

Power Polity in the Amber-Jaipur Kingdom

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The kingdom of Amber became a prominent political centre under Bhagwan Dass and Man Singh. During the eighteenth century, in terms of its territory, the Amber kingdom expanded considerably. Jai Singh adopted various methods to expand the territories and here onwards Amber-Jaipur state took control over vast territories of the eastern Rajasthan. Jai Singh assumed *de jure* control of the entire territory. Amber-Jaipur state was located between the two capital cities, Delhi and Agra. Ajmer, the headquarter of *suba* Ajmer was adjoining to its territories.

Initially, Jai Singh's reign was faced with challenges. On one side the Mughals threatened to expand, on the other hand, Kachhwaha *Thikanedars* (chiefs) created internal challenges. As both were powerful factions, in terms of the political-affairs the Jaipur state was facing turbulence. However, by 1720s Jai Singh could establish a consolidated political structure. He took complete authority over the Amber territories. Jai Singh administered Amber-Jaipur through *muandis* and *mutatids* on Mughal pattern. Through negotiations, he resolved the internal conflicts with *Thikanedars*. Measures were initiated in the court to grant-honours, ranks and suitable seats to the significant *Thikanedars*/Thakurs. The court-protocol initiated in the *Darbar* was helpful in retaining the loyalties of the *Thikanaedars*. The gestures to accord respect - granting of gifts, and bestowal of titles - were applied routinely. This was an effort to keep the political personalities conciliated and it made court-society dynamic. The *Dastur Komwar* (rules applicable caste-wise), an exclusive genre of empirical documents highlights the procedures followed-in the court. It depicts the treatment meted-out by the raja and in the Jaipur court

with its dignitaries. These are preserved at the Rajasthan State Archives at Bikaner in 32 hard-bound registers. By the mid-eighteenth century, the Amber-Jaipur kingdom witnessed a period of peace, opulence and its standing enhanced among the contemporary states.

After Jai Singh's death, a succession dispute broke-out between his sons Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh. This internecine conflict invited intervention of Marathas in the Jaipur state. Madho Singh was supported by the Peshwa, as the former promised to give a *nazar* of Rs.10 lakh. In May 1748, the Marathas entered the Kachhwaha territory and defeated Ishwari Singh in the battle of Bagru. Being defeated, Ishwari Singh affirmed to cede five parganas to Madho Singh. He also agreed to pay a handsome sum of money to the Marathas for ensuing peace. This war for throne was a fall-out of a treaty signed by Jai Singh with Maharana of Udaipur Amar Singh. Both Jodhpur and Jodhpur requisitioned Amar Singh to reclaim their respective territories from the Mughals. The aforementioned treaty was a medium for re-establishing the political alliance between the Ranas (Udaipur) and Kachhwahas (Jaipur). Col. Tod recorded, 'they repaired to Rana Umra at Oodipur...treaty of unity...against the common foe was solemnized by nuptial engagements... they ratified on oath the renunciation of all connections, domestic or political with the empire' (Tod, 1920. 317-18).

During medieval times, the matrimonial-alliances were the means to strengthen ties amongst the dynasties. For Rajput polity, these alliances were integral. For many dynasties these political alliances were means to get political stability. In order to vitalize cordial relationship with the Udaipur state, Sawai Jai Singh wedded a princess of the house (a daughter of Amar Sing). This espousal was a warranty in which terms of agreement were laid-down. Such as 'the sons of such marriages should be heirs, or if the issues were female' then they shall not be married to Mughals as that was considered dishonour (Tod. 318). The treaty was agreed upon on *Jaith budi* 15, V.S.1765/1708 A.D. Accordingly, Kachhwaha Raja agreed to:

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- (a) The saying and commands of Maharani Ranawati would be acceptable to him (Sawai Jai Singh).
- (b) In *Zenana* (female-apartments), Maharani's esteem/power would be the topmost in comparison of others.
- (c) On all festive nights *Maharaja* would be with Ranawati ji.
- (d) After coming back from battles, *Maharaja* would rest in the palace apartments of the Udaipur princess.
- (e) In processions, palanquin of the said Maharani would be foremost.

This matrimonial alliance not only magnified the status of Jai Singh but also empowered him to reclaim his territory. The Rathore-Kachhwaha army, defeated the mughals at the battle of Sambhar (1708). Hereafter, Jai Singh re-gained control over Amber. Forthwith, after the succession, Kachhwaha Raja Jai Singh focused on consolidation and reinforcement by seeking widespread support from numerous sections of the society living in and around Amber-Jaipur territories.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the Mughals were the exclusive source to legitimacy of the Rajput kingdoms and kings demarcating the territories of their *watans*. To legitimize the successor (to be coroneted) of the Rajput kings, the Mughal emperor sent *panjal tilak* (*Rajtilak*) to the former. Even in the first decade of eighteenth century, the Mughals continued to be the prime source of legitimacy. With the waning of the Mughal Empire, the need for alternate sources of legitimacy arose. In the politically tumultuous century, there was hardly any dependable power that could legitimize. In these times of scepticism, suspicion, distrust and political flux, the Kachhwaha king started attempting the exploration of alternate sources of legitimacy. The search for alternate sources of legitimacy pushed him to rely on local-elites/leaders who were efficacious in the religious and political spheres and life of the region.

