



Geography and Topography of the Jaipur City in the Eighteenth Century

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ABSTRACT

Commenting on Sawai Jai Singh's agreement Satish Chandra writes, "Hitherto, the Marathas had been claiming chauth and Sardeshmukhi, and urging its commutation into a lump annual sum or a Jagir. Now, the ceding of certain parganas was demanded in lieu of chauth. Thus, all pretence of chauth being a payment in return for protection or refraining from plunder was dropped. The claim for chauth was revealed as merely an excuse for territorial aggrandizement. From now on the demand for the chauth and sardeshmukhi of Malwa goes increasingly into the background, and the complete surrender of the province is demanded. Thus, the agreement of March 1733 marks a new stage in the Mughal-Maratha struggle in Malwa.

INTRODUCTION

I have discussed the Art, Architecture and literature of Jaipur city during the 18th century. We know Sawai Jai Singh was a founder of Jaipur. He founded the city in November 1727. All round initiated development by its founder. Artists and architects from all parts of the country from Banaras, Gujrat, Maharashtra, Agra and Delhi consented on the planning and construction of the city resultantly a new city sprang up under his personal care. Though Jai Singh's main passion was astronomy but his interest in constructional activity was remarkable. He appears to have imparted a new dimension to architecture his interest in building construction was remarkable. Before the foundation of the city, a palace was constructed in 1720 between November 1727 and 1729 and a large number of buildings, temples houses, observatories, sarais and other building of public utility came up later.

A few planes of the Jaipur city at the time are prevented in the city palace. This map appears to be a progress report of buildings in the city. Apparently the construction of the private buildings was strictly controlled by the king. The record indicates that a person who was the minister of Sawai Jai Singh ministry named Vidhyadhar was the chief architect and engineer for the buildings both state and private.

Geography and Topography

The district of Jaipur lies in the east of Rajasthan and in the Banas River basin and forms a part of eastern plains of Rajasthan. The region is drained by a number of seasonal rivers of which Banganga and Bandi are prominent.

In ancient and early medieval literature, the district is referred to as Dhoondhar and formed one of the four distinguishable politico-cultural regions of Eastern Rajasthan, along with Marwar, Mewar, Hadauti and Mewar. Dhoondhar region was roughly comprised of present districts of Jaipur, Dausa and Tonk. It is surrounded in the north by the district of Sikar and Mahendragarh (Haryana state), in the south by Tonk, in the east by Alwar, Dausa, SawaiMadhopur and in the west by Nagaur and Ajmer districts. The Aravali hills, surround eastern and northern part of the Jaipur district. Banganga and Sabi are important rivers. Ramgarh dam on Bangangariver is there to provide drinking water to the old city. Sambharlake is a single natural lake having the largest source of good quality salt in India.

Climate

Jaipur has a hot semi-arid climate receiving over 650 millimeters of rainfall annually but almost rains occur in the monsoon months between June and September. Temperatures remain relatively high throughout the year

with the summer months of April to early July having average daily temperature of around 30°C.

Dhola, subsequently married the daughter of the prince of Ajmer, whose name was Maroni. Returning on one occasion with her from visiting the shrine of Jamwahi Mata, the whole force of the Minas of that region assembled, to the number of eleven thousand, to oppose his passage through their country. Dhola gave them battle, but after slaying vast numbers of his foes, he was himself killed and his followers fled from the battlefield. Maroni escaped and bore a posthumous child, who was named Kankhal, and who later conquered the country of Dhundhar. His son, Maidar Rao, conquered Amber from the Susawat Minas, the residence of their chief, named Bhato, who had the title of Rao and was head of the Mina confederation. He also subdued the Nandea Minas and added the district of Gathurghati to his territory.

I. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE KACHHWAH STATE TILL 1800

The Kachhwahas trace their descent through the solar dynasty to Kush one of the two sons of Lord Rama, the famous king of Ayodhya and the hero of the epic Ramayana. As per the local tradition and popular bardic chronicles Dulha/ Dhola Rai (whose reign is accepted as being from 1006-1036 AD by most historians) the first ruler of this clan, laid the foundation Dhoondhar kingdom in 967 AD and made Dausa as his capital. Kakil Dev (1036-1038) who succeeded his father in 1036 A.D., seized Amber from Meenas, built the Amber fort and the temple of Ambikeshwar Mahadev, one of Amber's earliest extant monuments. The capital of Dhoondhar was shifted from Dausa to Amber between 1179 and 1216 AD. The Kachhwahas were ruling over a small principality till the beginning of the sixteenth century and were continuously involved in the disputes with their clan brothers and thus they were not able to control their clan members. Hence, their state was crisis ridden. The fortunes smiled upon them with the establishment of the matrimonial alliance with the Mughal emperor Akbar in 1562 and thus they got entry into the Mughal court and received respectable mansabs. With this power bracing, they successfully suppressed their recalcitrant opponents and were able to establish their dominance. By the 17th century the Kachhwahas became known for political clout and importance in the Mughal administration. Raja Man Singh (1590-1614) and Mirza Raja Jai Singh (1622-1667) contributed to the financial and cultural wealth of Dhoondhar through political alliance with the Mughals.

History of the Kachhwah state under Jai Singh

The Battle of Sambhar (October 1707 A.D.) both in the

life of Sawai Jai Singh and the history of Rajasthan, was a landmark during the first decade of the eighteenth century. Ajitsingh, Durga Das and the allied armies of Jai Singh defeated a large Mughal contingent of about 20,000 led by seven commanders.

In year 1709 Jai Singh and Ajit Singh were bound by matrimonial relationship. Jai Singh got appointed a subadar of Malwa in 1713 and was relieved from the subadari of Malwa in 1717 AD. Jai Singh was appointed to Malwa as its subadar for the third time in Sept. 1732.

Sawai Jai Singh's appointment against the Jats in Sept. 1715 was significant because the rise of the Jat power on the borders of his hereditary kingdom was a cause of great anxiety to him. Hence, Jai Singh's request to bestow Bundi on Budh Singh was granted by the emperor. As the district of Mathura was the field of Churaman's operation was not very far from Amber. Sawai Jai Singh agreed to undertake campaign against the Jat leader.

Sawai Jai Singh rose to eminence during the weak reign of the successors of Aurangzeb when central authority became ineffective. He got an opportunity to spread his diplomatic net throughout Rajasthan. After the downfall of Saiyyid brothers, he became the leading noble of the Mughal Empire. He acted as a wise mansabdar and mediator between the Mughal Emperor, the Rajput states and Marathas.

The Rajput rulers of Rajasthan framed and executed their policies in consultation with him, though the province of Rajasthan did not belong to him, his domination over the region continued till his death. Sawai Jai Singh's spectacular rise to power was due to the decline of the authority of the Mughal Emperor resulting gradual but rapid downfall of the Mughal Empire during the first half of the 18th century.

Reasons for Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh's shifting his capital from Amber to Jaipur

Military Reasons

The important consideration in shifting his capital was defence. There was a site of the south of Amber had been at a greater distance from Delhi and prevented the expansion of the city in that direction. It was crystal clear that the outskirting hill ranges (Nahargarh hills) in the shape of a horseshoe would allow the new city to expand only in the south. Have this flat site of a basin like shape was chosen on the North west and east by hills it was an open plain bounded.

Earlier Rajput capitals were established in the hills and hence moving capital to the plains was an example of Sawai Jai Singh's boldness.

The rocky terrain of Amber restricted expansion. Jaipur had all the potentialities of developing into city with proper drinking water because of a perennial stream nearby and its rugged hills guaranteed the supply of building material required in the times to come.

Two significant facts responsible for the origin of the city and its subsequent layout. Firstly, the need of a new capital and secondly Amber built on a hill was getting congested. Sawai Jai Singh's vision of the new capital was at par with Mughal cities. He desired to make Jaipur as a trade and commerce hub for the region.

