the percentage of landless households among tribals is higher than among non-tribals. Among the Bhil in Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh, landlessness amounts to an average of 53.4 percent. Even though land seems to be abundant in the tribal areas of Central India, the average size of land per household is 1.09 hectares, which is often not sufficient to meet the subsistence needs of an entire household (ibid., p. 127ff.). In order to understand the small legal landholdings of adivasis as one *material expression* of tribal existence, the following paragraphs put them into the context of colonial and nation-state domination that denied tribal rights to land and forests.

For most of the tribal population in India, the central state was virtually non-existent until the end of the 18th century. The vast forests and plateaus of the country allowed them an isolated existence away from foreign concepts of land and labour. Tribal communities were the owners of their land, whose varied use was usually regulated by customary laws (ibid., p. 16ff.). This indigenous system of informal landownership came to an end with the 1793 Permanent Settlement agreement between the East India Company and landlords from Bengal (Bandyopadhyay 1993, p. 151). Revenue-collecting agents—*muttadars*, *jagirdars*, *thekadars*, and *zamindars*—were introduced as intermediaries in tribal areas (GOI 2004, p. 16). The British gradually converted tribal landowners into land-tenants, catapulting them "from an oral promise-based community-legitimated economy into [a] formal documentation-based authoritarian economy with which they were totally unfamiliar and in which they could hardly be expected to participate" (ibid., p. 16). This marginalisation of adivasis was further compounded in the following century when the colonial rulers began to exploit forests, the mainstay of most tribal livelihoods.

In 1881, the tribes of the Satpura Hills consumed the produce of at least 31 species of trees as food, but "tribals in forest areas normally know of over a hundred natural products, besides the staples, that can be gathered without cultivation." (Ramachandra Guha 1983, p. 1883) Deforestation therefore poses a serious threat to forest-dwelling communities, especially in view of the dispossession of poor peasants and tribals since the 18th century, which has pushed a large number of adivasis into the heavily forested hill areas of Central India (Neuß 2012, p. 8ff.). Still, the forest cover of the country dropped from 55.5 million hectares between 1972 and 1975 to 32.8 million hectares in the 1990s, equivalent to a decrease from 16.89 to about 10 percent of the total land area (Baviskar 2005, p. 28). This decline reflects an exploitation of forests that accelerated with the railway expansion under Company and Crown rule in India. Between 1853 and 1910, the

kilometrage of Indian railways rose from 32 to 51,658, which led to the destruction of large chunks of forest to meet the demand for railway sleepers and fuel for the locomotives (Ramachandra Guha 1983, p. 1883f.). British claims over forests in India were thus formulated in the first Indian Forest Act of 1865. The following 1878 Act ultimately denied tribal people the right to the customary use of forests (ibid., p. 1884). Building on this, the Indian Forest Act, 1927 facilitated further expansion of government-owned forest land through reserved and protected forests (Sarin 2014).

Post-independence, the colonial forest policy, which primarily served imperial interests, was replaced by the 1952 National Forest Policy to follow extensive commercial and industrial imperatives (Ramachandra Guha 1983, p. 1892f.). Development aid agencies like the WB facilitated "the full exploitation and proper development" of (hill) forests—their deforestation and replacement by monocultures of fast-growing species—through numerous surveys and infrastructure projects (ibid., p. 1889). The tribal forest areas in Central India became the heartland of minor forest produce, with Madhya Pradesh alone accounting for almost 50 percent of the total revenue from non-timber forest products from 1976 to 1977. Although the collection of minor forest produce was a vital source of income for impoverished forest dwellers, the "exploitation of the tribals by mercantile interests" turned out to be the reality throughout India (ibid., p. 1890f.).[1]

Given the alienation of tribals from their land, traditional farming methods such as slash-and-burn agriculture as part of shifting cultivation *(jhum)* developed into illegal and often unsustainable cropping practices of adivasis (Ramachandra Guha and Gadgil 1989, p. 151ff.). Baviskar (1997; 2005) shows that since the 1970s, most of the land cultivated by Bhilala adivasis in Anjanvara, a small village in the southwest corner of Madhya Pradesh, consists of what is locally known as *nevad*, 'new fields' encroaching upon state-owned forest land. As a settled form of *jhum*, *nevad* destroys and depletes forest land, but the practice became necessary for the villagers to meet their subsistence needs. While *nevad* and its equivalents in other regions emerged as a consequence of the state exploitation of natural resources, *nevad* cultivating tribals are denounced as a threat to environmental conservation. (Baviskar 2005, 149ff.) The Forest Conservation Act, 1980 consolidated this position by halting the allotment of forest land to adivasis, disregarding the basic problems of tribal populations (GOI 2004, p. 264). Only the Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA) sought to correct the "historic injustice" done to Scheduled Tribes and other forest-dependent communities (Chemmencheri 2015, p. 2). The FRA recognises individual and community tenure rights, like the right to collect minor forest produce, and empowers

[1] Guha (1983) also gives an example from the Narmada Valley: "In Betal [*recte* Betul] district of Madhya Pradesh, Chiranji seeds are sold by the tribal to the trader at Rs 3 to Rs 5 per kg. The merchant, after separating fruit from seeds, results the same for Rs 50 per kg." (Ramachandra Guha 1983, p. 1890) Hence, the first Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission emphasises in its 1961 report that not only processing but also *major* forest produce has an "enormous scope for gainful employment for the tribals" (GOI 1961, p. 136)

the local village assembly *(gram sabha)* with regard to state-led resettlement projects for wildlife conservation (Chemmencheri 2015, p. 2).[2]

4.1.2 Everyday Forms of Repression and Resistance

The enactment of the FRA can be in part credited to a national alliance of grassroots organisations and other political formations that emerged when the Indian Ministry of Environment and Forests ordered the eviction of all forest encroachers in 2002. In the following year, more than 1,000 adivasis from all over the country raised their voices in a *jan sunwai* (public hearing) in Delhi, presenting their own accounts of evictions and human rights violations (K. Kumar and Kerr 2012, p. 755f.). Chemmencheri (2015) suggests that the FRA movement can be seen as a continuation of a tradition of adivasi resistance that goes back to colonial times. While the history of tribal opposition to state intervention and forest laws is long and multifaceted (Shah 2004), this section demonstrates that the local involvement of NGOs and activist groups since the 1980s had a significant impact on the *political expressions* of tribal life in the Narmada Valley.

First tribal movements already occurred in the late 18th century, when the British began to subordinate the populations of annexed tribal kingdoms (ibid.). The Bhil people of Khandesh, a geographic region in the northwest corner of Maharashtra, for instance, revolted multiple times between 1818 and 1831 against British attempts to convert them into (settled) cultivators (Benjamin et al. 2007; Gough 1976). Another phase of tribal movements coincided with the intensification of colonialism in India during the British Raj in the middle of the 19th century. These uprisings were typically provoked by the elite capture of land and forest resources, resulting in the dispossession of adivasis and the depletion of their sources of livelihood (Shah 2004). Beyond that, efforts of colonial administrators intensified to turn *jhum* practising tribals into plough agriculturalists, since the shifting 'axe cultivators' put valuable timber species at risk.

The Baiga of the upper Narmada Basin were the first shifting cultivators to be confronted with serious state efforts to stop *jhum* in the 1860s, forcing many tribal people to flee to neighbouring princely states. The government lifted its total ban on *jhum* in 1890 and converted a 9,680-hectare-large forest area (useless for timber production) into a Baiga reserve where *jhum* was explicitly permitted (Ramachandra Guha and Gadgil 1989, p. 151ff.). Those Baiga who did not resettle in the dedicated 'Baiga Chak' either accepted the terms of plough cultivation or opposed the state intervention through "forms of daily resistance, both symbolic and material" (Scott 1985, p. 349). Their protest found expression in the illegal practice of *jhum*, the nonpayment of taxes, and a petition that

[2]The FRA, formally titled The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, met with substantial criticism from conservationists, environmentalists, and wildlife activists. On the other hand, tribal groups criticised that the act does not include the (re)distribution of land (Saravanan 2009).

signalised the Baiga's will to preserve their cultural heritage (Ramachandra Guha and Gadgil 1989, p. 153). In contrast, opposition to the *jhum* prohibition in Bastar, a princely state during the British Raj and now a district of the Central Indian state of Chhattisgarh, took the form of a major rebellion in 1910. It was mainly Maria and Muria Gond adivasis who went on hunger strike, blocked roads, attacked buildings and infrastructure, looted markets and killed merchants and state officials (ibid., p. 155).

As shown in the previous section, the tradition of *jhum* evolved in the 20th century into what the Bhilala of Anjanvara refer to as *nevad*, fields that encroach on forest land but are necessary for subsistence (Baviskar 1997, 2005). The fact that *nevad* is illegal—now for the cause of conservation—has put the cultivators in a constant dread of eviction, with profound implications for the political expressions of tribal people:

> For so long had adivasis been held in thrall by officialdom — from the awful *motla sahib* (big man) in his jeep whose language they did not speak, to the cryptic, ominous-looking, written records of the patvari [village accountant], backed by the courts, jail and the brute force of the policeman's lathi [bamboo stick] — that they would shrink from a confrontation. (Baviskar 2005, p. 180)

The illegal fields gave rise to a constant flow of "unofficial transactions" from encroachers to corrupt forest officials, establishing "an unequal yet symbiotic relationship between the lower reaches of the state and adivasis" (ibid., p. 153). In response also to the failure of electoral politics to translate tribal interests into action (ibid., p. 84f.), activists of the Social Work and Research Centre formed the *Khedut Mazdoor Chetna Sangath* (Peasants and Workers Consciousness Union; KMCS) in 1982 to organise the Bhil tribes of Madhya Pradesh's lower Narmada Basin in a trade union (ibid., p. 176).

Baviskar (2005), who analysed the politics of the KMCS, identifies the transformation of adivasi consciousness as crucial for the activists' political mobilisation of 95 tribal villages by the mid-1990s: "The Sangath had to reinforce that part of the adivasi consciousness that resisted state hegemony, by demystifying the workings of the state apparatus, rendering its structure intelligible and therefore vulnerable." (ibid., p. 180) The activists learned local languages, articulated local problems, and used their networking skills to unite separate and in some cases feuding tribal communities (Babu 2010, p. 186). Slogans such as "*Adivasi ekta zindabad!*" (Long live adivasi unity!) and "*Jangal jamin kunin se? Amri se! Amri se!*" (Whose is the forest land? It is ours! It is ours!) built confidence in the adivasis' ability to resist the state, enabling them to confront government officials with a new vocabulary of protest (Baviskar 2005, p. 178ff.). Nonetheless, adivasi activists remained dependent on non-tribal leadership in dealing with an English-speaking world outside the villages (ibid., p. 189f.). The bottom line is that *nevad* revived in the united member villages of the KMCS, but the outside activists were unable to organise a self-reliant resistance of adivasis to corrupt state appropriation (ibid., p. 191ff.). The formation of the NBA finally drew the activists' attention to another dimension of state exploitation,

since Anjanvara and 25 other KMCS villages lay in the submergence zone of the SSD. As part of the NBA, the Union began to question the resource-intensive model of production that is embedded in "an ecologically unsustainable and inherently inegalitarian model of 'development', which could only be opposed in its entirety." (Baviskar 2005, p. 195f.)

