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Identifying the Value of Traditional Cultural Landscape in Rural Settlements

Aslıhan Tırnakçı¹

Abstract

The traditions, socio-economic conditions, habitational settings and the climatic factors of a society become stratified with the cultural values and establish the current values of the cultural landscape. The significance of a rural landscape as cultural heritage is directly related to the existence of cultural values and cultural landscape, which constitutes the totality of the cultural values should be preserved in order to ensure historical and cultural sustainability. The study area (Şavşat/Artvin, Turkey) has a rich value based on its cultural landscape and texture, given its rich biodiversity and the lifestyle of different cultures that shaped the traditional settlement. Certain routes were determined within the scope of the present study, with the aim to encompass the whole Şavşat. A method based on an inventory study was employed to analyze the 39 rural settlements and the values of the traditional cultural landscape were quantified through scoring 8 parameters based on the existence or nonexistence of cultural values. The 5-point scoring was ranged as follows: very low, low, medium, high and very high. Based on this scoring, Yavuz village, Kocabey, Kirazlı, Kayadibi, Çoraklı, Şavşat Center, Ilica, Maden were found have high, Cevizli, Maden, Köprülü and Çağlayan were found to have very high values for the cultural landscape. Consequently, it was indicated that identifying the values of the traditional cultural landscape through the scoring system based on the existence and nonexistence of cultural values with respect to certain parameters could contribute to the literature. It was considered that the findings of the present study could provide an important database in the regional/sub-regional scale for the conservation of cultural values with natural landscape resources and conveying these values to future generations.

Keywords: Cultural landscape, Cultural heritage, Value of landscape, Black Sea region, Şavşat.

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Kırsal Yerleşimlerde Geleneksel Kültürel Peyzaj Değerinin Belirlenmesi

Öz

Bir toplumun gelenekleri, sosyo-ekonomik koşulları, yaşadığı yer, iklimsel faktörler sahip olduğu kültürel değerlerle katmanlaşarak günümüz kültürel peyzaj değerlerini oluşturur. Kırsal peyzajların kültürel miras olarak önemi, sahip oldukları kültürel değerlerin varlığı ile doğru orantılıdır, ve kültürel değerlerin bütünü oluşturulan kültürel peyzajlar, tarihi ve kültürel sürekliliğin sağlanması amacıyla korunmalıdır. Çalışma alanı (Şavşat/Artvin, Türkiye) gerek sahip olduğu zengin biyoçeşitlilik, gerekse farklı kültürlerin yaşam şekli ile biçimlenmiş geleneksel yerleşim dokusu ile zengin kültürel peyzaj değerlerine sahiptir. Çalışmada Şavşat'ın bütünü kapsayacak şekilde rotalar belirlenmiştir. 39 kırsal yerleşim alanı envanter çalışmasına dayalı bir yöntemle incelenmiş, geleneksel kültürel peyzaj değerleri belirlenen 8 parametre çerçevesinde, kültürel değerlerin varlık sayısına ve yokluklarına göre puanlanarak nicelleştirilmiştir. Puan aralığı 5 sınıfa göre; çok az, az, orta, yüksek ve çok yüksek olmak üzere sınıflandırılmıştır. Bu sınıflandırmaya göre Yavuz köy, Kocabey, Kirazlı, Kayadibi, Çoraklı, Şavşat Merkez, Ilıca, Maden yüksek, Cevizli, Maden, Köprülü ve Çağlayan ise çok yüksek kültürel peyzaj değerine sahip alanlar olarak belirlenmiştir. Sonuç olarak, geleneksel kültürel peyzaj değerlerinin belirli parametreler temelinde varlık ve yokluklarına göre puanlama sistemiyle belirlenmesinin literatüre önemli katkı sağlayacağı; elde edilen sonuçların kültürel değerlerin doğal peyzaj kaynakları ile bütünleşik korunmasında ve gelecek nesillere aktarılmasında bölge/alt bölge ölçeğinde yapılacak planlama çalışmalarında önemli veri tabanı oluşturacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültürel peyzaj, Kültürel miras, Peyzaj değeri, Karadeniz bölgesi, Şavşat

Introduction

Men and manmade artifacts are the most significant constituents of the landscape. Based on anthropological and philosophical approaches, there was always an interaction between the nature and men. Such interaction resulted with the alteration and reinterpretation of the natural environment, thus emerged the concept of cultural landscape (Erdoğan and Turgut, 2013).

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) indicates that cultural landscape is a geographic area that emerges as a result of the interaction of humans and the natural environment, gains significance over time, and exhibits various natural, cultural and visual values. Such areas are considered mosaics that include features and elements of nature, physical elements that are formed as a result of human activities during the historical processes and elements that appear in the landscape in time (Lennon and Mathews, 2006). There exist various cultural landscapes that represent the different geographies of the world. Such landscapes, either above or underground or underwater, have a unique value with respect to science, religion, culture and fine arts of the geological, prehistoric and historical periods throughout the thousands-of-years history of civilization and reflect the social, economic and architectural characteristics of their period (Yazgan and Erdogan, 1992).

