Changes in life and language: Narratives in Kullui

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# Kullu District (Census 2011)

TOTAL AREA	5503 Sq.Kms
NUMBER OF TAHSIL/ SUB-TAHSILS	6
NUMBER OF TOWNS . . .	5
NUMBER OF VILLAGES. .	326

Population: 437 474

INDIA
HIMACHAL PRADESH
DISTRICT KULLU
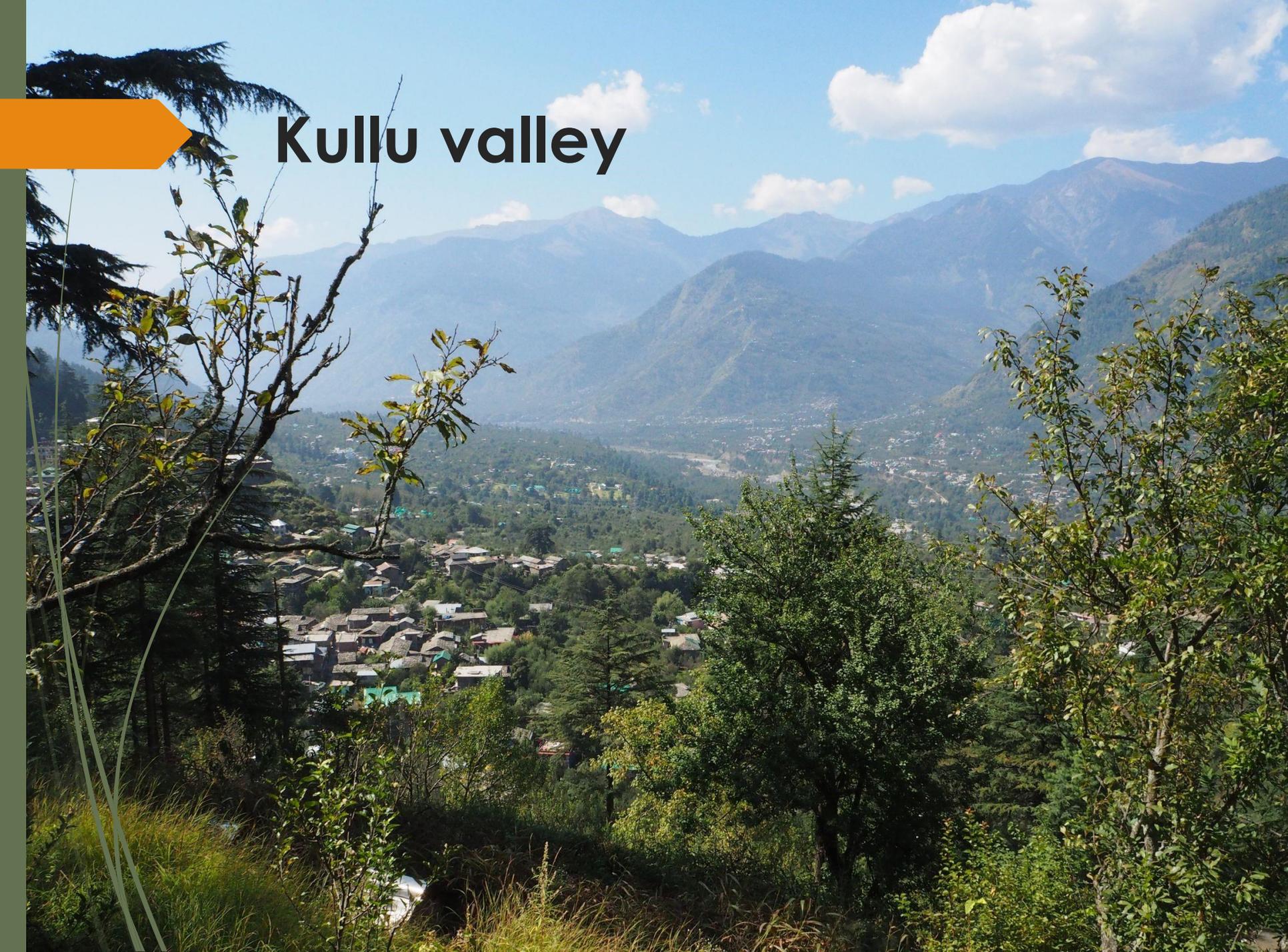
Kullu valley

