

# CHAPTER-9

## AMBER AND THE DECLINE OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

The essence of the decline of the Mughal Empire mainly laid in the weakness of its administrative structure. The Mughal state which was highly centralized in organisational form demonstrated its sovereignty by exercising full administrative control over its territorial domain, while socio-economic and political forces during the 18th century made every effort to minimize the effective control over them.

This period saw the diminishing of the central authority particularly through the upper strata of ruling classes viz. courtiers, wazīrs, provincial governors and the local chiefs. Further, the weakness of Mughal sovereignty marked by financial crisis threatened the Empire from within and without. The stability at the centre could have played an important role in subduing the emergence of certain powers which arose in northern Indian by 1740's.

The purpose of this chapter is to pursue the role of the chief of Amber during the period of turmoil of Mughal Empire. We are fortunate to have an enormous wealth of documents in the shape of wakīl reports and khutūt-1

Maharājgān. These letters are full of details regarding the activities of Sawai Jai Singh.

## I

The composition of nobility and its heterogeneous character which became complex in the first half of the 18th century paved the way for the conflict of interests of the various groups to acquire additional powers.<sup>1</sup> Some of these nobles were stationed at the provinces. They were mainly concerned to exact more for organisation and the emoluments especially of their own community (birādari). Sawai Jai Singh was not an exception to it. This urge for additional powers and benefits disturbed the equilibrium of the well established framework of the Emperor - noble equations. The political manipulation of the nobility weakened the central power and promoted the emergence of the Maratha, Jats, Sikhs, and to some extent, the Rajputs. Besides this, the resurgence of certain estates which were hitherto undermined

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1. Satish Chandra 'Parties and Politics'; W. Irvine: Later Mughals, Z.U. Malik, The Reign of Muhammad Shah 1719-1748; Jadunath Sarkar - A History of Jaipur, Revised and edited by Raghubir Singh), 1984; Z.U. Malik, Presidential Addresses, Calcutta, 1991 entitled "The Core and Periphery: A Contribution to debate on the eighteenth century". Muzaffar Alam 'The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India', Awadh and the Punjab (1707-1748); Vir Vinod, Vol.II.

by the central power gradually raised their heads during the first half of the 18th century.

While carving out the principality of Jaipur the ways and means adopted by the rulers of Amber were dissimilar to those of Marathas, Jats and Afghans, it was neither through plunder nor coercion, but through getting ijaras, jagirs and inam from the Emperor. The details of which have already been underlined it is true that Sawai Jai Singh also reaped benefits from the disintegration of the Mughal Empire, but he rendered all possible assistance to the Mughal Emperor till the time it served his vested interests. The Mughals too responded to his practical policies with a few exceptions, Mughal Emperor acted at times on the suggestions of Sawai Jai Singh. So by his worth and ability, Sawai Jai Singh enjoyed the status of Mughal Counsellor as well as was counted among the important nobles. He joined the groups at the Mughal Court keeping in view his own interest and family affiliations rather on ethnic or religious grounds. At one time, he was having good relations with the Saiyid and identified himself by their groups but as and when the political situation demanded, he became reluctant to support them. This can also be true in relation to the Marathas and Jats. Sawai Jai Singh, as far as the later Mughal court politics is concerned though not forming his

own group, behaved like a true statesmen dissociated from the different political groups at the Mughal Court from time to time, without betrayal to the Mughal Emperor, whether, it was on the question of wizarat or implementation of the imperial policy. It is true, that the leading nobles who could assert in influencing and executing the imperial policy themselves set up their own principalities. After Saiyid brothers fall, Nizamul Mulk was also keen to carve out a principality in Deccan. Attempts to acquire more and more mansab and jāgīrs were made. Thus those who could save the disintegration themselves were responsible for the decline of Mughal Empire. The question, now, is, where the rulers of Amber can be placed? Sawai Jai Singh was well acquainted with the court politics and he managed his affairs successfully sometimes involving in court politics and sometimes keeping himself aloof since the wazīrs and other nobles were pressing the Emperor to adopt a definite attitude towards the Rajput states and the individual Rajas.

Bahadur Shah and later on Zulfiqar Khan during the reign of Jahandar Shah showed a conciliatory attitude towards the non-muslims. Due to this liberal attitude Nizamul Mulk had to withdraw from the Mughal Court. The above perusal would indicate that though Sawai Jai Singh was counted among the important noble in the imperial hierarchy

but he could not prevail effectively in the above circumstances. It seems that there was no attempt whatsoever on his part to counter balance the pro-muslim nobility to serve his ends.

