

A preliminary Study on the

Cultural Landscape of Darma Valley

unfolding the linkages and synergies

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Cultural Landscapes

CULTURAL

To be cultural-to have a culture- is to inhabit a place sufficiently intensive to cultivate it.

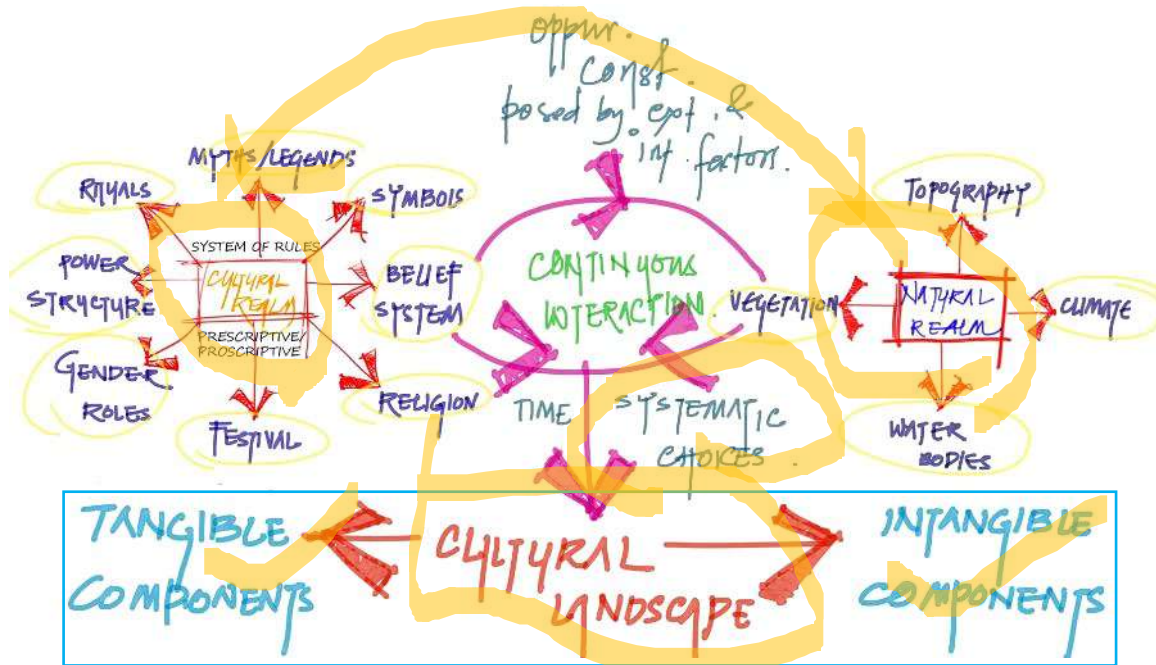
LANDSCAPE

"a portion of land that the eye can conceive in a single view; vista, prospect"

Otto Schlüter

Franz Boas

Carl Sauer



Source: Author

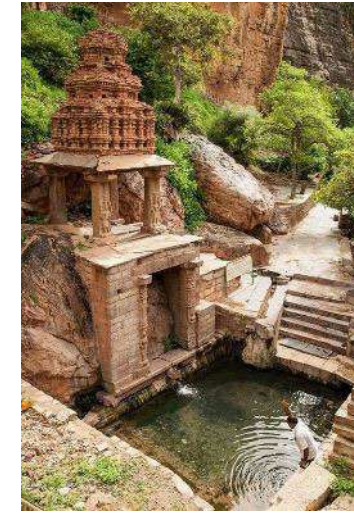
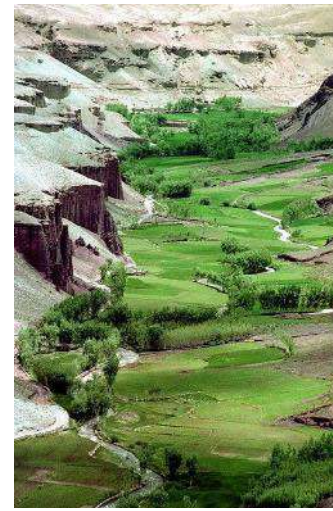


Image Source:
<http://www.christnet.eu>



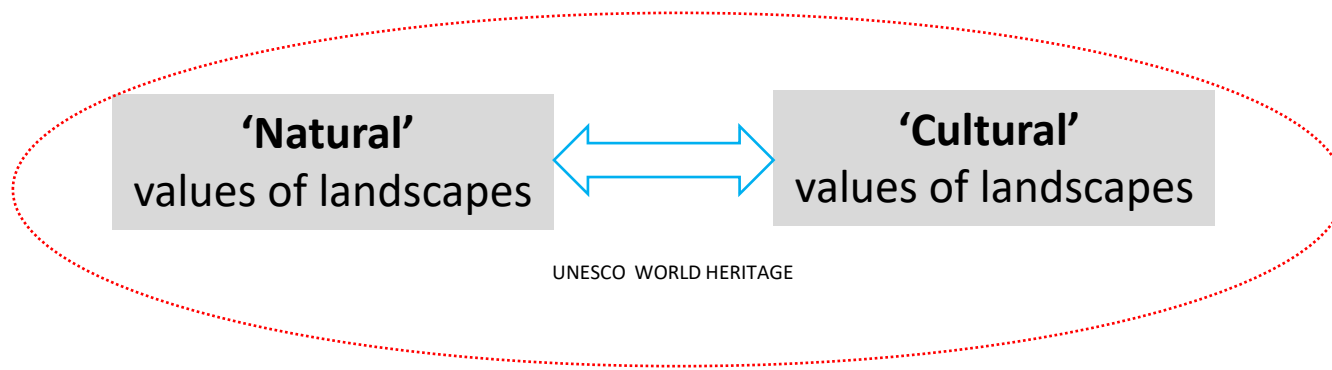
A natural landscape is a landscape where nature has been able to create a relatively stable situation without the intervention of man, regardless of the fact that may be in a far or not so far past, humans had been very instrumental in shaping that landscape.

