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COLLECTIVE SUSTENANCE & THE ENVIRONMENT: A POLITICAL ECONOMY ANALYSIS OF TOURISM IN HIMACHAL PRADESH, INDIA

SUHA PRIYADARSHINI CHAKRAVORTY

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Thesis Abstract

The Himalayas have long been a source of attraction for people for its resources that have encouraged its use and exploitation by the government since colonial times. The Himalayan terrain has typically been favoured for the tourism industry owing to its scenic beauty, recreational activities and the local cottage industries that have developed over a period of time, alongside the tourism sector that has facilitated the growth and sustenance of the local hill economies.

Tourism in Himachal Pradesh is not a new phenomenon and dates back to the historical accounts of the famous Chinese Traveler, Hiuen Tsang and later colonial travelers later such as William Moorcroft, who had written extensively on the social and economic life, art and architecture, scenic beauty and the flora and fauna of Himachal. However modern day tourism in the state has acquired new dimensions. Both formal and informal networks of people have been involved with the tourism industry in Himachal that has symbolically separated older forms of tourism with the newer kinds. This relates to not only the massive influx in the quantum of people to the state but the articles of exchange- kinds of products exchanged, and kinds of recreational opportunities made available to the tourists. Owing to the fact that agriculture was by itself not sufficient and was often severely impaired by adverse climatic conditions, the local communities engaged in trade of plants, herbs and herbomineral oils such as *shilajit* or *paththar ka paseena* (some of which were made illegal by colonial and post-colonial law).

The nexus of contractors and tourists with that of the local communities in the trading of a narcotic produce from Cannabis resin, *Malana cream* (native of the village Malana, in the Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh) is another issue linked with the creation of a massive illicit drug trade that caters to the national and international market.
While on the one hand its positive impact on the economy cannot be disregarded, the issue of environmental degradation has gradually deepened with the massive explosion of mega and midsized resort projects and building of hotels that have eroded the fragile slopes and been responsible for tremendous deforestation. Furthermore, the growth of the tourism sector (which has itself been heartened by the building of roadways) has in its turn encouraged incessant construction of roadways and led to urban modes of expansion in the hills, that have resulted in slope erosion and continuously de-stabilized slopes displacing the landless living in forests. Additionally, air pollution has become a major concern in the Himachal, owing to the vehicular emission from the large volume of buses and cars that ply to and fro the hills to cater to tourists. Himachal Pradesh has therefore witnessed a process of steady environmental degradation.

The study is conducted in Manali town in the Kullu district of Himachal, to critically look at the changing nature of peoples' survival mechanisms and coping strategies in the context of exploitation and management of natural resources vis-à-vis tourism. The notions of 'risk' is understood not merely in terms of environmental concerns in the hills, but also from the

perceptions of ‘new threats’ to ‘security’ that are embedded in the very geopolitical composition of the region, in the context of modern risk societies and the way in which ‘collective sustenance’ finds meaning in the context of the ‘shadow’ economy. It endeavoures to contribute to existing literature on exploitation of natural resources owing to tourism development in hill economies broadly, by trying to bridge gaps in the literature and bringing in an integrated agenda to look at institutional frameworks of the state and that of the local people in their modus operandi and collective sustenance mechanisms, including coping strategies in the light of ‘risks’ in ecologically fragile landscapes. Also, since not much literature has been generated as significant case study material for Himachal Pradesh, in terms of analysing the political economy of tourism in the region, the study addresses the concerns of these neglected hills and their communities as ‘precarious’ ‘risk communities’ attempting to cope with changing environment through collective action.
The study specifically engages in-

1. To examine how collective sustenance mechanisms operate beyond mere sustenance needs and evolve as coping strategies underlying the fabric of hill economies as tourism expands and impacts the politics of survival in molding these power configurations.

2. To study the networks that grow as a result of the interplay of tourism in relation to adaptive measures and coping strategies employed which has further repercussions in changing patterns of collective sustenance mechanisms.

3. To understand the ‘risk’ perceptions in relation to livelihood, shadows and collective sustenance and explore to what extent they have had implications for shaping the economy of the region.

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There have been innumerable people who have helped and supported me through the entire journey of this PhD that I embarked on, in the Department of Development Studies at SOAS, University of London, all of whom would probably be difficult to list here, given that on many occasions I have not had the opportunity to know their names owing to the myriad experiences I had during travel, or that they had rendered their support from the background without my knowledge and in some instances, have not wanted me to name them. However, at the outset, I must acknowledge that this work would have not been possible without the encouragement of my father, Soumya Kanti Chakravorty and my mother, Krishna Chakravorty, who I owe this PhD and my life to and who have amidst all the turbulent times been there for me in every possible way. I also thank my husband Kanak Dasgupta for all the care and support.

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ACRONYMS USED

Abbreviation	Meaning
ANT	Actor Network Theory
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
FEE	Foreign Exchange Earning
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FTA	Foreign Tourist Arrival
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GLOF	Glacial Lake Outburst Floods
GOI	Government of India
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPMC	Himachal Pradesh Horticulture Produce Marketing Corporation
HPTDC	Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation
HSV	Himalayan Ski Village
IDI	In- Depth Interview
INR	Indian Rupee
IIS	International Informal Sector
LSD	Lysergic acid Diethylamide
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
NGT	National Green Tribunal
NDPS	Narcotic Drugs & Psychotropic Substances
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development

NTP	National Tourism Policy
OTC	Over The Counter
PIL	Public Interest Litigation
PRASAD	Pilgrimage Rejuvenation & Spiritual Augmentation Drive
RSPM	Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SLL	Special and Local Laws
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USD	United States Dollar
VAT	Value Added Tax
WTO	World Tourism Organization

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Chapter 1
Setting the scene

1.1 Tourism in the Himalayas

The Himalayas have long been a source of attraction for people for its rich resources that have been used and exploited since times immemorial. The Himalayas have been favoured for tourism owing to its scenic beauty, the recreational activities made possible by the terrain and the local cottage industries that have developed over the years. Together they have facilitated the growth and sustenance of the local hill economies. Also, since agriculture by itself was often not sufficient in these terrains and severely impaired by adverse climatic conditions, the local hill residents engaged in trade of plants, herbs and herbomineral oils such as *shilajit* or *paththar ka paseena,* some of which were made illegal by colonial and post-colonial law. Trade in a variety of local produce has long been a cornerstone for the lives and livelihoods of the people in the Himachal region that further encouraged tourism in its turn, as Sir H. David's reflections find mention in the 1888-89 District Gazetteer of Simla,

> "The people of the north are active traders proceeding to Leh for Charas and to Gardok for shawl-wool, giving in exchange money, clothes and spices. The mountain paths are scarcely practicable for laden mules, and merchandise is carried chiefly on the backs of sheep and goat."[1]

The early documentations on tourism in the Himachal region includes the historical accounts of the famed Chinese traveler, Hiuen Tsang (between 627-643 AD) and later colonial travelers later such as William Moorcroft (early 1800s) being written, that bear testimony to the rich social and economic life, art and architecture, scenic beauty and the flora and fauna of Himachal (Chand, 1998). Tourism in Himachal is therefore not a new phenomenon. In addition to travelers in ancient India, colonial explorers, mountaineers and subsequent leisure seekers travelled to these hills in quest of an 'out of the ordinary' experience.

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[1]Gazetteer of the Simla District, 1888-89, Delhi, reprint 1992 (p 6)

In the 19th century, when the British began establishing hill stations as sites of rest and recuperation (R and R as they called it) for colonial officers, away from India's notorious heat and dust, what is now Himachal Pradesh became one of the states to be developed primarily for touristic purposes with Shimla becoming popular as the British summer capital since 1864. Subsequently, with the reorganization of the states in 1966, prospective naturally resource rich areas such as Kulu, Manali, Dharmshala, Kangra and Dalhousie were incorporated within the geographical perimeters of the state of Himachal Pradesh (Balokhra, 1997). Thereafter tourism got a renewed boost in the state with the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) after India's independence and has since then been exploited as a key sector economically by the state government that announced its own tourism policy in 2000.

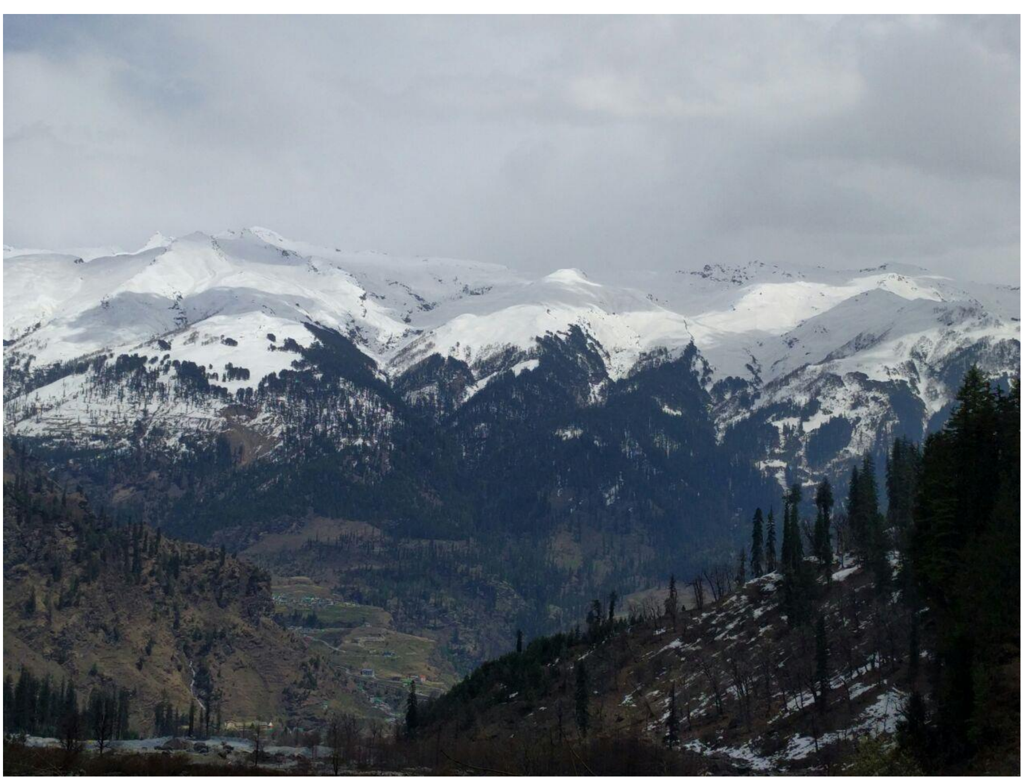

Figure 1.1 Snow- capped mountain peaks of Himachal Pradesh

Especially the locales of Manali and Dharmshala in Himachal Pradesh attracted *hippies*[2] and these mountains thus became an integral part of the famed Hippie Trail in the 1960s and 70s. They were people who lived communally and indulged in recreational drug use and experimented with forms of a locally produced psychotropic substance abundant in the bushy

[2] The term hippie also spelt as hippy is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as a person especially in the 1960s of unconventional appearance, typically having long hair, associated with a subculture involving a rejection of conventional values and the taking of hallucinogenic drugs.

outgrowth of the hills, i.e. *charas/ ganja/ Malana Cream;* the informal trade of which has now become increasingly organized over the years through systematic networks and operations. Over the years, the *ganja* forests of the wild were converted to controlled *kutlas*[3] (enclosures producing the weed). Land use became 'common' rather than 'open'[4] and this had implications for local hill communities and their claims to collective sustenance as a community capable of managing the resource. Newer kinds of recreational activities and adventure sports have also evolved and correspondingly become fashionable with time such as, guided trekking tours, mountaineering and rock climbing, angling, river rafting, paragliding, skiing etc.

Modern day tourism in the state of Himachal Pradesh, India has thus gone beyond its earlier simplistic dimensions of leisure seeking and acquired new traits as the tourism industry has colossally expanded over the years. Both formal and informal networks of people have come to be involved with the tourism industry in Himachal that has symbolically separated older forms of tourism with newer kinds. This relates to not only the massive influx in the quantum of people to the state but the articles of exchange; types of products exchanged and kinds of recreational opportunities made available to the tourists. Furthermore, the nexus of contractors and tourists with that of the local communities in the trading of a narcotic produce from Cannabis resin namely, *Malana Crème* (native of the village *Malana*, in the Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh) may also be directly linked with the creation of a massive illicit drug trade that caters to the national and international market.

While, Himachal Pradesh has been a source of enormous cultural, natural and scenic offerings for travelers, who have frequently come in quest of the majestic snow peaked mountains, rivers, forests, wildlife and the natural scenic beauty of the environment, it was only after India's independence and post globalization and economic reorganization that the tourism sector witnessed a boom in the Himalayan region. It has since then been a major source of employment and income generating opportunity for the local communities dwelling in the hills. The more recent studies attribute the growth of tourism in Himachal, especially in the Kullu District to namely four factors- a) conflict in the neighbouring state of Jammu & Kashmir since the 1989 that collapsed the long established tourist destination and pushed the

---

[3] See *Weed and the Valley*, by Suresh Thomas in Fountain Ink, posted on December, 4, 2012 available online at http://fountainink.in/?p=3074 last accessed on August 3, 2015

[4] Open access refers to a non-excludable system where land is not managed by a particular individual or group or where access is controlled while 'common' land is usually owned by a group of people who have their own sets of customs surrounding its use and access.

tourists to the Kullu Valley, b) the improvement work of the National Highway 21 linking commercial routes, c) the temperate summer climate of the Kullu Valley and d) economic growth and transformation of some sectors in the economy along with improved networks of communication the internet and transport facilities.[5]

Travelers today also frequent the hills of Himachal in search of traditional remedies offered through medicinal plants and herbs along with other forest and hill produce such as *Malana Cream* and *Shilajit* or *Pathar ka paseena*. As of the statistics of 2002, the total tourist arrivals in the state were estimated at 5.10 million, of which 1, 44,383 were foreign nationals alone.[6] The state has adopted the tourism policy in 2000, which aspires to remove gaps in the seasonality of tourism by endorsing sustainable tourism, engaging in employment generating schemes and promoting private investments in the tourism sector along with encouraging pilgrimage tourism.

While the positive impact of tourism on the economy cannot be disregarded, the issue of environmental degradation has gradually deepened with the massive explosion of small and mid-sized[7] hotels coupled with some mega[8] resort projects that have eroded the fragile slopes and been responsible for tremendous deforestation. Furthermore, the growth of the tourism sector (which has itself been escalated by the building of roadways) has in its turn encouraged incessant construction of roadways[9] and led to urban modes of expansion in the hills, that have resulted in slope erosion and continuously de-stabilized slopes displacing the landless living in forests. There were 288 km of roads when Himachal Pradesh came into existence in 1948, which has gone up to 23,788 km. The State has 8 National Highways having a total road length of 1,235 km. The government of India has constructed approximately 29,329 km of motorable road by September 2006. Additionally, air pollution has become a major concern in the Himachal, owing to the vehicular emission from the large volume of buses and cars that ply to and fro the hills to cater to tourists. Himachal Pradesh has therefore witnessed a process of steady exploitation of its natural resources for an

[5] See 'Natural Hazards Risk in the Kullu District, Himachal Pradesh, India' by James Gardener, in *Geographical Review*, Vol 92(2), Mountain Geography, April 2002, pp: 282-306, American Geographical Society

[6] In *Sustainable Tourism Development: A Himalayan Experience* by S.P. Bansal & Prashant Gautam (2007), Indus Publishing Company in association with Institute of Integrated Himalayan Studies, H.P. University, Shimla

[7] Refers to hotels with a capacity of between 50 to 100 rooms, See Ahmad. S (2014) Entrepreneurship in the small and medium-sized hotel sector, *Current Issues in Tourism*, 18 (4) 1-22

[8] Refers to exceptionally large-sized destination featuring large scale attractions such as golf course, theme parks/ multiple types of accommodation**,** See Prideaux B. (2009) *Resort destinations: evolution, management and development,* Elsevier, MA, USA

[9] See "Identification of Tourism circuits across India," by IL&FS, Interim report, Phase I, HP submitted to the Ministry of Tourism, July 2012

unprecedented growth of tourism with a subsequent increase in ecological degradation and pollution crises in the hills owing to substantial tree felling and forest clearing, which has had deep rooted ramifications on the geo-physical health of the region. Tourism in Himachal has also led to the pollution of the environment is terms of effluence and other solid wastes being disposed by hotels and resorts in an improper manner,[10] that not only litter the hills but cause serious health hazards to local inhabitants. Himachal Pradesh has therefore witnessed a process of steady exploitation of its natural resources for an unprecedented growth of tourism with a subsequent increase in ecological degradation and pollution crises in the hills owing to substantial tree felling and forest clearing.

It is against this backdrop of ecological degradation that this study is made in the Manali region in the Kullu district of what constitutes present day Himachal Pradesh, where I critically examine the changing nature of peoples' survival mechanisms and coping strategies in the context of exploitation and management of natural resources vis-à-vis tourism. I understand the notions of 'risk' therefore, not merely in terms of environmental concerns in the hills, but also from the perceptions of 'new threats' to 'security' that are embedded in the very geopolitical composition of the region, in the context of modern risk societies and the way in which collective sustenance finds meaning in the context and performance of the 'shadow' economy. I further expand on the idea of risk in Chapter 3.

1.2 Scope of Contribution

Landscapes provide a 'tableaux of memory' (Schama, 1995) which however does not correspond to 'a fixed record of power' but one that is constantly changing and being shaped by new political motivations, networks, and constituencies. As Mosse (2003) argues, while nature cannot be understood apart from 'its' social making, social life itself cannot be understood as a separate entity since there is an inherent ecological and territorial dimension to all rural social structures. These social structures are both embedded in to form certain kinds of landscapes which are therefore the product of 'social imaginings and ecological necessities' (Redclift and Benton, 1994) that further have bearings on geo-social existence of local communities.

[10] See article by *The Indian Express*, "Oberoi's luxury hotel gets pollution notice" for discharging untreated effluent into a natural drainage in the valley, available online at https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/oberois-luxury-hotel-gets-pollution-notice/ last accessed on December 5, 2020

In the light of the transformations that the landscape bears testimony to, this study endeavours to contribute to existing literature on exploitation of natural resources owing to tourism development in hill economies broadly, by trying to bridge gaps in the literature and bringing in an integrated approach to analyse institutional operations and collective sustenance mechanisms, including coping strategies in the light of 'risks' in ecologically fragile landscapes. Also, since not much literature has been generated as significant case study material for Himachal Pradesh, in terms of analyzing the political economy of tourism in the region, I study the settlement area circumscribing the hills of chiefly Kullu district, Himachal Pradesh and the hill communities residing in and around the town *Manali* and the village *Malana*, as 'risk communities' attempting to cope with changing environment through conscious political action.

In terms of additional input, the study seeks to engage in-

- Theory building

1. To examine how collective sustenance mechanisms operate beyond mere sustenance needs and evolve as coping strategies underlying the fabric of hill economies as tourism expands and impacts the politics of survival in molding these power configurations.
2. To study the networks that grow as a result of the interplay of tourism in relation to adaptive measures and coping strategies employed which has further repercussions in changing patterns of collective sustenance mechanisms.
3. To understand the 'risk' perceptions in relation to livelihood, shadows and collective sustenance and explore to what extent they have had implications for shaping the economy of the region.

1.3 Site for the Study

The North Indian hill state of Himachal Pradesh situated in the western Himalayas, covers an area of 55,673 sq km and comprises 12 administrative districts with 72 development blocks with the total forest cover approximated at 66% and a total population of 6,856, 509 as per the census of 2011. It is surrounded by the Indian states of Jammu and Kashmir on the north and by Punjab on the west and south-west and by the states of Haryana and Uttarakhand on the south-east. It shares the international border with Tibet Autonomous region on the east. Home to a number of indigenous groups such *gaddis*, *gujjars*, *bhots, pangwalas, swanglas, betas, kinnauras* and the *lahaulas.* Himachal displays a great variation in its socio-ethnic composition and hence in their means of livelihood and sustenance, since these diverse groups tend to occupy different ecological niches in the landscape. This can be attributed to the varying climatic conditions owing to its extremely diverse elevations, differing from about 350 meters to 6975 meters above sea level.[11]

Figure 1.2 District Map of Himachal Pradesh (not to scale) Source: Maps of India

[11] See the website for Tribal Development Department, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh available online at http://admis.hp.nic.in/himachal/tribal/tribalarea.htm last accessed on January 10, 2015

The history of Himachal is chiefly the political history of the princely states of the region that have been reconstructed to arrive at a generic history of the state of Himachal Pradesh. It was in the 19th and the 20th centuries that the British administrators began compiling State and District Gazetteers that reflect the local culture and heritage of the region. The early historical accounts of Himachal Pradesh, is one of migration of the people to the Himalayas primarily because of refuge in the hills in case of persecution or other pressing compulsions in the mainland (Minhas, 1998).

Himachal Pradesh came into being as the Chief Commissioner's province on April 15, 1948, soon after India's independence following which it received the status of one of the ten Part C states to have been included in the Union of India, as of January 26, 1950.[12] Subsequently, it became a Union Territory on November 1, 1956 after *Bilaspur* was merged with it in 1954. Himachal Pradesh was further merged with *Kangra* and other hilly areas of Punjab in 1966 but it was only on December, 18, 1970, that the State of Himachal Pradesh Act was passed for it to be recognized as the eighteenth state of the Indian Union since January 25, 1971. The water resources in the state have often enticed the Central government towards investment in a number of hydel power projects in the state, such as the *Allain Duhangan* project, *Renuka Ji* Dam project, the *Karcham- Wangtoo* project, *Sainj* project, *Sawra Kuddu* project, *Kashang* project, *Chirgaon- Majhgaon* project etc. This apart, the natural scenic beauty of the state has encouraged the tourism sector to flourish in the region.

Since, resource utilization and management depend upon a use of a combination of technologies and socio-genesis, a typical hill environment with its quintessential resource endowment gives rise to a specific cultural setting to make use of those locally obtainable resources. For Arnold & Guha (1995), "…within the broad bounds of environmental history, there is a history of the environment as cultural space and ideological artefact…" The communities (apart from acting within the constraints of the environment) continually accept challenges to grow beyond adaptation and politically organise themselves, which enables them to rise against the risks of environment placed before them. The natural constraints of Himachal Pradesh have similarly led its inhabitants to develop various indigenous technologies to combat it through cultural adaptation and beyond. This process has been

[12]See The Himachal Pradesh Government Official website available online at http://himachal.nic.in/index1.php?lang=1&dpt_id=17&level=2&lid=3589&sublinkid=3027 and last accessed on January 10, 2015

dynamic to the utilization pattern of natural resources such as of common lands, forests and rivers and which have also witnessed a change of ownership, access and use over time as 'collective sustenance' mechanisms evolved with time in tackling situations of environmental risks.

Difficult mountainous terrain, harsh climate and sparse population have traditionally been a handicap for Himachal with its economy being largely unorganized and fragmented prior to India's independence in 1945. Himachal Pradesh's ecology supports a forest dependent economy with mainly subsistence agriculture on terraced farms along the hill slopes. Owing to the fact that agriculture was often severely impacted by adverse climatic conditions, the local communities continually engaged in trade of plants, herbs and herbomineral oils such as *shilajit* or *paththar ka paseena* and the *Malana Crème*, and other economic activities brandishing tourism.

The primary research question:

How has tourism transformed with 'collective sustenance' strategies employed by hill communities post the 1990s alongside the drug economy that has developed in Himachal Pradesh?

The subsidiary research questions:

- What risks and rewards do the hill 'communities'[13] perceive in relation to tourism and the informal shadow economy? How were rehabilitation and compensation packages viewed?
- How have older forms of tourism been replaced by newer motivations in Himachal Pradesh?- Has seasonality been lost in the influx of tourists in Himachal Pradesh?
- Looking at the gender dynamics imminent in the question of collective sustenance, community identity when interfaced with tourism.

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[13] I use the word 'community' or 'communities' in the sense of an '*assemblage',* where micro-politics lies at the core of alliances within and between 'entities' in so far as the relations that bind them are of political symbiosis; an idea I further develop in Chapter 3 to also connect with my proposition of '*collective sustenance'* which is its essential feature.

- How has the illicit network changed the hill economy? - The context of trading of medicinal plants and drugs in Himachal Pradesh.

The objective of the study is to therefore look at the political dynamics immanent in the collective ways of negotiating tourism in the hill economy of Himachal Pradesh. Hence it analyzes whether establishing market links in the recent past with the territories outside of the locales of hills, has re-constructed the 'hill identity' in a specific way and examines the kinds of transformations the tourism industry itself has witnessed as part of the negotiations of the hill communities and the tourists.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

In this research, I investigate practices of collective sustenance that have emerged in the context of environmental and social vulnerabilities caused by tourism-dependent development model of Himachal Pradesh. According to Gibbs & Martin (1973), "Collective sustenance organizations are ones where individuals band together and coordinate their activities so as to obtain objects of consumption." I however introduce the concept of 'collective sustenance' by stretching it further to talk about the dilemmas of livelihood, collective action and risk perception for communities in an integrated manner. I see 'collective sustenance' as a means by which communities sustain themselves both in terms of livelihood and in terms of coping strategies that they employ to mitigate risks in addressing issues of the collective. For Sati and Dimri, (2008) "it is about people deciding themselves how to use their valuable assets and scare resources, for which markets they wish to produce and which services they need to achieve their goals." Collective sustenance then addresses the capacity of a community to make conscious political decisions (for comparative advantage) and act as a 'collective' by employing survival strategies they deem fit when faced with situations of risk. I additionally conceive of the notion of collective sustenance to include women and children, to act a 'collectivity' along with their male counterparts in the community, to make choices and address sustenance needs of the community as a whole. I use this concept of collective sustenance to look into the question of -a) construction of collective negotiation mechanisms with respect to tourism, and b) micro-level political negotiations/ networks vis-à-vis the informal shadow economy, by primarily studying the

Manali town, Kullu district in the hill state of Himachal Pradesh. In this study, I also explore the landscape of the region to trace the way in which collective sustenance finds meaning in terms of the interface between tourism and community identity and collective action shaping politically conscious choices and survival coping mechanisms.

The tourism development activities that have taken place simultaneously with the growth of the sector in Himachal have continually been questioned by people's experiences especially in conditions where the vulnerable, such as indigenous groups, communities living in forests, small scale farmers, and women have often been dispossessed and displaced. This in turn has led to an inquiry into the dominant model of development over the years, that sought to address- whose development, at whose cost, what cost etc. (Sangvai, 2007). This notion of 'development' has been said to cause degradation of natural resources, on vulnerable communities (Shiva, 1988), owing to disparate distribution of benefits and unequal access to resources. It is these anxieties that led to demands by the communities for an approach that is 'alternative' and one that makes audible unheard voices of the vulnerable (Agarwal, 1989; Agrawal et al, 1993) and amplify the issues of sustenance and collective action.

1.5 Introduction to Upcoming Chapters

In the chapters that follow, I explore the conditions and pre-conditions fashioning the human desire for leisure and pleasure in the hills of Himachal Pradesh, India by specifically looking at Manali, a major tourist destination for a gamut of recreational activities such as adventure sports, encountering 'new' and 'out of the mundane' experiences all of which form stand-alone industries in themselves owing to the scale and scope they offer. I also look into the micro-politics of exchanges of goods and services that take place within the ambit of tourism performance and the interfaces that are created by these axillary industries during such exchanges. These junctures of convergence in exchanges then help understand the political nature of exchanges that are played out in the broader socio-economic context of particularly vulnerable communities inhabiting ecologically fragile hillscapes. The choice of Manali as my field seems apt, given the scope of my research because the Manali town in Himachal (as we see it today) has undergone a massive change in terms of a rapidly growing tourism market and related development that has transformed the tranquil and undisturbed hillscape into a busy chaotic site in just a matter of the past few decades. While the effects of globalization impacting urbanization have been similarly experienced in other relatively

remote parts of the world and of India as well, what is special about Manali is the visible mushrooming of a sporadic concrete jungle all along the hills that surround it, in a matter of a few years, a process which gathered momentum in the mid 1990s and since then has continued to expand at an extraordinary rate. The early and mid 1990s that saw the expansion and development of the NH21 (the national highway connecting *Chandigarh- Bilaspur- Mandi- Kullu- Manali*) coupled with commencement of new bus and train routes linking major cities with *Kullu* and *Manali* and the political tensions triggering violence in the nearby Kashmir valley (which was a dream destination for tourists so far); all led to this urban boom and unstable growth of tourism in *Manali*. A variety of small, mid-sized and big players came into building the new tourism picture in *Manali,* each with their vested interest to exploit whatever resources were readily available at the site for it to be converted to a purely commercial space for more tourism to grow and thrive.

In this thesis, I develop an understanding of the ways in which hill communities play out their interests with the 'outsiders' (both tourists and the providers of tourism who do not originally belong to their space) and negotiate the exchanges in the wake of specific 'risks' they perceive and continue to sustain themselves through collective action. By 'risks' I mean both environmental/ ecological risks coupled with new kinds of threats to security perceived by these hill communities, to borrow from Beck (1992), that are but the fruits of modern societies. As in Beck (1992: 50),

> "surges of technical rationalization and changes in work organization but beyond that includes much more; the change in societal characteristics and normal biographies, changes in lifestyles and forms of love, changes in structures of power and influence, in the forms of political repression and participation, in views of reality and in the norms of knowledge. In social science's understanding of modernity, the plough, the steam locomotive, and the microchip are visible indicators of a much deeper process which comprises and reshapes the entire social structure."

These forces of modernization have re-structured the idea of 'risks' that are mostly manufactured and which may further apply to artificially induced environmental damage as well. In what he calls a 'boomerang effect,' the producers of risks are also exposed to those very risks and this pertains not just to the outsiders in this case, but to the local hill communities as well. It is therefore useful to examine the coping strategies employed by the

communities to combat these very layered kinds of 'risks' posed both by the outside players of tourism in *Manali* and the 'risks' these communities continually pose to themselves. The means for transacting these 'risks' through their conscious political decision making and action then becomes key to understanding 'collective sustenance' mechanisms, adapted by these hill communities to endure in the face of grave distress. My research analyzes this layered dynamic and develops its discourse on the politico-economic shifts that have taken place in the hills of Himachal since the 1990s to this day.

The early 1990s in India marked a phase of economic liberalization, that sought to bring about economic reforms through policies encouraging private and foreign investments to be injected into the economy. Furthermore, these policies were specifically designed to enhance the economy that was now to become more market-driven and service-oriented. The policies also sought to changing existing import tariff structure by reducing it, deregulating markets, and reducing taxes overall. Liberalization however brought its own evils accompanied by economic growth it attained for the Indian economy. Despite foreign investments and various other private fund injections, it led to widespread inequality that deepened the gap between the rich and the poor. Post liberalization in 1991, although poverty reduced in most parts of the country, the economically mobile upper classes were quick to generate more income because of the new economic policies. While there were genuine efforts by the central government in 1991 to control the earlier 'License Raj' that predicated the setting up of business and other economic enterprises in India, red tapism, nepotism and corruption were the baggage of the past (between 1945-90s) that continued to haunt the teeming millions even post liberalization.

As Deepak Lalwani (2007) observes,

> "A Balance of Payments crisis in 1991 pushed the country to near bankruptcy. In return for an IMF bailout, gold was transferred to London as collateral, the Rupee devalued and economic reforms were forced upon India. That low point was the catalyst required to transform the economy through badly needed reforms to unshackle the economy. Controls started to be dismantled, tariffs, duties and taxes progressively lowered, state monopolies broken, the economy was opened to trade and investment, private sector enterprise and competition were encouraged and

globalisation was slowly embraced."[14]

The post liberalization phase in India, thus saw not only an increase in foreign direct investment, new employment opportunities, infra-structural development of transport and communication networks coupled with better provisions for electricity throughout the country and rise in exports aggrandizing GDP growth but also contributed to inflation, loss of jobs owing to sophistication in technology that replaced human labour and the gradual slackening of local cottage industries and small scale business enterprises because of the investments trickling down to only selective industries which in turn deepened regional economic disparities that further gave rise to political tensions in regions that remained significantly stagnant in terms of economic growth. It is in the backdrop of this liberalization phase, that I look at the state of Himachal Pradesh and the ways in which it had negotiated these changes over the years with tourism playing a key role in shaping its political economy.

I also explore the new generation of exchanges of services and goods that has been an obvious consequence of this process of liberalization and increasing marketization, as tourism grew in the hill stations after 1991 owing to the prosperity of the middle classes. The growing wealth of the middle and upper classes also contributed to a leisure culture with an increased demand for leisure breaks (Baker, 2009). The survey by NCAER (2003) also suggested that the proportion of households 'doing' tourism was the highest among the urban middle income groups. Sreekumar (2005) points out that it is the increased disposable income that encouraged middle- class domestic tourism to flourish post liberalization with these tourists taking between 3-4 leisure breaks in a year in India with the hill stations being their popular choice as destinations.

The genesis of the adventure sports industry, privatization of the transport systems and better linkages of the local market with the global ones creating hybrid networks of trade and exchange may all be attributed to this post liberalization phase of the 1990s. The outcome was an increase in the range of services facilitating the growth of a multi-layered service provider economy growing parallel to the tourism sector. This is true of a huge growth of the

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[14] See p2 of India Report by Astair Research on India's 60th Independence Day by Deepak Lalwani, Director, Astair Research & Member of London Stock Exchange, pdf available online at http://www.iptu.co.uk/content/pdfs/india%20related%20article/india_independance_day.pdf accessed last on 12 November 2018

‘shadow economy’ that has boosted the informal adventure sports enterprises and the *hashish* trade in Himachal Pradesh which has even made inroads into the global market. According to a Report on Adventure Tourism Market Study in India prepared by Nielson (October 2016) for the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, tourism currently accounts for one of the key employing industries contributing to 9% of global GDP creating one in every eleven jobs. Another report forecasts the rise of the global adventure tourism market to grow at 45.99 % CAGR (compound annual growth rate) between 2016- 2020, which is predicted to be a game changer for overall market growth globally.[15] The growth of adventure sports tourism in Himachal Pradesh, India and specifically in and around Kullu and Manali including Solang and Rohtang has produced a pulsating economy around a diversity of activities such as trekking, mountaineering, white water rafting, quad mountain biking, rock climbing, kayaking, canoeing, paragliding, hiking, horse riding, skiing, angling, river crossing, camping in the hills etc. As of 2015, The Nielson Report logs a sweeping 162300 persons (for the month of May) and 100889 persons (for the month of June) who had opted for adventure sports tourism having been advised by their tour operators to engage in such activities. It also records the peak seasons as April, May and June for adventure sports tourism to flourish with Himachal Pradesh receiving a footfall of 120721 persons (for April) 169997 persons (for May) and 104975 persons (for June) in the same year. The report further suggests that Himachal Pradesh is one of the key players for adventure sports industry in India with an estimated share of 549774 Adventure Tourist footfalls annually recording the highest in the country as of 2015.[16]

In Chapter 2, I begin by historically tracing the roots of travel and pilgrimage to the Himalayas since ancient times followed by those of the colonial travelers and explorers to the landscape, coupled with building on the notions of space making that is shaped through each of these rationales of travel to these hills. In this chapter I also discuss the ways in which the hills have been produced as ‘elite’ and ‘exotic’ spaces, where ‘intemperance’ characterized the ways in which the British, the local kings and queens and the upper classes of nobility

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[15] See Report by Sandler Research Organization on “Global Adventure Tourism Market” (2016) available online at http://www.sandlerresearch.org/global-adventure-tourism-market-2016-2020.html and last accessed on November 25, 2018

[16] Report (2016) on “Adventure Tourism Market Study in India” prepared by Gunjan Rohatgi on behalf of Nielsen (India) Pvt. Ltd. And submitted to the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, available online at http://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/Other/Adventure_Tourism_Final_Report_revise_on_26-10-2016_%282%29.PDF accessed last on December 12, 2018

residing in these hills would conduct themselves. I especially explore the elitism surrounding the boarding schools in the spaces of the hills that continues to lure the aspiring urban middle- class for a better social standing along with locating the roots of desire on part of the common man to 'escape' the 'everyday realities' by seeking refuge in the hills. This I engage in by further emphasizing on the role of the Bollywood industry that has been instrumental in fashioning this 'desire'.

In Chapter 3, I lay out the conceptual and theoretical frameworks for the study that I base in the literature on tourism and its impacts in terms of anthropogenic effects, economic influences and the social and political repercussions that it has on local communities that I intersect with the discourse on common property and resource utilization, with respect to new age 'risks' (Beck, 1999) and the 'shadow' (Nordstrom, 2000) economy. I further borrow from the political ecology approach to discuss vulnerability that I apply to conduct my research.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the methodology of the research and discuss the various methods through which I physically navigate the space of the hills, negotiate access to people, networks and information having consciously addressed the issue of 'dressing', coupled with the navigating the language barriers in these hills. Finally, discuss the ways in which I use 'flaneuse' or casual wandering as a method to conducting mobile ethnography to look at the visually ever changing landscape of the hills.

I explore the tourism profile of the state of Himachal Pradesh in Chapter 5 first by situating it in the broader global trends of tourism and the way it has fared post the shift of focus from the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) to discussions around Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) in the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly that sought to develop tourism in ushering economic growth, and then specifically looking at the state's stake in the tourism business in Himachal. I also explore the rural and urban forms of tourism that has taken shape in Himachal over the years coupled with looking at the practices of domestic and foreign tourists to map the diverging types of tourism that has emerged according to their unique interests. I further discuss the ways in which people and livelihoods have been impacted by tourism in the state with special reference to collective sustenance mechanisms that emerge in the face of the risks that the local communities deploy to cope with the changing world around them.

In Chapter 6, I explore the impacts of tourism promotion initiatives in the state of Himachal Pradesh by highlighting the environmental stress and concerns felt by local communities through an assessment of proposed mega projects such as the Himalayan Ski Village project to understand the politics of aggressive tourism development in the state. I also address the issues of carrying capacity and those of future environmental concerns by discussing alternative and more sustainable ecology friendly methods of tourism practice that could offer effective solutions to environmental denudation.

I navigate through the shadow economy of Himachal in Chapter 7, where I begin by tracing the origins of the *hippie* trail in search for the unknown 'exotic' experiences to the Himalayas with special reference to Himachal and then exploring the rise of a specific kind of tourism in Himachal Pradesh around consumption of the locally produced *hashish*, namely *Malana Crème*. I thereafter discuss the issue of illegality surrounding the consumption of this intoxicant and place it within the broader social and cultural connotations of local community life and the issues of livelihood that I base the debate within. I further explore the politics of implementing the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances commonly referred to as the NDPS Act of 1985 and the implications it holds for the livelihoods of local communities. I thereafter map out indigenous community based practices that I look at through my lens of collective sustenance by especially taking the case of the *Malana* village in Himachal Pradesh, popular for growing of the famed *Malana* Crème, to understand the workings of the illicit / illegal economy in the state.

In the concluding chapter, I finally discuss the ways in which the 'identity' of the hills of Himachal has transformed in character over the years because of the operations of the tourism industry in the state. I historically trace the post liberalization phase in India i.e. the 1990s to the present day to map the trajectory of the dramatic changes that these hillscapes have undergone in the last couple of decades in relation to the massive boom of the tourism industry in the state and the ways in which it has thereby created 'new identities' and ones that have been culturally homogenized as an obvious impact of a market driven economy.

Chapter 2
Historical Backdrop

In this chapter, I give a historical background to the nature of travel to the Himalayas and trace the growth and expansion of tourism in the hills surrounding the Himalayas in relation to -

- pilgrimage,
- the desire to explore the Himalayan 'exotica',
- exploring new travel/ trade routes,
- trading of local produce sometimes engaging barter,
- leisure seeking activities in the serene calm picturesque ambience,
- travelling for purposes of rejuvenation and recuperation and a 'change' of environment to cure ailments,
- and sometimes even to experience an aspirational 'climbing up' moment from the mundane drudgery of the plains by sending children to elite boarding schools and engaging in 'holidaying' that is often a result of colourfully advertised enticing tourism packages or the likes of Bollywood icons that influence the idea of 'romance' surrounding the hills.

I begin by tracing the roots of travel to the Himalayas since ancient times followed by those of colonial travelers/ explorers to the hills and the urban middle- class living in the plains, and make a case for the ways in which 'space making' takes place through each of these diverse range of motivations of travel to these hills.

I discuss the ways in which the hills have been produced as an 'elite' and 'exotic' space where 'intemperance' was a peculiar feature of the colonial governments and the local kings, and through which the identities of the hills have been defined and re-defined. The combination of factors such as 'interests' for travel coupled with the colonial and post-colonial disposition both structural (in terms of geographical planning of the hill-space/ architectural set-ups) and functional (administrative arrangements) produce an eclectic 'identity of the hills' that I argue, shapes the desire of the man living in the plains to imagine as an 'out of the ordinary' space for further exploration and use/ exploitation.

2.1 Tracing the Antiquity of Travel in the Central Himalayan Terrain

Turning west a little, he speered for the green hills of Kulu, and sought Kailung under the glaciers. "For thither came I in the old, old days. From Leh I came, over the Baralachi." "Yes, yes; we know it," said the far-faring people of Shamlegh. "And I slept two nights with the priests of Kailung. These are the hills of my delight! Shadows blessed above all other shadows! There my eyes opened on this world; there my eyes were opened to this world; there I found Enlightenment; and there I girt my loins for my Search. Out of the Hills I came- the high Hills and the strong winds. Oh, just is the Wheel!" He blessed them in detail- the great glaciers, the naked rocks, the piled moraines and tumbled shale; dry upland, hidden salt lake, age-old timber and fruitful water-shot valley one after the other, as a dying man blesses his folk, and Kim marvelled at his passion.

-Rudyard Kipling, Kim

The Himalayan wilderness has continued to entice a very diverse range of people for a multitude of reasons best suited to each of their distinct interests. It has beckoned sages, pilgrims, poets, mountaineers, travelers, traders, explorers through the ages. The early accounts of Greek travelers who had accompanied Alexander the Great or travelled subsequently, have had toured across the *Hemodos*[17], in other words the Himalayas, which find mention in reconstructed versions of *Indica*[18] (since the original text in its entirety was lost) by Megasthenes (B.C. 350- 290). There is a popular legend surrounding the people residing in the *Malana* village in Himachal today, who claim to be Greek descendants of Alexander's soldiers and who have supposedly remained 'unpolluted' in the locales of this pristine geography. Chinese monks and Buddhist preachers such as Fa-Hien (Faxian) and Hiuen-Tsang (Xuanzang) have also roved the lengths and breadths of these hills. Fa-Hien was the among the first Chinese pilgrims to have visited India in search of Buddhist scriptures largely on foot fl. c. 399- 413, having commenced his journey all the way from Central China travelling through the Silk Route and thereafter through Himalayan passes to

[17] The ancient Greek name for the Himalayas that is derived from the *Sanskrit* word *Haimavata* or *Prakrit* word *Haimota* for 'snowy' and finds mention in Sunil Gupta's (2013) "*Hemodos*/ Himalaya Mountains," in the *Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, Wiley- Blackwell Publishing

[18] This record culminated into a vivid record of the early Indian history.

the-then Gandhar (now Kandahar) and Peshawar, the details of which are recorded in *Travels of Fa-Hien.* Hiuen-Tsang had documented his seventeen-year long pilgrimage to India in what is known as the *Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* and is believed to have been undertaken fl. c. 629- 645, following a dream that had inspired him to travel to India to explore the sacred Buddhist sites and procure authentic doctrines from the Indian masters. He had journeyed across the Tarim basin in China through the northern route of Tashkent, Samarkhand, Bacteria and further across the Hindu Kush mountains to reach India and thereafter documented an elaborate account of his voyage on the-then social life he found himself in, around these mountains.

Figure 2.1 Parvati Valley, Himachal Pradesh

The 'romance' surrounding travel to the Himalayan landscape date back to antiquity when the *yogis* (renouncers of the material world) and *rishis* (sages) journeyed a rigorous path to salvation, for what better terrain could suit their sense of purpose or inspiration than the majestic mountains with a promise of solitude and esoteric meditation! Various legends have thus been associated surrounding these *rishis* and the sanctity of specific geographies that tie itself with the cultural residues in the form of art and architecture in the locales of these hills, dating back to thousands of years that continue to attract travelers to this day.

According to a legend, a man who tried to kill himself learning of his child's death, was believed to have been saved by the river *Vipasha* (literally meaning emancipation and shortened to Beas now) which gave him spiritual awakening and marked his re-birth. This is who later came to be known by the name of *rishi Vashisth* (one of the *Saptarishis* or the seven revered sages according to Vedic texts in Hinduism). Following this episode, *Vashisth* is believed to have meditated in the hills surrounding the Beas and what is present day Manali, Himachal where the village popular for its hot Sulphur springs is named after the sage himself. The *Vashisht* temple (which had been constructed over 4000 years ago[19]) reflects a heritage of a quintessentially Himachali *pahari* architecture of wood carvings and stones, that has withstood the test of time and continues to attract numerous visitors including pilgrims who come from faraway lands to bathe in the holy healing waters of the *Vashisht* hot spring for its medicinal properties to cure skin and other ailments.

Further down from Manali about 35 km from the Kullu town, there is another hot spring on the *Parvati* Valley surrounding which there are few temples and a *gurudwara*. This however has been a much recent construction in the small town known as *Manikaran*, another prominent religious site for pilgrimage of Sikhs and Hindus alike. The first *Jain Tirthankar Adinath Rishabhdev* and *Adi Shankaracharya* who have also extensively travelled in what is present day Kashmir and Uttarakhand and have both passed away in the embrace of the sublime Himalayan nature, where their respective memorials have been built. While in the West, the idea of pilgrimage is almost absent, India has kept alive the tradition of pilgrimage around which an entire industry has mushroomed with specialized travel agencies, particular types of accommodation being offered such as the *dharamshalas*, *sarais*, *gurudwaras* and *chattis* coupled with specific kinds of eateries offering *satwik*[20] food along with a range of souvenir and collectible shops particularly dealing in miscellaneous religious paraphernalia (Gladstone, 2005).

While religion has often been perceived as a divisive force in social cohesion and sustenance of communal harmony, the Himalayan terrain proffers a somewhat different picture, for it provides for almost a multicultural continuum that tends to bind not only the myriad ancient

[19] See O.C. Handa's (2015) *Kullu: Its Early History, Archaeology and Architecture,* Pentagon Press
[20] The Sanskrit term refers to the food which causes cleansing of the body and capacitates clear thinking of the mind. Comprised of an essentially vegetarian diet that is deemed as having a calming effect for a healthy body and a positive outlook on someone.

myths and folklores of specific geographies despite the diversely layered religious practices in these hills but in a way further allows for shaping a shared socio-cultural identity and consciousness that transgresses the sense of a monolithic 'psycho-religious apparatus.' For Pathak (1987), cites that people carrying out otherwise faith based activities such as the singers in the hills praising *Vaishno Devi* (a Hindu deity) or managers of *Amarnath Yatra* (a quintessentially Hindu pilgrimage) may in some cases be followers of Islam. Also, many workers and helpers at the various other *gurudwaras* in the Himalayas are often non-Sikh. This itself is indicative of an everyday fluid cultural exchange that remains unbound by the puritan religious sentiments.

While many temples and shrines across religions find their place in these hills, what is also very interesting to note is the way in which some folk deities were created as part of the cultural experiences there. The melange of folk deities is inherently associated with this cultural diversity of humans and nature that they find themselves embedded in. The *Hadimba Devi* temple in Manali, the *Jamdagni Rishi* temple in Malana and the *Gurudwara Sahib* at Manikaran are a few examples of this cultural diversity in Himachal. Some of these locales in the Himalayas that have continued to embody the loci of pilgrimage in these hills through traditional cultural practice over the years, have remained aesthetically alluring to a diversity of visitors and travelers sometimes even without memorials or well defined constructions in terms of temples, shrines, monasteries or even *gurudwaras*. The varied ethnicities and tribes such as the *Gujjars*, *Sherpas*, *Brogpas*, *Drokpas* that have inhabited these hills have been more solicitous in their cultural interface with nature than with any institutionalized religion as such.

Also what is interesting to note is that apart from pilgrimage, accounts of age-old trade routes that have remained operational during the colonial times have been recorded by several European travelers such as James Baillie Fraser (1820), Alexander Gerard (1841), William Moorcroft and George Trebeck (1841), Godfry Charles Mundy (1858), Victor Jacquemont (1835), Baron Charles Hugel (1845), Godfry Thomas Vigne (1839), Thomas Thomson (1852), Alexander Cunningham (1854), Philip Henry Egerton (1864), Andrew Wilson (1875), W.G.N. Van Der Sleen (1929), Sir Edward Wakefield (1966) and others. This well explains the colonial interests for explorations of these hillscapes.

James Baillie Fraser (1820: 275) while emphasizing on the range of routes taken by the Kinnaura traders of Himachal, points to the fact that,

> "Indeed they are almost exclusively the commercial couriers between Hindustan and Tartary, and also between Tartary and Kashir, frequenting the routes from Leh in Ladakh, to Lhasa and Degrucho and Nepal on trading speculation."

These Kinnaura traders according to Minhas (1998) explored not only the nearby Ladakhi and Tibetan towns for commerce but also travelled to far away locales of Central Tibet, Yarkand, Kashmir, Lahore, Delhi, Calcutta, Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal. She in her book *Traditional Trade and Trading Centres in Himachal Pradesh*, further mentions that these traders used to primarily travel to Tibet in the months of May and June and return during the month of July, while their Tibetan counterparts travelled in batches of between twenty and twenty- five to the Indian markets in the months of October and November to sell their wares. A practice that continues to this day with a massive increase in the numbers of people moving to Himachal from Tibet and a flattening out of the seasonality curve[21]. Alexander Gerard (1841) interestingly notes the kinds of articles exchanged and points out that,

> "The *Koonawuree* take to *Garoo* the same things as to *Leh*, with the exception of goats and sheep, which are abundant in that country. In exchange they bring back, much rock-salt which is dug out of the lakes. *Beangee* and shawl wool, the produce of the Tartar sheep and goats, gold dust, tea and borax, *Nirbissi* or *Zeodary*, a few shawl goats and *Beangee* sheep and large *Taratar* dogs of a very ferocious breed, which guard their flocks from panther, leopards, and other wild beasts, and are excellent watch dogs for preventing bears for committing ravages amongst the vineyards."

While James Baillie Fraser who served as a civilian officer under Major General Martindell in the British army, and travelled arduously along with his troops in Sirmaur, Bushahr, the Shimla hills and Garhwal during Anglo Gurkha War of 1814, Alexander Gerard was a known naturalist who had travelled between 1817-1818 from Subathu and Kinnaur and mapped out a trigonometrical survey of the Satluj valley while serving in the East India Company's 27th

[21] Flattening out of the seasonality curve refers to seasonality being lost in travel.

Native Infantry[22]. Other notable officers were Godfry Charles Mundy and Edward C. Archer were both Aide-de- camp to Lord Combermere who had travelled in 1828 with him on his tours in these hills. While the former toured from Nahan to Shimla and further to Kinnaur via Rohru, the latter travelled to upper Shimla Hills. Also, Victor Jacquemont, a French naturalist travelled in Shimla and Kinnaur in 1830 while Baron Charles Hugel and G.T Vigne toured the hills in Punjab in 1835. The latter also travelled to Kashmir, Ladakh and Iskardu following some of the ancient trade routes. Thomas Thomson who was sent to Kinnaur in 1847 was instrumental in writing a detailed account of his journey from Sirmaur to Kinnaur and Leh in Western Himalaya and Tibet (1852). William Moorcroft however is more celebrated of the lot, who apart from being a veterinary doctor with the Company, travelled extensively between 1820 and 1828 from Calcutta to Ladakh, Iskardu via Sirmaur, Bilaspur, Nadaun, Mandi, Kullu and Lahaul disguised as a horse trader and had written considerably on the social and economic life, art and architecture, scenic beauty and the flora and fauna of Himachal, an account that has encouraged more and more people from the West to travel to this terrain.

2.2 Hill stations and the Raj

At the outset, the idea behind the nomenclature 'hill stations' as Kennedy (1996) proposes was a way to scale down the overwhelming remoteness and isolation generally associated with mountainous terrains that the Himalayas offered, and which in reality was nothing compared to what the British were used to. While the Himalayas have long been a source of attraction for its rich natural resources and minerals that have encouraged its use and exploitation in specific ways by the colonial government since the early 1860s, the terrain has typically been favoured by the British for recreation and tourism to grow owing to not just its scenic beauty and tranquil surroundings but for an ideal if not identical climate that they were familiar with, in their homelands. It was in many ways for them '*a home away from home'* as Kennedy (1996) suggests, where they asserted their unique values and distinctiveness that were instrumental in ruling the 'alien' other. Up until the time that the British had come to India and began settling down, the idea of travel and tourism were not entirely organized in the manner that had taken shape post their interests in converting these 'hillscapes' into leisure and tourist spots for recreational activities (Stock 2001, 2003; Equipe MIT, 2002).