So politically, checks and balances on the part of the Emperor did not prove effective. To some extent the Emperor wished to appoint such nobles who did not appear to be loyal but had an influential group, But, this policy also did not prove effective as we see in the case of Girdhar Bahadur who himself chose the province for governorship.<sup>1</sup> Even Jai Singh was entrusted the responsibility of Malwa though after a great deal of discussion. In such cases, we see the beginning of the new sūbedārī and provincial independence in the 18th century. The Emperor had no other alternative but was compelled to reconcile with one or other faction of the nobility, whom he considered less ambitious and who appeared to be willing to help. Sawai Jai Singh comes in this category of nobles who ~~were~~ were ready to maintain the rhythm of power of Mughal Emperor. His ambition for additional power in the province of Malwa or elsewhere if not protected by the central authority, were worked at by his own alliances

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 1. Tarikh-i-Hind, op.cit., p.240a-b.

with local forces.

## I I

Politically, Sawai Jai Singh's endeavours were to effectively administer his assignments, wherever he was posted, he sincerely implemented the imperial policy, he played an important role in the relations of Emperor with the Saiyids, Jats and Marathas. He rebuffed the power of the jat. After the death of Churaman, he subdued Badan Singh, the nephew of Churaman, who formally recognized Jai Singh power<sup>1</sup>Sawai Jai Singh, after the fall of the fort of Thun forwarded all the valuable to the Mughals Court. Badan Singh did not enter into direct relationship with the Mughal government but the Mughal Emperor could foresee its impact keeping in view the past experience. "At least temporarily jat problem was over. On June 19, Badan Singh signed a formal agreement with Jai Singh as follows. As the Maharaja has bestowed upon me the territory, villages and the land of Churaman Jat. I will remain in service of the Durbār and will rent every year Rs.83,000 as peshkash."<sup>2</sup> This shows the

1. Dastūr-Komwar, papers R.S.A.

2. Kapātdwara Records, op.cit.

influence of Jai Singh Sawai at the Mughal Court. Every now and then, they issued farmāns requesting him to attend the court immediately for consultation or to suppress the disturbances created by the jats in the vicinity of Agra. On his achieving success Sawai Jai Singh was granted robes of honour for his meritorious services.<sup>1</sup>

In relation to the Marathas, Sawai Jai Singh showed his statesmanship and proved helpful for the central authority from further devastation. Sawai Jai Singh's relations viz a viz the Marathas started when he was appointed as governor in Malwa or when he acted earlier as a deputy to Prince Bidar Bakht in 1705-6.

The Marathas made regular raids in Malwa and adjoining areas due to its being rich in revenue resources. It was also considered to be the gateway of Northern India. The influence of court nobles and the Emperor did not give Sawai Jai Singh a free hand to deal with the Marathas. Moreover, the appointment of Amir Khan as governor of Malwa disturbed the Mahārāja, who did not show any enthusiasm. In 1726,

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1. Farmān (Persian), Mughal Court to Mahārāja Sawai Jai Singh 29th Rabi' I A.H. 1126. 3rd RY of Farrukh Siyar/13 March 1716 Kapātdwara p.5. The Emperor was pleased to award a khilat fākra (embroidered) jewelled sarpēch and a Khāsa horse to Mahārāja Sawai Jai Singh for suppressing the revolts in the Sūba Malwa. A note of appreciation is added by the Emperor.



Mahrana Sangram Singh also requested Sawai Jai Singh for help against the Maratha invasion in his country. There was unrest in Marwar and Kota. The efforts of Girdhar Bahadur, subedar of Malwa had failed to check the advancing Marathas. Sawai Jai Singh did not move from Amber perhaps due to the fact that confrontation with the Marathas at this juncture would invite Marathas for the devastation of his own watan. When, the Emperor gave strong instruction to him to help sūbedār Bhawani Ram, father of Girdhar Bahadur he supported the Mughals. The Mughal army successfully occupied Mandu from the Marathas in 1730. His half hearted support may be explained for two reasons. Firstly, as has been said earlier he wanted to refrain himself from the direct clash with the Marathas, so that his own land would become safe. Secondly, his financial limitations, dissatisfied soldiers, and half hearted support from the people of Malwa had pressed him for reconciliation. Consequently, he inspired the Emperor to agree for a settlement. Sahu demanded a jāgīr of Rs.10,00,000/- annually in the name of his adopted son Kushal Singh with some other provisions Sawai Jai Singh's advice was practical. He wrote to the Emperor that a large army and a lot of money would be required for crushing the Marathas. It would then be better, if a jāgīr of

Rs.10,00,000/- was granted to Kushal Singh son of Chhatrpati.