In 1720s and 1730s, the court of Amber-Jaipur became a political-centre for receiving and assimilating indefinite political groups. The *darbar* was the nucleus for multiple expressions of mutual-exchanges. Constantly new political-inclusions were happening in the courtly society. Many *Thakurs*, *Muttsadis*, *barids*, traders, artists, dancers and merchants were also appearing and attending the Jaipur *darbar*. The dignitaries with political eminence were distinguished from the other members of the court. They were positioned in the *darbar* as per their political influence and status. Often fresh inclusions were done to the changes and shifts of the political situations. Some political dignitaries also achieved instant up-gradation in their court ranks. In Amber-Jaipur *darbar*, being a *Thikanedar*, Rao Partap Singh Naruka was supposed to sit on a lower seat. Once, on the intervention of Balanand, he

appeared before the king and sat besides Balanand.¹ It was contrary to the prescribed etiquette. However, the nobles of state didn't object at this. The protocols prescribed for dignitaries were diverse and distinctive depending upon their influence.

The king kept his gestures of respect reserved for the religious heads. In response, the king and his kingdom was blessed by the religious dignitary. The political representatives displayed their respect and honour towards the king and throne and extended it through salutations and presentation of gifts, *peshkash* and *nazar*. This depicts a visible gap that persisted in the treatments extended to the religious and political heads. During the eighteenth century, the Jaipur *darbar* was active to winning over a diverse variety of important persons. This was an attempt to instil loyalty amid the local-populace and initiate a favourable opinion for the state. All embodiments of etiquettes and manners applicable within the court were outlined by keeping the Raja as the core. Nobert Elias mentions that 'The control of individual feeling by reason, a vital necessity for every courtier, the reserved behavior and elimination of every plebian expression, the specific mark of a particular stage on the road of civilization' (Elias, 1994. 13). The behaviours of nobles were governed in the *darbar* and other realms of appearance. A courtier was expected to emit expressions of honour, faith, politeness, and respect. All these gestures and expressions must be performed by the courtier with dignity.

The political situation of Amber-Jaipur, in the latter half of eighteenth century was grim. It was mainly due to the decline of the central authority, external assaults, weakening of the state apparatus, mutual and associated jealousies amidst women of the *Zenana* and minority rule (Choudhary, 2013). The state also suffered frequent famine between 1750-1770.² Thus the state suffered financial crisis. The invasions from Marathas and their demands for huge amount tributes also added to the distress of state. Therefore, strong pressure was deployed on almost all the social groups and all of them were competing to secure a share for themselves amongst the limited opportunities. The *Thikanedars* dotted the Amber-Jaipur state. They formed a major segment of the court-nobility. In the court-society, being the clansmen of the Kachhwaha clan, the *Thikanedars* held considerable importance and power. At the same time, many other classes also gained self-assurance and prosperity in the court-society. All these groups demonstrated differences of structure and lifestyle. The Amber-Jaipur state encapsulated the distinctions and differences for structuring courtly behaviour, prescribing and lying protocol to regulate the emotional life and the public sphere of the king. All the dignitaries were significant in fashioning and disciplining

the court society of Amber-Jaipur kingdom. Therefore, the court society was responsible for creating a spanned out social base for the state and instilling loyalty amongst subjects.

Being Mughal *mansabdars*, the Amber-Jaipur kings were responsible for the imperial assignments. Thus, they were unable to attend the issues of their own *watan* in toto. In absence of rulers, the *Diwans* administered the state (*watans*). The waning of Mughal Empire enabled Sawai Jai Singh to shift his attention towards his *watan jagir* and take charge of the state affairs. Being attached to the Mughal court, Jai Singh was familiar with imperial etiquettes and protocols. Therefore, he took essential steps to stew his own *darbar* with the courtly manners, protocol and etiquettes of the Mughals. Thus, the Amber-Jaipur court culture emerged as a blend of Mughal courtly manners and Rajput traditions. The appropriation of different Persian terms and writing of them in *Dhundhari* (a variant of Marwari) reflects the efforts of assimilation. Prior to the eighteenth century, there was no distant difference of manner and protocol applied to the foremost religious and political dignitaries, who cooperatively formed the court society of the Amber kingdom. In the first half of the eighteenth century, new courtly culture was developing and taking shape. The extensive court rituals applied in the *darbar* reflected the social status and respect of individuals. The comprehensive account of DK indicates the role of individual official cum functionary in the state ceremonies, as *Khawaas* Roda Ram (a tailor) took the *khass-talwar* (sword that exhibits the minor king) of Kachhwaha Raja to the public audience and placed it on the *khass-chowki* (seat of king in absence). The etiquettes adhered to in the court were actually the means to accord respect and honour to the *chakar* members of the court society.