4.1.3 Forests and the River as Sources of Subsistence

The political mobilisation of Bhil people by activists of the KMCS in 95 villages along the Narmada in Madhya Pradesh is one example among many others in the region, which illustrate an ideologically charged 'transformation of adivasi consciousness' in terms of the relationship between tribal people and the state.[3] The activists identified *nevad* as an economic compulsion and rewrote it from a forest crime to a primal right of adivasis, an assertion of customary ownership (ibid., p. 178f.). Consequently, adivasis extended their *nevad* holdings from the fragile hill slopes deep into the forests, felling almost all the trees in some villages (Baviskar 1997, p. 206). Analysing the discourse of environmentalism in the KMCS, Baviskar (1997) shows that the unsustainable resource use in KMCS villages caused disagreement between tribal and non-tribal leaders of the Union, of whom only the latter (now also affiliated with the NBA) understood control over natural resources as a means to 'sustainable development' (ibid., p. 221). This raises not only the question of who is the better spokesperson for 'non-leading' adivasis but also of the extent to which the actions of tribal people, in everyday life as well as in political movements, are imbued with "an internally consistent system of values." (Ramachandra Guha and Gadgil 1989, p. 175) Aware that I cannot reconstruct unexpressed ideologies of the subaltern, the following paragraphs offer a selection of fragments that shall help to understand the *ideological expressions* of adivasis along the Narmada.

An increased pressure on natural resources that adivasis depend on contributed to an economic as well as political marginalisation of tribal people. Moreover, the state-sponsored depletion of their sources of subsistence translated into increasingly unsustainable resource use practices of adivasis, as the example of *nevad* illustrates. The decision of Bhils and Bhilala in the lower Narmada Basin to clear forests for farm land clouds the image of tribals as "champions of sustainable development" (GOI 2004, p. 466). In order to bring adivasis' customs, beliefs, and traditions together with an apparent imbalance between their needs and preservation of natural resources, Baviskar (2005) took a closer look at the actions of Bhilala in Anjanvara in relation to nature. The author revealed supernatural aspects of the local conception of nature; nature as an agent with consciousness. The capability of nature to regenerate is seen as separate from ecological change and increased pressure on resources, with rituals rendering conservation measures obsolete: "While

[3] Other examples include the *Adivasi Mukti Sangathan* (Tribal Liberation Organisation) in Madhya Pradesh and the *Kashtakari Sanghatana* (Toilers Organisation) and *Shramik Sanghatana* (Workers Organisation) in Maharashtra (Baviskar 1997, p. 204).

reverence for nature is evident in the myths and many ceremonies which attempt to secure nature's co-operation, that ideology does not translate into a conservationist ethic or a set of ecologically sustainable practices." (Baviskar 2005, p. 173) This shows that the 'environmentalism' inherent in the Bhilala culture presupposes not only the existence of the self-sustaining forest but also its sustainable use by others.

The most extreme form of intervention in the forest came with the damming of the Narmada and its tributaries, leading to the submergence of at least 350,000 hectares of forest land (A. Kothari et al. 1984, p. 913). Anjanvara's Bhilala witnessed the flooding of their village in 2004; the year before, they had felled the remaining trees of their forest to sell valuable timber upstream (Baviskar 2005, p. 274). Already 20 years earlier, Kothari et al. (1984) remarked that the destruction of a forest represents a disruptive event for adivasis, with serious cultural and psychological consequences (A. Kothari et al. 1984, p. 913ff.). Less often investigated is the importance of the Narmada itself for adivasis in its drainage basin, but Baviskar (2005) shows that the river is central to the Bhilala's song of creation *(gayana)*: "Throughout the gayana flows the Narmada, bestowing life-giving gifts to all whom she meets, naming and making sacred the geography along her banks. [...] Till the end, the Narmada of the myth is benevolent and nurturing — creating, planting and irrigating, just like her counterpart in real life." (Baviskar 2005, p. 165f.) Against this background, the obstruction of the river by thousands of dams, turning large parts of the Narmada into a 'dead' reservoir, appears as disturbing as the deforestation.

Apart from the consequences for the adivasi–nature relationship, the NVDP leads to massive tribal displacement, with the SSP alone displacing an estimated figure of 1.271 million adivasis (GOI 2004, p. 163). In view of tribals' political actions related to the construction of the dams, 'tribal aspirations' remain blurred when only looking at the protest organised by outside activists. In order to examine the ideological expressions of adivasis in the Narmada movement, it is necessary to link their political actions to a larger system of values. For the Bhilala, this includes a deep respect for the earth and nature, evident in religious practices as well as in everyday life (Baviskar 2005, p. 163). However, experiences of political and economic marginalisation together with increasing ecological uncertainties constrain the actions of adivasis (ibid., p. 173). Hence, it seems clear to activists like Patel of ARCH-Vahini that the tribals "have spoken with their actions", showing "a clear preference for good-quality land and security of tenure, and also for greater access to markets and other infrastructural facilities". (Jean Drèze 1997, p. 91) NBA activists, on the other hand, see tribal actions in the context of state exploitation and emphasise the strong links of adivasis with their physical environment. But, as Baviskar already pointed out, "activists' ideology, their very presence and intervention transforms the terms on which an agenda for action is set." (Baviskar 2005, p. 214)

4.2 Activists and Movement Expressions

> Since independence a preference for giganticism has come to dominate our development paradigm. Our planners, politicians and experts have opted wholesale for large dams and gigantic industrial units, and have dug mines and exploited forests in pursuit of their elitist vision of progress and development. The cumulative ill-effects of all this 'development' are now assuming disastrous proportions for a large section of the population, particularly for its most depressed strata – the tribals, the peasants and labourers – along with the already depleting natural resource base and our scarce financial resources [...]. (Dwivedi 1998, p. 148)
>
> *Action Committee for National Rally Against Destructive Development—1989*

4.2.1 Urban Development and Rural Costs

According to Gadgil and Guha (1994), rural–urban conflicts over natural resources translate into the *material expression* of the Indian environmental movement, echoing the struggles of the "victims of ecological degradation", who suffer disproportionately for the national goal of economic development. While these conflicts revolved around forests for most of the 20th century, the authors noted that "water-based conflicts — of which the Narmada controversy is at the moment the most contentious — are likely to dominate the environment debate in India." (Gadgil et al. 1994, p. 103) However, the previous sections indicate that no clear-cut distinction can be made between forest and water-based conflicts, for the latter must be seen in the context of the alienation of forest-dependent communities from their lands. Therefore, this section shows that the material expression of the NBA includes economic, ecological, and social anti-dam arguments based on an overall conclusion drawn from past struggles of the rural subaltern.

Questions that the NBA raised in its evaluation of the SSP reflect these economic, ecological, and social arguments against dams as development, which are linked together in an alternative paradigm of 'sustainable development':

> (a) whose development? (b) at whose cost? (c) what are the quantifiable and non-quantifiable costs and do they outweigh the benefits? (d) is this development sustainable and just? (e) is the project in the national interest? (f) who are the people being asked to make sacrifices in the national interest? (g) can their community life and resource base ever be compensated? (h) are the decisions taken only after complete and comprehensive investigations? (i) since people are dependent on the natural resources affected by the project, are their rights to decide on the harnessing and utilisation of such resources being recognised? (Dwivedi 1998, p. 148)

Accordingly, 'pure' economic arguments of conventional cost-benefit analyses are put in their ecological and social contexts, which shed light on non-quantifiable costs and on those who have to 'pay' them. The pioneering work for this was done by NGO activists who pointed out invaluable losses, such as "cultural disruption", and quantified the costs of submergence of forests, rehabilitation and land acquisition, and other aspects like the loss of minerals in the submergence area. Moreover, these activists emphasised that official calculations exaggerate benefits, like those of irrigation and power production, while underestimating actual costs to ensure that the cost-benefit ratio exceeds the minimum of 1:1.5 required for project sanctioning (A. Kothari et al. 1984, p. 917ff.).

Ecological aspects find expression not only in the movement's cost-benefit analysis of the dam projects but also in a "class-benefit analysis", which draws attention to conflicts over natural resources that take place between poor peasants and tribals and the middle-class and industrial elite in urban centres (Kalpavriksh 1988, p. 13). In this way, the NBA contrasts dam-related environmental degradation in rural areas, such as the waterlogging and salinisation of agricultural soils or the wholesale submergence of forest and wildlife, with gains that, above all, accelerate urban and industrial growth through improved water and electricity supply (Ramachandra Guha and Martinez-Alier 1997). Recognising the needs of natural resource-dependent communities, the activists link upper-class concerns about nature—seen as 'environment' or 'wilderness'—to a view of forests and rivers as vital sources of subsistence (Baviskar 2005, p. 41). Besides, the impact of environmental degradation on people who depend on forest produce and other natural resources extends the social problem of development-induced displacement. Beyond the initial question of R&R, the activists draw a larger picture of subaltern sacrifices 'in the national interest', taking into account the vulnerable position of many project-affected communities. As the community life of local adivasis in particular is tied to a largely unrecognised resource base—alienated first for exploitation, then for conservation—the NBA's social arguments question the possibility of a socially 'just' compensation.

4.2.2 Organisation of the Victims of Development

While the conflicting interests of subsistence-oriented peasants and 'modern' town and city dwellers define the material expression of the NBA, political mobilisation and organisation of protest in the Narmada Valley is typically done by activists with "urban (usually metropolitan), upper-middle-class backgrounds" (Baviskar 1997, p. 211). Resolving this apparent contradiction, one activist, affiliated with the movement since 1992, reflected in an interview that "even the villagers were saying that *highly qualified city friends* are coming and staying with them in simplicity. That made a kind of bridging. Giving up some of their social stigmas and coming together. So the tribal–non-tribal, rural–urban divides were minimised, and *that has probably given strength.*" (Appendix, l. 467ff., emphasis added) Similarly, Gadgil and Guha (1994) see the skills of educated activists as

a key resource of Indian environmentalism, as they delineate its *political expression* with "the organization by social action groups of the victims of environmental degradation." (Gadgil et al. 1994, p. 119) The authors argue that the coordinated initiatives of these action groups are threefold, since their activists are committed to organising the 'victims' for action, to communication and education, and to ecological restoration. In a subsequent essay, Guha and Martinez-Alier (1997) identified a general 'vocabulary of protests' used by domestic environmentalists to attain their first end of preventing ecological destructive economic practices through organised action.

With regard to the NBA, the authors divide the movement's 'vocabulary' into four broad strategies of direct action, employed for the collective show of strength, the disruption of economic life, to exert influence on individual targets, and to put moral pressure on the state. Demonstrations like the 1989 National Rally Against Destructive Development embody the movement's 'show of strength', reinforced by slogans such as *"Koi nahin hatega! Baandh nahin banega!"* (No one will move! The dam will not be built!) (Baviskar 2005, p. 203). More militant methods like the blocking of the Bombay–Agra national highway in 1990 are examples for disruptions that spotlight "the economic costs to the state (or to other sections of the public) if they do not yield to the dissenters." (Ramachandra Guha and Martinez-Alier 1997, p. 14) Individual targets are in the focus of sit-down strikes and similar tactics, which include the attempt of the six-day *Jan Vikas Sangharsh Yatra* (March of the Struggle for People's Development) in 1990 to obstruct work at the SSD site. The same event resulted in an indefinite hunger strike by Patkar and other charismatic activists, challenging the moral standing of the government during 22 days of fasting. In line with this strategy, activists formed the first *samarpit dal* (dedicated squad) during the 1991 monsoon *satyagraha* of villagers in Manibeli, dedicated to drown in the Maharashtra village closest to the SSD site (Baviskar 2005, p. 207f.).

