CHAPTER - IV

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AS ENCODED IN LANGUAGE
4.0. Introduction

Social structure is the patterned social arrangements in society that are both emergent from and determinant of the actions of the individuals. On the macro scale, social structure is the system of socioeconomic stratification (e.g., the class structure), social institutions, or, other patterned relations between large social groups. It is the structure of social network ties between individuals or organizations. It can be the way norms shape the behavior of individuals within the social system. It is the distinctive, stable arrangement of institutions whereby human beings in a society interact and live together. Social structure is often treated together with the concept of social change, which deals with the forces that change the social structure and the organization of society.

According to Radcliff-Brown (2004) social structure is a part of the social structure of all social relations of person to person. In the study of social structure the concrete reality with which we are concerned is the set of actually existing relations at a given moment of time which link together certain human beings.

According to Karl Mannheim (cf. John Kattakayam, 1983) social structure refers to the web of interacting social forces from which have arisen the various modes of observing and thinking. Social structure is an abstract and intangible phenomenon. Individuals are the units of association and institutions are the units of social structure. These institutions and associations are inter-related in a particular arrangement and thus create the pattern of social structure. It refers to the external aspect of society which is relatively stable as compared to the functional or internal aspect of society. Social structure is a living structure which is created, maintained for a time and changes.
Studies of social structure attempt to explain such matters as integration and trends in inequality. In the study of these phenomena, sociologists analyze organizations, social categories (such as age groups), or rates (such as of crime or birth).

Social structure is sometimes defined simply as patterned social relations—those regular and repetitive aspects of the interactions between the members of a given social entity. Social life is structured along the dimensions of time and space. Specific social activities take place at specific times, and time is divided into periods that are connected with the rhythms of social life—the routines of the day, the month, and the year. Specific social activities are also organized at specific places; particular places, for instance, are designated for such activities as working, worshiping, eating, and sleeping. Territorial boundaries delineate these places and are defined by rules of property that determine the use and possession of scarce goods. Additionally, in any society there is a more or less regular division of labour.

Furthermore, in any society there are arrangements within the structure for sexual reproduction and the care and education of the young. These arrangements take the form partly of kinship and marriage relations. Finally, systems of symbolic communication, particularly language, structure the interactions between the members of any society.

It is important to bear in mind that stratified societies cannot all be divided neatly into either class or caste systems. It is generally true that class systems are open to the extent that they are based on achieved status and permit considerable social mobility and caste system tend to be close in that they are based on ascribed status and allow little or no social mobility. Having made these conceptual distinctions, however, we must also realize that in real world class and caste systems overlap each
other. There are, in other words, elements of both class and caste in most stratified societies. There are no societies that have either perfect class system or a perfect caste system. Rather all stratified societies found in the world fall somewhere between these two ideal polarities, depending upon the relative amount of social mobility permitted in each (Ferraro, 1994).

4.1. Objective

The part expects to examine the division of Gujjar society, how the society is interwoven, the way it is organised, its inner functioning as well as its orientation. Their occupation, housing patterns, family structure, division of work, their recreation time, their legal framework, social traditions, festivity etc and how these customs are encoded in the language.

4.2. Gujjars of Fakir Gujri

Gujjars of Fakir Gujari live in an Egalitarian society where no individual group has appreciably more wealth, power or prestige than any other. Faqir Gujri is a medium size village which is located in North Srinagar of Jammu and Kashmir with total 309 families residing. The Faqir Gujri village has population of 1900 of which 990 are males while 910 are females as per Population Census 2011. The latitude 34.1920988 and longitude 74.9223386 are the geo-coordinate of the Faqir Gujri.

Fakir Gujri rests in the lap of Mahadev hillock and their colony is spread over 50-60 sq kilometers. The colony has lush green vegetation on both sides of the road. And the dwelling are scattered in chunks on both sides. The colony starts with proper metallic roads for a few kilometers after which there are no proper roads. There is no proper mode of transportation to the community. As Gujjars-the mountain dwellers prefer to walk. They can easily walk for miles together.
Fakir Gujri has been divided further into ten sub divisions known as Panchwards on the basis of Panchayti elections. They are:-