Solang valley

Himachali Pahari (Indo-Aryan brunch)

➤ Genetic group, about 6 million speakers

➤ Dialectal continuum

➤ Oral speech mostly, no written codification

➤ Poorly described

➤ Close contacts between different idioms of Himachali Pahari

➤ Influence of Hindi and English

➤ A lot of variation

Project on documentation of Kullui

- Launched in 2014 in the Institute of Linguistics, Russian Academy of Sciences
- Funding: Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) № 16-34-01040 «Grammar description and lexicon of Kullui»
- Methods - linguistic fieldwork
- The main objective of the project is grammatical description of Kullui
- Four linguistic expeditions to Kullu district – in 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Main objectives

- Documentation of Kullui on the modern linguistic and technical level: dictionary, corpus of morphologically glossed texts with audio and video recordings

- Theoretical research of the Kullui phonology and grammar

- Fieldwork research of the Himachali dialectal continuum

- Description of the areal and typological features of the Himachali dialectal continuum

Main objectives

- Linguistic situation in the region. Functional domains of the languages

- Geographical location of the Kullui language

- Differences between Kullui and neighboring dialects

- Language vitality

- Variation in Kullui depending on age, gender, social level, education and other factors

Language documentation

- Grammatical description
- Dictionary (audio)
- Text corpus (audio and video)

Project on the development of the corpus of Kullui

- **2019** - new project – "The investigation of the Kullui language based on the oral text corpus" (financially supported by RFBR # 19-012-00355)

Main objectives

- Collecting oral texts in Kullui
- Making a text corpus with audio recordings
- Corpus studies of grammatical and lexical features of Kullui

Making a corpus

- Text recording in different locations of the Kullu district
- Text transcription and translation (into English and Russian, sometimes Hindi) with the help of native speakers of Kullui in ELAN
- Morphological glossing of the texts in Fieldworks Language Explorer

Main difficulties

- No standardization of the transcription
- Constant changes in our understanding of Kullui phonetics and phonology
- Variation of different types
- Natural fluidity of an oral non-standardized language

Note on elicitation

- Elicited texts are included into the corpus as well as natural texts

Reasons

- The data that can be used for a corpus of a minor nonliterate language is very limited

- Natural texts lack a lot of grammatical features that can be easily obtained by elicitation

- We consider elicitation and natural texts as complementary sources of the grammatical and lexical data

Collecting texts

- Life narratives
- Legends, stories about local gods
- Local traditions
- Local history
- Material culture, traditional occupations

Texts in ELAN

Texts in Fieldworks

The importance of metadata

- Place of recording

- Socio-demographic data on the informant: age, gender, education, social position, occupation

- Linguistic history of the informant: place of birth, place of education, linguistic environment, languages of the relatives

- Text genre

Corpus studies

- Areal dialectal features
- Sociolects
- Dynamics of language change
- Language variation
- Lexical and grammatical constructions borrowed from Hindi
- Elaboration of semantics and pragmatics of grammatical and lexical units
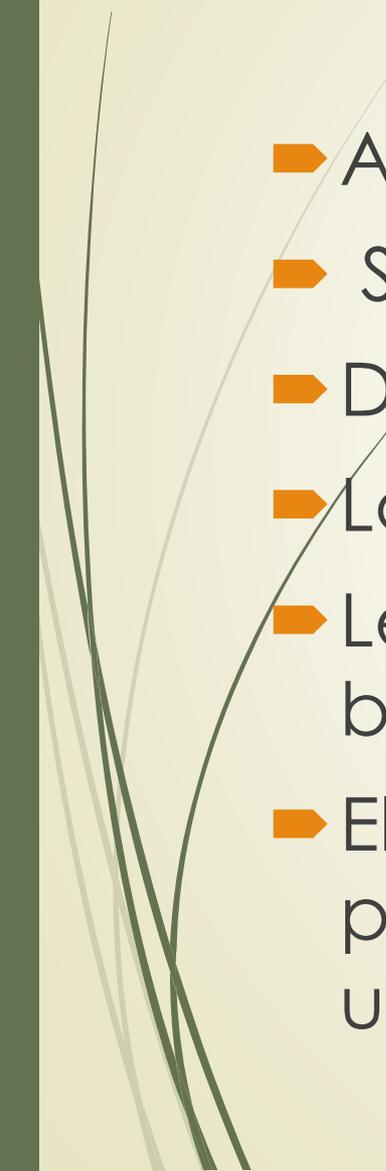
Corpus studies