As affiliates of the court, political dignitaries of the state discharged their administrative and political functions. The expanding Amber-Jaipur kingdom integrated political agents and nobles from different spheres of life. Thus the composition of the courtly society was altering. Now, the warriors were not the exclusive representatives of the state. Varied diverse assemblages were also registering their presence in the *darbar* and courtly rituals. 'The warrior nobility is replaced by a tamed nobility with more muted affect, a courtly nobility' (Elias, 1994. 467). Some political grandees were directly affiliated with the *raja* and a few of them were close relatives of the ruler. Thus, their presence in the political centres and public arenas marked a significant event for the state. The niceties executed and events marshalled for the guest clearly depicted the eminence of the persons for the kingdom. The restructuring in the courtly-culture were mainly to assimilate the varied ruling elites that

were not recognized as a warrior but as courtier. These political nobles were representing their *thikanas* and were attending the court as suave and enlightened aristocrats, underplaying their image of a rustic warrior.

The imperial dignitaries, *Thikanedars* and the ruling princes of other Rajput States (Jaisalmer, Udaipur, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Bundi, Kota, etc.) constituted the core of distinguished political luminaries at Amber-Jaipur *darbar*. The arrival of associated political luminaries to the Amber-Jaipur court was a juncture to display grandeur and power. A unique protocol guided the arrival and stay of other Rajput dynasts. The growing emphasis in favour of the court protocol is evident in arrival of the *thikanedars* or the domain in-charges and rulers. The shift in the court is apparent through the appearance of rulers. 'Within every major civilizing process one of the most decisive transitions is that of warrior to courtier' (Elias, 1994. 467). The self-restraint was instituted on the court nobility through the functions allotted to them. These functions were means to distinguish these nobles from other factions of the court. Political dignitaries performed every act within their power limits. The court protocol was designed to put subtlety on the outsiders and to roughly fix a hierarchy. To make these functional a precise etiquette was laid-down which bounded the court-society together. 'The necessity of asserting themselves within such a figuration gave all of them a special stamp, that of court people' (Elias, 1983. 35). By corresponding with the court dignitaries, attending the the court, the *raja* was tethering himself with the dispersed wide masses of his domain. Moreover, the court was also a platform for the *raja* and the nobility to showcase their potential and might.

In court, the reception for the dignitaries was varied, embellished and elaborate. On the basis of Dastur Komwar, the Amber-Jaipur *darbar* attendees can broadly be classified into eight categories. *Swamis*, *Mahants*, *Adhikaris*, *Purohits*, and Brahmins constituted the religious luminaries. The other regnant Rajput houses of Rajaputana barring Kachhwahas Bhatti (Jaisalmer), Rao (Jodhpur), Rana (Udaipur), *Thikanedars*, the Imperial dignitaries (Mughals and Marathas), *Thakurs*, *Muttsadis* (officials), *Barids* (spies) and *Khawass-Parbans* (private-servants of king) classed as political and service groups. The treatment met-out to the political luminaries in the *darbar* was emitting from their personal and filial relationship with the *raja*. 'Everything in the realm had to pass through the filter of the court before it could reach the king. Everything from the king had to pass before it reached the country through the same filter' (Elias, 1983. 42). All exchanges were two-way process and Darbar was the sieve through which it passed.

At times, some eminent political personalities visited

the Jaipur court with the women of their *zenana*. The protocol applicable to the dignitary was also extended to the female members accompanying the dignitary. As per DK (Musalman), in 1734 AD, Nawab Khan-i-Daura was accompanied by his Begum while he visited Amber-Jaipur. She was gifted 74-*thans*, 2-*thans* of silk (Rs.2100.12 anna), 1-*sarpech jadaou* (Rs.3799) and cash (Rs.1698).³ These items of gifts were principally presented to acknowledge her presence. *Rupiya-kharach-wastai* (money for expenditures) was also presented to the ladies of the political-guest.⁴ Begum Iztulnisha received Rs.2000/- and Rs.3000/- for expenses on her two visits respectively.

At times children of the political dignitary also received *kharach-rupiya* (expenses). Both the sons (Ahatsam Khan and Bisam Ashraf Khan) of Nawab Khan-i-Daura were presented Rs. 10000/- for expenses.⁵ 94 camels, 49 camels (47 he camel and 2 she camel) and 97 camels were sent for Nawab Khan Daura over various years. In 1728, state allotted 97 camels to Nawab out of which, 95 camels were given forthwith and 2 were kept balance.⁶ At times, the Raja also granted *inam* to a few ladies who accompanied the political dignitary. In 1739 AD, the Amber-Jaipur raja conferred an *inam* of Rs. 1000/ on Begum (wife of Nawab Khan-i-Daura) through Rao Kirpa Ram.⁷ Whenever the Nawab's wife was staying at Jaipur, the king regularly visits her *dera* (camp) and gave out precious gifts.