A Cultural Landscape, on the other hand, is a landscape where nature is guided by human action, both attempting to arrive at an equilibrium.



Approaches to understand

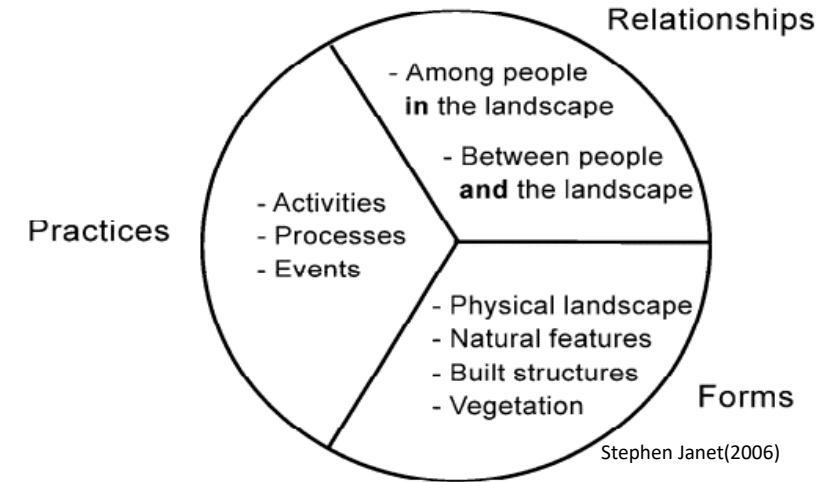
Cultural-ness and natural-ness are intertwined in all landscape, yet most disciplines and assessment methods have usually range themselves on one or other side of the **nature/culture barrier**, which's gradually been understood as unsustainable way of understanding any cultural landscape.



DIMENSIONS

- ❖ Landscape as a **spatial entity**
- ❖ Landscape as a **mental entity**
- ❖ Landscape as a **temporal dimension**
- ❖ Landscape as a **nexus of nature and culture**
- ❖ Landscape as a **complex system involving physical, biological and mental components**

Bärbel and Gunther Tress (2001)



Methodology Adopted in the study

To understand nature and range of values expressed by a community about its landscape

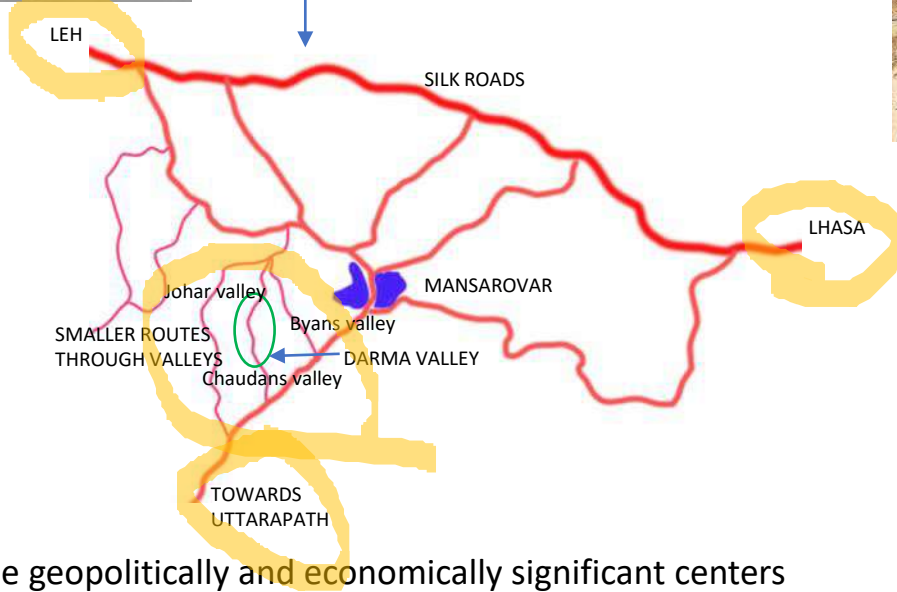
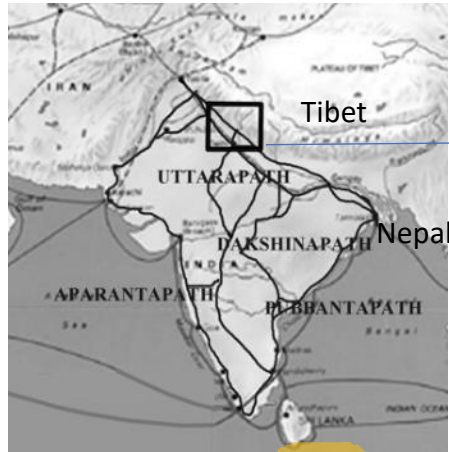
**GETTING THE INSIDER'S VIEW
SURFACE VALUES + EMBEDDED
VALUES**