1. Kreva mohalla (Fakir Gujari)
2. Makdam mohalla (Datir Pathri)
3. Bradinaar
4. Naginar
5. Brand Kayi (Ri pav)
6. Astan marg
7. Shali khod
8. Chakh/ Tanchi mohalla
9. Dardi Khovur
10. Bajran Mohalla (Kadiya wala mohalla)

Chakh/Tanchi mohalla is mostly inhabited by Kashmiri speakers. There are only a few Gojri speaking families in this colony. While as, Kreva Mohalla is inhabited by Gujjars with just few Kashmiri speakers. The name ‘Makdam mohalla’ has been derived from the word ‘Makdam’, meaning the head of the village panchayat. The Sarpanch [mokdam] lives in this colony. The old name for this colony was Datir Pathri. As there was a huge cultivation of Dhatura (Datura Stramonium) on this land so this place came to be known as Datir Pathri. Astan Marg is the most isolated place with less population. The place was named after a holy shrine located in the same area. Brandi Kaen has been named so as this colony is situated at the top of Fakir Gujri. The old name for this colony was Rih Pav. The word Shal Khod I Kashmiri literally means ‘Shal’ jackal and ‘Khod’ dwelling place. Kashmiri’s named this colony as Shal Khod after an incident where a jackal took a baby lamb from that
place. Bajran Mohalla was also known as Kadiya wala Mohalla. This was due to the abundance of wood logs found there.

As such there is no physical division on the basis of caste, occupation, economy, etc. but still the concept of social hierarchy is present. Gujjars belonging to different castes like Fahmeda, Khatana, Doyi, etc. inhibit the same area. Paharis, who call themselves ‘Lachhi Gujjars’ live next to them in the Nagbal area in Dara. ‘Lachhi’ is basically a jungle fruit (blackberry) after which the Pahari community is named.

4.3. Dwellings and House Structure

Gujjars are mostly believed to be herdsmen, who possess minor pieces of land on the mountain foothills. Most of them own barrack-type shelters made of wooden logs called [ɖʰok] on the upper reaches, they still possess [ɖʰok] and rear cattle at the upper reach and then sell these cattle to Bakerwals. Their houses are not very well built, but are average or some even below average, simply made up of wood, bricks, etc. Many ancestral houses are also seen which are known as [koʈʰas], because in ancient times Gujjars called their houses [koʈʰas]. The hutment of the semi-settled and Gujjars are commonly known as [koʈʰas]. It is a mud house against the slope of a hillock. The construction is totally devoid of any ventilation except a small entry door. The area inside is around 140 sq ft., which is shared by animals as well as human beings. The floor of the house is simply natural soil which has been leveled so as to make the movement of the inhabitants convenient. There is a small hole in the ceiling which is the only outlet for all types of bad odor or gases like smoke that comes from dung and left-over fodder of animals. There is no provision of drainage in the hutments. In earlier times there were only 3-6 [koʈʰas]. Nowadays only very poor people, who are not in a condition to renovate their houses, live in these [koʈʰas]. Now
with the changing trend Gujjars also prefer to live in concrete houses made up of mud and stones. As they live in the foothills of Mahadev these stones are available in abundance. So it has been seen that most of the Gujjar houses are constructed with these stones and mud.

The houses are adobe type one-storey shabby structures built close together on the mountain slope with a little kitchen garden. The houses are made of flat stones and clay or mortar. The roofs were either concrete or wooden with a foot thick layer of clay covering them. The houses are entered through a wooden doorway [pet] leading into a small hallway [buo]. The rooms are decorated with painting while others with painted carving. The carving on the wooden door is simple and geometrical consisting mainly of parallel indentations which may be long-- tracing the length or breadth of a panel, jamb or lintel—or short-- arranged at an angle to the vertical or horizontal members of the door frame. There are two rooms on each side of the hallway. Out of the two rooms facing each other at the end farthest from the entry, one is a kitchen and the other a store. The remaining two rooms [kəmro] facing each other near the entry are bedrooms [son go kəmro].

The kitchen [tʃulo ao kəmro] has crude shelves for utensils and a wicker basket hanging from the ceiling to keep the food items which are not perishable such as pulses. The floor is almost bare, with a small circular straw made placed near a [tʃolah] made of clay. The smoke of this [tʃolah] escapes through a chimney built into the wall. A corner of the kitchen is reserved for washing utensils. The toilets [təti] are separately built usually outside the house.