The dignitary's social standing and political influence pushed the raja to visit Begum's *dera*. The sanction of *inams*, and *kharach-ka-rupiya*, and the king's visit to *dera* indicates that Nawab Khan-i-Daura held considerable power. These visits also indicated the reorganizing efforts invoked by the Amber-Jaipur raja. The aura embodied by Khan Daura at Sawai Jai Singh's court can be understood through the elaborate procedures arranged around the later. The influence of the dignitary was also upheld by recognizing the events of guest's family and relatives. The Raja visited Begum Ijtulnisha's *dera*, arranged in Himmat Khan Johri' *Haveli*.⁸ Rs.50 were gifted to Begum Ijtulnisha for *kharach*.⁹ Ijtulnisha breathed his last at Amber-Jaipur in *Haveli* of Brijnath's wife. For expressing condolences, the raja visited her *dera*.¹⁰

Occasionally, the children of political dignitaries also arrived in the Amber-Jaipur court. To honour their sons the king presented them presents in the *Darbar*. Nawab's sons visited Amber-Jaipur court to meet *Shriji* (king) and were presented 5 *alam-chent*, 4 *faita-chent*, 2 *nilakh*, 1 *mashru-butadar*, 13 *chhint*, 5 *kurta*, 1 *alaicha-butadar* along with 52 *thaans*. The daughters' gifts were sent to *deras*. In 1738 A.D., the daughter of Begum was to get married. The Amber-Jaipur king received an invitation for it. For acknowledging it, Rs.50 were given.¹¹

Besides the regular visits of the political dignitaries and their families, festivals, marriages and birthdays

were also recognized and celebrated.¹² The king regularly despatched cash and gifts for the brides and bride-grooms. When the son of Nawab Hussain Khan was getting married, Rs.300 were sent.¹³ On this same day, in favour of Hari Singh Rs.2550 were approved for marriage-expenses. Bisam Muhammad Khan *Chobdar* received a *Kamadi-butadar* when he brought the message of child-birth at Nawab Khan Daura's brother's place.¹⁴ Numerous illustrations highlight the extensive treatments that were put-forth for the ladies visiting Amber-Jaipur. These indicate to the efforts that were put-in to expand the social base of the Amber-Jaipur state. With demise of Sawai Jai Singh, the protocols and arrangements for accommodation of the imperial noble ladies at Amber-Jaipur continued to decrease.

Mostly, the visits of female members of *Thikanedars* and *Thakurs* households to Amber-Jaipur were based on invitation only. Sometimes visits of women were conscious attempts for soliciting favour of the *raja*. The *saga* (houses of matrimonial alliance) of the Kachhwaha *Raja* regularly visited the Jaipur state along with their female members. Once, Kishan Singh Nathawats' sister arrived to Amber-Jaipur and lodged in the *Zenana*. When the *Shriji* arrived in *Zenana*, she performed *nichrawal*. In response, a pearl-necklace was presented to her.¹⁵ The women accompanying *saga*-nobles were always admitted in inner *Zenani-Deodhi* and received by the *patrani*. The theoretical segregation between 'public' and the 'private' realm of raja was always explicit. It was enlarged and implemented to administer the court society. Apparently, the court was an array to reflect the associations between king, power-centre and social-structures. The presence of political luminaries in the 'private' sphere of king was a signature of respect, honour and association.

The king patronized the honest and loyal nobles by allotting them places, within and in close proximity of the city. Mainly, the recipients were close acquaintances of the *raja*. Sawai Jai Singh allotted an estate to Badan Singh (Jat Raja, a close associate and trusted man of Kachhwaha *Raja*) in the Jaipur city. To crush the rebel Churaman Jat, Jat *raja* Badan Singh supported Amber-Jaipur king. Through his assistance, the Jaipur king was able to annex the fort of Thun. After triumph over the fort of Thun, Badan Singh was validated as the inheritor of all the possessions of Churaman. The honour and respect reserved for a high noble were spread-out to him. An estate was allotted to him to build the *Haveli* (residence). This *Haveli* and its estate were known as Badanpura. Later, the Amber-Jaipur kingdom utilized it as a halting-space (*dera*). Badanpura¹⁶ and Badanpura-Jat-ki-Bagichi¹⁷ were important *deras* and all the prominent state guests received by the Amber-Jaipur kingdom during the eighteenth century were lodged here. It was chartered for

chief political dignitaries of the Ambre-Jaipur state. When *Raja Hari Singh*, the ruler of Kama visited Jaipur, his grandmother accompanied him. Their stay was arranged at Badanpura.¹⁸ Many significant nobles and royal-ladies also received lands from the Jaipur king and maintained them as *Havelis*, *baag* and *bagichi* etc. The size, extent and decoration of establishment were solely dependent on the official's social rank.