[22] Poonam Minhas (1998) *Traditional Trade & Trading Centres in H.P.*, pp-76-77

The augmented tourist flow in the hills during the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century may be attributed to the advent of the railways and a network of roadways built during the Raj for better connectivity and therefore ease of access to these hills. In the year 1864, the British had officially announced Shimla as their Summer Capital in India following which there was a steady and structured way in which tourism began to flourish in Himachal. New roadways were built, new spots identified for leisure and recreation, parks and lawns fenced, manicured and maintained and hotels, bars and restaurants constructed around them. Subsequently, several local enterprises such as photo booths and studios, antique shops selling traditional artefacts and various other local cottage industries began evolving alongside these developments. The client-provider divide in tourism, began to undergo structural shifts owing to the economic possibilities that opened up both for the British and for the natives inhabiting the region. While the majority of the aforementioned enterprises were run by the locals, the advent of the leisure economy marked the genesis of a new service class of table boys in restaurants, caddies in golf clubs, stable boys for horses, etc. along with a peculiarly new class of *babus* or managerial level servicemen, who also emerged from amongst the locals, but who were selectively chosen according to preference and educated by the British to cater to the administrative side of things in running the leisure business in these hills[23]. While on the one hand the leisure industry was taking shape, by modernizing and urbanizing these hills, buildings once built for recreational purposes began to be converted into administrative quarters for the British as in the case of a famous ballroom in Simla, which finds mention in Kipling's (1886) The Plea of the Simla Dancers[24], where he sulks,

> "What have *we* ever done to bear this grudge?
> Was there no room save only in Benmore
> For docket, *duftar,* and for office drudge,
> That you usurp our smoothest dancing floor?
> Must babus do their work on polished teak?
> Are ball-rooms fittest for the ink you spill?"

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[23] See Hari Sud's (2013) *Entrepreneurs of British Shimla: The Sud, Sarkar & Shimla (1832-1932)*, Lulu Publishers

[24] Poem first published in the Civil & Military Gazette on 16 April 1886. Taken from David Alan Richard's (2010) "Rudyard Kipling: A Bibliography," The British Library Publishing Division

Even the Viceroy's Palace in Simla has been turned into a research institute since 1965 by the Ministry of Education, Government of India and what we know as present day IIAS (Indian Institute for Advanced Studies), Shimla. While the trend of converting majestic architectural buildings once constructed for leisure and recreation into administrative, educational institutions or museums is not a new phenomenon, there have also been state driven endeavours to convert colonial buildings and spaces into revamped heritage hotels with modern amenities such as the Old Governors House in Simla. It was originally a residence built in the Tudor style of architecture originally to house Governor Generals and Viceroys during the Raj, and where the famed trial of Nathuram Godse for assassinating Mahatma Gandhi took place in 1948-49[25]. With Himachal Pradesh getting the official recognition of a state in 1971, the place became the Governor's residence in Simla. However, a fateful episode of fire on the night of 12 January 1981 ruined the structure into ashes and later Hotel Peterhoff was rebuilt in 1991[26] in its stead offering visitors a renewed heritage feel to their tourism experience.

Figure 2.2 Erstwhile Lodge of the Viceroy that currently serves as the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla

[25] See Heritage Holidays: North and Central India, Volume 1, Outlook Publishing India, 2004

[26] Taken from the official website of the Raj Bhavan, Himachal Pradesh and titled, "Peterhoff (Old Raj Bhavan at Chauramaidan)," available online at https://himachalrajbhavan.nic.in/earlier.html accessed last on November 12, 2018

2.3 Simla – The British Summer Capital

It was merely two centuries ago that the area currently known by the name of Simla, was a dense forest with only the *Jakhu* temple along with a couple of sparsely distributed houses as signs of civilization. For lack of definite information and historical background, the name seems to be asserted by some who believe it to be derived from the word '*Shamlaey'* which refers to a desolate house. While some others take it to be an adaption of its earlier village name '*Shimlah'* or '*Shumlah,*' a few assume that the name is derived from the hill goddess '*Shamli'* with many others believing that the original name however was 'Shyamalaya'[27]. Although very little is known about its early history, with limited information found in records of 18th century Keonthal State which it was a part of, it was the colonial times that brought Simla or Shimla into limelight following which the place has had a huge makeover to accommodate the new yearnings and aspirations of a market-driven leisure industry[28].

The British connection in making Simla what is it today however date back to the period of the Anglo-*Gurkha* War of 1814- 1816, where the British were apparently approached 'for help' to curtail excesses meted out on the local hill people by the *Gurkhas*. The record maintains that the British were committed to expelling the *Gurkhas*, a common enemy from the hill territories to primarily aid the hill- men as an aftermath of their constant struggle with *Gurkhas* and had no intentions of annexing the area[29]. The same letter also mentions that majority of the local chieftains joined the British army under Major General Sir David Ochterlony to crush the *Gurkhas* and were successful in driving them out of these territories altogether. Quickly afterwards, nonetheless, Sir David Ochterlony issued an official proclamation stating that all the chieftains who had joined the British to drive away the *Gurkhas*,

> "would have their land restored and should enjoy the benefits of our protection, as well as their previous rights and privileges… it would be impractical for us to abandon the country on expulsion of the enemy as the government had desired, on the

[27] See V. Pubby's (1988) *Simla: Then and Now*, Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi
[28] See E.J. Buck's (1904) The Record of Simla: Past and Present, Calcutta: Government of India, Central Printing Office
[29] Letter written in January 6, 1850 by the then Superintendent of Hill States, W. Edwards to P. Melvill, Secretary of the Board of Administration, Lahore as cited by E.C. Wace (1884) in the Final Report on the First Regular Settlement of the Simla district in Punjab, 1881-83, Calcutta

contrary, in order to maintain our guarantee of protection not only against the foreign enemy, but to retain in their ancient principalities the chiefs whom we had restored, it would be necessary for us, however averse to the territorial acquisition within the hills, to retain such portions of the country as appeared best adopted for military positions and also calculated to indemnify the Government for the expenses of the military force, it was found necessary to retain in the hills."

The British Government thus deemed it necessary to hold on to a base in strategic areas and further decreed that all the land that was considered disputed owing to territorial differences of possession along with the ones where the ruling families had become extinct were also to be made part of British occupation. The *Maharaja of Patiala* then emerges as one of the key figures among the kings and chieftains who had helped the British in their operation against the *Gurkhas*. He was rewarded with land around the area that constitutes present day Simla and was additionally allowed to buy and acquire more land in the region. The two-fold reason that the British were keen to retain these hill territories were because they realized that the area was "an advantageous spot for recovery from the great chiefs of northern India" as the *Imperial Gazeteer of India*, *1887* notes, because of its proximity to Punjab and further because the British discerned that the local hill people were "simple-minded orderly people, truthful in character and submissive to authority, so that they scarcely require to be ruled."

The earliest reports on Simla are found from the records in the diary by the Gerard brothers, who were surveying the Satluj river valley, and who noted that Simla was "a middling-seized village where a fakir is situated to give water to travelers… we encamped on the side of Jakhu, and had an extensive and beautiful prospect."[30] However it was only in 1819 that the first British residence was constructed in the area by Lieutenant Ross, the then Assistant Political Agent in the hill states[31]. Although it was all but a simple cottage of wood and thatched roof, it was to become an iconic symbol of the Raj and its legacy especially in the context of emergence of elite spaces in the hills. Three years later, Lt. Charles Pratt Kennedy, his successor constructed the first *pucca* and much larger house for commercial purposes to rent out to the recuperating soldiers and civilians who could afford it. The town still houses a

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[30] Diary entry dated August 30, 1817 by Lieutenant Alexander Gerard and Lieutenant Patrick Gerard (popularly known as Gerard brothers) cited in Sir Edward John Buck (1904) '*Simla, Past and Present*,' Calcutta, Thacker, Spink

[31] See Hari Sud (2013) *Entrepreneurs of British Shimla: The Sud, Sarkar & Shimla (1832-1932)*, Lulu Publishers

few government offices in a building known as the "Kennedy House," however it is not certain whether this is the original building or an adjacent one, since a controversy arose over the building being alighted by fire.[32] Present day Himachal Legislative Assembly is also built around the area that housed its first ever *pucca* construction by Kennedy in the Simla town. Shortly afterwards, Simla's Kennedy House began attracting British officers to enjoy the flattering ambience and rejuvenating climate during the scorching summer months and by 1826 the relatively barren area began to attain a form of a proper settlement in the hills.

Noted British officials and men of noble ranks such as the-then Governor General Lord Amherst, and subsequently Lord Combermere, Captain Mundy et all began visiting Simla mostly on vacation, with the desire to rest amidst nature's bounty. It was during Lord Combermere's visit and under his able planning that a three-mile road around the Jahku hill was constructed along with a wooden bridge across a *nullah* or stream below the Jakhu connecting the main Simla area with *chhota* Simla[33], one of the busiest thoroughfares presently. Soon after, in 1830 the colonial government resolved to acquire more territories in along the settlement area of Simla and various negotiations and exchanges with the chiefs of Patiala and Keonthal followed. The *Simla Gazeteer of 1888-89* indicates a rapid expansion of the settlements and a massive rise in the number of houses built, that increased from merely 30 houses in 1830 to 100 in 1841 and 290 in 1866 and 1,141 by 1881. Gradually a prospect to transform Simla into a summer capital began to be discussed in the European circles following the first war of Indian independence or the mutiny of 1857, which aroused much trepidation and Simla was viewed as both a 'safe' zone and a strategic location to keep a closer eye on Punjab. With Lord John Lawrence becoming the unexpected Viceroy in 1863 after the sudden death of Lord Elgin, the decision to move the British summer capital to Simla was rigorously pursued as he writes to the Secretary of State that, "the work of government is probably treble, possibly quadruple what it was 20 years ago, and it is, for the most part, of a very difficult nature… Neither your Governor General nor his council could really do in the hot weather of Calcutta. At the very best they would work at half the speed." He also argued that the government work more effectively in a day in Simla than what it could do in five days in Calcutta. Following which, Sir Charles Wood, the Secretary of State wrote back saying, "with or without, your Council, you are quite welcome to be away from

[32] See Vippin Pubby (1988) *Simla: Then and Now*, Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi
[33] See H. Montgomery Hyde's Report (1961) Simla and the Simla Hill States Under British Protection 1815-1835, in the *Journal of the Panjab University Historical Society*, *Vol XIII*, Lahore, available online at http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/history/PDF/v13_1961.pdf last accessed on September 5, 2021

Calcutta for six months, and therefore you may set your mind quite at ease on that point[34]." And finally, Simla was formally announced as the British summer capital in 1864, that made significant changes to the way the British carried out their overall 'virtual' administration of the country as Randhawa (1974) reflects, "the white gods looked down upon the lesser beings who inhabited the plains of Hindustan from their Mount Olympus in the western Himalayas." Also, as Ashok Kumar (2012) observes,

> "Shimla may have been called the summer capital, but for all practical purposes this was the real Capital of India as the Government of India stayed there for the better part of the year moving down to Kolkata and later to New Delhi only during the winter months. As the summer capital of the British Raj, Shimla came to be known as 'the workshop of the Empire'."

This transformation of Simla into the British Summer Capital created an 'elite' realm, one that was characterized by privilege clearly segregating it from 'ordinary' life in the humid plains. Soon after what followed was this sanatorium cum holiday resort witnessing an impulsive urban expansion to suit British needs that gradually started acquiring an immensely ghettoized character with specific classes of people inhabiting specific areas in the town based on topography[35]. While the British and other European clerks were stationed at the large privately owned or annually rented estates on the Upper terraces of the hill, the lower peripheral regions in the Mall or main market area were allotted to the Indian clerks. Numerous *coolies*, porters, camp followers, shopkeepers, charcoal burners, wood carriers, carpenters and masons from the surrounding hills coupled with merchants, dealers and artisans from the plains along with the *khidmudgars*[36] and domestic servants who worked in the estates mostly squatted in the Lower Bazar area and sometimes even slept on the streets. Simla was thus segregated in clear cut zones in terms of this spatial arrangement in the Upper Ridge area, the Main market or the Mall area and a Lower Bazar with three different kinds of markets catering to each of these classes of people. However, the removal of Indian shops from the ridge and the Mall area seemed to be the only solution to keep the riff-raffs off the

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[34] Excerpts from letter exchanges between Sir John Lawrence and Sir Charles Wood in 1863, cited in Pubby V. (1988) *Simla: Then and Now*, Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi, pp 33-34

[35] See Kanwar P. (1990) *Imperial Simla: The Political Culture of the Raj*, Second Edition, pp 56-70, OUP, New Delhi

[36] A term used for attendants or waiters who usually earlier served as *sepoys* to the East India Company's armed forces

beautifully 'elite' spaces that were earmarked for the European tastes as the-then Deputy Commissioner remarked,

> "My idea is to give Simlah as much an European tone as possible... I look forward to the gradual removal of the Bazar at Simlah which is at present occupied by natives and to substitute European traders in their stead, in improved buildings[37]."

Subsequently, the Annual Report of the Simla Municipality of 1877-78 stated the problem of crammed congested spaces in the Bazar area and a local newspaper in 1894 suggested that an "ugly overcrowded bazar" was occupying a site which should have ideally been the "noblest and handsomest" of all. The Mall nonetheless underwent a complete morphosis as envisioned in 1861 with proper European-style shops, general stores, parks, milliners, dressmakers, clothiers, hairdressers, jewelers, saddlers, chemists, restaurants with fancy facades reflecting a quintessentially European taste. Since, "taking the air" was a common British practice in evenings, Captain Kennedy had already decreed in 1831 that 'no led horse or other cattle be taken for exercise during the hours generally set aside for Europeans to take the air[38].' Thus, the Mall became a promenading area when the Indian bazar was finally moved and the area cleared of sweepers, coolies, mule leaders and workmen between four and seven every evening. This resulted in a systematic move to making the main area of Simla town an 'elite' zone meant for the higher classes as opposed to *chhota* Simla that was allotted to the lower classes.

It is interesting to note that the 'hill stations' in general have been constructed during the Raj as specific sites for maintaining a distinct identity of the 'elite' and showcasing its sense of desire further fashioning and altering the landscape to creating 'special spaces' that are out of bounds for the common ordinary men. This applied to the idea of public residential or boarding schools in these hill stations as well.

2.4 Intemperance and Exoticism in the Hills

The British connection with the Maharaja of Patiala, goes back to the Anglo- Nepalese War, during which the Maharaja had assisted the colonial government to oust the Gurkhas and was

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[37] Proposed Removal of Upper Bazar, PWD, 1864, 2, HA ADR

[38] Foreign Political, Proceedings, 23 September 1831, NAI

rewarded with land near the settlement in Simla. A later king of the Patiala dynasty built his summer retreat or what is popularly known as the *Chail* Palace in 1891 on a hill slope known as *Chail*. The pretty hill- station located at an approximate distance of 45 kilometers from Simla, boasts of a lush polo and a cricket ground, at an altitude of 2250 meters making it one of the highest cricket grounds in the world today. As legend unveils, the Maharaja was expelled from Simla and severe restrictions were imposed on him to enter the town, following an episode of his elopement with the-then Viceroy Lord Kitchener's daughter. A spot intersected by the town's Ridge and Mall Road, popularly known as the 'Scandal Point,' that exists to this date in Simla, bearing testimony to the incidence of apparent romantic encounter and the elopement thereafter and remains a popular tourist spot. Although, it is unclear as to which Maharaja was expelled from Simla prompting him to construct the Palace in *Chail*, since there are distortions about dates and life-spans of the Patiala kings, there is a plausible chance of Maharaja Rajinder Singh building it, since it is recorded that he had an English wife.[39]

The Maharajas of Patiala nonetheless, played a significant role in the consolidation of British power in India and supplied men and arms to serve in the Imperial Service Troops during the Munity of 1857 as well. Throughout the World War I & II the 1st Patiala Rajinder Sikh Infantry and the 2nd Yadavindra Infantry sided the British operations in the Middle East and on the Burma front later shifting to Java (Indonesia) respectively[40]. The Maharaja of Patiala Bhupinder Singh himself served in World War I (1914) as Lieutenant Colonel in France, Belgium, Italy and Palestine and subsequently promoted to the rank of Major General in 1918 and Lieutenant General in 1931. The king also became the Chancellor to the Chamber of Princes having represented India at the Imperial War Council (where he gave a speech eulogizing British colonialism) during World War I and having represented the Sikhs at the First Round Table Conference in London, 1930.[41] It is in this light that it might be worth ruminating about admonishing the biased biographical work on the Maharaja's life, where Natwar Singh (2006) remarks, "if Maharaja Bhupinder Singh had been a whole time philanderer and trivialized, he would be of no interest whatsoever to a biographer. His attraction lies in his multidimensional personality- prince, patriot, philanthropist; polygamist, sportsmen, soldier, statesman; lover of music, manuscripts, medals, High Mason and tantric;

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[39] Jaidka M. (2012) Scandal Point, Rupa Publishers, New Delhi
[40] Sharma G. (1990) *Valour and Sacrifice: Famous Regiments of the Indian Army*, Allied Publishers, New Delhi
[41] Singh Khushwant (2017) *Captain Amarinder Singh: The People's Maharaja- an Authorized Biography*, Hay House Publishers, New Delhi

adoring father, indifferent husband, loyal friend, generous patron, intrepid enemy… father of Indian cricket and crafty politician- all at the same time." It is quite evident that his strong appeasing tendencies with the British, even post the *Jallianwala Bagh* massacre, which the Maharaja instead of condemning, defended outright, made him a classic British propitiator in more ways than one and for which he was substantially remunerated.

With time, the Maharaja of Patiala, emerged as a simulated exotic caricature of native ethnic and European taste that produced a bizarre concoction of a character that came out through his intemperance, in a display of opulence and thus attracted people from far and wide, who regularly flocked to his '*durbars'* or public appearances. In a narration by Lapierre and Collins (1997), the Maharaja is believed to have insured a diamond breastplate encrusted with 1001 blue and white diamonds, with Lloyds in London for 1 million dollars at that time, and which he would adorn naked and come out and greet his subjects when he hosted the annual *durbar* or the formal reception. This practice of walking naked with his genitalia on display would apparently bring peace and prosperity to the land and drive away evil forces for his organ was believed to radiate magical potentials![42] The glorious exuberant life of excesses that the Raja led coupled with the naked display of opulence he indulged in from time to time, had drawn both the British and the Indian alike to travel. The *Chail Palace* that was built by one of the Maharajas of this dynasty near Simla, spreading over 75 acres of land and one that has now been converted into a resort by the state government of Himachal Pradesh, also remains as an iconic residue of the Raj and of the regal Indian lifestyle that lure tourists to this destination.

Another 'elite' exotic character, the Rani of Sirmour, a western Himalayan queen emerges briefly from the records and letter exchanges found in the colonial archives whose presence if not as glamourous as the Maharaja of Patiala, still manages to raise poignant questions on the status of indigenous women and the way they were perceived during the Raj. Spivak's (1985) celebrated essay on the *Rani of Sirmur*, talks of the typical colonial tendencies of 'constructing objects of representation' that finally translated into a 'reality of India' by discussing the plight of the 'Third World Woman.' The 'Ranee,' who as an otherwise

[42] Lapierre D. & Collins L. (1997) *Freedom at Midnight: The Epic Drama of India's Struggle for Independence*, 2nd revised edition, Harper Collins

voiceless character having threatened *sati*[43] put the British into temporary peril. The Raja in question, Karma Prakash was deposed by the British for being a 'barbaric' ruler and when he died leaving behind the minor king Fatteh Prakash on the throne, the Company was in crisis, since the 'Ranee' was required as a guardian to protect stability and security of the British presence in the province for lack of a 'trustworthy male relative.' The chief reason according to Spivak, for establishing a minor king on the throne merely buffered by a woman, for the British was a clear imperial strategy for the dismembering of Sirmur after having banished the king. The whole of Simur had to be quickly annexed in order to secure the Company's trade routes and frontier provinces against Nepal and thereby "opening a commercial communication through Bussahr with the country beyond he snowy mountains."[44]

The archives however project her relatively nameless faceless facade that robs her of this very identity and she remains lost in the pages of letters that refer to her simply as the 'Ranee' or 'this Ranny[45]' Also, one is not entirely sure of her name as the records indicate two different names used in two different places as *Gulari* and *Gulani*. Whatever the name may be, Captain Birch's records indicate barely two instances where her presence is demonstrated[46]. One is when she receives two of her husband's ex-wives who had been banished from the royal household for 'fear of intrigue' and who later sought refuge in the palace post her husband's death. It is further noted that the Rani reinstated a pension of a sum of 700 hundred rupees at that time (having allotted 900 rupees for expecting to be asked for more) for her great-aunt-in-law who had been excommunicated after a fall out with her husband. As David Ochterlony writes, "It has been necessary for Captain Birch occasionally to interfere with her authoritatively to counteract the facility of the Ranee's disposition."[47] She is mentioned in these records, possibly because of the pure monetary exchanges involved that needed to be documented as part of colonial administrative reasons. The other instance is when she expressed her intention to self-immolate on her husband's funeral pyre, which for the British was not conducive to maintaining their foothold in the strategic location they sought to defend. It is here that the Rani appears as an individual capable of subjective

[43] Self-immolation on the funeral pyres of one's husband, a practice that was common amongst the Pahari elite women, who were later referred to as '*sati-maata'* and worshipped as demi-gods.
[44] Despatches to Bengal, Answer to Political Letter, 11 December 1816, dated 1 December 1819
[45] The Rani of Sirmur was largely referred to as 'Ranee' by the officers of the East India Company and 'this Ranny' by Geoffry Birch and Robert Ross.
[46] Boards Collections 1819-1820, Extract Bengal Secret Consultations, copy of a letter from Birch to Metcalfe included in Metcalfe to Adam, 5 March 1816
[47] Secret Consultations, Adani to Ochterlony, 22 May 1815

autonomy and tries to assert power firstly, by making certain political decisions in the absence of her husband in running the everyday administration of the province and secondly, by threatening *sati* to exercise her 'political will' obscuring her otherwise mundane stature.

Birch was extremely skeptical of her committing 'the act' and hence asked for a governmental regulation to prevent her from 'doing it' but was written off by the Governor's Secretary to influence her decision through alternative measures such as approaching the religious authorities to restrain her. Since, the custom of *sati* at that point had not been abolished still, the colonial government tried its best to convince the Rani since a 'royal sati' would have simply meant awkwardness. Spivak therefore, calls her presence 'an allegorical predicament' caught in the tussle between conforming to traditional patriarchy and British imperialism that sought to civilize 'the other' for she says (1985: 271), "Caught in the cracks between the production of the archives and indigenous patriarchy, today distanced by the waves of hegemonic "feminism," there is no "real Rani" to be found. This act of transforming a character merely into a shadow in many ways contributed to the 'British construction of India' as Spivak (1985: 249) sums up convincingly, "it is possible to say that this was the construction of a fiction whose task was to produce a whole collection of 'effects of the real' and the 'misreading' of this 'fiction' produced the proper name India." It is in this context that Spivak's representation of the 'Rani' embedded in the idea of 'third-worlding' is useful as a lens to understanding the colonial politics of both obscuring and exaggerating native social entities and their social lives for purposes of producing 'exotic' objects for convenience.

2.5 Elitism and Boarding Schools in the Hills

The 'civilizing project' was taken up by the British very seriously and they were not only looking to beautify and make things fashionably 'modern' (that they believed needed shaping up) but in practice did so extremely 'selectively'. Exclusivity and elitism marked much of their moves and motives that included constructing 'special' spaces that were earmarked for the upper classes and the British themselves, as earlier discussed in case of Simla's zoning. This imperial objective also marked several other operations such as constructing elite clubs

such as ‘Snooty Ooty’[48], parks, bars including the genesis of public and residential boarding schools in India, that were intentionally designed to serve as a “breeding ground for the civil services” in British India as Kanwar (1990) suggests. Boarding or residential schools during the Raj were primarily built in the hills to enable students to flourish to their highest potential amidst nature and calm, away from the noise of the bustling plains in an optimally temperate climate. This apart, a cool weather also capacitated strenuous activities and exercises including various outdoor sports that would build physically strong men who were required to run the government effectively (Spencer and Thomas 1948, Kenny 1995). For Kennedy (1996) hill stations transforming into educational sites for English children appeared to be akin to a “nursery for a ruling race” that sheltered the white men and their children from neurasthenia and spleen ailments, that a significant number of them suffered in the tropical climate of the plains.

The essence of these English public schools seemed to have been romanticized by Thomas Hughes’s *Tom Brown’s School Days* written in 1858, that painted a rather quixotic picture of the passionate headmaster of Rugby, who tried to instill the ‘ideal English qualities’ in his boys to prepare them for the outside world.[49] The Right Reverend G.E. L. Cotton, Bishop of Calcutta, had been assistant master at Rugby under dr. Arnold and had envisioned of three public schools in India which he aspired would “not be less secure and by God’s blessing not less useful than Winchester, Rugby, and Marlborough.”[50] The Bishop had recommended laying the foundation of a boys school in Simla or Mussoorie (hill stations in India) on October 29, 1860 as a ‘thanks-offering to God for His deliverance’ of the British population in India during the tumultuous period of 1857 and to which the Viceroy agreed. In January 1861, the Bishop’s proposition and ‘memorable minutes’ was confirmed by the-then Secretary of State and which became the Magna Carta of British Education in India[51]. Reverend S S. Slater was appointed Head Master shortly afterwards and following his arrival in Simla from England, the school first opened at Jutogh, (a few miles away from the town) in the name of Simla Public School, locally popular as Bishop’s School in 1863.

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[48] The Ootacamund or the Ooty Club where snooker is believed to have been invented in 1882 and as the name suggests had a truly supercilious character
[49] See Asa Briggs (1958), *Victorian People*, London, pp 148-175
[50] Buck E. J. (1904) *Simla: Past and Present*, p-87
[51] Dewan R. (R 47-54, S 90-01) cited @ http://www.oldcottonians.org/chronological_seq_1.htm accessed last on June 21, 2017

Later in 1866 it was shifted to Knollswood Spur in Simla, where the foundation stone was laid by Sir John Lawrence, the-then Viceroy. Bishop Cotton School was one of the finest public schools in India envisaged on the lines of a quintessentially English taste founded by public subscription and with financial support from the government, which was equally concerned about its administration. The four ex-officio members on the school's Board of Governors were the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab province, the Bishop of Lahore, the Commissioner of Delhi, and the Deputy Commissioner of Simla. In addition, there were four elected governors who were residents in Simla at the time coupled with the Viceroy acting as the school's Visitor. The school was specifically modelled to cater to the educational needs of the children of officials who came from England (and most of whom sent their children to English schools) along with the children of domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indian clerks and officials. Although the parents of these boys were mostly clerks with the government, there were many others who came from non-official and more privileged classes that included royal progeny of the princely states. In the same year, the Governor General's quarters of Auckland House was converted into a public school for girls modelled on similar restrictions and one that could only be afforded by the elite European parents. These premium educational institutions in the hills also aimed to impart typically English etiquette amongst its students that would be socially and culturally more valued than its ordinary counterparts in the plains. Simla's Bishop Cotton was considered as the best school in India and a report in 1905 officially validating the claim held that, "A European or Eurasian lad brought up and educated at Simla is, generally speaking, immeasurably superior to a lad brought up and educated in Calcutta or indeed anywhere in the plains."[52] These schools as Sanjay Srivastava (1998: 42) suggests in his work *Constructing Post- colonial India: National Character and the Doon School*,

> "constructed the rationale for the necessity of its existence by setting the observable tranquility of its environment, the great unanimity of opinion which greeted its birth, and the clear utilitarian logic of its discourse, against the pandemic turbulence and the profound disagreements which characterized a colonial society…It embellished that rationale by transcribing the economic and social stasis which characterized such a society with the language of individual pathology; that the 'problems' besetting Indian society could be solved by concentrating on the three elements of individual

[52] Report of the Simla Allowances Committee (1905) p-27

personality which Arthur Foot had suggested were central to the 'methods and programme' of a public school in his opening day speech: character, intellect, and physique."

He further goes on to say that these campuses provided for a space where 'sons' were able to grow up as 'modern citizens of the post- colonial nation state,' that which politically distinguished them from others, as unique individuals in terms of their identity in the national space. Several such other schools began to be erected in the hills all over India during and after the Raj which were increasingly becoming popular not just as prestigious educational centers but as 'elite institutions' akin to 'finishing schools'[53] in Switzerland. The transition that almost all hill stations underwent, i.e. from a colonial leisure hub to a post- independence tourist spot may be partly attributed to the Indian elite who had appropriated hill stations much before independence. Owing to the lack of proper educational facilities in the plains at that time, the affluent and educated classes, who could not afford foreign education for their children, used to send them to these residential schools in the hills and join them during their holidays (Sacareau, 2007). The famed Doon School and the Welham Girls School built in Dehradoon, St. Pauls School and St. Joseph's School – North Point at Darjeeling, Sherwood College- Nainital, Lawrence School Sanawar- Himachal and Lovedale at Ooty- constructed during the Raj have continued to remain 'elite' establishments where the crème de la crème of the country are groomed until the present day and what the 'middle class' in the plains still aspire to reach. Thus, these hills have transformed into spaces not only meant for leisure but as seats of elite learning and fashionable finishing schools attracting the urban upper and middle classes from the plains.

2.6 Bollywood and Hill Stations

The Bollywood or the Hindi film industry of Bombay has an age-old bond with hill stations in India. 'Out-door shoots' gradually became popular in Hindi cinema in the early 1960s, to break the monotony of shooting films at a studio space with 'sets' i.e. artificially painted backgrounds and constructed objects and was marked by an obsession for film shoots in hills, a phenomenon that Kesavan (2008) refers to as 'hill-station hedonism.'[54] Hill stations were

[53] Schools where 'good conduct' and a training in etiquette is imparted alongside academic pursuits
[54] Kesavan Mukul (2008) *No One writes to the Prison Doc Anymore*, Bollywood Special, Dharmendra, Outlook issue, May 19, 2008

considered a plausible option to shoot songs sequences or interesting junctures in films to mesmerize the audience with the alluring nature of the majestic mountains. Apart from offering picturesque surroundings, hill stations close to Bombay (currently Mumbai) such as Matheran, Lonavala and Khandala were deemed ideal for 'out- door' location shoots owing to their proximity and hence economic viability for the film production units. Geographical proximity meant ease of travel and lesser costs towards fooding and lodging for the cast and crew of the film units travelling to these locations.

In the 1960s, numerous film makers in Bollywood preferred hill stations to studio spaces or even sea- sides and some even conceptualized entire story boards weaving the narrative of the plots with the local customs, culture, politics, clothing and other regional mores specific to each of these hill locales. The story-line of 'Box office super-hit' films such as Shammi Kapoor (a prolific Bollywood actor) starrer *Junglee* (1961) and *Kashmir ki Kali* (1964) were framed for instance in the setting of Kashmir. Both these films explored the charming surroundings of Kashmir and the Srinagar valley like no other film had done before. The sequence where Shammi Kapoor romances the pretty Sharmila Tagore on a *shikara* (a traditional boat made of wood) in the famed Dal lake in the film *Kashmir ki Kali*, has been forever etched in the memory of the Indian masses. Even a Tamil super-hit film *Roja* (by the famous South Indian director Mani Ratnam) which was later dubbed into Hindi, was shot in the pristine surroundings of Kashmir in the early 1990s. Kashmir has continued to remain an all-time favourite spot for Hindi film shoots and coupled with eminent director Yash Chopra's cult classics such as *Noorie* (1979), *Kabhie Kabhie* (1976), *Silsila* (1981), and more recently *Jab Tak Hain Jaan* (2012), contemporary Bollywood directors such as Vishal Bhardwaj and Imtiaz Ali have also pictured their films like *Saat Khoon Maaf* (2011)*, Rockstar* (2011) *and Highway* (2014) in its backdrop. Some directors have also worked their scripts around the political turmoil in Kashmir and made films such as *Mission Kashmir* (2000), *Lakshya* (2004), *Yahaan* (2005), *Tahaan* (2008), *Shaurya* (2008), *Lamhaa* (2010), *Haider* (2014) and *Fitoor* (2016) lately.

Figure 2.3 A frame from the Bollywood film (box office hit) Highway, released in 2014
Source: *Indian Express*

Other popular (relatively smaller in magnitude) hill stations such as Coorg, Ooty and Darjeeling have also been chosen for out-door shoots for romantic diegeses for instance *Kyun Ho Gaya Na* (2004), *Hum Apke Hain Kaun* (1994) and *Barfi* (2012) respectively perhaps because of the warm and intimate space they offer in terms of offering depth and latitude in a film. It is also very interesting to note that films based on the nuances of human interpersonal relationships are mostly pictured in the locales of smaller hills compared to gigantic mountain ranges, which are probably reserved for portraying larger political issues or depicting solitude! As far as Himachal is concerned, a lot of romance, comedies and family dramas including *Jab We Met* (2007), *Black* (2005), *Three Idiots* (2009), *Tamasha* (2015), *Bang Bang* (2014), *Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani* (2013), *Highway* (2014) have been shot in the gorgeous locations of Shimla and Manali. This has in turn created a market for not just increased Bollywood viewership but accelerated middle class tourism in these hills since, the Indian masses have always been inspired by the glitz and glamour of Bollywood cinema that continues to excite and therefore fashion ‘desire’ of the common man. Hillscapes transform so to say, as ‘icons’ for appropriating ‘elite’ identities and help ‘levelling up’ of social status for the average man, keeping pace with the latest trends that Bollywood projects. This largely explains the sudden popularity and demand for the adventure sports industry and other relatively uncommon recreational pursuits (such as hiking) to flourish in the hills post movies

such as *Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani* (2013) and *Aisha* (2010). ‘Posing’ for photographs (and making it resemble with iconic stills from Bollywood films) in certain locations regarded otherwise as fairly ‘remote’ also contributes to building an emancipated sense of self with an ego boost for the ordinary man, who tries constantly to shun the grueling realities of life, through an act that transports him to ‘becoming’ a hero- like character depicted in the movies. These films thus offer a ready route of escape from the harsh everyday existences however temporary, and entice him to make journeys inward and outward both in the virtual and the real world. These journeys happen to lay the foundations of travel in terms of the paraphernalia associated with touristic enterprises and other leisure related activities.

Chapter 3
Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

After having set the geographical, topographical and the historical context in the earlier chapter, I now lay out the conceptual and theoretical frame of reference for the study, grounding them in the literature on tourism in developing countries, (especially in rural areas), and the impact it has on livelihoods of local communities inhabiting those geographies. I outline and analyse the political dynamics of 'othering' typically involved in tourism where the power hierarchies between the various stakeholders engaged in tourism are substantively striking. I develop a political ecology approach that I use to look at the communities' responses to the ever- changing environment around them and thereafter develop the frame of reference for a political economy study in terms of social, economic and political exchanges that take place between the actors and their environment (Beckert, 2012; Byrant & Bailey, 1997; Ostrom, 1998; Sinha, 2012 & 1994). In this chapter, I study the 'politics'[55] of survival that local communities engage in, to combat the changes in their immediate environment. This I see in terms of 'risks' that make them act as "risk communities" (an idea I borrow from Ulrich Beck, 1990s) in the context of globalisation that produces an interesting political dynamics of devising coping strategies that I develop as the idea of 'collective sustenance.'

"Collective Sustenance" (as I develop as a concept), is a mechanism through which local communities not just respond to changes in nature merely by cultural adaptation, but more importantly by their active agency to respond to risk situations through collective action. Such collective action, I show, is not a simple function of a homogenous group interest but of a micro-politics of vested interests that is played out within and between the communities. This is also what underscores the nature of political will and subjectivities that subsist in the course of the 'collective' action, especially in relation to accessing markets. I analyse the nature of transactions, exchanges and dependencies between service providers and clients in my field setting by applying the critique of Latour's Actor- Network theory by Law & Hassard (1999). I examine the range of relations that connect service providers and clients in tourism practice which in its turn not only shapes the relationships that already exist between

[55] I use the term politics to refer to conscious decision making and action by individuals or communities, who work with their individuated sense of interests to maximize gains having gauged the rewards and challenges in their immediate environment.

them but also affects the nature of commodity chains central to livelihoods and the local economy of tourism and hashish. I further explore how certain commodities behave like 'actants'[56] in that they dictate these commodity chains through price and through a social life they create in terms of mutual dependencies. My study also draws from Nordstrom's (2000) conceptualisation of the 'shadow economy' which I apply in my work to understand the informal/ illegal economy that has developed as almost a parallel economy to the tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh, largely as an outcome of it. In this chapter I seek to address-

1. How communities develop and reconfigure themselves through collective sustenance mechanisms that simultaneously emerge and sustain with the rising concerns of environmental and physical risks in the hills?
2. What overlapping relations exist between ecology, economy and communities and how dependencies arise out of this political interplay to maximise gain?
3. How community rights get shaped in the process of the aforesaid exchanges especially with reference to the 'commons' in the hills?
4. How the networks of the shadow economy and collective sustenance mechanisms thrive amidst the changing environment and impending risks?

3.1 Concepts & Theoretical Frames

I have built the conceptual framework of the study to a) analyse the impact of tourism in altering and shaping the political economy of the region b) locate risk perceptions and c) examine collective sustenance and coping mechanisms in the context of the shadow economy. In engaging with questions of environment and development-induced risks within the political economy of the hills, I draw on a robust literature on tourism in rural settings and particularly ecologically vulnerable regions. My main building blocks are the notions of 'risk society' (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1990), the idea of the 'Shadows' or the parallel informal economy (Nordstrom, 2000) and the cultural ecology approach (Steward, 1955; Forde, 1949). I use the 'actor-network' (Latour, 1993) theory broadly to understand the notions of space and 'power' (Foucault, 1978, 1980 & 1989) and the potential of the 'shadow economy.' I show the functioning of Malana Crème, as an '*actant*' (Tribhuvan, 2018) capable of exerting political power and having implications on the political economy of the region and as a

[56] An *actant* may be defined as something that 'acts' or to which activity is granted by others and therefore the idea could be stretched and attributed to anything (even inanimate) that may be perceived as a source of action.

player that influences existing socio-economic relations. To discuss the fulcrum of the questions I raise earlier, I have divided the chapter into the following segments conceptually, i.e. - i) tourism for development ii) relationalities & dependencies of economy, community, ecology & tourism, iii) common property and community rights for exchanges, iv) risk, environment and market interfaces, v) shadow economy and collective sustenance & vi) the political ecology of vulnerability.

i. Tourism for Development

To reiterate in this study, I seek to show how 'tourism development' in the hills, and the environmental and physical risks it generates, shape and are shaped by power configurations that develop with the emergence of modes and mechanisms of collective sustenance. I also examine the interface of the diverse range of stake holders such as the state actors, local 'communities' (an idea I problematize and further develop in the forthcoming sections) and the tourism service providers who are both affected and benefitted by the tourism 'industry.' I see their interactions in a complex web of social, economic and political relations where I hypothesize that each of the strands connecting these 'entities' become politically charged 'pathways' shaping and reshaping those very relations that bind them as they interact amongst themselves and with the *actant* in Chapter 7.

Hunziker & Krapf's (1941) perception of tourism as, "the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents," is an interesting starting point to the explore the nature of interactions that evolve in tourism play[57], and to what is commonly referred to as 'tourism encounter' (Crouch, 2001; Gibson, 2012; Babb, 2010 et al). For Crouch (2001) encounter is central to tourism and possibly its characteristic feature, a point reiterated by Gibson (2012: 14) who states that these encounters are "immediate, embodied and geographical" and further goes on to maintain that (*ibid*),

> "We travel to encounter other places, landscapes, people, sights, weather. While the tourism industry relies on all manner of material commodities to turn a profit (hotel beds, postcards, luggage, etc.), and has been incorporated into a symbolic economy of

[57] A process that leads to any touristic activity played out in the context of a market.

marketing representations, its most cherished, commodified, essential element is encounter."

The idea of tourism as an industry therefore entails grasping the complex nature of a multitude of processes that simultaneously are at work. These 'encounters' both between the tourists and the locals coupled with mine own with my subjects on the field form the cornerstone of my work.

With the United Nations Statistical Commission adopting the WTO's conceptualization of 'tourism' in 1994, the term was expanded from its stereotypical representation as 'holiday making' to define it as- "the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes." The same report classifies tourism into- domestic, inbound, outbound, internal, national and international (UNWTO, 1994). This is the working definition used for classifying tourism in the current frame of the study, including for methodological purposes during data collection on the field.

Additionally, I consult the literature on the political dimensions of tourism that has recently developed as a research subfield of tourism studies, and is primarily invested in public policy and planning analyses (Cheong & Miller, 2000). Planning and policy research in tourism studies have addressed the lack in policy interventions in development and advocated for community based solutions to tourism opportunities and predicaments (Reed, 1997; Ringer, 1993; Whittaker, 1997). My research resonates with Reed's (1997) study that explored power relations amongst the various stakeholders in community- based tourism planning activities in British Columbia, Canada, in that I seek to explore power relations with respect to community based tourism experiences as well. I also draw upon tourism research that engages itself with political economy and development debates, by analyzing tourism development with respect to national/ international development programs and market-driven development policies and structural adjustments to the changing global/ local economy (Hall, 1994; de Kadt, 1979; Poirier, 1995).

According to Leite & Graburn, (2009) tourism research may be distinguished into four basic types- empirical discovery, work on adjacent topics, theoretical extension, and critical analysis. While in the 1960s, scholars were interested in documenting impact analysis

(Nuñez, 1963) tourism studies were reduced to 'by-product of their primary research'[58] (Boissevain, 1977). This was typical of empirical research. Early anthropological work on phenomenon adjacent to tourism include Nash's (1970) *Community in Limbo*, about expatriate Americans in Barcelona and Cohen's (1971) "Arab Boys and Tourist Girls," a study of gender relations and prospects for young men in an Israeli town. This characterised the work on adjacent studies. Tourism studies concerned with theoretical extensions came to be conducted to analyse the concept of tourism in terms of existing anthropological models. Graburn (1983) elaborated this model drawing on Leach's (1961) writing on 'chronicity'[59]. Others followed suit and started focussing on the concept of acculturation, which was initially developed to understand the cultural impact of on-going colonial versus native divide (Redfield et al., 1936). The cultural residues that shape the social life of the hills as a result of this process of acculturation post 'chronicity' of colonial living, tourism and thereafter globalization has also conditioned my field and its beings. However, I position my study in the critical school of analysis by engaging it with concepts of power and politics, that I find is crucial to shaping the political economy of these hills.

The critical school of thought that emerged with Bryden (1973) and Young (1973), carrying out research delving into the economic rationale for tourism development and began locating social and cultural consequences of tourism therefore enhanced my understanding of tourism play. The works of later scholars who developed the body of the critical school through critical 'dialogues, conversations and entanglements' of representations in tourism, politics and power, (Ateljevic *et al*. 2007; Aitchison, 2001) also influenced my research in terms of conceptual modelling, especially where I define the idea of 'collective sustenance' and the micro-politics both disguised within and surrounding it.

This 'critical' shift in tourism studies also marked a breakaway from its earlier reductionist approach (of an empowered tourist v/s disempowered host) and established a more nuanced approach of critical analysis of the various players at stake. This critical approach also sought to examine issues of unequal development and hierarchical relationships embodying hegemonic power of developed nations and transnational corporations (Cheong and Miller, 2000). While remedying the problem of looking at a unilateral flow of 'power' in earlier

[58] Early studies on tourism were often viewed as an appendage to an existing anthropological study of ethnicity, race, gender or social class in a certain geography and its scope in terms of critical research was limited as it had not yet received the recognition of a full-fledged discipline.
[59] Referring to a chronic state, i.e. having a long duration.

studies, researchers such as Cameron (1997), Milne (1998) and Shaw and Williams (1998) have demonstrated the global-local flows of power and stressed that locals are not always passive when faced with social and economic challenges and that they can be resilient and proactive agents as they constantly negotiate their place in development.

I also acknowledge Leite & Graburn,'s (2009: 37) proposition of tourism which "can refer to a category of experience counterposed to everyday life: local, national or global industry; an opportunity for employment; a source of strangers in one's home locality; a force for social change; a form of cultural representation and brokerage; an emblem and medium for globalisation; a venue for the construction and performance of national, ethnic, gendered and other identities; or any combination of these and more." For Leite & Graburn (2009), tourism has been related to "ethnicity, identity, local and global politics, development, social inequality, gender, material culture, globalization, diaspora, lived experience, discourse, representation, and the objectification and commodification of culture" (p: 35). Stretching it a bit further 'tourism' can therefore be viewed as a social 'field' in which actors engage in complex interactions across time and space with cultural brokerage revealing the way in which they are further embedded in the very system as Ness (2003:9) describes 'it' as "more or less than an industry, cultural phenomenon or leisure." Furthermore, Sinclair and Stabler (1997: 58) establish a relationship of dependencies attaching other parallel industries to the industry of tourism and which for them is a "composite product" involving transport, accommodation, catering, natural resources, entertainment and other facilities and services, such as shops and banks, travel agents and tour operators. Many ancillary businesses also serve other sectors and consumer demands, thus raising the question of the extent to which suppliers can be considered as primarily suppliers of tourism. The many components of the product, supplied by a variety of businesses operating in a number of markets, create challenges in analysing the tourism supply chain, which is crucial to understanding the range of services encompassed in the performance of tourism and in terms of analysing the dependencies of tourism and its impacts in the scope of the present study.

Breaking from past debates over models and typologies of what constitutes the essence of 'tourism', recent scholars on tourism studies (Cohen, 1992; Graburn, 2002) have rather begun to explore the ambiguities, eventualities and slippages exposed in the particularities of tourism contexts. They highlight how people conduct themselves in the inter-related practices of "travelling, encountering, guiding, producing, representing, talking, moving, hosting and

consuming" (Leite & Graburn, 2009: 37). As Clifford argues (1988: 34), while on the one hand tourism relates to a process of a continuous tacking between 'inside' and 'outside' of events attempting to grasp the sense of definite occurrences and gestures analytically, it refers to stepping back to situate these meanings in wider contexts, on the other. Abram *et al* (1997) also understand tourism as not one but many sets of practices, "with few clear boundaries but some central idea" all embedded within broader social, political and historical frameworks. Therefore, the idea of tourism as understood throughout the study makes use of the above frameworks to frame its arguments.

While exploring the imagined 'colourful other' happens to be one of the many stimulants to commencing travel and engage in touristy activities, where natives are oftentimes "presented for touristic purposes, anachronistically[60] or allochronically[61]" (Fabien, 1983), in that they tend to freeze in time as Albers & James (1988:154) describe them as "idealized and exotic, isolated and authentically living others, torn out of their wider socio-economic and socio-historical context." It is this notion of the 'exotic' waiting to be explored that was one of the primary motivations of travel to the hills, in this context. Cohen (1993) further stretches the idea to talk about 'images of the tourist image' of the native people has evoked a substantial body of discourse amongst theorists of tourism studies that has continually attempted to understand the 'nature' of this image building. This depicts the reality of many tourist spots where a geographical space assumes a way more unique flavor depending upon the nature of the ethnic population that resides within its perimeters; that which produces a tourism culture based on exploiting this image of the 'exotic other.'

The idea of 'taking on' the lifestyle of this exotic 'other' (however temporary), through apparent performance of practices (mostly selectively) of mimicking or imitating of that 'other' culture such as dressing up as the 'other' or the consumption of food of the 'other' etc. marks an egress of the letting go of the components of one's own 'identity' not just by inorganically taking up of this exotic 'image' but involves a process of staging of a 'contrived image' (I discuss earlier when talking about the ways in which tourists especially pose for pictures or engage in daring activities such as adventure sports that they would otherwise not perform in their everyday life) which then fashions the politics of exchanges that take place in terms of both commodities and of culture in a particular tourist space. This mode of

[60] In an out-dated/ ancient way.
[61] Not occurring or existing at the same time.

tourism practice therefore, creates a 'spurious tourist space' where natives and non-natives stage their respective 'images' which play out in specific ways in reiterating that it is the geo-political reality of a space that ultimately shapes these contrived images (Crocombe, 1973 & Cohen, 1982). Therefore, by essentializing the image of the native (Clifford, 1988: 258) they create 'a stereotype of the stereotype' which is not only overly generalized but also, plane and not analytic enough in its scope to ethnographically understand native community practices. These stereotypes thus hinder a better contextualized, concrete and analytical study of these images of natives and non-natives in all their all-encompassing multidimensional range. For Cohen (1993: 36), these merely tantamount to "ethnographically idealized pictures of colourful natives intended to titillate the prospective visitor's quest for the authenticity of the life and culture"[62] of the other which then problamatizes the tourists' image of this other, where he fails to comprehend and accept the socio-political reality of "poverty, squalor, strife and death" that this 'exotic other' has to grapple with. The notion of 'representation' thus helps create an understanding of the various 'images' that gets projected in the course of tourism play.

Similarly, Graburn (1989) in examining the impetus to travel, employs Durkheim's division of the sacred and the profane to posit modern tourism as 'the sacred journey' or 'the spirit quest' which seek to provide satiation lacking in everyday lives. While Krippendorf (1987) locates tourism in the 'industrial social system', his work explores on the possibility for tourism to act as a social force, in envisaging 'new tourism' that will encourage a shift against the uniformity of modern life that may become "a true discovery, a place of experiences and learning, a means of human enrichment, a stimulus for a better reality and a better society" (1987: 530). McKean (1989) holds that in tourism there is an underlying quest to see and appreciate the whole wide world, the *oikumene*. Thus, tourism may not be viewed as a completely banal pleasure-seeking escapism (MacCannell, 1976), but as an intense, broadly shared human desire to be acquainted with 'others,' with the reciprocal possibility that one may come to know oneself (Mckean, 1989: 133). This psychological aspect of retrospection and self- discovery on part of the 'tourist' in its quest to know the unknown and of constantly moulding oneself to better suit to the needs of the time on part of the natives, thus creates possibilities of mutual well-being.

[62] As quoted in Mark Nuttall's (1998) *Protecting the Arctic: Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Survival*, Gordon and Breach

The World Tourism Organization (WTO, 1999) observes that tourism contributes to the well-being of tourists by giving them restorative holidays that fulfil many psychological needs. Tourism is also acclaimed for its contribution to the preservation of cultures at a time when globalisation is arguably a force for cultural homogenisation (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000: 226) as is true for the smaller pockets of villages near the field site. However, mass tourism today is heavily 'marketised,' and dominated by 'neo-liberal' values, where dominant decision makers harness tourism prospects for their own private wealth accumulation and often appropriate scarce community-owned resources to their advantage. While Stilwell (2002: 21) opines that neo-liberalism's 'core belief is that giving freer reign to market forces will produce more efficient economic outcomes,' Stephen Gill's (1995: 399) work on 'Globalisation, market civilisation and disciplinary neoliberalism' talks of the characteristics of the current era imposing a 'market civilisation and disciplinary neoliberalism' on global society. This further involves a more 'liberalized' and 'commodified' set of historical structures (that also undergo change), driven by the reorganization of capital and a political shift to the right, therefore involving a process of spatial expansion and social deepening of economic liberal definitions of social purpose and possessively individualist patterns of action and politics. I extrapolate this notion to my conceptualization of the 'community' in the actor-network model in Chapter 7. Also, Simpson (2007) warns about the challenges in viability of enterprises providing livelihood opportunities while protecting the environment and the indigenous cultures. Similarly, as Tao & Wall (2009: 90) go on to state that it is imperative that tourism "complements rather than displaces existing activities" of local communities, where they sustain themselves through numerous activities rather than distinct jobs, which I find useful to analyse the parallel shadow economy of the hills I study.

ii. Relationalities & Dependencies of Economy, Community, Ecology & Tourism

Since the study engages with the impact of tourism post the economic liberalization phase of the 1990s in India, with a range of tourism development initiatives and activities that were introduced in quick succession, the research draws upon literature pertaining to primarily three key strands of identifiable markers namely- a) economy, b) community and c) ecology each of which intersect and interact on the question of measuring the impact.

a) In terms of economic development, tourism is of growing significance to many nations and is recognized as the largest export earner globally and an important provider of foreign exchange and employment (WTO, no date). Especially, developing countries are encouraged to exploit its potential as a means of economic development since it causes less damage than extractive industries (Russell & Stabile, 2003) and can be used to generate revenue for other developmental activities as well (Mathieson & Wall, 1982: 41). Tourism undoubtedly is one of the principal forces shaping our world (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000: 214) and while it is important to take into account the economic contributions of tourism in terms of positive impacts, which include improving individual wellbeing, fostering cross-cultural understanding, facilitating learning, contributing to cultural protection, supplementing development, fostering environmental protection, promoting peace and fomenting global consciousness which contributes to the formation of global society (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000: 212; WTO, 1999), its obvious negative consequences cannot be overlooked. Wearing (2001, 2002) extremely critical of tourism operations within the neoliberal context states that, "Tourism in a free market economy can exploit natural resources as a means of profit accumulation, and consequently has been described as the commercialization of the human need to travel. The notion of unlimited gain has led to the exploitation of host communities, their cultures and environments…Tourism perpetuates inequality, with the multinational companies of the advanced capitalist countries retaining the economic power and resources to invest in and ultimately control nations of the developing world. In many cases, a developing country's engagement with tourism serves simply to confirm its dependent, subordinate position in relation to the advanced capitalist societies –itself a form of neo-colonialism" (2002: 238).

