

Status of Women in The Himalayas: A Case of Gaddis

Veena Bhasin

Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi 110 007, India

KEYWORDS Gaddis. Transhumant. Gender. Status. Himachal Pradesh

ABSTRACT This paper describes and analyses the life of Gaddi women of Bharmour in Chamba District, Himachal Pradesh, Western Himalaya. In traditional Gaddi community, the women have an important role to play. Gender principles are central to hill organization of traditional communities. Gender and the division of labour that depends on its recognition, are decisive elements giving societies stability and cohesiveness. In Bharmour, role of women is not only of importance in economic activities due to ecological and environmental factors, but her role in non-economic activities is equally important that is, formation and continuity of family hearth and home are the domain of women. Women's role as wives, mothers, organizers and as basic foundation of other dimensions of social life is of utmost importance. These factors have given, Gaddi women social status and authority almost equal to men.