The presence of the political groups was becoming more evident in the Amber-Jaipur court. Presence of politically powerful nobles in the *darbar* gave birth to mutual jealousies between socially and politically powerful elite-groups. Many of them adopted adroit methods to deal with one-another. The control over these was attained through incessant manipulations and systematic control. The loss and gain of ranking and status by an individual noble within the *darbar* was a noticeable feature of court-politics. The king unfailingly controlled the social-mobility of each individual by convincing them in the favour of royal-position. Towards the closing of eighteenth century, the pronounced protocol of the court became a regular affair. The power struggle in the *darbar* politics incorporating elite-formations went on increasing. This created an intense social-pressure. Normally, nothing uncalled for could transpire at the *darbar*. However, sometimes certain nobles rose in dissent and demur against the court proceedings. The key-factors for setting the status of each personage at the *darbar* were family and social-standing of a person.

For king, the *darbar* was a stage to showcase his influence, power and clan-status. Besides the court, various festivals/functions/ceremonies were other events for the display of grandeur, power and supremacy of the ruler. To establish difference of ranks and distribute favours the *raja* used his private-acts. All private royal-acts were governed and executed as per prescribed-etiquette as they were major symbolisms of the *darbar*. The diligent adherence and application of the court-etiquettes over a period of time established the court rituals. Eventually, the hierarchy of unique privileges got established as part of court-etiquettes. Invariably, protocol applied, ceremonies followed became the exhibits of power, status, and influence. To maintain and express the balance and tranquillity within the court-society, the protocol became the fulcrum. Certain favours through the *raja* were able to bring a shift in the ranks and position of courtiers. The movements, loyalty, official-rank, power-position and behaviour of the courtier towards the *raja* governed the position and status of an individual in the circles of court-society. Nonetheless, the position of a court-member was generally unstable and exclusively dependent on the king's prerogative. 'Etiquette for the king is an instrument not only of distancing but of power' (Elias, 1983. 117).

In the court society, full focus was on the persona of the king. His act to distinguish and elevate were evident through the applicability of etiquette.

The nobility centred around the *raja* naturally, constituting a pivotal section of the *darbar* and state. These political luminaries were chief officials representing the state. The king's interaction was finite to the nobles that were around him in the official capacities. The speech, gestures and actions of king's close-associates during the court-proceedings clearly reflects their influence. In Jaipur state, mainly the *Diwan* was responsible for executing the court-proceedings. Thus, he was the primary and seniormost personal of the court.¹⁹ In 1783 AD, after the intervention of *Mahant Balanand*, Naruka Partap Singh Rao appeared at the Amber-Jaipur *Darbar*. *Khawas* Rodaram was carrying out the court proceedings. While conducting the matters through his oration, he commented on the belligerent behaviour of Rao Partap saying, '*kai chakari thhai kari?* (what service have you done?) *Jad thhane chakri dee thhai kari nahi aur ab thhai karsoyo nahi*' (When service was given you didn't perform, and now also you will not do.) *Diwan* Rodaram stood-up and seized Partap Singh Naruka's hand and coerced him to salute the king, and make *nazar* (5 *mohars*), by placing *mohars* on his palm. This treatment to a significant official of the state reflects the influence and power veiled by the *Diwan*. It is noteworthy, that while the *Diwan* was delivering threats through astute verbal means, but Rao Partap Naruka prosperously dissembled his annoyance. This illustrates a lot about the manoeuvre of Amber-Jaipur court.

The *raja* was in a commanding position in the *darbar* and was capable to free off pressure from above. Other than him, everyone else in the *darbar* was manifesting pressures from above and co-courtiers. At times, nobles exerted immense pressure over the king. The political representatives were performing twine roles, as court members and as autonomous chiefs of their domains *Thikanas*. The regular interaction with nobles in the court was a *modus operandi* to hold-together the different limbs of the state. The visits of luminaries to court were notable events to constitute cordial relations with the *Thikanedars* and other political personals. As the lurking threat of these 'pressure from the ranks below him is certainly not inconsiderable. It would be intolerable, would hurl him into oblivion in a moment, if all the social groups, or even all the court groups below him, acted into the same direction against him' (Elias, 1983. 119). Kin and clan members of Rajput dynasties, the imperial dignitaries, *Thikanedars*, merchants/traders and, bankers and *Thakurs* (the lesser-known courtiers) were pre-eminent political dignitaries at the Jaipur *Darbar*.