Cultural landscapes consist of areas of varying scales that range from thousands of acres to one acre of smaller formal gardens. The character of a cultural landscape is defined both through the physical elements such as roads, buildings, walls and vegetation, as well as the forms of use that reflect

the cultural values and traditions. Therefore, the forms of historical buildings and settlements, associated elements and the uses of these elements provide visual materials indicating the heritage and development of nations. These elements within the contents of the cultural landscape represent a mirror of the cultures that constitute the landscape (Vos and Meeks, 1999; Birnbaum 1994; Droste *et al.*, 1995).

Cultural landscapes range from rural to agricultural areas, from small towns to national parks. Rural landscapes are areas shaped by culture, traditional land uses and natural environment (ASLA, 2006) . Rural landscapes are defined as traditional cultural landscapes and composed of tangible and intangible heritages (Cullota and Barbera, 2011), (Figure 1). Therefore, the United States National Parks Service (NPS) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) conducted studies to define the types of cultural landscape to facilitate their investigation and established a classification system. Furthermore, Parks Canada, American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), International Union for Conservation and Nature (IUCN), European Union (EU), European Council for the Village and Small Town (ECOVAST) and the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) are other important organizations that conduct research on the analysis and assessment of the cultural landscape.

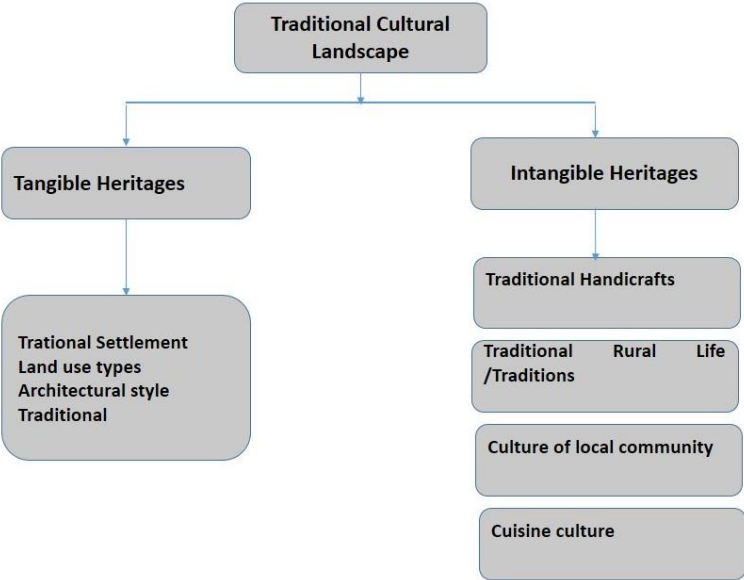


Figure 1. Cultural heritage of rural landscape (Anonymous, 2003)

The cultural landscape assessment of an area is based on the classification system that aims to delineate the types of cultural landscapes, defined by the UNESCO and NPS (United States National Parks Service) (Gilbert, 1985).

UNESCO classifies cultural landscapes under three main categories (Birnbaum, 1994; Mechtild, 2000; Fowler, 2003; Cleere, 1995; Rössler, 1992, 1995, 2000; Lennon, 1997; Lennon and Mathews, 2006; Taylor, 2003; Gorman, 2005).

1. Cultural landscapes designed and created by man (landscapes designed due to aesthetic considerations).

2. Organically evolved landscapes developed by association with and in response to the natural environment (There are two sub-categories, *relict/fossil* landscapes with changes ceased and *continuing* landscapes with dynamic changes).
3. Associative cultural landscapes where there are powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations.

NPS, on the other hand, classifies cultural landscapes under four main categories (Birnbau, 1996; Watt, 2001; O'Donnell, 1995; Keller *et al.*, 1999; ICOMOS, 2010).

1. Historic Designed Landscapes (created with respect to design principles/garden art styles; aesthetics is deliberate in such areas).
2. Historic Vernacular Landscapes (areas formed as a result of human activities; function is deliberate in such areas).
3. Historic Sites (significant for their associations with important events, activities, and persons, these sites have high contribution to the visual value of the physical landscape through their characteristics).
4. Ethnographic Landscapes (have natural and cultural landscape values, are shaped based on the traditional values of the community and are assigned as cultural heritage)

Biological and cultural factors that affect the character of a site are defined separately in identifying the value of a cultural landscape (Wascher, 2006; Weeks and Menta, 2004). Both primary (natural and biophysical) and secondary (cultural) landscape structures should be taken into account in defining cultural landscapes. Particularly, variable land-use patterns have a significant impact on the rural landscape typology in various European countries. Furthermore, tertiary landscape structures (spiritual values), such as historical landscape and memory, which do not have a direct visual effect on the landscape, are also used in landscape character analysis. Two approaches are employed for cultural landscape typology. The first is the classification system based on land use and land cover indicating the human pressure intensity on the natural landscape. The second approach is a complex classification system based on the synthesis of both natural and cultural landscape features (Lipský and Romportl, 2017).