As Baviskar (2005) shows, mobilisation for this direct action in the Narmada Valley relied on the NBA's cooperation with local rural-based mass movements. The Bhilala of Anjanvara, for instance, participated in the NBA through the structure of the KMCS, which allowed for their involvement in all mass demonstrations of the movement (ibid., p. 212). Such groups also helped to implement restorative initiatives like the establishment of alternative 'life schools', so-called *jeevanshalas* (Babu 2010, p. 241). Beyond that, city-based NGOs in India facilitated what Gadgil and Guha (1994) include in initiatives for 'communication and education'; urban action groups disseminated information about the movement, lobbied domestic governments, raised funds, and organised solidarity events (Baviskar 2005, p. 204). In addition, urban intellectuals and "think tanks" constituted the core group and *samanvay samiti* (coordination committee) of the movement, allowing for actions such as the filing of Supreme Court cases (Appendix, l. 319ff.). Another category of organisations involved in the NBA sheds light on a political expression that is not covered by Gadgil and Guha's (1994) analysis of Indian environmentalism: the NBA also coordinated its action with Western NGOs, such as the Environmental Defence Fund or

the International Rivers Network, which primarily seek to pressure international financiers of development projects that have adverse effects on the environment. One expression of this cooperation followed the submergence of Manibeli in 1994, when hundreds of NGOs from all over the world signed the Manibeli Declaration, calling for a complete moratorium on WB funding of large dams (Khagram 2004, p. 196).

4.2.3 Ecological Marxists and Crusading Gandhians

Ideologically, dam-related activism in the Narmada Valley is split into two major strands, with the R&R-oriented NGO ARCH-Vahini in Gujarat on the one hand and the NBA in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, totally opposed to the projects and the underlying model of economic development, on the other (Jean Drèze 1997). Following Gadgil and Guha (1994), only the latter reflects the *ideological expression* of Indian environmentalism, subsumed as the "fostering of a public debate on development options." (Gadgil et al. 1994, p. 120) Thus, the NBA's struggle "to halt the dam" is to be seen in the context of its overall aim "to challenge the development paradigm", as the chapter on the movement's material expression demonstrates (Appendix, l. 474). At this point, it is important to note that the formation of the anti-dam movement in the valley overlaps with the 1984 Bhopal disaster in the capital city of Madhya Pradesh, which resulted in the death of 15,000 to 20,000 people and the contamination of soil and groundwater with toxic chemicals. A few years later, anti-dam activists campaigning against the Indira Sagar Project in Madhya Pradesh explicitly linked the industrial accident to the construction of large dams:

> We see the problem of major dams in the context of the path of development chosen by the Indian State and financed by foreign capital. Major dams are but a part of the – intensive irrigation, HYV seeds, chemical-fertilizers, pesticides, hazardous high tech industries – path of development and we see the opposition to major dams in relation to opposition to such a path of development. (CAISA n.d.)

Soon after the Bhopal–Narmada link was established, the NBA arose and adopted a similar perspective, generally labelled as 'Ecological Marxist' by Gadgil and Guha (1994) because of its focus on the profit-driven destruction of nature by the rich. This tenor was most pronounced in the National Rally Against Destructive Development in 1989, which was followed by a cross-movement meeting in Bhopal. Remarkably, these gatherings served as a starting point for the formation of federations such as the *Jan Vikas Andolan* (Movement for People's Development) and its successor the National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM), initially headed by the NBA leader Patkar (Dwivedi 1998, p. 159f.). Taken together, structures like the NAPM not only facilitated the exchange of ideas and coordinated action but also integrated adivasis of the Narmada Valley into a national struggle against 'destructive development' (Baviskar 2005, p. 267).

At the same time, local protests such as the *Jan Vikas Sangharsh Yatra* of 1990 and its slogan *"Hamaare gaon mein hamaara raj"* (Our rule in our villages) express an opposite ideology that Gadgil and Guha (1994) refer to as 'Crusading Gandhian' (Baviskar 2005, p. 224). In general, the NBA's vocabulary of protest builds on Gandhian tactics of passive resistance—noncooperation with state officials, hunger strikes, sit-down strikes—calling for massive marches as well as decentralised and nonviolent collective action in the villages (ibid., p. 224f.). Attempts to strengthen (tribal) village communities are also evident in the movement's "*nirmaan* [construction] efforts, like the *jeevanshalas*, which is *nirmaan* of the whole community or a sustainability in the community." (Appendix, l. 419f.) The broad aim of these local initiatives is to create a cultural and political alternative to the dominant system, setting an "exemplar of social and ecological harmony" against the states' 'destructive' actions (Gadgil et al. 1994, p. 127). Yet, as Baviskar points out, "the Gandhian slogan of village self-government is deployed pragmatically as one among several strategies to affect the state." (Baviskar 2005, p. 225) The ideological expression of the NBA thus resonates with the attempt to "exploit all political spaces" by appealing to the movement's multiple audiences (ibid., p. 225).

5 Audiences of the Movement

Subaltern expressions of the NBA echo a history of political and economic marginalisation of tribal people in India that dates back to pre-colonial times. Post-independence, the land and forest-based struggles of adivasis took on another, water-based dimension, as the nation-state made natural resource-dependent communities subordinate to imperatives of a 'development' model calling for large dams. These struggles gained new momentum when anti-dam activists mobilised adivasis in the Narmada Valley under the banner of the NBA and represented tribal resistance to the injustices of state appropriation as resistance to 'destructive development'. Connecting to Bob (2002) and Lipsky (1968), I interpret this disparity as the result of a simplification and universalisation of subaltern struggles to address a wider audience of the movement's protest. This is vividly illustrated by a popular photograph used in the international NBA campaign that depicts a sit-down protest of local women against the hydropower project in Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh, in 2006, which emerged as the valley's new focal point after the defeat in the Supreme Court in 2000 (Patkar 2014). Three slogans are written on a wall behind the women, one in Hindi at the top and two in English at the centre (both signed with NBA): *'Har jor jurm kee takkar mein sangharsh hamaara naara hai.'* (Struggle is our slogan in the fight against crime and coercion.), 'NO BIG DAM', and 'DAMN YOU DAM MAKERS'.

5.1 Governments and the World Bank

Formed as rationalised actors in world society, the union government in Delhi as well as the concerned state governments in Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh take formal responsibility for the dam projects in the Narmada Valley (Meyer et al. 1997, p. 153f.). Together with international financial institutions, most notably the WB, they constitute the protest targets of the NBA and the first audience of the movement's protest examined in this chapter. In this respect, global organisation like the WB are not just constituents of the states' 'reference publics', which are discussed in the following section (Lipsky 1968). Instead, I regard them as part of an organisational framework that expands "agendas of concern for international society, including economic development," (Meyer et al. 1997, p. 163) and also as accountable actors involved in the definition and implementation of national policies (S. Kothari 1996, p. 1483). Towards an answer to the question of how subaltern struggles are taken up by movements that claim to defend or even represent subaltern groups, this section takes a closer look at the direct interaction between the NBA and its twofold protest target at the national and global level.

Given that elections are the usual mechanism for influencing state policy in modern representative democracies, it is remarkable that resistance to the NVDP took the form of a non-party movement that ideologically distances itself from the structures of electoral politics. Nevertheless, the NBA also acted pragmatically by "lobbying and pressuring state and central governments directly and through the intercession of sympathetic party politicians." (Baviskar 2005, p. 225) Perhaps the most direct involvement in party politics occurred when movement leader Patkar joined the *Aam Aadmi Party* (Common Man's Party) in 2014. Battling "for land, shelter and water" (Layak 2014), she contested the Mumbai North East constituency in the 2014 Indian general election but lost and left the party the following year because of its "undemocratic" way of functioning (Ranjan 2018, p. 86). Another, more intensively used 'bargaining arena' for the NBA's fight are the courts at the state and union level, which had already proved essential for the previous R&R campaign of activists around ARCH-Vahini (Khagram 2004, p. 95).

Interestingly, the NBA's most important writ petition (No. 319 of 1994) in the Supreme Court of India, which caused work on the SSD to remain suspended from 1995 to 1998, directly referred to the silencing of the local subaltern by project officials:

> The grievance of the Petitioner in this Petition is that a large number of persons, mostly tribals and other marginalised sections of society, are being forcibly displaced and uprooted from homes and lands on account of this Project *without giving them any opportunity to be heard* and without properly compensating or resettling them and without even properly explaining to them the nature of the Project and seeking their participation. (quoted in ibid., p. 134, emphasis added)

As a consequence, the Court appointed Grievance Redressal authorities for each state concerned, who visited resettlement sites and talked to affected villagers but in fact showed no willingness to understand local problems (Aravinda 2000, p. 4003). Similarly, the final judgement of 2000 recognises only the technical facts presented by the governments as valid, as it follows dominant scripts focused on human progress, national development, and dams as tools of development (Rajagopal 2005, p. 374ff.).

On the one hand, accepting the courts as final arbiters between the NBA and the governments limited the scope of the movement's vocabulary of protest. The Supreme Court judgement ultimately delegitimised more direct political action, such as hunger strikes or *jal samarpan* (sacrifice in the water), that the movement had effectively used to pressure the states in terms of SSP-related human suffering (ibid., p. 370). Further, the six-and-a-half year case allowed the governments to justify their "inaction with respect to policy changes by pointing to the sub judice status of all the issues before the court." (Randeria 2004). On the other hand, pressure to take legal action increased, as protesters in the valley faced severe state repression and regular police brutality in the form of *lathi*-charges (Sangvai et al. 1991). In July 2007, for instance, police officials violently dispersed a *satyagraha* in Badwani and arrested Patkar, who then wrote a letter from prison to the National Human Rights Commission (Appendix, l. 500f.). Thereupon, the Commission took cognisance of the complaint and 'set the law in motion' (NHRC 2008). In this way, the state and union courts emerged as the last resort to hold the states accountable for gross violations of law and human rights (Rajagopal 2005, p. 368f.).

Another factor that added to the central role of national law since the mid-1990s was the de facto withdrawal of the WB from the SSP in 1993, which reduced the movement's opportunity structures in the international sphere (ibid., p. 385). Until that point, the NBA leapfrogged the domestic parliamentary arena by making use of a network of Western NGOs that provided access to WB officials and parliaments of influential WB member countries. Although the movement succeeded in pushing the Bank to pull out of the project, the sustained lobbying abroad "led to several unintended long-term structural changes in Washington, DC rather than in India." (Randeria 2004). In sum, the main legacies of the campaign—a policy that ensures consultation with project-affected people prior to project appraisal, the creation of an independent Inspection Panel, and a review of the R&R aspects of all active projects—originated in the WB structures only after the loan agreement for the SSP had already been cancelled (Wade 2011). Since the Government of India did not abandon the project in 1993, the movement's successful campaign to make the WB 'step back' eventually "left the NBA at the mercy of the Indian state, including the Supreme Court" (Rajagopal 2005, p. 368). Given the desperate situation of the struggle in the valley at that time and the illegal submergence of the first six villages without resettlement, the NBA sought relief in the language of law but in the end deprived itself of its traditional vocabulary of protest.