The Amber-Jaipur kingdom maintained regular-

relations with their *Thikanedars*. An unambiguous group of lineage's off-shoots of the Kachhwaha clan was called *Bara Kotri*. It constituted a superior powerful segment at the Amber-Jaipur darbar. The members of clan-council counselled the raja on matters of social and political importance. The chief of Nathawat clan (Chomu) was the top-tier noble at Jaipur court. The Kachhwaha kings always maintained their primacy. The Chomu *Thikana* was directly linked to the Amber-Jaipur royal-house because of the dispute resolutions. If, the kingdom didn't had the male successor then the successor was adopted. Adoption was limited to few *Thikanas*. A male-heir could be espoused from the *Thikanas* of Jhilai, Isarda and Kama. The coronation ceremony of Amber-Jaipur raja was organised at the ancestral palace of Kachhwahas in Amber. The coronation ceremony was a grand occasion and all the *Thikanedars* attended it. Many other leaders of banking firms, trading houses and craft associations also attended and acknowledged the newly enthroned king by presenting nazar. The *Thakurs* and *mutsadis* appeared in the *Diwan-i-Aam* and presented *nazar/peshkash*. After the *Rajaya-abhishek* (coronation) ceremony the king took *guru-mantra* from the priest and prayed to the *nav-grahs* (nine-planets). After which the king made offerings to the *nav-grahs* in *havan-kund* (fire alter). Afterwards, the king saluted *guru/Brahmans* and sat-on throne. Hereafter, the priest performed *nichrawal* (ceremony for warding off evil) and tied *gan-jora/gath-jora* (knot) with the chief queen who remained in veil. After completing the rituals of worship, the king moved to *Rajtilak-ki-Chhatri*, where the chief priest applied *tilak*. The applying of *tilak* on forehead of prince at the *Rajtilak-Chhatri* marked the completion of the coronation ceremony. Later, the king visited the *Diwan-i-Aam.*, where the *Thakurs* and *mutsadis* saluted the king and offered *nazar*. Then a procession was taken-out from Amber and it passed through the city. En-route homage was paid to deities. In evening, the procession entered the palace and the king directly went to *Diwan-i-Khaas*, where the *Thikanedars* and the religious dignitaries await him. Dastur Komwar Kachhwaha mentions that *Rawla-Zenana* (female companions) of the king accompanied the procession and moved in the city with him.²⁰

The protocol designed for the political dignitaries of Jaipur can broadly be divided into five categories (Choudhary, 2021). At court, the imperial dignitaries were received with the upmost extensive and elaborate protocol. The king himself involved in the protocol applicable for imperial and few Rajput dignitaries. The king himself directly received many state guests. The acts performed by the king towards these dignitaries were-standing-up from throne, walking a few paces to receive the guest, *bagalgiri*, holding hand of guest, offering seat

(left/right side of the throne) and *sharbat*, bestowal of gifts, arrangement of entertainment, applying of *ittar* and offering of *beda-paan*.²¹ Some guests were received by the king by standing on *masnad* without moving forward.²²

*Mejbani*²³ (money allotted for arrangement of hospitality), *siropav-mahar bani*²⁴ (robe of honour given out of kindness), *rupiya-kharach-wastai-diya*²⁵ (money for expenditure), *mithaei*²⁶ (sweets) and *ajruh-maharbangi*²⁷ (money out of kindness) were other means to show respect towards the political dignitaries. At times, some money was allotted separately to make arrangements of hospitality, entertainment and comfort of the visitor. In 1736 AD, Faujdar Jamallula Khan came to meet Jai Singh, Rs.400 were sanctioned to him for *mejbani* and Rs.200 were presented on *vida* (seeing-off).²⁸ Similarly, a *mejbani* of Rs.2000 was presented to Nawab Shujaat Khan.²⁹ The difference in the amount for the respective visitors highlights their importance accordingly. Nawab Khan-i-Daura was allowed to come till *Deodhi* and entered *Diwan-Khana*. The king personally received him and presented him 1 elephant, 5 horses, 9 *toras* and Rs.18981.05.³⁰ Few state guests received large amount of money from the king for *kharach* (expenditure). The imperial representative Ghazi Khan came to Jaipur from Farukhnagar. Rs.16000 were presented to him for expenditure. Out of it, Rs.11000 was given from the royal treasury and Rs. 5000 was collected from *mutsadis*.³¹ There are ample instances that depict the making of payments in instalments. Gulam Hussain Khan received Rs. 3000 in ten monthly instalments of Rs. 300 each.³² Untill 1803, he received money from court. Most of his instalments were of Rs. 300 per month spread-over nine months (Rs.2700 each), 10 months (Rs. 300 each).³³ As per the status of individual the gifts from court also changed. The gifts of elephant,³⁴ camel,³⁵ horse,³⁶ *tora* (a jewel for turban)³⁷, *ghora-raas* (horse-leash)³⁸ and *haathi zanzeer*³⁹ were reserved for the highly placed guests. The gifts and honours of the guests were altered as per the dignity and status of the visitor. Besides it gifts such as *thaan*,⁴⁰ *siropav*, *kurta-zari*, *mashru-butadar*, *pashmina-butadar*, *feta-mukeshi*, *feta-gujarati*, *paag-rangin*, *kurta-raisami*, *cheet*, *mahmudi-chikan* etc. were given nearly to all guests. The guests of highest honour were presented most extensive items and valuable gifts.

