Chapter 4
VISUAL EVIDENCE

Change has a temporal dimension and its parameters differ according to the elements that make up the landscape. Cultural forms change and even transform within a comparatively short time span. On the other hand, landform changes are slow as dictated by natural processes. Even in the case of the latter, the pace of change varies from place to place as noted below (Fort 1998-99).

> *"These changes, related to superficial geomorphology (i.e., landforms), are usually not perceptible at human scale because they involve processes which occur over a longer time scale than human life. Yet, in the Central Himalaya of Nepal, the natural erosion forces are so active that their impact can be assessed by comparing the same landscape observed at different times."*

Photographs of the same place taken at different time intervals provide a useful record for assessing the extent of change. Such repeat photographs with terrestrial perspective complement vertical airphoto images. The earlier photographs of the study area were taken by the researcher during 10-31 October and 18-28 November 1962. Four photographs, Figure 11A (1971/72), Figure 27A, Figure 28A (1988), and Figure 29 (1989), from the latter dates are included to highlight certain aspects. Also, Figure 30 from 1962, Figure 29 from 1989, and Figure 22 from 2001-2002 with no repeat photos have also been inserted for illustrative purposes. Twenty-nine repeat photographs were taken between December 2000 and March 2002 (see the group of supplementary photos following Chapter 6). Thus, the time interval for most photographs is 40 years (1962-2002). The view-points from where the photographs were taken are indicated on the topographic map (Figure 5). This researcher was intrigued with the poorer quality of later photographs. The earlier ones were taken with an ordinary Voiglander camera using Kodachrome slide film. The latter ones were with multi-lense Asahi Pentax and Nikon cameras using Kodachrome-II print film. Despite the sophisticated tools, the later three winter attempts failed to match the clarity of the earlier ones. This could be due to the timing (autumn skies after the monsoon are more clear) rather than environmental pollution.

A. November 1988

B. January 2002

Figure 27: Chiyabari landslide: This slope east of Tanklichok, known as Chiyabari because of the *Osyris arboreal* bushes used for tea, collapsed on 24 August 1988 and killed five persons. The photo (Figure 27A), taken three months later, shows the source of slope failure and boulder-strewn rubble. The place is now overgrown with secondary vegetation while the lower section has been reclaimed for paddy cultivation (Figure 27B).

A. November 1988

B. March 2001

Figure 28: Bimire: The Chiyabari landslide flooded the paddy fields of Bimire with sand, pebble, stone, and boulders (Figure 28A). Fourteen years later, the damage is not apparent after reclamation (Figure 28B). Instead, the new encroachment on cultivated land is for construction of tourist lodges. These are at the southern end of Ngadi Bazaar (Figure 25B), a staging-point for mule caravans and trekkers to Manang since the late 1970s.

Figure 29: Naiche from the air: The village (1,300m) sited on the ridge slope west of the confluence of the Ngadi and Tonjo Khola. The landslide (S) that started on the 1st September 1989 and recurred in July 2001 damaged some fields. There are shady slopes east of the Ngadi with dense forest cover. (see figures 45 and 46 for a terretial view of the village from the West).

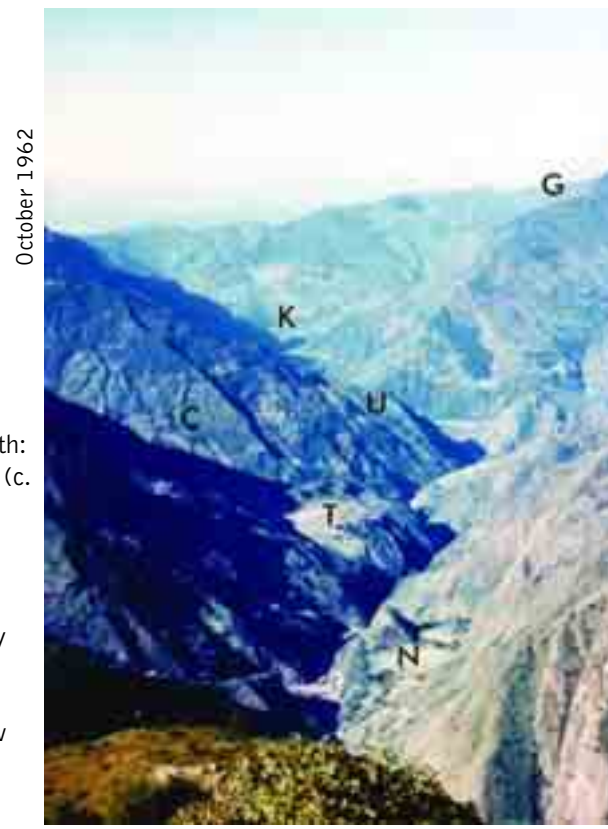

Figure 30: Ngadi Valley from the north: A panaromic view taken from Prepron (c. 2,400m). Naiche (N) and Tarachok (T) fields are on high river terraces while Usta (U) is on a ridge. Usta and Chimkhola (C) fields are on a north-facing dip slope. Naiche is inhabited by Gurung, Tarachok by Chhetri, Usta by Ghale, and Chimkhola by Tamang. Ghanapokhara (G) at 2,192 m has now been abandoned with its inhabitants settled in the Khudi (K) area.