In order to define the cultural landscape character of a site, inventory and assessment studies on the existing cultural landscape values are conducted due to the identification of existing land uses in the site (Van Eetvelde and Anthrop, 2009). The evaluations based on the obtained results are effective for the development of future planning and conservation strategies. The preservation of cultural landscapes is not only the development of modern techniques for sustainable use of land, but also promotes the development of natural values in landscaping through enabling biodiversity in various parts of the world and the continued existence of traditional forms of land use (Goetcheus and Uzun, 2010).

Despite the fact that the concept of the cultural landscape is not new, it started being used in international studies only recently. Several countries such as France, Norway, Germany, USA and Canada made significant efforts to recognize and preserve cultural landscapes. However, such studies are either scarce or nonexistent in developing countries. Natural sites draw more attention and are preserved more compared to cultural sites in various countries. However, in Turkey, such consciousness and preservation efforts are yet at the initiation phase.

Turkey, as a natural gateway between Asia and Europe, also accommodated different civilizations. The present study focuses on the values of the cultural landscape of Şavşat district of Artvin province,

which is the home of various natural and cultural landscape heritage and determines these values based on quantitative data. It is anticipated that the method employed in the present study, which targets cultural landscape value, would contribute the literature, since it could provide a basis for the use of the method for similar areas with unique cultural values. Furthermore, obtained results are expected to provide an effective data source for planning and conservation decisions in order to ensure cultural continuity in the region.

Materials and Methods

Materials

Şavşat, located in the eastern Black Sea region in Turkey is one of the eight districts of the province of Artvin. The study area has rich cultural and natural landscape values due to its borders to three different cultures, the Black Sea, Eastern Anatolia and Georgia in the northeast of the Eastern Black Sea Region and due to its location in the transition zone of continental climate between the Eastern Black Sea climate and Eastern Anatolia (Figure 2).

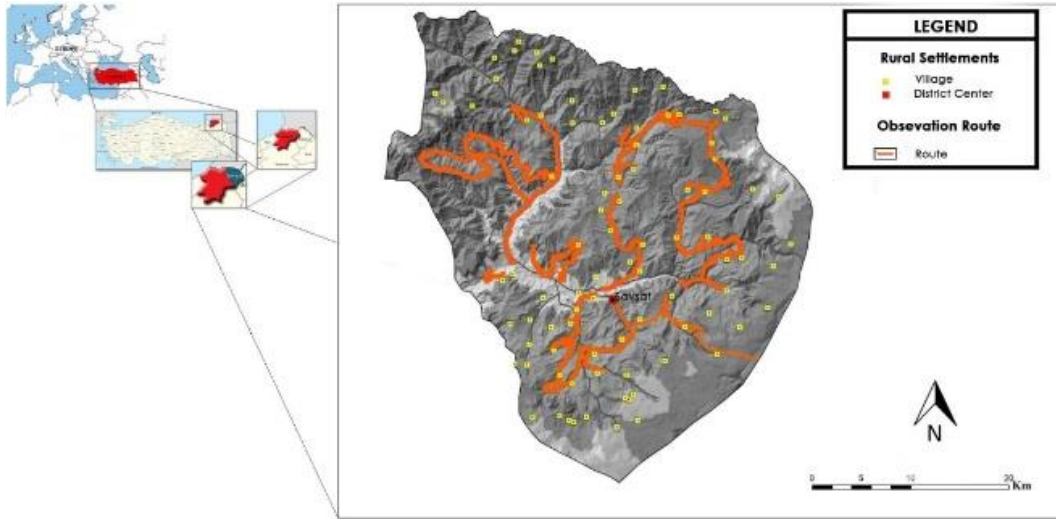


Figure 2. Location of the study area (Şavşat) and observation route

The present study examined 39 rural settlements through field study along the routes that encompass the whole Şavşat district. These rural settlements are Yavuzköy, Kocabey, Düzenli, Kireçli, Çamlıca, Hanlı, Karaağaç, Ziyaret, Yamaçlı, Arpalı, Susuz, Elmalı, Kirazlı, A.Akkoyunlu, Y.Akkoyunlu, Meşeli, Veliköy, Pınarlı, Yoncalı, Kayadibi, Cevizli, Çoraklı, Şavşat Merkez, Çermik, Akdamla, Ilica, Demirkapı, Tepebaşı, Maden, Çağlayan, Demirci, Oba, Dutlu, Tepeköy, Küplüce, Ciritdüzü, Sebzeli, Köprülü and Meydancık.