The court nobles prevailed upon the Emperor and ultimately negotiations failed. He had to stake his governorship, due to the effectiveness of Muhammad Khan Bangash, the new sūbedār, Sawai Jai Singh was reappointed as sūbedār of Malwa on Sept.29, 1732. In 1733, Holkar and Ranoji Scindia encircled the Imperial forces at Mandasor. Being a failure here, he was fully convinced that a policy of reconciliations might be fruitful, even then, he obeyed the instructions of the Court. Moreover, his apprehensions to the entry of the Marathas into Rajasthan pressed him to convene a conference of the chiefs of Rajasthan at Hurda on July 17, 1734 to find solution to keep Marathas beyond Narmada and save Malwa and Rajasthan which may serve three fold purpose a) to implement the Mughal policy b) to safeguard Rajputana from its ruin and c) to ensure the unity of Rajput chiefs. It is clear by this conference that every chief from Rajputana sought protection of Sawai Jai Singh.

This conference could not succeed in solving the problems. Under the circumstances, Sawai Jai Singh tried to convince the Emperor to negotiate peace, again

the orthodox section of nobility did not allow Sawai Jai Singh's practical advice to prevail. Jai Singh was convinced to negotiate with Baji Rao, but till the last, he did not betray the cause of the Mughals. Even during the reign of Muhammad Shah, when Nizamul Mulk was entrusted the assignment to drive the Peshwa of northern India. Sawai Jai Singh sent a well armed force under his son, Ishwari Singh and Ayamal to serve under Ghaziuddin, who was appointed as sūbedār of Malwa instead of Sawai Jai Singh.

With the defeat of Mughal forces where Rajput and jats fought bravely, Muhammad Shah realized the wise counsel of Sawai Jai Singh and Peshwa was granted the sūbedārī of Malwa.

The above perusal was necessary due, mainly, to the fact that during Maratha inroads, Sawai Jai Singh tried to implement the policy of Mughal Emperor as far as it was possible. His role in Malwa in relation to the Mughal Emperor and Marathas was not treacherous as maintained by some scholar<sup>1</sup>. He wanted to save his own self keeping in view the development at the Mughal Court and the strong force under the Marathas, where zamīndārs and cultivators were also discontent due to Daya Bahadur's oppression, his

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1. Irvine: Later Mughals, pp.248-49.

practical wisdom allowed him to sue for peace. At this juncture, reconciliations of the conflicting interests of the Empire and of the Maratha imperialism was essential. Through this policy, he could save the prestige of the Mughal Empire as well as his own, and his bretheren estates in Rajputana. Though, the fact remains, that this settlement could not continue for long and ambitious Marathas could not restrain themselves to move further. After the death of Sawai Jai Singh, Ishwari Singh rendered all help to Mughal Emperor during Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasion. But his family pressurised him to negotiate with the Marathas who ultimately dictated their own terms to the rulers of Amber.

Besides Jats and Marathas Jai Singh Sawai's role vis-a-vis Ajit Singh of Marwar and the Mughals paved the way for a settlement when the former revolted against the Mughals his relations with the Bundela state show that he on one hand, developed friendly ties with Chhatrasal; on the other, kept the imperial interest intact. On Jai Singh's request the Bundelas even supported Raja Girdhar Bahadur then at Allahabad, against the Saiyids.

By these illustrations, it is inferable that Sawai Jai Singh's role during the period of distintegration of Mughal Empire was constructive rather than destructive. Satish

Chandra in his concluding remarks has rightly observed that "the causes which were responsible for the conversion of the Mughal nobility from an instrument of integration into an instrument of disintegration of Mughal Empire. Individual failings and faults of characters also played their due role but they have necessarily to be seen against the background of these deeper, more impersonal factors".<sup>1</sup>

### I I I

With a strong central authority, Mughal Empire swayed over territorial units of Empire but, as soon as the social and political forces started playing their role effectively, it led for further weakening the military potential and financial stability of the Mughal Empire which provided ample opportunity to local potentates to raise their heads and power. The slow and weak internal working of administrative institutions of central government were cause and effect entwined for the decline of the Mughal Empire.