Darma Valley,

Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand, India

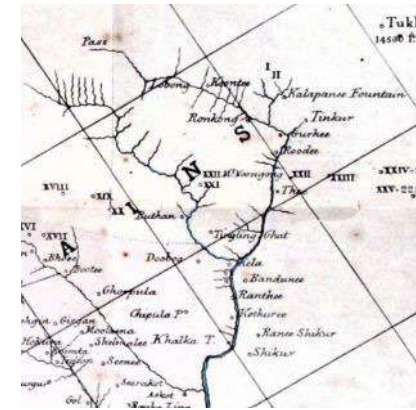
Situating the study area through archival records



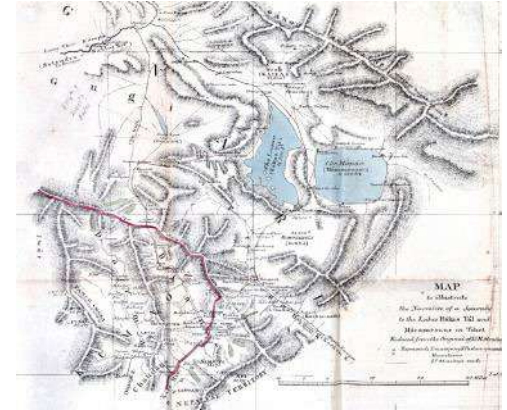
A gateway to the geopolitically and economically significant centers in Tibet and Central Asia



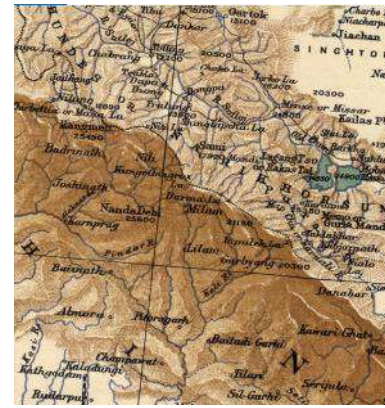
Web (1819)



Herber (1826)



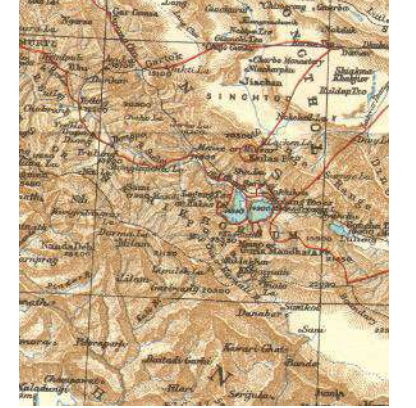
Strachey (1848)



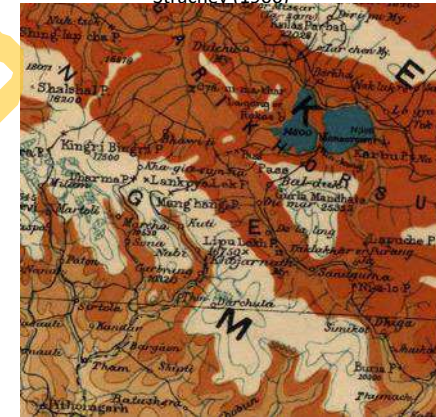
Strachey (1906)



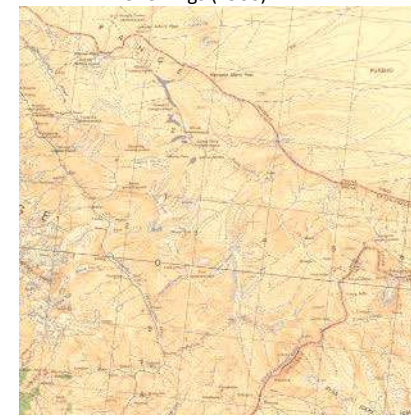
Sherrings (1906)



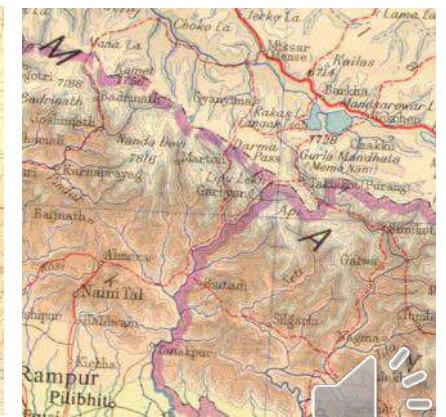
Hedins (1909)



SOI (1914)