Three dimensions could be straightforwardly attributed to understanding the economic implications of the tourism industry- the balance of payment effects, the income effects and the employment effects that tourism generates. International tourism continues to be one of the most important factors contributing to the balance of payments effects in terms of foreign exchange, further impacting absolute value and growth for developing countries (Dieke, 1993; Huband, 1997; Sinclair, 1998). The income effects of tourism have been studied by numerous scholars (Lindberg and

Enriquez, 1994; Hugo, 1992; Wagner, 1997) who have maintained that tourist expenditure has a direct bearing on the income of communities and that there are several factors governing the magnitude of the income effect (Archer, 1989). Some of the key factors being the volume of tourist expenditure, size of the economy and linkages between tourism establishments and other sectors of the economy.

b) The literature on the socio-cultural repercussions of tourism was also useful to understanding the dynamics of local communities and the tourists. For centuries, the elites of different societies and regimes have acknowledged and used the 'leisure potential' of nature (Darby 2000) and it is in this context that socio-cultural impact of tourism (Mbaiwa, 2005) on 'nature' is analyzed in Himachal and for which the working definition of 'culture' is borrowed from Geertz (1973). He sees (p 89) "webs of significance" in "a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life." It is this culture that ultimately drives individual and community actions in structuring power hierarchies in the everyday performances of political subjectivities within the web of social relations and interactions that take place.

For Mathieson and Wall (1982:133),

> "the socio-cultural impacts of tourism are the ways in which tourism is contributing to changes in the value system, individual behavior, family relationships, collective life-styles, safety levels, moral conducts, creative expressions, traditional ceremonies and community organization. In simplified terms socio-cultural impacts are 'people impact' they are about the effects on the people of host communities of their direct and indirect association with tourist."

c) The interface of tourism and environment is critical to understanding the impact on local ecology, where Krippendorf (1982) in his cardinal work on 'The Holiday Makers' has talked about the devastating environmental implications of indiscriminate tourism development. The adverse effects of tourism that discusses

socio-cultural and economic bearings (Cohen, 1984) on host communities in terms of over-utilization of resources also have contributed much to the understanding of environmental impacts on the ecosystem (Lindberg, et al., 1997), analyzing environmental related practices and issues of collective sustenance coupled with addressing issues of conflict (Koussis, 2000). Since there has been little research on the environmental repercussions of tourism in Himachal Pradesh, the present study delves into the effects of tourism in shaping local ecology. Also, Batta (2001, 2003) in his study of the environment policy for sustainable development of tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh, found that tourism exploited environmental resources without making any contribution to its sustenance and thus proposed for a cost sharing process on part of the tourism industry for the conservation of these resources, which additionally provide an insight in terms of recommendations the study proposes in its final phases.

I also refer to the Foucauldian (1978: 93-102) literature on 'power' and apply the idea of fluid 'power' as a 'complex strategical situation' comprising of 'multiple and mobile field of force relations' (never entirely stable) to deconstruct the networks of political and economic exchange in tourism play. As Foucault (1980: 52) enmeshes the concepts of 'power' and 'knowledge' in that "the exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power." He (1978: 93) goes on to state that power is omnipresent, "not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced from one moment to the next, at the very point, or rather in every relation from one point to another." For Foucault, power is not confined to institutions of economic importance but extends to otherwise seemingly non- political institutions the combined function of which forms formal politics. Therefore 'power' in a network of relations as Foucault (1978) understands it is not limited to a commodity or a possession bound to an individual or collective entity as he remarks (*ibid*: 99),

> "We must not look for who has the power… and who is deprived of it; nor for who has the right to know and who is forced to remain ignorant. We must seek, rather, the pattern of the modifications which the relationships of force imply by the very nature of their process."

This conceptualization of power exercised within a set of relations rejects all notions of the 'centre' from which 'it' originates placing the agency of the individual and his position as utmost important to bringing social change. As Foucault (1989: 98) views individuals as "vehicles of power and not its point of application." This idea of 'power' in relations of networks, when translated to tourism therefore indicates a more nuanced approach since it has the potential to highlight the everyday micro-interactions of local communities, tourists and a variety of institutional actors in localized settings, as opposed to 'power' viewed as concentrated in the hands of administrators and politicians. As Cheong & Miller (2000: 378) suggest, "instances of power relationships are located in the seemingly nonpolitical business and banter of tourists and guides, in operation of codes and ethics, in the design and use of guidebooks, and so on." They (*ibid*: 381) also maintain that various kinds of brokers as well as locals form the Foucauldian 'agents' of tourism power, in that they are "not weak intermediaries" or merely providers of 'tourism related services' but "compel the tourist to function in a certain way." Furthermore, these brokers that emerge from both private and public sectors (as tour guides, government officials, hotel/ restaurant employees etc.) 'collaborate' and develop strategies by aligning themselves according to their shared 'interests' around an issue. These brokers also critique existing structures and plan the course of tourism practice, by negotiating (*ibid*: 381) "how far development should proceed, what type of development is optimal, who should enter as tourists, and so forth." Thus, their active role as 'political' agents who intervene in the process of tourism practice for the sake of profit (Cheong, 1996) is an idea I apply to study the ways in which tourism brokerage takes place in Himachal.

iii) Common Property and Community Rights for Exchanges

I study the literature on natural resource management and claim making to build a framework for explaining the mechanisms of collective sustenance on part of the communities to maintain their livelihood and manage natural resources. Whilst Partha Dasgupta (1982) has provided prescriptions of 'controlling' natural resources with a neo-classical economic view, Chhatrapati Singh (1986) has argued for an inclusive economic model for development that incorporates legal apportionment of rights on part of communities that especially dwell in forests. Common property resources have extensively provided resource base for 'non-cash, non-market economy' (Singh, 1986; Jodha, 1994), where resources have been abundantly

accessible to communities in the form of forests, rivers, shrubs, pastures etc. However, with the legalized and de facto privatization of the commons, the relatively non-cash economy has been converted into a market economy which in turn has led to rural and tribal poverty. It is the idea of 'justice', that Singh puts forth which provides a backdrop towards understanding the issue pertaining to managing the natural resources, and one that he connects to the idea of 'rights'. The rights based approach to collective sustenance and development would therefore be analyzed in the backdrop of political forces operating in the region.

I refer to the literature by De Angelis (2012) who while recognizing the potential of 'commons' as an essential basis of community livelihoods to promote sustainability and social justice, also talks of the capitalist tendencies of emerging markets post globalization, that give rise to hierarchical structures, social and economic injustice and environmental degradation. He further enlightens on the question of 'commoning' or making common and goes on to state that, it is the process of 'commoning' that restates and reproduces relations that may be regarded as autopoiesis (i.e. as a system replicating itself through its own resources) similarly as capital's inherent characteristic that makes it a political project to 'view commons' as a resource to expropriate and enclose. While communities earlier enjoyed unhindered access to forests to collect timber for fuelwood and many other purposes, had access to common grazing land for their livestock, 'enclosures' fenced of areas to prevent open access that contributed to socio-economic inequalities in the communities. This is interesting to understanding the context in which the said 'commoning' takes place in terms of looking at community practices and management of 'commons' in the hills- the forests, rivers and particularly the harvest of *Malana Crème*. While earlier harvest of the weed was from the bushy wild outgrowth in the hills, efforts by the local 'political elites' emerging from the community themselves to enclose the land dedicated to growing the weed in the enclosed *kutlas* raises questions of their intent and need to convert otherwise open access spaces into 'commons.' As Caffentzis & Federici (2014) maintains that one of the problems facing the world today is not only increasing privatization in the current neo-liberal phase of capitalism, but this growing popularity of the commons. They point further out that, "There are increasing number of people who do not have an anti-capitalist agenda but rather make a

little island or 'commons' for themselves – which are built on the principle of exclusion, cooperating only with people that hold their same interests."[63]

iv) Risk, Environment and Market Interfaces

The study draws from Beck's (1992) understanding of 'risk society' to engage with risk perceptions of hill communities as tourism plays out with respect to collective sustenance and traces the way in which communities organize themselves when placed in those very conditions of risk. His conceptualization of 'risk society' emerged from its historical roots in environmental movements and environmental politics in Europe following contemporary processes of modernization and globalization. For Beck, measuring the 'side-effects' of the production process and products were central to the analysis of the first wave of environmental movements. In addition, he locates patterns of social (community) and institutional behaviour in the very process of proliferation of certain kinds of risks. At a theoretical level, Beck's risk society analysis could be conceived of as an extension of Giddens' (1990: 38) idea of 'reflexive modernization' and one that understands 'reflexivity' as 'social practices' that are 'constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices.' While many of his critics have labeled his work as pessimistic and mostly descriptive (Dingwall, 1999), one of the major contributions he has had in his 'risk society' thesis, is an exploration into the 'possibilities of grass root sub-politics on part of communities, NGOs and environmental campaigners to act as a new force in society' (Matten, 2004: 382).

In further trying to formulate a critical theory of world risk society, Beck (2009) seeks to address some other questions, among which one seems relevant for the study. He asks, "To what extent does the theory apply with the automatisms of modernization and globalization, that has taken on a life of its own having had witnessed a process of rediscovery of human action shaping and also shaped by political perspectives and cosmopolitan alternatives?" According to Beck, "The meanings of proximity, reciprocity, dignity, justice and trust are transformed within this horizon of expectation of global risks," and what emerges is a 'kind of glue for diversity' that encourages risk communities to be bound together. I depart slightly

[63] See http://entitleblog.org/2014/08/10/federici-and-de-angelis-on-the-political-ecology-of-the-commons/ for the conversation between Silvia Federici and Massimo De Angelis, as they were invited for a talk on the Political Ecology of the Commons in the Autonomous University of Barcelona on 2014

from this view and argue that the risk communities in the hills despite this 'glue' that binds them together, act as politically charged relatively disaggregate entities to negotiate the changing environment, by employing copying strategies that are more individual- interest driven.

It is in the light of this conceptual model of 'risk' facing societies and shaping social realities that the study seeks to explore the risk dynamics of the regions in question. In this background, the Malana Crème trade coupled with other informal goods and services (adventure sports industry) exchanged in the course of tourism practice, and long term perceptions of risks determine to a large extent, when and how producers (harvesters and service providers in the context) respond to opportunities of the market. While these border on questions of illegality and run the risk of being policed, the harvest of Malana Crème entails an equally risky process even involving small children to use their nimble hands to rub the leaves with optimum pressure and thereafter scrape the resin from the palm and roll it into balls.

v) Shadow Economy and Collective Sustenance

The notion of the 'shadows' from Nordstrom's (2000) conceptualization of the ways in which world economies and policies are shaped by machineries, outside the realms of formal markets and politics and yet are 'largely invisible to formal analysis,' forms one of the key analytical tools for building on the argument in the study. For Nordstrom (1995, 1999; Nordstrom and Robben 1995),

> "those most successful at this non-state trade amass economic fortunes that can be translated into political power, fortunes that can reshape social, economic and political landscapes…. states and shadow networks exist simultaneously, each phenomenologically different, each representing distinct forms of authority and politico-economic organization."

Nordstrom thus refers to the relations between the formal and non- formal, legal and non-legal, state and 'extra- state' networks operating in the shadows in shaping politics and development.

The term 'extra-state' to refer to 'shadows' has been an incisive choice for it provides room for understanding that while the networks are not directly included by the states themselves, they are neither absolutely distinct from or contradictory to states, since they tend to work around formal state representatives and institutions. She further maintains that shadow networks, licit or otherwise, go beyond value-neutral international market networks in contouring political power, economic possibilities and constructing cultures, since these networks of exchange are governed by specific codes of conduct, hierarchies of deference and power configurations and social principles. Ethnographic work on these networks calls for a re-evaluation of basic theoretical premises that concern itself with the interplay of state/non-state, legality/illegality and formal/non-formal power equations.

To explore questions of illegality vis-à-vis legality, academic research concentrates on the following strands of theoretical approaches in terms of certain categories that define illegality on the basis of goods and services, namely- illegal and dangerous goods, illegal and immoral practices, illicit and non-dangerous goods and non-legal and informal goods and services. More often than not, analyses tend to focus on to a singular category which therefore suffers from a fundamental problem of engagement with a closed network thus being restricted to the particular field of investigation. The point is thus to stretch analyses beyond water tight categories in looking at linkages within the networks in order to achieve a more nuanced understanding of complex 'extra-state' realities. Nordstrom (2000) comes up with extremely interesting insights from her study of the 'shadows' by building on her argument of trade in illicit goods with informal markets by linking it with development and political power and then further showing that the junctures of licit economy and 'extra-state' trade has the capacity to shape formal global markets.

Nordstrom's work explores not merely extra-state transactions or individuals who 'operate in the shadows' but vast networks of people who move goods and services to cater to worldwide markets. Networks of the market are triggered by 'assemblages'[64] of political, demographic, economic, historical and cultural processes (Grief, 1996; Appadurai, 1996). These networks are dynamic and evolve over time by responding to changing circumstances and the extra-

[64] The ontological framework of 'assemblage' originally formulated by Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari (1980) in *A Thousand Plateaus* and later refined by Manuel DeLanda (2016) *Assemblage Theory*, Edinburgh University Press to refer to a multiplicity made up of diverse heterogeneous characters where its only unity is perceived in terms of the relations of its parts in co-functioning and symbiosis & where alliances are more important than filial ties.

state fluidity and elasticity to suit itself to the needs of the day are worth evaluating in view the of the present study. It is in this context that the informal networks for Malana Crème, a narcotic substance obtained from the Cannabis resin, abundantly available in the wild outgrowth of the hills, native to Malana village, Kulu district, Himachal Pradesh would be discussed with reference to collective sustenance mechanisms. The informal Adventure sports industry growing parallel to the tourism would also be examined in the context of 'shadows' in the hills.

vi) 'Actors' and 'Networks' of Exchanges

I draw upon the 'actor- network' theory (Latour, 1996) to critically analyze the functioning of the complex interactions of goods and services in course of tourism praxis that are embedded in a web of social, political and economic relations which both arise out of these relations of exchange and further shape them. I take cue from Law and Hassard's (1999) enquiry into the anatomy of the 'actor-network' theory that seeks to transgress the traditional monolithic conceptualization of the 'actor' and 'network' in terms of agency and structure in understanding the 'tension' with which 'the theory' is (ibid: 1) "displaced, criticized or applied" to examine socio- political realities. This they did through a dismissal of the earlier reductive approaches of looking at 'actor- network' theory that tended to overlook the potential of 'entities' to exude 'quality' in that they were viewed simplistically as 'things' that passively 'took their form and acquired their attributes' from other entities owing to the relationship that bound them together. As Law suggests (1999) the classic essentialist dichotomies of agency/ structure, human/ non- human, before/ after, context/ content, materiality/ sociality, active/ passive were questioned and what emerged in the form of a re-evaluation of the ANT is a theory that could now grapple with the underlying tensions that separated these 'agency- structure' distinctions into water-tight categories. While prescribing 'a theory of the actor- network', he not only broke the 'fixity', singularity and unilateral tension so far attached to it, but made a case for the recognition of mobility, fractionality and dissolution between both these components. I draw upon his conceptualization of a '*semiotics of materiality*'[65] coupled with the notion of '*performativity*'[66] which he applies to explain the

[65] 'Semiotics of materiality' as Law (1999) suggests refers to acknowledging semiotic insight to studying relationalities between entities that apply to all things material and go beyond the purely linguistic domain in recognizing 'relational materiality' drawing from Karl Marx's visualization of 'modernity' that he posited in the Communist Manifesto as 'all that is solid melts into air.'

relational character of the actor –network, to understand relationalities and dependencies operative in networks of exchanges shaping the political economy of tourism in Himachal.

For Law (1999: 8),

> "… actor- network theory has indeed helped to destabilize Euclideanism: it has shown that what appears to be topographically natural, given in the order of the world, is in fact produced in networks which perform a quite different kind of spatiality."

The earlier notions of the actor- network disregarded the hierarchies of distribution during the process of exchanges especially in the way the 'order of things' was assumed and given primacy in a manner that automatically presupposed 'power' as emanating from the center and then moving towards the distributaries of the periphery. Law and Hassard (1999) also broaden the scope of the actor- network theory by recognizing that 'spatial possibilities' operate across patterns of topological relationalities, that which produces a conducive environment for the network to thrive amidst risks and tensions. It is in this regard that Foucault's conceptualization of the '*dispositif*' also becomes useful to understand the combination of structural power dynamics operating through the diverse sets of administrative, institutional and knowledge systems that produce specific hierarchies defining the nature and performance of relations in exchanges and interactions of those networks. I argue that the clear-cut distinction between the nature of agency and that of structure is fizzled in the sense that not only inanimate objects acquire qualities akin to human actors and are capable of exuding power in the web of relations they are placed within as '*actants'* but that the networks themselves exude power as 'dynamic processual pathways' (as I understand them) in predicating the course of transactions. And as Gomart & Hennion (1999: 224) point out, "Competencies are shaped by the social and material organization of work, the lay- out of the instruments, the means of communication" which then further conditions the modus operandi of networks of exchanges. Also, the ways in which the actor- network theory recognizes the micro interactions of the diversity of animate and inanimate entities as '*actants'* projecting them as 'associations' provide scope for analyzing the politique of the 'collective' in my study of coping strategies as collective sustenance mechanisms.

[66] Law's (1999) idea of 'performativity' refers to the performance in and through the relations that arise out of positionalities of entities and stress on the ways in which 'things get performed' and 'perform themselves' going beyond the established 'order of things' to simply imply that everything is impermanent and 'reversible.'

It is by identification of the image of 'belonging- by- assemblage'[67] and not just countering it with that of its earlier parallel 'belonging- by – banishment'[68] but by recognizing the dynamics of both these images simultaneously through the various intersectionalities and domains of the network by an inclusive rather than a 'cookie- cutter' approach (Lee & Stenner, 1999) that I further develop my argument on the workings of the local network of tourism that produces 'hybrid' entities by assemblages of old and new forms of politico-cultural identities and which is reflected through the various distribution channels of the informal local enterprises of adventure sports coupled with that of the robust shadow economy of the Malana Crème trade. The 'distribution of visibilities and articulabilities' as Lee & Stenner (1999) point out, automatically translates to a varying set of activities performed on a multi- dimensional scale that necessarily takes places both within spaces that are (ibid: 96) "well- lit and spaces that are shadowy and dark" making conditions for these 'hybrids' to sustain and grow. I see that the consequence of this 'de-centered' multi- layered political play in exchanges and interactions culminates ultimately into 'hybrids'; the hallmark of the complex world today. These 'hybrids' are thus born out of the tensions of the possibilities of 'belonging' in an institution that which is "guaranteed by the exclusion and silencing" (ibid: 95) of these entities working in the shadows. It is here that the image of 'belonging- by- assemblage' when pitched against 'belonging- by – banishment' marks out the possibility of recognition of the excluded entities in the workings of networks. As Latour (1935: 51) envisions, "By deploying both dimensions at once, we may be able to accommodate the hybrids and give them a place, a name, a home, a philosophy, an ontology…. a new constitution." "He further goes on to state that (1993: 41) this leads to "light streaming into previously darkened spaces" where the hybrids can be recognized as entities and given names. This hybridization as I understand it, marks critical junctures in the networks of exchanges, molding not only the political nature of commodity chains but that of the coping strategies employed by local communities in circumscribing the life of collective sustenance mechanisms. Also, in the scope of the study, it is interesting to note how the nature of spiritual and cultural consumption of *hashish* has acquired new meanings in terms of the post globalized market through 'hybridisation' of the commodity along with the

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[67] 'Belonging by assemblage' refers to the condition of cohesion that is created out of meeting and becoming part of an assembly in a way that increases the power of all concerned in a certain order, that which works out in a more profitable manner for the new '*hybrid collectif*' than an individuated entity.

[68] 'Belonging by banishment' refers to the condition wherein the idea of belonging in a given order, is established through the banishment of entities that pay the price of 'not belonging' i.e. not being part of a circle of communication, and there is a clear division between those who belong and the ones who do not.

hybridization of the networks themselves. A similar trajectory of metamorphosis may be observed as regards the commodity chains and networks driven by the culture of consumption of coca leaves by Inca messengers (approximately 8000 years ago) that have now transformed into a robust *cocaine* industry in South America. It is therefore clear that the asymmetrical power configurations in terms of the play of entities (*actants* as well as the 'dynamic processual pathways') that contend for access to and control over resources/ commodities in these networks of exchange and transactions dictate the political economy of a region, in my study Himachal Pradesh.

vii) Political Ecology of Vulnerability

Political ecology identifies the environment as a 'space' within which different social actors with asymmetrical power configurations contend for access to and control of natural resources and therefore remain engaged in an assemblage of conflicting social relationships (Bryant and Bailey, 1997). Practitioners of the political ecology approach however tend to use the term 'natural resources' rather than 'nature' (Bryant and Bailey 1997) since the aim is to avoid essentialism and to bring in a conversation between economy and politics in order to conceptualise of a political economy of the environment (Wolf 1972). They further emphasize the connections between ecology and social context by harmonizing ecological and social transects, contributing to the understanding of their interactions and the social production of landscapes (Blaikie 1985; Fairhead and Leach 1996; Vayda and Walters 1999). For instance, in her work 'In the belly of the River,' Baviskar (2004) goes on to examine the historical context, social structure and politico-economic dynamics of the interaction between the local community in question and the social movement that was staged in terms of discussing the impact on each other.

Vulnerable groups, because of their productive choices, gender and social standing, even as part of local communities having strong local relationships with the environment are often doubly marginalised having to endure the worst outcomes stemming from sudden and radical changes brought about by development interventions (Agrawal 1996; Carney and Watts 1991; Rocheleau et al. 1996) such as tourism development endeavours. Cinner and Aswani (2007), Posey and Balick (2006) and others have emphasised on the role of local communities in the management and creation of a sustainable environment, where

responsibility for resource management was linked to resource use via local community institutions Agarwal (1998: 201). For Agrawal & Sivaramakrishnan (2000: 9), "The complex political and analytical moves that have conjoined the local with community have also meant that the local has assumed oppositional overtones against the homogenising influences of a global modernity." This is to say that the significance of indigenous knowledge to combat processes of development highlight the role of local communities in environmental management, particularly in contrast to 'outsiders' or distant corporations who are often seen to possess little stake, and therefore little interest, in the managing resources sustainably (Brosius, Tsing & Zerner, 1998).

Building on these concepts and theoretical interventions, I situate my study in the conversation between power and social relations showing how it operates in a web of the varied kinds of exchanges and at different levels to feed into broader literatures of hill tourism, rural livelihoods, community based sustenance mechanisms and re-construction of identity in a globalized world. Thus, I create a space for dialogue within and between these concepts and frames of reference I work with, to generate knowledge for identifying the nature of changes to tourism practices in the hills of Himachal and the ways in which local communities have come to exert politics and devise collective sustenance mechanisms in the face of risks; a process that re-constructs the hill identity. The outcome of the study is therefore to identify to what extent globalization and the subsequent tourism development has restructured a primarily remote rural economy and provoked local communities to respond to changes in their environment through collective sustenance.

Chapter 4
Methodology

The study borrows from the critical school of analysis, in terms of its research model to understand the nuances of collective sustenance mechanisms. The idea of collective sustenance (as I develop it) refers to a community's capacity to generate livelihood, sustain itself by devising coping strategies when faced with situations of risk in the context of tourism. I supplement participant-observation with interviews, textual and visual analysis of locally produced imagery, texts, etc. coupled with semi-structured questionnaires to generate data, along with doing mobile ethnography. As (Graburn, 2002) points out, ethnography on mobile people is a complex exercise and additional qualitative and quantitative methods needs to be utilized. For Leite & Graburn (2009) however, "an extended period of participant observation is generally considered the defining element, the sine qua non, of anthropological research," to imply that a stronger engagement provides the basis for holistic analysis of how the phenomenon under study fits into broader systems of meaning and action. The study sought to therefore not just conduct travelling ethnography but explore some additional techniques to conduct the research in as much naturalistic setting as possible.

The methodology I use for primary research in the hills to physically navigate the space of the hills and negotiate access into it, includes conducting mobile ethnography, participant observation, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with the local communities, NGOs and local administrative heads especially in tourism departments of the state, all of whom were my key informants. This in combination with archival material I found in various libraries for instance in *IIAS* Shimla, *Himdhara Collective* records and the *Sambhaavnaa Institute* in Palampur (Himachal Pradesh) constitutes the key tools of my methodology, to arrive at the findings for the research, i.e. to try and locate political potentials[69] of collective sustenance mechanisms underlying specific geographies particularly those of hill economies and the recoil that arises out of the power dynamics during 'tourism' play which in its turn moulds specific power configurations.

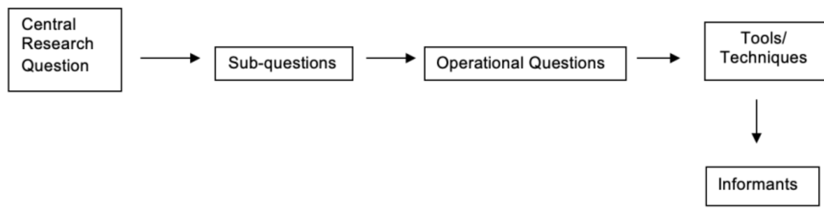
[69] Relating to the capacity of decision making or performing certain activities to be able to better access power for political gain or comparative advantage over others in a network of relations in a given space.

In addition to the secondary sources of literature pertaining to concepts and theories that were used in framing the research, relevant census records were also consulted to account for the demography in the site to look at the impact of tourism and informal economy. Records from archives (public and commercial libraries), land revenue offices accessed to observe in detail the literature available for the study. In addition, newspapers, 'grey literature' and other NGO/research committee working papers and non-formal literature (including material published by small town local press) such as handbooks, brochures, pamphlets were considered as well to understand the involvement and role of the local and government organizations in promoting tourism and combating environmental problems.

The study is explanatory[70] in nature and employs a mixed methods approach. While most of 'what', 'when' and 'where' questions are better answered with Quantitative Research techniques, the 'why' and 'how' questions in addition are possibly best answered through Qualitative methods of gathering information in small groups and on a one-one basis. As the study engaged primarily qualitative research techniques such as Focus Group Discussions, Interviews with Key Informants, Life History Interviews with the use of primarily semi-structured questionnaires, it also entailed some ethnography and participant observation of remote areas in Malana village and in Kasol and Manali town. The breakdown of the specific elements of the research methodology for fieldwork, with the rationale for the same are enlisted as below.

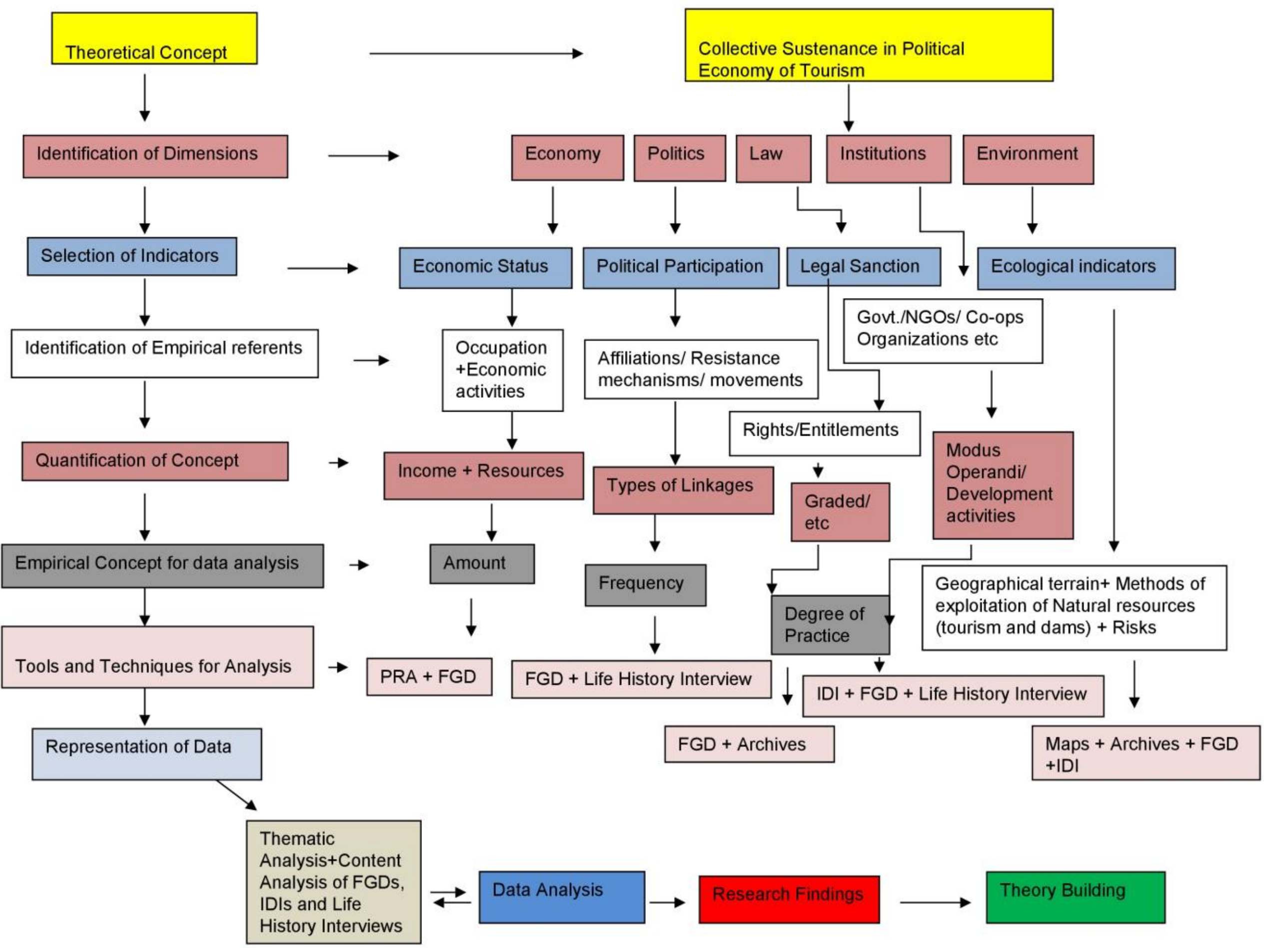
i) Methodology for fieldwork

The study took on the following matrix in terms of the method towards gathering data from informants. The following diagram (Figure 4.1) shows the logic of eliciting responses from the informants based on the information sought.



[70] Explanatory studies refer to research conducted to explain causes for an event or phenomenon, in terms of not just bringing clarity to a situation/ problem (not clearly defined by earlier studies), but by producing operational definitions of key concepts engaged, generating better researched models.

The following flow chart (Figure 4.2) shows the ways in which the main theoretical concept has been broken down in terms of dimension, and how data analysis has been done. It displays the identification of indicators that correspond to the empirical referents, and the ways in which tools and techniques are used to arrive at the findings that ultimately contribute to theory building.



Source: *Author*

With this frame of reference, data is collected and put forth for subsequent analysis. Mostly semi- structured open ended questions were asked to respondents using the following conceptualizations of impact of tourism and networks of the shadow economy vis-à-vis 'collective sustenance' mechanisms which were further put to thematic and content analysis and findings were derived from it. This in combination with mobile ethnography and participant observation techniques was useful to support the data generated on the field.

Figure 4.3 Key Questions & logic of Analysis on Impact of Tourism

➢ **Impact of Tourism**

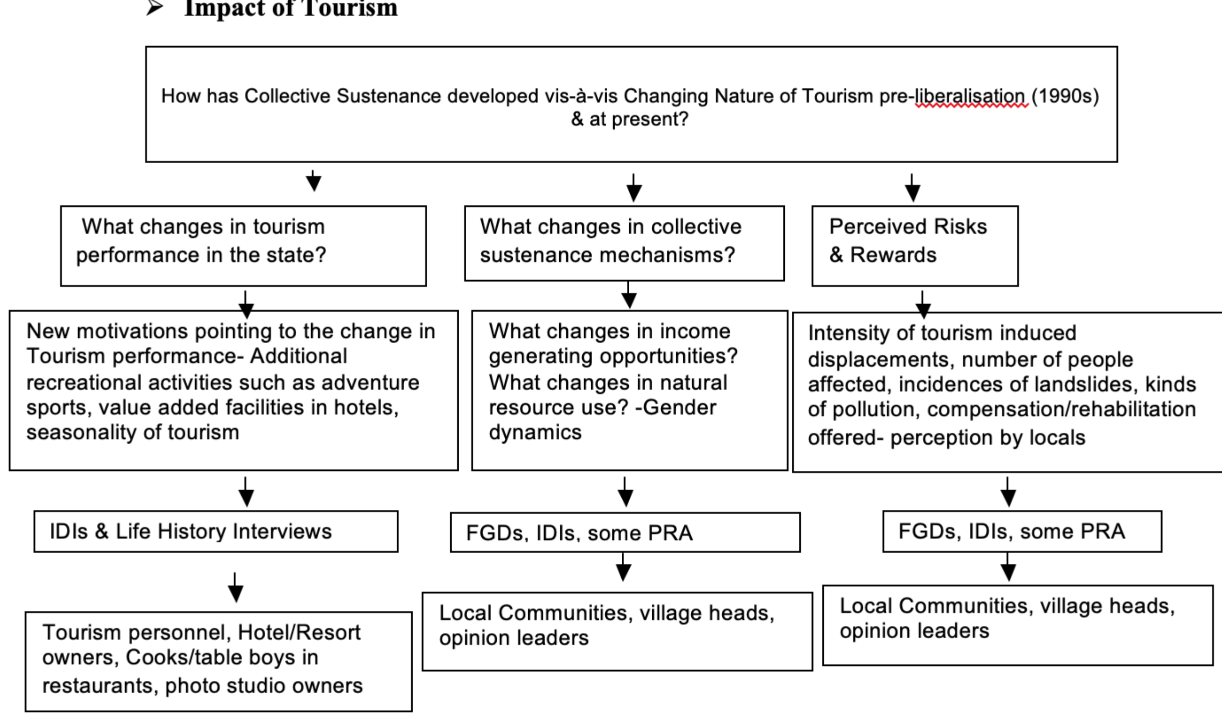
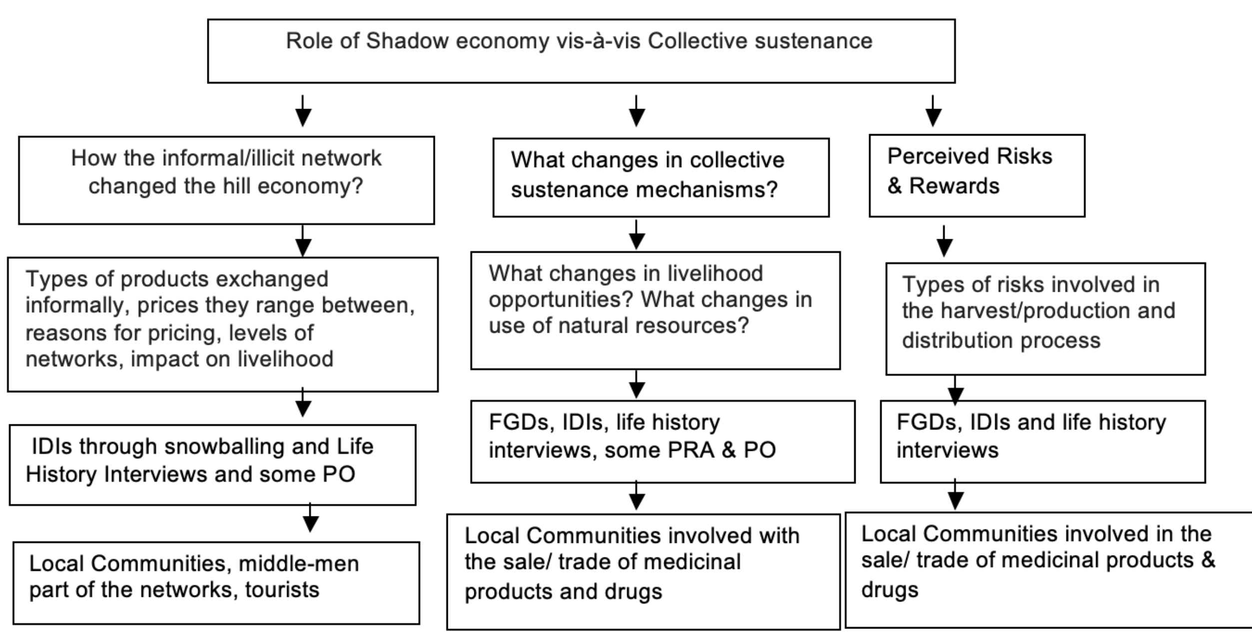


Figure 4.4 Key Questions & logic of Analysis on Networks of Shadow Economy

➢ **Networks of Shadow Economy-**



ii) Research Design and Sampling

While the research design constitutes a primarily single-sited case study approach that sought to explore the impact of tourism particularly in the *Manali* town, in the *Kullu* district of Himachal Pradesh (Northern India) with multi-stage sampling, the 'field' for the study was beyond the perimeters of *Manali* town including the adjacent villages of *Buruwa*, *Shanag* and *Palchan* and some of the *Parvati* valley. This was a conscious choice to grasp the nature of impact and community responses in the villages adjacent to the primary site and hence the research remains multi-sited. For the scope of the current study, Non-Probability Purposive Sampling[71] technique with Snowballing[72] as the key method for selection of respondents for carrying out the research on the informal economy was deemed most suitable. This apart, an approximate 10 per cent sample of the local hotels and guest houses catering to tourists was prepared and another 10 per cent of local tour and travel agencies were taken into account through random sampling technique. This was based on the data available from the State Department of Tourism, HP, *Kullu* and *Manali* Hotel Associations of *Manali*, the association of local transporters such as the Taxi Union in Manali, and other informal agencies etc. Data on the number of visitors, type of tourist activity, duration of stay, bed capacities, number of hotels and guest houses, type of hotels patronized, purpose of visit, purchase of local crafts and goods, mode of transport to the area, local transport, expenditure made during the visit, etc. were collected from the tourists, hotels and homestays including tourism related agencies and local photo studios, hawkers and food vendors etc. Further a random sample of 150 tourists from Manali was interviewed for the said study.

[71] A sampling method where selective sampling is conducted based on the researcher's judgement and preference in choosing the sample, i.e. certain members of the population to participate as subjects for the surveys.

[72] The term refers to a sampling tool used to conduct the research through referrals made by individuals who share an interest or characteristic feature which is central to the enquiries of the study. The identification of such samples is also known as chain sampling or chain referral sampling since the researcher asks the initial participants of the survey to identify the following set of participants based on their commonality and a target population for the research is better identified.

Figure 4.5 A Focus Group with the village elders of *Shanag*, Kullu District, Himachal Pradesh

Data on the different indicators of socio-economic and ecological impact of the tourism industry was further gathered from the hoteliers and *dhabas*, cooks/boys in restaurants, kiosk owners, transport agencies, tour package companies, photo studio owners, guides for trekking and adventure sports (such a paragliding, skiing and river rafting) and other people engaged in tourism related activities. While the average time frame for interviewing tourists ranged between 5-7 minutes, the interviews with government officials and NGOs lasted for between 30 minutes and an hour- long. And most importantly focus group discussions were conducted with local communities by categorizing them according to their gender and in age groups of 18-29, 30- 44, 45- 60 and 60 above. Life history interviews of local NGOs and other community based enterprises and cooperatives were also conducted.

The specific survey sites are-

Manali (town), Kullu District (primary), Himachal Pradesh (Primary)
Shimla (capital city) Himachal Pradesh

Kullu lies between north latitude 31°21’ and 32°26’ and east longitudes 76°59’ and 77°50’ comprises of the upper section of the ‘Beas valley’ coupled with a small piece of Sutlej valley towards the south. On the north, a high mountainous range separates it from the valley of Chenab that is part of Lahaul and on the east the high range separates it from Spiti. The alpine valley of Kullu, 80 km long 2 km wide with the river Beas bisecting it (Banon, 1952),

has now developed as one of the most prominent tourist corridors of the state of Himachal. Geographically, the Kullu valley begins from Aut (near Larzi) and closes at Manali, which has over the years become a popular tourist destination. Manali, is situated on the right bank of the river Beas, between latitude 32°15' 30'' and longitude 77°10' 35'' E at an average height of 18.29 meters. Mass tourism flourished in Kullu valley in the 1960s with Manali being a destination resort (Singh, 1989). This apart, Manali offers recreational activities and adventure sports to tourists such as trekking and mountaineering in the peaks of Deo-Tibba (6002m) Inderasan (6221 m), Mukerbhe (6069 m) Shikerkhe (6200 m), river rafting on the Beas to Jhiri, near Bajaura in Kullu, paragliding from hill tops of Bijli Mahadev, Rohtang Pass, Solang Nala coupled with skiing and heliskiing on Solang slopes (offered by private companies). The traditional tourist handicrafts of Kullu-Manali, such as the Himachali caps and shawls, woollen coats, jackets and blankets, wooden craft, and jewellery made from local stones have significantly contributed towards generating income opportunity for the locals. Hence locating the research at Manali, as a primary case study for an impact assessment study on tourism was considered a reasonable choice for field work.

Shimla, was also included as part of the fieldwork for the study to gather supplementary data from the State Department of Tourism and the Himachal Pradesh University and other libraries. This is prompted by the fact that Shimla was the British Summer Capital in the colonial times and since then has remained a fashionable tourist destination itself. Also, for the study on *Malana Cream* trade networks, the small hill village of Malana, Kullu district, and Kasol town, Himachal Pradesh were visited. Additionally, Delhi was toured to collect data on package tour operators and their modes of functioning to cater to tourist activities in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh.

iii) Data Analysis Process

The qualitative enquiry was confined to a three-pronged structure of a) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with the communities in the region, b) In Depth Interviews (IDIs) with the tourists and other Key Informants of the local communities, people who have led/been associated with local struggles in the region along with that of the tourism estate managers, government representatives at the state department of Tourism in Himachal and local NGO heads such as Mamta Chander, Ajay Sharma, Manshi Asher and by conducting c) Life History Interviews of mostly opinion leaders such as Guman Singh, Tashi Dorje, Sunny

Sharma and others coupled with those of community based co-operatives for tourism related products such as *Bhuttico* and other local micro-credit savings cooperatives as deemed suitable in the context of the study.

The proceedings of the FGDs, IDIs and Life History Interviews was then recorded verbatim and transcribed on a computer system. Subsequently both Content and Thematic Analysis were done with the captured information on the aspects of patterns of perceivable change that has taken place with regard to natural resource use and management versus livelihood dilemmas and on steps taken by the government towards handling the 'pollution crisis' in the region. While Thematic analysis refers to finding common themes and patterns that repeatedly came up in interviewee responses in qualitative terms especially for FGDs, content analysis basically entails a quantitative technique to finding key words and phrases that on isolation indicated the major focus of the discussions recorded in vivo done during the initial phases of coding process for IDIs. For instance, while doing thematic analysis, repeated 'themes' such as carrying capacity and environmental pollution concerns that arose out of the FGDs not only helped develop arguments but enriched the dataset in terms of both 'thick descriptions' and a critical realist way of demonstrating direct links with evidence from the partiicipant's lived realities to support the assumed connections I had attempted to build, when linking tourism interfaces with environment.

Finally, the analysed information was subjected to ethnographic assay for drawing conclusions. The findings thereafter were interpreted and further analyzed to arrive at concluding the research making certain observations of cardinal salience regarding the changing pattern of tourism and the way in which natural resource use gains meaning especially in the context of environmental degradation and the way the politics of 'collective sustenance' is played out in the contemporariness of 'globalizing institutions.'

Since my main focus remains understanding the ways in transformations had taken place post globalization in the hills to re-structure individual and community identities, I used FGDs for local communities in the villages to allow for a dialogue between people and probed where necessary on the questions of livelihood and income generation activities they were engaged in and found themselves impacted by. Issues of risks and rewards were also discussed in detail, the data from which were subsequently used to intersect the discourse of tourism, development and environment in generating answers to the research question. I also engaged

them in a discussion of gender and economic activity to locate the ways in which women's participation is recognized both in terms of earning and in shaping community identity as agents of change in their performance of collective action and sustenance. Since the 'field' in question is a relatively patriarchal space, I purposely segregated male and female respondents for FGDs so that the voices of the women are not silenced easily.

Short interviews for tourists to map out their touring patterns, interests of leisure, activities they perform coupled with the time of arrival and departure were recorded to generate information on questions of seasonality and to look at motivations guiding travel today. I use IDIs to interview NGOs and other tourism department office bearers to generate data on the way each of them view the essence of tourism development and related activities as both income generating and detrimental to the hill topography. Life History Interviews of community co-operatives and other opinion leaders involved directly in campaigning against large scale tourism development activities were also done to track when and how local protests have shaped survival mechanisms and lead collective action in the face of risks. I therefore use all of the stake holders' perspectives in bringing them in a conversation to constructing the 'tourist space' in the hills through a further application of the theoretical understanding that is generated both in terms of concepts and frameworks used in the study as well as the underlying power dynamics that emerges from an interaction of all of the aforesaid categories to shaping the idea of collective sustenance that is both risky and rewarding.

While employing the aforementioned tools and techniques, certain ethical codes of conduct were practised to ensure a rigorous, transparent and honest process of conducting research. Utmost care was taken to minimize personal biases on the research and the subjects of inquiry, the respondents were treated with respect and presented in the study in a non-judgemental fashion. Gate-keepers were also treated with utmost caution and constant triangulation was carried out to check for inconsistencies in narratives. Furthermore, the research tries to eliminate the biases inherent in politics of representation and check for silences and manipulations at all levels of collection and processing of data. Also, while some aspects of data collection were straightforward, it was difficult to obtain certain other kinds of data partially because the research engaged with illegal and illicit trade networks.

4.1 Cultural Ecology Method in Political Economy Analysis

Taking a cue from an anthropological approach, I use 'cultural ecology' as a methodological tool to understand how the adaptation of a culture to its environment leads to certain changes in culture. In the scope of the study, the cultural ecology approach helps understand the ways in which 'community' culture evolves with respect to coping strategies they employ when subjected to a specific environment. The earlier scholars like Steward (1955), perceived of environment and culture as not distinct categories but as engaged in a continuous dialectic interplay that he refers to as 'reciprocal causality' or feedback. Kaplan and Manners (1972: 79) stretched the idea to state that the relative influence of environment and culture in a feedback relationship is not equal. While culture becomes a more dominating factor sometimes, environment plays an important role in other cases. This is to say that neither environment nor culture are a given and that each is defined in terms of the other. Steward also points out that some sectors of culture have a tendency to form strong environmental bonds than others and the ecological analysis approach may be used to understand cross-cultural parallels within a specific 'cultural core.' His (1955: 37) understanding of this 'culture core' that comprises the economic sector- the characteristics that mostly relate to subsistence activities and economic arrangements is one of the important analytical tools that is used to dissect the research question. For Bassett & Zimmerer (2003: 98), this 'nature-culture core' has been central to identifying and analyzing the new millennium's "concerns for environmental degradation and planning, conservation, biodiversity, indigenous knowledge, and the multiple ways in which communities manage natural resources, shape landscapes, and struggle over resource access and control." I use this 'nature-culture core' for understanding the networks of exchanges in Chapter 7, because it is constituted of "interacting dialectical processes" of culture and "consciousness" in relation to domestic and political economy on the one hand while on non-human 'entities' and the environment on the other (Zimmerer & Young, 1998: 5).

While some recent scholars of cultural ecology (Sutton & Anderson, 2004; Baumgartner *et al.*, 2008) tend to focus on economic strategies used by particular cultures in site-specific case studies in tackling contemporary ecological problems in adapting to their immediate environment, others (Lapka *et al.*, 2012) focus on the interconnectedness of the issues of poverty, environmental degradation and loss of freedom within the broader framework of

cultural ecology. For the latter scholars (Wu and Hobbs 2002; Naveh, 2000; Soukup, 2010), an integrative approach is the key to a "holistic, comparative and interdisciplinary" and therefore more refined research. For Baumgartner *et al. (2008),* cultural ecology is driven by both *cognitive* (describing the world) and *action interests* (managing the world as it should be) also, as Hirst (2018) points out, modern cultural ecology draws on elements of even political ecology including the consequences of power relation and conflicts in the environment to understanding the range of human interactions[73] to make sense of our lived realities. Therefore, cultural ecology (contrary to its earlier perceptions) does recognize 'culture' as an evolutionary idea which brings in a multi-linear rather than a uni-linear approach to understanding social and cultural change as a consequence of environmental stress.

The cultural ecology approach goes hand in hand with the political economy analysis since the latter depends heavily on analyzing the interrelationships between environment and technology (productive/exploitative) that governs behavior patterns in a specific cultural context. Earlier scholars like Vayda and Rappaport (1968) have gone on to extend the idea further to imply a network of ritual, ideology and technology that interact with each other and has a feedback on community behavior and subsistence. However, Lapka *et al.* (2012: 20) have maintained that, technology and economy are not completely capable of determining the relationship between humans and their environment since it is circumscribed by a "very complex cultural system of interlinked material artefacts, norms, values, ideas and other manifestations of human enterprise."

Also, drawing upon Geertz's (1963) system theory allows for an analysis of mutual causality between elements in a system and it is by drawing upon this complex network analysis that the study attempts to be enriched. Furthermore, changes in the system, lead to various kinds of adaptation techniques been explored. Hardesty's (1977: 24) version of such adaptation include provision of basic solutions to environmental problems, improvement of the efficacy of the solutions, better adaptability to changing conditions and thereafter providing better awareness to tackling environmental problems. However, adaptation should not be confused with adjustment since they entail distinct processes. 'Adaptation' may be referred to as processes that include a population's capacity to organize and alter itself in accordance with

[73] See Lesley Head's (2007) *Cultural ecology: the problematic human and the terms of engagement*, Sage publications

the habitat, while adjustment in cultural terms could indicate as in Cohen's words (1968:57) "homeostatic changes that occurs within a society at a given level of adaptation; these changes result in a better 'fit' or articulation between the groups technology and its institutions, ideologies, and customary behaviour. Stretching this idea further, modern day cultural ecology understands that any successful coping behavior in relation to environmental stress commands the transfer of knowledge from science to society and culture through an integration of the new knowledge, values, norms and ideas injected into culture. As Lapka *et al.* (2012: 22) go on to state that the core of the cultural change does not lie in the science or the technology but in "the values and behavior of each single individual, sharing both culture and nature with the others." Hence, this dynamics of adaptation is delved into, in order to make sense of coping mechanisms by 'communities' in the context of exploitation and use of natural resources for the case study region.

Guillet's (1983) model on the cultural ecology of the mountainous regions in terms of specific elements that adaptation entails- such as " a) array of vertical production zones, each characterized by a complex interaction of variables including agriculture regimes, social organization, stratification, land tenure, labour organization and level of productivity, b) choice by the population of a production strategy and c) potential for change in the strategy depending on other endogenous and exogenous factors provides a stepping stone in understanding adaption for sustenance in hills. The interactions of climate, soil fertility and altitude thus have known to be determining features for agriculture, pastoralism and other kinds of subsistence activities. Other factors of zonation however, also have a feedback on the way in which populations adapt to mountainous environment and negotiate livelihood opportunities. Furthermore, higher visitation rates for tourism in mountains also impacts the sensitive eco-system, its culture and ways of adaptation thus calling for a multi-dimensional analysis of the relationships between humans and the nature surrounding them to identify the drivers of change (Carter and Beeton, 2004; Wilson et al. 2018; Satz et al. 2013). In the study, the functional elements of cultural adaptation is analyzed to look for dependencies on the informal operations that run as ancillary industries to the tourism sector (such as the adventure sports industry and the Malana Cream trade) as a means for collective sustenance in the hills.

4.2 Navigating a new space

As Hall (1990: 225) notes,

> "Cultural identity… is a matter of 'becoming' as well as 'being.' It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power… identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past."

This idea of 'being' and 'becoming' marks a transcendence that further brings out the essence of temporality shaping specific positionalities created as a result of cultural exchanges between people over time. It is in this context that Appadurai's (1996: 33) notion of the 'scapes' as I use in my work in terms of referring to spaces in the hills as 'hillscapes' injects the additional dimension of positioning specific spaces.

Engaging in ethnography for early anthropologists (Malinowski 1922; Mead 1928; Radcliffe-Brown 1930; Levi-Strauss 1948) was synonymous with voyages that were difficult to undertake and landscapes that were known very little about. In this sense, the act of performing travel ethnographies meant a symbolic 'rite to passage' for the ethnographer (Novoa, 2015). However, it has been a relatively recent phenomenon that 'mobile ethnography'[74] as a concept has developed about a decade ago (Sheller & Urry, 2004). The reason probably being the new meaning attached to conducting a travelling ethnography, the operative word being 'mobile' where, as Cresswell (2006: 25) argues, "if something can be said to be fluid, dynamic, in flux, or simply mobile, then it is seen to be progressive, exciting, and contemporary," whereas "is something is said to be rooted, based on foundations, static, or bounded, then it is seen to be reactionary, dull, and of the past." Unlike in the days of early anthropologists such as Mead and Malinowski, the world as we know today has come to be a much more 'mobile' space where people have the capacity to easily access locales earlier

[74] Refers to ethnography done 'on the move' especially conducted for multi-sited research in a short span of time and is useful to study mobile phenomena or mobile populations.

considered as remote or difficult to commence journeys to. Mobile ethnography therefore is not limited in its scope to a niche space and offers possibilities for spaces to be explored with much more mobility than in the past, because it inherently implies a continuous process of displacement that the travelling ethnographer undertakes.