II. CAUSES BEHIND THE FOUNDATION OF THE CITY

The founder of the new city was Sawai Jai Singh and it was named after him as Jaipur. When he became the ruler, Amber was a small state of Rajasthan. Amber, Dausa and Baswa were the only three parganas having total area between 5,000 and 7,500 square kms. By the time of his death, Amber had developed to a large state comprising of modern districts such as Jaipur, SawaiMadhopur, Sikar, Tonk, Alwar, Jhunjhnu and a part of Bharatpur. Sawai Jai Singh laid out many streets in the new city of Jaipur, and thus enhanced the joy of heart. He said to Vidyadhara that a city should be founded here.

The planning and its implementation prove his vision and also his administrative ability. It took him six or seven months to complete the main portions of the city. We can say that the most fruitful years of Jai Singh's life were from 1723 to 1729 and 1740 to 1743. During these years he remained mostly in Jaipur. Only after 1722-23 he devoted his time in the activities for which he is remembered. These activities can be divided into following four categories –

1. Planning and construction of his capital
2. Enlargement of his state and the establishment of leadership over other states of Rajasthan
3. Building of five astronomical observatories and study of astronomy.
4. Reforms in Vaishnavism in Northern India.

Sawai Jai Singh, c. A.D.1693-1743. —Sawai Jai Singh, better known by the title of Sawai Jai Singh, in contradistinction to the first prince of this name, entitled the 'Mirza Raja', succeeded in 1699 in the forty-fourth year of Aurangzeb's reign. He served with distinction in the Deccan, and in the war of succession joined prince Bedar Bakht, son of Azam Shah, who declared himself as successor of Aurangzeb; and with them he fought the battle of Dholpur, which ended in their death and Aurangzeb's prince Muazzam came on the throne with title of Shah Alam Bahadur Shah. For this opposition

Amber- was sequestrated, and an imperial governor sent to take possession; but Jai Singh entered his estates, sword in hand, drove out the king's garrisons, and formed a league with Ajit Singh of Marwar; for their mutual preservation.

It would be tedious to pursue this celebrated Rajput through his desultory military career during the forty-four years he occupied the *gaddi* of Amber; enough is already known of it from its combination with the Annals of Mewar and Bundi, of which house he was the implacable foe. Although Jai Singh was involved mixed in all the troubles and warfare of this long period of anarchy, when the throne of Timur was rapidly crumbling into dust, his reputation as a soldier would never have handed down his name with honour to posterity; on the contrary, his courage had none of the fire which is requisite to make a Rajput hero; though his talents for civil government and court intrigue, in which he was the Machiavelli of his day, were at that period far more notable auxiliaries.

The Building of Jaipur: Work in Astronomy.

As a statesman, legislator, and man of science, the character of Sawai Jai Singh is worthy of an ample delineation which would correct our opinion of the genius and capacity of the princes of Rajputana, of whom we are apt to form too low an estimate. He was the founder of the new capital, named after him Jaipur or Jainagar, which became the seat of science and art, and eclipsed the more ancient Amber, with which the fortifications of the modern city unite, although the extremity of the one is six miles from the other. Jaipur is the only city in India built upon a regular plan, with streets bisecting each other at right angles. The merit of the design and execution is assigned to Vidyadhar, a native of Bengal, one of the most eminent coadjutors of the prince in all his scientific pursuits, both astronomical and historical. Almost all the Rajput princes have a smattering of astronomy, or rather of its spurious relation, astrology; but Jai Singh went deep, not only into the theory, but the practice of the science, and was so esteemed for his knowledge, that he was entrusted by the emperor Muhammad Shah with the reformation of the calendar. He had erected observatories with instruments of his own indention at Delhi, Jaipur, Ujjain, Benares, and Mathura, upon a scale of Asiatic grandeur; and their results were so correct as to astonish the most learned. He had previously used such instruments as those of Ulugh Beg (the royal astronomer of Samarkand), which failed to answer his expectations. From the observations of seven years at the various observatories, he constructed a set of tables. While thus engaged, he learned through a Portuguese missionary, Padre Manuel, the progress which his favourite pursuit was making in Portugal, and he sent "several skilful persons along with him" to the