- Dialectal or social variation of *s* vs. *h* (*sa – ha* - copula, *senge – henge* 'with' etc)

- Word order (not possible on elicited data)

- Comparison of the pronouns' semantics and pragmatics (visible/invisible, animate/non-animate, person/non-person)

- Numeral system (old, based on 20 vs. new, based on 10)

Example of archaic form

tebɛ	tinʰ-ɛ		bol-u
then	they.DIST-ERG		say-PFV.M

mer-a	**kɔm**	**hu-i**	**go-u**
my-M	work	be-i.form	go-PFV.M

mu	ebɛ	lupt	ho-ŋa
I.OBL	now	disappeared	be-GERV

tɛ	lupt	hon-d-ɛ	lag-ɛ
they.DIST	disappeared	be-PTCP-PL	DUR-PFV.PL

Then they (Krishna – honorative PL) told – my **job has been done** I am going to disappear and he began to disappear.

"Standard" expression of perfective meaning will be
*"**kɔm hu-a**" work be-PFV.M*

Language attitude

- Naggar village, 2014

Language attitude

- *I have two children, daughter is older, son is younger. They should get good education. They go to **English-medium school**. I made this decision because the time when I used to study there were no English schools. And sometimes it seems like my English is not very good because of which I thought that my children should go to English school. **They must achieve good in life** and the drawbacks that we have must not remain within them... **Today, most of the people send their kids to English-medium schools** … The drawback the native people have like these days the people from Delhi come or people from big cities, they all speak English. But here most of the people don't know how to speak English. Probably, **this is the only reason why people send their children to good schools or wish their children to go to good schools**.*

Language attitude

- *And I wish that my children together with being good also follow the culture. Probably I cannot say much but I can try telling my kids to study subjects like Sanskrit together with the other subjects. In the coming time like **local languages are losing their value** the same is the case with Sanskrit. **I wish that all kids remain attached to the culture and local language**.*