As a mobile ethnographer, I locate my navigation practices in the body of work proposed by George Marcus (1995, 1998), who popularized the concept of a multi-sited ethnography and more recently in that of Sheller and Urry (2004). Marcus's notion of ethnographic practice was fluid enough to encompass the gamut of 'people, things, ideas, metaphors and biographies' that constantly sought to get a better hold of the ever- growing mobile world. As Karen O'Reilly's further observes (2009: 144), "in the context of increased global interconnectivity, and mobility of people, objects and ideas, ethnographers are taking their methodology to multiple and mobile places and spaces." An inclination to performing mobile ethnography thus took shape in the mid 90s and was rehabilitated in the works of Sheller and Urry (2004) as 'it' acquired a new flavour through an emphasis on 'mobility' with the 'new mobilities paradigm' proposed by them. In this work, they discuss the significance of new spaces and technologies that act differentially to both enhance mobility for some and cripple mobility for some others depending on the politics that encircles bodies being transported from one place to the other.

Sheller and Urry (2004) also talk of the 'cosmopolitanization of taste' that has had further repercussions for the transport of consumer products globally, including 'massive flows' of illegal material such as guns, drugs, cigarettes, alcohol and other counterfeit and pirated articles. This paradigm calls for a better analysis of the politics of mobility and in turn capacitates a well- grounded understanding on consumer choices and holidaying. This 'new mobilities paradigm' in conducting mobile ethnography also acts as a bridge between transport research and social science research by weaving in elements of social and political experiences into relationships established through travel, transportation and communication furthered by better access and better mobility. The reason why I chose mobile ethnography as a methodological position, is to work more cost- effectively around a space I wanted to explore in a short span of time, considering the time constraints of the doctoral study. Rather than spending a lot of time in one area or a particular village to observe community interfaces with tourism, deeply over a period of time, I chose to move around the town and its

surrounding villages along the hills to cover a range of tourism related activities and community responses within the time I had at hand.

The *sedentarist*[75] tendencies in social science research methods needed to be countered with an approach that recognised systematic movements of people who in pursuit of either leisure or work, commenced travel with the expansion of the automobile industry. This marked a shift from the earlier focus on the idea of residence that normalised stability and trivialised change and distance as realm of the abnormal. With this shift in outlook, urban studies began to recognise speed and metabolism, shrinking of distances both social and physical owing to a diminution of social space and did away with the mundane stagnant celebration of territorial nationalism[76]. The way forward for social method to handle the ever- modernizing growing urban landscape found refuge in the 'mobility' discourse. For Sheller (2004) the growth of the automobile industry had its ramifications not only on 'local public spaces' but also affected 'gendered subjectivities' by creating new possibilities for social and familial networks to develop and spatially altering the idea of the neighbourhood coupled with fashioning urban aspirations and travel as a whole. It is the very approach that stressed on the multifaceted nature of socio-political and economic linkages that run through the workings of transport and communication networks and thereby establish a mobile political economy of trade and travel which I explore in my work. Tsing (2002: 472) further stretched this notion to refer to a possibility of not just blurring the borders of terrains as spatially bound geographic entities and bearers of social processes but negotiating logic of proximities in a local- global scale by trailing the 'rhetoric of scale.'[77] This rhetoric of scale has in my work prompted my choice of sites and further contributed to a critical appreciation of the comparisons I engaged in with respect to framing my arguments in terms of the local (Manali, Malana) – global (markets) which I see as a transnational spectrum.

The concept of 'liquid modernity' as Bauman (2000) suggests helps break away from the static monolithic structures of the past and in developing ideas around the way in which

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[75] See Martin Heidegger 's (2005: 103) "Building Dwelling Thinking," in Neil Leach, ed. Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory, Routledge: London
He talks of '*wohnen'* while referring to place of dwelling, where one resides at peace and finds contentment by being 'at home.'
[76] See Kaplan D.H. (1999) "Territorial Identities and Geographic Scale" available online at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247713264_Territorial_Identities_and_Geographic_Scale accessed last on 2 December, 2018
[77] Refers to a metaphor implying the dissolving of the micro-macro distinctions of geographical boundaries by going beyond the visual imagery of 'terrains' as water tight containers for social change.

people, machines and things acquire social qualities in a web of social, political and economic movements that take place continuously. This marks a shift from the earlier notions of modernity that spoke of its character as 'solid' and heavy towards one that is 'liquid' or fluid, where the defining feature happens to be the 'velocity' with which things move from one space to the other. This in turn is reflected in the literature on *nomadic* theory (contrary to *sendentarist* perspectives prescribed by the likes of Heidegger as already mentioned) that studies motion and travel both physically as well as metaphorically. While travelling through the hillscapes of the Himachal, I personally relate to this aspect of 'speed' playing out as an extremely powerful force accelerating the dynamic process of moving or shifting from one place to another that I engage in myself (both as a researcher and as a tourist). Some of these metaphors further themselves 'travel' through geographically bounded spaces cutting across terrains and even across research disciplines (Braidotti, 1994; Cresswell 2002; Urry, 2000). This appears in subtle ways in the method of *flanerie* (Baudelaire, 1964) and 'deep hanging out' (Geertz, 1998) I practise as part of my ethnography which I later discuss in the upcoming sections. Also, the 'right' to travel and the capacity to navigate is circumscribed by the uneven power configurations that manifests differentially in differing contexts and spaces. These politically charged power outfits as Tsing (2002: 462) describes, drives "the material and institutional infrastructure" of these movements thereby offering the scope for an analysis of economic and political behaviour that either limit or promote the 'circulation rhetoric' which ultimately seeks to explain the logic of circulation of people and things in an interconnected world. I tend to enmesh this 'logic of circulation' in tourism play by placing it in the body of the actor-network theory to understanding the layered linkages between the actors and networks that both produce and are produced by differential power equations ultimately resulting in uneven distribution of resources and defining the political economy of a given space, in my case the tourism- heavy hillscapes of Himachal. It is therefore useful to learn from Skeggs (2004: 49) that,

> "Mobility and control over mobility both reflect and reinforce power. Mobility is a resource to which not everyone has an equal relationship."

This understanding of mobility situates itself in the discourses of power and access where I borrow from the "new mobilities paradigm" (Sheller & Urry, 2004) that takes upon itself the task of further locating the fulcrum of mobile contexts, that evolve through the performance

of travel and tourism interlaced with the other socio- technical process that surrounds it. The act of mobilising place-based identities (Fortier, 2000; Tolia- Kelly, 2006) may then be thought of as an off- shoot of mobile context building, a process that entails identities to be transported elsewhere, strengthening the relationship between global- local enterprises having had inherent 'power- geometries' in the very foundations of such movements. This applies to my enquiry into the very essence of Malana crème, that is known for its place- based identity in terms of the relationality it is automatically ascribed with, rooted into a very specific locale (the village Malana) but exhibits a transcendental character in terms of its global purchase by not only fashioning a desire of its consumption outside of the locale it originally belongs to, but by physically establishing its presence in the global markets. As Germann Molz suggests (2006), these movements both in the physical and the metaphorical realm predicates a source of power and status for the object or the person making the movement. Lassen (2006) in his framing of the '*aeromobile* elite' points to the privileges that come into play while showing the interconnectedness of systems in 'network sociality' that affirms dependencies in these fluid movements of people, things and services. These dependencies for Wittel (2001: 69) translates to, "cars, trains, buses and the underground, of airplanes, taxis and hotels, and it is based on phones, faxes…" and so on; those of modernity's gifts. Axhausen also (2002) draws up a list of necessary implements for successfully carrying out such networking that include, "a car or the budget for taxis, budget and access for long-distance travel, location- free contact points" while Shove (2002) points out the need for enough time and support to manage all of these components with ease. All these dependencies therefore reflect on the needs of a modern urban comfortable experience of travel, which in turn impacts tourist footfalls.

The act of travelling to occur today thus requires many stretched out interconnected networks of modern urban living that which are arranged and channelized through 'nodes' of mobility that choreograph new forms of social and political life that builds around them. These nodes for instance are seen operating through airports, bus and railway stations, motorways, leisure and recreational complexes, public plazas, parks, hotels, restaurants, bars, pubs coupled with the infamous dens and back- alleyways, 'underground' spaces where illicit/ illegal exchanges of goods and services take place. While the nodes through which transparent interactions and movements take place in broad daylight are what Lassen (2002) calls smooth 'corridors,' the

dark side of movements and exchanges produce ‘smart mobs’[78] as Rheingold (2002) proposes. It is these negotiations in dark and illicit, that calls for a re- definition of the social networks that are established in the interplay of the ‘shadows’ (Nordstrom, 2000) and the ever- expansive market of illegal goods even in the wake of ‘risks’ (Beck, 1992) that predicate it. These networks however do not perform unilinearly in vacuum, but rather cut across complex intersectional nodes placed in a multitude of socio-political and economic realities that continuously shape and re-shape these movements of goods and people. Drawing from Law (2006), it is these ‘endless regimes of flow’ that function in differing scales, ranges, velocities and scope that my enquiry into the networks of illicit transactions of the Malana crème is rooted.

The act of traveling and getting transported from one place to the other is by itself not a process that is meaningful in terms of a journey to the destination but one that inherently active by itself. It is the ‘occasioned’ (Lyons & Urry, 2005) activities ‘on the move’ that define the nature and experience of each of the different modes of travel and thereby constitute the sociability of ‘dwelling-in-motion’ (Featherstone et al, 2004) such as long journeys commenced in cars, ships, aeroplanes etc. A range of activities that are undertaken during travel, such as talking, gathering information while travelling, stopping to shop or eat, engaging in some way with fellow travellers; all combine to the making of a social space with a moving presence of sociability intertwined in travel by default. This is also true of my long bus journeys on private buses packed with tourists from Delhi to Manali, where I would regularly chat with my co-passengers (especially families) and get off with them at roadside *dhabas* and share the table with them. The mobilities discourse therefore enables one to rethink the dead assumption that ‘actors are able to do only one things at a time’ (Hannam et al. 2006: 13) and that events follow one another in a one- directional manner. It is extremely useful to turn to Callon et al (2004) for identifying ‘presence’ in apparent absence in this regard. The explicit difference between the traveller and the spaces to where the travel ultimately finds resolve in, needs to be problematized further. Although the automatic assumption of fixity is associated with a space and that of mobility ascribed to a traveller, it is only practical that these categories be delved deep into. Water- tight compartmentalisation does not help in conceptualising the idea of travel. Places and people are better understood in their interconnected relationalities that take place through performances (Hannam et al, 2006:

[78] Refers to people who use digital or mobile communication systems and the internet to organize action in the social, cultural, economic or political spheres sometimes even knowing each other.

13) since a majority of such performances are "intermittently mobile within the destination place itself". For me, the travel I undertook in many ways led to this blurring of the boundaries of journey and the spaces I initially imagined as my site (destination) because the spaces I was exploring, were in parallel, attaining a 'mobile' character in themselves through the material interactions that I realised are engaged with it on an everyday level with a variety of people. Places act as dynamic entities within which a series of performances take shape at specific intervals of time. The point of travel is not merely to get to a destination but an experience that involves an amalgamation of "materialities" and "mobilities" that brings socialities, objects and technologies under one umbrella by encouraging a reflection into a journey that goes beyond the restricted perimeters of spaces (destinations) by stretching liminalities of presence and 'being' as part of travel. The essence of travel therefore rests in experiencing this journey, which for me had opened up a new direction in terms of exploring the landscape through a "vision in motion"[79] in Himachal.

The idea of "moving with" and to be able to "be moved by" (Büscher et al, 2011: 1) therefore form the spirit of travel for me. As opposed to traditional methods of doing ethnography by participant observation in a setting thought of as a fixed spatially bound category, my method of doing field work dealt with exploring mobile subjectivities all along and allowing myself to experience fleeting moments and transient socialscapes produced by the mobilities of performances of actors and networks. 'Shadowing' (Czarniawska, 2007), following people on their way to the wheat and corn fields including apple orchards, walking with them along the spiralling hilly strips and of mountains both in Manali and Malana, and more generally imitating them in their ritual practices of everyday enabled me to experience more than what participant observation meant to do. As Büscher et al (2011: 13) emphasises,

> "inquires on the move- such as shadowing, stalking, walk- alongs, ride- alongs, participatory interventions and biographies we describe- enable questions about sensory experience, embodiment, emplacement, about what changes and what stays the same, and about the configuration and reconfiguration of assembles of objects, spaces, people, ideas and information."

[79] See M. Büscher's (2002) "Vision in motion," *Environment and Planning A* (38), pp 281-299

The significance of ‘being there’ in the truest sense of the term as implied in methodologies that study mobile subjectivities and relationalities between objects and subjects in a network, is critical as a method to sociological enquiry for what it does is to ‘place oneself into another’s shoe’ for a better understanding of the dynamic exchanges and fluid movements that occur. For Fincham et al (2010: 5), ‘being there’ translates to a better grasp of “mobilities in situ”, which subsequently presupposes moving along with people. While some disapprove on grounds of imagined biases that might form, engaging emotionally and participating in the everyday lives of the (otherwise objects of enquiry) people and communities has in my case made possible not just dry interviews to take place but created possibilities of social engagement that has enriched my social and political vocabulary and ‘being’ as a whole. It is this “co-presence” that allows for a mutual appreciation leading to a better involved perspective and development practice that goes beyond mere observation. While there are a range of techniques that may be employed in practising mobile ethnography depending on the scale and frame of context, it may also involve travel to far away locales with people who make such journeys as part of their sustenance. The concept of ‘far away’ however applies very differently to the urban experiences of commute (like in my case) compared to the hills (Himachal in this case), where people tend to conceptualise distances in a much shorter way than people in the cities do. This is probably owing to the nature of travel that they are used to even in relatively large spatial settings and that their everyday sustenance entails, making them experience distance differentially. Whatever the case may be, mobile ethnography offers a much broader scope to grasp social life in its entirety by engaging deeper into the ways in which movements of people and things produce meanings out of their mobilities at the same time analysing the pathways for ‘dwelling in motion’ and the ways in which these movements affect their habits, practices and behaviour. Even when I was engaged theoretically in drawing a comparison between two periods of time in the scope of my study (pre-liberalisation and post- liberalisation phases of the Indian economy) that transformed the character of Manali, the issue of mobility featured consistently as that fluid movement which almost carried the past and merely did some shape changes into modelling it in the way we see it today.

4.3 Negotiating Access

Simplistically speaking, access to any given space depends on the socio-political dynamics that charge relationalities between the one who seeks access and the one who provides so. In conducting ethnography, negotiating access becomes a key means to reaching objects and subjects of investigation in gathering data and making them respond to the various kinds and modes of enquiry. A power play is however inherent in the very structure of these negotiations despite efforts, researchers and participants, alike take to minimising these power differentials and flatten it to one level. Otherwise peaceful 'presence' may sometimes be mediated by certain other specific kinds of disharmonious 'presence' during navigation of a space that at times leads to tensions by exerting power. These may manifest in subtle forms of silent tensions, verbal disputes or even in outright clashes to the point of even stopping access to a space. Therefore, what is interesting to comment here is that negotiations of power between all the multi-tiered categories of people and things shape the politics of 'spatialities' that further steer moulding the very nature of access to spaces. There is almost no escape from 'power' in this sense, even in apparent peaceful contexts. Any kind of exchange thus involves an inherent power differential that predicates the very nature of that exchange. For a metropolitan city dweller like myself, the experience of negotiating access to certain kinds of spaces in the hills of Himachal has been different in different settings and for the different individuals or community groups I engaged with during my field study.

The grand landscape of Himachal, the topography I chose as my 'field', dotted with tall mountains, rocky hills and gurgling rivers and rivulets, although picturesque in its appeal, had a number of constraints in terms of physical access from one place to the other within its limits. Local buses are almost always overloaded with people during most part of the day owing to the fact that people were commuting between markets to either buy or sell their wares or do work in the axillary industries of tourism that constitutes selling shawls, adventures sports along the riverbeds and in Solang valley and Gulaba. Also since hiring cars and taxis are an expensive way to travel across markets, towns and nearby villages most people tend to walk long distances in the hills. While relatively short distances were manageable with the *autorickshaws* that ply primarily in the Manali town, walking long distances alone along the bending hilly tracks initially was a challenging and an alienating experience. Eventually I began to not just appreciate the sights and sounds around me during

the act of walking or travelling but tried to interact with almost anyone and everyone I saw around me by consciously calling out to them simply for directions to a place, asking them about their travel and about their everyday which instantaneously sparked off a conversation that has contributed to drawing meaningful conclusions and analogies. While there were physical difficulties in terms of accessing the remote locales of the hills I chose to base my investigation within, there were certain privileges that I was offered owing to my identity of an urban woman trying to study a specific hilly population in some instances. The fact that I was engaged in research at a 'foreign' university (a privileged place of residence for them) automatically had its effect on the local people who instantly identified me as a possible ally through whom they could push forward their interests and convey their grievances to the higher authorities. My apparent positioning in their eyes in turn led to the treatment they meted out towards me. Even in the case where interviews with government officials in the tourism department and the district level office were difficult to obtain owing to a bureaucratic difficulty of access, I was able to much easily obtain appointments and given in-depth interviews on the merit of the university card that I carried to these places. I for the sake of my research used this 'positioning' of me that I played along with the imagined 'elite' identity I was ascribed to. This in turn guaranteed my easy access physically to specific spaces such as *sarkari* (governmental) offices such as the tourism departments in Himachal, (specifically Kullu and Manali), the marketing offices of the State Tourism Board in Manali, the District Magistrate's office including getting interviews with various mid-level government officers and office bearers.

Dressing also formed a key method in the process of gathering data all through the length of my field study in Himachal. Dressing appropriately during each phase of fieldwork was crucial for me to obtaining the desired outcomes in terms of the merit of the responses. The iconic picture of Margaret Mead (1928) dressed in the costume of an American Samoa 'islander' where she based her ethnographic work in the South Pacific Islands, was a major influence for me and was useful to recollect during my engagement in both ethnography and interviews. Dressing differently for different respondents proved as an interesting method since it generated 'real' responses owing to the fact that familiarity and resemblance almost always produce a resonance that is essential to a truer reflection of one's/ collective's thoughts, behaviour and practices. While I would wear a simple *salwar kameez* (a commonly worn Indian dress for women), a sweater and a *shawl* (owing to the cold weather) when I went to the villages in and around Manali, I chose to wear a very different kind of clothing

for my appointments with the state government officials which tended to be more formal and comprised of wearing an overcoat on top. This provided a context for formal interactions and for me and my interviews to be taken ‘seriously.’ In my negotiations with the other service providers of tourism and vendors of ‘illicit’ commodities, the way I dressed was quintessentially different from how I would usually dress on field to meet the rest of the others. I would intentionally wear skirts with flairs, baggy pants and lose shirts bought from the local shops in Kasol to look my part as a prospective ‘hippie’ client. This technique I felt broke the ice by providing a comfort of familiarity that acted as a conversation starter and my initial apprehensions disappeared with more people opening- up to me. In my understanding, dressing acts as a means to better connection and communication owing to the associative capacity it has, and where identification of people and things are woven together in the everyday imagination and constructed images of social life. Further, in my personal experience of the field, dressing in each of the aforementioned instances unveiled a politics of expression and made possible enquiries into the nature of perceptions vis-à-vis unleashing the dynamics of ‘elitism’, power play and issues of access that fashioned such perceptions in the first place. To look at myself critically as the ‘tourist other’ was also made possible in the way I negotiated my access in terms of ‘dressing’ and my own everyday performances of a variety of conscious and semi- conscious political choices I made in specifics contexts.

4.4 Politics of Language & Consent

The notion of ‘informed consent’ is a necessary corollary for conducting interviews and focus group discussions for any research nowadays. Generally, the potential informants are required to be furnished with all the relevant details of the research undertaken before they are asked to formally consent to participating in an enquiry, and that their consent should not be coerced but voluntary. While the question of informed consent is taken very seriously across all disciples of research, some social science researchers recommend a well negotiated and open- minded approach to getting informed consent. For instance, Michael Parker (2007) calls for an ‘informed bioethics’ drawing from the bio-medical model of research ethics in the negotiation of consent. He further (2007: 2254) stretches the concept of liminality to state that, researches are “standing on the threshold between two worlds” when they perform research and when they “enter the field.” This process of “duplexity” reflects the method by

which researchers negotiate knowledge production and research ethics which are mediated through their interactions with the informants or participants.

This ‘duplexity’ especially plays out in interesting ways in instances where a language barrier influences the interaction between the informants and the researcher which is finally mediated through a ‘language’ that is symbolically representative of meanings that form the base of enquiry. While in my otherwise negotiations of the field, Hindi was a commonly known and spoken language which I happen to be fluent in, the villages around Manali (such as Buruwa and Shanag, where I based myself for a substantial period of time) used a local dialect of *Pahari* which although was much akin to Hindi, had some words that were completely different from Hindi with a striking similarity with *Gaddi* (a language spoken by the shepherd community in Himachal) and with some influence of *Punjabi* and *Rajasthani* in everyday speech. Interestingly, the local communities in the relatively rural spaces surrounding Manali as well interlaced their everyday speech with some words borrowed from even English. Despite minor difficulties in comprehending some words of this eclectic concoction of the local *Himachali* language initially, I began to gradually comprehend their meanings as I continued to engage with the communities on an everyday basis, as the case probably is with all language learning. In case of the Malana village however, there were real challenges in verbal communication in some instances. Although some in the village, especially most of the younger generation of the local *Malanese* people knew the hybrid form of Hindi and Pahari popular in and around Manali and Kasol, the village elders spoke *Kanashi* (the local language for Malana and one that is not known or spoken by anyone outside of the village) which had to be translated by some of the younger people for me to make sense of, while I was engaging in questioning or during the course of our discussions about their social life.

While formal consent sheets could not be signed in such instances and people grew sceptical of what their signatures on pieces of printed paper entailed, an agreed and informed consent was achieved through a simple gesture that they made with their head and hands showing approval. Many of them offered their formal consent to me writing about their everyday lives at the very end of the discussions they already participated in, while a few others chose to simply walk away with a frown. The problem with getting consent sheets signed arose owing to the fact that most of the villagers did not know how to read Hindi and did not completely trust the translators’ or my intentions initially and began to think of me as a representative of

the state. Hence the initially adopted strategy of handing out consent forms straightaway before engaging with them at any level had to be changed. I had to organically start speaking and engaging with them like an average tourist and then gradually make my research intentions clear by resonating with their angsts first and then subtly nudge them towards reflecting on issues that concern their environment and livelihoods having finally succeeded in obtaining consent. However, some aspects of my ethnography also involved taking photographs (discretely) of illicit exchanges of Malana Crème without the knowledge of the parties involved in the transaction. This was not intended to harm an individual or community but simply to substantiate the nature and 'feel' of such exchanges. The photographs that I have shared in the research have the faces of individuals in question removed or blurred deliberately so that the identity of these persons may be strictly protected and not revealed.

The question of language politics is also intrinsically operative at each stage of questioning, translation and emanation of responses as Rampton et al. (2004: 2) suggests,

> "language and the social world are mutually shaping, and that close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday activity."

The structuring of social life around language (although not a rare phenomenon) manifests in interesting ways in the Malana village. Karrebaek and Charalambous (2017: 4) having point out that, "language is regarded as a contextualised system and understood and studied in context; conversely, language shapes, constrains and influences social meanings," go on to stress on the need to evaluate the roots of these contexts of interaction and processes of meaning- making that occur owing to the inherent linkages between social life and language instead of assuming this reciprocal relation at face value. What this evaluation therefore does is to direct towards a better understanding of historically produced social structures such as crystallisation of race and notions of ethnicity that are further reproduced through 'language play' (in terms of everyday mundane talk) in communities' interaction amongst their own members and with the ones 'external' to them. This is particularly visible in the Malanese context, where people of the village centralise on their identity, social being and performances in the very roots of culture shaped by the distinctness of their language. The way in which this 'language' play on the one hand maintains the status quo of the Malanese people by preserving their distinct culture confined to their community and village and on the

other separates the ‘outsiders’ by desperately maintaining checks in order for the language to not be transmitted to people ‘external’ to their world, is fascinating for an ethnographic observer such as myself.

In my everyday exchanges with the villagers of Malana, I began to thus look closely into the semantics and semiotics of language play I was both witnessing and part of because of my interactions with them, where the verbal language played an insignificant role to play in terms of me comprehending meanings of their social life. The formation and preservation of a distinct linguistic community that has remained relatively unstained by ‘external’ influences such the villagers of Malana, happens to be a useful vignette to studying other such linguistically distinct ethnicities, where social life and language itself could be ‘felt’ and not just externally ‘acted out’ or in its literal sense be understood by plain speech.

There was also a conscious difference that I maintained all the while in terms of my performance of ‘language play’ I engaged in with the different kinds of people I was engaging with. This performance of ‘language play’ was essentially to commensurate with the nature and type of responses I was looking to explore and which varied across the different identities of people I was dealing with. For instance, the method and the language in which I engaged with the tourists in and around Manali was phenomenally very different from the ways in which I engaged with the state government officials in Himachal, and which differed from my interactions with the suppliers of tourism industry, such as the hotels and restaurant owners, shop owners and the transport and tour operators and the villagers in and around Manali.

Talking to tourists and sustaining conversations with them initially posed itself as a challenge and a number of interviews that I initially started with structured questionnaires failed half-way through the conversations, either because they seemed to get distracted and uninterested or had to leave suddenly because they had their touristy ‘things to do’. To get more focussed interviews, I had to change my strategy to a more organic and engaged approach which involved merely sparking off a conversation randomly but in a relatively more intimate setting where I could establish personal contact with them. In order to do this, I would often catch them relaxing or taking a break in between their physical activity of moving about, in cafés and restaurants. I did not use a printed questionnaire to fill out information on for the tourists, but after having sustained a conversation for a while, informed them of my

intentions of research and further sought consent on recording some of their reflections on tape. This then appeared a lot more comfortable for them owing to the informality of mood and setting that I was able to create through chatting casually, rather than handing out or recording responses onto physical questionnaires which limited the scope of engagement.

As far as my interactions with the government officials and locally based NGOs are concerned, I had to take prior appointments to get the in-depth interviews done all of which took place in their respective offices. I used structured questionnaires laced with both closed and open ended questions for broadening the scope of each of the responses. In most cases I was barred from recording the responses on tape but was encouraged to write them down as they spoke owing to the formality of the setting and the nature of my enquiry. In case of my dealings with the various service providers and suppliers of the tourism industry, such as the transport and tour operators, the local taxi associations, the adventure sports providers, I first came across as a 'tourist' to them. I deliberately played on this identity of 'being a tourist' and navigating the space to gather a tourist's point of view in micro-negotiations with the various venders of tourism. The fact that I was also viewed as a prospective client/ a buyer of goods and services played as an additional impetus for them to invest their time into my research.

4.5 Wandering and Flanerie

The essence of a 'wanderer' entails soaking in the sights and sounds of a space that s/he finds herself/ himself navigating in. While the lens s/he uses becomes a useful point of reference in carrying out the act of 'wandering', by representing the 'form' of such musing, the 'space' where this navigation takes place in becomes its significant other and as the classic 'content' by default. The act of navigating a new space also has an inherent politics of promenading involved that is complicated by a number of factors such as 'who' promenades, at 'which time, and for 'what purpose' all of which affect not just the exercise in navigation but generates certain kinds of stereotypes which further produce socio-cultural understandings of specific kinds of spaces.

Baudelaire's (1863) essay on the 'Painter of Modern Life' then becomes a starting point to exploring the essence of the *flâneur*. The *Flâneur* for him also enjoys his leisure anonymously. For Milburn, it is not so much the idea of the character of the *flâneur* per se

that is as important as the activity he engages in; *flânerie*. For him, the act of *flânerie* involving the essence of how the *flâneur* 'soaks in' from the surroundings happens to be sociologically more relevant rather "than for whom he is or what he looks like." It is in this context that Keith Tester (1994) talks of '*flânerie'* as that "skill for observation of the fleeting and the transitory which is the other half of modernity to the permanent and central sense of self." Chris Jenks' (1995) understanding of the '*flaneur'* in this context becomes an interesting entry point for me to locate my position in physically walking and strolling the space, which constituted the hillscapes of Himachal and specifically Manali and Manala that I performed the research within.

> "The *flâneur* is the spectator and depicter of modern life, most specifically in relation to contemporary art and the sights of the city. The *flâneur* moves through space and among the people with a viscosity that both enables and privileges vision… The *flâneur* possesses a power, it walks at will, freely and seemingly without purpose, but simultaneously with an inquisitive wonder and an infinite capacity to absorb the activities of the collective, - often formulated as 'the crowd.'

The idea of the '*flâneur'* is essentially one of a leisurely character who roves about aimlessly but remains open to sensory experiences of seeing, smelling, hearing and feeling that is involved in the simple act of strolling he engages in. I borrow from Kevin Milburn's (2010: 2) ideation of the *Flâneur*, 'who' for him "is a conflation of a person, a metaphor, a way of seeing and a way of expressing." Milburn goes on to state that the *flâneur* observes aspects of modernity "by setting up a vantage point to view, with something akin to a totalizing gaze, the metropolis- that most geographically overt manifestation of modernity." In the words of Benjamin (1983), "the *flâneur* was engaged in an archaeological process of unearthing the myths and collective dreams of modernity and not just observing urban life." While Mike Savage opined that Benjamin's work wasn't concerned with "delineating it as an actual social type which existed in specific urban historical settings, but as a theoretical, critical, counter to the idea of the mass," he stressed on the way in which signs, metaphors and illusions of modernity were better grasped with the *flâneur's* lens. In the very same vein Deborah Parsons, in her 'Streetwalking the Metropolis: Women, the City and Modernity' (2000) mention, spoke of the way in which *flâneur* and *flânerie* work as travelling metaphors that look at urban spaces and cities as texts waiting to be engraved, written, read and reread and

rewritten. Susan Buck-Morss, in her celebrated work 'The *Flâneur*, the Sandwichman and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering' (1986) is therefore useful to turn to for she suggests that,

> "It is the material culture of the city, rather than the psyche, that provides the shared collective spaces where consciousness and the unconscious, past and present, meet."

Walter Benjamin's (1983) reading of Baudelaire almost freezes the '*flâneur'* in time restricting its zone of performance quintessentially to 19th Century streets of Paris and there alone. It is this conception of the *flâneur* that chooses to altogether undermine its potential to be transported into a different part of the world at a different point of time. The fulcrum of contention in Baudelaire's picture of the '*flâneur'* is that he situates the character in his idea of 'modernity' that for him is inseparable with 19th Century Paris. The *flâneur* for Baudelaire is therefore constantly trying to make sense of the modernity that he finds himself been engulfed by as he reflects (1863: 403), "Modernity is the transient, the fleeting, and the contingent; it is one half of art, the other being the external and the immovable forms." Thus in essence, what the *flâneur* looks at ultimately is the emerging expressions of modernity. The idea is best summarised by Keith Tester (1994 :17), who believes that for Baudelaire, "modernity is the form and Paris "the content," where the *flâneur* is both the "figure and the point of observation that straddles the two and pulls them together into a unity." While both Tester and Benjamin (1983) in their submissions on *flâneur* talks of the specificity of it being possible only in the confines of the then city of Paris, to stretch it to a point where they both agree that *flânerie* has no contemporary pertinence and that if 'it' is posited elsewhere today, 'it' would seem general and 'historically rootless.'

However, the figure of the *flâneur* has been of interest to numerous social scientists, who have all attempted to explore 'its' meanings and locations in their own ways. Apart from merely positing the figure in 19th century Paris such as Walter Benjamin (1983) and Keith Tester (1994), David Frisby (2001) for instance, locates disguised or invisible forms of *flânerie* in developing social theory, while Zygmunt Bauman (1994) had come up with an extended treatise on modernity and post-modernity within which he situates the *flâneur* with Bruce Mazlish (1994) enunciating the practicality of Adam Smith's idea of 'the impartial spectator' in his reading of the *flâneur*. They all interrogate into whether women may have a similar footing with their 'male' counterparts in practising *flânerie* or whether they are

destined to be merely streetwalkers and take on specific roles especially when they manoeuver spaces after-dark. Others such as Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson (1994) and Janet Wolff (1985) have specifically enquired into the politics of gender and *flânerie* in this regard. Wolff (1985) mentions that *flâneuse* was not an exercise the 19th century women could partake in by further mentioning that there could be prostitutes, widows, lesbians or even murder victims out on the streets alone but that women from 'respectable' backgrounds could not stroll alone in the city. This is credited to Baudelaire's understanding of the *flâneur* that presupposes a masculine observer, one "who can reap aesthetic meaning and an individual kind of existential security from the spectacle of the teeming crowds- the visible public- of the metropolitan environment of the city of Paris." Notwithstanding the fact that the male gaze had led to this popular conception especially after dark hours, Frisby (1994) suggests, that *flânerie* practice puts into 'perspective' social life by offering a socially credible vantage point which is the observer's lens. In this sense women who physically roved public spaces after dark came to be viewed as 'objects' of exchange who by the virtue of 'modernity' had the liberty to wander at night but would be immediately categorised either as sex workers or as individuals robbed of their familial associations and lone women, such as widows, lesbians, trans-genders or even murder victims. Elizabeth Wilson (1995) in her work 'the invisible *flâneur*," mentions that some women from noble backgrounds also wandered the streets of Paris, and did so after having disguised themselves often as males because of the associated implications of social labelling and other more serious dangers of gender based violence. It is also interesting to note that these cultural remnants of 19th Century Paris continue to plague societies world over, especially in the developing countries even to this day. Women and other disadvantaged groups have however, responded to this cultural inertia and protested the unjust treatment meted out to them unfairly on the basis of gender through a number of dialogues and civil society movements. Two world-wide movements named 'SlutWalk' (2011) and 'Take Back the Night'[80] have been crucial to not only protesting gender based violence and victim blaming because of sheer choice of attire by appropriating the identity of the 'slut,' a colloquial word for a prostitute and not only carry out group marches on streets but also occupy spaces after dark that were otherwise considered the

[80] Having had its roots in a brutal incident of stabbing and murder of a micro-biologist by the name of Susan Alexander Speeth, when she was walking home alone at night in the October of 1975, the movement has over the years acquired a global appeal. Various women's rights organizations have used the banner of the movement in organizing marches and related events to address these issues of gender based violence and on larger questions of socio-cultural stigma usually attached to women's dressing and ambling on the road. See article on "Students 'Take Back the Night' on Columbia streets," in *The Maneater*, available online at https://www.themaneater.com/stories/campus/students-take-back-night accessed last on 18 November 2018

exclusive domain for men and 'unsafe.' The act of reclaiming these otherwise hyper-masculine spaces therefore called for an unshackling of the 'spatial limits imposed' on women.

On the other hand, women were also looked upon as subjects of consumerism, in the case of departmental stores, where they loitered about. It is in this context that Tester emphasises the role of departmental stores that become critically problematic to decipher spatially, since they behave both as a component of the empire of male 'gaze' and an observatory from which the 'spectacle' may be observed. In this context Parkhurst Ferguson spells out,

> "Although the department store is a logical outgrowth of the arcade, the new site alters *flânerie* almost beyond recognition. If the arcades offer the *flâneur* a privileged site, they do so because the space they offer is at once public and private. The *flâneur* in the arcade entertains a singular relationship to the city, one that is emblematic of his relationship to society at large: he is neither fully outside, on the street, nor altogether inside, in the shops… The space of commodification created by the department store radically modifies the individual's relationship to the city and to society, a space that abolishes the lines of demarcation distinguishing observer from observed."[81]

In Baudelaire's eyes, *flânerie* is also expressed scenically as picture shots taken from the helicopter panning below into objects it encounters. Thus, what *flânerie* essentially entails is making staccato recordings of fleeting moments mentally by capturing the latitude of occurrences one encounters while leisurely roving about an urban space. It is this mental act of chronicling during the course of strolling that provides an extensive picture of a particular urban space. For what Benjamin argues is that capitalism and the associated commodity fetishism and its logic of circulation is itself explicated in the workings of a city life and therefore there are no 'spaces of mystery' left to unveil for the *flâneur*. He sees forces of the 'capital' generating its own order in the city as he understands 'capital' as almost an organic power capable of shaping spaces and their identities, which partially interests my work. Benjamin (1983: 5) then goes on to state that, "the intoxication to which the *flâneur*

[81] See Priscilla Parkhurst Fergusson's (1994) The *flâneur* on and off the streets of Paris in Keith Tester ed., The *flâneur*, Routledge: London, pp 34-35

surrenders is the intoxication of the commodity around which surges the stream of customers." This in many ways fashions 'desire' and ultimately crystallises in a process best described in Marcuse (1964) already as, "repressive desublimation." Marcuse had presented his idea of society moving towards a one- dimensional culture, much before Benjamin wrote on the logic of the capital flattening out possibilities of fresh discoveries in terms of spaces, in almost the same vein as Marcuse argued that the capital has powers to transform culture into commodities which then become the essence of the society itself having robbed people of the possibilities for exploring choices.

I however choose to depart from this overtly rigid understanding of the *flâneur* and instead attribute 'it' with transcendental qualities that remain intact irrespective of the change of locale or specific temporal dimensions automatically equated with. For me the existence of the *flâneur* may be well explained way beyond 19th Century Paris, and in what constitutes modern day Manali. Although I acknowledge the historical importance of the spatio-political contextualising of the way *flânerie* appeared in Baudelaire, 'it' is somewhat different in its dimension with how it featured in my performance of the 'act' which in its political essence, remained the same characteristically in terms of marking critical junctures of me making sense of my surroundings in the course of my quiet sauntering on the crowded streets of Manali interfaced with my otherwise talkative and extremely socially engaged period in the hills with a variety of people. While very few academic writing has been invested in situating the *flâneur* out of the Parisian arcades, up until the mid 1990s perhaps because the likes of Michael Bull (2000) were convinced that 'the figure' did not merit much discussion owing to its monolithic spatio-temporal dimensional. It has been a relatively recent phenomena that the figure of *flâneur* has been discussed for its relevance outside of the close-bound perimeters of Paris and the possibilities of locating 'it' in a range of urban landscape that manifested in literature and the mass media as well. For Milburn, it is this "refracting lens of mediated variants of the *flâneur*" that becomes the emblematic lens for my exercise in *flânerie* to both look out and introspect within simultaneously as I strolled about in Manali. It is therefore useful to see how 'spaces' mediate as 'fields' in the interaction between actors, objects and their performances in the web of relations that are circumscribed within a network.

The dialectics I negotiate at first of 'being' a *flâneur* and then 'performing' *flânerie* therefore becomes interesting in my research while exploring the Manali town which has shed much of its rural character and transformed into a bustling urban town with a massive flow of

commodity and service exchanges happening as an inherent part of the growth of tourism industry. However, I engage in *flânerie* only at certain specific intervals of time which was initially intended as my 'time off' in the field but which interestingly had a crucial role to play while I was involved in participant observation and ethnography during my time spent in the hills. The performance of my *flânerie* is based in Varma's (2011) location of the figure as one that represents 'bohemian fantasies of inhabiting the other.' This in the scope of my research featured in my time spent loitering the streets of Manali and Kasol. It is her image of a 'complex mode of unhomeliness' resulting from 'modernity's self- representation' (ibid: 49) that is important for me to recognise as the time spent during the initial phase of my fieldwork in Manali and Kasol, where I was exploring a relatively new territory and which to me was far from offering a homely or 'safe' space.

This situation and my location in terms of practising ethnography on the field however changed over time as I began to mingle more with whatever I came across and thereafter began to experience gradually. I departed from my earlier *flâneur* mode of "being part of but forever apart from the crowd" and began to meander into the crowd of tourists and a variety of service- providers, thereby almost deliberately establishing an everyday relationship, by regularly visiting certain shops and restaurants, engaging in small talk with shop owners and transport operators and to an extent even barging my way through in situations where other tourists would likely wait to be sat at a table in a café or a restaurant setting. I would often go to cafes and restaurants in Manali, during extremely busy hours in the evening, so I could share the table with tourists (on the pretext that an empty table was not available) who didn't mind my presence and I would be able to instantly and easily start engaging with them. This in many ways shaped my later and more involved activities with the tourists and local people alike, that in essence was majorly concerned with hanging around with people in a space for a much longer while, than it was before. This change may also be attributed to the changing dynamics of the interactions I had, which built my trust in a certain space and in a certain people.

'Deep hanging out' a phrase generally referred to mean engaging to the point of immersion, coined by James Clifford in 1977 and later reinstated by Geertz in 1998 as a book title he chose for *The New York Review of Books*, slowly came to be appreciated as a popular method to satiate anthropological enquiry through a 'deep' and committed engagement, a process entailing informally immersing oneself into the social and cultural life of the 'others'.

Although Wogan (2004: 130) mentions its relevance in, "the future of localized, long-term, close-in, vernacular field research," the applicability of this very engaged process of 'hanging out' seems plausible outside of a purely vernacular zone he specifies. In the context of my field research, it was not so much the existence of a homogenous vernacular space that was making a difference but that of the level of engagement I could establish in a relatively heterogeneous space constituting a layered variety of people and groups belonging to a range of ethnicities, language and culture that I was interacting with. Although my intentions of 'deep hanging out' was initially challenged given the fragmented nature of the little- known space I was seeking to explore, the fact that it organically took shape in different contexts in the same space led to my eventual perception of this colourful layered existences in terms of the different groups be it the local communities, the tourists or the service providers, I was communicating with at different points in time.

Geertz's (1998) method of 'deep hanging out' has also influenced much of my field and ethnographic work where I draw from his idea of 'getting immersed' in the performance of the 'other' culture which inspired me to completely give up on my otherwise personal everyday practices by being seriously involved with the hill communities I was working with. A process that was gradual and meant not only 'soaking in' everything I was surrounded by, but also led to me getting actively engaged in their everyday lives. This created a blurring of the boundaries that so far distanced me as an outsider, probably owing to my own perceptions of the 'other' that was discouraging me in many ways to completely let go of my inhibitions and accept and trust them on a personal level. I realised (although at much later phase of my fieldwork) that my innermost feelings and attitude had changed dramatically towards them after I phsyically started engaging more with them, through a variety of ways that included casually chatting with them like friends do (out of my time spent in conducting structured interviews) cooking with them, accompanying them to the local market in buying grocery and their household stuff and trying to learn knitting from them etc. Everyday life is thus best observed through 'shadowing' (Czarniawska, 2007) and by employing other techniques to following people around or doing the things they generally engage in as part of their everyday rituals. A whole- hearted engagement in their everyday lives and informal participation in these activities not only contributed to me getting a better sense of their world but also placed me in a special way in their lives. The way these people supported me in conducting my research on the field having accepted me at a very different level by opening their heart and hearth to me, mostly in and around the villages of *Manali* town such as

Buruwa, *Shanag*, and *Palchan* (where I spent substantial periods of time), I came to be treated as one of their own. This on a personal level has been a truly rewarding and satisfying experience and opened my own visionary doors of perception for a much better understanding everyday life in the hills. This also, further manifested at a very different level and scope (during the penultimate phase of my field work) in shaping my very own set of personal commitments and agenda triggering an activist side in me getting immensely involved in their lives coupled with addressing issues concerning their angsts especially those relating to their immediate environment and sustenance.

The idea of 'Deep Hanging Out' has also inspired me to shed my own apprehension while engaging with the café and restaurant owners, the hashish sellers (mostly young boys) operating in the cafés and on open streets and the tourists who I started accompanying in their walks and in long conversations we would end up having in quaint cafes, restaurants or bakeries.

For Ingold (2007: 82-83),

> "Immersed with them in an environment of joint activity, they learn to see things (or hear them, or touch them) in the ways their teachers and companions do…. anthropology, therefore, does more than furnish us with knowledge about the world… It rather educates our perception of the world, and opens our eyes and minds to other possibilities of being. The questions we address are philosophical ones; of what it means to be a human being…. And the balance of freedom or constraint in people's relation with others... , of the connections between language and thought, between words and things."

Tim Ingold (2007: 82) thus emphasises on the importance of this process of 'immersing' oneself 'in an environment of joint activity' to creating a participatory dialogue which can thereby facilitate genuine interactive introspection towards better redressal of problems rather than operating with 'the sideways glance' (ibid: 83) and merely proffering touch-points. This for Ledwith (2007) has been recognised as 'critical praxis' or 'emancipatory action research' and has serious implications in terms of me critically engaging with communities, and jointly exploring a range of issues with each of the groups and communities that I found were 'precarious entities' at the end of the day, and who constantly negotiated their sustenance in

the wake of long standing risks. ‘Precarity’ has been identified as one of the conditions that cause ‘precariousness’ of life where social life is explained in terms of a discourse of ‘care’ and the interconnectedness of affective labour with between people, things and the environment they find themselves in. According to what Butler (2009: 25) suggests is that “the politically induced condition in which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks… becoming differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death” (Butler, 2009: 25). While I am not in agreement with the first part of the statement, owing to the fact as I understand is that, social and economic networks run on their own logic of politics that play out owing to the power differentials created by situational vulnerabilities that further re-produce heightened risks, it is worth locating these ‘precarities’ in structural hierarchies in the networks that produce the differential exposure to such risks. This is what I seek to understand in my research by locating the micro- politics of exchanges at different nodal points of the vast network of tourism practise that create these precarities and vulnerabilities, and are ultimately the result of structural power differentials. In terms of physical presence on the field, I experienced some of these precarious moments myself while engaging with people who were involved in the illicit trade of *Malana Crème*, the famed hashish. In one instance, that I was in *Kasol*, during the fieldwork, I was in caught in an extremely precarious moment while I was interviewing, where I was almost forced to flee the scene so as not to agitate/ excite the dealer I was talking to, inside a relatively unassuming clothes shop and learning about the way sales happen around the area, and who was constantly flirting with me and was at a point authoritatively asking me to spend a couple of days with him to learn the tricks of the trade! In such relatively secluded spaces, presence of mind is extremely crucial in taking decisions and at that point compromising on information gathering is ultimately a trade- off for personal security and well- being. These precarious experiences obviously impact findings in that no further information can be obtained at that time and there is a sudden stop to information flow which ultimately kills the purpose of data gathering, but these instances also generate understandings of the perilous nature of these industries that feed into broader questions of risks researchers face world over in doing research. Constant reflexivity is required on part of the researcher through all stages of research especially while on the field.

There might also arise a range of limitations to gathering data not just in precarious moments but in safe spaces as well. For instance, while I was made to feel welcome at the various administrative offices of state tourism departments in Manali, because of my positionality as

a researcher in a foreign university and supplied with endless official data in print, but there was once instance where I had gone to interview a senior official of the Tourism Department in Kullu where I was not made to feel welcome when I began asking uncomfortable questions on waste management, pollution, effective disaster management and over-crowding of hotels and was asked to leave after a point citing excuses.

There are obvious limitations to data gathering on field owing to individual positionalities of researchers that include gender, language, ethnicity, class, caste all of which act as barriers to interaction in natural settings where respondents almost intrinsically start judging the researcher based on their apparent outward perception of him/her. In my case where I was perceived as a single unaccompanied woman from a different ethnicity and speaking a relatively different language, some of the respondents saw me with empathy and took extra care of me while hosting me in their homes, while some others looked at me with utmost suspicion (mostly because I was unaccompanied) either because of cultural prejudices or fear to disclose information especially in the case of my interactions with dealers of hashish. I also could not understand all of the conversations that were taking place in front of me, since the locals communicated to me in broken Hindi but spoke in *Pahadi* amongst themselves. Therefore, I acknowledge that the data I gathered on the field might have limitations since I could not in many cases enter certain domains of cultural exchanges and social interactions owing to the language and ethnic barrier. Also, as earlier discussed I severely failed at gathering insider information during my interaction with one of the hashish dealers in Kasol, (to whom I had posed as a regular tourist) and who was probably trying to engage me in rituals of 'testing' to cement trust in our interaction. Thus, issues of trust form the cornerstone of authentic data generation and while I went on to establish cordial relationships in other interactions with the villagers, in this particular case, I was unable to engage further. Sometimes I wonder what other information I could get hold of as an 'insider' had I agreed to the dealer's proposals!

Despite these limitations, as is natural in any social research, my study was successful on counts that the data generated on the field could smoothly interact with the various strands of concepts and frameworks I chose to work with. Together they made possible the exploration of the dynamics of change in relation to tourism, development and risk in reflecting power flows. Therefore, conclusions and suggestions were finally offered based on both the assessment of literature review as well as primary information gathered on field through the

ethnographic study in an attempt to understand the political economy of the region. Through this discursive process, it was made possible, to track changes in communities' collective sustenance mechanisms with regard to overall tourism development coupled with an analysis of coping strategies vis-à-vis alternative livelihood strategies as adopted by the communities living in the hills in situations of risk.

Chapter 5
Tourism & Its Contours

In this chapter, I discuss the different contours shaping the tourism profile of Himachal Pradesh first by situating it in the global trends of tourism discourse in terms of economic development and subsequently, by documenting the way in which Himachal Pradesh has performed post the shift from MDG to SDG, that sought to develop tourism-led economic growth. I study the state's stake in developing the tourism business in Himachal post the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly of 2015 and with the state government's 2020 vision of sustainable tourism development in the hills. I discuss the ways in which people and livelihoods have been impacted by tourism in the state, with special reference to collective sustenance mechanisms they employ to cope with the changing world around them. I further explore the rural and urban forms of tourism and try to map the tourism practices of domestic and foreign tourists to look at how they commensurate with each other in exploring the zones of conflict and sustenance.

5.1 Tourism Trends and Economic Development in South Asia

According to the Global Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index that measures the set of enabling policies and factors for sustainable growth and development of the travel and tourism sector of countries, India has scaled up 13 positions from the 65th to the 52nd rank as of the year 2015-16 and a further leap of 12 spots from the 52nd rank to the 40th position globally as of 2017.[82] India's travel and tourism industry is expected to exceed its previous growth rate of 7.5% exceeding the 6.9% growth rate predicted for the entire South Asian region. According to the Ministry of tourism (MoT), the number of Foreign Tourist Arrival (FTAs) as recorded in 2015 was 80.27 lakhs with a growth of 4.5% when compared to the FTAs of 2014 which was recorded at 76.79 lakhs. Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) from the tourism sector alone stood at 1,35,193 Indian rupees in 2015 with a growth of 9.6% when compared to the previous year that recorded FEEs amounting to 1,23,320 Indian rupees in 2014.

[82] See newspaper article on "India jumps 12 spots in World Economic Forum's global travel and tourism ranking," in *Indian Express* Times available online at http://indianexpress.com/article/business/business-others/india-jumps-12-spots-in-world-economic-forums-global-travel-tourism-ranking-4602124/

Internationally, while the focus has shifted from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) during the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly, out of the 17 SDGs, 4 have been identified to be of potential use in building tourism development goals. These speak of economic growth, decent and humane work conditions for all involved, promoting sustainable consumption and production and finally aid conservation and sustainable development of aquatic resources. The UNWTO or the UN World Tourism Organization has consequently began working and aligning its linkages with these SDGs. Many developing countries and particularly India is beginning to therefore develop its tourism market through focused initiatives advertising tourism for better trade competitiveness, stimulate higher financing of the overall tourism sector for its growth and development, promoting new routes and opportunities for better travel facilities, development of air transport and committing to create new jobs as part of sustainable development through tourism.

As the UNWTO announced 'One Billion Tourist, One Billion Opportunities,' as the World Tourism Day theme in 2015, the UNWTO barometer suggested that international tourist arrivals increased by 4.4% reaching a total number of 1,225 million in 2016. As indicated in the World Travel and Tourism Council report of 2017, international tourism receipts earned by destinations globally have increased to 1,220 billion USD in 2016 and in addition to this, generated 216 billion USD in exports through the international passenger transport services rendered to non-residents in 2016, accounting for the total value of tourism exports that amounts to 1.4 trillion USD or 4 billion USD a day on an average.[83] Presently, international tourism accounts for 7% of the world's total exports in goods and services that has witnessed a 1% growth since 2015, making the tourism one of the fastest growing industries than world trade in general over the last 5 years. It is estimated that there will be about 1.8 billion international tourist arrivals by 2030 according to UNWTO.