5.2 Urban 'Elite' and Western NGOs

The second protest audience of the NBA includes what Lipsky (1968) terms the 'reference publics' of the protest target, identified in this case as the domestic urban 'elite' and the authority of Western NGOs. Broadly speaking, the former comprises intellectuals and NGO professionals who influence public opinion in India's cities through communications media and thereby challenge a national development model that depicts the construction of large dams as a means for economic and human progress. Resource-rich NGOs in the West, in turn, use the local movement to raise awareness in world society of environmental and human rights violations in the Narmada Valley, thus urging global actors like the WB to harmonise their policies with norms and principles derived from a world-cultural model of sustainable development. Employing media-effective forms of direct action, the NBA managed to form alliances with both groups constituting the reference publics, which enabled the movement to access new arenas for protest. At the same time, this reinforced the need for a simple and universal framing of the struggle, which consolidated itself as the fight against 'destructive development', emphasising the nonconformity of global institutions and the nation-state with world-cultural scripts.

In fact, the emergence of the NBA itself can be conceptualised as an alliance formation of relatively 'powerless' rural-based mass movements, which was fostered by Patkar and other leading figures with urban and academic background. Besides, research and publications by city-based NGOs and independent scientists rationalised the ideological diversity of the various groups, integrating them into a larger movement against a project that breaks-up and disempowers local groups through displacement (S. Kothari 1996, p. 1478). Under the umbrella of the NBA, activists in the valley focused from the outset of the movement on coordinating actions with like-minded reference publics of the Indian states and related international institutions. Nationally, the resulting network of NGOs and intellectuals not only facilitated the mobilisation of up to 60,000 people for mass protests like the National Rally Against Destructive Development in 1989 but also catalysed the formation of a broad alliance of people's movements, which brings together 222 organisations from across India in the NAPM. Headed by NBA leader Patkar, this alliance adopted the struggle against development-induced displacement of subaltern groups and extended it in 2005 with the *Ghar Bachao Ghar Banao Andolan* (Save Homes, Build Homes Movement) from the Narmada Valley to the slum areas of Mumbai (Ranta-Tyrkko et al. 2016).

Moreover, the NBA's social movement character together with its media-effective forms of protest attracted the attention of urban authors, filmmakers, and celebrities, who were instrumental in influencing public opinion in India's cities. This led to the release of three major films about the movement between 1990 and 1995, followed by an internationally well-received British production in 2002.[1] NBA activists then distributed these films to

[1] The Indian productions include "A Valley Refuses to Die" by K. P. Sasi (1990), "A Valley Rises" by Ali Kazimi (1994), and "A Narmada Diary" by Anand Patwardhan and Simantini Dhuru (1995). The

schools and colleges with National Service Scheme units and started discussions with students and other people outside the valley (Appendix, l. 531ff.). In 1999, shaping of public opinion took on a new dimension when the 1997 Booker Prize winner Arundhati Roy dedicated an entire book to the Narmada and leading activists of the NBA.[2] However, in the political context of the late 1990s, with the Hindu nationalist *Bharatiya Janata Party* in power in Gujarat and at the union level, this provoked "even greater organization, mobilization, and violence by pro-dam actors, particularly extreme Hindu fundamentalist groups and leaders." (Khagram 2004, p. 247) Nevertheless, the author's support for the movement and the colourful "Rally for the Valley" in summer 2000 was widely covered in the international media (Wood 2007, p. 174f.).

When the political winds shifted at the national level, the NBA was able to draw on an international alliance that had been developing since the early 1980s. Remarkably, this period also saw a rapid increase in the number of transnational human rights, environmental, and development organisations, which supported the dissemination of global norms on sustainable development (Khagram 2004, p. 11ff.). In this context, the local movement in the Narmada Valley emerged as a resource for a variety of campaigns by international NGOs that sought to advance their own agenda, for example in the field of multilateral development banks. This gives rise to the question of whether the NBA addressed these organisations on its own initiative or vice versa. In the case of ARCH-Vahini, it was John Clark of Oxfam-UK who convinced Patel in 1984 to raise "this [R&R] issue in the U.K. and at the World Bank." (quoted in ibid., p. 91) Two years later, Patkar was approached by Marcus Colchester of Survival International and Bruce Rich of the Environmental Defense, who were allied in a transnational campaign on multilateral development banks. Rich then "invited Patkar to the United States to consolidate the transnational anti-Narmada campaign." (ibid., p. 109) In the late 1980s, the newly formed NBA took on a central role in this ongoing campaign, moving from the outset under the eyes of a transnational elite audience, which needs simple and universal claims that pass through the filter of the mass media.

5.3 Dam-Affected People in the Valley

The heterogeneous group of dam-affected people in the Narmada Valley constitutes the third protest audience of the NBA, ranging from subaltern hill adivasis and landless labourers to elite landowners in the plains. In order to create a broad support base at the

British documentary "Drowned Out" by Franny Armstrong (2002) was also screened in Jalsindhi on the banks of the Narmada by the film crew to check with the tribal villagers whether it "told their story properly". (Armstrong 2010)

[2]In response, the Supreme Court expressed its disapproval of Roy's book "The Greater Common Good" and other "distorted writings", stating in the October 1999 judgement that "the leaders of NBA and Ms. Arundhati Roy have attempted to undermine the dignity of the Court." (SCOI 1999)

grassroots, one of the NBA's main functions at the local level was to unite these disparate communities in a common cause that could be found in displacement. This was facilitated by often socialist rural-based mass movements and tribal unions like the KMCS, which also provided basic resources, such as offices, to activists (Appendix, l. 466). Beyond that, the NBA successfully mobilised large farmers and landowners who feared losing their fertile agricultural land and ended up helping the movement to remain independent of external funding (Baviskar 2005, p. 219). The people in the valley were eventually brought together in demonstrations, where "the release of collective effervescence by the mass of singing, chanting bodies strengthen[ed] their resolve to fight." (ibid., p. 226) In this way, the NBA temporarily sidelined local conflicts and problems, for example the ecological degradation caused by intensive agriculture, and replaced them with the overarching issue of submergence and associated cultural and material losses.

In keeping with the Gandhian ideology of village self-government, NBA activists sought to link the organisation of resistance to the creation of an alternative political culture in dam-affected villages. By living together with adivasis and consulting them in decision-making processes, they fostered confidence-building among this politically marginalised, subaltern group. Besides, the presence of Patkar and other female activists empowered women to encounter men and the state as citizens at village meetings and anti-dam protests (ibid., p. 217). The organisation of the NBA, however, was usually left in the hands of outside activists (ibid., p. 227), who regularly formed smaller groups of leading activists that were able to make quick strategic decisions in the light of current political developments (Appendix, l. 343ff.). Moreover, NBA activists often served as the sole sources of information for adivasis in remote villages and were thus in a position to set the agenda for action with the kind of information they provided. Not giving villagers the option to fight for more comprehensive R&R policies, they incorporated local struggles of the subaltern into a larger movement against dams and 'destructive development'.

As the immediate goal of the NBA was "to halt the dam" (Appendix, l. 483f.), most activists left the villages in the submergence zone of the SSD when the dam began to bear the stigma of being a lost cause after the 2000 decision of the Supreme Court (ibid., p. 266). The movement had to channel its limited resources to other dam sites on the Narmada where the projects could still be challenged. At least in Anjanvara, this left the adivasis feeling stranded, neither in a position to speak nor to be heard: "No one comes through any more; there aren't any meetings. Villagers *miss* the activists, their spirited energy and their counsel, the news and the connections they brought to the rest of the world. The tide of activity has ebbed." (ibid., p. 279) In the end, the Bhilala were compelled to abandon their village and forest, together with their small fertile fields and much larger *nevad* land. Those adult villagers whose names appeared on the list of project-affected persons, which was drawn up in in the late 1980s and never updated again, had to accept either marginal cash compensation or inferior land in Gujarat, which in some cases was unsuitable for living and farming (ibid., p 274f.). The subaltern struggle

against outside oppression and for sources of subsistence continues in other places with an even more reduced natural and material base.

A similar picture is visible in numerous partially submerged villages, where seasonal migration emerged as the survival strategy of many adivasi households, drawn into an environment of commodified nature and labour (Mayaram 2019). Yet, in some places along the Narmada, a legacy of the NBA persists in the form of *jeevanshalas*. The schools that grew out of the playful interaction between activists and children affected by the *satyagraha* in Manibeli in the early 1990s provided during their heyday an alternative education to several hundred adivasi children in about a dozen tribal villages (Appendix, l. 93ff.). Today, *jeevanshalas* continue to exist at nine locations in the Narmada Valley, but the rising reservoir levels during the monsoon season put also the remaining schools regularly at risk of submergence (ibid., l. 214ff.). The villagers themselves manage the institutions, whose curriculum was prepared with the help of urban activists and academics (Babu 2010, p. 241). In contrast to the government schools, it gives importance to local tribal languages, histories and cultures. In the Kakrana *jeevanshala*, education is free for girls, and the children of migrating parents are given the opportunity to stay back in the village and study; one of the graduates is now part of the Water Resources Department in Madhya Pradesh (Mayaram 2019). By knowing how to read and write the dominant scripts, this generation can rewrite its history from a subaltern perspective.

6 Conclusion

After three decades of protest, the NBA has lost momentum. The SSD is built; the Narmada is dammed. Half of the NVDP's major projects are either ongoing or already completed. The movement to save the Narmada now finds itself stranded on the banks of vast reservoirs; vital waves of solidarity support fail to materialise. Only the rising water levels during the monsoon draw some media attention to the plight of displaced tribal and non-tribal families that have still not been rehabilitated. In this thesis, I concentrated on the subaltern struggles of adivasis in the Narmada Valley and on the extent to which they find expression in the protest of the NBA, which is mostly organised by urban and intellectual activists. More generally, my aim was to examine how the silenced voices of the subaltern can be made heard by movements defending subaltern groups. Starting from the assumption that the NBA simplifies and universalises the voices of dam-affected adivasis to make them relevant to a wider audience, I distinguished political, material, and ideological expressions of the anti-dam movement and its subaltern constituents. In the course of this, I highlighted adivasis' economic and political marginalisation in the name of colonial and then national 'development' as well as their local actions in relation

to nature, which are constrained by an increased pressure on tribal livelihoods. This was contrasted with the NBA's representation of subaltern struggles in the Narmada Valley, which are showcased by activists as a local fight against large dams as a form of 'destructive development' sponsored by global institutions and the nation-state.

The following discussion of my findings was conducted in terms of the three audiences addressed by the movement's protest: the union and state governments concerned as well as the WB as the protest targets, the urban 'elite' and international NGOs as their reference publics, and finally the dam-affected people in the valley. First, this revealed that state repression and violations of law required activists to resort to the courts, which in turn delegitimised more direct political action. In addition, the WB's pull-out from the SSP reduced the NBA's opportunity structures in the international sphere, thus leading to an impasse, leaving the Supreme Court as a final arbiter. Second, the NBA derived its strength from alliances with groups in India and abroad. They helped the movement to influence public opinion in the cities and to gain leverage on the protest targets through international pressure but also increased the NBA's dependence on communications media as a mediator between the movement and its transnational allies. Third, the NBA sidelined ecological and social problems in the Narmada Valley in order to create a broad support base at the 'grassroots'. At the same time, activists made efforts to politically empower local adivasis and build participative decision-making structures in the villages. Important strategic decisions for the struggle, however, were left to urban activists and movement leaders, who always act against a background of limited resources.