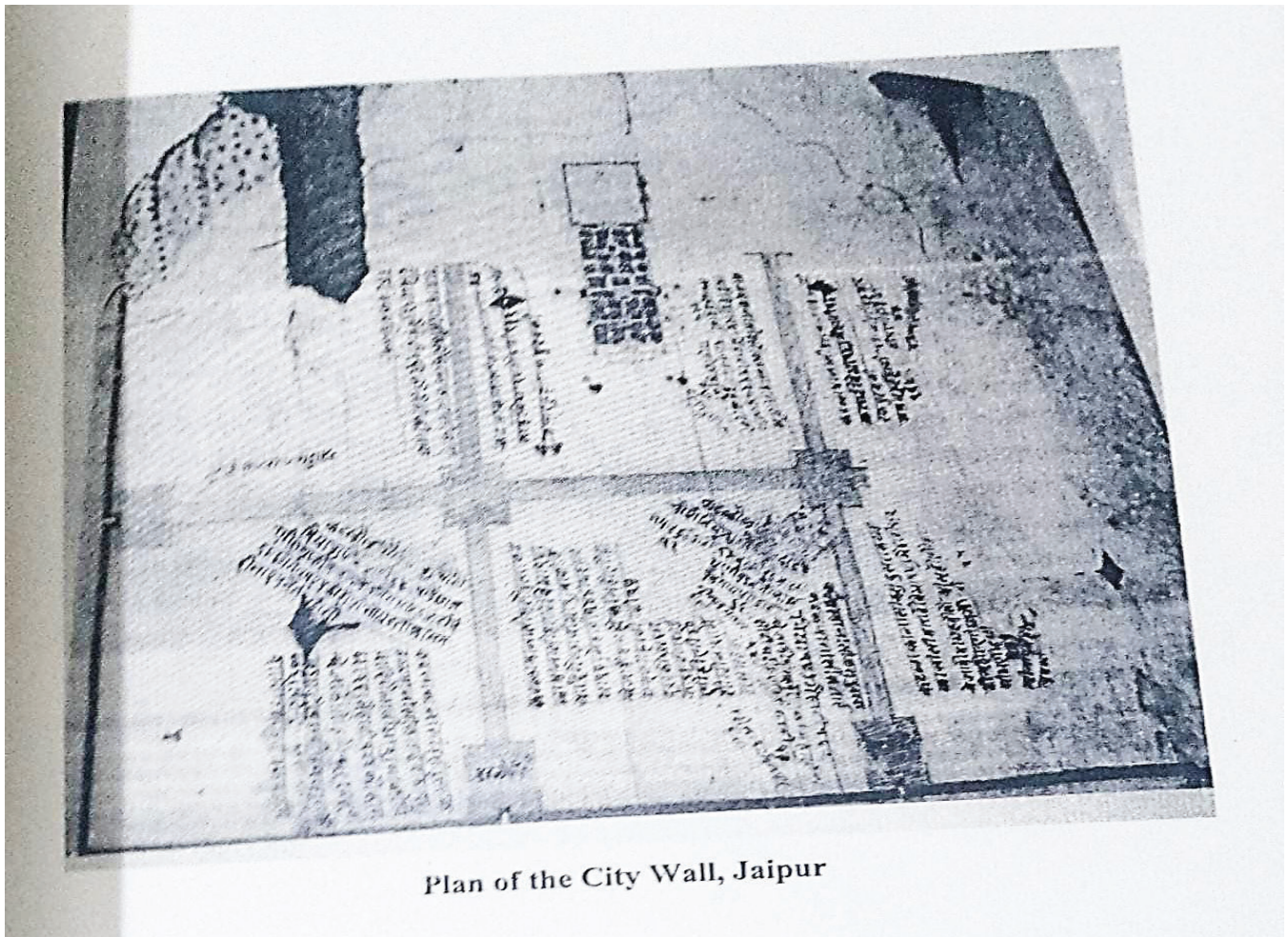
court of Emanuel. The king of Portugal dispatched Xavier de Silva, who communicated to the Rajput prince the tables of De la Hire. “On examining and comparing the calculations of these tables (says the Rajput prince) with actual observation, it appeared there was an error in the former, in assigning the moon’s place, of half a degree; although the error in the other planets was not so great, yet the times of solar and lunar eclipses he found to come out later or earlier than the truth by the fourth part of a ghari, or fifteen pals (six minutes of time).” In like manner, as he found fault with the instruments of brass used by the Turki astronomer, and which he conjectures must have been such as were used by Hipparchus and Ptolemy, so he attributes the inaccuracies of De la Hire’s tables to instruments of “inferior diameters.” The Rajput prince might justly boast of his instruments. With that at Delhi, he, in A.D. 1729, determined the obliquity of the ecliptic to be $23^{\circ} 28'$; within $28''$ of what it was determined to be, the year following, by Godin. His general accuracy was further put to the test in A.D. 1793 by our scientific countryman, Dr. W. Hunter who compared a series of observations on