The sector of travel and tourism has continued to demonstrate resilience despite the escalated unpredictable shocks from terrorism and political instability in the wake of natural and environmental disasters and health pandemics, and has contributed to a 3.1% growth in GDP, supporting 6 million additional jobs in the sector coupled with being successful in generating

[83] See UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2017 Edition available online at https://www.eunwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284419029 accessed last December 1, 2017

7.6 trillion USD (which constitutes 10.2% of global GDP) and 292 million jobs, equivalent to 1 in 10 jobs in the global market as of 2016. The tourism sector alone accounted for a 6.6% of total global exports and approximately 30% of total global service exports[84]. In 2016, the sector's GDP growth rate not only outpaced the economy-wide growth recorded in 116 of the 185 travel and tourism economies (such as Australia, China and India) covered by the annual economic impact research, but also surfaced as tougher industry that outperformed the public services, financial and business services, manufacturing, retail and other transport sectors. South Asia recorded an 8% surge in international tourist arrivals in 2016, led by India that accounted for a 10% rise, being the sub-region's most preferred destination. Nepal followed suit to record a 40% rise in arrivals after having rebounded from the 2015 results post the Kodari and Gorkha earthquakes. India alone recorded 14,569,000 international tourist arrivals in 2016 out of 25,273,000 total international tourist arrivals in South Asia, having generated international tourist receipts amounting to 22,427 million USD thereby contributing to 6.1% share of the total receipts[85]. As of 2016, Himachal Pradesh is recorded to accommodate 1.76 crore domestic tourists and around 4.53 lakh international tourists alone and recorded a total of 1.84 crore tourists which was nearly double the population of the state and which clearly denotes its importance as a popular holiday destination[86]. India's rising middle class and the tendency of increasing disposable incomes has also accentuated the growth and development of domestic tourism (Baker, 2009).

5.2 The Industry of Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

The romance surrounding tourism in the picturesque landscape of majestic snow-capped mountain peaks and alluring hills, lush valleys and the gorgeous falls, its gargling rivers and rivulets has often overlooked the people who inhabit these spaces. As opposed to times when ancient explorers and travelers came to these locales to appreciate and learn from both nature and culture of its people, the post- colonial era marked a dramatic change in the attitude with which hills and mountains came to be viewed.

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[84] See Report on Travel and Tourism: Economic Impact 2017, World by World Travel & Tourism Council available online at https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/regions-2017/world2017.pdf last accessed on Dec 1, 2017

[85] See UNWTO Report 2017 Edition

[86] See Tarun Vats & Smita bhutani's (2018) From Ancient Travel to Modern Tourism in the Himachal, Himalayas: A Historical Perspective in *International Journal of Research & Analytical Reviews*, Vol 5(4), Oct-Dec 2018 available online at http://ijrar.com/upload_issue/ijrar_issue_20542377.pdf last accessed on September 2, 2021

With the British establishing Shimla as their summer capital in 1864 in the hills of Himachal, what followed was a gradual appropriation of hill spaces as a primary destination for leisure and recreation, and since the early 1990s (just after tourism was declared an industry in the state in 1984) it transformed into a full-fledged industry opening the floodgates for rapid urbanization and industrialization in these hills. The early tour operators in India such as *Thomas Cook India Ltd*. (est. in 1881), the *American Express* and a little later, the Indian travel companies such as *Jeena and Company* (est. in 1920) *Lee and Muirhead India Private Limited (*est. in *1945)*, *N. Jamnadas and Company Limited* (est. in 1920) and *The Marcury Tours & Travels* (est. in 1948) organized group tours both abroad and domestically[87]. Furthermore, with the organization of the Travel Agents Association of India in Bombay (presently Mumbai) in 1951, domestic tourism saw a renewed boost after a period of sluggish growth immediately post-independence in 1947. Many other travel agencies and tour companies such as SITA (1963), the Indian Holiday Private Limited in Delhi (est. in 1990) followed suit and started their operations. Therefore, India, after a few years of its independence, witnessed a steady growth of tourism, with the urban middle classes discovering the hill stations as a destination for leisure and recreation.

Since 1955, with the establishment of the Tourist Information Centre in Shimla, the-then headquarters of the union territory of Himachal Pradesh, tourism development began to be seriously executed in the state. A centre for winter sports and a golf club were constructed in *Naldehra* and *Kufri* between 1958- 59 and other tourist information centres established in *Chamba*, *Mandi*, *Nahan* and *Bilaspur* in Himachal. The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, *HPTDC* was also formed in Shimla under the companies act 1956 with the separation of Punjab from Himachal (HPTDC, 1972) which sought to opening up avenues and prospects for tourism development alongside the private sector. Civil aviation activities were further brought under the fold of the Department of Tourism in Himachal Pradesh in 1987 to boost tourist footfall (Jreat, 2000).

Furthermore, with the 10th Five Year Plan that promoted village tourism and highlighted the socio-economic gains for rural areas and new spots in the hills, Himachal Pradesh underwent an overall infrastructure development of its rural areas including landscaping, development of

[87] See Abu Barkat Ali's (2015) *Travel And Tourism Management*, PHI Learning Private Limited, Delhi, p 128

parks, fencing, compound wall etc., improvement and newer constructions of roads within Panchayat limits, electric supply in villages, procurement of facilities directly linked to tourism such as adventure and water sports, modes of transport for moving within the tourism zone, reception centres for tourists, tourist accommodation etc. (Vats & Bhutani, 2018). This for reasons obvious, had a variety of implications for the hill communities living in these places, since the alarming rate at which modernization was brought about not just in the landscape through speedy technological developments. The hill people were further witnessing a sea-change in their own ways of life which were evident consequences of firstly, a process of 'exoticizing' that they were subjected to and later, forced cultural assimilation in various ways. In the larger scheme of things, what stands out glaringly was merely the desires of the people of the plains fashioning the entire tourism industry in the hills that continue to invisiblize the locals' culture, traditions, aspirations and rob them of their original identity.

The tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh in many ways resonates patterns of tourist flows similar to the tourism sector seen in the rest of India, however, the character of tourism especially in the *Kullu Valley* is unlike the other hill stations that developed during the Raj perhaps because it started taking shape post Indian independence in 1947. Whilst a sizeable number of British and other European families ran homestays, guest houses and inns in and around *Kullu* Valley, *Manali* wasn't as popular as *Shimla*, *Mussourie* or *Ooty* for colonial travelers owing to issues of accessibility into the difficult terrain. *Kullu* valley and especially *Manali*, grew as a 'tourist spot' to provide recreation for the middle and upper classes post Indian independence notably with Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister visiting *Manali* in 1958 and subsequently in 1959 (Shabab, 1996). A few other factors that contributed to *Manali* becoming a popular retreat for holidayers both Indian and foreign were a steady growth of roadway networks stimulating more footfalls in the hills along with the construction of the air strip at *Bhuntar*, approximately 40 Km south of *Manali* near *Kullu* town, during the late 1950s that not only boosted the number of foreign visitors but also encouraged weekend holidaying. The completion of the National Highway 21 that links *Kullu*, *Manali* and *Mandi* with the lengths and breadths of the country particularly with massive population hubs such as Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh is another major motivator behind the rapid acceleration of the tourism sector in Himachal and particularly *Kullu* and *Manali* towns. Advertisements whether in the form of large hoardings, flexes and billboards atop high-rises and fly-overs in the key areas of bustling towns and cities or full-page colour adverts in the leading dailies on the potentials of holidaying and

recreation in the hills akin to what Crossette (1998) suggested "pitched to local tourists in terms similar to those that publicized them first among colonial elites." A combination of factors thus appealed to the Indian middle classes to explore tourism in these hills.

Figure 5.1 A government initiative showcasing 'local' *Himachali* dance to attract tourists at *Naggar Haveli* in *Kullu* district, Himachal Pradesh

i. People, Livelihoods & Tourism

Prior to British colonization, the people living in the villages of Himachal had complete control of the forests and its resources having paid little honorarium to the native kings from time to time (Tucker, 1982). With the advent of the British, a process of formalization and territorial marking started taking shape with new taxes being levied on land and other resources, that often led to skirmishes between the local communities, the native kings and the officers entrusted with tax collection by the British government (Guha,1983). However, the local and especially the indigenous communities continued to enjoy access to the forests and its resources that supported them in day to day subsistence. In 1864, with the Forest Department having been formally established (to primarily aid railway construction) as Guha

(1989: 37) suggests, a number of discussions arose on whether ‘customary use’ of forests be deemed as privilege or a ‘right’. It was finally concluded that the ‘right of conquest is the strongest of all rights- it is a right against which there is no appeal’ (*ibid.*: 38). Thus, with the subsequent Forestry Act of 1878, an embargo was imposed upon the local communities by severely limiting use and access over forest resources and further having declared some forests declared closed or reserved. This is many ways led to a transformation in the use of forest resources that altered the age-old collective mechanisms and local community practices in Himachal and brought about a more individual- centric use of the forest lands. The rural folk in these hills earlier depended on the forests for fuelwood, fodder and other types of forest produce and jointly took decisions on the felling of trees and overall forest management as a collective. With the British asserting complete ownership of these forests and dictating their terms of forest use on the local communities post 1878, the social ties that bonded people in close- knit collectives; that which modulated customary use of these forests earlier, abraded (Cranney, 2001).

The organic relationship between man and nature was lost, and this further created alienation and prompted the rural folk to act independently and often inconsiderately. The villagers encroached on others’ lands, began felling trees and selling wood to fulfill their immediate sustenance needs without gauging long term effects on the overall village or the environment. As a local village woman Hema Devi reflects, “*Pehle bohot jungle the, abhi to sab kaath diya… jitna hai usi se kaam chalta hai… jo samne pada hai kabhi kabhi usse bhi kaam chala letein hain*” which translates to show that “there was dense forests in the past which have now been chopped off and they make use of whatever there is left of and that sometimes they use what they find in their immediate vicinity.” This gradual decay and exploitation of the fragile hill communities in the Himalayan region to borrow from Berreman (1985:10) may be understood as “fourth world colonialism,” a term he coined to critique a process of, “exploitation of an internal minority within a ‘developing’ or ‘third world’ nation, by the majority population.”

People in the hills in Himachal, continue to be heavily dependent on these traditional modes of subsistence with pastoralism and agriculture as their primary means of livelihood to this day. These hill communities still rely on the forests for fodder, fuelwood, leaf manure, construction material, medicinal herbs and plants for basic subsistence. However, horticultural practices have also evolved over the years in these hills, with the formalization

of the sector presently by the Himachal Pradesh Horticulture Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation Limited (HPMC). A very recent initiative under the auspices of the World Bank, has also started in 2016 known as the Himachal Pradesh Horticulture Development Project that aims to aid small- scale farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in Himachal to increase yields, quality and market access of certain horticultural commodities. Medicinal plants and herbs traditionally have had a very important place in rural lives especially for hill communities but even with the changing times, the market for it has increasingly grown over the years with a visible change in the organization of work relating to patterns of picking/ collection, packaging and distribution to markets as was evident from the FGDs of local communities and life-history interviews of local co-operatives involved in manufacturing products out of these herbs and plants. Timbre from local forests are still a major article of export to Delhi and other metropolitan cities for the construction sector. This apart, the Turpentine Oil sector and the Turpentine factories in Himachal also play a key role in contributing to employment opportunities- by offering work whether in extraction of resins or as labour at the factory site itself.

Apple cultivation in orchards is a predominant industry in the state and Himachal is perhaps rightly nicknamed the "Apple Economy" owing to the sheer size of the enterprise in the state. As the most important fruit crop, apple production in Himachal constitutes approximately 49% of the total fruit production in the state with the total area under cultivation having increased from a mere 400 hectares in the years 1950-51 to 30235 hectares in 1960-61 and currently 1,10,679 hectares as of 2015-16[88] spread throughout the districts of Kullu, Mandi, Shimla, Kinnaur, Chamba, Sirmaur and Lahaul-Spiti. An auxiliary industry that has simultaneously boomed with apple production is the production of crates used in packaging the apples for far-away markets. The production of these crates from wood derived from coniferous trees has itself turned into a medium scale industry in the state today. This apart, the basket weaving industry almost solely managed by local communities, has also developed to cater to the increasing demands of storage and transportation of articles such as food grains, tea leaves and betel-nut alongside apples. Cane and Bamboo primarily used for making the conical baskets known popularly as *Kilta* also constitute an important livelihood

[88] Anand Bodhi (2017) "Apple production to remain less this time in Himachal," Times of India, City- Shimla, published on 17 July, 2017 available online at- http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/shimla/apple-production-to-remain-less-this-time-in-himachal/articleshow/59631217.cms

option for the rural poor in Himachal, where women are especially involved in making these baskets.

Figure 5.2 shows apples being dumped at an open shelter for eventual transport and sale to the market in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh

Figure 5.3 shows villagers working in orchards carrying bucket loads of apples to the trucks for eventual sale

Tourism as an industry did not exist in its current form in Himachal or any part of India prior to colonization. Travel in the form of pilgrimage was known and practiced by some who sought to engage in pious deeds in sacred places amidst nature's bounty (Gladstone, 2005). As discussed earlier, this very act of travelling was not meant to be an enjoyable experience but a rigorous one since the whole purpose of the journey was meant to cleanse traveler's soul of his/her past sins culminating into a spiritual awakening in ancient times. Recreational travel for purposes of sheer leisure as a concept developed only with the advent of the British in the hills. The relatively neglected and inaccessible terrain of mountainous habitats began to be explored by the British and other European travelers who later deemed it fit to be treated as resorts for recuperation and leisure. It was however only in the beginning of the twentieth century that marked a flow of migrants both Indian and European (initially mostly of English

and Scottish origin) who gradually started settling down in the hill state of Himachal. It was however in the later part of that century that the new batch of European travelers proposed the cultivation of apples in orchards in the Kullu Valley, which (as earlier discussed) has today become the principal industry alongside Himachal's tourism and handicraft trade. These apple orchards also continue to entice tourists for its charming appeal amidst picturesque surroundings of hills and valleys who often prefer staying at lodges and homestays that offer scenic views to these orchards.

Tourism in Himachal has undergone immense changes both socio-culturally and politico-economically since post- colonial times and continues to mushroom along with processes of urbanization at a breakneck pace aiding not only its massive sector-wise expansion but further contributing to a parallel augmentation of other small and mid- scale industries on which tourism has a direct bearing. The way tourism and recreation have been packaged as commodities today, "the consumption of which is an end in itself" as Gladstone (2005: 144) points out, the market for tourism in Himachal has opened up new possibilities for the growing middle classes in India; something that was in the past only confined to the realm of the rich and the upper middle classes. The whole idea of marketing, be it in the form of huge flexes, billboards or glossy adverts in lifestyle magazines or brochures, direct attitudes towards transforming luxuries into occasional fancies that which blur earlier constraints of seemingly expensive pricing that are now easily evaded in the new gimmicks of packaging of leisure opportunities. This projected assurance of comfort in one's own 'budget' appeal to the middle classes enormously as an affordable choice to exploring the recreational options. As its obvious aftermath, the tourism industry in Himachal, presently the principal driver for state revenue generation, has successfully managed to employ a huge chunk of its population either directly in the tourism business or through other tourism related activities such as handicrafts, apple orchards, adventure sports activities, selling of medicinal plants etc.

For the local Communities in Himachal, however, tourism seems to be a paradoxical case in point having generated both economically productive opportunities and at the same time inducing long term damages to the environment (I treat as commons) and ecology of the hills. On carrying out Focused Group Discussions with some of the locals in *Shahnag*, *Buruwa*, *Siyal* and *Palchan* villages close to *Manali* town in the *Kullu* district, on the impact of tourism on their lives and livelihoods, I found that while there was a common consensus on the income generating aspect of the extensively flourished tourism industry that they

recognized as a boon, there were divided on their views relating to environmental degradation. While all spoke of the adverse effects of tourism and increasing urban expansion and development that is taking a toll on the ecology of these hills, there were some others, who opinionated that ecological devastation was but a trade-off, a price they had to pay for reaping the benefits of a speedily changing and economically viable industry that has made their lives much smoother than before. As a local man working in the apple orchards in *Buruwa*, *Pawan Singh* remarks, "*Tourists toh gaon mein nahi ate phir bhi [yeh] seb ke business ke liye achha hai… rastein achhe ho gayein hain… Mandi mein apples bhejna asaan ho gaya hai*" which translates to the fact although tourists rarely stay in the villages, it is because of the industry of tourism that has developed, proper roadways have been built linking *Manali* to *Mandi* (a market town in Himachal from where apple sale and distribution happens to the rest of India), which has been a boon for the apple trade and their livelihood. The local communities also spoke of the fact that tourism facilitated an appreciation of their traditional ways of life, which they could make a living out of. There are many instances where they have provisions of renting out their village homes to tourists, who get lost or stranded while trekking in the hills or people who come for lengthy stays and prefer to live in a typically *Himachali* setting amidst nature to enjoy untainted rural surroundings. Thus, the interviews and the FGDs conducted with the local communities show that tourism was a part and parcel of their lives and livelihoods that they cannot distance themselves from.

Tourism also seems to have propelled extremely unique local small scale services that people in the hills of Himachal especially in popular locations such as *Manali* and *Naggar* benefit from. The local hill women especially are known to frequent popular places of sightseeing and gather around these tourist spots such as the *Hadimba Devi Temple*, the *Nyingmapa Buddhist* monastery in *Manali*, the *Vashisth* Sulphur spring and *Solang* Valley, to either rent out their traditional handspun attires[89] (complete typically *Himachali* ornaments[90]) on hire or to encourage tourists to 'hold' the massive sized angora rabbits (a native of Himachal) to take pictures with and thereby making substantial money out of the exercise. While the women

[89] The traditional Himachali attire for women consists of a thick handspun fabric known as the *Pattoo* which is worn around the body and fastened across the shoulders with a *Boomini,* or traditional broach and chain made of silver and tied around the waist with a belt-like cloth known as the *Gachchi*. A scarf called *Thipu* is also used to cover the head. The footwear resembling carpet slippers is traditionally made of hemp or the fibre derived out of the stem of a marijuana plant and knitted with colourful wool on top to cover the toes and upper part of the feet and are called *Pullas* by the locals.

[90] The Himachali ornaments are a part of their traditional attire and comprises of a combination of jewellery, generally made of silver, that are worn in different parts of the body, starting from the head to feet.

who rent out clothes charge between 150-250 Indian rupees to the tourists, the ones who rent out angora rabbits for pictures charge around 100 Indian Rupees. There are tourists who don't bring cameras or forget to bring them while travelling and some others who despite possessing it fall for the cajoling of local photographers to get themselves professionally photographed for better picture quality. These tourists have no other option but to rely on the local photographers available around specific sights to carry home a piece of their memorable experiences. There are photographers who often diligently surround the busy tourist spots and charge between 100- 300 Indian Rupees for a collection of generally 2- 4 photographs depending upon the popularity of the location and the demand. There are also local guides who charge an hourly rate of between 100 -150 Indian Rupees depending upon the location or a day rate of 500- 700 Indian Rupees for accompanying tourists (especially foreigners and trekkers) from one spot to another. While these local small scale industries developed, a horde of other local handmade manufacturing units of herbomineral oil, soap and especially handspun handloom clothes boomed with the growing tourist demands.

The weaving of *Kullu* Shawls and caps in handloom factories particularly in the *Kullu* District, happens to be a significant income generation opportunity undertaken both by private initiatives such as *Bhuttico*, one of the largest co-operative weavers' societies (engaging local communities for livelihood) and the Himachal Govt.'s own handicraft enterprises. These locally produced handicraft items are sold extensively throughout Himachal be it in chic shopping arcades or government emporiums and has a huge market for export to countries such as England, Belgium, France, China, Japan, Russia, Spain and the US as well. *Bhuttico* as a cooperative society has also managed its exclusive weaving sheds apart from a housing colony built for its members, complete with a community center, a sports club and a cultural activities club and boasts of sharing fair opportunities with the weavers for them to enjoy a decent life. As of 2015, *Bhuttico's* handloom industry alone had produced an output that exceeded 1,25,000 garments that year having generated a total sales turnover of approximately 13 Crore Indian Rupees.[91]

NGOs such as *Jagriti* and *Save Manali* who have actively campaigning for local communities to come together and work towards environmentally sustainable practices through various

[91] Data obtained from the local showroom in Manali, Kullu and verified from the official Bhuttico website available online at- http://www.bhutticoshawl.com/main.php?route=details_f1&Scid=1 last accessed on 7 September, 2017

ecology friendly projects. After conducting life history interviews of both these NGOs, it was seen that *Jagriti* has been involved with the rural poor especially the Scheduled Caste women in three villages located in the valleys of *Lug*, *Garsa* and *Pahanana* in *Kullu* since 2003. The NGO has been responsible for the formation of women's saving and credit groups that is the primary epicentre for all the other activities they engage in. This was done by collectivising them into groups and inculcating a habit of savings which then becomes an instrument for regular meetings, for they are then compelled to meet each month to deposit their share of money towards whatever little savings they can afford. Since a typical feature of the poorer households remains that the cash flow doesn't take place on a regular basis, these communities often find themselves in debt and therefore seek support from moneylenders and are burdened with very high interest rates. The initial process of collectivising these groups apparently entailed mapping their status with a set of qualitative and quantitative indicators such as type of house, number of rooms, whether a *kachcha* or *puckka* built, literacy, kind of clothing, type of livestock they possessed – along with mostly visual indicators that focussed on habits, land holdings, number of children etc. The present move undertaken by *Jagriti*[92] capacitated them to make some changes in their pursuit of savings, the basic work revolving around livelihood generation, with projects running on drudgery reduction and energy saving, traditional crop conservation and providing an incentive for its continued conservation together with an effort towards engaging women in *Panchayati Raj* institutions such as *Gram Sabha* etc.

Over 400 women (a substantial number for the hilly terrain) are involved in this livelihood generation programme depending on the kind of natural resources that are available around them, and whatever they have access to, coupled with the technical skills they possess to drying mint and other crops/plants/herbs and then generating an income out of the process. This method both works towards conservation and provides incentives to conserve the dying species of wild flora native to the Himachal. Apricots, mint, stinging nettle, rhododendron are the major sources of income for these women. Initially the programme was aimed at a decentralised process with women manufacturing products out of the natural resources they gathered and processed and the NGO's role limited to packaging and marketing it. However, later it was found that the women were not making any profit because *Kullu* town did not serve as a good prospect for market where enough profit could be generated. To increase

[92] As narrated by Mamta Chander to the author

profit margins, *Jagriti* started getting more involved in the manufacturing process as well. Since local markets do not provide good profit margins, the NGO extended support in trying to find markets that could provide more profits. It also worked on reducing dependence on the forests, by promoting Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in a major way. This advocacy for clean energy helped save their time and improved the living conditions of these women effectively. Mamta Chander, the NGO head is especially critical of biomass (despite its renewability) for not being clean enough and believes that this endeavour has not only proven aspirational but functional for these communities, where it has in practice helped reduce time for gathering fuelwood thereby allowing women to effectively manage time and participate in other kinds of activities to both supplement the household income, make savings and to make their voices heard in local self- government institutions such as the Panchayat and the Gram Sabha.

ii. Risks and the politics of Collective Sustenance

"Remember those forests of oak and rhododendron,
Fir and spruce,
Those trees of pine and deodar
They have vanished?...

The trees near the streams have been felled,
The rivers have run dry,
The wild fruit, the herbs are gone,
The berries, the wild vegetables have disappeared…

With the felling of trees landslides have started;
Our fields, barns and homes are all washed away.
Where once there were lush forests
There is now sparseness…"

Source: Three Garhwali folk songs by Ghan Shyam Shailani as quoted in Bina Agarwal's (1986: 1) 'Women, Poverty and Agricultural Growth in India.[93]'

The transformation of the *Kullu- Manali* corridor as a traffic heavy destination for holidaying may be attributed to the construction of roadways brought about by the British colonial administration in the early twentieth century and one that has constantly undergone development. It is these roads that ushered the way for 'modernizing' the *Kullu* Valley and the adjoining regions thereby thoroughly altering the traditional social structures of rural life and cultural habits of the people inhabiting these areas. The exercise of road building in these hills also facilitated a steady linking up of the relatively inaccessible regions with the markets located in other bigger population centers therefore establishing market ties with these hubs in moving towards a 'cash crop' economy from one that was primarily subsistence based. This had obvious implications on the life and livelihoods of the local communities in terms of a dramatic socio-cultural change.

The eternal debate surrounding livelihoods and development also surface in the context of tourism, where the ideal approach is perhaps to locate the fulcrum of 'micro-politics' (McAreavey, 2006) that shape the dynamics governing tourism and livelihoods for local communities. While on the one hand mega tourism projects had proved disastrous for the hills and its people time and again, the local communities themselves have learnt to negotiate these changes over time. They have often collectively acted to resist modes of economic and environmental oppression in the guise of massive tourism projects like in the example of the Himalayan Ski Village (elaborated in the subsequent chapter), by adapting themselves resiliently to changes taking shape as a consequence of these expansive projects in some cases. As Guman Singh, a champion of the *Him Niti Abhiyan* (a collective working towards sustainable mountain development in Himachal) when interviewed, talks of the ways in which he has tried collectivizing local level small- scale tourism service providers such as guides, homestay owners and local communities around *Dharamshala*, *Chamba*, *Manali*, *Reckong Peo* and *Shimla*, to discuss the wide-ranging impacts of mega- tourism projects and come up with local tourism solutions that they deem best to deal with the current situation. He excitedly talks of the need to distribute tourists to alternate sites in Himachal rather than

[93] See Agarwal B. (1986) 'Women, Poverty and Agricultural Growth in India,' Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol 15 (4): 164-220

allowing for a saturation of tourism to happen in Manali and Shimla and following the 2020 state government's vision of tourism development in Himachal Pradesh.

It is in the face of a variety of risks and concerns- environmental, social and monetary, that I attempt to understand the way in which the local communities deploy themselves as active agents in consciously playing out their part in micro-politics with respect to changes of modernization and urbanization resulting from tourism and allied activities. During the focused group discussions that I conducted in the villages of *Palchan* and *Buruwa*, I found that while a defensive resilient approach is adopted by these communities when they form small collectivities to address issues or grievances of common concern, an aggressive aspirational politics of survival guides the same people when acting as individuals, in which case they appear to act more independently as political subjects capable of decision making, when they were interviewed separately. For example, where the *Palchan- Rohtang* ropeway project started involving cutting down of coniferous trees and displacement of people and local shops and *dhabas* along the slopes, it affected different people differentially. While most of the community members harped on the negative bearings of the said project, a few others on being interviewed separately, said that it was going to open- up more possibilities of tourism related activities saving on time and would mean a cleaner and greener environment as opposed to the heavy pollution from plying cars and buses along the slopes. These were young people who lived around *Palchan* and *Marhi* and mostly engaged in the adventure sports industry particularly skiing in *Rohtang*.

This dichotomous tendency may well be attributed to the very change visible in the social fabric of the rural communities in hills post tourism upsurge which has broken down social ties to a large extent but still retained some of its orthodox age-old hierarchies of customs and norms that continue to influence their lives. One good example is the concept of village elders, who are not only paid great respect because of their age and experiences but are sought to for support in nearly all decision making relating to serious concerns for the entire community, to this day. The penchant for 'pendular politics'[94] is as primitive as human survival and happens to be another influencing factor that gravely transforms collectively acting conscientious groups of people into self- asserting motive- driven individuals to not only better cope but assert their comparative advantageous position in times of crisis. This is

[94] The tendency to swing from one side to the other for comparative political advantage.

what both drives individuals to combat risk situations as well as produces conditions of other kinds of risks in turn.

A classic example is the Malana Crème or hashish trade that has developed in the hills of Himachal alongside the tourism business. Huge numbers of both domestic and foreign tourists (mostly Israeli) visit Manali and its adjacent towns of Kasol and Tosh and sometimes even scale the difficult terrain by trekking all the way up to Malana village (about 46 kms from Kullu town) in pursuit of smoking up one of the premium quality of the *charas* (hashish) derived out of the resin from the marijuana plant, native to the village. The height at which these plants grow contribute to the superior quality that the Malana Crème boasts of compared to other forms of hashish and *charas* available elsewhere in the country or even the state. For the local communities, consuming the hashish was cultural[95] and the various parts of the plant had a variety of daily practical uses such as rope making from hemp as construction material and in footwear or grinding the seeds to make *chutney* (a spicy dip) to savour with food. The Malana Crème is also believed to have medicinal properties for treating illnesses ranging from simple headaches to long term conditions such as seizures, glaucoma, nerve pain or even cancer. However, owing to its intoxicating effect that many want to experience a recreational 'high', Malana Crème has turned into an extremely profitable industry in these hills where tourism has flourished in some cases because of its market. The Malana Crème used to naturally grow in the wild and the locals would gather the leaves and rub off the resin with their bare palms to produce the *charas.* However, with the new turn of tourist expectations surrounding the increased popularity for the crème, the local communities realized that they had to tap this potential market for economic reasons of sustenance. Since there exists a legal ban on *charas* and Malana Crème particularly in Himachal, the price at which the crème is sold at is extremely high (more discussions on pricing, quality and the hashish debate follows in the chapter on shadows).

While the Himachal is presently grappling with the growing tourism that has even made inroads into this relatively secluded village, *Malana*, the residents of this village have negotiated a way to earn a livelihood around sale of the coveted hashish by developing a *charas* based economy that thrives all through the year and continues to attract a growing

[95] Consuming hashish or *charas* culturally referred to consuming this *prasad* or the blessed offering made to Lord Shiva, the ancient Hindu god (part of the Holy Trinity responsible for cosmic balance) as part of the worship. The believers/ worshippers often smoked up the *charas* taking the name of the god aloud as part of the ritual.

number of tourists each year. Owing to severe weather conditions almost all throughout the year and limited possibilities for agriculture in such great mountainous heights, the *Malana* village is dependent on a primarily subsistence economy with pastoralism as the basic sustenance option alongside weed cultivation. The trade has undergone substantial change with the present production and distribution mechanisms at work, with the locals producing several varieties of the weed including some hybrid ones in *kutlas* (enclosures designated for cannabis cultivation) as contrary to earlier gathering of leaves from the wild for personal consumption. Although the village has opened its gates for the booming marijuana trade, it had over the years maintained strict standards of 'pollution and purity'[96] by levying severe fines on misconduct or non-conformity of those standards.

While the selling of the intoxicant to tourists constitutes a risky affair because of the official ban and perennially keeps them on the edge of suspicion and in some cases even leads to arrests by the police, the village locals engage with the tourists and tourism in so far as their economic needs are met without a major alteration to their ancient local cultural habits and practices. In the scope of the present study, I treat 'collective sustenance' as a conceptual tool to understand the ways through which local communities such as the *Malanese* people transact with their direct nature and the tourist flows that eventuate in the search of the 'divine' hashish these despite risk perceptions of getting caught for illegal sale of the product and the underlying fear of 'pollution' through tourists. Pollution thus relates to only the physical environment of the village but of ancient cultural practices of untouchability that still prevails in these hills because of a sense of assumed superiority in the disposition of the locals in their conduct with the non- *Malanese* and tourists to conserve their sacred spaces. It is essential to therefore understand risks in terms of both physical, environmental, cultural and legal perceptions in the context of livelihoods and 'collective sustenance' mechanisms employed by these communities to fight the harsh environment and generate livelihood out of the crème trade.

In this study, I define 'collective sustenance' and broaden its scope in relation with its earlier notions of simple sustenance to include adaptive mechanisms that negotiate the internal micro-politics politics of the collective identity of these communities in the face of perceived

[96] The people of the *Malana* village have strict rules of pollution and purity, where they consider tourists and any other person not from their village as 'outsiders' and accordingly treat them as untouchables in order to protect their sacred culture and social life.

common risks and motivations. I analyse the immanent dynamics of everyday conscious political decision- making by the hill communities (in terms of survival coping mechanisms vis-à-vis motivations and risk perceptions) which forms the basis of an understanding of risks and rewards that the hill communities perceive in the context of the tourism play in Himachal Pradesh. Perception of local communities towards rehabilitation and compensation packages (discussed in the subsequent chapter in details) as part of the development and growth of the mega and mid- sized tourist enterprises have also been critical to understanding the ways in which 'collective sustenance' mechanisms operate or fail to negotiate the existing power structures. This includes how the local communities also seek employment in the tourism sector in Himachal- the local transport and travel business, in souvenir shops, hotels, restaurants, coffee shops and in various other government/ private- run local tourism enterprises, even when they acknowledge the risks and challenges associated with the industry. Also, in the application of collective sustenance as an analytical concept to study collective action combined with risk negotiation, I further look at the role of women and children in the production and distribution process of Malana crème trade and their engagement directly with the tourists at various levels to explore other opportunities of income generation such as handicrafts, rabbit holding, traditional dress hire and even prostitution. More elaborations on the gendered dimensions of collective sustenance and alternate economy of drug tourism and sex trade in the penultimate chapter on Shadows.

5.3 Tourism Profile of Himachal Pradesh

The state of Himachal Pradesh can be mapped as demonstrating three culturally distinct zones, of which the districts of *Lahaul- Spiti* and *Kinnaur* constitute the 'tribal' belt with strong Tibetan and Buddhist influences, the middle belt consisting of a predominantly Hindu agrarian class who practice settled cultivation in the sub-montane regions of the state and finally the lower belt comprising of Shimla, Dalhousie and *Kasauli* that continue to exude an urban character with residues of its British colonial past. Notwithstanding the resemblances that Himachal Pradesh shares with other Indian states with respect to tourism and its intra-state profile, what it exhibits today are distinctions that mark out its own unique identity and have an altogether different character than the other states (especially the ones in the plains). A clear reason for this is that Himachal Pradesh as a state has over the years formalized the tourism sector having developed a tourism centric state policy where, the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (henceforth HPTDC) has played a key role in the state

tourism business. The Corporation is responsible for bringing under its auspices the entire gamut of tourism related activities and auxiliary sectors that operate parallel to the tourism industry such as registering local hotels, restaurants/ bars, issuing licenses to photographers/ guides and taxi associations, running HPTDC bus services to cater to tourist needs specifically and maintaining various other registers of local cottage industries and adventure sports activities etc. The HPTDC manages and boasts of the largest hotel chain in Himachal Pradesh and one of the largest in the country with a total number of 58 hotels at present with 20 in the *Satluj* circuit (encompassing *Barog*, *Chail*, *Shimla*, *Naldehra*, *Narkanda*, *Sarahan*, *Rohru*, *Kharapathar*, *Paonta*, *Renukaji*, *Chindi* and *Darlaghat*) 14 in the *Beas* circuit (including *Kullu*, *Manali*, *Naggar*, *Jogindernagar* and *Rewalsar*) 19 in the *Dhauladhar* circuit (with *Dharamshala*, *Palampur*, *Jawalaji*, *Chintpurni*, *Hamirpur*, *Dalhousie*, *Khajjiar*, *Nurpur* and *Chamba*) and 5 in the Tribal circuit (comprising *Kalpa*, *Kaza* and *Keylong*)[97].

The Kullu valley is believed to have its name derived from the word *Kulanthapitha*, meaning 'end of the civilized world' or 'end of the habitable world'[98] as translated commonly. As suggestive in its name, Kullu was for a large part of the early twentieth century mostly inaccessible (only reachable by steep slopes and difficult mountainous paths in the summer months) if not almost cut off from the rest of the Indian subcontinent. Kullu valley and its adjoining villages, originally inhabited by indigenous tribes have had a mainly subsistence economy dependent on forestry, fishing and agriculture. Tourism to Kullu and Manali was limited to pilgrimage for a relatively long period of time during and even after the British Raj. Himachal was famous for pilgrimages such as Mata Jwalaji and Chamunda Devi (Kangra district), Chintpurni Devi (Dharmshala), Naina Devi and Baba Basandi (Bilaspur), Mansa Devi (Hasampur), Renukaji (Mandi) and the Bijli Mahadev, Raghunath and Hadimba temples in the Kullu district. While Shimla was developed as a hill station for recuperation of British soldiers or a resort for the officials to relax at, Kullu and Manali were relatively unexplored from a tourism point of view during the colonial period. Travel comprising mostly explorations was however not unheard of in the region in colonial times. However, the nature and purpose of travel to the region has changed dramatically over the years paving the way for a buoyant economy thriving because of tourism alone in Himachal and especially the Kullu-Manali corridor.

[97] Source: HPTDC website, available at http://hptdc.in/index.php/hotels/ accessed last on September 7, 2017

[98] See Penelope Chetwode's (1972) The End of the Habitable World, John Murray, London

The designated offices of tourism development attempt to formalize the tourism industry in the state through various means such as regularly collecting data and publishing state-wide listings of home-stays, forest rest houses, hotels, lodges and other kinds of accommodation provisions on the basis on price, conducting both impact assessment researches and studies on further scope for tourism development in the state periodically. The HPTDC also generates and maintains district-wise monthly progress reports of registered hotels, homestays, travel agents, outdoor photographers, guides and restaurants/bars. This apart, it maintains yearly records of tourist footfall especially in the Kullu- Manali region.

Currently the Kullu- Manali corridor has witnessed an unprecedented rate of tourism attracting mostly the urban Indian middle classes. Although the officials of the state Dept. of Tourism maintain that the tourism industry in Kullu and Manali has seen a boom like never before, especially in the new Manali region having grown enormously in the last 7-8 years, there is evidence to show that the benefits from this tourism boom in the area, has spilled off mostly to outsiders, even though its costs have been shared disproportionately by the local communities and residents of the hill state. Though the revenue increase of the state has been more for the year 2016 (approximately 5-7% that has exceeded its usual 3-4% growth rate) because of the Kashmir problem that has diverted the tourists who come in search of snow peaked ranges, the profit generated by the overall tourism enterprise in the state has been mostly taken away by private hoteliers from Chandigarh and Delhi, who run hotels in and around the *Kullu- Manali* area. Since both *Kullu* and *Manali* offer an entire range of tourism alternatives, from budget to luxury accommodation facilities and modes of travel, people from all over the country including a good number of people from the southern and eastern part of India flock to *Manali*, coupled with a large number foreign tourists who come especially to trek, relax for relatively longer periods compared to their Indian counterparts or travel in the quest of the infamous hash, the *Malana Crème*. A large number of Israeli tourists are also the usual feature of Himachal, since they turn to the hills for recuperation and relaxation after their compulsory military training in their home country and for which the Indian government has relaxed visa regulations for them. This apart there is also a mix of weekend holidayers from Delhi and Chandigarh coupled with budget honeymooners who arrive in *Manali* throughout the year to temporarily ‘get away’ from the bustling cities they live in. August and September are considered as the season for trekking, while June-July continue to be peak seasons for all kinds of tourist footfall. According to an official of the

state Dept. of Tourism, foreigners come all through the year but their traffic apparently increases between the months of August and September for primarily trekking activities and adventure sports they seek to enjoy. Since September is also the month when the first flush of the *Malana crème* is rubbed and processed as consumable hash, an obvious connection between foreign tourist flow (of especially Israeli origin) cannot be dismissed. What is also peculiar to note is the fact that most of them come as backpackers and stay in homestays and obscure lodges in and around Old *Manali* and the *Vashisth* village area, managed privately and pay no more than 500-700 Indian Rupees per day for their stay and spend between 6-7 days on an average in *Manali* later moving to other spots such as *Naggar*, *Kasol*, *Tosh* and *Malana*. The study found that domestic tourists end up paying much more towards accommodation and other touristy activities such as local travel to *Solang Valley*, *Gulaba* and *Manikaran* using local cabs, participating in adventure sports such as paragliding, rafting, skiing and river- crossing, and shopping for local cottage industry wares etc. than their foreigner counterparts having spent between 2-3 days on an average in *Manali* only. This is possibly the reason behind the booming hotel sector in *Manali*, which caters to the aspirational middle classes with above average and luxury resorts complete with spas and swimming pools that offer them 'guilty little pleasures' out of their mundane everyday experiences. In Gladstone's (2005) study on tourism in Himachal Pradesh, he found that there are more hotels per capita income in the state compared to any other in India excepting Nagaland, Kerala, Goa and Arunachal Pradesh, with a formal hotel sector that is much larger than elsewhere in India. This he found out by equating the formal accommodation sector with the public hotel sector and other privately owned facilities for accommodation that were approved and classified by either the state Dept. of Tourism or Govt. of India in the context of Himachal. Another criteria Gladstone employed was 'pricing' of these accommodation facilities, where he argued that hotels charging more were more likely to present a formal character than the ones who costed less per night.

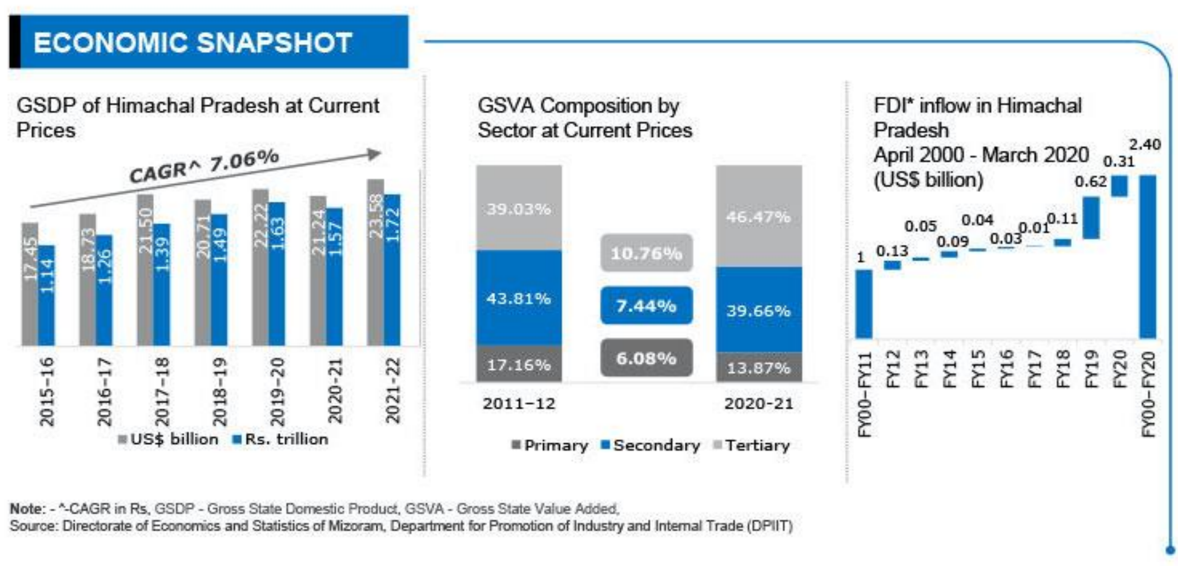

Figure: 5.4 Economic Profile of Himachal Pradesh

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics of Mizoram, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade[99]

While the state Tourism Department officially is responsible for trying to sustain tourism and related activities, such as registration of hotels, dealing with complaints, grievance redressal of hotel owners, taxi associations etc., in *Manali*, it's job entails management of beautification endeavours, developing infrastructure for parking spaces, hotels, home-stays, restaurants, adventure sports conductors, tour guides, photographers all of who have to be registered with the department. There are officially 3350 hotels, 1657 homestays, 2912 travel agencies, 222 adventure sports enterprises, 1314 guides and 899 photographers in Himachal Pradesh at present.[100]

[99] As available online at https://www.ibef.org/states/himachal-pradesh.aspx

[100] See Tourism & Civil Aviation Department of Himachal Pradesh's statistics available online at https://himachaltourism.gov.in/counter/ last accessed on Sep 5, 2021

Figure 5.5 The main market area popularly known as the Manali Mall

The tourism officials they agreed that infrastructural development needed a boost and from the tourism point of view more flights, some helicopters, choppers were needed for better commutation. The officials further added that highways are being made to effectively manage tourist traffic and the one from Keeratpur to Chandigarh and other super highways that are coming up linking Chandigarh to Mandi, will drastically reduce the time to travel into the hills of Himachal. Among the current big ropeway projects that are coming up, there is a one from Palchan to Rohtang Pass that is especially controversial and is estimated to reduce pollution in a major way by controlling vehicular emission as conveyed by the Tourism Department during one of the interviews. However, towards the end of my field research, I found out that this particular ropeway project would severely impact the small local businesses operating from stalls and carts, such as the local tea/magi sellers along the highway, the taxi drivers and the other local unregistered adventure sports conductors, who would be completely out of job once this is in place. There is also a general disagreement on the number of deodar trees that are going to be felled as a result of this project and for obvious reasons the Govt. figures (of approx. 400 trees) are much lesser than what the local

communities have suggested (1500 deodar trees) because there has been a lot of money and politics involved in getting environmental clearances to get the project sanctioned.

Additionally, there are projects in place engaged in constructing highways with 4 lanes that are among the ongoing roadway broadening measures along the hills that would apparently reduce traffic jams en-route the hills. However it may be seen as a source of major slope erosion, which the tourism officials refuse to address. On the question of solid waste management the Dept. of Tourism is grappling with only a single solid waste dumping ground at Rangri, near Manali that does some recycling apart from which there are no incineration plants near Manali. On the issue of pollution check mechanisms both the Marketing offices and the Tourism Development offices have confirmed that NGT has restricted the number of cars (which earlier was about 3500 cars in peak season) to 1200 cars per day to move to the Rohtang pass with the Bahang barrier conducting pollution checks enroute to Rohtang. However it was also observed that there were no pollution checks for goods carriers, trucks, buses that travel uphill to reach Manali to cater to the bulk of the tourists in the town. As Singh points out (1989: 138) tourism in India, "unfortunately, has still to consider research on "tourists" important to the sound growth of the industry... There is a crisis of information on Himalayan resorts." Thus, while there is dearth of information on accurate tourism statistics in the state, despite the research and studies that are conducted periodically to identify potentials of tourism development, the overall growth of the industry depends on an effective analysis of the local capacities of tourism development which has to be then counterposed with basic tourist needs towards a sustainable and environment friendly endeavour.

5.4 Rural versus Urban forms of Tourism in Himachal

"Aye, kya bolti tu? Aati kya PVR? McDonald jayenge, McBurger khayenge, McLove manayenge aur kya. And why not, yaar. V-day and V-mail comes but once a year, no? One day for us to play… the MTV way. So… be you my Valentine?"

- Nikhat Kazmi, *The Sunday Times of India*
  February 14, 1999 (Valentine's Day)

The classic lines of a popular song from a Bollywood masala movie, twisted a little to underscore the popular sentiments of the thriving urban middle class in the cities perhaps best

explains the present state of affairs that even the hills-scapes in the country have not escaped. What started as the European style sculpting of hill stations in India, has over the years transformed into an urbanized over-crowded industry. The genesis and rapid development of the leisure industry of economically under-privileged countries such as India and specifically its tourist spots may be attributed to a parallel accentuation of the culture of consumption in the Third World, especially amongst its privileged classes thriving in urban spaces. As Gurcharan Das[101] (2002: 287) remarks, "We start off the twenty- first century with a dynamic and rapidly growing middle class which is pushing the politicians to liberalize and globalize… and it is enthusiastically embracing consumerist values and lifestyles."

For William Robinson (1996: 18) "Transnationationlized fractions in the Third World are "junior" partners: they oversee at the local level, and under the tutelage of their "senior" counterparts in the North, the sweeping economic, political, social and cultural changes involved in globalization, including free- market reform, the fomenting of "democratic" systems in place of dictatorships, and the dissemination of the culture/ideology of consumerism and individualism." Whilst the process of urbanization itself is the result of a pulsating economy undergoing rapid change socio-culturally because of forces of globalization and liberalization, it actively plays as a major contributing factor for shaping consumer needs and desire therefore further facilitating a speedy makeover of this cultural consumerism. As Barber (1992) points out, the socio-political forces mesmerizing "the world with fast music, fast computers, and fast food- with MTV, Macintosh and McDonald's, pressing nations into one commercially homogenous global network," calling it "McWorld" is the idea driving the very nature of most industries globally and holds good for the leisure industry as well. This has in turn has created what Gladstone (2005) calls, the "comprador class," that which has over the years successfully tied itself to "global capital flows" and has managed to sustain itself despite poverty proliferating at its usual pace like in most low-income countries. It is this class that dictates the overall consumer culture owing to its control over resources and thereby predicates the idea of 'urban desire' luring the other classes who in turn get attracted to and strive to achieve those standards to be at par with the swift changes and more so with these classes.

[101] Gurcharan Das is the former Head and CEO of Proctor and Gamble, India

In a 1999 cover story of India Today, a news magazine that had a feature on the growing demand and easily accessibility of synthetic drugs such as cocaine, ecstasy and LSD compared these 'designer' drugs with its relatively traditional psychotropic counterparts such as opium, *bhang,* and *charas* to conclude that it is the urban elite residing primarily in cities that has created a 'designer culture' to socially level up itself, as opposed to rural habits where 'smoking up' is a more traditional and cultural practice for the community. The contributors to the story, Ramani and Thapa (1999: 52-53) go on to state that:

> "For this Armani-Suited, gelled, city-slick segment, cocaine isn't a problem. It's just the latest fashion accessory. And there is an openness about the entire thing as they blow white lines inside their steel and chrome BMWs and Porches or pop multi-coloured pills in huge rave parties, jiving to some hypnotic techno beat. People who do drugs in this rich brat pack aren't perceived as losers. In fact, they're the winners… These rich kids become role models for others who break into this elite circle and start equating drugs with coolness."

It is this 'coolness' quotient that has driven many in the metropolitan spaces to take up recreational substance abuse whether expensive synthetic drugs or traditional *charas* and *hashish* to not only survive in urban 'hep' cliques but helped fashion urban desires for holidaying in far- away hills that offer these recreational objects of psychedelic satisfaction, be it Kodaikanal's magic mushrooms[102] or Himachal's *Malana Creme*. As a domestic tourist from Mumbai when interviewed in a café in Old *Manali* reflects, "I would usually not indulge in smoking up… but [here] it's different!"

In Himachal's *Manali*, the town where the study is primarily based at, one can find both urban and rural forms of tourism co-existing side by side. While conducting mobile ethnography, I found that the New Manali area in the town bustles with restaurants, bars and plush hotels and resorts offering five- star luxury to the rich and the urban aspirational middle classes, the Old Manali area is relatively quiet with quaint coffee-shops, German bakeries and simple home-stays and lodges for the lower income families on shoe-string budget for holidaying or for the *hippies*, who come for much longer stays in the hills. Rural forms of

[102] See Junaid KC, Mohamed Riyas Kozhikkattil & Divya N.V. (2019) Drug Tourism in India: Trends and Challenges, in *IJTRS*, Vol 4 (2), pp 30-34 available online at https://ijtrs.com/uploaded_paper/DRUG%20TOURISM%20IN%20INDIA%20TRENDS%20AND%20CHALLENGES%20.pdf last accessed on Sep 5, 2021

tourism in and around Manali may be seen in the villages of *Prini*, *Palchan*, *Buruwa*, where homestays are set up for ecologically sustainable tourism practices to develop by local communities, who also offer their homes to tourists for the duration of their stay. Rural tourism has been encouraged by the government of Himachal Pradesh owing to the economic potential it envisages for the local communities, to increase income for poor households, check migration of the local youth to neighboring states by offering an alternative to horticulture, agriculture and fishing and thereby promoting orchard tourism and local art, handicrafts and culture. The government of Himachal Pradesh through its Homestay Scheme in its tourism policy sought to developing the tourism potential of the peripheries of the main tourist centers such as Manali, in order to balance off the carrying capacity concerns faced by such centers. In 2008 Manali registered the first ever homestay unit in the state and since then the number of homestays have increased from 300 units with 900 rooms in 2008 to a sweeping 500 homestays with 1300 rooms in 2012, out of which more than 130 homestays were recorded in Manali alone. However, a large share of rural tourism in Himachal is unrecorded and operates informally, however some outside players record their business enterprises in and around these villages of Manali, and declare them as ‘homestays’ since these are exempt from the VAT and Luxury Taxes that are otherwise levied to profit- making hotel enterprises. While the formal sector of tourism and its markets has been the predominant object of analysis, probably owing to the ease of identification, both in terms of scale and better availability of statistical data, the informal tourism enterprises and ‘shadow’ markets have been largely obfuscated in tourism studies. As Opermann 1993: 541) maintains,

> “although [it’s] existence has been accepted by the disciplines of diffusionist paradigm, even as a major element in the early phases of tourism development, drifters are generally ignored in the tourism research.”

Also, as Gladstone (2005) points out, this neglect may also be attributed to the obsession in tourism studies to study the economic impact of ‘high- end’ tourism. This is nonetheless challenged by Meijers (1991) who establishes that in some instances, International Informal Sector (IIS) tourists (mostly hippies, solo travelers and backpackers) spend as much money during their relatively longer stints in the host country as do the high-end tourists who stay for shorter durations. However, Cohen (1972) suggests that ‘drifters’ are more likely to be economic liabilities than potential revenue generators for the local economy of host countries. In the same vein and more pessimistically Smith (1990: 34) refers to these young drifters as

‘virus’ who travel from one place to the other “leaving behind prostitution, alcoholism, juvenile crime, and narcotics.” I argue that while a combination of factors may be attributed to these conditions, the onus cannot be singularly placed on the international informal sector tourists or ‘drifters’ for these problems. The unregulated informal sector in Manali and Malana has been generated out of the demands of both the domestic and the international tourists’ coupled with the host communities’ engagement and service delivery practices[103] in terms of supply chains that works in tandem with the needs and aspirations of the tourists’ in question.

