

The Royal Household (*Rajlok**) of Kachhawa Kings of Jaipur.

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Abstract : The aim of this paper is to explore the history of the Rajput rulers of Jaipur through the entry point of its *Rajlok*. The term *Rajlok* literally means the space inhabited by large number of queens, concubines, mistresses, *patar*, other inmates like *baiji* (princesses) and *kawar* (prince). Clearly, it was a site of restricted sexuality but excessive filial relationships. The status of ladies was well defined in a hierarchical order. The mother queen i.e. *Majee Sahib* genially controlled the happenings within the *Rajlok*. The power of *majee sahib* was not only confined to the domestic arenas it even extended in to the court and influenced the political shifts. Marriage alliances were forged for political and territorial gains. The queens were identified by their clan names not their personal names. Frequent visits of members from natal family to *rajlok* were striking feature. The nexus of *rajlok* not only influenced the marriage alliances with important rajput dynasties but also helped in carving political ambitions. Their chiefs (*thikanedars*) did same with non-kachhwah clans. The *rajlok* was also a site for king (*Shree jee*, *huzur*, *maharajadhiraj*) to welcome and bestow honor to the *thikanedars*. Whenever the mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of prominent *thikanedar* visited *rajlok* they were presented with gifts and money. On various festivals like *teej*, *rakhi*, *diwali*, *dussehra* and *holi* these ladies visited the *rajlok*. On many occasions ladies of chiefs were also invited. Clearly, relationships between royalty and families of chieftains were cemented through exchange of gifts and presents and by honoring them. The extended rituals performed in court and *rajlok* depict the hierarchy of *thikanas*. Thus, these religious happenings and festivals had connotation of political rituals.

Keywords: *Padhravan*, *Rajlok*, *Sukh Niwas*, *Seekh*, *Thikanedars*, *Zenani Deodhi*.

I. Introduction

In the last few decades scholars have shifted their attention from social and economic history to a wide range of themes like court culture, palace politics and gender issues. The eighteenth century which was earlier no men's field has been studied more closely. The weakening of the Mughals centre paved way for the emergence of various regional states all over the country. The Amber/Jaipur state which was a close associate of the Mughals during the sixteenth and seventeenth century gradually distanced itself from the empire. During the eighteenth century in the absence of Mughal legitimating authority the Jaipur state leaned on alternative sources of its legitimation. The state of Jaipur developed a mechanism of seeking legitimacy from the religious and political dignitaries who were located in and around Jaipur. The state received various *mahants*, *purohits*, *fakirs* and political dignitaries (*thikanedars*) who were important for the state. The ceremonies associated with the reception, *padhravan* (welcome), *seekh/ ruksadi* (seeing off) and *darbar dastur* (court ritual) depict the political importance of these dignitaries. The centre for performing all these rituals was court and *Rajlok*. The court was a centre for all the business related to state whereas; the *Rajlok* was an excluded place where only those dignitaries who were crucial in state affairs were invited by the king. In this paper an attempt has been made to highlight the organisation and structures of power in the Jaipur state during 18th century. The state of Jaipur constantly manufactured consent of various political and religious groups to prop up its power.¹

Historians have made efforts to find out the links of the imperial household which affected the court politics. Some historians have studied the royal household and understand its inner politics related to succession and acquisition of power. The Mughal household (harem) has been studied by many historians and they successfully brought out connection of the royal household with court politics, which in the long run affected the fortunes of the empire.² Though the impact of the household politics on the larger politics of the Mughal Empire have been studied in detail there has been a relative negligence of the royal household politics of the post-Mughal and pre-colonial states. Hence, an effort has been made in this paper to examine the sources of the Kachhwaha household in order to explore its inner dynamics. The *Rajlok* of the Kachhwaha kings is equivalent of the Mughal Harem both of which literally mean the royal household. K.S. Lal's pioneer work on the household of the Mughals, is a detailed narrative of the functioning and organisation of the Mughal Harem. He

**Rajlok*, literally means royal household. A document *Dastur Komwar Rajlok* is preserved in Jaipur Historical section of Rajasthan State Archives at Bikaner. It records the day to day functioning of the royal household.