Altogether, there is a gap between subaltern and 'elite' positions in the NBA. Adivasis in tribal villages are dependent on activists from the cities who can provide a steady stream of information and other resources necessary to fight a national project that first of all violates the rights of the country's most marginalised populations. The silenced voices of the rural subaltern are channelled by urban outsiders who have the power to transform them into an ideologically compatible resource for a movement that tries to exploit all political spaces to attain its predefined end. To stop the construction of large dams in the Narmada Valley, the NBA employed a narrative of 'destructive development' that echoes local struggles and simultaneously resonates with expectations of a transnational audience following world-cultural models of sustainable development. In this way, the movement aimed to enforce conformity of the states and the WB with world-approved policies but failed at the national level in the face of political winds shifting towards a right-wing model of 'national development'. The inevitable submergence of tribal villages implied considerable cultural and material losses and further political disempowerment for the subaltern oustees, whose voices remain silenced by the nation-state. However, the voices find expression in the NBA's local initiatives and are most pronounced in *jeevanshalas*; schools run by the subaltern, for the subaltern, and against subalternity.

To conclude, movements like the NBA operate within structures of world society that silence the subaltern. They cannot make the silenced voices of the subaltern heard. Yet,

their activists can explore and assert forms of subaltern agency in local struggles against subalternity. Although a movement's vocabulary of protest cannot express silenced voices, activists can be receptive to and learn from subaltern expressions in the movement and adjust their actions at the 'grassroots' level accordingly. This allows the movement to adapt its self-representation and to shed light on subaltern struggles that transcend its end. If it fails to do so, the movement runs the risk not only of silencing the subaltern but also of entrenching subalternity. Unfortunately, this thesis cannot make more specific claims about 'the silenced voices'. This is justified by its theoretical approach to the problem of the representation of the heterogeneous Other, which is rooted in postcolonialism. Still, a potential limitation of the thesis exists with regard to its scope, as the (non)definition of the subaltern used is restricted to the Indian context. While the related question of who can be considered subaltern has no general answer, the introduced concept of epistemic violence can be used to identify subaltern groups in countries other than India.

Beyond that, the case of the NBA is located in a democracy; a form of government that facilitates a high degree of domestic social mobilisation, the (transnational) expansion of movements, and, last but not least, activists' use of communications media. Hence, subaltern possibilities for action are likely to differ in, for example, highly localised or suppressed movements based in non- or less democratic countries. Another, more accessible starting point for future research can be found in the aforementioned Niyamgiri movement in the East Indian state of Odisha. The movement now appears to be led by activists from the Dongria Kondh tribe, who are demanding that the Vedanta refinery be closed and the Niyamgiri hills be declared a Dongria Kondh habitat under the FRA (Beigh 2019). This raises a number of questions regarding the (dis)engagement of outside activists and the emergence of space for subaltern agency. And: to what extent can tribal leaders who have escaped from subalternity speak on behalf of the subaltern, who are still silenced? But my study also leaves open questions regarding the NBA: what were the actual decision-making structures at the 'grassroots' level, and how far were they open to subaltern voices? What did the adivasis in the valley resist against, and to what extent was this resistance self-motivated? And above all: what does 'the subaltern' want?

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7 Appendix: Interview

Clean verbatim transcription of an interview between the author (Q) and an interviewee (A). The interview was recorded in three parts on a train from Ajmer, Rajasthan, to Mumbai, Maharashtra, on 12 October, 2019.

`part 1 | start time: 10:37:24, duration: 13:26.3`

A: Tell me first what you want.
Q: Basically, I'm interested in the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* and how the work evolved over the years and these kind of things. I know you only on a very personal level, but I have no idea what you're actually doing or what you have done, what your involvement in the various processes have been in the last years and centuries.
A: Basically about the *Narmada Bachao Andolan*. You want my involvement in the *Narmada Bachao Andolan*, right? Or other processes also?
Q: Other processes are also interesting, and I'm also interested in how the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* has actually worked and organised itself and these kind of things. But we can do this step by step. First, I would like you to introduce yourself, who you are and what you're doing.
A: I'm **[name]**, **[full name]**. At present, I'm a team member of the National Alliance of People's Movements' Conveners Team. I had done my postdoc abroad, and I was working as a Pool Officer in the virology institute. At some point, I happened to have some friends who were associated with *Narmada Bachao Andolan*. This was around '92, '93. In Pune, the friends who found the issues of questioning the present development model formed a group as supporters of *Narmada Bachao Andolan*. I became a part of that. Ninety-two was a very important year for the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* because the *Andolan* had by than completed almost eight, nine years. The *Andolan* formally began in '84. I'll tell you about the history later. The '92 monsoon was crucial because Medha Patkar and the members from the villages to be affected in the three states – Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh – and some full timers – there was a team, the names were not announced, but it was a team who had said that if the government doesn't care for the people's voice – like who's development, at what cost and who decides – we'll just brave the waters when the dam water rises. That triggered a lot of support from all around the various states in India as well as a lot of international support. It was around that time that, when they were waiting for the response from the government, that some of my friends in Pune started a fast in support. We tried to gather support statements from various professionals like architects, engineers, doctors, beyond the civil society activist members. Just in time before this, people were submerged, this team. The government managed to send some information that they will look into the matter by

having the special committee that was formed later. This was my entry point as a supporter of *Narmada Bachao Andolan*. Within the year, again, the committee's names were consulted. I forgot the details of the members, but the committee was declared. However, it had not started functioning until almost the next monsoon. Then in 93, again, Medha Patkar and others were on fast in Mumbai. We got the message saying that the government is saying that the government doctors used to visit, saying that health is endangered and so she should withdraw the fast, whereas the government was not responding to the demands for which she was on fast. Some friends had contacted, saying that we need some person from the health sector who could advice us on the seriousness of the health status and talk to the government, demanding at least to share the reports, which they were not doing. I went to the *dharnasthal*, and, fortunately, the next day, some senior doctor had come who had happened to be my colleague in a meeting about AIDS disease, which was coming up. We had shared in a conference. This helped me to talk to her, and I said that every patient whose sample is taken has a right to know about the reports, and this is what is happening. She agreed with me that the report should be shared, and that's how we started getting the reports. I had a positive kind of entry in the whole scenario. Until then, I had never met Medha Patkar and she was also kind of surprised, but that's how I became friends at equal levels and not a follower as many people consider themselves. During the time, I stayed on the *dharnasthal* until we had the negotiations completed. There were a lot of children and villagers. Actually, it was through the children performing some street play that I learned about the *Andolan*, why they had started. The children used to play a wonderful street play, telling the story of the village. These were children ranging from eight years to 13 years. They shared with me that the government schools were only on papers. They were not functional in the entire belt of 33 villages of Maharashtra, on the banks of Narmada and a little up on the hills. When this whole struggle started, the adults in the village had realised that they were not being shown the documents. They were not consulted because they could not read and write. They wanted their children and the future generation not to be deceived just because they can't read. They wanted to have their own schools, so they had started this what is known as *jeevanshala*, whereby these are the schools run by the villagers in the villages and for the village community. I was fascinated by this concept, and when I talked to the adults, they said *ki* if at all we send our children outside the valley to other government schools. The way they are taught is they gain a complex about our culture, an inferiority complex, and they don't want to stay back in the village. We don't want that to happen. Our culture is to live in harmony in nature, that is the tribal culture. We're neither Hindus nor Muslims, and we want our culture to be maintained. It was really a very fascinating and amazing concept that I was exposed for the first time. I got friendly with the children, so the children told me that you should come to our villages. Over the three, four days that I stayed, they used to feel very sad because in Bombay there were tremendous lighting for the advertisements and excessive noise and everything. It is for this that the government wanted more electricity. That's why they wanted to have big dams. These people were loosing their entire culture, the beautiful thick

70 forest, and all their villages and their belongings. I was really moved by that. That time, I was
71 doing some assignment with the Pune University, and I just completed the content. It was a
72 teaching assistantship. I didn't want my students to get affected if I leave in the middle of the
73 year, so I completed that academic year. Then, I went in the summer to the Gujarat area,
74 which was the entry point to get into Maharashtra because there was no transport available.
75 On the Maharashtra side, there were very tall mountains. The most convenient part was
76 entering from Vadodara towards what is known as Kevadiya Colony. Kevadiya Colony was built
77 by the government by displacing six villages from Gujarat without even considering them as
78 project-affected. That time, the government's understanding of projected-affected people was
79 only those who get affected directly by the backwater. From Gujarat, the backwater-affected
80 were 19 tribal villages, in Maharashtra it was 33. With the increasing height of the dam, it was
81 to submerge the entire tribal belt of Madhya Pradesh also and the plains of Madhya Pradesh.
82 In total, it was 192 villages of Madhya Pradesh, tribal and non-tribal, and the plains. And
83 one town, which also was the market when we took to in Madhya Pradesh. Earlier, the town
84 people were not aware about they're being affected. Not just to the tribals but even to most
85 of the peoples in Madhya Pradesh on the plains who were literate also, there was hardly any
86 consultation about when the Sardar Sarovar Project was launched. We will take a break now.
87 Take a leave. Just see what you're getting is all right.

`part 2 | start time: 10:51:46, duration: 1:09:50.4`

88 **A:** This is how I've got into the struggle. Continue?
89 **Q:** Yes.
90 **A:** Okay. Basically, I'm interested in education, so it was a very wonderful experience to stay
91 in the *jeevanshala*. The *jeevanshala* used to be provided by the villagers. For every child, the
92 parent will give enough grains for the child for the entire academic year. The idea was that
93 *Andolan*, the movement, raises funds just to pay the teachers. It began during the struggle
94 in Manibeli around '92, '93. That time, this concept evolved and it had started because the
95 children were also staying at the *dharnasthal*. Some of our friends had, in the play they started
96 teaching them and that's how this concept had evolved. I went in '94, May, to get things
97 ready for the coming monsoon. This Narmada comes from the mountains of Madhya Pradesh
98 and it travels between the Satpura and Vindhya Ranges. When this heavy rainfall and the
99 multiple streams feed to the Narmada, it becomes very difficult to cross the river. We had
100 to put enough food for the *jeevanshalas* until the waters recede in the next three months or
101 so, so the children should not have any problem. Even though the villagers were giving the
102 grains, that was not really sufficient and any other support that we would need because the
103 struggle was also on. I had want to help them. For the struggle in monsoon, there used to be
104 a lot of visitors, so they wanted someone who can speak in multiple languages. I knew a little
105 bit of Gujarati and Marathi, Hindi, English. I was placed in an actual supporter's house in
106 Kevadiya Colony because we didn't have money to have any special office or anything. We