In order to receive the dignified guests, important officials of the court were deputed. In 1733, *bakshi* (Nawab Yadgaar Khan) of Nawab Khan-i-Duara came to Jaipur. To present him gifts from *Kirkirikhana*, *Raja Ayamal* was deputed.⁴¹ The court officials dealt with various state guests. When Nawab Khan Mirza came to the court, Dayaram Khatri was appointed to receive him and gifts were arranged. The gifts were 7 *thaans*, 1 *chira-mukeshi*. Rs.30.50, 1 *sarpech-mukeshi* Rs.4, 1 *mahmudi*

Rs.24, 2 *mashru-butadar* Rs.59, 1 *faita-gujrati* Rs.40 and 1 *balabandi*-Rs.35.⁴² The court officials receiving and welcoming the visitors on behalf of state were mainly the loyal and highly placed officials. Nawab Khizr Khan Yunni Pathan, *faujdar* of Gwalior came from Mathura to meet *Hazuri* (king). Radhaydas received him and 8 *thaans* were presented to the visitor.⁴³ The Bhattis, Ranawats, Badgujars and Rathors established matrimonial-alliances with the Kachhwahas. Being associated with the Jaipur *Rajas* these rulers visited Jaipur regularly. Elaborate protocol was applied to the above mentioned Rajputs. The contemporary Rajput houses sent *tika* (formal coronation-wishes and gifts) to the newly installed king. These civilities were part of Rajput polity. Similarly, the Jaipur kings also reciprocated to the successions in other clans. It was not mandatory for the clan-rulers to appear in-person for the *tika* ceremony. Mostly, an important official of the state delivered *saaj* (accessories, letter, gifts) of *tika*. The official, delivering *saaj* was received as a state-guest.

In short, the court was an expression of a very specific social constellation. The court constantly held and brought people together from various social fields which led to the figuration of the court and court society. Instances indicate that the court was a centre of meditation between the king and society. In the eighteenth century, the Jaipur court was a social phenomenon and a 'representative organ' of the state.