the latitude of Ujjain with that established by the Rajput prince. The difference was $24''$; and Dr. Hunter does not depend on his own observations within $15''$. Jai Singh made the latitude $23^{\circ} 10' N.$; Dr. Hunter, $23^{\circ} 10' 24'' N.$

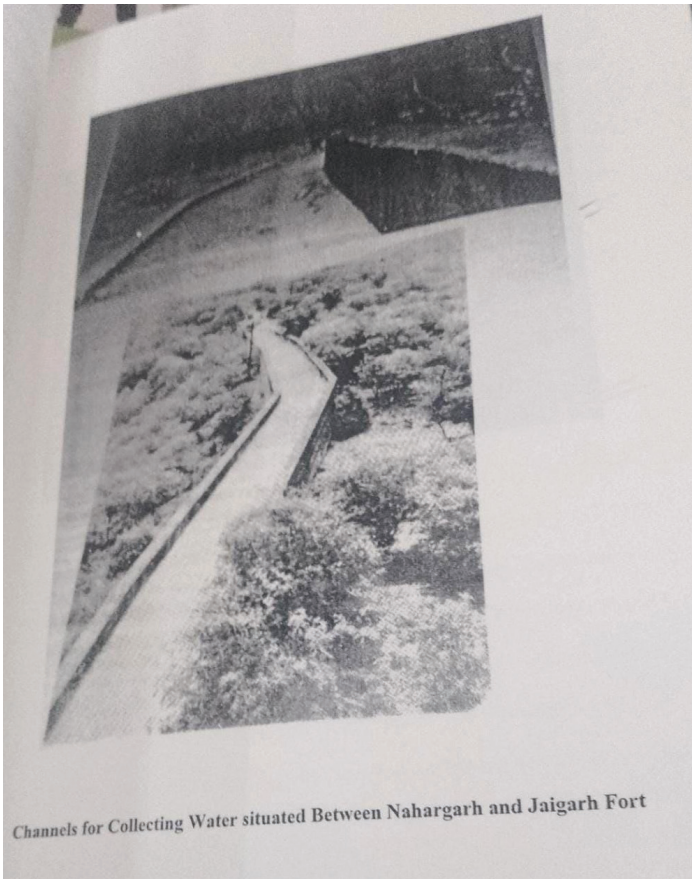
From the results of his varied observations, Jai Singh drew up a set of tables, which he entitled *Zij Muhammadshahi*, dedicated to that monarch; by these, all astronomical computations are yet made, and almanacks constructed. It would be wrong— while considering these labours of a prince who caused Euclid’s Elements, the treatises on plain and spherical trigonometry, ‘Don Juan’, Napier on the construction and use of logarithms, to be translated into Sanskrit—to omit noticing the high strain of devotion with which he views the wonders of the “Supreme Artificer”; recalling the line of one of our own best poets.

III. VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES UNDER JAI SINGH

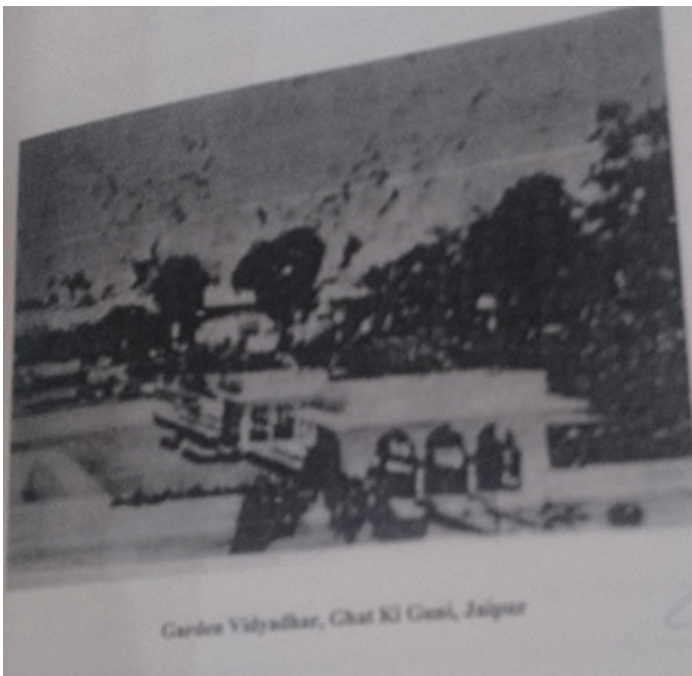
During his reign there were developmental activities in many sectors such as building construction, erection of