Atalay (1983) indicated that the study area was located in the Colchic Section of the Black Sea Phytogeographical Region of the Euro-Siberian Flora. This region is commonly influenced by the humid temperate and humid cold climate of the the Black Sea region and the vegetation was shaped based on temperature, precipitation, height and aspect. Şavşat has a mountainous terrain structure, with heights ranging between 600 to 3171 meters. However, the altitudes of the rural settlements vary between 950 and 1800 meters. Such altitude difference, occurring in proximities in topography, leads to diversified natural and cultural landscape values. Therefore, the region includes three different vegetations, forest vegetation, high mountain (alpine) vegetation and aquatic vegetation and different geological and geomorphological formations such as valleys, hills, plateaus and lakes.

Sharp ridges were formed in the region, between the valleys of Meydancık stream, Şavşat stream and several smaller side streams. The northern part of the study area was dominated by a unique slope morphology, formed by the bottomless valleys between these ridges. The gradient ascends above 45% on the slopes. Wear surfaces became sharp ridges. Up to 2000 meters, this slope morphology is covered by a forest composed of coniferous and broad-leaved trees, such as Eastern Spruce (*Picea orientalis* L.), Eastern Beech (*Fagus orientalis* Lipsky.), Eastern Black Sea Fir (*Abies nordmanniana* subsp.), Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris* L.), Bearded Alder (*Alnus glutinosa* subsp. *barbata*), Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), Oak (*Quercus* spp.), Common Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), Maple (*Acer* spp.), Aspen (*Populus tremula* L.), Linden (*Tilia* spp.) and Rowan (*Sorbus* spp.), yet the vegetation transforms into higher mountain meadows at higher elevations.

There are several seasonal landslide lakes and glacial lakes in the region. One is Karagöl Lake, in the Şavşat Karagöl-Sahara National Park area and it is the most important lake in the region. Forest, pasture, agriculture and settlements constitute the main land-use patterns in the region, which has a great diversity of cultural landscapes with traditional land use and life continuity. Furthermore, there are various examples of military, religious buildings and civil architecture that respond to the richness of the cultural landscape of the region and bear the traces of different cultures.

Methods

The method of the present study was constructed due to the assessment based on the criteria determined through the values of the traditional cultural landscape of rural settlements in the study area (Belknap et al., 1967; Cullato and Barbera, 2011; Erduran et al., 2012). Such assessment methodology provides direct access to the data resulting from the reinterpretation of nature by humans in field studies. Furthermore, the quantitative data obtained from the field studies were integrated with rural settlements via the ArcGIS 10.2 software to determine the traditional cultural value density of the studied rural settlements. The study was carried out through the following 3 basic phases;

1. The data pertaining the natural landscape structures (topography, soil, climate, vegetation, etc.) in the study areas were obtained from associated institutions and transferred to digital environment using ArcGIS 10.2 program. Subsequently, the data on traditional land use, local architecture, historical-archaeological structures were obtained from associated institutions and literature and the data on recreation infrastructure and cultural life were based on observations conducted during the field studies.
2. An area inventory form, with revisions of cultural landscape factors, was prepared based on Swanwick's study (2002), with the aim to identify the values of the cultural landscape resources. 39 rural settlements were examined, and verbal interviews were conducted with local people along the routes that encompassed whole Şavşat. This form was used to conduct on-site examinations of the rural settlements and to analyze the cultural landscape components such as historical and archaeological structures, festivals, economic structure, handicrafts, local materials that affected architecture, settlement form and type, traditions and customs, environmental pressures on the area in detail.
3. Inventory forms and verbal interviews with local people were evaluated together to determine the traditional cultural landscape values of each rural settlement, and a scoring table was prepared based on 8 criteria. The determined criteria were historical and archaeological structures, local architectural structures, festivals, plateau traditions, handicrafts, religious

buildings and traditional agriculture. Given that there were no significant differences in the distribution of values based on traditional cultural landscape throughout the study areas, each criterion was scored based on the number or existence/nonexistence of these assets and a qualitative evaluation was made. Such evaluation approach facilitated the clear identification of the existence or nonexistence of an asset without grading its qualifications. A 5-point scoring was used, ranging as follows: very low, low, medium, high and very high. The obtained data were digitized using Spatial Interpolation Analysis in ArcGIS 10.2 software and the spatial distributions within the rural settlements based on cultural values were obtained.