Notes

1. *Dastur Komwar*, vol.11 (Naruka). *Mangsir Buddi* 9 vs 1830/1773 AD.
2. The famine years were 1755, 1757, 1758, 1760, 1761-65 and 1770 AD. Cf. Gupta, *The Agrarian System of Eastern Rajasthan*, p.10.
3. *Dastur Komwar*, vol.19, *Musalmaan*, *Magh suddi* 3 vs 1791/1734 AD.
4. *Ibid.*, *Baisakh suddi* 15 vs 1796/1739 AD and *Mangsir suddi* 10, vs 1808/1751 AD.
5. *Ibid.*, *Bhadwa suddi* 11 vs 1796/1739 AD.
6. *Ibid.* vol.19, *Fagun suddi* 14 vs 1777/1720 AD, *Jaith buddi* 9 vs 1781/1724 AD and *Posh suddi* 8 vs 1785/1728 AD.
7. *Ibid.*, *Sawan suddi* 5, vs 1796/1739 AD.
8. *Ibid.*, *Mangsir buddi* 7, vs 1817/1760 AD and *Chait suddi* 6 vs 1820/1763 AD.
9. *Ibid.*, *Asadh suddi* 8, vs 1775/1718 AD.
10. *Ibid.*, *Asadh buddi* 3, vs 1825/1768 AD.
11. *Ibid.*, *Sawan suddi* 1, vs 1795/1738 AD.
12. *Ibid.*, *Baisakh buddi* 11, vs 1777/1720 AD.
13. *Ibid.*, *Fagun suddi* 13, vs 1792/1735 AD.
14. *Ibid.*, *Sawan suddi* (date missing) vs 1792/1735 AD.
15. *Ibid.*, vol.11, *Nathawat*, p. 475.
16. *Ibid.*, *Asoj buddi* 2, vs 1811/1754 AD, *Kati suddi* 9 vs 1848/1791 AD and *Miti Asoj buddi* 1, vs 1851/1794 AD.
17. *Ibid.*, *Miti Mah buddi* 2, vs 1843/1786 AD.
18. *Ibid.*, vol.26, *Nathawat*, *Maha buddi* 7, vs 1823/1766 AD.
19. *Ibid.*, vol.11, *Naruka*, *Kati suddi* 7, vs 1840/1783 AD.
20. D.K., vol.2, *Kuchhwaha*, vs 1824, 1834, 1861/ 1767, 1777, 1804 AD respectively
21. D.K., vol.19, *Musalmaan*, *Chait buddi* 7, vs 1850/1793 AD, *Posh suddi* 5, vs 1827/1770 AD, *Asadh suddi* 2, vs 1846/1789 AD. Protocol applied to receive Nawab Gulam Muhmud Khan, dated *Asadh buddi* 4, vs 1853/1796 AD. Reception laid out for Nawab Itfarwar dualla Nusrat Jang s/o Najaf Ali Khan Hamdani dated *Miti 1 Sawan suddi* 14, vs 1843/1786 AD. D.K., vol.20, *Musalmaan*, *Kati buddi* 5, vs 1925/1868 AD reception of Nawab Abdulla Khan. D.K., vol.26, *Nathawat*, *Miti Asoj suddi* 10, vs 1809/1752 AD, the reception of *Raja Hari Singh* of Kama. D.K., vol. 7, *Jadam*, *Miti Posh Suddi* 10, vs 1808/1751 AD, depicts the same kind of reception for *Raja Gopal Singhji Jadam* of Karauli.
22. D.K., vol.19, *Musalmaan*, *Asoj suddi* 2, vs 1796/1739 AD. Vol.26, *Nathawat*, *Maha buddi* 7, vs 1823/1766 AD.
23. *Ibid.*, *Maha buddi* 10, vs 1787/1730 AD, Rs.200/- were allotted for hospitality for Baisam Nawab Khairulla Khan. On *Fagun suddi* 14, vs 1829/1772 AD, Rs.300/- were granted to *Chakar Dayaram* of *Padshaji*. D.K., vol.26, *Nathawat*, *Miti Maha buddi* 7, vs 1823/1766 AD, Rs.200/- for *mejbani* were allotted to *Raja Hari Singh* of Kama.
24. *Ibid.*, *Fagun suddi* 4, vs 1802/1745 AD, Muhmud Razamand Khan, *Nayab Subedar* of *Multan* was granted *Siropav Maharbangi* of Rs.77.3/4 comprising of 5-*thaans*.
25. *Ibid.*, *Chait buddi Amawas* vs 1778/1721 AD, Rs.500/- were granted to *Khalliulla Khan* for miscellaneous expenditures. On *Fagun sudi* 13, vs 1792/1735 AD, Rs.3210/- were allotted to *Jiwan Khan*.
26. D.K., vol.26, *Nathawat*, p.734.
27. D.K., vol.19, *Musalmaan*, *Asadh suddi* 7, vs 1796/1739 AD, Rs.15 were allotted to the granddaughter of Nawab Khan Daura. On *Asoj buddi* 11, vs 1799/1742 AD, a *siropav maharbangi* was presented to *Diwan Shiv Raj Pandit*.
28. *Ibid.*, *Chait buddi* 10, vs 1793/1736 AD.
29. D.K., vol.20, *Musalmaan*, *Fagun buddi* 14, vs 1781/1724 AD.
30. D.K., vol.19, *Musalmaan*, *Mah suddi* 3, vs 1791/1734 AD.
31. *Ibid.*, *Jaith buddi* 9 vs 1816/1759 AD.
32. *Ibid.*, *Baisak...* vs 1798/1741 AD.
33. *Ibid.*, pp.197-252.
34. *Ibid.*, *Mangsir buddi* 4, vs 1777/1720 AD, one elephant was gifted to Nawab Khan Daura.
35. *Ibid.*, *Fagun suddi* 14, vs 1777/1720 AD, *Jaith buddi* 9, vs 1781/1724 AD and *Posh suddi* 8, vs 1785/1728 AD.
36. *Ibid.*, *Mah suddi*, vs 1791/1734 AD. *Sawai Jai Singh* visited to the *dera* of Nawab Khan Daura and presented five horses and one elephant. D.K., vol.7, *Jadam*, two horses, two elephants were presented to *Kawar Amolik Pal*.
37. *Ibid.*, *Mangsir buddi* 4, vs 1777/1720 AD, two *toras* were gifted to Nawab Khan Daura.
38. *Ibid.*, *Mah suddi* 3, vs 1791/1734 AD, two *ghora-raas* were gifted to Nawab Khan Daura. *Asadh suddi* 2, vs 1846/1789 AD, Nawab Gulam Muinnuddin Khan received two *ghora-raas*.
39. *Ibid.*, *Asadh suddi* 2, vs 1846/1789 AD.

40. Ibid., *Jaith buddi* 12, vs 1774/1717AD, *Mangsir buddi* 4, vs 1777/1720 AD and *Maha suddi* 3, vs 1791/1734 AD, 45-*thaans*, 18-*thaans* and 156-*thaans* were presented to Nawab Khan Daura respectively.
41. Ibid., *Kati buddi* 9, vs 1790/1733 AD. The items given to the *bakshi* of Nawab were 14-*thaans* each of 18 *gaj*, 2-*toras* of cloth costing Rs.1028/-, *aalam-mukeshi*-Rs.71/- (2-*thaans*), *sarpech-mukeshi* of Rs.9.50/- (1-*thaan*), *faita-gujarati*- Rs.263/- (4-*thaans*), *balabandi*-Rs.48/- (2-*thaans*), *mashru-butadar*-Rs.135/-, *mahmudi-chikan*-Rs.315/- and 1-*alaycha-butadar*-Rs.42/-.
42. Ibid., *Kati suddi* 7, vs 1779/1722 AD.
43. Ibid., *Fagun budi*, vs 1781/1724 AD.