

## HISTORY OF CHEETAH, MEHRAT, KATHAT

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Dr. Preeti Goswami\*

### ABSTRACT

*This research delves into the intricate social dynamics of the Cheeta, Mehrat, and Kathat communities situated in the Ajmer district of Rajasthan, India. Through a historical lens, it explores the evolution of societal structures, particularly the division between Aryan and Non-Aryan classes, and the resulting stratification into leading and backward groups. The study sheds light on the geographical and natural characteristics of Ajmer-Merwara, nestled amidst the Aravalli mountain ranges, with its unique topography influencing climate patterns and agricultural practices. Additionally, it examines the historical context of Ajmer, from its inception under the Chauhan rulers to its eventual integration into the British colonial era. The narrative encompasses a rich tapestry of conquests, alliances, and shifting powers, ultimately culminating in Ajmer's transition to a district within independent India.*

**KEYWORDS:** Cheeta, Mehrat, Kathat, Rajasthan, Ajmer, Caste, Community.

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### Introduction

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Man, as a social being, is innately curious, driven by an instinctual desire to explore and progress. This progress hinges on the interplay between direct experiences and societal foundations, shaping the trajectory of human development. Since time immemorial, human societies have coalesced into distinct social groups, characterized by their relative pace of advancement. The leading groups forged ahead, propelling the wheels of progress, while the slower-paced counterparts lagged behind, deemed as the backward groups.

Within the intricate tapestry of human society, delineations based on factors such as color and culture have given rise to two prominent classes: the Aryan and Non-Aryan. Here, the Aryans ascended to a position of leadership, while the Non-Aryans occupied a secondary status. This division not only influenced social hierarchies but also dictated the flow of knowledge and cultural exchange. The leading society, endowed with advanced skills and organizational prowess, often found itself disconnected from the culturally rooted communities dwelling in rural and forested regions, who lacked avenues for meaningful interaction.

Consequently, human society underwent a natural segmentation into tiers of development, spanning from highly advanced to underdeveloped strata. Certain communities, rooted firmly in their traditions and resistant to modernity, emerged as distinct entities, distinguished by their unique social and cultural backgrounds. It is these very groups that form the focal point of our inquiry.

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\* Assistant Professor (Guest Faculty), M.D.S. University, Ajmer, Rajasthan, India.

This research endeavors to unravel the intricate fabric of social and cultural life within the Cheeta, Mehrat, and Kathat communities, nestled in the precincts of Ajmer district, Rajasthan. To contextualize this exploration, it is imperative to delve into the geographical and natural underpinnings of Ajmer-Merwara, a region ensconced between specific latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates. The landscape, characterized by the majestic Aravalli Mountains, exhibits a diverse geography, while the scarcity of rivers has historically impacted agricultural practices, often leading to drought and famine. Despite these challenges, Ajmer's unique elevation mitigates extremes in climate, rendering it a region of perennial attraction.

Nature herself has bestowed this territory with two enchanting lakes, most notably the renowned Pushkar Lake, enveloped by scenic hills. Moreover, this land has served as a sanctuary for diverse wildlife, though encroachments and deforestation have sadly diminished their populations. The historical narrative of Ajmer, steeped in valor, heroism, and sacrifice, unfurls against the backdrop of its strategic significance, having been a crucible for numerous dynasties and empires.

As we embark on this journey through the annals of history, it becomes evident that Ajmer's trajectory has been one of dynamic shifts in power, punctuated by conquests, defeats, and the ebb and flow of various ruling regimes. The emergence of the Chauhan dynasty, epitomized by figures like Ajayraj and Arneraj, signified an era of empire-building and territorial consolidation. However, the subsequent forays of Muslim rulers from Delhi and the eventual ascendancy of the Mughals ushered in a new chapter, forever altering the sociopolitical landscape.

This study, therefore, seeks to unravel the layers of Ajmer's history, examining not only the grandiose narratives of rulers and dynasties but also the lived experiences of the diverse communities that have shaped its socio-cultural milieu. In doing so, it endeavors to contribute to a nuanced understanding of this historically significant region and its multifaceted tapestry of identities.