Findings

The study area is located at the intersection of three different cultures due to its borders with Georgia, Artvin and Ardahan. The dynamic topography of the area led to certain biological and hydrological diversity and culturally significant resources. Particularly, the instantaneous changes in the landform in close proximities resulted in quite diverse areas with respect to the natural and related cultural landscape. The region, with rich variety of traditional cultural landscapes, is also significant for nature preservation on a global scale. The cultural texture of the study area was examined within the framework of current land use, socio-economic structure, recreational infrastructure and environmental pressures.

Tangible heritages

Land use types

The economy of the region, commonly dependent on rural characteristics, was based on agriculture, animal husbandry and forest products. Current land use indicated that 42% of the study area consisted of forests, 28% of pastures, 13% of agricultural land and 17% of habitation areas. High sloped topography resulted with a low percentage of agricultural areas in the Şavşat district, where all areas with suitable slope and qualified soil were being used for agriculture. Therefore, agriculture was commonly based on traditional family type enterprise structures in limited areas and small parcels. Agricultural products were sold in local markets, especially to the visitors to the district, in addition to the consumption of the producer families. Agricultural lands are also used as pastures, which were formed as a result of illegal deforestation, and are used for grazing and constitute an important land use, especially for livestock production. Such areas, significant for animal husbandry, started to lose their importance due to the migration trends that affected the villages. However, in recent years, plateaus and plateauing gained importance due to recreational activities.

Traditional settlement

Common settlement types in the study area consist of villages and sub-village settlements such as winter quarters and plateau settlements. The villages in the study area represent the characteristics of collective settlement types. Settlement areas developed to an elevation of 1500 to 1600 meters, which could be considered as the upper limit. Stream sides, slopes and/or foothills were chosen as settlement areas. Rural settlements were shaped through the landscape characteristics of the natural environment (soil, water, topography, view, etc.), which later represented itself as a local characteristic. The residential units were distributed over one, two or more parcels at different distances. While the areas within the settlements, with suitable slope and qualified soil, were used for agricultural purposes, the village residences were located close to agricultural areas due to facilitating

transportation and cutting back on economic costs. Winter quarters were considered as temporary settlements that formed a connection between the village and the plateau. There exist winter settlements between the elevations of 1500 and 2000 meters and plateau settlements between 1800 and 2800 meters. Winter settlements are the settlements where the villagers spent 1 to 1.5 months before going to the plateau and to the village. Plateau settlements are used between June and September. Commonly, winter and plateau settlement continues as a tradition in the region and rural settlements that actively use the winter and plateau settlements were taken into consideration within the scope of the present study. Winter and plateau settlements are usually named based on their location. Winter and plateau settlements are also collective settlement types, which do not include agricultural production. The economic occupation of the plateau residents depends on livestock and related production. Kocabey, Maden, Pınarlı, Yoncalı, Kayadibi (Arsiyan) plateaus, which are among the study areas, have traditional winter and plateau settlements with high tourism potential.

Architectural style/ texture

The obtained data indicated that there were various registered historical and archaeological landmarks within the study areas, which belonged to different periods. Furthermore, there exist several unregistered artifacts that are the remnants of certain cultural accumulation. There are national parks in Meşeli, Veliköy and Kocabey, a preserved natural area in Meydancık, gene conservation areas in Maden, Meydancık and Taşköprü and a wildlife conservation area within the borders of Akdamla and Meydancık. Given the scope above, it is possible to state that the study area has a great potential in terms of visual and natural landscape diversity.

The scoring of historical and archaeological structures were based on the historical monuments, military buildings (castles and towers), religious buildings (churches, mosques and mausoleums), examples of civil architecture (chateau and houses) and cemeteries registered by the Trabzon Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation Board and the field observations conducted in the study areas. There existed a limited number of preserved historical and archaeological structures in the region. Şavşat Center, Çağlayan, Köprülü and Cevizli villages were the places with the highest number of preserved structures, which are significant in terms of culture and tourism.

The study area has a unique architecture that included a collection of various cultures, which were extant. Such originality was reflected in the details of architectural structures. The main design element of the traditional Şavşat houses were wood and stone, abundant materials in the region. The houses were commonly built with a traditional building system, with two-storeys, using log and timber loadbearing walls. It is possible to observe the best examples of cultural landscape throughout the study area, with respect to the harmony between traditional buildings and natural landscape. However, new constructions and infrastructure in the center of the district and rural settlements adversely affected the traditional settlement character of the region. The structural landscape character of the majority of rural, winter and plateau settlements became disrupted through new constructions. Rapid and unplanned construction, especially in the center of the district, resulted with the disappearance of the traditional pattern and loss of original character.

Religious buildings such as mosques, tombs, monasteries and churches built with different architectural structures and techniques in the region are significant landmarks. Köprülü, Cevizli and Şavşat Center are the rural settlements that especially stand out with such quality. Yavuzköy, Kocabey, Hanlı, Pınarlı, Kayadibi, Cevizli, Çoraklı, Şavşat merkez, Akdamla, Ilıca, Çağlayan, Dutlu, Meydancık,

Maden, Küplüce, Kireçli, Karaağaç, Sebzeli and Köprülü are the villages that were prominent in terms of monumental structures to be protected.