However, some of the houses built recently have partially or completely different internal and external structures which reflect the outside influence on the community.
The cowsheds [bãḍi] are based on a lower level than the house. The cowsheds are made of stones held together by mud. As one enters a cowshed the half towards the opposite wall is demarcated by a series of vertically arranged parallel wooden stakes held together by two long and horizontal pieces of timber, one at the bottom and one at the top. This is where the cattle are kept, tied to the above mentioned wooden stakes.

4.4. Occupation

The people of this group are exceptionally poor and in reverse. They are not indulged in any fixed occupation, nor are they into any government occupations, except for a few, among younger generation, who work in Government sectors. Gujjars are very hard-working. They are being liked as laborers and semi-skilled workers. The main occupation of Gujjars in the valley of Kashmir is cattle rearing particularly sheep, buffalo and horses. This is considered the primary source of income for their sustenance. They are settled on the high altitudes and are very poor with negligible output. Those of the Gujar, whose resources through cattle rearing and agriculture do not help them to sustain themselves, take to semi-skilled jobs like that of a laborer, household servant or watchmen. In summers Gujjars go to the upper reaches of the hills to rear their cattle where they still possess [dhokes]. Before the arrival of winter they come back along with their cattle. This seasonal migration of Gujjars is called [udvare]. Now-a-days, most of the Gujjars are indulged in semi-skilled labour so they send their cattle to the upper reaches along with Bakerwals. In any case Gujjars are not self-sufficient in their day-to-day requirements. Very few Gujjars are engaged in whole time business or semi-skilled jobs.
4.5. Division and Society

At the social level the Gujjar of Jammu and Kashmir have divided themselves into three principal kinship groups:

1. Household (Dera)
2. Lineage (Dada-potre)
3. Clan (Gotra)

A household is referred to as dera, established after marriage. Each son establishes his own dera as he gets married. A household consists of five to six members. Division of labour in a household is based upon sex and age. Female performs the domestic work while male perform more arduous task like herding of cattle, repairing of tools, hunting of wild animals, ploughing and harvesting of crops. The household is thus primary economic unit.

Several Dera constitute a lineage (dada-potre). The pastures are allotted to lineage but not to individuals. Lineage may have 200 persons. Each lineage has a head who is responsible for the socio-economic and political activities of his group. The entire Gujjar community is divided into a number of Gotras (clans). The clan is based on a fiction of common descent while as the lineage dada-potre is based on actual patrilineal descent. As per Warikoo, (2002) a few prominent Gotra among the Gujjars are: Khatana, Chechi, Chauhan, Kasana, Bajran, Koli, Badana, and others. The presence of Gotra system among the Gujjars seems to owe itself to their Hindu ancestry. The Gotra name is often suffixed to their names.

4.6. Family Structure

Gujjar usually lives in nuclear families consisting of husband, wife and their children. The father is the head of the family, the ultimate authority, and the role of
decision making primarily lies with him, as does the ownership of all the property. Gujjars trace their lineage patrilineally. Landed property is inherited only by a son from father. A man with no son leaves is property to his resident son-in-law or in some cases he may leave his property to his favorite or poorest son-in-law. The earnings of an unmarried Gujjar goes to his father. Men preside over most ceremonial, ritual and religious events and are central to the Islamic ruling of a well governed society, which prescribes a marginal role to women in various domains. There seems to be no evidence of any kind of Goddess worship among the Gujjars. Usually the male members constitute the clergy exclusively. Women usually offer their prayers at home but they visit shrines often. Interaction with strangers is considered a male task. Women are hesitant, and discourage to speak in presence of men.

4.7. Division of Labour

The Gujjars divide work in a household chiefly along the lines of sex and age. While some choices are strictly assigned to males and females, other activities may be jointly or randomly performed by men or women. Accordingly to the available resources some tasks are branded as being exclusively male or female. Domestic activities like cooking, cleaning, fetching water, tending to children and washing are performed mainly by women. While as pastoral activities including various herding activities like going to the upper reaches of the hills for rearing cattles known as [udvare] is a male task. Men also perform other chores outside the house. Women assist in pastoral activities. The chopping of firewood is mainly a male chore but may also be performed by women. Some of the Gujjar women go to the upper reaches of the hillock to collect wild herbs [booti] which they later sell at a good price in the market.
Gujjar women are expert in making embroidery. Every item in their house is embroidered showing their inclination for the art form. The perfect example of this can be seen by the delicately embroidered caps and shawls which the Gujjar women wear. They even enjoy in making the rugs, sheets, radio cases and bags.