The irregularities of central authority are found during the closing years of Aurangzeb's reign and onwards. As revealed in a wakil report that "for a long time the

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1. Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court (1707-1740) pp.267-68.

diwān and bakshīs lost ground to the Khwaja. If the court is convened, then, only the diwān and bakshīs come. In the whole month, four or five sessions of the court were summoned for a duration of two to four gharhi. Sometimes, even when, the requests were being read out, the court was adjourned.<sup>1</sup>

During this period, the enhancement in jāgīr and mansab depended mainly on the recommendation of effective groups. A large number of cases, therefore, were recorded by the wakīl of Sawai Jai Singh informing him about the pressure for money (muhimsāzi) prevalent in the court to get favours from the Imperial Court. Pancholi Jagjiwandas wrote to Mahārāja "everyone here is getting their work done through proper muhimsāzi. Even Raja Sabha Chand advised me to pay in advance to Nawab Amirul Umara (wazīr) Zulfiqar Khan. No work can be done without his consent. All the powers of the Emperor vested practically in the hands of nawāb. Similarly, Rāja Sabha Chand enjoys full authority on behalf of the nawab. Therefore, if both of them could be pleased together then our desired demands could be met successfully". Therefore, proper arrangement of money should

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 1. Wakīl Report dtd. Miti Sāwan Vadi 5, V.S. 1762/20 Aug. 1705.

be made for them both.<sup>1</sup> The illustration was necessary to bring out clearly how money and the patronage of influential nobles at court was necessary to fulfil the required demands of Rajput Rājas. Jai Singh also did not lag behind and whatever, assignment he sought, he successfully got it. For example, the wakīl of Jai Singh succeeded in seeking the favour of Amirul Umara, Zulfiqar Khan and Imtiaz Mahal on Amber's control over pargana Hindaun.

A large number of arzdāshts provide us the information regarding the collection of dawwāb or Khurāk-i dawwāb. This collection created a clash of interest between the state and jāgīrdār. When, Hidayatullah Khan, diwān-i-tan o Khālisa assumed the office of wazīr, he made an attempt to review the practice of dawwāb. Since the Mughal state was facing financial crisis, he instructed the mutasaddis of the office of the dawwāb to collect the amount of dawwāb from the wakīls of the 'umara.<sup>2</sup> The kotwāl was also instructed to collect it even if the force is to be used.

Though the collection of dawwāb was made from the leading nobles at the court and the Mughal State was keen to

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1. WR, Jyeshtha Vadi 1, 1769/May 10, 1712.

2. Arzdāsht dtd. Chātra Vadi 11, 1767/4, March, 1711.

realize it at any cost, the problem was, whether, it was to be deducted in advance or the jāgīrdār were to pay it afterwards i.e. getting the jāgīr. An arzdāsht dated 1711, informs that the office of the diwān used to make deductions in the name of the dawwāb at the time of drawing up salary claim of each mansabdār. This appears to be possible keeping in view the jāgīrdārī crisis. The explanation given by Mahabat Khan to the darōgha of the office of dawwāb that since the amount of dawwāb deducted from the salary claim of the Rajput Rajas, they would pay the dawwāb provided they were issued the parwāna of jāgīr.<sup>1</sup>

Bahadur Shah was perhaps the last Emperor who saw to it that rules of branding of the horses were strictly followed. An arzdāsht informs that one fourth of Jai Singh's talab kept on pending until the dāghnāma was submitted to diwān office.<sup>2</sup> At the time of his appointment as faujdār of Ahmedabad Khora, he requested for some concessions in branding the horses for him and his birādari (men belonging to his clan) which was declined by prince Azimush Shan on

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1. G.D. Sharma: Vakil Report Maharajgan, p.25; Arzdāsht dtd. Jyestha Vadi 5, 1768/1711. Also arzdāsht dtd. Sawan Vadi 5, 1768/ 24 June 1711 informing the Mahara-ja that the order issued by the Emperor on the tajwīz of Muzaffar Jang left no alternative before the noble but to make the payment of dawwāb.
2. Arzdāsht dtd. Kārtik Sudi 14, 1768/ 3 Nov. 1711.



the plea that there was no previous tradition to grant any exemption to Māharāja regarding the exemption of dāgh to him and his birādari.<sup>1</sup> After a great deal of correspondence Sawai Jai Singh succeeded in the grant of exemption for his birādari. This is not because of the fact that the diwān had accepted it in the normal routine, but considering group politics and the weaknesses of imperial administration Sawai Jai Singh succeeded in getting this concession only for one year.<sup>2</sup> This policy once adopted paved the way for further weakening the strength of imperial army. It also indicates the weakness of Imperial authority over the local chiefs.