Intangible heritages

Traditional handicrafts and cuisine culture

A large part of the study area was covered with forests and such feature was an important factor in the development of crafts based on wood workmanship. Earthenware such as pottery, large jars and casseroles are also produced in the region. However, these traditional handicrafts, which are scarcely extant, is in the process of disappearing. The cultural diversity of the region also creates diversity in the local food culture. There are some local dishes. These are Purşuk soup, Ayran soup, cheese melting, montain beets, bird food (dishes made from vegetables and meadow herbs), silor, doner kebab etc.

Traditional rural life / Traditions

An important element of cultural landscape is the rural life of Şavşat/Artvin. The culture of rural life, which has been passed down from the past to the present, existed in the days of Şavşat. Specially every summer the culture will revive with the return of the old residents. Experience of rural life is an important cultural heritage for the development of cultural tourism in Şavşat because it is very interesting for tourists.

The region provides a wide range of nature-based festivals due to its diverse values based on the natural, historical and cultural landscape resources. Şavşat accommodates various festivals in order to sustain traditions, improve plateau tourism and bring local people, who live in different places, together. Therefore, traditional festivals in the region were evaluated within the scope of the present study (Table 1).

Table 1. Traditional festivals in Şavşat, Artvin region

Name of the Village	Name of the Festival	Scope of the Festival
Kocabey	Sahara beetroot festival	It is an activity that allows the people, who work between spring and plateau period, to rest and have fun.
Veliköy	Snow wrestling	It is an annual winter festival organized in February as a tribute to Karakucak wrestling.
Maden	Marioba plateau trekking	It is a trekking activity towards plateaus, with horon dance performance on the plains during trekking.
Meşeli	Beetroot festival	It is an activity that celebrates the moving of locals to plateau settlements.
Meydancık	Satave festival	It is an event organized for bringing the locals together and keeping traditions and customs alive.
Yavuzköy	Winter festivals	It is an annual festival held in February and has a variety of recreational activities (skating with sleds, horon dance, playing snowballs, etc.).

Since there were no cultural values in the region that significantly differed, quantitative data were used in the evaluations of the rural settlements within the framework of eight criteria. Therefore, the evaluations based on determined criteria indicated that twelve of these criteria were found in the same rural settlement. Rural settlements were therefore evaluated based on the criteria that existed in them. Rural settlements with a score between 9 and 12 were designated as “settlements with very high cultural landscape value”, those with a score between 7 and 8 were defined as “settlements with high cultural landscape value”, those with a score between 5 and 6 were “settlements with moderate cultural landscape value”, those with a score between 3 and 4 were “settlements with low cultural landscape value” and the rural settlements with a score of 2 or lower were defined as “settlements with very low cultural landscape.” Based on the scoring, it was found that Yavuzköy, Kocabey, Kirazlı, Kayadibi, Çoraklı, Şavşat Merkez, Ilıca and Maden were the settlements with high cultural landscape value, and Cevizli, Çağlayan, Meydancık and Köprülü was found to be the settlements with very high cultural landscape value (Table 2). The obtained data based on scoring was used to create the map that indicated the cultural landscape value of Şavşat and presented the spatial distribution of these values (Figure 2).

Table 2. Cultural Landscape Values for Şavşat, Artvin

Geleneksel Kültürel Peyzaj Elemanları		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39			
1	Historical and Archaeological Structures	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	3	1	4	-	1	2	-	-	1	3	-	-	2	-	1	1	2	2	4			
2	Local Architectural Structures	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	
3	Festivals	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
4	Winter and Plateau Settlement Traditions	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	
5	Handicrafts	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
6	Religious Buildings	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	3	
7	Monumental Buildings to be Preserved	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	
8	Traditional Agriculture	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
TOTAL		8	8	4	6	4	5	6	5	4	3	3	2	7	4	4	4	6	6	4	7	10	7	7	4	5	8	4	3	7	9	3	3	5	3	6	5	5	9	12			

(Rural Settlements: 1.Yavuzköy, 2. Kocabey, 3.Düzenli, 4. Kireçli, 5. Çamlıca, 6. Hanlı, 7. Karaağaç, 8. Ziyaret, 9. Yamaçlı, 10. Arpalı, 11. Susuz, 12. Elmalı, 13. Kirazlı, 14. Aşağı Akkoyunlu, 15. Yukarı Akkoyunlu, 16. Meşeli, 17. Veliköy, 18. Pınarlı, 19. Yoncalı, 20. Kayadibi, 21.Çoraklı, 22. Şavşat Merkez, 23.Çermik, 24. Akdamla, 25. Ilıca, 26.Demirkapı, 27.Tepebaşı, 28. Maden, 29. Çağlayan, 30.Demirci, 31. Oba,32. Dutlu, 33. Tepeköy, 34. Küplüce, 35. Ciritdüzü, 36. Sebzeli, 37. Meydancık, 38. Köprülü)