4.8. Spending the Leisure Time

It was observed that unlike other urbanized communities, who have various recreational sources like going out on holidays, picnics, watching movies etc, Gujjars do not have any such habits of recreation. It may be due to their lesser economic status and availability of time. They spend most of their time in their fields, pastures etc earning for their livelihood.

As Gujjars live in the outskirts of the city they have lesser contact with other people. They live in serene environment in the lap of nature. They do not have much exposure to the urbanized life style. Their life style is much simpler than urban people. They are usually occupied with their work in the community like rearing cattle, cultivating land etc.

Gujjar men do not have much source of recreation. Their typical time-pass is talking at their suitable ambiance in the group where they examine about legislative issues, employments, cattles and so on. Young men might likewise incline toward listening to music such as Gojri, Pahari folk songs and Hindi bollywood music while ladies for the most part invest their energy by going to one another and tattling. They also engage themselves in making various decorative items and embroidery. Gujjar ladies have great weaving skills. They intricately invest weeks in embroidering caps for themselves and for their friends and family. They are likewise great at making floor coverings, sheets, sacks, radio-cases and so forth.
Recreation for young men and young ladies of Gujjar group is up to play together. Adolescence girls more often stay at home and are indulged enjoyed household exercises like cleaning and improving the house. They are likewise inclined to music, they want to listen to the Gojri folk music and other programmes telecasted on radio. They now and again pay visit to their female companions in neighborhood.

Only a few families have television at their homes as a source of entertainment. People also spend time with their families where more youthful eras are told about their, ancestors, events and episodes of past stories and so on. Usually parents, grandparents describe stories to their stupendous kids. Narrating is the most loved side interest of youngsters and their storytellers. Gujjar youngsters are attracted by the stories spun around yarns of imagination. Far beyond the boundaries of what is real and imaginary. Gujjar fables has unlimited adventures of stories about jinns, fairies, warriors, kings, rulers, pastoralists and so forth. The most fascinating thing about narrating is the enthusiastic voice of the storyteller which draws lures the listeners.

4.9. Games

Despite of living in the small thatched mud houses Gujjar children are involved in recreational activities mostly games. They have numerous games which they play with enthusiasm and have great cultural values. They do not have video games, play stations and other recreational sources. These traditional games would keep children busy and attached to each other and these would provide pleasure to the kids. But it also taught to deal things with righteousness and to live with each other in harmony.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gujjar Games</th>
<th>English Meaning</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[səntoli]</td>
<td>Seven tones</td>
<td>This is the game played between two groups. Seven stones are stacked up as tower and the group needs to break the tower and remade it before getting hit by the rival group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[səza]</td>
<td>Hopscotch</td>
<td>This game involves making of huge rectangular box on floor having smaller six boxes. A box comparatively smaller in size is drawn on the upper side of the huge rectangular box. The players have to throw the smaller piece either wooden or shoe polish box filled with mud in the first box; And has to cross the boxes without touching the boundaries and that too with only one leg, other leg being hanging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[kəbaɖi]</td>
<td>Kabbadi</td>
<td>Kabaddi is a team game. Two teams having 7 players in court. They compete with each other for higher score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʈɔpa tʊɾa]</td>
<td>Hide and seek</td>
<td>The players hide themselves in the environment. The hiders have to find the seekers. The player found last is the winner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[zir]</td>
<td>..................</td>
<td>In this game one player needs to pursue the rest. In the event that the pursuing player touches somewhat to any of alternate players that player is announced out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[giʈi kʰerə]</td>
<td>Pebble game</td>
<td>In this game players gather small five stones which they need to pick in order. In the first place the stone is tossed noticeable all around and after that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
grabbed starting from the ground. This is followed by two stones, then three and after that four. In the event that the player neglects to pick all the stones or drops any stone, he/she would be proclaimed out.

| [taːj mara] | Clapping | It is a game in which generally two players are clapping with each other accompanied to a song, rhyme or nursery rhyme. |

**Table 4.1: Traditional Games played by Gujjar children**

Besides these traditional games, Gujjar children also play cricket [bɔʈ kʰɛɾə], football foot ball [kʰɛɾa] etc.