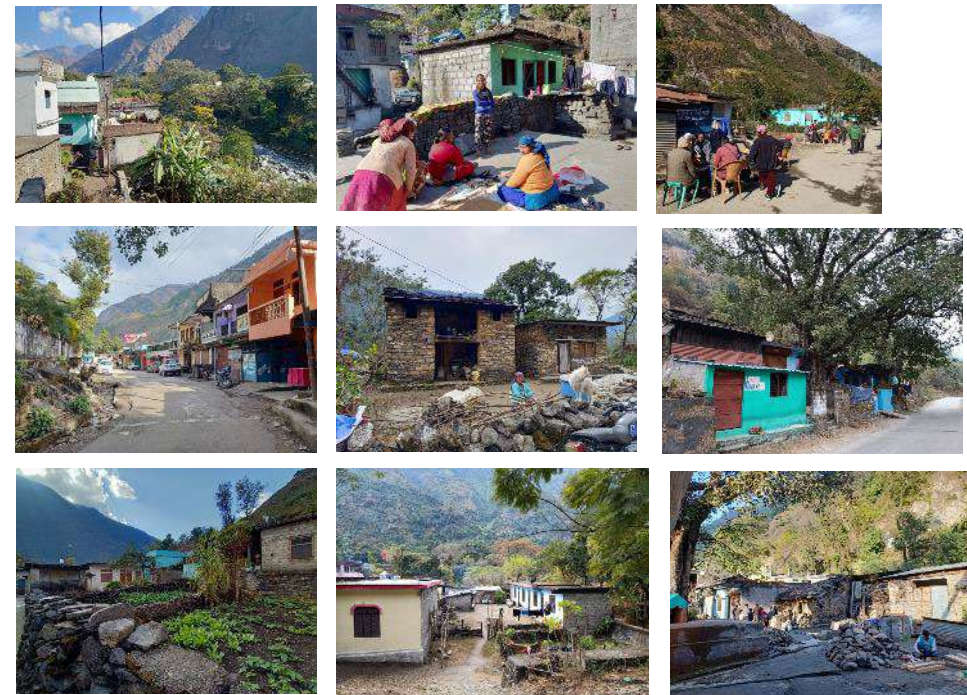
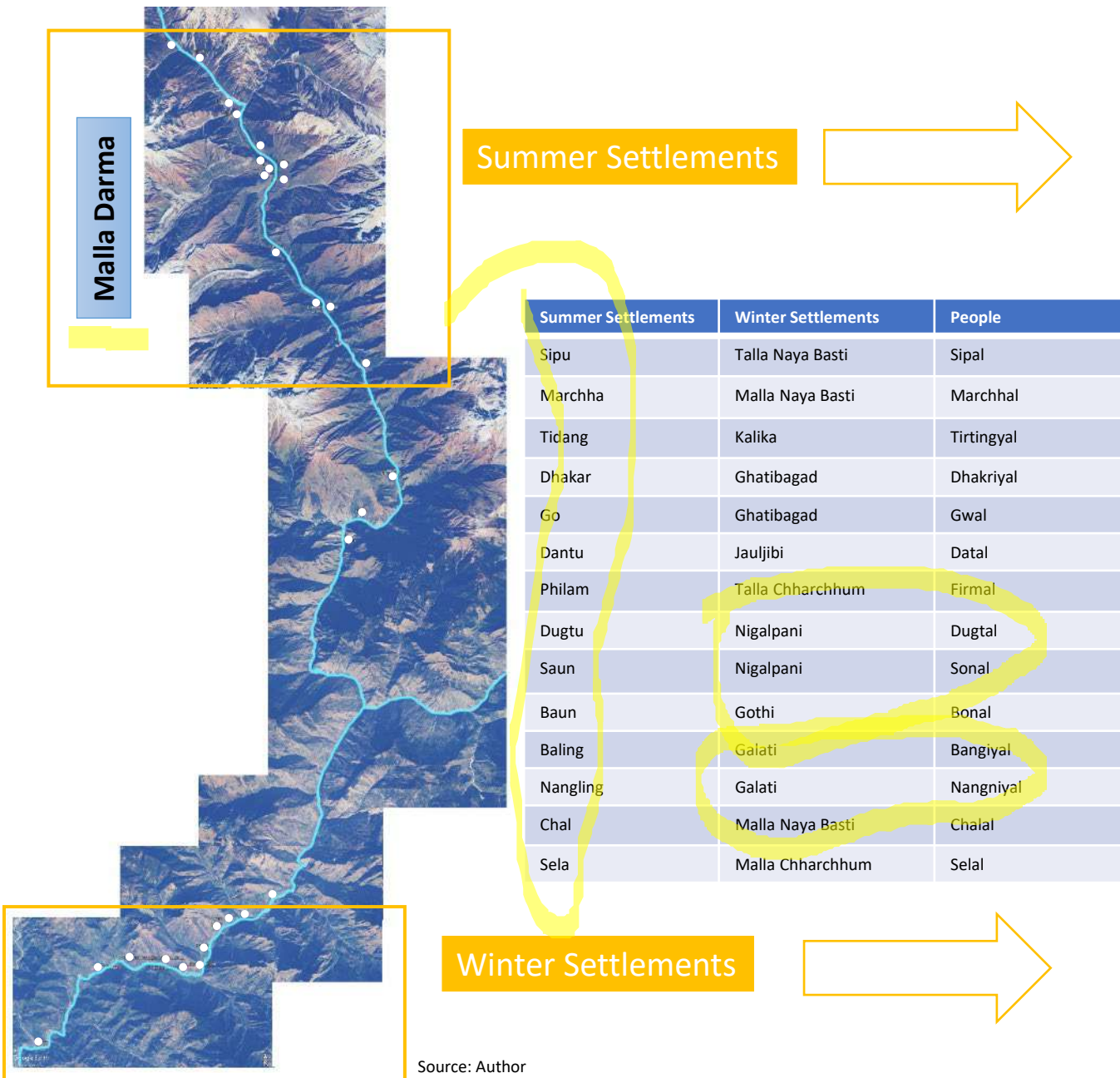