Plan of the City Wall, Jaipur



Channels for Collecting Water situated Between Nahargarh and Jaigarh Fort



Garden Vidyadhar, Chat Ki Gani, Jaipur

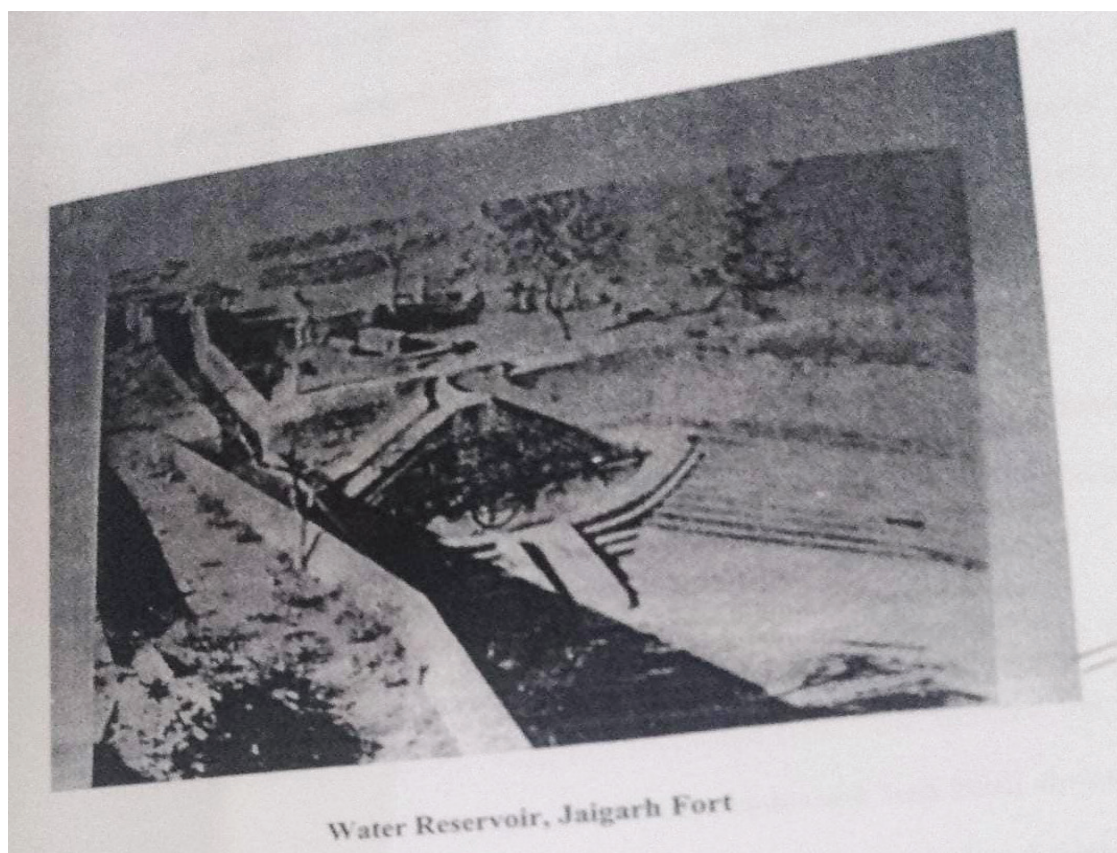
water monuments and other kinds of buildings: religious and secular. Under the former category, temples and monasteries were constructed while in the latter royal palaces, state buildings, observatories, water harvesting structures, dams, tanks and residential structures of the nobles, merchants and common man were built up. The process of decoration with paintings and sculptures was initiated after the construction of large number of buildings. A large number of artists, artisans and stone cutters were employed to carry out varieties of art work.

The royal court was shifted from Amber to the newly founded city. The court activities flourished and this attracted large numbers of musicians, poets and dancers. Under royal patronage music and literature developed. New music styles came into existence. Large number of literary works were produced on different subjects by scholars and other writers who flourished during this period. Thus by the end of the 18th century the new city was witnessing development in many sectors.

Sawai Jai Singh's appointment as Governor of Malwa, for the second time, in Nov. 1729 was due to many reasons. The immediate cause of his appointment was failure of his predecessor Bhawani Ram to handle properly the situation in SubaMalwa. The Government had been demoralized due to increased raids of the Marathas and financial exhaustion of the resources. Nizam-ul-Mulk's example of independent rule had set the forces of disintegration at work everywhere. Therefore, under the changing perspective of Mughal-Maratha relations, Khan-i-Dauran (Mir Bakshi of Muhammad Shah from 1719 to 1739) persuaded the Emperor to appoint Sawai Jai Singh as the Governor of Malwa. 'He was the best of the Raja' and was sent with enormous resources of the Empire, 'to drive the Marathas out with his own forces'. Moreover, the Kachhawa Raja was himself interested in the governorship of Malwa due to the following reasons:

He was on friendly terms with the Marathas. He thought of making an alliance with the Marathas which might enable him to carve out an independent Kingdom for himself stretching from the Jamuna to the Narbada. Jai Singh was afraid of Maratha incursions in the then Rajasthan and their ultimate designs on his principality.

He also wished to act as a bridge between the crown and the Marathas, seething with vigorous life and stirred to power and adventure. Sawai Jai Singh always tried to dominate over the neighbouring states to extend his influence and control over those who looked to him for guidance.



Water Reservoir, Jaigarh Fort

CONCLUSION:

The conclusion is based on the physical survey. I did survey of Jaipur city during my research period.

Then I added both geography and topography in my research chapter. Sawai Jai Singh, who was the ruler of this place has established this city in both these ways. Here we have discussed about climate as well as planning and building.

Declaration: *We also declare that there is no conflict of interest among authors, and all ethical guidelines have been followed during the present study.*

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