Further, the relations of Mughal faujdār with his agents created problems under a stable administration. The rulers of Amber always gave due respect to the Mughal faujdār as is obvious in 1708, when Bahadur Shah confiscated the hereditary watan Amber in royal khālisa. Jai Singh sent instructions to his diwān Ramchand to hand over the possession of Amber to Hussain Khan without offering any resistance and asked him to treat the Saiyid

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1. Arzdāsht dtd. Māngsir Sudi 6, V.S. 1768/ 4 Dec. 1711.
  2. Arzdāsht dtd. Paush Sudi 9, 1768/ 6 Jan 1711;  
Arzdāsht dtd Māgh Vadi 15, V.S. 1768/ 26 Jan. 1712.

and his official with all courtesy.<sup>1</sup> Further, instructions were extended to treat Shujaat Khan with due hospitality.<sup>2</sup> But a large number of chithis and parwānas of later period reveal the non-cooperation of āmils and other officials of the pargana showing antipathy to these Mughal faujdārs, who failed to maintain law and order in the parganas.<sup>3</sup> The practice of the jāgīrdār having faujdāri rights over his jāgīrs buttressed his authority which could threaten the jurisdiction of the provincial governor as well as the central authority.

The rise of local magnates certainly gave a blow to the disintegrating Mughal Empire. It was not only confined to the expansion of Amber state through the acquisitions of large and fertile jāgīrs with the support of Mīr Bakhshī, Khan-i-Dauran and other nobles, but it did extend to the rise of Bundi and Kota and other states in Rajputana. There appears to be no deliberate attempt on the part of these states to eliminate the Mughal Empire perhaps Mughals were still powerful enough to crush them. It could be felt by them that by now, Jai Singh was capable of pleading their

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1. Parwāna of Jai Singh to Ramchand (diwān of Mahārāja) Sudi 12, V.S. 1764/1707.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Chitthis, V.S., 1764,65,66/1707,08,09.

vested interest. As a result, the imperial power could feel the strength of the regional and local elements emerging effective. Their growing power and resources based on caste and community relationship could prove detrimental to the interest of the Mughals.

Sawai Jai Singh's activities and diplomacy had derived the maximum benefits from both the orthodox and liberal section of the nobility. The group affiliations and court politics after Aurangzeb's death helped Sawai Jai Singh to enlarge his estate. The exemption from Khurāk-dawāb and the opportunities of sūbedāri of Malwa for Jai Singh and Gujarat for Ajit Singh met successfully due to Sawai Jai Singh position at the Mughal Court. We notice that just after the death of Aurangzeb, the wakīl of Mahārāja Jai Singh had approached Amirul Umara Asad Khan and succeeded to obtain the title of Mirza Rājā along with a mansab of 7000/7000 for Jai Singh after paying Rs.50,000 in cash along with 21 muhrs,<sup>1</sup> so was the case of Ajit Singh. This practice became widespread during the reigns of Bahadur Shah and Jahandar Shah. Wakīl Jagjiwan Das had agreed to pay Rs.75,000 to mīr bakhshī Mahabat Khan in order to get the signature of the

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 1. G.D. Sharma: Vakil Reports Maharajgan, Introduction, pp.33-34.

said bakhshi in the yāddāsht.<sup>1</sup> Such cases of paying money in advance are replete in the arzdāshts of the wakīl.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV

Enough attention has been paid by the modern scholars on jāgīr system and the crisis therein.<sup>3</sup> With the growing number of the mansabdārs the crisis deepened. An interesting wakīl report records'. "The Emperor enquired about the number of Mughal mansabdārs. He was informed by the bakhshī that under Alamgir, the number of Mughal mansabdārs was 5000. It was 1200, during the reign of khuld-i-manzil (Bahadur Shah). And at present (in the reign of Farrukh Sujar), the number exceeded to 17,000. The bakhshis were then ordered to maintain 5000 Mughal mansabdars as per the tradition of Aurangzeb. When, it was found that the deduction in number would mean the loss of Mughal nobles, the original list of 17,000 was restored.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid.

2. WR Jyestha 1768/1711 Wakīl wrote to Maharaja 'I have conveyed your demand to Amirul Umara. He had demanded money for making arrangements. Please write to me the money you wish to present.