### 4.10. Practice of Law

The Gujjar system of law is executed for the benefit and with the consent of the entire community. As per constitution of India and Panchyati Raaj Act, Faqir Gujri village is administrated by Sarpanch (Head of Village) who is elected representative of village. There are also Namberdar and Punch members. Together they form the lawful body known as Panchayat. The Gujjar are dispersed over a larger area, so each clan has its own chief. These are prominent men of the clan who are respected by all the clan members. They are chosen on the basis of their stature in the community, sense of the fair play and oratory skills. Sardars are the only recognized administrative heads in the Gujjar community and even today, they resolve nearly all disputes among their clan members. Each Sardar works with a couple of informally appointed Salakars or advisors who are consulted, along with other elders and prominent men of the community. The Moulvi or the priest plays a significant role in
the execution of the Gujjar. He is often summoned by the Saradar to facilitate in the performance of the ritual of oath during prosecution. The centrality of the Quran and the faith vested in the oath should also be mentioned. The Gujjar and believe that anyone who commits perjury will be punished visibly within days of committing the sin and narrate the incidents on how perjures have suffered divine intervention.

Law is governed by the moral and ethical norms of the community, and solutions are sort mainly in compliance with the implicit laws kept in place by the elders from one generation to the next. Panchayat plays an important role in the Gujjar system of law. It is consulted for settling various familial disputes like divorce, elopement, mutual disputes regarding land and property etc. It also works for the welfare and betterment of the community like development of the community. It also acts as a modulating voice for bringing into notice various issues and problems faced by the community to the Government authorities. Women have mostly a little role to play in the Gujjar system of law. But now-a-days women are a part of Panchayat. Even though they are not appointed as chiefs, advisors or religious heads, nor have there been any cases where women have controlled the system of justice formally but they form apart of system now-a-days. However, in specific cases elder women may be consulted by the men owing to the wisdom and experience their acknowledge to have acquired by virtue of their age.

4.11. Religion and Festivity

Religion underlines the integrity of the family as the foundation of faith, and recognizes that the key of family integrity is maintaining traditional roles for women. Gujjars are Muslims who are profoundly rooted in their religion. They solidly trust in their religious traditions, customary move and religious rituals. This tribe has their feelings imbued with their religion. These individuals take after their own
conventional qualities and traditions entirely till now. They follow the ritual of daily prayers (Namaz) more religiously. Men and women pray separately. Women usually offer their prayers at home. While as men visit Mosque (Masjid) for offering prayers collectively. Gujjar consider it mandatory to transfer this religious knowledge to their younger generations. Gujjar children are sent to [dərzgah] for their religious upbringing.

The beliefs and attitudes of Gujjars revolve around the framework of religiously determined beliefs and attitudes. The basic concepts of the community people revolve round the five pillars of Islam. These are confession of Faith (Shahada), Ritual prayer (Salat), Alms Tax (Zakat), Fasting during the month of Ramadan, Pligrimage to Mecca (Hajj). Such beliefs shape up the social patterns of Gujjars. It is observed that their life revolve around the notion that all human beings must think and work about the betterment of others. The entire Muslim population of the community belongs to the Sunni sector. It is observed that no Shia Muslims live in this community.

The essential religious routine of fasting amid Ramadan [roza] is ordinarily trailed by dominant part of the Muslims truly. In this practice individuals keep quick from dawn to dask. All the community members (males, females and children) fast quickly during the month of Ramadan. They follow certain other conviction like the belief in the Almighty God, finality of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), praying five times a day and performing Hajj if possible.