used to use an office from her veranda, that's like an extended shed. I was getting things ready. When the school began again, I stayed in the school for about a month or two because the only teacher that was there for about 35 children, over the age group of eight to twelve, had to get married, so he had gone on leave. I happened to stay with the children. Instead of my teaching the children, I learned a lot from them. Basically interlinking what's happening around to the larger concepts of environment and social justice, that's how those interaction helped me. The most interesting thing about the schools was that the elders in the village also used to come in the school and chat with the children. The children used to be very anxious to know what is happening on the front of the struggle. Actually, I realised that what is in the textbook is not very relevant to them. What they wanted to learn was more what's happening in the struggle. One day, in the morning, I was teaching some friend from the book. Okay, they're just listening. In the evening, I found one boy trying to read a pamphlet. He was not very smart in giving responses in the morning, so I just asked him, *Do you need help?* Because he was trying to join the letters, he was so **[unintelligible 0:05:23]** that he said, *No, no, I'm fine.* After some time, he could give me the summary about what that pamphlet said. He said it is about the next step of the *Andolan* to take our struggle at our parcel level, the block level. It was very amazing and really a learning for me as a teacher. Just while chatting, I told the children that, *Okay, you invited me to your village, so here I am and now you show me what you like the best.* The children giggled around, and they asked me, *We'll show you the jungle, you come.* For a moment I was again taken aback because I had never been to a jungle. I'm not a trekker, and I spent most of my time around Nagpur in a city. I never had a first hand experience of being in the jungle. Then, the next day, we had a nice excursion tour with the children. It was just up on the hill. During the time, almost each child knew the role of each plant in the whole nature cycle, like they show me on plant saying that, *Oh you know this is used as for building our huts.* And the other one saying, *If our animal's sad or sick, we use these leaves.* It was very amazing. Then, as the monsoon approached, there was a police camp on the river bank, which was put in the name of protecting the village from the rising waters. In reality, probably it was to intimidate the villagers so they vacate. Our school was just up, a few meters away. When it started raining in the evening very heavily, because the children were watching outside, all of a sudden they gave some very happy response. I said, *Oh what happened?* They said, *That police camp's cloth is flying away.* I said, *So, what makes you so happy?* They said, *We are happy because they had put it under the tree which was our place for playing. So we were very unhappy with it.* Then they composed a song. It was really amazing. That started my dialogue with the children about the police. I said, *Why are you so unhappy with them?* They said, *They stay in this camp.* They had very green *sitaphal* trees. You also like *sitaphal*, right? *They try to use it as fire for cooking. They don't even understand that green trees are not going to help them for fire. They're surely destroying the plants from which we could get food.* Because there were no shops or market nearby, that was their only thing. That's why they were angry. Then, the other person also saying, *They use so much of soap when they wash their clothes in this thing, so that with their soap our fish is*

going to get extinct. How will we get fish? I thought that they have such a good sense about nutrition and the environment, so what kind of science I am going to teach them. That's how I really enjoyed the time there, and I wrote a small article saying *My Jeevanshala*. After some time, I took a break because I was also associated with a school that was coming up in Pune, called *Aksharnandan*, which also had environment as one of the basic backbone, as we call it, a value. I came back for a while and since then, I have been associated with the school in terms of supporting *jeevanshalas* in different ways. I got involved with the *Andolan* struggle also because I realised that the education in a project-affected area cannot be without understanding the relationship between social justice and environment. One more thing I would like to share is because the struggle was strong, the government didn't want to even acknowledge that these children are learning in the *jeevanshala*. They would continue to give the false records of the government school. As the villagers used to describe, the government teacher is seen only on two or three days, which is for the flag hoisting – that is 15th August, our independence day; 26th January, it is a Republic Day –, and maybe rarely otherwise. And these schools were not given recognition, so the children were not allowed to appear for the government exam, which is at some level we call fourth standard. Then, because I was based in Pune where the education department has its head quarter, I took up this assignment to myself to ensure that these children get a chance to appear for the government exam. Earlier some time, there was a also a dialogue with the villagers that, *Okay the children are learning, they want to learn. How does it matter, even if the government doesn't recognise.* They said, *But it is our right, the government has to recognise us as citizens also.* I followed that up, and when I talked to the higher office in Pune, they directed me to doubt. In the meantime, when that officer was not in place, I just managed to talk out and have a glance at the records. The village were I had stayed and physically seen that no teacher is there, there was the name of some person and the salary was being extracted for the last three years, so I challenged that. Some of our other friends who were also associated in Mumbai and all, they also helped it out. Finally, the government managed to give permission to the school. Usually, the picture given outside is the tribal children won't learn, they can't farewell. When these children appeared, to the surprise of the administration, they all fared very well. The only problem they had earlier, which I had realised, was because they don't have script in their language, writing was a problem. I had managed to stay with them, sort of play with them, find out what they know, and then encourage them to write that. By that, they had gained confidence in writing also. This became a system for the teachers who joined later. When the children fared well, the administration couldn't believe, so they repeated the exams. The second time also the children fared very nicely. That's how finally the government had to accept that these other schools run by the villagers are really helping. Over the years now, *jeevanshalas* have become a model for the kind of education that should be given to the tribals, which retains their self-image, which gives them enough confidence. Over the years, what we have realised is, what again the police had bolted down, these children are very quick in their responses. They can climb up the trees, they can play and run up with the mountains. The school started having some small games,

187 teams and all. Actually, because we were all on the mountain slopes, it's very difficult to find
188 a plateau even for the children to practice. The schools began as two, one each in the *taluka*
189 of Akkalkuwa, which is the area where Manibeli, our first internationally known village, what
190 is called Manibeli Declaration. There are about nine villages. The other larger block is Akrani
191 or Dhadgaon. Dhadgaon is now semi-urbanised and it has a market and all. It's up on the
192 mountain in the fourth range from the river side of the seven ranges of Satpura – *sat* is seven,
193 *pura* is the ranges. We conduct annual games. Now, with these schools faring really well,
194 other villages also demanded. At one point, we had fourteen schools, *jeevanshala*, at the banks
195 of the river and in the mountains, three in Madhya Pradesh, and the rest in Maharashtra. But
196 because of the rising height of the dam, in spite of the struggle because the government kept
197 on giving false **[unintelligible 0:16:43]** about the rehabilitation status, there was some level
198 of submergence. Some of the *jeevanshalas* we had to pull together, and some moved out to
199 the rehab sites. The rehab sites also initially, which were planned by the government, they were
200 not having all the standard facilities. The land, which was given just without any consultation,
201 was not good. Like this, five rehab sites were prepared by the government. Mostly, the villages
202 which were kind of away from the bank, they were bribed and threatened. Some of them have
203 moved to the rehab site, but actively, the struggling people in villages right on the river bank,
204 which were to first face the submergence, they had not moved out. They said, *We don't want*
205 *to leave our mother river and the forest and all.* That struggle continued over the last 34 years
206 now. At a later stage, some of our activists and the government made a joint resettlement
207 committee. In the meantime, this Forest Rights Act came. Although the villagers were very
208 keen on getting only forest lands, that became difficult because otherwise the government will
209 displace some other earlier residents, saying that they're encroachers because the government
210 never makes the land records for the tribals. We said that we don't want to displace anybody
211 else to get land for us. Then, in Maharashtra, the government started buying good land
212 with our participation to ensure that it is not encroached by anybody else. The people who
213 are selling it are not deceived either. There is no corruption. With all that, we managed to
214 ensure that the government allots reasonably good land. Now, there are more rehab sites. At
215 present, we have nine *jeevanshalas*. Two in Madhya Pradesh. The first village where it had
216 started, Jalsindhi, that got almost all submerged. That *jeevanshala* is closed. Now, there is
217 one *jeevanshala* in the village called Bhadal and another in Bitada. In Maharashtra, we have
218 *jeevanshalas* still in Manibeli. When I stayed in the first beginning of my thing, the *jeevanshala*
219 had shifted from Manibeli to another village called Chimalkhadi because the lower part of
220 Manibeli had submerged. But when the Chimalkhadi *jeevanshala* area also got submerged,
221 we shifted the *jeevanshala* back to the Manibeli village, little on the hillside. Because that
222 had its one relevance as Manibeli Declaration. That school continues. Every time there is
223 submergence, we had to shift it up. Unfortunately, now, with the present Prime Minister,
224 who was earlier the Chief Minister of Gujarat, being very staunch and unreasonable, he has
225 increased the height of the dam in spite of not having the rehabilitation completed. Now,
226 there is a stage that there is hardly any scope to move up in the mountains. The *jeevanshala*

227 in Manibeli is now considering how to continue in that village. Maybe they will find out the
228 next hamlet still up because they are very keen not to shift out from the forest. There is
229 another in a village called Danel. It's a kind of big village with many hamlets. In all these
230 tribal places, there are small hamlets. All our schools are residential because the children can
231 not do up-down every day. Every school caters for four, five villages around with many hamlets.
232 There is one in Thuwani, then another in Trishul, Savrya Digar. One of the schools which was
233 in Maharashtra side Bhadal had to be removed up to the village called Bhadal. It's a unique
234 geography. On the bank of Narmada, on the Madhya Pradesh side, is a village called Bhadal.
235 There was a small tributary, and on the Maharashtra side, on the other bank of that tributary,
236 was a village also called Bhadal. I was very amused when I went there. Both the communities
237 are like kins. We could shout out to any visitor like us going. The other school children would
238 say, *We want you to come to our place also,* and then drive their small boat and take us there.
239 But with the rising of water now, all that has been very highly destructed. When I went first
240 in '94, they used to have a small boat called Dungi, which was almost the size of this berth.
241 It was made from a big tree's trunk. When the tree gets very old and it falls down, they cut
242 the tree and they make a boat. It was a kind of self-reliance also. People say that, *Like every*
243 *child grows, and walks, and runs, we used to learn swimming.* The river was so small that
244 they could just jump into the river, cross it and go to the market in Gujarat. Now, all that is
245 very highly devastated. Now, those small boats, they cannot use. Just to get maybe water.
246 The river banks has the remnants of the submerged area, so the water is not clean. They
247 had to go deeper into the river even to get the drinking water. It becomes very hard to stay.
248 Still, some people are still continuing because they want to keep their word of *doobenge par*
249 *hatenge nahin* and *We don't want to leave our forest.* That's the present situation for the part
250 that I have stayed most. Around 2000 to 2003, when the waters submerged most of the fertile
251 land, we were really worried how these people will survive, at least until the water recedes.
252 That time, we collected donations from big cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, and all around.
253 Then, I used to go and buy grains, like 15 tonnes grains at a time in Mumbai. Just to have
254 the basic survival for the next monsoon, until the monsoon recedes or something like that. To
255 every family we have distribute through the board. We somehow managed to negotiate with
256 the Maharashtra Government to give us the barge, which carry the 15 tonnes to bring the
257 grains from Gujarat to the river bank in the trucks, which was very risky and hectic because of
258 the terrain and the rains causing it all the more difficult. I had the privilege of getting familiar
259 with most of the villages. That makes it all the more difficult when you see the submergence.
260 It's difficult to put into words how one feels.
261 **Q:** In the movement, you had to take lots of decisions. There were many people involved, on
262 the one side the affected people and on the other side people who wanted to change something,
263 who came from the cities maybe, like you. What were these dynamics within the movement?
264 Who was able to participate in decision-making processes, for example?
265 **A:** When I joined the struggle, it was about eight, nine years old. The person who first went to
266 these villages and talked to them was Medha Patkar, who had done her Social Science in Tata