Sociolinguistic situation

➡ Suma village, 2017
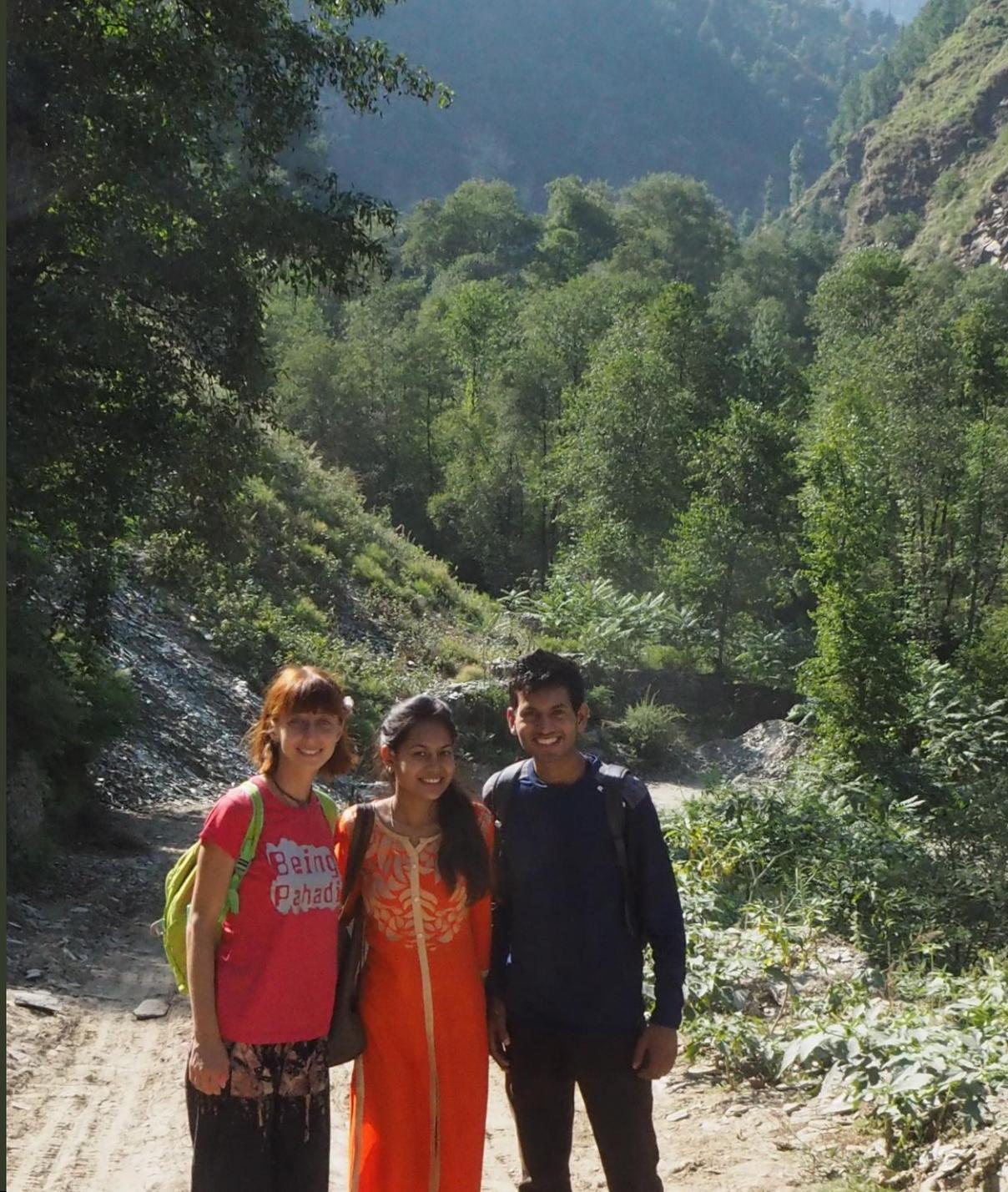
Sociolinguistic situation

- …*All the people are farmers here.* ***And most people are uneducated. I am the first girl who went outside for studying.*** *I don't live much in our village. So I don't know much about my village... But* ***now I don't have time to go my place to look at something there****. In our* ***village most people are farmers*** *and we also do farming. But I went to Shimla, then I understood the importance of the villages…*

Cultural and historical information

Naggar village, 2014

Cultural and historical information

Krishna Temple

(Naggar village)

Cultural and historical information

Bashing village, 2016

Cultural and historical information

Temple in Bashing village

Cultural and historical information

Naggar village, 2016

Cultural and historical information

*This is Naga temple. This is very old temple. This is a temple of Shesh Nag. This building was made five years ago. I am a local gur. My name is Rakesh. I became a gur 3,5 years ago. The manager of the temple is Rajender Acharya ji. He is local manager. Pujari Prashpottam Sharma, he is local pujari. There is a puja here every day. Only once a day, in the morning. Every Sunday there is a **"puts" (question) ceremony**. Everyone who comes here goes away cured. There is a spiritual source here. There is water here, if you drink this water, all the sorrows will go away… **The Naga God has birthday in April**. (Every year in April) **the gur makes a speech, where he went during the year, what will come next year, flood, snow, rain**… Good news, bad news – he tells everything.*

# Local
traditions

Naggar village,
2017

Local traditions

We are local people, aren't we. Our **local speech, local custom**. What else shall I say then? When our guests come... First of all we feed them. We feed them because who knows, may be they will come in the form of a deity. They will come having become a deity. How can we know? **Then we think**, **let's feed our guests before us. After that we will eat ourselves**, if there is something left for us. Then we'll see. At the moment, please, eat.