Thus, the study is enriched through a profiling of tourism activity, in the way in has generated a massive leisure industry in these hills, involving a range of small scale homestays, guest houses, and lodges in and around the relatively rural areas around the bustling Manali town along with mega corporate and luxury hotels run by the big businessmen from Delhi and Chandigarh, mostly built in and around the main market and mall areas. This is reflective of the economic motivations that drive these big and small players, that which commensurate with the repercussions that tourism continues to impact the land and lives of the local people of Himachal in terms of both generating opportunities and simultaneously creating a forevermore ecologically unstable locale.

5.5 Domestic versus Foreign Tourists

Since the motivations of travel and tourism are very different for domestic and foreign tourists, including the activities they envisage doing in the hills, it is useful to look at the ways in which they desire leisure and conduct themselves in the course of performing tourism. As Gladstone (2005: 146) points out, “The British supervised construction of a mall built in gingerbread style, complete with Victorian tea shops, a village church, a recreation park and amphitheatre (Annadale), a clubhouse, library, billiard hall, theatres (Gaiety and the Ritz), and even a replica of an English public school.” Thus, the desire of the British to reconstruct a mini England in their colonized land in and thereafter officially declaring Shimla, as the summer capital in many ways led to a complete makeover of the hills of Himachal. Following suit, the other European travelers started frequenting the hills and

[103] Service delivery practices refers to practices that are guided by a standard set of principles based on which its operation takes place.

mountains in Himachal coupled with the domestic tourists, whose choice of destination in these hills was guided by the rise of middle-class growth and packaged tourism interventions.

The Table 5.1 below shows a year-wise breakdown of domestic and international tourist footfall in Himachal between 2008 and 2015.

Details of Tourist Arrival Report (Indian and Foreign)

YEAR	DOMESTIC	FOREIGN	TOTAL
2008	20,01,674	1,12,910	21,14,584
2009	22,24,649	1,19,514	23,44,163
2010	23,95,990	1,33,707	25,29,697
2011	26,59,527	1,38,488	27,98,015
2012	30,82,545	1,43,900	32,26,445
2013	27,66,709	1,19,341	28,86,050
2014	31,87,436	1,04,309	32,91,745
2015	33,14,463	1,09,468	34,23,931

*Source: Tourism & Civil Aviation Office, Kullu

In the scope of the current research, I look at not only the quantum of foreign versus domestic tourists with changes in seasonality, but analyse the unique forms of tourism/ tourist activities that commensurate with specific kind of tourists. For instance, the ways in which specific types of spaces in *Manali* have been preferred by each of the domestic and the international tourists through the short interviews I conduct with the tourists.

The study reveals that while the most number of domestic tourist footfall was recorded in the month of May and June, the international tourists preferred the months between May and September peaking with foreign tourists arriving for trekking and mountaineering activities during the later -half of August and September, with the end of the Indian monsoons in these hills. Also, the number of hotel and homestay occupancy was recorded as the most in the months of May and June, with December and January recording the least occupancy. The study also shows that domestic tourists between the age group of 25- 34 years were logging as the most predominant in opting for weekend holidaying or honeymooning in *Manali*, with

the most number of interviewees being 'married' at that time. While solo and backpacking tourists recording a very low number amongst domestic tourists as compared to their international counterparts, who were mostly solo travelers or backpackers.

A significant number of domestic tourists, especially low- income families also opted for extremely low budget and in some instances free accommodation in monasteries and *dharmshalas* having combined the experience of both pilgrimage and leisure in these hills. Large numbers of domestic middle- class tourists were also found to be consuming food mostly at *dhabas* and fast- food centres in and around the main market area in *Manali* as compared to dining at restaurants while quaint Italian cafés, restaurants and German bakeries cater mostly to the upper middle class of domestic tourists along with foreigners. It was also found that although most of the domestic tourists made their own travel arrangements to reach *Manali*, a substantial number of them opted for packaged site-seeing deals locally in and around *Manali*, such as *Vasisth*, *Naggar*, *Kullu*, *Manikaran*, *Kasol* etc.

It is also interesting to note that the influencing factors for tourists to practice specific forms of tourism in Himachal (for instance, leisure, pilgrimage, adventure) is also naturally connected to not only the performance of that specific kind of tourism but correlates to the place and duration of stay. It was seen that while the domestic tourists who were interested in mostly in 'doing' pilgrimage were opting for low budget accommodations around the bustling pilgrimage site and stayed for a much longer period than the upper middle classes of domestic tourists who opted for luxury hotels equipped with a 'spa' experience or fancy homestays in the quieter parts of the town for their retreat. Since spending on holidaying is not a factor for the latter, it was seen that the tendency to privately hire cars and taxis to travel in and around *Manali* was more prominent amongst this class, while the former relied mostly on shared vehicles and autos provided by local transport associations and packaged deal operators.

The study also revealed that a substantial middle- class population of domestic tourists also stay in moderately priced inns/ homestays/ hotels that provide rooms @ 500- 1000 INR (Indian Rupees) per night for which the average duration of stay does not exceed 3 nights for each individual/ family unit. Most domestic honeymooners were found to have availed packaged deals in *Manali* with a relatively flexible itinerary that they found useful owing to the provision of private cars ensuring privacy and security during travel. It was also seen that

while the domestic solo travelers were akin to the foreign backpackers in terms of similarities in destination preferences and mode of travel, that often involved trekking and hiking to sites like *Jogini* falls from *Vasisth*, or travelling to *Kasol*, *Malana* and *Tosh* 'to get away' from the world, or engage in adventure sports activities such as river crossing and rafting on the Beas, paragliding in *Solang*, the foreign backpacking tourists stayed for longer periods of time in the hills to rejuvenate and mostly based themselves in low budget hostels in and around Old *Manali* unlike the former.

These very distinctions of culture, class and aspirations of the varied kinds of tourists and their performances of tourism in these hills leads to crystallization of observably distinct tourist sites that are organically produced. Given this nature of the diversity of interests fueling the desire for tourism for both domestic and foreign tourists in Himachal and in *Manali* in particular, it would perhaps be reasonable to state that their own class positions and aspirations feed into the complex political dynamics of tourism demand and supply which then further produces certain kinds of 'spaces' driven by those specific interests, that which make possible the sustenance of both formal and informal networks of goods and services to thrive.

Chapter 6
Tourism & Its Aftermath in Himachal

In this chapter, I discuss the study the impact of aggressive tourism promotion initiatives in Himachal Pradesh and the anthropogenic impact it has on the ecology of these hills including environmental stress and those of carrying capacity concerns. I use these concepts and pitch them in the light of the idea of 'collective sustenance' that I develop, to understand the micro-politics of individual and collective motivations and responses in the hills in dealing with the transformations of the landscape and situation of risks, as a result. I also address future environmental concerns by discussing alternative and more sustainable ecology friendly tourism practices that could offer solutions to environmental degradation.

6.1 Tourism Promotion Initiatives in India

India's tourism sector is estimated to grow by 6.7% reaching approximately 35 trillion Indian Rupees (USD 488 billion) by 2029 accounting for 9.2% of the total economy[104]. The same report suggests that the total international tourist arrival in the country is expected to be around 30.5 million by 2028. The government of India has been continually engaged in spending on a variety of infrastructural development facilities and on tourism allied sectors to boost the industry in the country. Various policy initiatives and campaigns such as the Incredible India campaign[105] has lured both domestic and foreign tourists by projecting the image of India as a remarkable destination with its various parts endowed with unique culture, history, heritage and natural beauty. Tourism providers shortly began offering competitive packages for holidaying and a range of low-cost private airlines and 'discounted' online packages started catering to all kinds of tourisms through convenient and affordable opportunities that brought about new kinds of tourist flows.

The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, recently received a 70% hike in the union Budget with an allocation of a sweeping 1,590 crore from 980 crore Indian rupees, to focus on

[104] See *Indian Tourism and Hospitality Industry Report*, May 2021, available online at https://www.ibef.org/industry/indian-tourism-and-hospitality-industry-analysis-presentation last accessed on Sep 5, 2021

[105] A first of its kind marketing initiative launched by Amitabh Kant, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India and conceptualized by V. Sunil (Ogilvy & Mather) in 2002 with an objective to brand India as an ultimate tourism destination offering unique experiences, that at the end of the first year itself generated a 16% increase in tourist traffic in the country.

infrastructural development of the sector and towards publicity and promotional initiatives as of 2016-17. The government further allocated 900 crore Indian rupees towards infrastructure development, 700 crore INR towards the *Swadesh Darshan Scheme* and 100 crore Indian rupees for the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (*PRASAD*) scheme. As is evident from the interviews of various officials of the state tourism departments, apart from central fund injections, the state and center are both actively working together towards receiving investments in the sector from the big corporates in India and even foreign players. The lack of safety in other tourist destinations in the mountains and hills of India, such as Kashmir and most parts of North East including Assam, Manipur, Mizoram has further contributed to the significant rise of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. Also, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently drawing up plans to promote pilgrimage in Himachal as part of his Hindutva agenda, through various schemes (I discuss in the subsequent sections), tourism in Himachal Pradesh is witnessing an upsurge.

The focus areas of the state tourism policies of that have already started to develop substantially are in the areas of –

1. Development of facilities to support meetings, incentives, conferences and events in urban centres
2. Mega Tourism Projects in high potential areas
3. Cruise Tourism along the coastline
4. Water/ Amusement/ Theme parks
5. Spiritual Tourism
6. Coastal/ Beach Tourism
7. Cinematic Tourism
8. Khadi/ Handloom/ Handicraft & Textile Tourism
9. Archaeological & Historical Tourism
10. Geo- Tourism
11. Eco & Wildlife Tourism
12. Adventure Tourism & Water Sports
13. Wellness & Medical Tourism
14. Cuisine Tourism
15. Industrial Tourism

State Departments have also begun developing circuit driven and theme based tourism with Himachal promoting a range of theme oriented tourism opportunities such as Religious and Spiritual tourism, Wellness and Medical tourism, Eco-tourism and Adventure tourism in its various parts.

Figure 6.1 on the left shows Dept. of Tourism approved rates for Skiing gear hire, while Figure 6.2 on the right showcases the different kinds of adventure sports activities offered by a local operator in Manali

Himachal Pradesh (and its neighbouring state of Uttarakhand) is known by names such as *Devbhoomi*, or land of the Gods. Famed for its distinctiveness of lofty snow- peaked Himalayan mountain ranges that it showcases as part of its topography, it also derives the name Himachal which literally translates to “the abode of eternal snow.” It is these mountains that have moulded the state’s heritage, history, ecology, culture and social living that which has further shaped the range of travel and tourism experiences in Himachal. While numerous temples and religious places have encouraged pilgrimage and spiritual tourism in Himachal, *Bijli Mahadeo*, *Chintpurni*, *Jwalaji*, *Baijnath, Nandadevi, Manikaran* and *Keylong* monastery deserve special mention, recording the second highest concentration of pilgrims in the world[106]. Wellness and Medical tourism has also been practiced in Himachal since the colonial times, where many of its regions such as *Shimla* and *Dharmshala* were treated as places for physical and mental relaxation, rejuvenation offering conditions suitable for recuperation of physical exhaustion, anxiety and other diseases common in the plains. This sector has over time evolved offering new age facilities of modern spas and saunas (building on earlier pilgrimage- associated *kunds*) combined with modern adaptations of ancient yoga techniques that has also made its niche in Himachal. Eco-tourism has also developed

[106] Singh S. (2006) Tourism in the Sacred Indian Himalayas: An Incipient Theology of Tourism?, *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol 11 (4), p 375

substantially in the recent years in Himachal, having taken lessons from the best practices of community based natural resource management, and with the support of local communities themselves, who offer economically viable environment friendly alternatives to urban forms of tourism.

The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, has newly sanctioned an eco-tourism project in Himachal amounting to 3.68 crores INR, to create circuit driven ecotourism units in *Kullu*, *Shimla*, *Kinnaur* and *Bilaspur* districts and out of which 2.94 crores INR has been already released to the state along with the Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation further releasing 1.12 crores as the first installment for the phase of work scheduled during 2008 - 2009. Eco-tourism has been promoted recently in many regions through Private Public Partnership (PPP) programmes, whereby facilities even in the state forest department have been rented out as sites to practice environmentally responsible tourism such as in *Shoghi* camping site close to Shimla, *Ala* forest rest house in Dalhousie, *Barog* camping site, the *Chewa* site near *Barog* and *Moti Kuna* hill at *Sanawar*, *Solan* district. Local communities have also been actively involved in setting up various homestays and cottages including an igloo stay[107] especially in the villages around *Buruwa*, *Prini* and *Banjar*, *Kullu*, thereby supporting eco-tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The Adventure sports tourism industry has especially witnessed a boom in Himachal with many service providers, big and small, including independent enterprises that operate unlicensed. With the activities ranging from very dangerous to less risky, the adventure tourism initiative supported by the government, however has only advertised high altitude trekking, paragliding, skiing, heli-skiing and white water rafting on its brochures and pamphlets, clearly leaving out a range of 'adventure' activities that the state economy is benefitted from indirectly.

The government of Himachal Pradesh has implemented some key initiatives and formulated policies to augment tourist footfall in the state over the years and continually attempts to strategize, promote and implement rigorous operations to ensure higher revenue generation for the state. In 2005, the Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation proposed a future tourism policy that envisaged the growth of the industry as a phenomenal possibility for state economy of Himachal having enlisted a series of schemes and strategies to promote tourism

[107] The Manali Igloo Stay is an endeavor by the locals of the *Prini* village, that has provisions for night stay at the igloo built by the local community and additionally offers adventure activities such as snow hiking, skiing and snowboarding

all through the state, such as the *Homestays Scheme*, *Har Gaon ki Kahani*, *Unforgettable Himachal Campaign*, Adventure tourism and various other policy incentives allied to tourism and recreation development.[108] The *Homestays Scheme* sought to provide clean, comfortable and affordable accommodation to tourists especially in rural areas coupled with offering the tourists with cleaner alternatives to urban tourism by giving them a glimpse of rural life and culture while successfully decongesting the urban centers that face over- crowding and heavy volumes of vehicular traffic. Initiated in 2008, the *Homestays Scheme* was also meant to support local communities in remote villages of Himachal by exempting sales and other luxury taxes usually applicable for hotels. The *Har Gaon ki Kahani* scheme was introduced in 2010 to showcase the local culture and folklore traditions in Himachal. Out of each of the 12 districts of the state, a village was chosen to promote the local culture of the region through oral narration of ancient stories and traditions. This scheme was promoted to develop a historical and cultural understanding of the region amongst the tourists. The *Unforgettable Himachal Campaign* was inaugurated in 2011 by the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (HPTDC) and was an initiative to reach out to maximum audience through the mass media in the form of print, online and television advertisements promoting Himachal Pradesh as a dream destination capable for building unforgettable memories. In 2005, Adventure tourism begun to be promoted by the government of Himachal Pradesh, which showcased Himachal as having a substantially developed adventure sports industry offering a variety of activities such as para-gliding, skiing, river rafting, river crossing, mountain-biking, and heli- skiing in different parts of the state. Various other policy initiatives to encourage private sector investments and participation began to be offered in Himachal, such as announcing a 10-year tax holiday for entertainment outfits and by deferring payment of luxury tax by hotels and other tourism providers[109]. These schemes and initiatives have contributed towards opening the floodgates of a massive floating population in the form of tourists, which has had enormous economic implications towards revenue generation in the state.

The Himachal Pradesh state government has recently also launched a scheme '*Nai Raahein Nai Manzilein'* worth 50 crore Indian Rupees for the development of unexplored tourist spots

[108] See 2012 Results Framework Document for Tourism and Civil Aviation, Shimla, Government of Himachal
[109] See KPMG Report (2012) Tourism in Himachal Pradesh and the Way Ahead by PHD Chamber, New Delhi

in the state[110]. Under this project, 20 crore Indian Rupees has already been released to construct a '*Shiv Dham'* a centre for pilgrimage and a culture centre with open spaces for meditation in *Mandi* town. Also, the *Bir Billing* area is being developed with the assistance of the Forest Department, as a paragliding destination while the *Chansahal* area in Shimla is being developed as a Ski destination in the state at present. Furthermore, since water sports have also been identified as generating substantial revenue to tourism, three new areas are being developed as centres for water sports in *Larji* Reservoir, *Pong* Dam area and *Kol* Dam under the same scheme. Additionally, the Tourism Department has signed and sanctioned the setting up of ropeway projects for better connectivity and tourism related activities such as the *Dharamshala* ropeway and *Sri Adi Himanai-Chamunda Ji* in *Kangra*, *Palchan* to *Rohtang* and *Bhunter* to *Bijli Mahadev* in *Kullu*. The Civil Aviation department in Himachal is also working to expand *Kullu*, *Kangra* and *Shimla* airstrips on a priority basis. Under the RCS, UDAN-2 program, five new heliports are being developed in *Shimla* and *Rampur* (*Shimla* district), *Baddi* (*Solan* district), *Kangnidhar* (*Mandi* district) and SASE[111] (*Manali*, *Kullu* district) and a proposal for the construction of Greenfield Airport (measuring 2513 *bigha*[112]) at *Nagchala* in the *Mandi* district is being reviewed by the state government currently. This development of tourism and travel in this ecologically sensitive region has however also brought its share of concerns impacting local communities, the environment having played out its own political and economic interests that further has implications for the growth and development of tourism industry in Himachal.

6.2 Environmental Concerns

The snow peaked 'mountainscape' of Himachal have been exploited for its natural beauty since antiquity, however the velocity with which developments have taken shape, have rendered the fragile ecology of these mountains more susceptible to environmental risks and natural disasters. The way in which tourism has been planned in these hills have been done much akin to the plains, without having taken into consideration the ecology or the nature of

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110 See Government of Himachal Pradesh's *Economic Survey 2020-21*, Economic & Statistics Department, Himachal Pradesh available online at https://himachalservices.nic.in/economics/pdf/Economic_Survey_eng2020-21.pdf accessed last on Sep 5, 2021

111 SASE is short for Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment, located near *Manali* and is invested in the research of snow and avalanche as the name suggests.

112 *Bigha* is a scale popularly used in India for land records, to measure land, where 1 *bigha* translates to 0.6198 acre of land

population inhabiting these terrains. The increased floating population density owing to tourism boom in Himachal have over the years proved detrimental for the region. While Himachal has been largely an agrarian economy with a predominantly rural population (which amounts to more than 90% of its total population) living in the villages all over the state, it has witnessed a steady boom in tourist traffic which has further augmented rapid processes of urbanization simultaneously with development of tourism sector in the state.

With around 89.96%[113] of its rural population engaged in agriculture and horticulture that is favoured by the climatic conditions of the region, constituting the primary sector in the state, the processes of extensive urbanization have led to many constraints for the simple rural folk in Himachal Pradesh. The Tourism and Civil Aviation department of the state with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank under the Infrastructure Investment Program for tourism has completed 8 sub projects worth 250 crore Indian Rupees during the financial year 2020-21[114] to provide improved facilities for the tourists in the state and is targeted at increasing tourist inflow, increase per visitor spending and the duration of stay for leisure. It is interesting to note that while the state government has stressed on the need for effective management and development of forests, pasture lands and orchards (apple specifically, that has also been financed by the World Bank recently), it has simultaneously pursued an unrestrained tourism policy that has affected these natural resources in turn. The multi-faceted tourism establishments in the form of separate large and small industries have also posed increased threat to the ecology having exposed these mountains to the risks of unstructured development causing slope erosion, road accidents owing to landslides, flashfloods and environmental pollution to name a few along with overall ecological degradation.

The most consequential damage has been from the extensive pressure that tourism has exerted on the Himalayan ecology, with a burgeoning construction of tourism facilities and the mushrooming of transportation networks that have further led to massive deforestation and destabilization of the ecosystem in Himachal. Additionally, clearing of forest land for increasing built-up land mass and feeling of timber illegally, have intensified the issue of deforestation. Deforestation has not only created increased risk conditions of landslides and

[113] See *Himachal Pradesh State Report, June 2021* available online at https://www.ibef.org/states/himachal-pradesh.aspx last accessed Sep 5, 2021

[114] See available online at https://himachalservices.nic.in/economics/pdf/Economic_Survey_eng2020-21.pdf last accessed on Sep 5, 2021

soil and slope erosion but also further endangered biodiversity and a decline in rare species of birds and animals native to the geography, having induced a loss of habitat for these creatures.[115] This apart tourism generated waste production especially seen around trekking trails, roadsides, tourist spots and riversides, its inadequate management have not only tarnished the aesthetic beauty of Himachal, but also created high pollution levels in air and water. In *Manali* itself, many hotels in and around the Mall area, have flouted the TCP norms of confining construction to a maximum of five stories in terms of building height. Hotels have also been constructed right into the river beds along the *Kullu- Manali* stretch and in many instances, the Beas had been diverted into channels for construction work. With a complete lack in land use planning and disproportionate regulations on constructions, *Manali* town has turned into a construction chaos with the mushrooming of unregulated tourism.

Figure 6.3 showing unplanned urbanization ushered by hotels and guest houses in Manali

It is estimated that *Manali* town and the other village panchayats in its vicinity produce approx. 20 metric tonnes of garbage at a daily basis, with the volume increasing to 50 metric

[115] See Environment Policy Guidelines, Department of Environment, Science and Technology, Government of Himachal Pradesh available online at http://desthp.nic.in/epguidelines.html last accessed December 8, 2017

tonnes in the peak season[116], given an obsolete waste management plant that the municipality is grappling with. It is also surprising that currently there are no incineration plants in *Manali* town to treat solid waste. The trash from tourist spots as far away as the *Rohtang* Pass (approx. 51 km away) and *Gulaba* (approx. 20 km away) is brought to *Rangri*, 3.5 km away from *Manali* for treatment which completely lacks the infrastructure to deal with the sheer volume of it. The Integrated Solid Waste Management Plant at *Rangri* was set up for waste disposal by the *Manali* Municipality with assistance from NORAD, with a capacity to treat only 30 metric tonnes per day. With the present rate of waste collection, the plant is in need of serious infrastructural development. An explosion of motor vehicles such as innumerous tourist buses, taxis, private cars, goods carrier trucks on the highways and in tourist congested spaces such as *Kullu* and *Manali* town in particular, has increased vehicular emission levels and contributed to excessive air pollution. According to a recent report, the air quality of *Manali* town has declined with the RSPM levels[117] increasing especially in the weekends, recorded as high as 60.35 microgram per metric cube. Other toxic gases such as Sulphur dioxide and Nitrogen dioxide are also found in *Manali's* air because of the massive influx of these tourist vehicles. This apart, the unmanaged traffic of these vehicles has created bottlenecks and congestion developing at almost every intersection of the main towns and near tourist spots I visited. Furthermore, unregulated construction of hotels, guest-houses and other tourism facilities between the *Kullu- Manali* stretch has led to soil, water and air pollution.

The rivers in the state are also facing great risks because of development of hydro-power and big tourism projects in the state. The diversion of river flows involved in the construction of dams in ecologically vulnerable landscapes such as Himachal, tends to have disastrous implications for the local people. Besides fragmenting habitats, non-scientific and excessive illegal sand mining, industrial pollution and unregulated construction of various infra-structure development activities associated with damming, the unprecedented rate of 'development' as corollary to the growth of tourism, culminates into a series of maladies affecting the lives and livelihoods of local communities, who depend on these rivers. The rivers in Himachal have been polluted with industrial effluence and sewage as an outcome of

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[116] See *Hindustan Times* article on 'Air quality in Shimla, Manali declines due to tourist influx,' available online at http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/air-quality-in-shimla-manali-decline-due-to-tourist-influx/story-FF8AzMKA4sFgNjMqRKkuAO.html last accessed on December 8, 2017

[117] RSPM level refers to a fraction of TSPM or Total Suspended Particulate Matter, that is readily inhaled by human beings through their respiratory system.

primarily the tourism swell in the state. This is because of the rapid urbanization and growth of tourism that has in turn led to a heavy tourist inflow, the burden of which the state is grappling with. According to a recent report, *Manali* and *Kullu* towns top the list for polluting the rivers in Himachal, and maintains that the majority of such tourist towns with large floating populations lack proper sewage treatment plants in the state and records a rise in per capita generation of trash in these hills[118]. The Beas that was once a source of potable water in the *Kullu* valley has turned into a sewer owing to the lack of a proper sewage system. Sewage and solid waste disposal is also not effectively managed in the state and trash loads of plastic, building waste, and muck dumping are often found dumped on the hillside. The sewage system in the urban centers of Himachal are also technologically extremely inadequate, and for which the rivers bear the brunt and ultimately turn into the dumping ground for untreated sewage generated at an alarming rate. Disposal of solid waste, encroachment on the river waterway and water extraction are all consequences of an unmanaged process of tourism. The National Green Tribunal in 2013 had ordered to shut down 34 hotels located along the river banks in the *Kullu* and *Manali* stretch in order to deal with river pollution of the Beas, since they were operating without any required permissions from the pollution control board whatsoever.

Officially, there are about 302 polluted streams along 275 rivers in the country, out of which the Beas in Himachal has a disturbing water health according to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. This health is measures by assessing the water quality, the quantity of total dissolved solids and employing other indicators such as dissolved oxygen, pH levels and temperature. Beas was found to have degraded in terms of water quality and overall health impacted by pollution in a span of between the last 20- 30 years. This may be confidently attributed to the spurt of the tourism sector at an alarming rate in Himachal in the past two to three decades. Between the years 1985 and 2006, the number of hotels in the *Kullu- M*anali valley had increased from 10 to over 600. The number of tourist footfall in the *Kullu- Manali* circuit alone saw an enormous rise from a mere 38,000 in 1975 to 1,30,000 in 1985 with the figure climbing to 250,000 by 1990[119]. The *Kullu*, *Manali* and *Bhuntar*

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[118] Article on "Tricking sullage from towns polluting rivers in Himachal", in the *Hindustan Times*, June 21, 2017 available online at http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/trickling-sullage-from-towns-polluting-rivers-in-himachal/story-KzaNouqELAEzIuDbHtjyaN.html last accessed on Dec 1, 2017

[119] See Manshi Asher's (2008) *Dream Destination for World Class Tourists… Nightmare for the Himalayas: Impacts of the proposed Himalayan Ski Village Project in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh*, a preliminary fact finding report, for *Himi Niti* Campaign, HP, *Jan Jagran Evam Vikas Samiti*, Kullu district, HP and Equations, Bangalore, March 2008 available online at

municipalities have not been successful in checking pollution in the *Beas*. A considerable quantity of solid waste trash and junk along with a part of sewage mostly generated by the resorts, home-stays and hotels all the way from tourist spots like the *Rohtang* pass, *Solang* valley, *Aleo*, *Old Manali*, *Kullu* and *Bhuntar* towns end up in the gushing streams of the Beas, where heaps of rubbish can be seen along the banks of the *Beas*[120]. The *Beas* continues to get more and more polluted each day owing to the complete lack in sewage disposal planning and solid waste management.

Himdhara, at *Palampur* (*Kangra*, Himachal) based NGO that works as an environment research and action collective, has recently brought out a report on the health of the rivers in Himachal based on the extent of threat they face in the wake of big hydro-power projects, unrestrained urbanization owing to tourism, industrial pollution, sand mining and flood and other climatic changes that both contribute to and are a result of large scale development activities in the state[121]. This threat projection report has been prepared by assessing social, cultural and economic values of these rivers according to *Himdhara*, who claim that any planning, strategizing or assessment process should involve a discussion with local communities to bring in their perspectives on the issues that will directly impact them. As Lankford and Howard (1994: 138) suggest that,

> "Local governments and tourism promoters should pay particular attention to the finding that if people feel they have access to the planning/ public review process and that their concerns are being considered, they would support tourism. Extensive efforts should be made to identify ways to involve the local residents in the continuing planning and design of their community."

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http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/Impacts%20Of%20The%20Proposed%20Himalayan%20Ski%20Village.pdf last accessed on Sep 6, 2021

[120] See P.R., Mishra & R.K. Nanda's (2014) 'Water Resource Pollution and Impacts on the Local Livelihood: A case Study of Beas river in Kullu district,' India in *Future of Food: Journal on Food, Agriculture and Society* 2 (1)

[121] See 2016 Report by *Himdhara* on *Dried and Dusted: State of the Rivers- Himachal Pradesh*, as part of India Rivers Week, 2016 available online at http://www.himdhara.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/State-of-the-Rivers-Report-final-2017-Himachal-Pradesh.pdf last accessed on December 2, 2017

Culturally, the exponential rise of tourism in Himachal has also inscribed a new set of values shaping attitudes, habits, beliefs and practices that have changed the 'culture of capital'[122] in the region by replacing it with crude forms of consumerism. As is reflected in one of the interviews with Hema-Ji (a local vender who sells her hand-knitted dried grass slippers, straw mattresses, baskets etc. outside the *Hadimba Devi Temple* in *Manali*) where she goes on to say that, "*Ab toh gaon ke log yeh sab use karna chhor diyen hain... market mein isse saste chappal mil jate hain… kuch tourist-log hi yeh kharidte hain aajkal…*" which translates as "these days villagers don't use these hand knitted slippers much… other kinds of cheap slippers are readily available in the market… it is only the tourists who buy these nowadays." She further reaffirms that while women in the villages earlier had the time to make handspun and hand knit clothes using locally sourced wool and cotton, that the community members used to wear all the time and take pride in, presently most of them prefer buying ready-made garments from the markets and reserve their traditionally made outfits for special occasions. This is seen not just in the choice of attire but everyday living in terms of using modern gadgets like cellphones, televisions and appliances that replaced their traditional modes of living and impacted their social and cultural life to a large extent. This had in many instances led to changes in the modes of living for local communities which has been replaced by new commodities that are easily and readily available in the market and does not require the time and patience it earlier did. Also with the explosion in tourist accommodation facilities resulting in construction of several kinds of hotels, restaurants, bars, travel agencies in an unmanaged way, the entire landscape of Himachal has dramatically changed aesthetically, replacing the natural scenic beauty with views of a concrete jungle, which these communities have not been used to in the past. Substituting primitive building material such as mud, straw and timber with cement, iron and asbestos have also led to an alienation from local knowledge and traditions (Donovan, 2013).

6.3 An Assessment of the proposed Himalayan Ski Village Project

Since tourism is primarily a resource centric and therefore a resource heavy industry that counts on the availability of natural resources and a combination of technology to provide the

[122] See Bourdieu P. & Passeron J-C. (1977)'s "Cultural Reproduction & Social Reproduction,“ for the concept of 'embodied cultural capital' relating to both inherited and acquired knowledge through socialisation of traditions.

ultimate tourist experience, its unregulated proliferation has generated irreversible damage on the ecology. While tourism has brought about exciting modes of income generating opportunities for the local communities in Himachal, where it has benefitted the rural poor in a variety of ways in terms of livelihood, it has simultaneously been responsible for the steady decay of the environment because of its uncontrolled expansion in this fragile landscape which has in turn affected lives and livelihoods of these communities and have led to the depletion of ‘commons’ that these communities depend on for sustenance. The Himalayan Ski Village project envisaged in 2004 in Kullu, Himachal may be treated a perfect case in point for understanding the communities’ struggle in demonstrating resistance to tourism led privatization of the commons in the context of collective sustenance.

The 300 million USD Himalayan Ski Village project financed by Alfred Ford[123], was successfully stalled by the local communities who worked together with the *Him Niti Abhiyan*, a local collective of environmentalists, lawyers and activists who were intensely concerned of the detrimental after-effects of the project on the ecology of Himachal. The Himalayan Ski Village (henceforth HSV) project proposed a construction of state of the art hotels, restaurants, cafes, entertainment and shopping arcades coupled with residential apartments and villas in the Kullu district of Himachal. Initially the proposed project built up area was meant to spread over 133 acres and required access to 6000 acres of forest land and pristine mountainscapes for skiing activities, a space for a storage house and a support base in terms of a helipad and a gas station near the Beas river (the area has not reduced as per the report of the Govt. High Powered Committee and stands at 223 acres or 93.1 Ha). The developers had proposed to divert 14.7 Ha of forest land for the project which the local communities organizations and NGOs opposed on the counts that it required large scale deforestation, increased risks of flash floods, siltation in dams and farms downstream, impacting flow of natural resources such as medicinal herbs and plants, fodder, fuel wood to the villages located along the slope, disrupt grazing rights and livelihoods of nomadic communities in high altitude pastures, and further lead to pollution of water resources and decreased water availability in the rivers and streams (that are the primary source of water for drinking and irrigation for local communities) owing to artificial snow making.

[123] Alfred Ford happens to be the great grandson of the US automaker, Henry Ford

In June 2007, *Jan Jagran Evam Vikas Samiti*[124] (a *Kullu*- based local NGO) and a local hotelier filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the High Court of Himachal Pradesh[125] and in April 2008, the Court dismissed it saying that they were satisfied with the state government's action of looking into the various aspects relating to setting up of the HSV through the six- member High Powered Committee. This committee was entrusted with conducting spot inspections and record resident views by early 2009, which the local communities boycotted since they were not supplied with any documents relating to the project that had been long demanded. Following this episode, a public meeting was held in June 2009 on the prospect of the Ski Village by a state level review committee which was in the end unanimously repudiated by the representatives of the local people, the Panchayats and the *Mahila Mandals*. The committee thus recognized the local people's non- acceptance stance and maintained that, "tourism is an economic activity, so it becomes necessary to spread it benefits to the community when we plan or develop… Development has to be in a manner that keeps in mind the wellbeing of the local people as well as the environment… Community participation is a must to develop and decentralize the development sector effectively… Such projects on the basis of single proposal received by the Government of Himachal Pradesh because of the non-acceptability and non-participation remains a non-starter."[126]

Tourism induced massive land acquisition and displacement of local communities for construction of mega hotel projects, have resulted in loss of access to natural resources thereby severely impacting livelihoods. Sometimes large-scale investments in the form of *benami* transactions[127] in the tourism sector expropriates common property resources that were originally meant for collective sustenance. The Planning Commission had been critical of the tourism policy in the state having brought out the Himachal Pradesh Development Report in 2005. In the report, the Commission vociferously maintained that the Himachal Tourism Department is pursuing a desperate tourism policy trying to oversell the already

[124] Under the leadership of Lal Chand Katoch and Pushpaal Singh Thakur, a small group of local residents of Kullu met on 10th January 2006 and collectivized themselves to raise awareness and discuss the issue, after the news of the MOU for the Ski Village was flashed in the newspaper.
[125] *Him Niti Campaign*, Himachal Pradesh, JJVS, EQUATIONS (2008) Impacts of the proposed Himalayan Ski Village Project in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh
[126] (2009) Report on Review/ Examination of the Project Himalayan Ski Village in Kullu District, Himachal Pradesh, submitted by a Committee constituted by the State Govt. on Directions of the Hon'ble High Court, HP pp 66-84
[127] *Benami* literally means not in one's original name and hence relates to transactions that are carried out with false names in other words false transactions.

saturated *Shimla- Kullu- Manali* circuit. It also emphasized on the fact that there were no new strategies adopted for tapping onto other potential tourist spots for tourism development to increase state revenue generation by the state Tourism Department. Notwithstanding the Section 118 of the Himachal Pradesh Tenancy and Land Reforms Act, 1972 that severely restricts sale and purchase of property to non-*Himachalis* or non-residents of the state, HSV was exempted from this law with the Government of Himachal Pradesh playing an adequate role in modifying its land policies under Section 118 to accommodate Land Reform Acts together with the Planning Commission's recommendations to entice private players and therefore huge investments in the tourism sector of the state.

6.4 Carrying Capacity Concerns in the hills

The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India had announced the Draft National Tourism Policy (NTP) on May 1, 2015 and proposed to engage with several new initiatives in order to develop tourism within the country through various promotional activities and by means of introducing advanced tourism products suited to the requirements of the industry. However, the draft policy has failed to directly address issues relating to people affected by tourism and respond to the challenges addressed by the various civil society organizations working with these vulnerable communities. While the draft policy proposes to create a 'Brand India' with the five 'T's it identifies as lists as tradition, talent, tourism, trade and technology, the policy document is in many ways flawed and unconstitutional since no discussions took place with the local self- governing institutions that are responsible for administering the tourism destinations. In Himachal, the story is no different, with vulnerable local people dependent on natural resources forever losing their lands and livelihoods to the tourism industry in the name of development. The processes of tourism development that have occurred over time without having taken into account the carrying capacity concerns of these fragile landscapes. The draft NTP of 2015 does not apprise the tourism sector with the implications of unregulated tourism development, thereby keeping concerns of regulation mechanisms for protection of the vulnerable people hidden away from its radar, while enabling the bigger players of the corporate sector receive tax benefits and subsidies. Also, while the policy stresses on the role of the Centre towards tourism development, it seems to invisiblise the role of the State Tourism Development Corporations, District councils and other institutions such as the Municipal Corporations and the Panchayat. The very enlisting of 'tourism' in the

concurrent list not only erodes the local and cultural aspects to tourism understanding and promotion, but also hinders effective dialogue and relevant participation of these institutions in policy interventions and decision making.

The World Tourism Organization (1993: 18) defines carrying capacity as, "the level of visitor use an area can accommodate with high levels of satisfaction of visitors and few impacts on resources" while Mathieson & Wall (1982: 21) define it as, "the maximum number of people who can use a site without an unacceptable decline in the quality of experience gained by visitors." A lay man's definition of carrying capacity of a tourist destination thus translates to its capability of absorbing the process of tourism before the host is negatively impacted by such tourism. However, according to Batta (2000), there are many layers to understanding carrying capacity with relation to tourism, where he maintains that many of these definitions that are usually used are problematic in that, they do not take into account the collective experiences namely the social, economic or cultural sensitivities of the host destination. He argues that while the definition seeks to highlight the importance of 'numbers' to arrive at an ideal quantity of tourism that the destination might seek rather than the numbers it can attract, it also spells out the limitations of that capacity to 'hold' tourist flows. For the sake of estimating the practical concerns of carrying capacity in the Himachal and the ways to measure it, the McIntyrean (1993: 23) definition that holds, "the maximum use of any site without causing negative effects on the resources, reducing visitor satisfaction, or exerting adverse impact upon society, economy and culture of the area" seems most plausible since it takes into consideration all the variants to measure capacity.

Carrying capacity may further be categorized as Natural, Social and Economic depending upon the threshold of adverse impact exerted on host destinations, based on each of these attributes, according to Batta (2000). Natural carrying capacity pertains to measuring that threshold based on physical and ecological factors that include overall cleanliness and lack of pollution in the destination's environment, lack of congestion, attractiveness of destination and an unpolluted flora and fauna that comprise the ecosystem and effective management of ecology with acceptable levels of air, water and soil pollution. Social carrying capacity incorporates the idea of lowest psychological rejuvenation and satisfaction that the tourists willingly accept before travelling to another destination along with estimating the social impact it will generate on local communities. Finally, economic carrying capacity relates to absorbing tourism activities without disrupting local endeavours that depend on income

generating opportunities in a tourist destination. In case of Himachal what was found was a complete rupture in all aspects of natural, social and economic carrying capacity considerations. During the FGDs that were conducted with the local communities, and during interviews with small scale local venders and *dhaba-wallahs* what came out in terms of discussions of the impact of tourism, was a distressing picture. In a particular focus group that engaged the village elders of *Shanag*, (proximally located to *Manali* town) some very interesting anecdotes and reflections came out where most of them agreed that while tourism was generating employment to the local youth, the rapid transformations they had seen to the hillscapes in their lifetime, in a matter of a few decades has kept them pondering on the necessity of this development. Parkash Ji, who was one of the respondents of this FGD goes on to say that, "*Pahar toh pahar nahi raha... charo or hotel aur tourist… jahaan jatein hai ganda karte hain… humara kuch nahi raha… ekdin is bojh se dab ke saare mar jayenge…*" which means that, "mountains are no more the same… there are only hotels and tourists around… wherever they go they dirty the place… we don't have anything left… a day will come when everyone will die because of this mounting pressure." This shows that these hillscapes are faced with carrying capacity issues and severe environmental stress.

On the issue of pollution generated by unregulated tourism that has reached devastating proportions currently in and around *Manali* town and the area especially around the *Rohtang* Pass, in Himachal, the state government had recently carried out a survey to estimate physical, social and economic carrying capacity of tourist spots such as *Vashishth*, on the way from *Manali* to *Rohtang* pass and from *Rohtang* to *Khoksar* in the Lah*aul- Spiti* district including their catchment area and zones of influence, recording a heavy tourist flow on the directives of National Green Tribunal. The survey found that the perilous situation that surrounds *Manali* at present on issues of over- crowding, congestion and pollution and ecological degradation, will similarly impact the area around the *Rohtang* pass and spread to *Lahaul- Spiti* like an infection if not treated with regulatory care and precaution at the earliest. According to the study, the commissioning of the 'tunnel of hope', connecting *Dundhi* at *Solang* with *Lahaul- Spiti* would give rise to haphazard unregulated constructions in the form of shops and concrete buildings adjacent to the road, which will further deteriorate traffic and congest the area apart from polluting the natural environment. The

report also stated that the looming conditions are capable to induce natural disasters akin to the 2013 Uttarakhand floods and storms[128].

The National Green Tribunal has had a significant role to play on the issue of environmental degradation in Himachal. While it has acted as an agent for guiding and checking pollution in Himachal and particularly *Manali* town and the area surrounding the *Rohtang* pass, it has also shaped environmental politics in the region. As an apex judicial institution to address and control environmental issues in India, the NGT was beckoned by the state government to suggest policy change and give directives to the government of Himachal in 2010 on the issue of the rapid environmental degradation and pollution. As a response to a report prepared by National Environmental Engineering Research Institute at Nagpur, the NGT acted *suo moto* stressing on the state of environmental concerns in *Manali* and *Rohtang* and held the Himachal government responsible for the ecological degradation. The NGT (2014) maintained that, "the state government neither formulated nor issued any specific guidelines statutory or otherwise on prevention and control of environmental degradation and damage in relation to *Rohtang*."[129] It further imposed restrictions on vehicular traffic by limiting the number of cars and taxis (to 1200 daily) *en route* to *Rohtang*, and enforced the Green Cess coupled with advocating for improving civic amenities, campaigning for cleaner and greener vehicles, and introducing afforestation and reforestation drives. While the NGT's orders and restrictions may be largely looked upon as bringing about positive changes, in tackling with the impending environment risks and concerns, the situation on the ground is quite different. The entire gamut of the small- scale enterprises that are run by local communities such as taxi drivers, people involved in informal recreational services such as the local youth offering adventure sports alternatives, local shacks, *dhabas* and shops along the highway connecting major tourist spots in and around *Manali* are the hardest hit. The recently commissioned ropeway project from *Palchan* to *Rohtang* Pass, with a clearance from the NGT is expected to reduce pollution in the area by controlling vehicular emission massively. Nonetheless, this ropeway construction involves clearing a large part of forest land with approximately 1500

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[128] See online article, 'Himachal Pradesh Govt. to survey carrying capacities of areas near Rohtang,' in the *Times of India*, March 27, 2017 available online at https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/himachal-pradesh-govt-to-survey-carrying-capacities-of-areas-near-rohtang/articleshow/57845097.cms accessed last on December 10, 2017

[129] As cited in Kumad Singh's (2015) Tourism in Manali: a Quest for Sustainability, Evaluating 2005 Tourism Policy of Himachal Pradesh, available online at file:///Users/Suha/Downloads/KSingh_oodledata_temp_turnitintool_1574435742._605_1448012896_3213.pdf last accessed on December 10, 2017

coniferous trees (that take years to mature) namely *deodar* varieties, which according to the local community will prove to be detrimental in the longer run. The government estimations of the number of deodar trees that need to be felled for this project are much more conservative suggesting a figure of less than half of what the local communities suggest. The project when developed to its full potential will also severely impair earnings for the small operators and tourism providers, who depend on the passing tourist cars on the highway from *Palchan* to *Rohtang* for sustenance. This unfortunate state of local businesses in Himachal is the result of a larger political agenda for increasing state revenue for tourism promotion involving substantial investments and various actors party to the endeavor including the NGT.

6.5 Future projections of environmental stress in Himachal

The issue of environmental degradation has added to the list of concerns faced by the fragile hillscapes, owing to the tourism boom in Himachal. As discussed earlier, the incessant construction of roadways and urban expansion has led to severe deforestation resulting in erosion along the hill slopes, which in turn have been responsible for the destabilization of the slopes and landslides with increased risks for road accidents to occur more frequently. Additionally, large scale deforestation and felling of trees along the slopes has also led to displacement of local communities whose social and cultural lives and livelihoods depend almost entirely on these forests and other natural resources such as rivers and other local medicinal plants and herbs.

As Butler (1975: 89) reflects,

> Unless the often unforeseen and thus unplanned effects of tourism development can be controlled, or at least recognized and predicted, the opposition to the development of tourism, particularly in less developed parts of the world, is likely to increase, Such a situation would be extremely unfortunate and could result in the loss of potentially valuable economic benefits to many areas.

Also, while carbon emissions generated in the process of large scale uncontrolled tourism practice contributes to climate change (NAPCC, 2008), it is being projected by many

(Agrawal *et al*., 2019; Reymann *et al*., 2019) that climate change will impact the fate of the tourism sector in turn. While transportation, construction work, effluences from the various types and kinds of accommodation and service providers involved in tourism, including energy consumption usher environmental degradation and led to eventual climate change, the prospects of the tourism industry and the security concerns of people living in Himachal is worth estimating in the wake of these increased risks of environmental degradation and climate change.

That glacial movements are indicators of climate change in a specific region has already been confirmed by many geographers and glaciologists (ADB, 2010). The Himalayan river water flows that are largely influenced by the seasonal monsoons along with the ice and snow melting during the course of its flow in the summer season, have been mapped between 1972 and 2006. The study found that of the 224 glaciers that it has mapped, the glacier in the Beas basin in Himachal alone, receded from 419 to 317 km[130]. There has also been a substantial rise in 'natural' disasters such as landslides and flashfloods in Himachal at present which are the indirect consequences of heavy construction of roadways and four and six lane-ing of highways along these fragile hills coupled with excessive rainfalls that are a regular feature of this region. The impact of this unprecedented growth of tourism which has further accentuated these environmental and ecological disasters, is most felt by the local communities who depend on the natural resources for sustenance. As Mamta Chander, a key spokesperson of *Jagriti*[131] retorts, "The biodiversity and the wild flora is being wiped out by excess of tourism activities in the state… there is need for the government to re-think sustainable development without merely ranting it as a *mantra* and not doing enough." Thus, the lack in existing infrastructure and limitations in devising ecologically responsible policy has given rise to many such concerns and anxieties that pertain to the future of the tourism industry in Himachal.

[130] S. Dutta, A.L. Ramanathan & A. Linda (2012) Glacier fluctuation using Satellite Data in Beas basin, 1972-2006, Himachal Pradesh, India in Journal of Earth System Science, Volume 121, Issue 5, pp.1105-1112

[131] A local NGO based in Kullu and working with vulnerable women towards sustainable livelihood development

Figure 6.4 showing a landslide owing to flashfloods

Among the many causes for concern, the construction of the Rohtang Tunnel that is currently being built happens to top the lists of the projects that might prove detrimental for Himachal in the long run. The 8.8 km tunnel considered an engineering marvel and a ‘tunnel of hope’ for many might have a backlash in terms of increased environmental stress on the landscape. The 4000 crore (INR) project as estimated presently and scheduled for completion by 2019 by the Ministry of Defense claims to foster economic prosperity in Himachal by integrating the global and local markets with Lahaul-Spiti’s relatively backward economy thereby also cutting across new economic and cultural possibilities through trade and tourism in the region. The projected tunnel is estimated to end general isolation faced by the Lahaulis for the six months in winter by significantly reducing the distance between Manali and Keylong by 48 km and a travel time of 4 hours. After major budgetary overruns and delay owing to ‘geological surprises’[132] that the project has witnessed so far, the new deadline of 2019 for completion of construction is seen as a corridor of possibilities worth anticipating for, by the Lahaulis. People in the region are speculating on the increased physical mobility that the project will bring when launched and expecting a heavy tourist footfall with its obvious economic implications that will bring about a change in their standard of living as a result. While *Manali* already suffers the effects of uncontrolled tourism, the National Green Tribunal has expressed its concerns of the heightened tourist flows that the tunnel might

[132] See Report by Himdhara 2016

encourage in the ecologically brittle region of *Lahaul* and had asked the government of Himachal Pradesh to chalk out a definite strategy to protect this delicate zone. The NGT further directed the Himachal government to submit a list of 'precautionary and remedial measures' that it proposes to follow in the ecologically sensitive and sparsely populated area of *Lahaul* that for most part of the year remains covered with snow with its population completely isolated during winters. *Lahaul Spiti* district also happens to a trans- Himalayan region with one of the largest concentrations of glaciers spread across approximately 2000 sq km. Climate change has so far contributed to the thinning of glaciers, whereby in the last 20 years, temperatures have been recorded to have risen by 2°C. As Lenin (2016) suggests, 13% of the glaciers globally have gradually melted since the last 4 decades. This is worrisome for *Lahaul-Spiti*, since the 'tunnel of hope' accentuating heavy tourist flows would eventually lead to global warming and climate change resulting in glacial thinning and its gradual depletion. The Geological Survey of India (GSI) had carried out a preliminary investigation on the roster of glacial lakes in the *Chandrabhaga* basin of the *Lahaul* and *Spiti* district and mapped an especially risky lake known as *Gepang Gath*, having conducted a Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) risk assessment in the area during 2008, 2012 and 2013 subsequently. The assessment found that the condition of the *Gepang Gath* glacial lake was already hazardous and largely threatens the *Manali-Leh* Highway and downstream the *Sissu* village.[133]

6.6 Eco-tourism and Alternative Tourism- A Way forward?

The International Ecotourism Society (2005) defines eco-tourism as, "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well- being of local people." While familiar arguments in the discourse of ecotourism has provided similar definitions, ecotourism specialist Erlet Carter (1994) maintains that the practice of an authentic ecotourism venture is only possible with locally owned and managed tourist facilities where the communities have a sensitivity towards their local environment. Butler (1993: 29) argues,

[133] See Article by Anand Bodhi, Melting glaciers giving rise to new lakes in Himachal Pradesh, in The Times of India, Jul 23, 2014 available online at https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/global-warming/Melting-glaciers-giving-rise-to-new-lakes-in-Himachal-Pradesh/articleshow/38889169.cms last accessed on December 2, 2017

> Tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human, physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well- being of other activities and processes.

In the above definition, it is this critical 'other' that we perceive as mass tourism or urban forms of consumer driven tourism that physically and socially decays and degrades the environment along with the local community cultures. While, this process benefits from the relatively inexpensive infrastructural development as investment, it supports local communities to additionally to reap the fruits of both domestic and international tourism. As Gladstone (2005: 202) points out ecotourism requires "fewer imports or 'leakages,' more local inputs and thus a higher multiplier effect." This translates to the fact that it enables profits to remain within the ambit of a specific geography that is inhabited by specific communities who work as collectives as opposed to big corporate players, mostly 'outsiders' who operate constantly in the quest for short-term profits and look for surreptitiously maximize profit margins and have negligible interest in the development of the region they operate in. Small- scale local ventures on the other hand have a minimal impact on local environment because of their long- standing sensitivities that they employ in tourism practice owing to their association of cultural bonding with nature.

The Forest Department of Himachal Pradesh had formulated an Eco-tourism policy in 2001 which was subsequently revised in 2005 with renewed objectives of showcasing the wilderness and solitude of Himachal to the tourists visiting the state with an aim to conserve the natural resources by ensuring adequate measures to preserve the environment along with involving local communities, to support their livelihood opportunities. The underlying idea was to decongest the already over- crowded popular tourist destinations and bring tourists close to nature by bringing about new economic prospects to local communities. The strategy involved further evolving the existing eco-tourism sites managed by the various eco-tourism societies and developing new sites and circuits through PPPs and liaise with the state Department of Tourism to effectively manage these sites through promotion and logistical support. The funding plan involved allotting 60.15 lakhs INR towards development of 5 eco-circuits in 2008-09 in the *Dalhousie* circuit (*Chamba* district), *Chopal* circuit (*Shimla* district), *Dhauladhar* Sanctuary (*Bir-Rajgundha* circuit), *Kais* Sanctuary (*Nagar-Footasur*

lake circuit in *Kullu* district), *Diana Park* trekking hut and *Prashar* lake (*Mandi* district) and towards repairing FRH at *Bassi* (*Bilaspur* district). It additionally allocated funds in 2009-2010 for *Dharmshala* (*Triund*) circuit, *Bir-Rajgundha* circuit (*Dhauladhar* Sanctuary), *Tundah-Banni* circuit, *Hadsar-Kugti* Circuit, *Chopal* circuit, *Rohru* circuit, *Garkhal- Subathu* circuit, *Kilba* FRH and *Purbani- Kanda* circuits in *Kinnaur*[134]. Through the PPPs it sought to provide temporary accommodation to between 30-40 people in transportable Swiss cottages and tents, conduct nature walks and trekking, and provide a range of activities such as rock climbing, planting of trees, coupled with developing effective garbage disposal and sewerage facilities etc.