US ARMY MAP (1955)

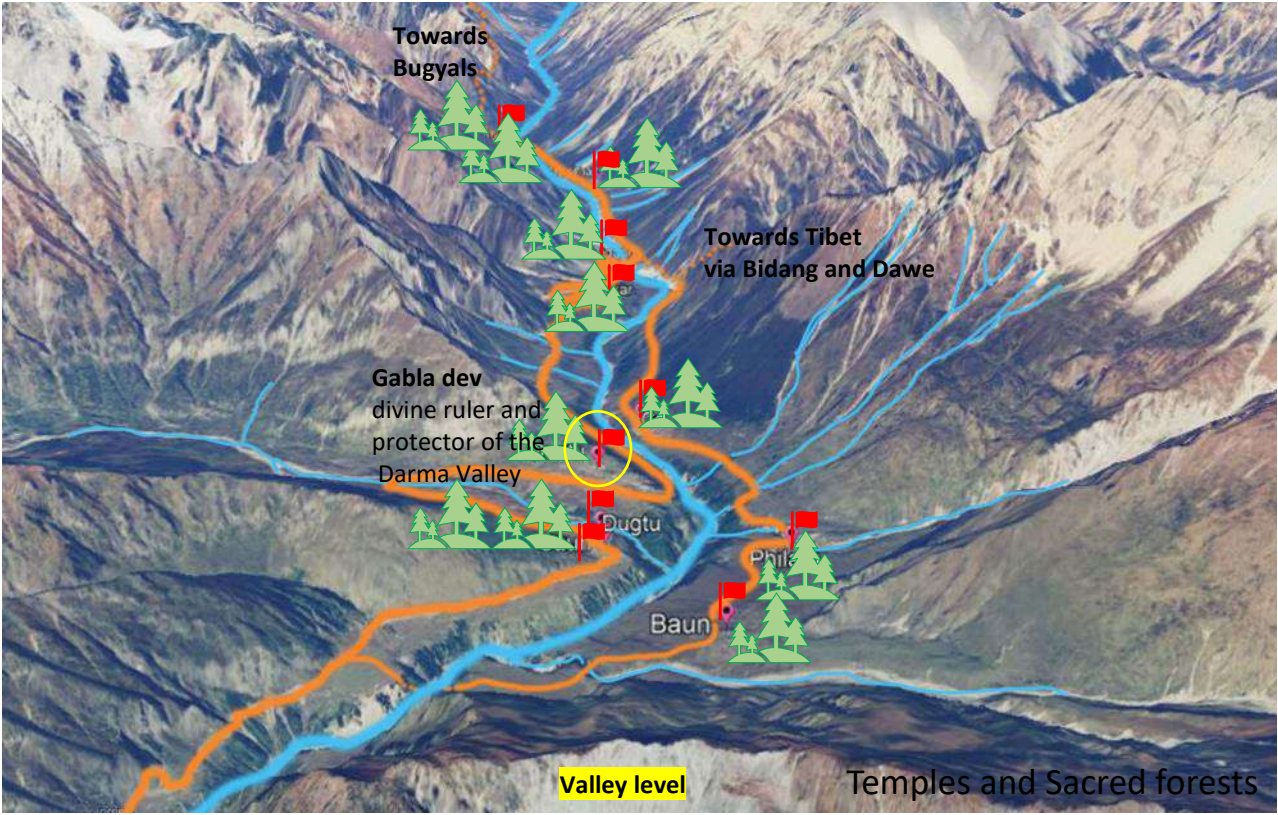
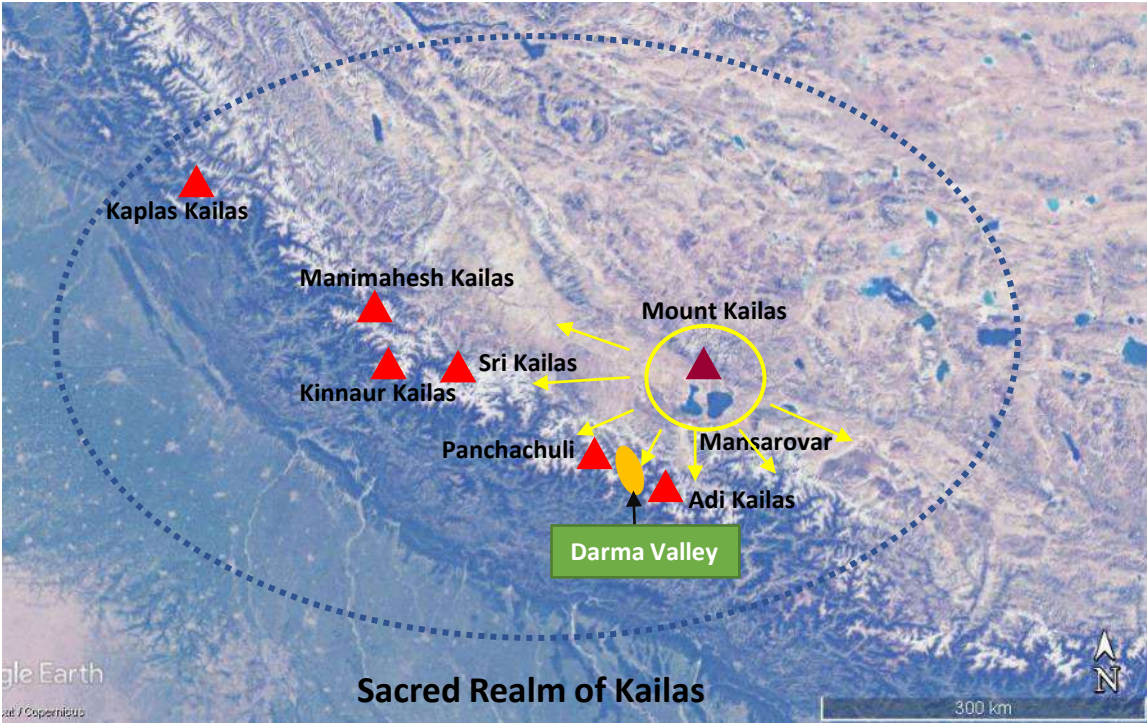