Islam remains as the most-alluded point in the group. Along these lines all the community members practice the thoughts and standards of religion and abstain from everything which religion has restricted and considered undesirable and they need their youngsters to follow them devoutly. Gujjars being religiously oriented celebrate
all the religious festivals with great zeal. On the arrival of Eid (Muslim celebration), the entire family especially children wear new garments which are specially designed for Eid. Men get garments for women and children. Exceptional non-vegetarian dishes are prepared on this event. There is a massive get-together at the mosque on the day of Eid where Eid prayers are offered. Both Eid-ul-Adha [kurbani eid] and Eid-ul-Fitr [nikki eid] are celebrated with great zest and zeal. Eidi\textsuperscript{1} [eijdano] is given to women and children on this auspicious day. Eid-ul-Adha is celebrated after two months and ten days after Eid-ul-Fitr. On this occasion animals like goat, sheep, cow and ox are sacrificed [kurbani]. This meat is cut into pieces and disseminated equally among relatives, companions and neighbors. Flees of the animal is then washed, dried and given to Masjid or kept at home. Gujjars also celebrate the night festivals of Shab-i-Qadr and Shabi-Barat. On both these nights, prayers are offered for the whole night. While the former is remembered as the night in which the Holy Quran was sent by God Almighty to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Arrangements are done Shabs, women clean the whole house as it is believed that there ought to be no impurity in the house during the auspicious occasions.

Muslim Gujjars hold certain practices very sacred and important. Through these practices the Muslim Gujjars recollect their history, express conviction, and grow in devotion. In such a folk based religious environment, all preferences in thinking and behaving become clear and clearly distinguish between sacred and profane things and ideas related to that. A study in the community revealed the following items considered as 'Sacred': The Holy Quran, The Shrines and Mosques,

\textsuperscript{1} Eidi is a gift like money, presents etc given to children and women by the elders of the family.
The book of Hadith\textsuperscript{2}, Marriage (Nikkah), The Priest (peer), Regards for Parents and a Person’s beard.

While as, the items considered as profane are: Prostitution, Consumption of alcohol, Adultery, Eating Pork or Non Zabeha meat, Dishonesty, Policies such as Riba\textsuperscript{3} (Interest), Praying behind women, lying, etc.

Furthermore, the belief in local peers (priest) and the centrality of the Sufi Shrines (Dargahs) to the Gujjars is of prime importance. Gujjars are deeply influenced by the Sufi saints and hence their belief in Peers runs deep. Almost all the Gujjar children wear Amulets\textsuperscript{4} [taviz] blessed by a peer. They visit Peers in times of their illness and misfortunes. Gujjars not only seek blessings for themselves but also for their cattle. They visit Peers when their cattle are not well or suffer from some misfortunes. They prefer to consult the native healer or the peer during an illness than a doctor. Gujjars often visit Shrines. Chief among these Shrines is Wangat Shareef in Baba Nagri, Kangan. This shrine is important to Gujjars as the peer worshipped in the shrine was a great religious personality and healer. And Gujjars were deeply influenced by him. They believe that visiting the shrine solves their problems and fortune prevails on them.

They also visit the Shrine of Peer Shang Rishi Sahib, located in the community. It is known by the name of Bab Su Rishi. Gujjars believe that this peer was follower of Hazrat Sheikh Noor Din Noorani (R.A). The community has two religious sacraments for him. One is in the form of shrine and the other is symbolic tree which is now fenced by the stones. It is believed that Bab Su Rishi was highly

\textsuperscript{2} Hadith is a book of records of the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), his family and his companions.

\textsuperscript{3} Riba means increase or growth. It is unjustified increment borrowing or lending money, paid in kind or cash above the amount of loan, as a condition imposed by the lender or voluntarily by the borrower.

\textsuperscript{4} Amulet is simply a written dua which is from the holy Quran written on a piece of paper. It is usually worn around the neck or arm.
spiritual with divine powers. According to Gujjars a leopard visits the shrine on every Thursday night and sits under the holy tree where this Sufi Saint had prayed for years.

Gujjars also celebrate his memorial ceremony [urs] in the community in the month of May. On this day Gujjars prepare meals and take it to the shrine. The meal consists of non-vegetarian dishes like chicken, mutton, beef and a special type of Lettuce known as [vopəl hæk]. This Lettuce holds a significant value and is mandatory to cook as it is believed that this Sufi saint used to eat it. This meal is prepared by the women of the family. After preparing it is served in a clean utensil Trami\(^5\) and taken to the shrine by the elder male member of the family. This food is then served to the priests in the shrine. On the second day of the Urs women and children visit the shrine. There is a great zest and zeal on this day. People from different areas also pay a visit to this shrine on this day. There are numerous stalls of street food like fritters (mũdʒ gul), sweets, halwa paratha, etc. On this day people pay alms and tie knots at the Holy shrine. They believe that by doing so there wishes will come true and they will be blessed.