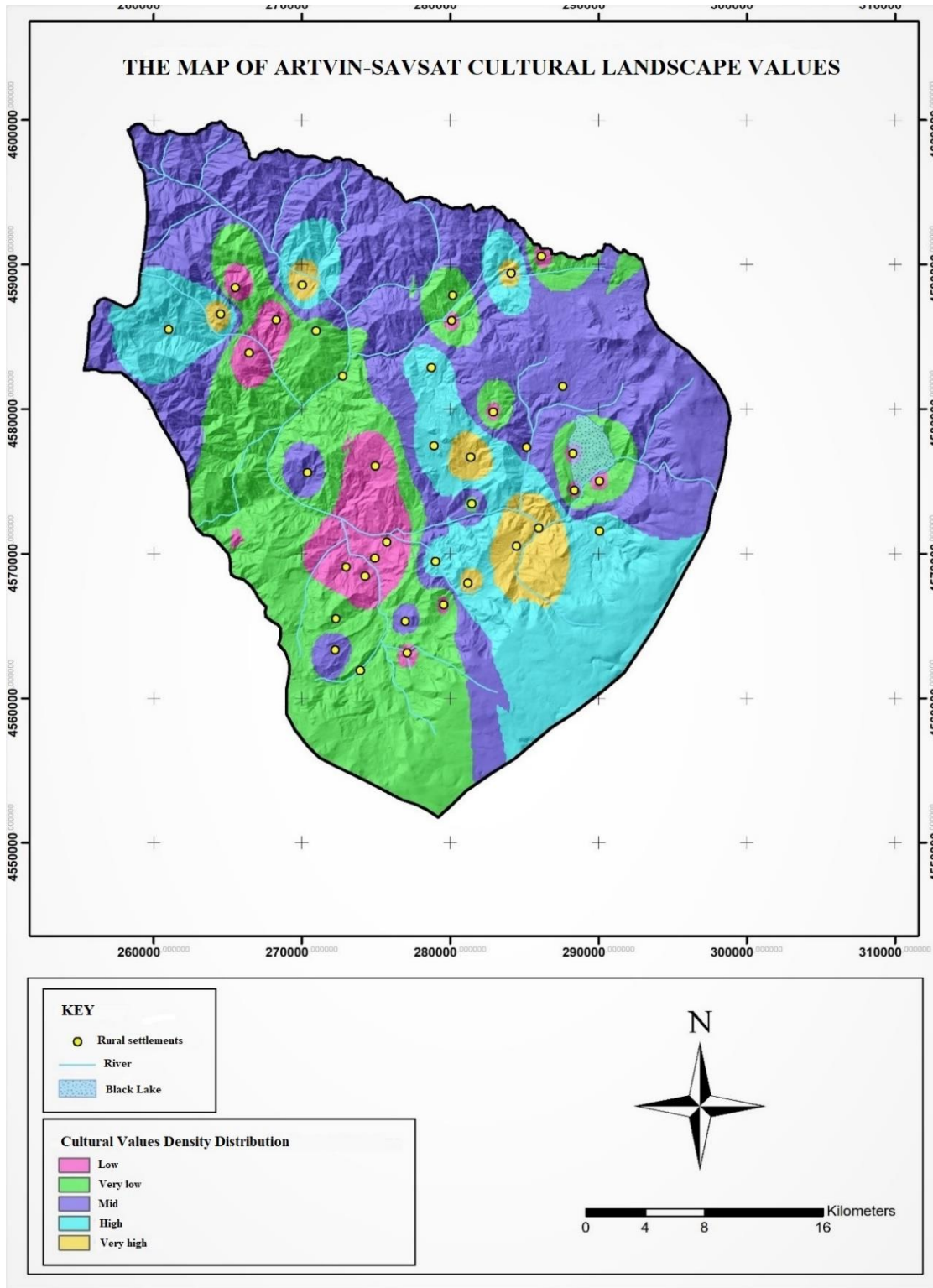


Figure 2. Spatial Distribution Map for the Cultural Landscape Value of Şavşat District in Artvin Province, Turkey.

Discussion and Conclusion

The most important condition to sustain dynamic landscapes is the determination, definition and protection of landscape characteristics through taking the natural and cultural elements into consideration (Anonymous, 1996; Jones and Daugstad, 1997). There exist different national and

international studies which focused on the landscapes shaped based on different cultures and all these studies employed different methods. Many of these studies were limited to the evaluation of different biophysical strata such as topography, climate, vegetation and soil (Mücher et al., 2003; Wascher, 2005; Mücher et al., 2006, Brabyn, 1996, 1997; Linton, 1970), hence traditional cultural heritage values were scarcely researched.