While the Government of Himachal Pradesh has had already established eco-tourism facilities in *Shimla*, *Rohru*, *Chopal*, *Kullu* and *Chamba* forest divisions with new societies being formed in the *Parvati* valley, Banjar around the Great Himalayan National Park, and in the districts of *Kinnaur*, *Dalhousie* and *Bilaspur* divisions (whereby it has also provided testing facilities for the same), the state government has recently also collaborated with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and even secured a loan to implement Community Based Tourism in various parts of the state. These regions were selected by the virtue of the fact that they are ecologically fragile where local community dependency is accorded more worth than agricultural output. Various state and local NGOs such as *Equations*, *Him Niti Abhiyan*, *Jagriti* and *Save Manali* are also actively involved with these community based programmes and eco-tourism endeavours that aid sustainable tourism practices in Himachal. However, despite efforts by the government and the local NGOs to make tourism sustainable and ecologically responsible in Himachal, there are critical environmental, cultural and economic concerns thwarting the *Pradesh* to sustainably develop in more ways than one.

While tourism pushes its way forward encroaching on commons in the charade of development, where the state at best acts as an aid and facilitator for massive acquisition of resources for private profit and use, it is the local communities and the environment that bears the brunt of this 'development.' This is because tourism depends on an assortment of social, physical and economic resources that often tend to be in contention with the needs of the local communities. With the erosion of common property resources such as forests,

[134] See Revised Policy on Development of Eco-tourism in Himachal Pradesh, retrieved from Himachal Pradesh Forest Department website, available online at http://hpforest.nic.in/files/Ecotourism%20policy.pdf last accessed December 12, 2017

natural streams and rivers, the *bugiyals* or grazing pasture for livestock in the mountains, that which are currently diverted for the exclusive purposes of tourism, the communities not only lose ownership and access of these sources but have no other option but to either revolt and stall projects they deem unacceptable or succumb to the forces of development and adapt themselves to the changing times to meet tourism demands in order to sustain themselves. National Green Tribunal orders on several occasions have proven to have exuded a misplaced sense of ethics while passing directives, the brunt of which are consequently being faced by the numerous small-scale tourist operators, particularly the locals, who are losing their livelihood as a result of closure of hotels, shacks and other enterprises in particularly the adventure sports industry (like the quad mountain bikes, paragliding, rafting, river crossing) and severe limitations imposed on local taxi drivers. The lack of policy for ecology friendly tourism with controlled mechanisms to oversee excesses, has been the fundamental reason for this problem. This lack in policy may be attributed to the fact that local communities and residents around key development sites for tourism in Himachal are not consulted with before the planning stage or even before passing directives. As Guman Singh, an opinion leader from *Him Niti Abhiyan*[135] remarks, "Without proper consultation with the locals, the government has been carrying on aggressive tourism development in the mountains which is proving disastrous for the entire ecosystem of the region."

Therefore, while enumerating the tourism promotion initiatives undertaken in Himachal Pradesh and the ways in which it has had repercussions on the local economy, I discuss the impacts of various programmes and initiatives of the Department of Tourism, Government of India on especially in rural areas in the hills. Through the enormous tourist influx in Himachal Pradesh that had been the obvious consequence of these initiatives and which had significantly contributed to the revenue generation of the state, I look at the environmental concerns that emerge as the carrying capacity of the state is sacrificed, by discussing the debates surrounding environmental degradation and tourism in these hills with special reference to the *Manali* town. I show the politics of state intervention in the industry of tourism in Himachal by looking at the state tourism development department's engagement with the various projects in and around *Manali*, by specifically looking at the ways in which evaluation of the environmental concerns and practices are in place for the issues of hazard alleviation, toxic waste disposal, emission checks by the concerned departments of the state.

[135] A mountain people's collective working towards sustainable development in Himachal

Also by interrogating the various kinds of restrictions imposed by the state on various pretexts on the small players, scape-goating of small service providers such as local taxi-drivers, guides, adventure sports conductors in the name of environmental protection and prevention of emissions and pollutants with respect to its continued support for mega projects despite of massive deforestation, I highlight the politics of state intervention in tourism. I also look at the linkages of the state with the variety of other players of tourism such as the service providers and the gatekeepers such as the National Green Tribunal (NGT) and the ways in which each of these entities strategize their actions around tourism in Himachal Pradesh. I further engage in an analysis of the tourism-people dialogue mediated by state through its various orders, mandates, decrees and policies with respect to environment and critically challenge some tourism development programmes and initiatives that have been aggressively encouraged and enforced by the state even in the face of large-scale degradation that have ramifications on the social and political lives of the local people and the ecological terrain broadly.

Chapter 7
Shadows of Himachal

In this chapter, I discuss the 'shadow economy' operating in Himachal Pradesh, by first tracing the quest for 'the exotic' in the landscape through the roots of *hippie* trail that date back to the late 1960s. I show how history shapes transnational relations (in terms of networks) in tourism and its exchanges by analyzing the contexts in which 'backpacking' has evolved and how the ideas of 'setting out for the unknown' has over the years given way to a commercialization of tourism practice today, influencing local and global markets of *hashish* in substantive ways. I study the 'shadows' of Himachal through the informal networks of goods and services that cater to a fairly large number of tourists especially those of the solo backpackers, who explore these hills in search of an 'exotic' experience. I explore the Shadow economy through an analysis of the 'legal' and 'illegal' practices, and the formal and informal arrangements that they are placed within. I begin by exploring notions of 'framing' the 'illegal' and trying to bring out the politics of labelling that constructs ideas on what constitutes the 'illegal' through an analysis of the NDPS Act. Finally, I draw upon Foucault's theory of power (1978, 1980 & 1989) and intersect it with Law and Hassard's (1999) critique on the Actor Network Theory, to build on my own model to understand circuits of power emerging from interactions between the various actors in the network, in the scope of my field and the 'shadows'.

7.1 The Hippie Trail and the quest for the exotic

There is a concern that faces writers and academics alike when talking about the Hippie trail and its genesis coupled with the travelers who were an integral part of the 'travel' since the trail had no existence in official documentation. An accurate estimation of east-bound travelers on the hippie trail during the 1960s can never be found despite that there might have been hundreds of thousands of people travelling at that time (Kerouac, 1991), since the numbers were representative of a minority who were influenced by a specific socio-political agenda which did not influence the broader Western world or its socio-cultural scene. However, it is these travels that express some of the most significant and lasting cultural shifts that emerged from the years between the late 1960s and 70s in that they literally opened- up 'routes to the east,' which were later exploited by more commercially minded establishments. These travels further lead to an intensified Western fascination with the

Orient and its way of life, ethos and religion, in that they painted a picture of a post- colonial generation who were now able to set aside the distorting lens of the imperial legacy and look afresh at the East. This new youth culture was to determine the fate of modern day travel to the East as backpackers[136].

Carroll and Noble (1977: 411) while talking about the situation of disillusionment of the youth with the government in United States reflect that,

> "Polls indicated [between 1960 and 1972]… dramatic shifts in cultural values and tremendous loss of faith in established political, economic and social institutions. Students widely engaged in premarital sex… marijuana was available as cigarettes; and homosexuality was tolerated. At the same time students shrank from the idea of fighting wars for national honor, and in general they eschewed the use of violence. Students expressed growing distrust of business corporations, the national government, and established churches, and skepticism about the modern work ethic."[137]

This apart, America was witnessing one of its most testing times with Kennedy's and Martin Luther King's assassination, with violence, political turmoil and civic unrest unfolding in all parts of the country, riots becoming commonplace and people being beaten up on the streets of Chicago for protesting the Vietnam War. The claustrophobic atmosphere of the Cold War era also left England and the rest of Europe in a state of perpetual political angst and apprehension of war. In Ireland, the Church seemed to be controlling all aspects of civil and political lives and many deemed it repressive and desired to get away from it, while in France, the government's reaction to the riots of 1968 made the youth especially critical of the political system. Compulsory military training and social service was a bitter pill that many in Europe including the French youth had to swallow[138]. These had obvious ramifications on the minds of those who had to live through it as an everyday affair. With these growing political tensions both in domestic and international politics of countries, specifically in the West, there were feelings of disenchantment with the very notion of

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[136] Refers to independent travelers with a budget, who pack their bags (mostly rucksacks) on their backs to explore new places and hence derive their name.
[137] See P.N. Carroll & D.W. Noble (1977) The Free and the Unfree: A New History of the United States, Penguin, Middlesex
[138] Christian Mottet as narrated in D. Tomory's (1996) *A Season in Heaven: True Tales from the Road to Kathmandu*, Thorsons, London

politics and people were looking for an alternative (Turner, 2006). As Max Flury[139] points out, the tendency amongst the hippies to change the world was thus through a change of mind and 'not more politics' since the existing political conditions then could not solve the situation ripping the West apart.

The emanation of the term '*hippies'* began with the press ascribing it to long haired college dropouts and beatniks from the Haight- Ashbury district in San Francisco (Farber and Bailey, 2001), who practiced an alternative communal way of life built on sharing. However, by 1967, these enclaves earned a bad name (Thompson, 1979) and with 'not much room to live' between the police informers and the hustlers, the *hippies* began to explore 'new worlds' (Thompson, 1992). Therefore, the mid and late 1960s marked a prominent counter culture promulgated by this Western youth that had new political propensities with covert modes of operation that included underground press and graffiti, politically charged lyrics of anti-war and songs of protest, a sudden spurt of rock and pop music festivals,[140] a spiritual inclination, diverse forms of experimentations and boosted a consumer driven economy of hallucinogenic and psychedelic drugs.

That change was needed to reform the wretched world was an imperative idea generated by this counter-culture and one that was one of the important precedents for setting foot towards the East in scores. Although travel to the Oriental exotica to attain spiritual bliss was not completely unknown in the past, the 1960s paved the path for a redefinition of the idea with large numbers of the Western youth travelling, who were less bound by rules, carried 'no baggage' and basically bohemians in their outlook; the *Time* magazine in 1967 describes them as, "Hippies preach altruism, and mysticism, honesty joy and nonviolence.[141]" Maclean (2006:18) talks about this exceptional generation of youth as, "Kids who face no unemployment, who fear no hunger, who have the chance to imagine no boundaries; a footloose generation devoted to the acquisition of experience and self-knowledge."

Parkinson further (2001: 18) attempts to trace the route of the trail and describes it as,

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[139] As quoted in Tomory (1996) *A Season in Heaven: True Tales from the Road to Kathmandu*, p 211
[140] Such as Woodstock (1969) and Isle of Wight festivals (1968, 1969 and 1970)
[141] See Special Issue on The Hippies, *TIME*, July 7, 1967

> “a convoluted and overlapping series of overland connections between Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia, with branches in both Americas. The trail doesn’t stop at the edge of any continent… The trail then effectively encircles the entire globe with a series of more or less well-defined pathways familiar to generations of backpackers.”

However, this frame of reference seems a bit too broad with only a handful of travelers visiting Quito (Ecuador), Marrakesh (Morocco) and the Great Barrier Reef (Australia) which he considered to be part of the trail as well. In fact, the trail portrayed visibly precise territories that it encompassed. With the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans forming the eastern, western and southern limits geographically, and with the exception of the communist states (Yugoslavia and Bulgaria excluded) because of reasons of inaccessibility during the 1960s-70s, the trail seems to have passed through all the states within these perimeters of overland routes. Although the Middle East and Africa could be accessed by land and fell well within this geography, they were rarely explored with Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Nepal forming the most important dots on the trail. It is thus interesting to note that while a number of countries were geographically part of the trail, some were more popular than the others because of an ‘ideal goal’ that the destination was imaginatively ascribed as one that would be worth bearing all the suffering for, during travel. On a similar vein, the Lonely Planet guidebook of 2001, *Istanbul to Kathmandu: A Classic Overland Route* not only suggestively refers to Istanbul as the gateway with Kathmandu being the ultimate dream destination, but romantically entices travelers by advertising-

> “Istanbul to Kathmandu: The names alone inspire images of an exotic overland adventure. There’s something undeniably irresistible about starting a journey at the gateway to Asia, among the minarets, bazaars and Turkish teahouses, and ending up surrounded by the snowy peaks of Nepal Himalaya.”

Istanbul, as suggested by Moore (1999), was however not exactly the starting point with hippies travelling from all around Europe, but was to an effect the first point on the trail that marked the beginning of the Muslim world in other words the exotic ‘other’ land. While India and Nepal were the preferred destinations, the Muslim world was treated as only a passageway to reach it as Maclean (2006: 204) retorts-

> "Iran was the 'in-between' country: drugs were illegal, torture was common and Islam was a religion too practical and grounded to appeal to most mystic-seeking hippies. No one came to Tehran to get high. 'Iran is a repressive police state,' wrote one early intrepid. 'Get through it fast."

Numerous studies on travel[142] to the oriental exotica mostly undertaken by European travelers during the late 1960s and thereon clearly reveal that the ready availability of cheap drugs amidst serene surroundings coupled with a quest for spiritual awakening were the main factors for the genesis and development of the 'hippie trail.'

The birth of the hippie trail may be ascribed to the year 1957, since it marked a remarkable event that refashioned the very idea of travel[143]. Paddy Garrow-Fisher, an ex-RAF engineer, Irish by descent, who had served in the army in Asia and the Middle-East, undertook a first of its kind 'bus adventure' with his converted van and travelled approx. 20,000 km with a load of daring travelers all the way from England to India. When India got its independence in 1947, he was one of the few army-men to have remained in the country since he liked the local cultures and even spent time learning local languages such as Hindi and Farsi. Post Indian independence, he traded vehicle engine parts having travelled the lengths and breadths of the country on a motorbike. On having his business expanded during the 1950s, he bought a second-hand bus that he had converted into a van and often picked up hitch-hikers along the highway for a nominal fee. However, this did not give him enough incentive to sustain his business and he re-converted the van into a bus and founded the Indiaman coach service that officially launched a service from London to Delhi in the Easter of 1957 and a following journey in the August of the same year. The Indiaman brochure had the following warning notice for travelers which simultaneously had a rare impolite and adventurous tone and read-

> "We have always been at great pains to STRESS that this journey is an 'EXPEDITION' rather than a 'TOUR' in the normal sense. IT IS NOT- the MOST COMFORTABLE WAY OF TRAVELLING. IT IS NOT- the CHEAPEST WAY OF TRAVELLING. It is a rugged, rewarding journey that will take you across mountains and deserts and into the remotest parts of some very primitive countries… It will

[142] See Marjorie Kirchner's (1973) *The Indian Traveller, Overland* and (2013) *Bharat Darshan*, Gottlieb Press, Portland, p 51; & Jack Parkinson (2001) Farewell Hippy Heaven: Rites of Way on the Overland Route, Lothian, Melbourne, p 14
[143] See S. Gemie & B. Ireland (2017) *The Hippie Trail: A History*, Manchester University Press, p 11-12

bring you into the company of people who are warm, 'happy go lucky,' tolerant and human- so if there is any 'gingerbread' in your make up, better stay away! Bluntly- it is a trip for the genuine TRAVELLER rather than the modern TOURIST. Luxury does not exist all along the overland route. Hotels range from excellent to pretty putrid but all are endurable and if you can rise above the limitations of 'creature comforts' you will certainly enjoy this trip… OUR WARNING IS NO STUNT- so please- please- for your sake, for our sake, for God's sake! - stay away if you want mollycoddling."[144]

Despite the disclaimer 'Paddy's Bus' became extremely popular since there were not many options of overland travel between England and India in times when travel by sea took weeks and airfares were expensive, and that people could now be part of overland adventure through unknown territories and exotic culture. These coaches became so popular that numerous other travel companies replicated the initiative and offered different types of travel coaches that ranged from low cost to luxury air-conditioned coaches and carried travelers from their port of arrival and departure to various hotels and other resting places. The 'Magic Bus' services also started operating and offered to transport people from London and Amsterdam to India on faster routes, while other companies offered relaxed and more leisurely routes through specific sites of interest. For Rory Maclean, these travelers "aimed to learn and extract pleasure from 'the foreign.' Most of all, they travelled to be transformed."[145]

The Overland Hippie trail also known by names such as the 'Road to Kathmandu' or the 'Hippie Highway' has been a deeply romantic idea for travel for many since it not only indicated a substantial change in Western cultural consciousness, but helped people find refuge in the spiritual realm amidst external political tension and the general social atmosphere of the West in those times. Before the trend of overland travel, independent travel was unconventional in the West, however towards the end of the phase of the 'hippie movement' in the late 1970s, backpacking and solo travel had become so fashionable that it

[144] From the 1964 Indiaman Brochure, as quoted in Mike Alexander's *A journey of a Lifetime: Paddy's Bus*, in his blog Overlanders: Great Overland Passenger-Carrying Journeys & Expeditions where he shares his accounts of the travel on an Indiaman's bus, available online at http://www.indiaman.101answers.com/ last accessed on December 3, 2017

[145] Rory Maclean (2006) *Magic Bus: On the Hippie Trail From Istanbul to India*, Penguin books, London

almost meant a “rite of passage for many people in the West”[146] and opened the floodgates of contemporary travel.

Modern day travel as Hannam and Diekmann (2010: 88) suggest,

> “depicts the exotic through the lens of the individual traveler or backpacker who has to overcome (and suffer) a series of rites to passage in order to move from being a tourist to a fully accomplished traveler in an exotic world. Such ‘suffering’ is of course constructed as an ‘authentic’ experience in the glorification of being a traveler consuming the exotic, in contrast to the tourist who consumes the familiar.”

I see these backpackers as flexible travelers gathering human experiences, who are better prepared in tackling unpredictability and risks in that they not are not only accommodative while travelling but actively immerse themselves in the local culture as they move across the landscape in Himachal. Modern day backpackers also visually resemble their 1960s *hippie* counterparts a lot as the famed travel writer Peter Moore argues that,

> “they all wore baggy pants and loose cheesecloth shirts, and decorated themselves with the same assortment of bangles, anklets, necklaces and earrings. All the girls-and most of the guys-had their noses pierced. And they looked as if they had been in India for months, may be even years.”[147]

This is a typical visual characteristic of *hippie* presence in my field as well, i.e. the towns of *Kasol*, *Tosh* and *Old Manali* in Himachal even today.

Early backpacking travels[148] indicate that Nepal and its capital Katmandu especially was aspired as the culminating destination for the hippie trail, India was also one of the most sought after choices for reasons discussed earlier and was preferred because it was *en route* to Nepal. While only a small number made it to Nepal because of more difficult terrain that resulted in physical exhaustion, India served as the resting place for these travelers since the

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[146] G.J. Szuveges (2014) *The Overland Hippie Trail to India and Nepal in the 1960s and 1970s*, Thesis submitted as part of the Final Honours Examination, History Program, La Trobe University available online at http://www.hansroodenburg.nl/trail/THESIS.pdf accessed last on December 5, 2017
[147] Peter Moore (1999) The Wrong Way Home: London to Sydney The Hard Way, Bantam, p 222
[148] See Rory Maclean’s (2006) Magic Bus: On the Hippie Trail

very 1960s, with over four-fifths of travelers globally, visiting the country to rejuvenate and re-discover themselves. As of 2016, the official number of international tourist footfall recorded stands at 8.8 million, with an 9.7% increase over the previous year.[149] This automatically points to the fact that international travelers have over time rendered the country suitable for relaxation and holidaying over other tourism destinations. Apart from the reasons discussed, affordability was and still is a big concern for international tourists who look to spend long periods of time in unfamiliar places. A travel advice in the BIT guide from 1973[150] for travel especially to India draws up a suitable list of 'to-dos' for travel to the unfamiliar landscape:

> "Its best to have no definite plans or time schedule, just go where you want, when you want… Travel as lightly as possible as you may well be adding to your pack along the way. Be willing to adjust to local food, customs and conditions. Language is no real problem as you'll soon find ways of communicating non-verbally and also pick up basic words of foreign languages. Remember that wherever there are people, there is food, accommodation and transport of some description, no matter how primitive. And the further off the beaten track you go, generally the more interesting the scene is."

Overland travel that boosted the Hippie trail giving it a shape of almost a mass movement both literally and metaphorically, that which inspired a generation of youth to undertake new forms of risks in travel in many ways shaped modern day international backpacking and solo travelling. What started as a journey to the alluring East for the quest of 'enlightenment' because of complete disillusionment of the Western society, polity and economy, morphed into a journey that sought 'authentic' spiritual experiences. Maclean (2006:12) elucidates that for Allen Ginsberg, India was his promised land since in his journal he writes-

> "In a prayer hall, he experienced 'a kind of Euphoria with my body relaxed and cross legged and eyes fixed and mind happy and aware of the long trail from New York to Tangier to that spot of wet on the floor'… he found 'in the East something ancestral

[149] See NTA Brochure, 2015-16, Ministry of Tourism, p 2 available online at http://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/awards/NTA_Brochure_2015-16_compressed.pdf
[150] BIT (1973) *Overland to India and Beyond*, BIT Information and Help Service, p 1

> in ourselves, something we must bring into the light.' His journey was key to the emotional and intellectual counterculture renaissance."

Ginsberg's visit in 1962 followed by the Beatles's in 1968 to Rishikesh (located in present day Uttarakhand and adjacent to Himachal) promoted Eastern spirituality particularly India in a phenomenal way and soon afterwards, their 'flower children' flocked particularly to this part of the country adorning waistcoats and pyjamas identically copying the band's style of dressing![151] Since then, the northern part of India especially, the Himachal and what constitutes present day Uttarakhand has been a hippie- haven be it for a spiritual journey, learning yoga or for sheer relaxation and smoking up pot. Nonetheless, a lot has changed over the years especially with present day law enforcement mechanisms putting a ban on cannabis cultivation, sale and imposing severe restrictions on consumption, something that unfolded with the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (henceforth referred to as NDPS) Act been passed in 1985.

7.2 The NDPS Act and its implications

The NDPS Act was enacted in the year 1985 by the Rajiv Gandhi government, following the pressure to comply with the UN treaty banning drugs. India was compelled to sign the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs in 1961 despite vociferously leading an opposition to maintain its tolerant stance towards organic intoxicants that was culturally consumed in the country. Presently, the Act continues to be the single guiding legislation to deal all cases regarding drug use in India, where production, possession and trafficking except for medicinal purposes is deemed illegal. It also does not recognize any difference between hard and soft drugs and punitively directs imprisonment to any individual who is found in possession any of the drugs enlisted as 'illegal,' the length of which may vary between six months to a period of 30 years depending on the quantity of drugs in possession. Since its official genesis, the NDPS Act has undergone three amendments (in 1989, 2001 and more recently) in February 2014, having relaxed it for patients requiring drugs (earlier rendered 'illegal') for medical reasons and treatment. This has meant a step forward in the context of not only upgrading medical treatment for people who need those drugs but further calls for an inclusive measure to

[151] See Maclean (2006) *Magic Bus*, p 211

support people who are dependent on these drugs. However, there is substantial scope for reforming the Act as it currently stands as a severely iron-fisted legislation ready to deliver stringent penalties on offenders. While the premise for the NDPS Act begins with a presumption that delivering rigorous penalties and punishments dissuade drug abuse and its trafficking, it fails to recognize the social impact it has on the people who use it as part of their everyday lives and has been doing so culturally for relatively longer periods of time; in the context of the present study, the indigenous Malanese people residents of the *Malana* village in Himachal. Contrary to the belief that fear of incarceration leads to reduced addiction rates, the evidence as gathered on the field shows that it does not hold good practically. The villagers of *Malana* continue to systematically grow, locally consume the hashish themselves and sell it to the middlemen and tourists even after the several cases of arrests that have taken place in the village by the local police.

Marijuana and hashish derived from the *Cannabis sativa* plant, has been consumed by many communities in India for spiritual, recreational and medicinal purposes, since times immemorial, the earliest accounts of which may be traced to 1000 BC[152]. It was after the advent of the British that laws regulating the cultivation of hemp were enacted and taxes were imposed[153] on the sale of hemp and other products derived out of it. It was in the 1920s that the growing nationalist movements in India led to cannabis cultivation being regulated by provincial excise Acts[154]. After literally a decade, the Dangerous Drugs Act was passed in 1930 that aimed to further restrict drugs derived from cannabis, coca and poppy plants by regulating all aspects of manufacture, possession, sale, trade and other forms of transactions through licenses and sought to penalize unlicensed enterprises, allowing wholesale and retail trade in limited quantities but restricting sale to women and persons under 25 years of age.[155] Initially there were no offences for cannabis consumption, however with the legislation in the forms of the Dangerous Drugs Act, all derivatives of hemp, coca and opium continued to be regarded as "manufactured drugs" in the statutory definitions for these drugs! These drug laws were detrimental towards not only choice of trade and occupation but had a direct effect

[152] Early accounts of cannabis may be found in the *Atharva Veda* XI, 6.15, Chapter 11, Varak 6, Verse 15, where it is considered one of the five most sacred plants on the earth with a guardian angel residing in its leaves. It is also believed to have unique medicinal qualities of pain relief and capacity of transcending one's mind to a state of bliss.
[153]See M.C. Mehanthan's (2007) *Law of Control on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in India*, Capital Law House, Delhi, 2nd Edition
[154] See Madhya Pradesh Excise Act 1915, Punjab Excise Act 1914 & Bengal Excise Act 1909
[155] See Sections 2-14 of Act 2, Dangerous Drugs Act 1930

on the livelihoods of poor farmers who were dependent on the cultivation of plants such as hemp and poppy. Despite the freshly framed 1940 Drugs and Cosmetics Act to regulate use of medicinal marijuana and opium, the Dangerous Drugs Act continued to make its presence felt in making new policies.

Post Indian independence, all law came under the purview of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Indian Constitutional provisions in 1950[156] and the stringent tendencies began to be strongly felt with Article 47 of the Constitution stating that, "The State shall endeavor to bring about prohibition of the consumption except for medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health." Notwithstanding that these Directive Principles of State Policy are legally non-enforceable, this provision has been time and again cited to rationalize punitive action for offence. The most interesting thing to note is that both the State and the Center have the powers to legislate on the issue of Drugs and Poisons, since the Constitution has placed the category in the concurrent list. This is remarkable since the state governments have the authority to come out of the fold of national policies on drugs and narcotic substances and suggest alternatives and frame new policies, where it deems suitable such change. Also, in the scope of the present study, it is astonishing that there are no effective measures ensured by the state authorities to control liquor intoxication on the highway in Himachal apart from the various sign posts dotting the road that read, "Don't Drink and Drive." The highway stretch from Kullu town to Manali itself is freckled throughout with various liquor shops, small and large that can be found at regular intervals of less than a kilometer radius on either side of the highway. This indiscriminate issuing of liquor licenses on the highways to generate revenue for the state as opposed to prohibiting cannabis consumption on moral grounds is a peculiar propensity of the state to selectively legitimize what it renders 'less harmful.' This only adds to the physical risks of accidents to the already existing concerns of landslides because of environmental reasons.

India is currently signatory to three United Nations drug conventions namely, the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961), Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971) and Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988), all of which has systematically paralyzed the hemp-based economy of the country. Although domestic legislation to give shape to these 'treaties' was passed only in the 1980s, when the

[156] See Article 13 (1) of the Constitution of India

'grace period' for prohibiting all use of cannabis except for medicinal purposes had expired according to the 1961 Convention. In 1985, the Rajiv Gandhi government hastily passed the NDPS Act to strengthen enforcement issues relating to drugs and narcotics and guarantee effective control of drug trafficking. While the Act prohibits cultivation, production, sale, trade, purchase, import, export, consumption and use (apart from scientific and medicinal purposes), it also states that accessory crimes such as abetting, aiding including preparation and conspiracy relating to drug offence will attract equal punishment as the principal offence.[157] The Act classifies substances into three broad segments- i) Narcotic drugs, ii) Psychotropic substances and iii) Controlled substances. Cannabis was labelled as a narcotic drug and all its derivatives in the form of its resin or *charas* and the more concentrated form *hashish*, along with the dried flowering tops of the plant known as *ganja* and any mixture of any of these are strictly prohibited apart from medicinal uses. However, *bhang* or the leaf of the plant is excluded from this definition as in accordance with the 1961 Convention, but regulated through excise laws of the different states.

All narcotic drugs fall under the umbrella category of "manufactured drugs." With its various amendments, first in 1989 that sought to implement a 'tougher' policy in terms of prescribing a minimum mandatory sentence of 10 years imprisonment with severe restrictions on bail, bar on suspension and commutation of sentences, forfeiture of property, trial by special courts and mandatory death sentence for particular repeat offenders, and its subsequent amendment in 2001 because of its predecessor's severity, whereby quantity based sentencing began to be introduced depending also on the kind of drug seized[158], the Act did not go much further. It is only with the much recent amendment in 2014 that the NDPS Act incorporated the special conditions such as management of drug dependence and regulation of treatment facilities in Section 71, thereby legalizing Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST) and other harm reduction services and enabling treatment centers in the states to be overseen. The NDPS Act however is yet to go a long way in terms of firstly recognizing the difference between organic and synthetic drugs. The term "manufactured drugs" is applied to even soft organic substances that were culturally consumed by communities over generations. The severe nature of the NDPS Act also allows little room for humanizing offences and goes on to criminalize offenders and mete out disproportionate punishments discriminatorily which

[157] See Sections 8, 28, 29 and 30, NDPS Act

[158] See IDPC briefing Paper, *Drug Policy in India,* February 2015, International Drug Policy Consortium Publication, 2015, prepared by Tripti Tandon, Lawyers Collective

includes even death penalty.[159] These measures are stricter than those prescribed by even the UN drug control conventions.

The very premise that incarceration will automatically lead to a reduction in addiction rates, is a faulty one to begin with since there is evidence to suggest otherwise. As of 2015, amongst a total of 15,217 prisoners who were convicted under the Special and Local Laws (SLL), all over India, a majority was convicted under the NDPS Act accounting for as high as 47.5% (that translates to 7227 out of 15, 217) of total convicts. Also, a majority of under-trial prisoners booked under the SLL, accounting for nearly 31.6% (i.e. 15,959 out of 50,457) of all under-trial prisoners, were lodged in jails for offending the NDPS Act. In the hilly and sparsely populated state of Himachal Pradesh, 190 prisoners have been officially recorded as convicted along with 314 under-trial prisoners, who have been booked under this Act as of the 2015 prison statistics.[160] At present, state prisons in India lodges a huge number of repeat offenders booked under the NDPS Act, with 63% having a history of drug abuse. Also, despite the uncompromising harsh nature of the Act there is a massively growing number of teenagers and young adults India who resort to consumption of habit forming opiates and its derivatives such as morphine and heroin, cocaine and other synthetic drugs like LSD, ephedrine, methaqualone, barbiturates, Nembutal sodium and amphetamine which lead to physical dependence. This apart, in Northeast India, mostly in states such as Mizoram and Manipur, 70% of the total drug addicted people resort to doping on propoxyphene (Proxyvon), an over the counter (OTC) drug through intravenous injections given that the two states have followed a rigorously prohibitive policy towards alcohol since the late 1980s and there is an extremely rigid control on smuggling routes for other drugs from the adjoining Myanmar border. This has led to practices like ‘shooting galleries’ (where the same syringe is shared between the members of a cluster who then become blood- brothers) which in turn has led to state-wide HIV infections on an endemic scale[161]. Also since propoxyphene is not soluble in water and leaves a precipitate, injecting it directly into the vein has led to many deaths from such clogs. All these point to the fact that incarceration or of its fear does little to address the real issue of addiction while exposing people dependent on drugs to other serious

[159] See Article 39 of the 1961 Convention & Article 12.10.b of the 1988 Convention
[160] See Prison Statistics India 2015, National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs available online at http://ncrb.nic.in/StatPublications/PSI/Prison2015/Full/PSI-2015-%2018-11-2016.pdf accessed last on December 5, 2017
[161] See Monitoring and Evaluation of National AIDS Control Programme (NACP-II), A study Report of NACO, 1999- 2000 & A Report on Mapping of Population sub-groups vulnerable to STI/HIV/AIDS in the state of Manipur (Manipur State Aids Control Society), 2002

criminal offenders, thereby enhancing their chances of committing more serious crimes. As a way forward to reforming the NDPS Act, some advocates[162] have suggested decriminalizing consumption of non-habit forming *Cannabis* that has been not only consumed culturally as part of Indian traditional customs and rituals, has a strong medicinal value but also has a huge prospect as a hemp industry capable of generating livelihood opportunities to many in the country. As in Himachal, where *Cannabis* cultivation has proved beneficial for the local communities since it is easy to grow, does not require a huge capital and generates a substantial amount of money.

Known by names such as grass, *ganja*, pot, *maal*, stuff, *marijuana* is made by drying the flowering tops of the head plant called Cannabis sativa, while *hashish* or *charas* is made by rubbing the buds of the plant between the palms of the hand using optimum pressure. Another variety of the Cannabis plant known as hemp is used to produce *bhang*, from its seeds and leaves that also acts as an intoxicant consumed generally with milk was not so rigorously prohibited owing to cultural and religious reasons. However, before 1985, cannabis was extensively used in medicines and known as the 'penicillin of the *Ayurvedic* industry'[163] in the country. It is very interesting to note that while cannabis has been made illegal in India by tacit UN pressure through the signing of the various drug control conventions, the US has itself made cannabis legal in 27 of its states for medical purposes and in 11 states for even recreational purposes. While Cannabis use is legal in over 40 countries, India is still grappling with the fear of addiction of a non-habit forming organic intoxicant that does not generate physical dependence like cocaine, heroin or even alcohol and has been consumed since ages as part of local culture. Apart from its medicinal properties for treating gastric ailments, jaundice, diabetes, diarrhea, and acting as appetite booster and offering pain relief from a multitude of ailments including nerve related diseases, even cancer treatment, coupled with its recreational aspect, hemp cultivation as an industry can alone boost the economy of any country. Hemp may be used to manufacture food supplements, body care and skin care products, sturdy plastic products. According to a

[162] Larry Russell (2018) *Legalize Cannabis and other drugs to reduce crime and improve health*, March 11, 2018

[163] The Indian Hemp Drugs Commission in 1894 called Cannabis, the penicillin of the *Ayurvedic* medicine since its medicinal uses were extremely popular ranging from aiding digestion and acting as appetite booster, as mentioned in *Sushruta Samhita* (6BC) used to treat anxiety and had pain relief properties as well.

Forbes report, the hemp industry is projected to create more jobs than the manufacturing sector in the US by 2020.[164]

It is very clear that there are ulterior motives behind these political designs. While some industries such as the liquor and tobacco fear a collapse in their sales directly, other industries comprising the big pharmaceutical companies agonize on their future. Christine Vestal reports in The Washington Post that the researchers and medical practitioners are of the opinion, "that greater use of marijuana for pain relief could result in fewer people using the highly addictive prescription painkillers."[165] It has been observed that in the American states that have legalized cannabis, there is a significant drop in the sale of painkillers as suggested in the figure below. It has also been observed that in these very states there is a decline of liquor sales by 10% and a substantial drop in tobacco sales, where cigarette makers are anxious and estimating both prospects of the cannabis industry and aligning to its market and as a rival venture that could destroy its own standalone market. Similar trends could be translated for the Indian example as well post decriminalization and legalization of marijuana.

Cannabis ban has not led to a real non-availability of any of its products in India such as *ganja* or *charas*, which are still widely available, but has given rise to a huge black marketeering of these substances involving a complex network of a variety of dealers, traders, middle-men and sellers who make a substantial profit out of it. In Himachal's *Malana* itself, despite the ban, the local government estimated that an area of about 240 hectares (593 acres) of land was used for cannabis cultivation accounting for more than 12,000 kilograms (26455 pounds) of *hashish* as of 2016.[166] It is remarkable to note that of all the *hashish* that is produced, only a small percentage approximately 1% gets seized and the rest enters the phenomenal black market that aids over pricing of this hashish. As Bhasin

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[164] See Forbes Report on Marijuana Industry Projected to Create More Jobs Than Manufacturing By 2020 available online at https://www.forbes.com/sites/debraborchardt/2017/02/22/marijuana-industry-projected-to-create-more-jobs-than-manufacturing-by-2020/#3e92827b3fa9

[165] See story on "Using marijuana to treat chronic pain might help cut down on opioid abuse" in t*he Washington Post*, February 26, 2017 available online at https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/using-marijuana-to-treat-chronic-pain-might-help-cut-down-on-opioid-abuse/2017/02/24/518fbec2-f84e-11e6-bf01-d47f8cf9b643_story.html?utm_term=.989d6d693752 accessed last on December 5, 2017

[166] See Story on "For this Himachal village, banned cannabis is its source of livelihood," in India Today, December 4, 2016, available online at http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/indian-village-malana-himachal-pradesh-cannabis-livelihood/1/826614.html accessed last on December 5, 2017

points out (2018) that when we are not legalizing ‘it,’ we are merely encouraging these black-marketeers, drug dealers and other brokers who are making a lot of money in the process.

7.3 Indigenous practices and collective sustenance

India houses the second largest indigenous population in the world, and is home to over 10.45 crore people classified as members of Scheduled Tribes, that constitutes about 8.6 percent of India’s total population recorded as of the census of 2011. The Indian Government however does not recognize the existence of other indigenous people officially, on the pretext that a claim cannot be made to identify the original settlers of specific geographies owing to the complex migration patterns of people India has witnessed so far, and which is dissimilar to that of many other countries such as Australia and Canada, who have been able to recognize them. Nonetheless many activists have time and again vociferously fought for establishing indigenous status for the *adivasi* or tribal population and particularly those who have not been recognized as members of Scheduled Tribes in the census, so that they are able to secure their “collective rights of self-determination” that would further enable them to negotiate their position internationally[167]. While combining cultural politics with transnational concerns helps create an international appeal to address critical issues facing these indigenous groups, the international activists often fail to understand the nuances of local culture. In this context, Hardiman (1984, 1987) notes that secular historians have deliberately refused to acknowledge the importance of the deeply religious sentiments that enwrap literally all aspects of *adivasi* social life. He illustrates that in the 1920s, in parts of western India, the political actions of the *adivasis* were almost always enmeshed with religion. Similar myopia may be observed in instances where modern day secular activists championing the cause of indigenous rights, ignore the value of the notion of the religio- spiritual space that circumscribes indigenous living.

Borrowing from the concept of ‘sacral polity’ which is a term conceived by Parry (2000), to refer to a state were the economic, political and the religious realm is taken as one concept, I attempt to understand the mechanisms of local governance that the Malana village practices. As the Gazetteer of the Kangra District (1987) suggests, the Malanese people call themselves ‘*Kanets’* which has been derived from the Sanskrit word *Kunit* which literally means

[167] See Alpa Shah’s (2010) *In the Shadows of the State: Indigenous politics, environmentalism, and insurgency in Jharkhand, India,* Duke University Press, Durham and London

'indifference to caste rules.' They are believed to have been descended from the clan of Rajputs who had abandoned their caste customs. However there seems to be a disagreement on questions of their place of origin, race and migration and many are divided on their views of their origin and some have even claimed that their race may have connections with ancient Greece[168] (in their physical appearance and based on which they have devised their 'insider-outsider' codes of conduct). The ritual practices of the village in many instances resembles with the traditional notions of 'oracles' found in ancient Greek mythology. While for the Malanese, the supreme authority of the village rests in their deity, the *Jamlu devta*, who controls all aspects of their social, cultural, political and religious lives, the decisions of their lord are known to be made through possessions of the *Gur*, the principle disciple who then communicates the will of the *devta* to the rest of the community. The *Jamlu devta* who is also known as *Jamdagni rishi*, (an incarnation of lord *Vishnu* in primitive forms of Hinduism) is believed to have been a god residing particularly in the Kullu valley and to whom all cultivable land around Malana belongs. He has thus been not only worshipped by the locals as a protector of their lands and lives and but also has been crucial to the overall administration of the village.

The issue of local legitimacy of the indigenous systems of governance is thus worth engaging with, considering that there is a constant conflict of interest between these indigenous people and the state that refuses to recognize them as equal to its other subjects, and therefore either displays a patronizing tendency towards them or completely disregards their existence by selectively imposing 'development' models particularly in the areas they inhabit, rendering them displaced continuously. Shah (2010) mentions that it is these indigenous practices of governance that tends to take shape out of mistrust of the state and further on gathers potency for being 'intimately connected' with the 'sacred realm' that binds them through a socio-religious fabric of beliefs and superstitions. This is very clearly visible even for ritual practices that in many cases form the cornerstone for delivering justice in such a system.

For the indigenous people of the Malana village in Himachal, a small village nestled in the high rustic mountainous terrain, a similar connection with the sacred realm dictates almost all aspects of their lives. Although the remoteness from mainstay Indian polity and governance has been responsible for the genesis of this indigenous system of local governance, unlike in

[168] See Story by Namrata Joshi on 'Jamlu's Fiery Curse' in *OUTLOOK* magazine, January 21, 2008 & See S. Kaur's (2013) *Fin Feather and Field*, Partridge, Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi

Jharkhand, the people of Malana village democratically control all aspects of governance (Jeratha, 1995) under the guidance of their *devta*. Members are elected by the villagers and are responsible for overall administration of the area through the two houses- the upper house known as the *Jeyshthang* and the lower house or *Kanishthang* akin to the *Rajya Sabha* and *Lok Sabha* models of the Indian parliament (Handa, 2001). There are 11 members in all who manage the upper and lower houses. The *Gur*, *Pujari* and *Kardar* are the three permanent members (who are expected to serve the *devta* and be responsible for administration through the upper house throughout the span of their lives while the rest 8 act as temporary members subjected to periodic election. While the post of the Pujari and the *Kardar* are hereditary, the role of the *Gur* is of enormous importance since it is through him that the *devta's* will is communicated to the villagers. The four elected members comprising the *Jeysthang* can select a member each called *Pogudars*, who then elect the *Pradhan* and the *Upapradhan* amongst themselves and are further responsible for making decisions for the village. The lower house must ultimately approach this upper house for final sanctions and verdicts. Malana had thus over the years proved to be an autonomous village in the truest sense of the term and has been often known as 'a democracy within a democracy'[169] since it has remained relatively untainted by external political forces of the state given that it is a self-sufficient village that does not depend on external doles or grants. However, a lot has changed in the recent past with state actors such as administrative officials coupled with the police attempting to take control of the village.

The Malanese people have nonetheless, continued to sustain themselves in the wake of these increased risks of cannabis crop destruction by the administrative authorities and the local police who threaten them with imprisonment for drug offense. While on the one hand the local police is responsible for maintaining adequate checks to control crème peddling, which is evident from that fact that they have also frisked me and searched for hashish on my way back from the village by stopping me on the highway, they have often been accused by the Malanese villagers for being complicit in re-selling of the hashish after seizing it. As a *dhabawallah* in Malana points out, "one way to continue the trade depends on regularly bribing the local police in order to stop raids" in these *dhabas*, restaurants and bars designated for selling and storing the crème. However, it is a temporary means to keep the

[169] See V.A.V. Raman & Krishna Anand (2015) *Malana: A transfigured Landscape*, Book Age Publications, New Delhi

police at bay since they return for more cash later to give the sellers many more such ‘grace period’ to wrap up their trade. This process is cyclical and in practice never actually ends.

7.4 Malana and the ‘shadows’

The journey to the Malana village that earlier demanded an onerous exercise of trekking uphill through the rough mountainous paths, involving between a minimum of 2-3 days of travel to reach the hamlet, has now reduced to a journey time of merely 90 minutes (approximately) from the nearest rocky but motorable road that connects with the Malana Hydroelectric Power Plant. This road was constructed given that the hydel power project was envisioned and for which the civil work and construction started in 1999 that connected the dam site all the way from Jari to Malana. This has in turn has not only encouraged more tourists than it had in the past, but also increased the risks of state control for the Malanese people, especially over cannabis cultivation and sale of the famed hashish, the Malana Crème.

The villagers of Malana have been residing on an approximately 12000 feet[170] flat plateau-like platform in this faraway locale for nearly 5000 years as estimated by archaeologists and other anthropologists[171]. It is the remoteness that has discouraged their interactions with other communities and people compared to other parts of Himachal. Although tourists and travelers have explored Malana in the past, the scale at which it has gained its popularity recently is because of the famed Malana Crème that has made significant noise not just in the country but internationally. A fairly large number of international tourists namely from countries such as Israel and Italy[172] have time and again travelled to especially Malana and other areas such as Kasol, Tosh and Rashol which are all proximally located in Himachal, in the quest of the crème. The extremes of temperature and the limitations of geography restricted movement and communication for these Malanese people and hence they have been able to preserve their culture in a unique way, which for many other hill villages in Himachal has not been possible. Bounded by mountain passes on three of its sides and a *nallah* (a stream) gushing

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[170] See Colin Pritchard’s (1968) The Mountains of Malana in Soli Mehta (ed.) *The Himalayan Journal*, Vol 28 available online at https://www.himalayanclub.org/hj/28/2/the-mountains-of-malana/ accessed last on Sep 4, 2021

[171] See Dervla Murphy’s (1968) The Valley of Refuge in Soli Mehta (ed.) *The Himalayan Journal*, Vol 28 available online at https://www.himalayanclub.org/hj/28/3/the-valley-of-refuge/ last accessed on Sep 4, 2021

[172] See Guardian article by Adrian Levy & Cathy Scott-Clark, *Valley of Shadows*, April 20, 2002 available online at https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2002/apr/20/weekendmagazine

down in force from the other side, Malana stands out as an ancient Hindu village[173] that has also conserved its distinct language over the years, known as *Kanashi* (Rosser, 1955). The language has Sino-Tibetan influences and is one that has little resemblance with Pahari, Hindi or any of any dialects that are usually spoken in the rest of Himachal. Despite the hashish centric tourism that has gathered momentum particularly in Malana in the recent years, the village has managed to maintain its age-old customs, its own system of governance while strictly adhering to pollution-purity measures in its interactions with tourists and travelers.

Figure 7.1 shows houses in the Malana village scattered along the mountain

It is surprising to note that despite forces of modernization that has had made inroads into *Malana*, its peoples have not let any of it make them feel 'impure.' On trekking up into the village, one can find dish antennas for satellite television connections jutting out of almost every house on the hilly patches. The houses are built with concrete and has all modern

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amenities including electricity, and television sets booming with DTH services. There are *dhabas* and a number of guest houses that have been built over the years, however certain parts of the village including the 'sacred' spaces and ancient temples have remained untainted despite these apparent changes visible on external structures.[174] The mindset of the *Kanets* of *Malana* have remained orthodox mostly over fears of 'pollution' by the 'outsiders' in terms of physical mingling destroying their uniqueness. The Malanese settlement today exhibits a peculiar tendency of the ancient simultaneously co-existing with the modern.

Figure 7.2 shows the Malana Village interior

Malana has been the field for many social and anthropological studies, and has encouraged a variety of social science practitioners, researchers and explorers apart from travelers and tourists who have frequented the settlement to gather a sense of socio-cultural and religious practices of this one of a kind ancient village that has remained geographically and culturally isolated for long. James Lyall who was the Settlement Officer at Kangra between 1865-1872, in his account of the village, wrote, "in my recollection they have on several occasions mobbed or abused European travelers who have visited Malana and gone anywhere near the temple with boots on and have been fined for the offence."[175] This practice is still prevalent and heavy fines are levied for non- adherence to their age-old rules and restrictions. Among others, leather is forbidden in the vicinity of the ancient temple that houses the *Jamlu devta*

[174] Concrete houses with tin roofs have replaced primitive housing made of stones and timber, see *Malana: A transfigured landscape*, p 31
[175] See James B. Lyall's (1875) Final Report on the Revised Settlement of Kangra District

and there are clear notices warning visitors not to touch their temples, along with certain objects and stones that are considered 'sacred.' They also do not encourage tourists and people from communities other than them, to directly touch them in any way while interacting. This extends to even sale of commodities, whereby they keep the object of sale on a certain surface and expect cash to be kept there similarly for them to pick up subsequently.

Figure 7.3 shows the temple of the *Jamdagni Rishi* or the *Jamlu Devta* with Figure 7.4 showing a clear notice warning tourists not to touch it.

Earlier there were four extremely arduous routes; one through the Chandrakhani Pass (via Rumshu village), the second through the Roshkoling Pass (via the Rashol village), the other

through the Bheling pass (via the settlement of Jana) and another along the right banks of the Malana Nallah through the undulating Jari-Malana path. These were the only routes to access the village traditionally, possibly because the Malanese people did not prefer infiltration from the outside world. Access was made possible with the construction of the new motorable route in 2007 that followed the banks of the Malana Nallah, (passing exactly at the height of the Malana village from where the distance to the village is merely 2.5 kilometeres through a route where the *nallah* needs to be crossed) and thereon a climb initially through a cemented footpath and thereafter rocky patches and *pagdandis*[176] to reach the hamlet. While the Kanets of Malana are known for their stringent rules of 'pollution- purity,' they are generally hospitable to the travelers who visit their village. The place has also been famously called the 'valley of refuge'[177] since the Malanese have been known to provide sanctuary to anyone who sought asylum in their land having fled out of fear; a ritual obligation as their oral tradition suggests that their deity, the *Jamlu devta* protected their ancestors who fled their original place of inhabitance during a crisis in the same land as narrated by Bua Ram (a village elder from *Malana*). The local outlaws, including couples who flee their homes (due to refusal or social acceptance of their relationship) have often taken advantage of this immunity knowing fully well that because of the customary practices of the Malanese, they would be less prone to risks of being handed over to the police.

Since the cold climate and extreme high altitude is a deterrent for growing traditional crops, sole dependence upon agriculture for basic sustenance is not feasible for the Malanese people. Apart from making use of the little cultivable land near the village to grow millet, wheat and maize, they depend on pastoralism and rear their cattle on high altitude grazing lands where they build seasonal huts or *doghries* in summertime and are also involved in weaving clothes, making handicrafts and gathering and stocking fuelwood for winters as suggested by Masi Devi on being interviewed. Both people and mules carry loads of fuelwood and other basic commodities along the *nallah* route to the village. The villagers also barter local produce such as honey, *ghee* (clarified butter), wool, game birds, medicinal plants and other forest products for rice, maize, pulses, rock salt and other necessities for basic sustenance. The roots of a certain plants are collected and used to manufacture incense, which are also traded. They have also been known to hunt musk deer that is found thriving in

[176] Steps that are made out of rocks by placing it in a fashion so as to build a stairway
[177] See Dervla Murphy's (1968) Valley of Refuge, in S.S. Mehta (ed.) *The Himalayan Journal*, Vol. 28 available online at https://www.himalayanclub.org/hj/28/3/the-valley-of-refuge/ last accessed on December 7, 2017

the terrain. Although only a handful of them are allowed to leave the village[178] with the permission of the *Jamlu devta*, some travel to Kullu, Mandi and Solan districts of Himachal to sell their wares and trade in essentials such as medicines, clothes, shoes and other home appliances. However, the most interesting feature that has the village gain its popularity is because of the naturally grown cannabis abundantly available in the bushy outgrowth on these high- altitude hill slopes, that in turn is known to produce the best quality hashish in the world. The informal economy of cannabis cultivation and *hashish* sale therefore is the predominant enterprise for these people, since agriculture and pastoralism both are severely restricting owing to the harsh climatic conditions in these hills.

What started in the 1980s at a relatively small scale has over the years transformed into an organized industry involving almost everyone in the village presently. Earlier on, hashish was produced by rubbing the buds of the cannabis plant found extensively in the wild, and scraping off the resin to roll into balls which were then flattened between plastic films and weighed for sale in *tolas* (a measure that is equal to approx. 11.33 grams by weight). With the escalated demands of Malana Crème from all over the world, the production of hashish in Malana has undergone substantial change. There has been a systematic effort by the people of the village to not only increase its yields in *kutlas* (small patches of land earmarked for cannabis cultivation), women and children are also involved in the production process, since a superior quality hashish depends on the application of optimum pressure while rubbing the buds for about 20-30 seconds in between the palms to produce the sticky resin, and it is best attained with nimble hands. The best quality of hashish is harvested when this method is followed at a time when the plants are at the peak of their ripeness, generally between the months of late September and mid- October. On an average, a worker is able to collect a very small amount of the resin, i.e. between 7-10 gm per day following which, 'it' is kneaded and stored in a cool dry place and made to cure before selling.

The sale of the hashish happens mostly through *dhabas*, guest houses and grocery shops that also sell commodities of daily use in the village. Children are also involved in the process of sale in that they are often the point of contact to reach the sellers and in some cases, act as sellers themselves. Apart from local sale in the village itself, a complicated network of re-sellers, various kinds of dealers and middle-men are involved in the trade of Malana Crème,

[178] On being interviewed, Beli Ram (*Malana*) maintains that he has been lucky to find employment in the Forest Department as someone from the village since not many get this opportunity.

who sell them in potential markets in the nearby locales of Kasol, Tosh, Manali and in some instances even transport them to Chandigarh and Delhi, where they make a huge margin of profit on the sale. While, numerous varieties of the crème are sold, an average quality crème is sold for between 2500- 3000 Indian Rupees per *tola* with the best quality hashish or the super crème being for between 4500 – 6500 Indian rupees per *tola*. There are other spurious varieties of the hashish available which are mixed with impurities to increase the quantity and are sold for between 1500 -2000 Indian rupees per *tola* or even as much as good quality hashish prices to travelers who are novice and can hence easily be duped. As Bud Ram (a local villager) suggests, many tourists fall easy prey to middlemen/ dealers in Manali and Kasol who sell cheap quality hashish to inexpert first- timers, who cannot make out the difference in texture or smell.