Being pastorals Gujjars celebrate the eve of Baisakhi and other small harvest festivals at the community level like sowing and harvesting seeds for the new crops. Prayers are offered and alms are given when new seeds are planted. Sacrifices are also made. Gujjars prepare a special dish tahri (yellow rice) and distribute it among the people.

4.12. Superstitions and Beliefs

Gujjar people are strongly superstitions. Nearly all the persons hold seriously irrational beliefs concerning methods of warding off ill or bringing good, foretelling

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\(^5\) Trami is a large circular carved copper plate shared by four persons in traditional way of sitting over a piece of cloth.
the future, and healing and preventing sickness and accidents. A crow cawing at night signifies disaster, fight, devastation or death. Redness in the sky denotes murder. A red sky in the morning is said to bring in rain while a red sky predicts dry weather. The buzzing of honeybees near the homestead means that guests will arrive. While kneading dough falls out in a jerk with some water, it also signifies the coming of guests.

The Gujjars believe that horses are carrier of good or bad spirits and new horses are purchased with utmost caution. It is said that if a mare is born during July or August, the animal is inauspicious or the carrier of bad luck. The facial expressions of horse and its eyes are taken as important indicators of its good or evil spirit.

It is also believed that adults should not sit under a walnut or deodar tree with children, as these trees are possessed with evil spirits. Children are also told that it is not safe to go near springs and other water sources. Some people claimed that the superstition comes from the fact that snakes are often found near springs in hot weather as they are cold blooded creatures and need to cool down near springs and other water bodies.

Dreams have significance for the Gujjars. They believe that the dreams are a message from God and important matters are revealed through the medium. For this reason the Gujjars do not go about revealing their dreams to everyone. Instead, dreams are treated as a secret, and only revealed to few close family members. According to some, dreams should not be told even to kin members as this may bring bad luck. Dreams are only told in detail to a knowledgeable few who can interpret them accurately. It is also believed that the wrongly interpreted dreams can bring bad luck and even death and devastation to the individual. A large number of Gujjars believe that dreams are prophetic. They also believe that very similar dreams can have
divergent meaning and interpretations and thus it is foolish to have watertight connotation and symbols, as they must be interpreted in their specific context.

4.13. Social Customs

Living in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, Gujjars, like Kashmiri speaking people are very social. They socialize with their acquaintances very well. Gujjars are simple and warm. They treat their guests with love and warmth. Gujjars visit their family and friends on different occasions like Eid, congratulating on child birth, wedding, getting engaged, shifting to a new house, prolonged ill health, at the time of misfortune or death etc.

They go to different social gathering such as the wedding ceremonies of their nearby ones. The custom of seeing relatives for congratulating [mubarak den tālija] begins with the fixing of the marriage [b‘andọ suto karam]. Gujjars visit their relative/companions at this time and they blaze Isband (Peganum Harmala) in a Kangri to stamp a good starting. It is trusted that these fragrant seeds push away the negative energies. The acquaintances again visit on the day of collecting firewood from forest [ləkdi kəran tʃalo]. On the wedding day there is a tradition of giving cash to the bride/groom as a gift. A record of this money on this event is kept on a notebook to pay it back later on. This convention is known as [vɔrtav].

Gujjars additionally visit their relatives and neighbors who shift to another house to congratulate them. They prepare a basket loaded with goodies such as cakes, biscuits and some sweets known as [mədʒno]. On this event Isband is blazed in Kangri. This custom is known as [isbād təkʰavâ].

Acquaintances are also visited at the time of child birth. When a lady gives birth to a child (specially a baby boy) she is visited by her relatives and friends to
congratulate her. Gifts are given to her in cash or kind. A [məʒmo] is also prepared for this occasion.

There is also a tradition of visiting families whose children have qualified their BOARD exams. People are also visited on starting a new business, getting a job, shop etc.

People visit each other on festivals like Eid. On this day acquaintances are visited and greeted without any gifts. The host treats their guests very warmly; they are served with tea or kehwa with some goodies. Gujjars also invite their married daughters along with their husbands over lunch, dinner etc. on various occasions like Eid [ eid sal].