### **Hypothesis**

The hypothesis of this research posits that within the Cheeta, Mehrat, and Kathat communities of Ajmer district, distinct social structures, cultural practices, and historical narratives have evolved over time, shaped by factors including geographical features, historical events, and interactions with dominant societal groups. It is anticipated that these communities exhibit unique social hierarchies, traditions, and cultural identities, influenced by their historical experiences and geographical surroundings. Additionally, the hypothesis suggests that the interplay between leading and backward groups, as well as the division between Aryan and Non-Aryan classes, has contributed significantly to the social dynamics and stratification within these communities. This study seeks to empirically validate these assertions through comprehensive ethnographic and historical analysis, aiming to provide a nuanced understanding of the social and cultural life of the Cheeta, Mehrat, and Kathat communities in Ajmer district.

### **Observations and Discussions**

In human society, on the basis of color and culture, two classes 'Aryan' and 'Non-Aryan' were formed and while Aryans got the leading position in the society, Non-Aryans remained in second place. While on one hand the leading society developed higher skills and organizational power, on the other hand, the civilized and leading society, which had full faith in and followed the culture and had no means of communication, living in rural areas and forest areas, along with - Didn't give a chance to walk together. In this process, human society naturally got divided into developed, developing, semi-developed and underdeveloped levels. Some communities which could not enter modernity or have kept their culture alive, whose social and cultural background is completely different and distinct from other communities. Such groups are the subject of the researcher's study.

The presented research work is related to the social and cultural life of Cheeta, Mehrat and Kathat located in Ajmer district of Rajasthan.

Rajputana has been a vast battlefield till the beginning of the nineteenth century. Its history is the history of bravery, courage, patriotism and self-sacrifice. No other state has as many brave warriors and battle warriors as Rajasthan. Colonel Todd has rightly written that "There is not even a small state in Rajasthan in which There is no battlefield like Dharmapoli and hardly any city is found where a heroic type of sacrificing for the motherland like the Greek hero Leonidas has not been born. On one hand, in Rajasthan, there are brave women like Maharana Sanga, Jaimal Panna, Maharana Pratap, Prithviraj Chauhan, Veer Durgadas Rathod, Padmini Meera Bai, Pannadhay and Gaura Dhoy, Hadi Rani, Jhalkari Bai.

History is witness to the fact that Rajasthan has been a stronghold of monarchy and feudalism. The word Rajasthan was used for the first time in 1829 by Colonel Todd after passing through states and names like Jungle Pradesh, Matsya Desh, Rajya Maru, Rajputana etc.

A small part of this province belonged to the British area which was known as Ajmer-Merwara. The time of establishment of Ajmer was between 1110 AD to 1113 AD Rajasthan is situated in the west on the map of India with many colors. Ajmer, the heart of this Rajasthan, vibrates with emotions, here the Azaan of the Dargah calls for world brotherhood, while the temple of World Father Brahma situated in Pushkar unites the world. The non-violence of Jain philosophy is present in every part of the place, the Buddhist temple situated in Daural develops the feeling of brotherhood in the society by talking about the upliftment of the self. Both the sects of Christianity increase love and harmony towards human beings. The fire temple of the Parsis creates a society with the sense of purity and knowledge like fire.

### **Ajmer Merwada - Geographical and Natural Introduction**

Ajmer-Merwara is situated between 25° 23'30" and 26° latitude and 73° 47'30" and 75° 27'0" longitude. During the British rule, Ajmer was divided into two districts, Ajmer and Merwara, whose area was 2069 and 641 square miles respectively. Due to the residence of Mer caste in the border areas of Ajmer, Udaipur and Pali districts, the border areas of these districts are called Merwada.