267 Institute. She was in some project in Gujarat, and she happened to learn about this through
268 some other. That was around '83, '84 that she went to the villages in Maharashtra. That
269 time, this Manibeli and all villages, they were part of the district called Dhule. Later, that
270 district got slaved and now they all belong to the district called Nandurbar. Afer she visited
271 the tribal area, she was pretty moved by that. She met some people in Dhule, which had a
272 very strong base of *Rashtra Seva Dal*, a group that had grown up during the freedom struggle.
273 The senior people of the town, they had already started developing concern. They had made
274 a small group, some *dharan grasta samiti*. Then, they all sat together. They discussed that
275 the villagers should be informed about there being supportive also. Some similar process had
276 happened even in Madhya Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh was more politically oriented. In Madhya
277 Pradesh, one or the other party, either the BJP or the Congress, they were shouting and there
278 was some dynamics. Some people from both the parties could see the injustice, the way in
279 which it was gone and the devastation that may come. On the Gujarat side, there was a group,
280 I think it was ARCH-Vahini as one of the things, but they were more concerned about the
281 rehabilitation thing rather than any environment devastation, initially. Around '84, Medha
282 moved up along the villages from Maharashtra to Madhya Pradesh tribal area and then to
283 the plains and gathered all the supporters. Afterwards, when I met some of them, they say
284 that, *We were not very sure that such a young girl in salwar karmeej – she's telling about*
285 *such big things, and she seems sincere. We thought of supporting her, but we could not think*
286 *how she could take it up to the international level that she has done today.* The way the
287 struggle has gone, they were very happy. This was around '94 to '97, '99 when I met those
288 people. What I witnessed during my stay there is, for every decision which was preparation for
289 the monsoon, we have travelled with Medha to a range of villages. Some people from the
290 village who were – there were couple of them who were literate, who had stayed in Arandini
291 and Pune, Keshubhau and his brother Madukaka. They would come with Medha. By then,
292 Medha had learned the local tribal languages also, and these people will share about what
293 is the status, in terms of what the governments are saying, what is happening outside, what
294 kind of support structure is there. They would ask the villagers that, *What do you think*
295 *we should do?* There used to be extended overnight consultations. By the time we reached
296 there, it would be dawn. Usually, the villagers by that time come back from their farms, they
297 have their food, and then they will come for the meeting. We would have extended meetings
298 in the night, and it used to be a collective decision. Because there were no communication
299 means from one village to other also, some representative from that village will join our team.
300 Like that, we'll go to the successive villages to ensure that most of the villages get consulted.
301 Because there are many hamlets, and sometimes there used to be clusters of villages who
302 had planned the meeting earlier. It was seen that maximum consultation is done. It used
303 to be very collective decisions, as far as how the villagers see the struggle should go on at
304 that stage of the struggle. The government was always trying to push. This concerned four
305 to five governments because it was an interstate project. Certainly, the central government
306 and four state governments, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan also used

to be there earlier because this whole thing was being done in the name of supplying water to Kachchh and to Rajasthan. Later on, Rajasthan had realised that there was such a small amount, and the way it was going, the Gujarat government trying to start sugar cane factories, sugar cane cultivation, diverting water to many industries. By then, they had realised that they are not going to get anything, and they were going on the back seat. At another level, I have also been part of confronting the governments, all the different. What I found amazing was every time the village representatives would say first what they want to say. Then, Medha also had a core group of some seven, eight people, initially when I joined in '94. Two or three of them were IIT engineers who had joined. There were a couple of women who were, at least three of them, social science persons, and some more, like Shripad Dharmadhikari, who was the one who happened to be my relatives' relative line. It was through him that I had gone. The consultations used to be at different levels. When the village round is over, by one of these senior people, then all these senior core groupers people will sit together. In '94, finally, we had filed a case in Supreme Court. There were two people who were looking after the Court process. Others would go in the villages and get what is happening there. There used to be consultations. My very first day when I came with Medha to Baroda was in our small office, which is almost like this cabin, we had a overnight meeting. Because there was no other place to even lay down, I happened to sit in that core group meeting for the whole night to come out at the *sahamati* kind of thing, how to go ahead. Then, at intervals, we used to have a larger group called *samanvay samiti*, which consisted of senior think tanks like *Vasant Bachikar* and some others. We would sit together even in the city, where Medha and some of this core group members would come. They will share with us how they saved from the villagers point of view. Then, sometimes, some of us would show maybe some angle which was more and more to the outside world with some aspect that somebody's comment or some other related article that they had not seen. Our consultation was more open accountability. At some times, it really becomes difficult to go for consultation. In a situation where there is a general consensus understanding, that times you have to take your own decisions, which, I think, is fair. Like this monsoon, the collective decision was to do a relay fast, but then Medha had realised – the staunchness of Modi in her mind – that unless she is there on a continuous fast, the relay fast may not cause the same impact. She insisted that other people do the relay but she continued the fast. Then, the rest of us who are friends and long term supporters and the village representatives. Now, the struggle centre has shifted more to Madhya Pradesh, where there are very big villages with black cotton soil. They're very spread out also. The villages would have their own representative who would have a consultative meeting. The relay fast decision was taken in that consultative meeting. Then, as the water started rising, some of the village representative also had to take care of their own villages. The continued fast decision had to be taken more by a smaller group and not allowing the government doctors to intervene. Depending on the situation, it becomes little difficult to have a large-scale participative decision, or at times, for emergencies, to take a smaller group. But it is seen that it's a collective decision.

Q: When did this issue pop up in your life for the first time, that something is happening in the Narmada Valley that is affecting people?

A: This? Around '92.

Q: Ninety-two.

A: Yes, I just came back form my post doc, it was the end of '88. Then, I took a six months break until I found an assignment in Pune, in the virology institute as Pool Officer. Staying in Pune, I was hearing about what is happening around. In beginning of '92, prior to the monsoon, in one of my relative's place, this Shripad Dharmadhikari had come. Then, we're talking about the struggle. I thought that this guy seems to be sincere. What he's talking makes sense. Still, I had a little apprehension, how can the government be so ruthless and stupid, that was the kind of feeling that I was having. I kept a watch on what's happening around, and in the next few months, I realised that it was true that the what the governments were doing for political interest was really not in the interest of the people. It was over a period of some six, eight months. When I really met the people in Mumbai in '93, June, which was almost a year after I had learned about it and had got associated with the support group, that I was convinced that the people are honest and the people are right. At that point, I thought there isn't much point in following my own career. If these are the children who want to learn and are facing problems, I should help them out or I could stand by them.

Q: Over the years, the *Andolan* got lots of attention, also worldwide attention. The media reported about it. Did it influence the *Andolan* in any way? Did it have an impact on their work?

A: When I joined itself, the *Andolan* had received some international fame. That was one more thing that I was fascinated by. That the village people who – this Keshubav, who was the one of the few literates and who had supported Medha and who was walking along over the years, he was the one who went to receive the price for the award. Medha didn't go. Somebody asked him that, *Oh, you're going abroad. It will be all in English, so how would you manage?* He said, *Why should I worry about the language?* And Shripad was to travel, so he said, *People there want to know about what's happening in my village, so I'll speak in my language. And this guy is there. He will translate it.* It was like this Devaji Topha, did you know? At this, there was one tribal leader who was sitting next to me, and he just wanted me to translate, and otherwise he was very alert and confident. He offered to Nimbia that it seems he needs help and I can go and help him to deal with how to ask for this Schedule Five, Schedule Six thing. It was that kind of a confidence. I think what *jeevanshalas* are doing is, over the years, they're retaining that confidence in our children. Many children from the *jeevanshalas* are now athletes. They have won kilos of prices. The first two brothers who came, one of them is our forest officer, and one of of them is an MSEB, doing their jobs and all, training the children in Balewadi, Pune. Many more, more than 6,000 have passed out from – the *jeevanshalas* are only up to fourth standard. Then, they come to the nearby towns, where supporters like me, they keep helping them, trying to collect support from them. Because even though the adivasi hostels are supposed to be free to them, they give very minimal things. Some kind

387 of support they need. More than the financial support, it is the social support. To me, the
388 decision-making, I would say, is certainly participatory. That's what I have observed.
389 **Q:** Then, there is one . . .
390 **A:** The people feel good when they're acknowledged internationally, but that doesn't make
391 much difference. Because basically, this tribal way of thinking is not oriented towards any cash
392 or monetary thing. Even if I go and discuss with them about some of my idea, if the idea
393 klicks to them, they'll say, *Okay, sounds good. Let's try. Let's do it.* Then it would be me or
394 you or any of the city person who **[unintelligible 00:46:02]**, *How do we get money for it?*
395 That's immaterial. If it is our world, we'll do it. It is spirit. It's our thinking style that we
396 think about how to get money and then go to funders and get oppressed by the funders. The
397 villagers don't think in that way. Of course they realise that you need money, but their way
398 of thinking is from bottom up, that first it is our commitment, we'll do it. You might have
399 heard about a film called *Swades*. Once we were having a fast in that kind of place called
400 Domkhedi, where there was a small waterfall. One visitor, I think from London and some from
401 Kerala, they were working on small power generation units. They managed to build that small
402 unit on that tiny waterfall to the extend that that could generate enough light for us to have
403 one bulb, so we could work in the night in our *dharna*-thing. That was the beginning. Then,
404 near that *gaanv*, there is a tributary of Narmada which was a little better fall. Some beautiful
405 place. It was supposed to be out of the submergence as per the government thing, even at full
406 height. When the dam height was around 95 or something, some contributors like me, from
407 the southern states, a big group had come, and one of them was engineer again in this power
408 generation, small dams kind of things. The villagers, they did *shramadaan* with our friends
409 from Dhule, who raised some founds because they are working in alternative energy. They built
410 a dam which could supply electricity to 300 **[unintelligible 00:48:50]** around. One school,
411 which was not our *jeevanshala* because it was a higher level, which was run by one of the local
412 organisations. That much electricity they could produce. This friend Gowariker, who later
413 came up with this film *Swades*, he had visited that place. Taking that idea, he developed the
414 film. He got scared to publicly acknowledge that it is form the *Andolan* because he thought
415 that Gujarat people would banish it or something. Unfortunately, when the dam height was
416 beyond 110, the government calculations were so wrong that this got flooded. It was at that
417 stage that the government realised that we were generating electric power of our own. Then
418 we claim for that replacement, which has still not arrived. We are not done. What I mean is,
419 along with the struggle, there were also some *nirmaan* efforts, like the *jeevanshalas*, which is
420 *nirmaan* of the whole community or a sustainability in the community. Developing respect for
421 their own culture and also this watershed kind of things. That's about it. In Madhya Pradesh,
422 there are some efforts because Madhya Pradesh plains was already very much urbanised, all
423 this chemical agriculture and Bt cotton. They had already flooded that area. There are
424 some attempts at places to shift it to organic farming. Tribals by themselves were natural
425 farmers. Unfortunately, when they are given land in the rehab sites, which are close to the
426 cities, semi-urban, there that land is used to chemical farming. They had to compulsorily