THE GEOGRAPHICAL INSTITUTE, EDINBURGH (1958)

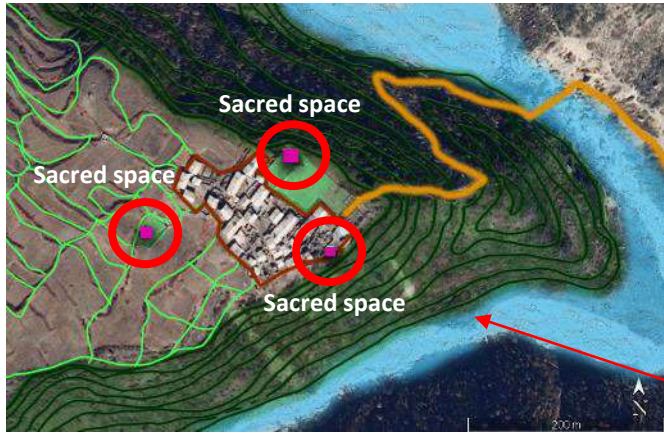
Darma: an Overview



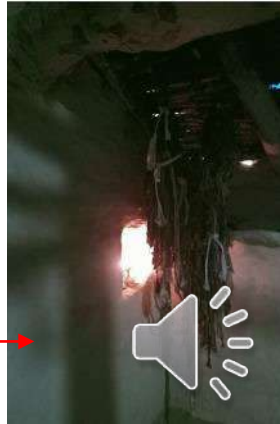
Darma : a shared sacred landscape



RITUAL PARTICIPATION || SENSE OF COMMUNITY || SOCIO-ECONOMICAL WELL-BEING



Dwelling level
Settlement level



Source: Author

Darma : an adaptive ecological network



Forest Settlement
Farmland River

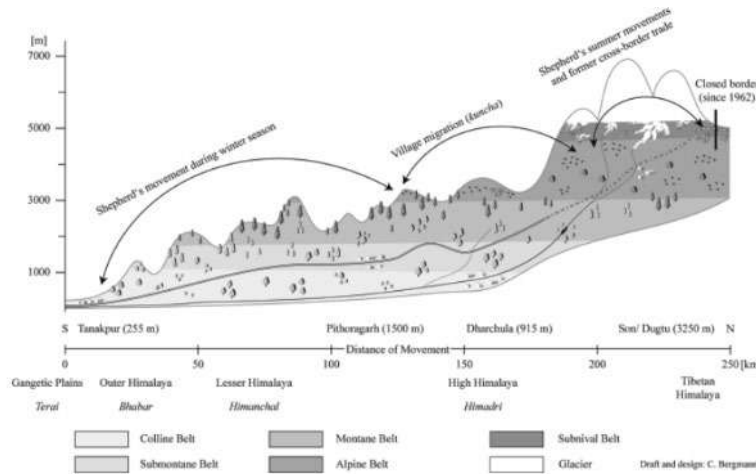
A settlement's position within the terrain influenced by the natural elements : Forest, Cultivable land, Water source and Sun

Protection needs

Cultivation needs

Financial needs

Spiritual needs



Source: Bergmann, Christoph & Gerwin, Martin & Sax, William & Nüsser, Marcus. (2011).

The cyclical movement

an excellent example of natural resource management, and the traditional ecological knowledge that indigenous societies have learned over ages by living in harmony with nature



cumulative body of ecological knowledge

knowledge associated with building construction and settlement planning

Knowledge of Medicinal herbs, Food preservation and seed conservation techniques

Craftsmanship (wood, wool)