The beautiful ranges of the Aravalli Mountains, which start from Delhi, spread like a river from north-east to south-west of Ajmer. In this area, the 3075 feet high peak of the Aravalli mountain range Goram' is worth seeing. Ajmer The region has always been deprived of rivers. From near Pushkar, the Luni River, which is towards Marwar from the beginning, seems to be flowing away from this area, and on the other hand, the Banas River, which flows in the opposite direction, which is the Chambal River. Khari and Dai rivers affect only parts of the south-eastern part of the district. Ajmer receives very little and uncertain rainfall, due to which the situation of famine and drought persists. The main reason for this is This is that due to being situated in the foothill region and being marginal to the desert terrain, this region is often deprived of the monsoons arising from the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. Despite the natural beauty and geographical strength, this region does not receive adequate rainfall. Due to lack of water, it has been counted among the dry areas. This area is situated at an altitude of 1800 feet above sea level and perhaps due to this the climate and environment of this area is neither too hot nor too cold. Due to this specialty, this area has always attracted visitors.

Nature has adorned this area with two natural picturesque lakes, one of which is Pushkar Lake. This lake is popular throughout India due to its natural beauty and being surrounded by hills all around.

This area is said to be a safe sanctuary for wild animals. Tigers, hyenas, nilgai, deer, snakes, pigs, rabbits, titi, ducks etc. are found in the area. But due to increasing forests and destruction of wild animals, their numbers have decreased and some wild animals have almost become extinct. This area was also an important area in terms of natural wealth, but due to the short-sighted policies of the British rulers, the forest wealth of this area gradually started getting destroyed and at one time it came to a time that the entire area started appearing treeless.

### **Historical Significance**

(Ajmer The vast area of Mewar, which is known today as Ajmer, has been under the Chauhan rulers of Sambhar for a long time. The power of the Chauhan rulers reached its peak during the time of Ajayraj, the first son of Prithviraj, hence Indian history The period of Ajayraj is considered to be the period of empire building. Famous historian Farishta has mentioned in his book Tarikh-e-Farishta that Ajmer existed even in 997 AD, but historians do not agree with this opinion. "Prithviraj It is said in Vijay that Ajayraj protected the borders of his kingdom by fighting the Muslim rulers of Delhi and established Ajmer (Ajaymeru) around 1113 AD, which later became the capital of the Chauhan Empire.

Another prominent historian of Rajasthan, Gorishankar Ojha, has proved on the basis of some ancient coins found in Chittor and new historical research that Ajayraj established Ajmer in 1110 AD.

Ajayraj, also known as Ajaypal in Indian history, built a fort on a hill known as Taragarh, also known as "Garh Beatli". The valley adjacent to this fort, which is adjacent to the Dargah and contains a high density of population, is known as 'Anderkot'. During this time, he founded a city which was named Ajmer after him. The history here is the history of bravery, courage, patriotism and self-sacrifice. This state, wrapped in the memories of its glorious stories, is unique. Preparing the basis for a cultural study by researching the history of such an important area, the social environment of the groups living in it and the social and cultural aspects would be an important step for a social scientist and an important contribution to this wonderful state.

There are 3 villages proposed in the research of the researcher which are located in Ajmer district. Chaurasiyawas 9 km from Ajmer. And Chang and Rajiyawas are situated in Beawar Beawar 65 km from Ajmer. Far away and this village is 12 and 16 km from Beawar respectively are located far away.

During the reign of Ajayraj's son and successor Arneraj, the Muslim rulers of Lahore and Ghazni made several attacks on Ajmer with the aim of taking control of Ajmer, but under the able leadership of Arneraj, the invaders had to face defeat. In the struggle for power, Arneraj was defeated. Son Jagdev ascended the throne after killing his father but he was an incompetent ruler. As soon as he got the opportunity, his younger brother Vighararaja IV, with the help of other chieftains, killed him and himself ascended the throne. Vighararaja, being an able ruler, He was also a great warrior."