3. Satish Chandra: Medieval India Society, the Jagirdari Crisis and the Village, Delhi, 1982, M. Athar Ali, Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, opc.cit.

4. Arzdasht dtd. Asōj Sudi 10, V.S. 1771/18, Sept 1714.

This passage is self-explanatory the tendency of generous grants of mansab after the death of Aurangzeb, assisted a crisis in the jāgīrdāri system. The enormous increase in the number of mansabdārs resulted in more demand in pay claims. The wakīl, therefore, informs the Mahārāja in 1714, that the work of Kachehri had to be closed since the mansabdārs demanded jāgīrs in lieu of their salaries. At this time, over 400 crore dāms were due upon the state for payment to the mansabdārs; fifty one crore of arrears of revenue (sanvāti) were left uncollected in paibāqi, but none of the mansabdārs accepted jāgīrs against their pay claims.<sup>1</sup> The decision was therefore taken that mansabdārs be paid amounts equivalent to salary of half of their zāt ranks. We, are also informed that similarly the dāms (of pay) of other Hindu and Muslim nobles were in arrears.<sup>2</sup>

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1. WR dtd Chaitra Sudi 2, 1771/17 March, 1714.
  2. Ibid. The arrears of salary claims (talab). If certain mansabdārs are given as follows:
 

1. Sawai Jai Singh	17,25,302
2. Abdullah Khan	20,00,00,000 to 30,00,00,000
Husain Ali Khan	
Ibadullah Khan	
and Samsanudaula	
3. Udot Singh	40,00,00,000
4. Kr Abhai Singh	5,25,00,000

Also see WR dtd Asōj Sudi 10, 1771/18, Sept. 1714.

Thus, large arrears of pay accumulated owing to proper jāgīr assignments.

Insecurity of pay claim made Ajit Singh agree to take 3,00,000 dāms from pargana Sorath in paibagi rather than to leave the claimed arrears (talab) pending.<sup>1</sup> Another arzdāsht reveals that Nizamul Mulk disbanded 1000 sawārs for there was no jāgīr to maintain them. An arzdāsht of March 1714, informs that Mahārājas salary claims from Amber and Deoti Sanchari worth dāms one and a half crore, seventeen lakh, twenty five thousand and two are in arrears. Nawab Qutbul Mulk, Amirul Umara, Mir Jumla and Khan-i-Dauran had two crore dāms in arrears, similarly, Ajit Singh and Udot Singh have four crore dāms.

Under these circumstances, there was opportunity for the ruler of Amber to obtain parganas of his choice as is obvious from his parwāna addressed to his wakīl at the Mughal court "you wrote to us to obtain the paibāgi (Khālisa land) of sūba Darul Khair (Ajmer) on condition of posting a force there. The paibāgi of the said sūba is of no use to us, because it is scattered and far away. The mahāls of Chatsu Mauzabad, Dausa and Niwai are situated close to our

1. WR dtd. Baisākh Sudi 1, 1772/9, May 1715.

watan and zamīndāri mahāls. The Rajputs, who are to be posted, are already residing there (in the said mahāls) so that the zamīndāri should be administered and the forces may be kept ready for the service of the Emperor as desired. Bearing all this in mind, you should act according to the instructions given above. If the paibāqi is to be given to any agents, you should not hasten to accept ... you (wakīl) have said that you would obtain the mahāls of Toda Bhim, Toda Rāja Rai Singh etc. near the watan. It is hoped, you would give effect to this proposal".<sup>1</sup>

It is clear from the evidence, that after the death of Aurangzeb, Jai Singh was eager to obtain parganas close to his watan by all means. Mughal Court, keeping in view the support of the Rajputs, approved it. One of the parwāna (Persian) from Mughal Court addressed to Samandar Khan says.... "since Hastera etc. pargana Amarsar, suba Ajmer are near Amber; they must be connected with Amber."<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding the fact that the jāgirdāri crisis paved the way for fulfilling the desire of the rulers

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1. Parwāna (Persian) dtd. 23 Muharram 1131/ 15th Dec.1719. Miscellaneous Persian Papers; Arzdāsh (Hindi) from Sah Ram Chand (diwān) to Mahārāja dtd. Miti Māngsir Vadi 2, V.S. 1765/1709.
2. Parwāna (Persian) dated 1 Zīalqād, 1131/ 15 Sept. 1719.