People are also visited when sick. But women visit only their close relatives. Usually men visit men. They might take along fruits. Gujjars also visit to pay condolence to the deceased acquaintances. They visit the deceased family for four days continuously. They may also pay a visit on first Monday, fortieth [tfalimoh] etc. No items or goodies are taken on this occasion. People also pay a visit to their friends and relatives generally. They may take fruits or sweets along. It is not considered good to pay a visit without taking anything.

4.14. Ethno medicine

Plants are integral source of medicine in the rural areas, particularly in the tribal communities. The Gujjars are knowledgeable about a wide variety of uses of different plants. They use plants chiefly for medicinal purposes, both for humans and animals, as well as to supplement their diet. They practice partial gathering and collect many plants that are cooked and consumed as vegetables and fruits. Gujjars are perhaps unmatched by any other community in the state, as far as the depth of
knowledge of Kashmir’s terrain, flora and fauna is concerned. They climb high mountain peaks, find and identify the plants with medicinal properties and extract them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicinal Herbs</th>
<th>Botanical Names</th>
<th>Ethno medicinal Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ɾatandʒog/</td>
<td>Geranium Wallichianum</td>
<td>It is a tuber shrub that grows to the height of about half a metre. The tuber is ground, mixed with flour and ghee and cooked as a roti and eaten. It is used for headache. Its roots are used for general weakness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kau咄/</td>
<td>Saussurea Costus</td>
<td>Kaudh is a bitter tuber with a plant that grows 15 cms tall. The tuber is ground and mixed with sugar and eaten. It is mainly used for stomach ache.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/dɔtur/</td>
<td>Datura Stramonia</td>
<td>It is a foul-smelling, erect freely branching herb. It forms the bush up to 2 to 5 fts. It is a traditional medicine used for asthma, insanity and also used as an anti inflammatory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/sund/</td>
<td>Zingiber officinal</td>
<td>Sund is a ginger-like tuber shrub that grows to a height of about half a meter. The tuber is ground and applied on the forehead. It cures the headache.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kæʤuban/</td>
<td>Arnebia Sativum</td>
<td>Kajubaan ia a shrub about 60 cm tall. It treats asthma. The leaves of the plant are boiled in water and consumed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/tʃora/</td>
<td>Angelica Glance</td>
<td>The Chora plant grows to a height of about a metre in the high alpine areas of Kashmir. It is used to treat jaundice. The leaves of chora are dried and burnt which keeps the snakes away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pevok/</td>
<td>Peevak</td>
<td>Peevak is a short plant, about 20 cms tall. The leaves of plant are boiled with water and drunk. It treats the chest pain.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Kuth** is a shrub that grows to a height of about 60 cms. The roots of this plant have to be washed, dried, ground and mixed with oil. This is applied on joints to relieve the pain.

**Allium Satium** is a bulbous plant. It grows up to the height of 1.2 metres. It is used as a snake repellent. Its boiled in water and this water is spread outside the house from all the sides to keep the snake away.

**Benal** is the herb whose stems are used to treat the ascaris (roundworms).

**Koṣṭhari** is an herb whose roots are used to cure diabetes. It is bitter in taste.

**Cilblains** (Rheum Sp.) is a herbaceous perennial plant growing from fleshy roots. Its roots are dried and used in powder form. It is used to cure the wounds and injury. Its leaves are used as vegetable.

This herb is given the girls during menstruation to get the relief from the pain. It is used in the form of powder with eggs. It is used by boys also during stomach ache.

**It** is an herb whose leaves are boiled in water. This mixture cures the cough.

**Borago officinalis** is a herb whose whole plant is used for increasing lactation. Its whole plant is used for increasing lactation. The plant is boiled in water and given to lactating mother to enhance milk production. Its root extract is used in hair oils.

This herb is used to cure diabetes.

This herb is used to treat the hair fall.

**Euphoria Heliscopia** is an annual plant which grows 10-50 cm tall with a single, erect, hairless stem. Leaves and stem latex are used against ringworm infection.
| /hundʰ/ | Taraxacum Officinale | This herb is given to mother after delivering a baby. It is also found useful in treating jaundice and dyspepsia. |
| /ʃanɡɪr/ | Glycyrrhiza Glabra | It is a herbaceous perennial, growing to 1 metre in height about 7-15 cm long, with 9-7 leaflets. It is used for cough. Its dried roots are taken with water. Also used as a mouth freshener. |

Table 4.2: Ethno-medicinal plants used by Gujjars