In the present study, the concept of cultural landscape (Swanwick, 2002; Uzun et. Al., 2012; Erduran et al., 2012; Özsüle, 2005, Atik et al., 2015) was taken into account as the effects of individuals on land use, settlement history, settlement type, local architectural forms, the formation and development of traditional and cultural values such as the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape and these discussions were based on on-site observations. Such an approach was considered as highly practical in identifying and comparing areas with different cultural values. However, it is important to determine the cultural values on site, in order to process the data correctly and to obtain healthy results. Although the present study covers a small part of Artvin, the methodology is expected to be applicable both nationally and internationally.

It is necessary to plan agricultural or forestry-based land use with preserved natural, traditional architectural style and materials should be preferred in new buildings, local people participation should be provided in order to ensure the sustainability of the rural landscape character (Tilt et al., 2007). Şavşat has the character of a rural landscape where natural resources are preserved, natural landscape structure was continuously and organically developed and cultural landscape texture and features were shaped by human influence over time.

Criteria that reflect the cultural landscape value of the region were determined based on the observations conducted in field studies. A “cultural landscape value determination card ”was created in line with these criteria (Brabyn, 2005; Kim and Pauleit, 2007; Bartlett et al., 2017). The obtained data through field observations and interviews with the locals were recorded on these cards and the cultural landscape values pertaining to all rural settlements were revealed. Yavuzköy, Kocabey, Cevizli, Ilica, Caglayan, Meydancik and Koprulu were determined as rural settlements with high cultural value based on the results obtained in these study areas.

Physical heritage is a significant contributor to tourism development in cultural heritage management (Jones and Daugstad, 1997). In this context, especially the traditional settlement structure, local architecture and historical and archaeological structures of the region were considered important elements in terms of cultural tourism and these elements were commonly extant. It is also necessary to protect the population in order to transfer the current local life with traditions and customs to future generations. However, inadequate income from agriculture forced the young population to migrate and such condition threatened the transfer of local values to future generations. Therefore, alternative tourism policies based on natural and cultural landscape values of the region could ensure this transfer through eliminating the factors that cause migration and providing a new income resources for the local population. Properly planned and implemented rural/cultural tourism is an important and effective tool in the preservation of traditional cultural values. However, the negative effects of the increasing agricultural and forestry activities deteriorate the visual quality and local tourism landscape character (Halfacree, 1995) and such outcomes adversely affect the local tourism (Ryan, 2006). Locals should be guided and educated in alternative tourism activities such as plateau tourism, mountain climbing, bird watching and hiking. Yet, the demand for rural/cultural tourism also increases the pressure on resources (Kim and Pauleit, 2007). Therefore, it should be

remembered that the number of visitors coming for tourism could increase day by day and place pressure on resources.

Every landscape, with specific structure, composition and visual quality, goes under a rapid change due to various pressures such as intensive agricultural activities, migration, urbanization, transportation and infrastructure work (Wascher, 2004) and the increased construction and road works are considered as a threat to rural character (Ryan, 2002; Halfacree, 1995). Such activities increase the pressure on the landscape. According to Wascher (2004), several European landscapes disappeared, and others became more homogeneous. The variable pressure of human activities on the landscape results in a constant change of the cultural landscape characteristics and landscape texture of the region. The most important factor that threatens the natural and cultural resources of the region was the hydropower plant (HPP) facilities and dams, which create serious environmental problems. During the construction of the dams and HPP facilities, transportation infrastructures and tunnels destroy large areas and the cultural heritage elements in these areas are either submerged or destroyed irreversibly.

Şavşat has an important potential due to its high values of the natural and cultural landscape, the existence of natural vegetation and preserved rural settlement texture. The existence of natural vegetation and traditional settlement texture increases the value of rural characters (Tilt et al., 2007). However, the obsolescent traditional houses in the study area are being replaced by reinforced concrete buildings/modern houses that are not integrated with nature. Such situation negatively affects the cultural landscape character of the region and creates visual discomfort. The architectural typology of local buildings should be documented, the construction of new buildings should follow this documentation and the materials used in the new buildings should be compatible with the traditional texture in order to preserve the regional architectural identity of the region.

It is important, both nationally and internationally, to ensure the sustainability of the culturally rich rural landscape character of the region. Therefore, landscape management plans are necessary to maintain and sustain such prosperity. As a result, the method and findings of the present study could provide an important guide in the production of planning and management decisions, with respect to regional differences and cultural value characteristics, along with the criteria defined in the present study and new site-specific criteria developed for the analysis, protection and sustainability of the current status of cultural landscapes and cultural values that have a dynamic structure.

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