of Amber to expand their territories, the Mughal state did not give a free hand to Jai Singh to act at his own. The appointment of imperial officials like faujdārs and jāgīrdārs, who were either Muslim or belonged to classes other than Kachchwahas kept check and balances on the activities of Jai Singh and reported to the central authority, whenever they were harrassed by the Mahārāja or his agents.<sup>1</sup> The wakīl informs the Mahārāja about the complaint of Sabha Chand that "Mahārāja neither has removed the thāna from Sambhar as yet, nor has he given the revenue of jāgīrdārs of Mewat Akbarabad and Ajmer, even then, he expects for enhancement in jāgīr, Ajit Singh is safe since he is away while you are only 80 kōs away from Jahanabad. You are staking our watan without any reason. The Nawāh (Amirul Umara) says that Rāja Ram Singh and Nawab Asafudaula had become brothers by exchanging turbans, I and Kunwar Kishan Singh had become brother. Keeping this in view, you have been granted mansab and title. You are considered to be the grandson of late Mirza Rāja yet you are creating problems.

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1. A few examples referred in Amber records and Khutūt-i-Mahārājgan may be cited a) Pirag Das Rathor, faujdār of Bahatri V.S. 1750/1693; b) Sukrullah Khan, faujdār of pargana Nahar Khoh V.S. 1761/1704; c) Saiyid Husain Khan faujdār of Amber 1765/1708; d) Fakhruddin, faujdār of Sambhar 1767/1710; e) Wahid Khan, faujdār of pargana Fatehpur 1769/1712; f) Nawab Intiaz Khan, faujdār of pargana Barath Sanghana.



We have been asking you since last four months to stop the non-cooperative activities. The late Mirza Rājā (Jai Singh) and Ram Singh had wished you to be in the Emperor's service; fulfil their wish,<sup>1</sup> and get whatever you want from the Emperor in lieu of this.<sup>1</sup> Such requests to Mahārāja were constantly reiterated<sup>2</sup>.

In the beginning, Amber rulers acquired ijarās for a short term i.e. of two to three months in the early part of 18th century, but soon they found that constant renewal of ijāra may bear more fruits, so they keenly acquired them. So long as Sawai Jai Singh served the Mughal Empire as sūbedār or governor,<sup>he</sup> was contented getting assignments. But soon he opted to acquire more and more parganas in ijāra close to his watan and began to consolidate his position. Pancholi Jagjiwan Das in 1712, informs the Mahārāja that "Altiqad

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1. WR dtd Sāwan Vadi 2, 1768/5 Aug.1711; Also letter of Nawab Asad Khan to Sūbedār of Ajmer dtd. 11 Safar 1121/21, April 1709; Arzdāsht dtd. Shrāvana Vadi, 2, 1769 (July 9, 1712).
  2. WR dtd Māgh Vadi 3, 1768/30 Jan.1711; Shah Qudratullah has instructed Maharaja to come to the Imperial Court from Ajmer the Prince (Azimush Shan) has managed the delay of the issue. It is, therefore, advisable to come to the Court. In your absence, the mutasaddis will manage the affairs of your state. Come immediately since your promotion and betterment depends upon the will of the Emperor. Also WR Asārh Vadi 5 1769/12, July 1712.

Khan grandson of Asafudaula has been appointed faujdār of Narnaul and I tried to obtain ijāras from him.... In compliance with the darbār's order. I have secured ijāras of many jāgīrs held by the Umara (nobles). Pattas have been prepared and arrangements for furnishing the surety of some reliable sāhukār (banker) may be made so that I may obtain the pattas and send them to the darbār..... The pattas of Shujaat Khan's jāgīr consisting of parganas of Amarsar; Mauzabad, Bhairana and Nagina under the sarkārs of Tijara, have been obtained with effect from Kharif crop... The patta jāgīr of Hasan Khan Ghigada Khan worth 70,00,000 dāms in pargana Lalsot is ready .... the patta of jāgīr of Muhammadabad alias Ghazi Ka Thana held in jāgīr by Rai Ghasi Ram and Hidayat Kesh Khan waqia nigār kul is ready. This patta of Benehta held in jāgīr by Jamal Mohammad etc. mansabdārs, valued at 4,00,000 dams is ready. The jāgīrs of Badshahzada Aizuddin, Khan Jahan Bahadur, Azam Khan Bahadur Khan-i Dauran, Khan Jahan Bahadur's son and Khan Dauran Bahadur's son in Mewat. Jahan Bahadur wishes to establish friendly relations with the darbār. The mutasaddis say that the pattas for the ijāra of the jagirs of Khan Jahan Bahadur as well as those of his Kinsmen will be given as soon as the sureties are produced".