427 take up through chemical farming. With the pressure of the struggle, we have still not been
428 able to help them to totally move to organic farming because if you are in a place where the
429 surrounding other farmers are doing chemical farming, it's very difficult to have your own small
430 in between as organic. That's one of the challenges that I wish I could have handled but have
431 not been able to. You wanted to ask something more.
432 **Q:** There is one question that keeps puzzling me. The *Andolan* got really successful. Still,
433 there are many other similar *Andolans*, anti-dam movements, in India, like in Tehri or in the
434 North-East, and somehow they didn't get as much attention as the *Andolan* in the Narmada
435 Valley got. How can you explain this? What is the difference between these movements?
436 **A:** It's really hard to compare and see that the other *Andolans* have not gone. Because Tehri,
437 as far as I understand, has gone to a level of success also. Sometimes, it is the perseverance
438 and resilience of the person who leads it also, to keep pushing. I think another even more
439 important factor is, most of the area of *Narmada Bachao Andolan* had been the tribal area.
440 Tribals, as their own lifestyle, they have a way of collective living, collective decision-making.
441 That also must have helped for the *Andolan* to carry on for this long. People from Madhya
442 Pradesh plains, those communities were more scattered in the casteist framework and all.
443 Through uppers, the communication of all this core group realised that it is because these
444 tribals are taking so much risk and struggling, they are earning more time to live. They are
445 not getting flooded. It's marvellous, the kind of change. Even in the social structure it has
446 gone. Because even from Madhya Pradesh, initially, the youth which came, came as farm
447 labourers' children – the young people from farm labourer, they came to that *Andolan*. When
448 they found that they are being treated equally by all of us – because when in *Andolan* we all
449 stay together, eat together, sleeping. Our availabilities are so small that we can not even have
450 two different rooms for girls and boys also. It was not by preaching but by living together that
451 some of these values and the confidence-building happened. At some later stage, we found
452 that when they are in the team and we go to even a big landlord in Madhya Pradesh, they
453 are with us. Later, they shared that, *Ten years before we would not have even been within*
454 *the house, we would have to have wait outside.* It's a gradual change but happening. These
455 kind of developing intimate relations within the community and having a large participation
456 of community representatives at all levels, like whether it in the decision-making, whether
457 it is conducting meetings in the villages or whether it is challenging the government. It is
458 always that the village representatives are there. Along with people like us who would have
459 documents, who would provide the documents, who would follow up with the . . . Earlier, in
460 initial days, all that we had in office was a small half-broken typewriter. We had a journalist
461 friend called Sanjay Sangvai, you should read about his book sometime. Just note his name,
462 he has written wonderful articles and books on the development aspects in general and this in
463 particular, Narmada *Andolan*. He would keep three carbons, type the press known, like that he
464 will have to do it three times to have nine copies. That was the kind of hardship they took.
465 This was under the situation where we were working from Gujarat, which was terribly against
466 us. It was only few workers movements who would lend us the office or some support. All

together, even the villagers saying that highly qualified city friends are coming and staying with them in simplicity. That made kind of bridging. Giving up some of their social stigmas and coming together. The tribal–non-tribal, rural–urban divides were minimised, and that has probably given strength. Each group has its own limitation, and it also has some skills and because of your exposure some capacities also that you can contribute.

Q: If you would summarise the goal of the *Andolan*, what would you say, what was its aim or is its aim?

A: The aim was to challenge the development paradigm and achieve social justice for those who are not considered. The way that the development decisions are taking. At many times, when there is a demand for dialogue, the government will either call only the leaders or maybe four representatives, and we will insist that either you come out and face the crowd and we assure you there won't be any problem – because ours is a non-violent struggle, that is one of the strengths – or then you allow the representatives. If we are 33 villages, we should at least have ten representatives, even if you consider clusters. These kind of perseverance and the government realising that the people who were representing really knew about the thing. Every time, whenever there is any development outside, we try to share it, as far as possible, to the downward levels. I think that is the strength. The immediate goal is, of course, to halt the dam, which some may say that – anyway the dam is complete, so it's not successful. But I believe the success lies in the fact that two more generations could survive over the 35 years. When I went, when the struggle was already nine years, the child who was there for ten years, now his own child is learning in the college. If there was no struggle, they would have drowned at that stage.

Q: In which way did you target at international support to prevent the construction of the dam? Did you think about how to reach those international organisations or something like that?

A: Yes. When I joined, when the struggle was like nine years, there was already a lot of attention to them. Yes, of course it helps. I am not able to now connect whether it was proactive or whether – like at different stages writing to the Human Rights Commission. I remember at one point – because in Madhya Pradesh there was this BJP for the last fourteen years – there was this severe *lathi*-charge because Madhya Pradesh was not giving land for landless and we don't have. The villagers, when their own land had drowned, they decided that the government unused land, they will capture and they will do mass cultivation. That was another form of struggle which they did. Towards the evening, a big police force came, and they were badly beaten up. From the jail itself, Medha wrote a letter to the National Human Rights Commission. The court took *suo motu* cognisance, and it was not only that there were no cases put on these people who had done that struggle. But the court gave a decision that each one who was involved in that should get 10,000 Rupees compensation by the government, and if the government doesn't have money, it should be taken from the salaries of those who were responsible for not achieving the rehabilitation. Because they did not have any option, they had to make this struggle. Over the years, having better media

507 communication devices has certainly helped because now a small thing can reach . . . But even
508 before, because there was always an interaction with Riverside Network – Patrick is one of the
509 persons from Riverside Network – then it strives out. Like you we had, even that I knew of,
510 maybe more than hundred international students who came as interns or as supporters or as
511 media persons. International support definitely helps because when there is an emergency here
512 and somebody climbs up in some place in another nation saying that, *Unless the government*
513 *responds, I won't get off.* Some such things have also helped. That certainly helps. Whenever
514 there was an invite, Medha or Shripad or one of the team members would go and present their
515 case.
516 **Q:** In which way was there a supportive network, a national supportive network and . . .
517 **A:** All, national, international, both. The major one was certainly this Riverside Network,
518 which Patrick is a name that I remember. Another thing is, there were lots of films made at
519 different stages. Along with the interaction with Shripad, as I said, I happened to see a film
520 called *The Valley Rises*, which is at the initial years, how the people decide that we'll struggle.
521 There's that slogan, *ham hamaara adhikaar maangate, nahin kisee se bheekh maangate*. At
522 different times when people came, although there was not internet thing, but the filmmakers
523 always came. Anand Patwardhan is one from Maharashtra, Mumbai he is based in. He made
524 this film *A Valley Rises* and the next one was *A Valley Refuses to Die*. Then, there were some
525 films made by people from Delhi. Then, one film was made on this very incidence that I said
526 about, the activists getting beaten up. Even in the cities, we had different forms of reaching
527 out, like initially during the Ganapati struggle, we used to have our posters, and we would
528 stand on the roadside. When many people move for watching Ganapatis, then they will stop
529 by. Then, some people from Gujarat or supporting the Gujarat side as, *How you say no to*
530 *development?* They will argue with us, and when one person is arguing, other ten different
531 people will think, *Why is he arguing?* So, they would also stay. From that to going to the
532 colleges, showing the films and then interacting. Any college where there is this NSS kind of
533 thing, programmes for social science colleges. Then, few going to this NSS kind of camps.
534 Trying to relate to the people outside how it is relevant for their own society or personal
535 life also. Those are the kind of things we did. Another very effective thing used to be that
536 whenever there is a struggle in cities, either in Mumbai or . . . the children of *jeevanshalas*
537 would come and would do excellent tribal dance. They would have there that street play. As
538 an education tour, we brought those children and we visited many schools in Mumbai and
539 Pune. During one of that, they wanted to see the sea. We were in Mumbai on the beach,
540 and the children started doing the drama, and people gathered. Then, they got once more
541 and once more, three times at least. Then, we said, *They must be tired now, I know.* That
542 day, each of the mainstream media in Mumbai, newspaper, they had this photos of Narmada
543 children.
544 **Q:** Just to have it documented, when did the *Andolan* emerge and who were the people behind
545 it?
546 **A:** In three different states some activity had started, mainly since '83 or something. When

547 Medha went in '84, she interconnected them and made it into one *Andolan*, which was
548 formally announced as *Narmada Bachao Andolan*. That was in '84. We celebrate our decades
549 celebration according to that. Okay?
550 **Q:** Thank you so much.
551 **A:** Sure.

part 3 | start time: 12:03:09, duration: 7:17.7

552 **A:** ... because it didn't come in the flow. That time, I was not part of this *Andolan*, is
553 some time around maybe '89, '90 or '89 to '91. I had come back to India, but I had not
554 joined the *Andolan*, but I heard about it later. There was one very big event in a place called
555 Harsud, which is on the border of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. By then, Baba Amte had
556 also extended his support to Medha. It was under his guidance that people had decided to
557 walk, *padayatra*, from Madhya Pradesh towards Sardar Sarovar because some information –
558 that time there was RTI – some information details they had asked for. The government has
559 refute saying that it is national secrecy or whatever. They had decided to walk, and this all
560 big farmers from Madhya Pradesh, so they will bring their tractors and all, some 21 tractors
561 and large lorries. It was a huge mass, and that got tremendous support from all over India.
562 That time, Patel, Keshubhai Patel, was the Chief Minister of Gujarat. His wife Anandiben
563 Patel, who fairly later became in politics, she and some people from Gujarat, they stopped
564 these people. They say, *We would not let you cross the Gujarat border.* So this whole thing,
565 they waited there and they had tied their hands, saying – they knew that Gujarat will try to do
566 repression –, *hamala chaahe kaisa hoga, haath hamaara nahin uthega*. Wherever there were
567 stop, they just stopped there and they continue strike. That time, Medha and some more
568 people, Devrambhai, Kamluji, and some others, four, five people, they were on fast for 21
569 days. That time, Sanjay Sangvai was the journalist sending messages, mails, press notes, like
570 that. That was one, Harsud thing. It was around that time that this idea of NAPM was born,
571 that's what I have heard. One more big event was stopping this highway in Madhya Pradesh
572 towards Indore. That's a connecting link by road between Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.
573 It's a place called Khalghat. This people just sat on the highway, and for almost a day or more
574 than that, the traffic was halted. It showed people's commitment to non-violence and their
575 strong determination. I think there were some interactions, fairly, through different people
576 in the environmental groups internationally. These things reached, and then that Magsaysay
577 Award and all that came up.
578 **Q:** In which years did these events happen?
579 **A:** This was between '89 to '91. That is when I had just come, and I was fiddling to find
580 out a placement for myself, which in the environment, in the research field, was not too
581 good. That time, I heard about this, but I wasn't part of it. These are the two which must
582 be mentioned. Then around '93, '94, when I came in, Swami Agnivesh, have you heard of
583 him? He was another interesting figure, you should learn about it. You're interested. He calls

584 himself a Swami, but he's not a Swami in typical religion kind of **[unintelligible 5:12]**, but he
585 wears that kind of orange thing. He's a person who worked to free children from this bonded
586 labour thing. That's his major contribution. He's the person who had also tried to talk to
587 Maoists, asking them to give up their arms. Swami Agnivesh also has been a **[unintelligible**
588 **6:10]** supporter. Then, there was another person called B. D. Sharma, like Aruna Roy, who
589 was in services and then came out. He was the person who was in government, who was
590 instrumental in having the Schedule Five about the rights of tribals. He was based in Madhya
591 Pradesh, Bhopal, when we had our extended struggle in Bhopal in '94, after which the Supreme
592 Court gave a stay to Sardar Sarovar, not to increase height. B. D. Sharmaji is another name
593 **[unintelligible 7:03]**. Maybe you can look for cross references on these people.

Written Insurance

I hereby certify that I have prepared this bachelor thesis independently. All passages which are taken from the wording or the meaning of other works (including electronic sources) have been clearly marked in each individual case with precise indication of the source.

Bielefeld, 5th October, 2020

Max Harder

(Max Harder)