Picture 7.5 on the right shows a village girl carrying a back full of the cannabis leaves.

These networks are often controlled by the local mafia and small groups of Israelis, who had made Kasol their second home in Himachal. This category has its roots in the groups of Israeli travelers who continue to come and sometimes even stay on for lengthy stretches of between 3-6 months on an average, especially during the summer months in Himachal, in places like Kasol, Manali and Rishikesh (Uttarakhand) after completing their compulsory military training in their home country and for whom India has had made tourist visa

regulations less restricted since the times of Rajiv Gandhi government to encourage them to rejuvenate in India.[179] On my visit to Kasol, I came upon a continuous stretch of shops, cafés, photo studios, restaurants and bars that had signboards in Hebrew along with English and served Israeli food. In one café in Kasol, I met with an Israeli lady during one of my interviews, who visits the place each year and stays between the summer months of June and September to set up a mini library with Hebrew books alone to cater to the Israeli population.

Figure 7.6 on the top left showing a clothes shop with a signboard that reads as Yogi's Shop (in Hebrew); the Figure 7.7 on top right reads a signboard for a Juice Shop; the Figure 7.8 at the bottom is of a library full of Hebrew books in a part of a café, open to loans for tourists in Kasol.

For the people of Malana, the economy that has been the backbone for their survival rests on cannabis cultivation and hashish production. The criticisms of it unethically operating in the

[179] See chapter on Prelude to Normalization in *India's Israel Policy*, by P.R. Kumaraswamy (2010), Colombia University Press

‘shadows’ owing to its illicit/ illegal nature is much contested matter. While notions of a rapidly expanding ‘illicit’ market with transnational potentials, circumscribes this debate around moral and ethical value judgements, it is imperative to critically analyze, what is ‘it’ that makes something ‘illegal’ and how far ‘it’ manages to wanton ‘good’ for all, in practice. Whilst this debate on what constitutes ‘illegal’ and to whom, there is an underlying assumption that ‘illegality’ is defined around non-adherence to what is made ‘legal’ by certain political configurations by the virtue of their access to power, in playing out their vested interests in the process of framing the ‘illegal.’ This is since, ‘what’ is legal pertains to anything that is permitted by law, the act of granting such permission rests not with the law that is produced but the maker of that law. This domain of enacting laws and later following them constitutes a tremulous enterprise since the cost of framing the ‘illegal’ often generates various kinds of political, economic and social implications for people who are found to be outside the limits of these set standards. Whilst this process renders some vulnerable and some more powerless than others unequally, the burden for deviation is exacting and most felt in instances where people are unable to make their cases heard because of existing social class biases as in the case of the indigenous *Kanet* community in Malana.

Sometimes, these notions of legality are also abused by certain agencies of local government (the local police in this case) who claim to be guarantors of law thereby producing a systemic tendency of conflict and corruption predicating the process of trade in the ‘shadows’. As Nordstrom (2004: 211) warns,

> The realm of the unregulated is a realm of possibility and danger, were great fortunes and great cruelty are possible. But it is also where the average person turns for survival in an unsure world. The arena of the shadow is a place where power regimes are contested, where new forms of capital, access, and authority rise- some crumbling before they master any real influence in global affairs, others supplanting old regimes with new.

While it is interesting to note that the ‘shadows’ have the potential to usher economic and political development, by linking international markets with local ones like Malana, the fruits of its networks are irregularly distributed and shares of profit determined by hierarchies of power. These hierarchies are not only capable of molding renewed socio-economic relations, between the various brokers in the web of networks they find themselves in, but also capable

of generating larger economic and political outcomes for countries globally. As Hopkins and Wallerstein (1986) suggest that, commodity chains are essentially "sets of inter-organizational networks clustered around one commodity or product, linking households, enterprises, and states to one another in the world- economy"[180] which I draw upon by making a case for the political competencies[181] shaped by the *Malana Crème*. I use 'actor-network' theory to look into the micro-politics of interactions and exchanges that produces repercussions both within and outside of local space of Malana and Manali and in the global context.

7.5 Power, Politics and Actor-Network

I draw upon the 'actor- network' theory (Latour, 1996) to critically analyze the functioning of the complex interactions of goods and services in their course of tourism praxis in these hills of Himachal. I study the quality of their embeddedness in a web of social, political and economic relations that both arise out of these relations of exchange and further shape them into self-sustaining units. I take the cue from Law and Hassard's (1999) enquiry into the anatomy of the 'actor-network' theory that sought to transgress the traditional monolithic conceptualization of the 'actor' and 'network' in terms of agency and structure in understanding the 'tension' with which 'the theory' is (ibid: 1) "displaced, criticized or applied" to examine socio- political realities. This they did through a dismissal of the earlier reductionist approaches of looking at 'actor- network' theory that tended to overlook the potential of 'entities' to exude 'quality' in that they were viewed simplistically as 'things' that passively 'took their form and acquired their attributes' from other entities owing to the relationship that bound them together. As Law suggests (1999) the classic essentialist dichotomies of agency/ structure, human/ non- human, before/ after, context/ content, materiality/ sociality, active/ passive were questioned and what emerged in the form of a re-evaluation of the ANT is a theory that could now grapple with the underlying tensions that separated these 'agency- structure' distinctions into water-tight categories. While prescribing 'a theory of the actor- network', he not only broke the 'fixity', singularity and unilateral tension so far attached to it, but made a case for the recognition of mobility, fractionality and dissolution between both these components. It is his conceptualization of a '*semiotics of*

[180] As quoted in G. Gereffi, M. Koreniewicz & R.P Koreniewcz (1994: 4) "Introduction: Global Commodity Chains," in G. Gereffi and M. Korenziewicz (eds) *Commodity Chains and Global Capitals*, Westview: Boulder, CO

[181] By political competencies I refer to the political capacities of outfits to act as competent agents to access exude and even control power.

materiality' coupled with the notion of '*performativity'* that which he applies to understand the relational character of the actor –network, that I draw upon to understand relationalities and dependencies operative in networks of exchanges shaping the political economy of tourism in Himachal. 'Semiotics of materiality' as Law (1999) suggests refers to acknowledging semiotic insight to studying relationalities between entities that apply to all things material and go beyond the purely linguistic domain in recognizing 'relational materiality' drawing from Karl Marx's visualization of 'modernity' that he posited in the Communist Manifesto as 'all that is solid melts into air.' Also, Law's (1999) idea of 'performativity' refers to the performance in and through the relations that arise out of positionalities of entities and stress on the ways in which 'things get performed' and 'perform themselves' going beyond the established 'order of things' to simply imply that everything is impermanent and 'reversible.'

For Law (1999: 8),

> "… actor- network theory has indeed helped to destabilize Euclideanism: it has shown that what appears to be topographically natural, given in the order of the world, is in fact produced in networks which perform a quite different kind of spatiality."

The earlier notions of the actor- network disregarded the hierarchies of distribution during the process of exchanges especially in the way the 'order of things' was assumed and given primacy in a manner that automatically presupposed 'power' as emanating from the center and then moving towards the distributaries of the periphery. Law and Hassard (1999) also broaden the scope of the actor- network theory by recognizing that 'spatial possibilities' operate across patterns of topological relationalities, that which produces a conducive environment for the network to thrive amidst risks and tensions.

I further draw from Foucault's theorem that 'power' is employed and exercised through a net-like organization from his essay titled, "The Subject and Power" (p 792) where, he familiarizes us with this 'net-like' organization that creates the zone for the exercise of power which relates to,

> "the system of differentiations which permits one to act upon the actions of others; differentiations determined by the law or by traditions of status and privilege;

economic differences in the appropriation of riches and goods; shifts in the process of production; linguistic or cultural differences; differences in know-how and competence; and so forth."

I translate this into a model I develop, to better understand the circuits of power that continually mushroom out of these system of 'differentiations,' whether as result of a call and response between actors or the *ones* that are inherently present or by default continue to operate as a result of longstanding status privileges or traditions, which in its turn impacts production processes, exchanges and its limits and ultimately the question of access.

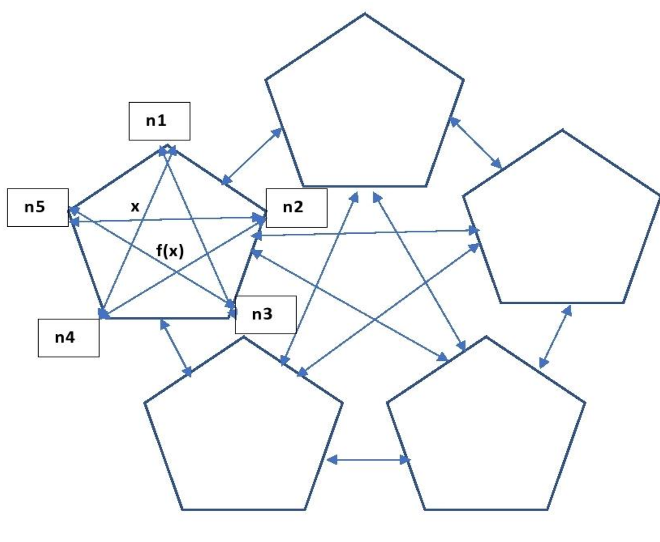

Figure: 7.9 Shows a cross-section of a network
Source: *Author*

In the diagram above, 'n' is used to denote the number of actors engaged in a network shown in the form of a pentagon here (which may be translated to any sided/ shaped parallelogram depending upon the actors involved and the nature of their intimacy/ distance), 'x' is used to denote relations within and between the actors in that network where, f(x) or the function of 'x' causally denotes the function of those relations of power. However, f(x) here may not be treated as a sum of all relations but is used to simply denote a relation, that predicates the course of several relations arising between n1, n2, n3 and so forth. This is because 'power' exists everywhere in all its subtleties and may not be added or subtracted but only felt in these relations in its diffused state. However, this is not to say that 'repressive' power does

not exist in these networks and challenge the existing relations from time to time. It only indicates the changing relationalities arising out of the interactions and transactions within the actors/ elements in a network in the given dispersed fabric of 'power' in turn, governs these relations.

I devise this model to visually represent the political dynamics inherent within these networks that are further connected with other networks to show how circuits of power change, in accordance with the position changes of these values of 'n' in the network depending upon the intimacy or distance within and between '*actors'* which further impacts the nature and intensity of these relations of power. I also argue that these value changes are a result of a continuous process of "*pendular politics*" (oscillating between sides for comparative political advantage) that continues to align and re-align 'power' dynamics thereby becoming self-sustaining circuits. This in my study relates to the ways in which transactions take place between the local communities, state and other actors, which give rise to a newer political dynamic each time and that which further defines and re-defines their positions in the network in accordance with the changed situation. This changing dynamic, as I understand it, then produces self-sustaining circuits which are directly the result of "collective sustenance" mechanisms and coping strategies employed by the '*actors*.'

It is in this connection that Foucault's (1977) conceptualization of power is helpful, where he goes on to state that power (p 93 & 94), "is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with…" Here, Foucault also (ibid: 792) states that the "exercise of power is not a naked fact, an institutional right….: it is elaborated, transformed, organized; it endows itself with processes which are more or less adjusted to the situation." However, I disagree with where he states (ibid: 792) that, [it] "is never localized here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth," owing to the fact that while acknowledging the omnipresent diffused stature of power, one must not forget that at least momentarily 'power' concentrates/ localizes itself at certain junctures which give rise to the risks and tensions perceived between actors in the circuits during the process of exchange, whereby they constantly attempt to re-align their positions for comparative political advantage.

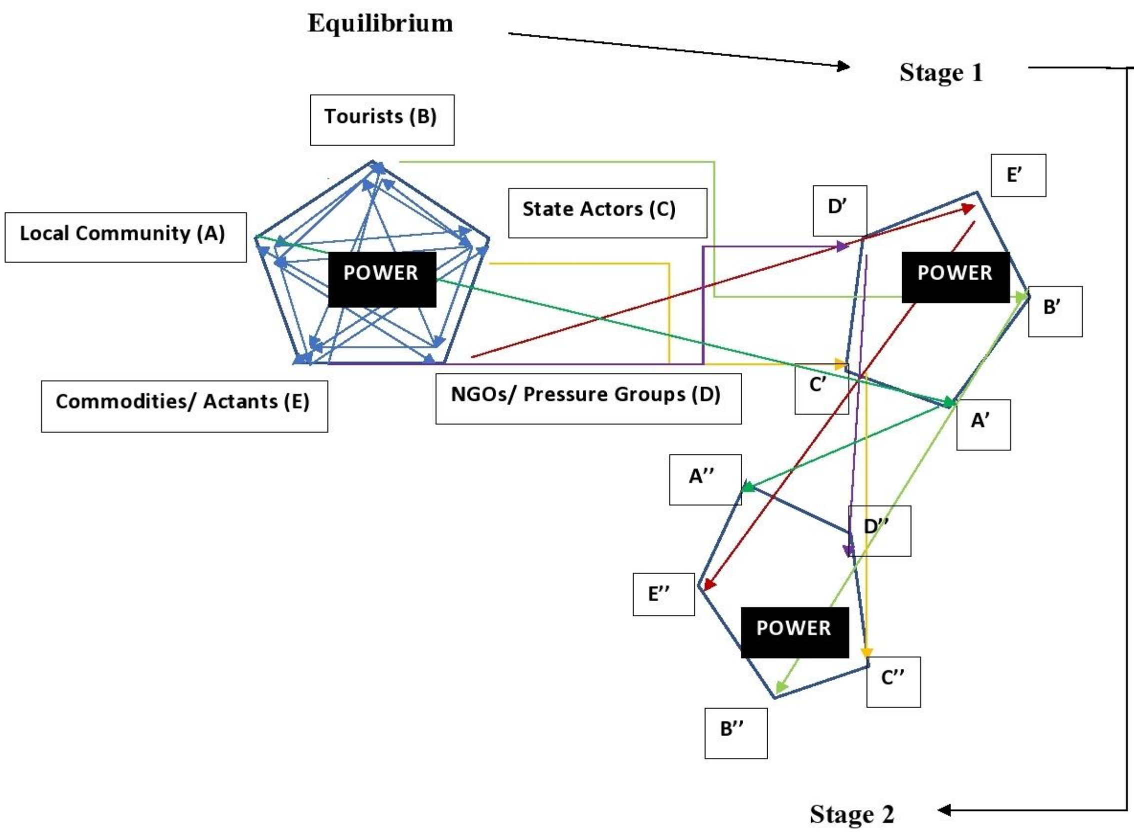

Figure: 7.10 Shows the stages of evolution of transactions of a network

Source: *Author*

Thus, applying the Foucauldian idea of ‘power,’ I opine that it is this normalized omnipresent power that re-produces its own circuits of relations and are sustained through these ever changing and perpetual transactions taking place continually, having at each stage evolved as represented in the above diagram as the transgression from stage 1 to stage 2 and so on and so forth.

It is in this regard that Foucault’s conceptualization of the ‘*dispositif’* also is useful to understand the combination of structural power dynamics operating through the diverse sets of administrative, institutional and knowledge systems that are both embedded in and produce specific hierarchies defining the nature and performance of relations in exchanges and interactions of those networks. I argue that the clear-cut distinction between the nature of agency and that of structure is fizzled in the sense that not only inanimate objects acquire qualities akin to human actors and are capable of exuding power in the web of relations they

are placed within as '*actants'* but that the networks themselves exude power as 'dynamic processual pathways' (as I understand them) in predicating the course of transactions. And as Gomart & Hennion (1999: 224) point out, "Competencies are shaped by the social and material organization of work, the lay- out of the instruments, the means of communication" which then further conditions the modus operandi of networks of exchanges. Also, the ways in which the actor- network theory recognizes the micro interactions of the diversity of animate and inanimate entities as '*actants'* projecting them as 'associations' provide this scope for analyzing the politique of the 'collective' in my study of coping strategies as collective sustenance mechanisms.

It is thus by identification of the image of 'belonging- by- assemblage'[182] and not just countering it with that of its earlier parallel 'belonging- by – banishment'[183] that one may recognize the dynamics of both these images simultaneously through the various 'intersectionalities' and domains of the network by an inclusive rather than a 'cookie- cutter' approach (Lee & Stenner, 1999) that I further develop my argument on the workings of the local network of tourism that produces 'hybrid' entities by assemblages of old and new forms of politico- cultural identities and which is reflected through the various distribution channels of the informal local enterprises of adventure sports coupled with that of the robust shadow economy of the Malana Crème trade.

Also, the 'distribution of visibilities and articulabilities' in the network as Lee & Stenner (1999) point out, automatically translates to a varying set of activities performed on a multi-dimensional scale that necessarily takes places both within spaces that are (ibid: 96) "well-lit and spaces that are shadowy and dark" making conditions for these 'hybrids' to sustain and grow. I see that the consequence of this 'de-centered' multi- layered political play in exchanges and interactions culminates ultimately into 'hybrids'; the hallmark of the complex world today. These 'hybrids' are thus born out of the tensions of the possibilities of 'belonging' in an institution that which is "guaranteed by the exclusion and silencing" (ibid: 95) of these entities working in the shadows. It is here that the image of 'belonging- by-assemblage' when pitched against 'belonging- by – banishment' marks out the possibility of

[182] 'Belonging by assemblage' refers to the condition of cohesion that is created out of meeting and becoming part of an assembly in a way that increases the power of all concerned in a certain order, that which works out in a more profitable manner for the new '*hybrid collectif*' than an individuated entity.
[183] 'Belonging by banishment' refers to the condition wherein the idea of belonging in a given order, is established through the banishment of entities that pay the price of 'not belonging' i.e. not being part of a circle of communication, and there is a clear division between those who belong and the ones who do not.

recognition of the excluded entities in the workings of networks. Furthermore, as Latour (1935: 51) envisions, “By deploying both dimensions at once, we may be able to accommodate the hybrids and give them a place, a name, a home, a philosophy, an ontology…. a new constitution.” “He further goes on to state that (1993: 41) this leads to “light streaming into previously darkened spaces” where the hybrids can be recognized as entities and given names. This hybridization as I understand it, marks critical junctures in the networks of exchanges, molding not only the political nature of commodity chains but that of the coping strategies employed by local communities in circumscribing the life of collective sustenance mechanisms. Also, in the scope of the study, it is interesting to note how the nature of spiritual and cultural consumption of *hashish* has acquired new meanings in terms of the post liberalization globalized market through the ‘hybridisation’ of the commodity itself along with the hybridization of the networks themselves. A similar trajectory of metamorphosis may be observed as regards to the commodity chains and networks driven by the culture of consumption of coca leaves by Inca messengers (approximately 8000 years ago)[184] that have now transformed into a robust *cocaine* industry in South America. It is therefore clear that the asymmetrical power configurations in terms of the play of entities (*actants* as well as the ‘dynamic processual pathways’) that contend for access to and control over resources/ commodities in these networks of exchange and transactions dictate the political economy of a region, in my study Himachal Pradesh.

Despite efforts by the local administration to prevent *hashish* production and sales by burning the fields and taking the necessary precautionary steps to check crème ban, the shadow economy of the crème still thrives in the region. Despite the cannabis ban in accordance with the NDPS Act of 1985 (recently amended in 2014) that apprises a punishment of up to a 10 year- long prison sentence for offenders, the Kullu district alone produces approx. 11 tons of *charas* every year, the majority of which is supplied from the Malana village which later gets smuggled to the international markets in Europe, where it is ‘sold under names such as *White Widow* and *Shanti Baba’*.[185] Borrowing from Nordstrom’s workings of the ‘shadow’ economy, what unfolds in the context of the crème trade in Himachal also involves a complex network of small scale sellers, brokers, middlemen, large dealers and the local mafia who work outside the perimeters of formal and legal state channels and international and

[184] See Richard T. Martin’s “The Role of Cocoa in the History, Religion and Medicine of South American Indians,” in *Economic Botany*, Vol 24 (4), Oct- Dec 1970, pp 422-438 published by Springer
[185] See *Malana: A transfigured landscape*, p 55

domestic laws and are responsible for contouring economic and political configurations that are governed by specific codes of conduct, structural organization and social principles rather than operating loosely without definite anatomy. Notwithstanding that these networks are 'extra-state' in their operations, it is critical to understand that they do not operate outside of the state in that they are not necessarily distinct from the state since they work around formal representatives and institutions that embody state power (though on contradictory terms) in tandem.

These illegal/ informal new age networks are ever dynamic in scope and evolve by responding to changes that take shape in both global and local markets and other formalized institutions by further brokering soft power (rather than force as in the past) thereby generating a bargaining power capable of regulating the micro-politics of such relationships in turn. For understanding this politically dynamic process, it might be worth looking at Beck's (2009) idea of world risk society, that I intertwine with the concept of Nordstrom's 'shadow economy.' As Beck seeks to understand the extent to which the automatisms of the processes of globalization and modernization take course to rediscover human actions which then responds to the cosmopolitan alternatives by politically shape changing themselves as a feedback, I find that this connection also applies to the movement of these new age networks that adjust itself by elastically changing form as a response to such political interplay especially in the wake of 'risks'. It is the concept of the 'shadows' and 'risk' facing communities of which networks are a part, that I find an active power play of conscious political manouvere that the vulnerable actors especially employ to sustain themselves collectively. The collective however enjoys relative 'power' and are able to operate unhindered so long as the 'elites' from within the collective, do not surface to make claims opposed to their interests, which then affects meanings of proximity and reciprocity between the actors. In the case of *Malana Crème* production and sale, perceptions of risk determine when and how producers and sellers of the commodity respond to the opportunities of the market and meet its demands optimally coupled with tackling the police, the middle-men and the local mafia.

Chapter 8
Conclusion

In this chapter, I discuss how the findings of my primary research on the field speak to the material gathered through secondary sources so as to produce an understanding of the research questions I initially pose. After analyzing the data generated on the field and pitching it in the light of the various concepts, approaches, tools and methods I discuss in the previous chapters, I explore the ways in which tourism has transformed with respect to 'collective sustenance' visavis the drug economy that has flourished in Himachal Pradesh. In doing this, I particularly look at the political will, subjectivities and 'agency' of local communities who have continued to cope with this change as a result of aggressive tourism development thereby further looking at the 'micro-politics' involved in the everyday exchanges and interactions with the various stake holders of tourism. As Cheong and Miller (2000: 379) state that,

> "Power relations in tourism systems are dynamic and constantly changing. With this, absolute number and ratios of tourists, locals, and brokers at destinations change throughout the phases of development. Tourists can become brokers by starting entrepreneurial businesses or by assuming government positions as consultants or enforecement agents. They can also become locals by establishing permanent residency at destinations. Similarly, locals can become brokers by engaging in the business or management and planning of tourism; they can also become tourists. Brokers can change their identity to tourists or cease to be involved in tourism related ventures and become locals. The shifting identities of tourists, locals, and brokers largely depend on contingencies, time, and place. Consequently, there is no one-sided, fixed flow of power from one individual to another."

I further engage in an analysis of the risks and rewards in a typically hilly terrain, especially by looking at the gender dynamics and its interfaces with tourism, in the context of livelihoods and identity, I locate 'power' hierarchies and its subsequent play. I therefore attempt to produce an understanding of these power relations in these hills and the ways in which local communities deal with these power configurations in constant flux.

8.1 Recent Fall outs of Excessive Tourism in Himachal

The pristine landscape of Himachal Pradesh that enticed travelers and explorers throughout history have undergone dramatic changes over the last couple of decades and visibly so post the 1990s. The once serene surroundings of the hills offering quiet spaces for contemplation and self- discovery, has increasingly become bustling with more and more people engaged in numerous activities that reflect modern urban ways of living. This has largely been pushed forward by the fast- growing urbanity that has replaced rural modes of living in simple wooden houses with an unprecedented mushrooming of concrete jungles on hill slopes predicated by the ever- dynamic transport and communication networks and extensive trade connecting people from the remotest parts of these hills to the mainstay Indian cities in the plains such as Chandigarh and Delhi. The unprecedented growth of the market economy having fueled these processes of modernization and urbanization has led to a complete erosion of the ecology of the region having pushed local people to the fringes.

As Vandana Shiva (2010: 216) points out,

> "The market economy is not the primary one in terms of the maintenance of life. When sustenance is the organizing principle of society's relationship with nature, nature exists as a commons. It only becomes a resource when profits and capital accumulation become the organizing principles and create an imperative for the exploitation of resources for the market. Yet without a clean atmosphere and clean water, fertile soils and crop and plant genetic diversity, human survival is not possible. These common resources have been destroyed by economic development. This, in turn, has created a new contradiction between the economy of natural processes and people's survival economy. Since those pushed out by development are forced to survive on an increasingly eroded nature."

The recent water crises felt in Himachal[186] owing to excessive tourism, is just one of the many fall outs that the region has had to face owing to the massive scale in which the

[186] See First Post's Report on "Shimla Water Crises: Residents ask Tourists to stay away as locals protest; Himachal Pradesh CM Jai Ram Thakur reviews situation", June 01, 2018 available online at

enterprise operates. Since the second half of the month of May 2018, Shimla saw a severe shortage of drinking water supply for a period of almost a fortnight owing to an escalated tourist footfall. The report additionally discloses the horrifying plight of the residents by bringing to notice that residents of Shimla town had not only extremely limited access to drinking water but also had sewage water being supplied to their houses. With the severity of the water crises intensifying, local communities, environmental activists and residents of Shimla made an appeal to the tourists to keep away from Shimla until the water crisis could be managed. With the month of May and June marking as the peak season for tourists to travel to the hills, approximately 20,000 tourists are estimated to arrive each day to *Shimla* alone. However, post the acute water crisis, the government of Himachal decided to cancel the Shimla Summer Festival which has been one of the key promotional events to encourage tourism as part of the state policy. There was widespread activism on the social media with the message "Stop Visiting Shimla" going viral to stall the advent of tourists to Shimla. Among other more apparent natural causes such as climate change inducing low rainfall and less snow coupled with a hot summer that has intensified the water shortage in the hills of Himachal, Manshi Asher, an environmental activist and spokesperson for *Himdhara*, an action research organization that engages in specifically environmental issues in the Himalayas, mentions that the rapid urbanization, expansion of industrialization and heavy tourism activities in Himachal have been affecting the river basins of the *Ravi*, *Beas*, *Satluj* and *Chenab* and the river flows in substantial ways so as to change their course altogether. Mega sized projects such as the construction of dams, upcoming hydro-power projects and setting up large and small hotels have all added up to manufacturing the acute water shortage in Himachal especially in and around *Shimla*. The report also mentions the population explosion in the hills of Shimla which currently stands at approximately 2 lakh although requires 42 million litres of water per day, in reality only receives between 18- 20 million litres per day owing to the stress on water resources because of excessive tourism. The indiscriminate use of water in hotels and guest houses by tourists has only deepened the crisis. These carrying capacity concerns especially contribute to a heightened risk to life and sustenance for the locals of the region.

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https://www.firstpost.com/india/shimla-water-crisis-residents-ask-tourists-to-stay-away-as-locals-protest-himachal-pradesh-cm-jai-ram-thakur-reviews-situation-4490713.html last accessed on December 5, 2018

In this regard, Trupp and Dolezal (2020: 11) maintain that, "important questions on how tourism cannot just be more beneficial for local residents and destinations, but also how the industry can essentially be restructured and re-imagined to put those that are marginalized" need to be raised. Issues of environmental degradation and air and water pollution that are but the aftermath of severe environmental stress on resources also pose challenge to the ecology of the region. Vehicular emission resulting from an astronomically large number of cars and buses plying up and down the hills catering to tourism alone, have systematically eroded the scenic beauty of these hills. Also, the large extent to which solid waste disposal and urban effluence is being generated by the hotels and resorts is not only eroding the beauty of the hillscape but posing serious risks to health for the locals. Despite plastic ban initiatives especially taken up seriously in Manali, Himachal, where plastic bags have altogether been done away with, having introduced paper bags in its place for day to day transactions, water bodies such as rivers and falls along the hills continue to get polluted with industrially packaged plastic wastes such as plastic water bottles and plastic snack wrappers that tourists dispose during their travel from one spot to the other. These have damaging implications for the locals who depend on these rivers as a source of clean water to carry out their household chores or for fishing. Water turns toxic owing to these pollutants in the rivers continue to thwart the flora and fauna of the region alongside completely denudating the beauty of the space.

8.2 Politics, identities & Collective Sustenance

The hills of Himachal have through the ages offered not only an 'ideal' spot for purposes of travelling 'out of the ordinary' for a variety of people and for a variety of reasons but discursively produced 'a space' that is 'exciting' to both 'reside in' and 'journey into'. However, this idea of 'residing' is more often than not temporary and not long- lived. Also, the notion of 'journeying into' the space as I see it, entails a continuous flux of shifting or moving from one zone to another within 'the space', here the hillscapes, not just physically but psychologically, as I find backpackers and other tourists moving from one destination to another in and around Manali for different experiences. This constant movement experienced by travelers and tourists both outwardly in terms of physical space manoeuvre and inwardly as a transgressing psychological experience lead to ways of 'self- discovery' that which then patterns expressions of tourism as well.

As discussed earlier, although the motivations for travel to these hills have been different in each of the instances of the pilgrims and other religious travelers, those of the colonial travelers, the Viceroys of the British Raj and later the *hippies* and more recently ‘a new middle class’ of domestic travelers ranging between weekend holidayers, back-packers and honeymooners, these hills have over the years produced ‘a hyper real space’ that marks a rupture between the real world and an imagined ‘other.’ It is this imagined ‘otherness’ that therefore has constructed the image of an ‘ideal prototype’ which has been the leitmotif of ‘escape’ from the real- world situations. This is quintessentially true of the way in which travelers have imagined these hills as ‘a space’ where the everyday lives of the people and the ground reality of the hills has been completely negated. In this sense, the travel to the hills may be thought of as an ‘event’ that erases the everyday/ the mundane by creating a space for the experience of surreal and hyper- real existences, that which marks a shift from ‘the everyday.’ Also, as with landscapes, the imagination of ‘hillscapes’ by travelers and tourists pertains to an association with a space that is ‘wide’ in its range and has innate qualities of the ‘wild’ and where ‘everyday living’ does not happen. In this construction of the hills as a hyper- real universe there is no space left for acknowledging the everyday of the hills. This transforms the hills in some sense as a ‘pre- space’; a zone that precedes reality and which experiences the ‘in-between-ness’ of being stuck as both a space of the imaginary (as I demonstrate it with the discussions of post- colonial legacy and Bollywood influencing travel to the hills) and the obliterated (through an analysis of the Ranee of Sirmour, the exotic but ‘invisiblised other’ in Chapter 2).

Also, the tendency to invisiblize the regular mundane life of the local communities residing in the hills followed by an ascription of exoticism to the hills by tourists and travelers alike has eventually led to a gradual annihilation of the ‘everyday’ lives in the hillscape of Himachal. In Chapter 6, I show that this neglect of everyday lives in the hills is reflected in the habits, practices and playing out of the politics of exploitation of natural and human resources both in the gaze and performance of tourism that is only capable of seeing the ‘beautiful’ and the ‘exotic’ and that which cannot comprehend the saga of poverty or of the harsh everyday realities negotiated by the locals in the hills. This I argue has led to a systemic process of making and shaping of the hillscapes (both imaginatively and physically) in accordance with the individuated desires and capitalist fantasies that have gradually tried to culturally homogenize the space of the hills. The Post- liberalization (during the 1990s) phase in India thus hastened a process of cultural homogenization through the dynamics of global

purchase and the 'logic of the capital' dictating forms of markets, shaping new identities having replaced older ones dramatically and thereby creating conditions in which the 'individuated self' plays out its interests for comparative political advantage even within the perimeters of the apparent social group s/he identifies herself/ himself as part of. This however may not be treated as a simplistic understanding whereby the 'individuated self' completely loses all of its other social or community identities, but as a complex process that s/he undergoes as a political entity to negotiate its space in the community and beyond in order to manouevre access to markets, local and global. This is also true of the idea of 'collective sustenance' that I frame to include 'risk' (Beck, 1999) situations and especially when negotiating access in the 'shadows' (Nordstrom, 2000), where I fully acknowledge the rise of 'local elites' who emerge from amongst these hill communities and play out their vested interests while engaging in the political life of the community for better access to power and markets in Chapter 7.

I also show that whilst the tourists have travelled and negotiated their access through the hillscapes, the local 'identities' have also journeyed and changed with respect to such travel. The fact that identities are constantly changing in a '*glocal'*[187] world is therefore established through the workings of the capitalist economy that finds expression in the rapidly expanding tourism enterprise in these hills and the 'language' in which it is taking the older identities away and replacing them with a universal undertone is purely one that is market- driven. This cultural homogenization has in turn led to the birth of a 'global middle class,' a phrase coined to imply a class of people who by the virtue of their aspirations to social mobility define their modes of economic behavior, a condition that is an obvious outcome of globalization and the expansion of the 'transnational economic complex' (Sachs, 2010). It is this global middle class, he argues that tries to compete for a 'greater share of income and power' which is often negotiated at the expense of the basic rights of the impoverished and the powerless. Sach further states (2010: ix-x),

> "As governments and businesses, urban citizens and rural elites mobilize to forge ahead with development, more often than not the land, the living spaces and the cultural traditions of indigenous peoples, small farmers or the urban poor are put under pressure. Freeways cut through neighbourhoods, high-rise buildings displace

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[187] A world where the distance between global and local vanishes

> traditional housing, dams drive tribal groups from their homelands, trawlers marginalize local fisher- folk, supermarkets undercut small shopkeepers. Economic growth is of a cannibalistic nature; it feeds on both nature and communities, and shifts unpaid costs back onto them as well."

This is also true of India's post liberalization phase following 1991 with tourism in Himachal becoming a popular middle- class choice as I show in Chapter 1. The obvious impact is encroachment on local social lives and livelihoods that tend to culturally homogenize local communities by introducing synthetic changes and setting artificial standards for recognition of 'development.' These standards in turn shape aspirations for these communities and further produces their own set of micro- politics to be played out in the quest for power, access, economic betterment and a desire for cultural if not economic equity that often crystallize in the scramble for resources. The scramble for resources and fierce competition then further leads to a process of intense exploitation of the environment and its natural resources, where this tussle between imagined aspirations and lived realities shape new identities of middle-class-ness. This creation of middle- class culture and the experiences of 'middle- class- ness' therefore necessarily affirms the strength of networks that link global markets with the local ones; that which intensifies with the project of modernity with the state playing as an interlocutor. The modus operandi of the state is to basically work in tandem with the market but does so with clearly differential treatment that it metes out to individuals and groups depending upon the way 'it' sees them as economic prospects suitable of being privileged over others for the interests of the state. The way the state functions in a capital driven economy therefore is by attempting to formalize markets by passing legislations, offering incentives and in some cases strictly curbing certain exchanges through prohibitions if those go against 'its' interests. Therefore, what is interesting to note here is that the notion of 'illegality' as we understand it, is also produced by capitalism to a large extent. I use the term 'illegal' here not in a moral sense but to refer to the intervention of the state in looking at the politics of prohibition with respect to culturally embedded values and practices of local communities. While there are some exchanges that are socially and politically tolerated more than others despite been deemed 'illegal,' owing to an imagined hierarchy of moral rejection depending on the severity of social deviance it is provoked by, ethical connotations of illicit/ illegal exchanges inform social considerations that further feed to the politics of legitimization of certain articles over others. The social construction of 'legal' and 'illegal' is

however largely defined by the state's control over economic transactions that restrict articles on the basis of norms that it lays out in deeming such as immoral or unhealthy according to 'its' standards; that which then shapes social expectations and guides compliance or otherwise.
For Dewey (2016: 5),

> "The adoption of a perspective informed by the notion of a market changes the landscape somewhat. In this new landscape, an actor rarely given much consideration appears- the consumer – and, more generally, their moral considerations regarding the nature of the products they purchase. Here, reference is made to valuations of illegal products, to tolerance and rejection, or to the social consideration of the moral meaning of the exchanges."

It is this notion of tolerance or rejection at the social level that circumscribes issues of legitimacy, whereby some articles of exchange are privileged over others owing to the fact that (ibid: 5) "they are embedded in tradition, or because they are considered vital for life, are tolerated or even accepted by certain sectors of society." These long- standing socio- cultural considerations feed into the politics of framing the 'legal' and the 'illegal' on a much more local level, where the state might not be able to thrust upon 'its' generic and overarching set standards and norms which might not appeal locally. Tolerance guided by social considerations and operative in informal ways at a local level is therefore crucial to not only the sustained running of the market but to providing political stability locally (Misse, 2007; Dewey, 2011). It is therefore useful to acknowledge the facets of both the legal/illegal conundrum coupled with the understanding of the ways in which legitimate/ illegitimate find meaning in the political life of people since it enables a better grasp of the externalities that surface from the operation of these illicit markets and thereby defines their role as political subjects. The very fact that the consumption of *hashish* in the hills of Himachal have found a huge market not only locally but internationally, is proof enough of the strong informal networks embedded in politically stable structures that operate in these hills despite state intervention. Also, the ways in which informal jobs are created through the adventure sports industry including the sale of *Malana Crème* through informal channels of employing young boys on the streets, networks of table boys in cafes, bakeries and restaurants, point to a systemic condition of making the best political use of the externalities of these illicit articles of exchange and of the otherwise 'illegal' markets. Borrowing from this understanding of the

notions of illegality vis-a-vis the legitimate, where Dewey (2016) stresses on the role of the 'market' in the local landscape shaping the frame of reference for the idea of 'legitimacy,' I explain the social and cultural frame of reference surrounding the consumption of *hashish* or *Malana Crème* in these hills and the ways in which the product negotiates its access into the networks of the tourism enterprise having catered to a range of customers both domestic and foreign and continually does so in its own quest of establishing legitimacy, even in the wake of 'risks' of prosecution.

8.3 Commodity chains and Networks of the Shadows

While a whole body of literature has been generated on the 'extra-legal' domain of markets and governance, especially around the operations of mafia groups and the protection of sale of illegal articles they enjoy (Gambetta, 1993; Volkov, 2002; Varese, 2004; Campana, 2011), the study of political economy of markets and geographies have largely focused on the role of legal and formal institutions as capable of shaping capitalism. In this research, I demonstrate the role of informal institutions, illicit networks and illegal articles of exchange emerging as potent forces for fashioning capitalism and thus creating a strong stimulus for defining the political economy of the region. I recognize the micro- politics immanent in the running of informal institutions and illicit markets which in turn are predicated by informal norms that monitor the functioning and competition between the various stake- holders, brokers, suppliers and clients involved in such exchange, just as in the case of their formal legal counterparts. However, the covert ways of operation in the 'shadows' having maintained an element of 'secrecy' is what makes the dynamics of illicit exchange divergent in terms of its form. A combination of the level of political tolerance, local politics, informal institutions and the logic of the market are therefore key to the sustenance of illegal enterprises and markets. The issue of corruption as I discuss in Chapter 7, also act as one of the key dependencies for the operation of these illegal networks which does not necessarily translate to only calling out the strained methods of negotiation between the parties concerned but point to the politics of 'consensus' that is agreed upon even in the presence of differential power hierarchies. As Dewey (2016: 8) suggests,

> "The study of informal institutions in the context of illegal markets does not end in the study of corrupt relationships among organized criminal groups, local politicians, and the police. Instead, it must be taken into account that the exchange and circulation

of products depend not only on agreements that neutralize the law but also on multiple mechanisms that legitimate actions, provide capital, mask transactions, and reduce violence."

It is therefore the negotiations of people and communities with the demand, production, supply chains and consumption of illicit/ illegal articles even in the wake of risks of prosecution that therefore shape the very workings of networks of Malana Crème trade. Whilst there can be two broad categories that can apply in terms of what is deemed 'illegal' by the state by outright prohibition of specific kinds of goods or certain kinds of exchanges and those operating in the 'shadows' through informal institutions, what is fascinating to observe is that the process of 'illegalization' or making something 'illegal' intrinsically privileges specific power outfits including those of the state who make conscious political use of such exchanges (manifested through corruption). Also, despite strict prohibitions, the ways in which markets and networks of illegal objects and exchanges operate within the ambit of the state and sometimes with its full knowledge and cooperation, as in the instance of Malana Crème trade is worth evaluating for the sake of understanding the 'logic of capital'[188] as a driving force shaping political economy of geographies, here the hillscapes of Himachal. The ways in which sustained inequality, poverty, hunger, forced displacements and economic crisis have led to human deprivation having marginalized populations over entire geographies, have now found refuge in the operations of the illicit/ illegal informal markets that have opened- up access to vital goods and services essential for basic sustenance. As in the case of the local communities in Himachal, especially the *Malanese* people for whom these illicit markets having had enjoyed social legitimacy for long have now transformed as mechanisms for access to a certain economic status. These operations have over time also increased people's experiences of political negotiations coupled with an increased access to goods and services that have thereby shaped their modes of living (Bronk, 2009; Beckert, 2012; Appadurai, 2013). This in turn molds their aspirations and develops their potential to negotiate future occurrences by preparing them to actively fight risk situations in thereby capacitating them to act as 'agents' of change rather than mute victims of exploitation. Thus, the promise of better access, economic stability or heightened economic status, increased

[188] Refers to a dynamic process that commodifies all aspects of our life, social, cultural or political in its tendency to generate capital whenever, wherever and from whichever source it is possible.

reciprocity in networks work as motivational forces for the maintenance of these illicit networks.

8.4 Micro-politics of Local Institutions v/s Governmental Politics

While I further explore the micro-politics of market- driven networks both legal and informal/ illicit that which naturally intersect with each other at certain intervals depending on the needs of exchange, I also show that there are specific political ways in which even local institutions and NGOs negotiate their access to these markets. Also, while this ideal notion of working towards a common good in ensuring protection of local communities and issues of conservation drives these NGOs and local institutions, what is interesting to find is that specific individuals and groups from amongst these institutions emerge as politically charged entities who for comparative political advantage play out their own vested interests and which sometimes leads to disequilibrium of the cohesive nature of these otherwise tight federations. For instance, *Navrachana*, a pressure group comprising mountain activists from in and around Kullu in Himachal was formed in 1994 and was working on Natural Resource Management with the idea of community conservation. It got a new life in 2004, where it was officially launched as the '*Himalaya Niti Abhiyan'*, by group of organizations and people who set out to work on issues of mountain specific development, conservation of the ecology and livelihood of people in the region. This initiative marked the coming together of a federation of people in small groups to conserve nature and protect the environment, save land- grabs, defend old rehabilitation programmes coupled with resisting the proposed Himalayan Ski Village project put forward by Ford with an estimated area coverage of most of the Kullu and Manali range. The project because of its sheer size was projected to severely impact local communities, the fragile landscape along with destroying orchards and farmland and even pollute the air and water. The project also envisioned the making of artificial snow to support skiing activities along thousands of hectares along the hillslopes, for which the river Beas would have had to bear the brunt. However, with the series of appeals and constant negotiations with the state, local communities together with *Navrachana* have been successful in finally stalling the project. This apart the collective has also been instrumental in trying to organize and federate small local operators to adopt ecology- friendly tourism practices which has however not yielded desired outcomes. This may be attributed to individual political interests and local level politics playing out through sectional unions such

as the taxi associations, porters unions, rafting unions including photographers' unions they are part of, and which majorly drives their motivations for siding or protesting specific development activities. Many other locally based hoteliers and tour operators also act in accordance with the more dominant corporate power outfits, siding their initiatives owing to the monetary profit they envision for themselves. This is true of especially packaged deals that they partner with these big corporate enterprises and advertise as 'affordable' in order to lure tourists into opting for a 'better' and more comfortable experience over small enterprises such as local homestays and guest houses. Through my research, I demonstrate that it is this individuated aggressive aspirational politics of survival that even feeds into the ways in which local communities organize themselves and strive to sustain in the face of risks they perceive. It is in this sense that I problematize my notion of 'collective sustenance' to state that I treat it not as a homogenous cohesive process that uniformly motivates and guides people's action but point to a condition where layered politics of survival is played out in accordance with the structured hierarchies of power that are inherently present even in operations of a collective entity. The success of collective sustenance mechanisms therefore lies not just in the capacity to act as a homogenous outfit by addressing blindly the interests of the entire collective, but more to the functional dynamics that is played out in the process of bartering individuated interests, in the face of perceived risks, which are then capable of shaping the workings of these collectivities.

I also explore the governmental politics inherent in the ways in which tourism has been planned in Himachal Pradesh. Having identified the enormous tourism potential for the state in terms of generating revenue, the government of Himachal Pradesh had since 2005 actively taken up the cause of aggressively furthering tourism in the state. Although in its draft Tourism Policy of 2013, the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh advocates for sustainable development and inclusive green growth to be the backbone for guiding tourism in the state, the government has failed miserably to implement what it had promised to do. It had time and again ignored community participation in planning exercises and even for instances when it did attempt to engage in facilitating dialogue with local communities, it eventually refused to acknowledge their plight and dictated its own terms of tourism practice and development. It also gave more priority to private sector engagements and dialogues for expanding tourism activities along with creating new tourist hubs and developing existing tourism circuits completely neglecting local livelihoods and the ecology. The recent tensions on the setting up of a Rupees 450 Crore Rohtang Ropeway Project which the local communities around

Manali had opposed bear testimony to one of many such interventions which are almost oppressively pursued by the government. Although the project stresses on the positives of reducing traffic congestion and carbon emission on the hills by completely doing away with the plying of cars and taxis on the hills towards a cleaner and greener environment in and around Rohtang, what 'it' holds for the future of livelihoods of the local communities on the ground paints a rather grave picture. The project if completed risks the livelihoods of the local *dhabas* (places offering refreshment) that are lined along the entire stretch of the road between *Palchan* and *Gulaba* and will severely affect the business of the small local taxi operators along with the livelihoods of the local youth engaged in the adventure sports industry and photography along the sites. While the National Green Tribunal has lended its support for the ropeway having issued environmental clearances for the same, the politics imminent in the recent high court judgement ruling on the setting up of this proposed ropeway (from *Palchan* to *Rohtang*) on the hills of Himachal in the Public- Private-Partnership' mode clearly reflect on the ulterior political motives of the state over its commitment to local communities and the ecology broadly. Also, historically, the way in which *Gulaba*, in the upper *Manali* region faced tremendous deforestation, whereby the government of Himachal Pradesh had felled trees indiscriminately for revenue generation in the 1980s, bear testimony to the complete lack of planning and commitment for ecological conservation. Even today this aggressive attitude for maximizing profits over ecological sustenance has not changed and despite the calls for a cleaner and greener surrounding, the construction of the project itself entails axing down of hundreds of coniferous trees (that take years to mature) including some rare exotic species which will in turn make the region more prone to landslides and cloudbursts. Further, the project when completed will create a massive stress on the area in and around *Rohtang* and severely impact carrying capacity of the region since the ropeway will facilitate the influx of tourists all throughout the year and the *Rohtang* will not be able to recuperate from the stress it earlier was able to deal with owing to the six –month embargo that was in place so far. The ropeway will thus not only destroy the rare species of trees and impact the wild flora and fauna along the villages of Palchan, Marhi and Gulaba but will create tremendous stress on water resources in the villages of Palchan, Kothi and Ruar which will soon follow suit to what had happened to Shimla in terms of the acute water crisis felt by the locals, as discussed earlier.

As Guman Singh, a mountain people's rights activist points out, "the Himalayan region needs mountain specific and Himalaya specific policy frameworks for development" to work

without which mega- structures that get constructed inevitably lead to havoc in the ecology since he feels the region is extremely sensitive. He also vociferously advocates for inclusive approaches to be introduced whereby people's participation in decision making processes he feels need to be incorporated during planning and policy making with regard to Himalaya specific development.

Developing countries world over are forever more grappling with issues of poverty, environmental degradation and ecological concerns that arise out of the interplay of a combination of social, political and ecological forces limiting choices for livelihood or income generation. Despite these challenges, local communities, have shown more than adaptability and retaliated, having faced numerous kinds of risks, often in terms of collectivizing their actions to build more resilient enterprises for their sustenance. The hill communities in Himachal, are no exception. However, it is the locational specificities that as I argue, shape extremely unique forms of political interchanges 'in doing tourism' that underline the very nature of the political economy of Himachal Pradesh.

8.5 Market Economy and Tourism as Work

While I start off the premise of my research on 'tourism' by basing it in the notions of leisurely travelling, I gradually explore how these acts of travelling move beyond the ideas of seeking solace out of the drudgery of the 'everyday' and picks up characters of 'work' that is automatically implied given the dynamics of exchange that one finds herself/ himself into while practicing tourism in a certain space. The market economy I argue, is pivotal to understanding the negotiations and micro- politics of exchanges that happen during the course of tourism practice, in transforming the apparent practice of leisure into an 'industry'; that which intrinsically entails 'work' to be accomplished at the various intersections of exchanges that take place with the various brokers. Also, the ways in which modern day 'packaged tourism' is marketed and driven, the idea of leisure for pleasure completely transforms into doing 'work' in some sense since it automatically implies adherence to a schedule, an itinerary and a structured routine; the ideal features of 'work.' I explore how popular culture, the homogenized product of market economy ushered by the forces of globalization and liberalization shapes the political economy of tourism by fashioning people's choices to practice leisure. I further show how in doing tourism, the different political subjects involved in the dynamics of tourism enterprise, play out their own sets of

political interests/ agenda which then crystallize into specific positions thereby structuring the dynamics of exchange according to the power differentials thus created as 'collective sustenance' finds meaning in the face of risks and exploitation. In this sense, I attribute agency to my subjects and not merely treat them as victims who are placed in the receiving end of things, but as active negotiators who continually strive to fight back exploitation despite their vulnerabilities and precarious conditions. This I show through the activism that the local communities engage in with the support of local institutions such as the Panchayats and local people's pressure groups and NGOs along with the ways in which networks of *Malana Crème* trade are negotiated even in the face of state opposition. That different forms of markets both illegal and legal have been created and expanded post the 1990s, have also led to divergent ways of access to these networks both surreptitious and blatant, whereby the challenge of manouevre has acquired new dimensions in terms of each of the intersectional politics of exchange that individuals and groups experience at critical nodes, that which shapes their political dialogue with the state.

In a World Bank report[189] published in January 2015, Maitreyi Das, Lead Social Development Specialist, World Bank maintains that, "Himachal Pradesh stands apart from many states in India with its strong track record of poverty reduction, service delivery, and human and social development outcomes" where she especially emphasises on the success of the economic growth rate of the state by pointing to the fact that the state compared to the rest of India, has exhibited a commitment to supporting women's empowerment and gender equality which is reflected in women's participation in the labour market and in economic decision making thereby paving the path for better access of women to services and markets. The report also identifies two factors that have been key forces to drive the state's inclusive labour market outcomes where it states that almost half of urban men and one-fifth of urban women of working age, in the state were employed in regular salaried jobs in 2011 and among those who were employed by 2011, approximately one-third held public sector jobs. The second reason attributed to Himachal Pradesh's high employment rates in the report point to agriculture which comprises the mainstay of its massive rural economy and thus tend

[189] See 2015 World Bank report by Maitreyi Bordia Das, Soumya Kapoor- Mehta, Emcet Oktay Tas & Leva Zumbyte 2015 on "Scaling the Heights: Social Inclusion and Sustainable Development in Himachal Pradesh" available online at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281407634_Scaling_the_Heights_Social_Inclusion_and_Sustainable_Development_in_Himachal_Pradesh last accessed on 5 December, 2018

to have exhibit high labour force participation rates. Despite the high economic growth that the report projects stressing on the potentially viable sectors of energy, watersheds, industrial development and especially that of the tourism industry in the state, Himachal Pradesh is grappling with serious environmental concerns that thwarts the lives and livelihoods of the local communities at every step today. It is by engaging in a study of the livelihoods with respect to environment using the notion of 'collective sustenance' that I explore the political economy of tourism in Himachal Pradesh.

8.6 Contribution of the Study

While basing itself in the interdisciplinary conversations between anthropology, sociology and development studies, the study creates knowledge on relations of 'networks' with special reference to the politics of 'collective sustenance' that I see being played out in the everyday interfaces of communities and the world around them in the context of tourism. This study contributes to existing literature on tourism and development by an analysis of 'politics' and 'power' in a dialogic space especially in remote rural hill areas. It also enriches the current scope of the Actor-Network theory in that it uses the real interactions of communities and the various brokers of tourism as observed on the field to stretch notions of structure and hierarchies in discussing the pathways through which power flows take place and dependencies shape and re-shape as elaborated earlier in Chapter 7. The study is different from earlier studies of tourism in that it critically analyses the exchanges of the various actors enwrapped in the 'precarities' around them in terms of 'risks' by contributing to knowledge on the politics of livelihoods for sustenance. The potential of the study to be applied in different contexts of social and development research may be especially through the use of the concept of 'collective sustenance,' and the idea of 'pendular politics' that is omnipresent and which I add as a dimension in critiquing the Actor Network theory that I apply to studying the web of relations arising out of the interactions and exchanges whilst acknowledging power hierarchies of those relations on the field.

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