In 1165 AD, Delhi was ruled by Tomar ruler Madanpal. He was continuously troubled by the attacks of Muslim invaders. On the other hand, the Chauhan rulers of Ajmer were also trying to dominate Delhi. Tomar ruler Madanpal, as part of the reconciliation policy between Ajmer and Delhi, got his daughter married to Chauhan dynasty ruler Someshwar." And later, Someshwar's son Prithviraj Chauhan (III) emerged as a powerful ruler, but in 1192 AD. He was defeated by Muhammad Ghori in the second battle of Tarain and was killed. After this, Ajmer became the center of the Mughals. Muhammad Ghori handed over the responsibility of establishing complete Mughal rule over Ajmer to Qutbuddin Aibak Qutbuddin's aim was to conquer the area from Ajmer to Anhilwara, but the Maros (who are descendants of the Cheetah group) with the help of the Rajputs gave him a heavy defeat, due to which he got injured and had to take shelter in the fort of Ajmer to save his life. Ajmer remained under the control of the Dill Sultanate until the end of the fourteenth century.

Thus, after the defeat and death of the great ruler of the Chauhan dynasty, Ajmer remained the center of activities of various rulers of the Delhi Sultanate till the 14th century. In the long period between Taimur's invasion of India and Akbar's victory over Ajmer, Ajmer experienced many changes of power. See, many Muslim rulers kept coming and going like a storm. For some time, the Chauhan rulers also regained control over it, but this right could not prove to be permanent, finally on 25 June 1818, the East India Company and Maharaja Alijat Daulatrao Sidhion As a result of the treaty between. Ajmer was given to the British.

When the British took control of Ajmer province, its land was divided into 18 parganas and 634 villages. It had 19 lakh pucca bighas of cultivable land. All the landlords in this area were mostly Rathores, with only a few Pathans, Jats, Mers and Cheetahs The Mer and Cheeta people lived at the extreme end of the district. Except the landlords of these two groups, all the rest were peace-loving and hard-working"

The first English Superintendent of Ajmer tried to establish peace by pacifying the leopards. He had entered into an agreement with the Meros living in Jhakre Lulwa, Shyamgarh. This reduced the incidents of looting but Cheetah and Mer did not show interest in keeping their promise. Due to the tireless efforts of the British to control them and successful military operations, ultimately the Cheetah group had to sign an agreement not to loot. Then the British defeated the forts like Kot Kirana, Bagdi, Baukha, Hayur etc. and captured these forts and captured them.

In this way, after a heavy struggle, the British succeeded in taking over Merwara (where the Cheetah and Mehrat Kathat groups had dominance). After independence, this area was included in the Indian Union and today it is known as Ajmer district.

## **Conclusion**

The historical narrative of Ajmer district, Rajasthan, is a testament to the dynamic shifts in power, conquests, and the interplay of various ruling regimes. From its inception under the Chauhan rulers to its integration into the British colonial era, Ajmer's trajectory reflects a rich tapestry of conquests, alliances, and shifting powers.

The social fabric of Ajmer has been woven with threads of diverse communities, each with its unique social structures, cultural practices, and historical narratives. The Cheeta, Mehrat, and Kathat communities, nestled within this region, have evolved over time, influenced by factors including geographical features, historical events, and interactions with dominant societal groups.

Geographically, Ajmer-Merwara, nestled amidst the Aravalli mountain ranges, bears the imprint of its natural features on its climate patterns and agricultural practices. While the region grapples with challenges such as scarcity of rivers and periodic droughts, its unique elevation mitigates extremes in climate, making it a region of perennial attraction.

Ajmer's history, steeped in valor, heroism, and sacrifice, has witnessed a succession of rulers and dynasties. From the emergence of the Chauhan dynasty to the subsequent influence of Muslim rulers and the Mughals, Ajmer's sociopolitical landscape has been marked by dynamic shifts in power.

Ultimately, the story of Ajmer district is a tapestry woven with threads of courage, cultural richness, and diverse identities. Understanding the intricate social dynamics of communities like the Cheeta, Mehrat, and Kathat is not only a historical endeavor but also a crucial step towards comprehending the depth and diversity of human societies in this historically significant region.

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