"The jāgīrs are situated close to his watan and extend from Akbarabad district to Mewat. The acquisition of ijāra for these jāgīrs will prevent a lot of quarelling. The holders of other (smaller) jāgīrs near the watan will readily agree to give them to us on ijara. Once these (bigger) jāgīrs have been taken on ijāra by the darbār. I have arranged with the mutasaddis of Badshahzada Azizuddin to secure the ijāra of jāgīr in Perozpur, pargana Jhar. I shall report the result later".

"The Badshahi courtiers present policy is to accept whatever price they can get in case the rajas do not come to terms with the Emperor and so they are giving out such ijāras indiscriminately ... Now is the time to take as many ijāras as one can. Such ijāras will remain in force for three years. If the darbār misses the chance of getting these ijāras later on. When the Emperor has made a settlement (with the raja) it is doubtful if the jāgīrdārs will give out any ijāra then."<sup>1</sup>

Once the Jaipur rulers acquired these parganas it is very rare that they were taken back in imperial khālisa. Gradually, most of important parganas assigned to them in

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 1. Arzdasht by Pancholi Jagjiwan Das; Also Agrarian System pp.18-38 for the parganas taken in ijāra and jāgīr.

lieu of salary or on ijāras were absorbed in the watan area and shaped Jaipur State in 1726-27.

This large territory acquired from the Mughals was administered by him through sub assignments and sub leases. Most of these sub-jāgīrdār and ijāradār belonged to Rāja's own community who were basically zamīndārs. Thus becoming an asset for the rulers of Amber in beginning. But threatened its autonomy later. In the context of the Mughals, though there appeared to be no deliberate attempt to eliminate the authority of the Mughals but they stood for the cause of their masters (Mahārāja) against an external threat. The local magnates in the capacity of zamīndārs and ijāradārs having rich revenue resources could raise their head against the Mughals. And it became a difficult task for the imperial officials to collect the revenue from them through his agents.

The jāgīrdārs and ijāradārs slowly grabbed the revenue of the area assigned to them and claimed hereditary rights in Rajput states and led to further strengthening of the zamīndārs as a class. This left the land-owners and cultivators at the mercy of the new jāgīrdārs and zamīndārs.

To summarise, one of the important features of the first half of the 18th century appears to be a growing

tendency among the nobles to hold jāgīrs on permanent basis whether through assignment or lease. The emergence of bhumias, garhi and thikānas leading to rise of independent principalities. Their rise within the existing social structure is unique. And all this happened at the cost of the Mughal Empire.

The decline of the central authority contributed to another development that resulted in a peculiar relationship between the regional state of Amber and the mercantile classes. Amber, rulers received the financial support from the bankers and usurer at times voluntarily and others extorted by force. Most of the time this relationship benefitted.<sup>1</sup> This class of bankers monopolised agrarian economy and urban markets controlling the prices, standing for surety in case of ijāradārs and granting loans to the cultivators and the state. They monopolised offices and so on. Their investment in purchasing the land is not borne out

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1. The death of Azimush Shan on March 8, 1712 had caused considerable financial inconvenience as the local mahājans refused to lend money on credit to Jagjiwandas on the ground that they were not sure whether the purās of Lahore would be kept with them under the new regime; Arzdāsht dated Phalguna Sudi 11, 1768 (March 8, 1712); Also see arzdāsht from Pancholi Jagjiwandas to Mahārāja Jai Singh dated Sharāvana Sudi 15, 1769 (August 5, 1712). Contrary to this, the mercantile class supported the Mahārāja at local level with its resources.

from our evidence. In the second half of 18th century such a phenomenon however is visible.<sup>1</sup>

We cannot therefore completely divorce the decline of the Mughal Empire from that of the Amber state. In a way they were complimentary to each other. The sub-assignments and sub lease adopted by the Amber rulers in one way or other also distintegrated the power of Jaipur rulers. Though both of these process were not exactly simultaneous or parallel they were, however, at times overlapping or one paving the way for the other. This was so to say a vicious circle which tresspasses the limits of the period under purview and it was the charisma of Jai Singh's role that seemingly averted it for the time being.

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1. Dilbagh Singh: The State Landlords and Peasants, Chapter 7.