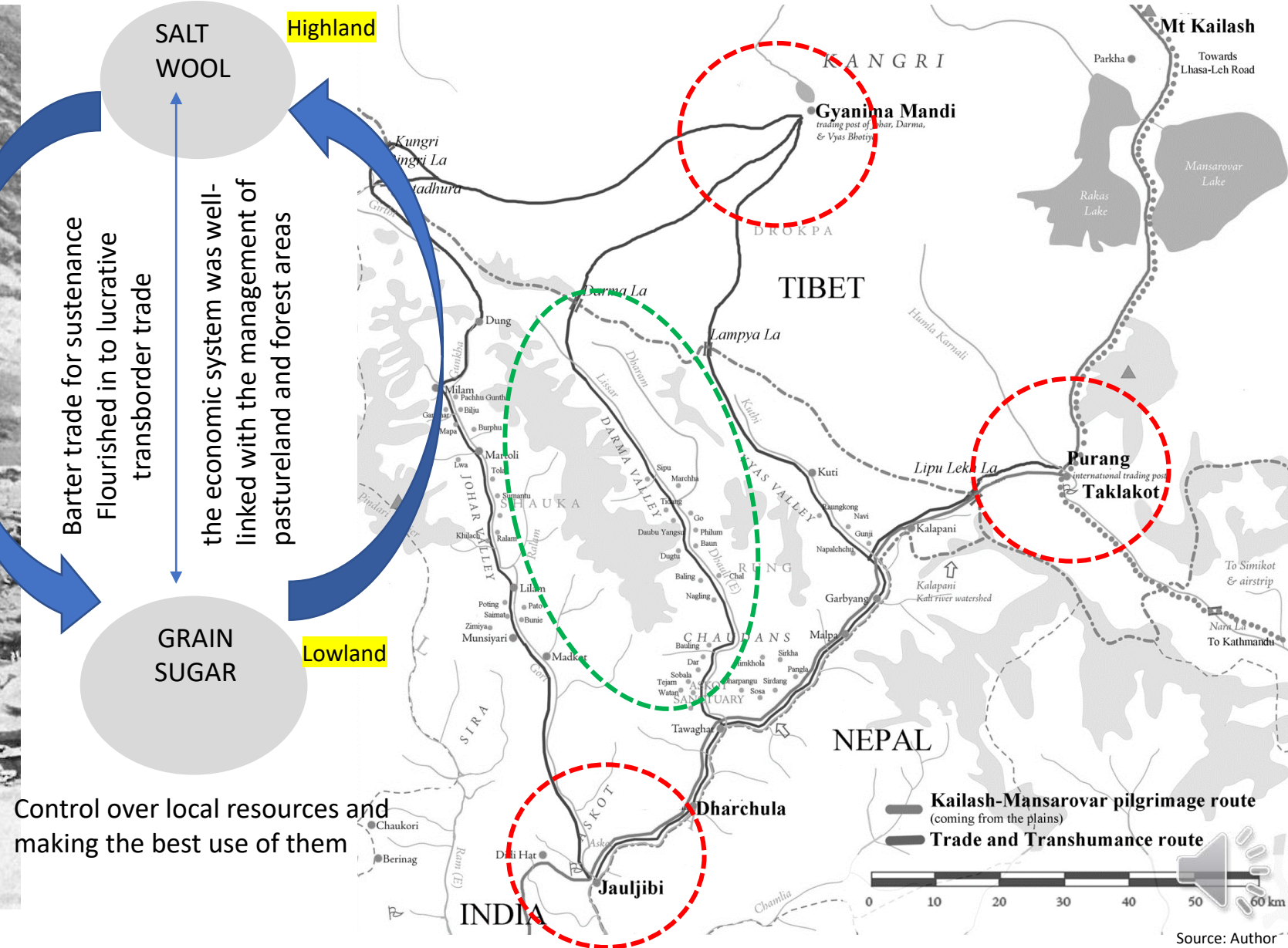
Religious practices, ceremonies to safeguard natural resources



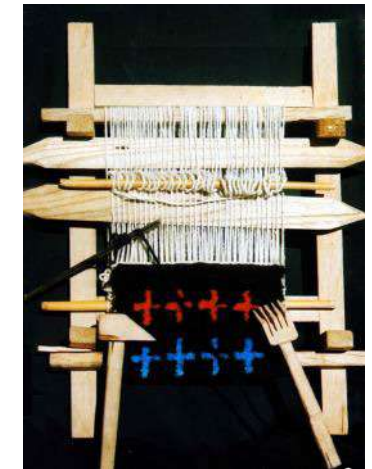
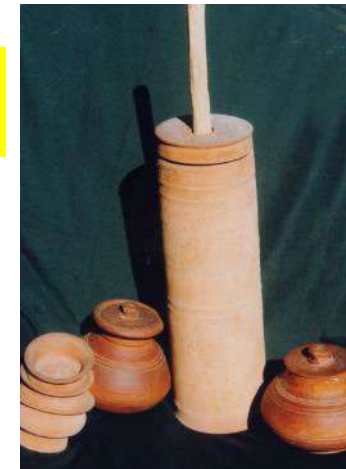
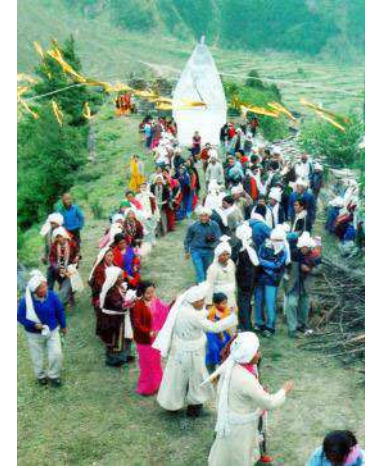
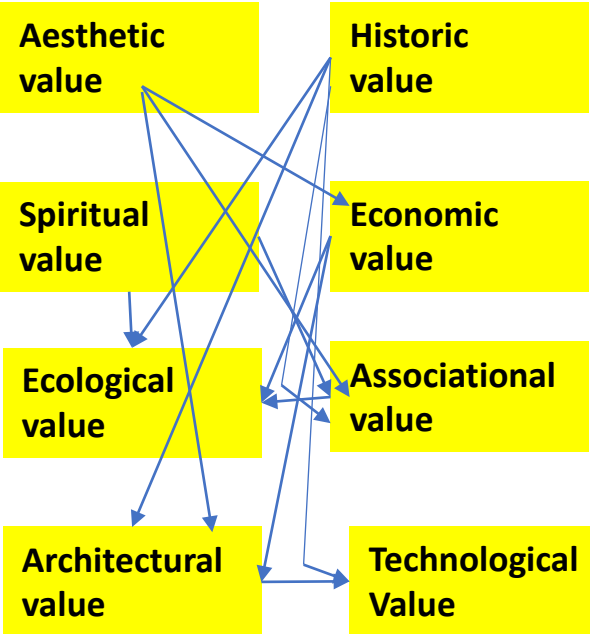
Darma : an integrated landscape of Ecology & Economy