Pahari: Indo-Aryan Languages of North India

pahari-languages.ru

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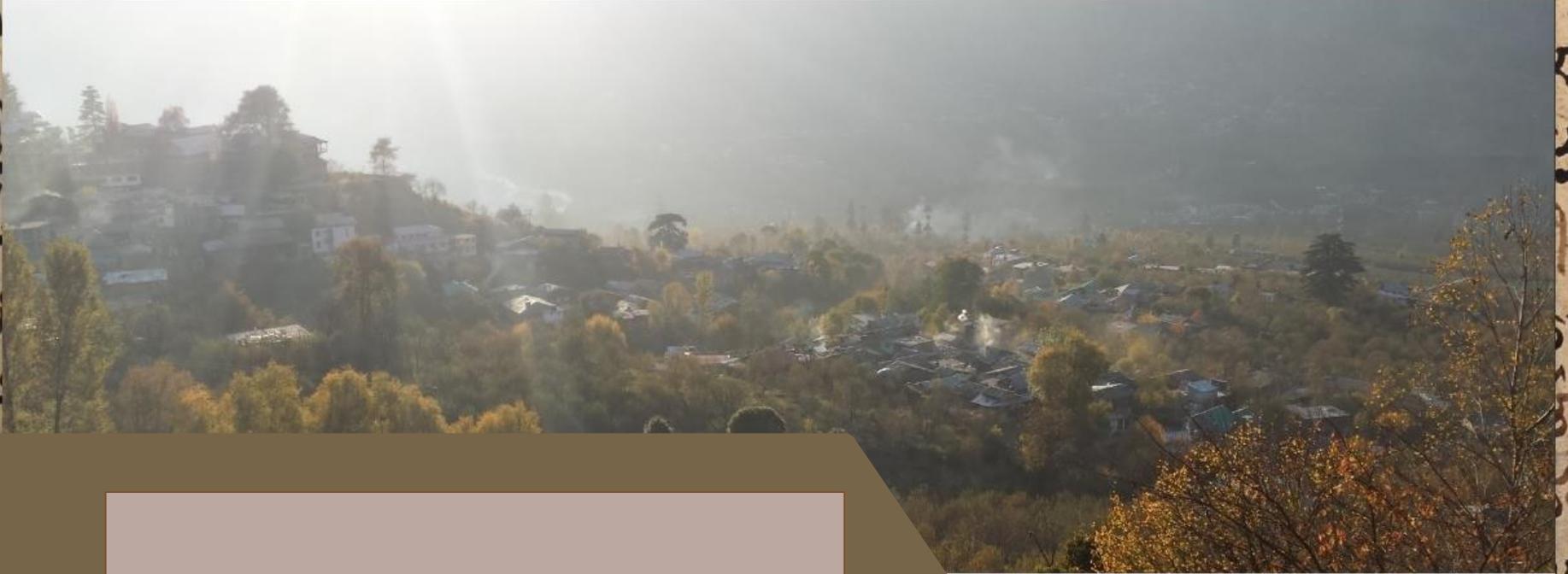
The site is intended primarily for linguists. However, we believe it will be of interest for other professionals such as anthropologists and ethnographers. It also provides useful information for travelers headed for the Himalayas. We have created this site for Kullui speakers as well. These wonderful people inspired our project and gave us an opportunity to get in touch with the life and culture of amazing India.

Новости

Доклад о многоязычии в Куллу
3 months ago

(Русский) Доклад об экспедиции 2016 года (27 декабря, Институт языкознания)
5 months ago

(Русский) Доступна видеозапись презентации с Фестиваля языков
6 months ago

धन्यवाद