Photo credit: Kurt Boeck Retrieved from: wikipedia

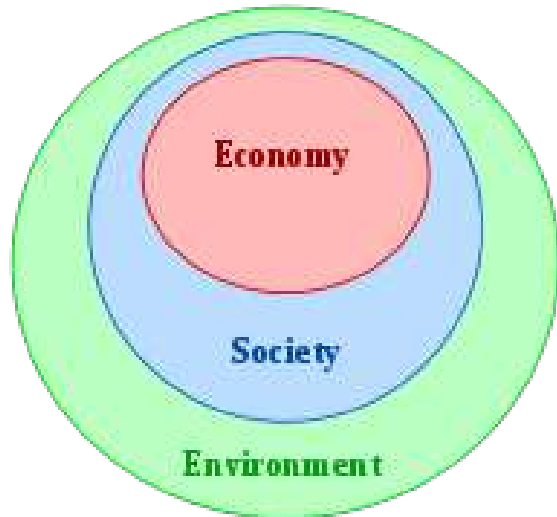


Darma : Tangible and Intangible Components



Past and Present || Changes and Continuity

PAST



Sino-Indian war and change in socio-economic dynamics

Climate change and the ecological changes

Cultural Landscape of Darma Valley:
Society and economy imbedded within
the ecological sphere resulting in a high-
value sustainable system with sacred
faith acting as the regulatory
mechanism

Identity || Spirituality || Sustenance

PRESENT



Decline in seasonal migration
Disruption in pastureland regeneration cycle



Increased frequency of landslides



Outmigration leading to abandonment of
settlements



Flashfloods wiping out settlements



Introduction of unsustainable building material
Settlements are rapidly changing to
accommodate tourism demands



Abandonment of farmlands
Decreasing forest cover

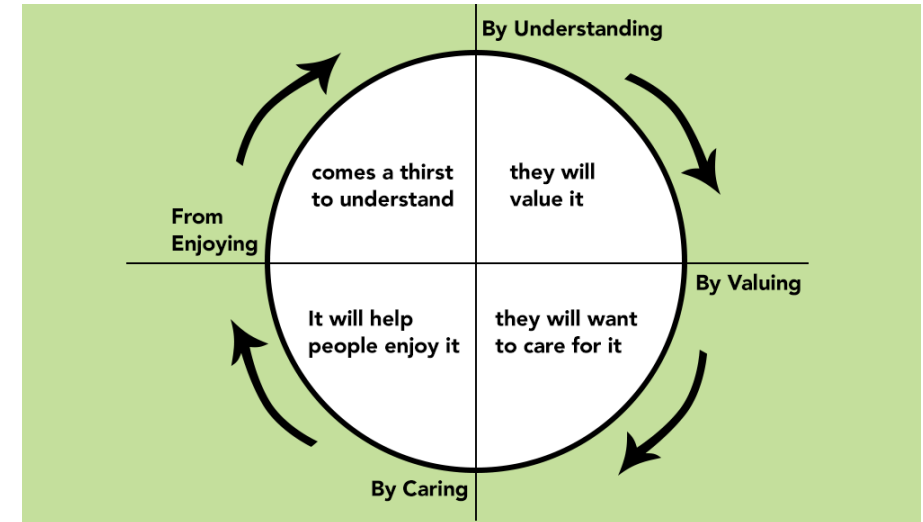


Conclusion

Organically Evolved Landscapes

- Darma valley through its **physical composition** and its **sacred dimension**, meets important social, cultural and economical needs.
- The **traditional knowledge system** includes : ecological knowledge and resource management techniques, sustainable building techniques and settlement planning, knowledge of medicinal herbs, food preservation and seed conservation techniques, wood and wool craftsmanship.
- Appeasing diverse deities of water, rain, and forest, officiating ceremonies of agricultural activities, and conveying the knowledge and tradition of resource management through **rituals are fundamental aspect** of the cultural landscape.
- Due to changes in socio-economic dynamics and ecological changes, the **relationship between society, ecology, and economy is rapidly becoming unsustainable**.

WAY FORWARD



1. The recognition and conservation of values in landscapes is vital to sustaining distinctive cultures.
2. To have a holistic understanding, research is required to determine the following: Valued relationships, Valued events, practices and processes, Valued landscape forms and how all the tangible and intangible features are interrelated.
3. Effective ways of dissemination needs to be in place which could benefit both the insiders and outsiders.



THANK YOU!!