¹ R.P Rana, "Chakar To Raja, The Emergence of Naruka State of Alwar (c.1660-1790)" *Social Science Probings*, June 2006, pp.59-79.

² Rekha Mishra, *Women in Mughal India (1526-1748)*, Munshiram manoharlal, Delhi, 1967, Ruby Lal, *Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2005.

found the Mughal harem as a complete world which catered to all the needs of the Emperor. All the functions and rituals of the harem were centred around the Emperor. Harem for emperor was a place to seek pleasure. K.S.Lal's work provides a deep insight into its working.³

Harbans Mukhia in an interesting work tried to locate the various cultural functions, etiquettes and court culture of the Mughals. He studied the sources of the Mughal states legitimacy, the evolution of court etiquette and the world of the imperial mughal family. The extended etiquettes and mannerism associated with the mughal harem made it a place of decorum as well as pleasure and joy.⁴

Another significant work which reveals the political significance of harem is by Ruby Lal. She argues that the residents of domestic arenas influenced the various political shifts of Mughal India. Through her research, she is able to understand the influence exercised by the inmates of harem. For changing, controlling, shifting and managing powerful positions for self and their children the harem proved to be a vibrant space. Competition, hostilities and constant rivalries were common amongst the inmates of the harem. All the queens, concubines and inmates had their own retinue of servants (maid-servants), who were loyal and honest to their masters. Through these servants they hatched conspiracies and passed on messages. The inmates of harem not only hatched conspiracies for the power but even tried to gain benefits. At many occasions these women also declared their false pregnancies and tried to control the politics through re-production. Because, the status of any women in harem largely dependent on the birth of a male-child and heir.⁵

Clearly significant research has been carried out by historians to understand the dynamics of harem of the Mughals. Somehow the palace politics of regional kingdoms has been neglected so far. The Jaipur state was one of the regional kingdoms which became autonomous in the 18th century. In the course of their association with the mughals the Jaipur rulers had become familiar with the mughal courtly culture. Jaipur state in 18th century and 19th century had much of the rituals, which were adopted from the Mughal court and empire.⁶ The elaborate rituals were not only in vogue in the Jaipur court but many rituals also impacted the royal household (*Rajlok*).

II. The Royal Household:- Rajlok

The royal household of Jaipur state was called *Rajlok* which literally means a space peopled by the members of royal family. The royal household (harem) of Mughals was a common space for all the ladies including the mother, queen, chief queen, wife, co-wives, inmates and concubines, but the hierarchy of ranks existed. *Rajlok* was an extensive structure with various concrete complexes. The hierarchy of rank existed amongst the ladies. The *Rajlok* included various complexes such as *Sukh Niwas*, *Pritam Niwas*, *Chand Mahal*, *Sabha Niwas* and *Zenani Deodhi*. The *Sukh Niwas* was the King's palace where he resided with the chief queen (*pat rani*). *Pritam Niwas*, *Chand Mahal*, *Sabha Niwas* were the complexes for receiving the dignitaries of state. The entries to these complexes were selective in nature depending on political status of the visitor. The restricted entries are suggestive of preferential treatment given by the Raja to various rulers of different states, *thikanedars*, *purohits* and *mahants*. Many of these dignitaries were seen off (*vida*) from Diwan-i-Aam. *Zenani Deodhi* (female apartments) was an extended complex where the mother queen (*majee sahib*), prince (*chinnajee /kuwar jee*), princess (*Bai /laad Kawri*), queens (*rani*), concubines (*pardaayat*), inmates (*paswans*) and dancers (*patr*) resided. There were separate apartments allotted to each lady according to her status. These separate apartments were called as *rawalas* (small palace). Thus, the *Rajlok* accommodated all the ladies related to the king in different capacities.

The *Zenani Deodhi* adjoining the city palace of Jaipur is fully a concrete structure with corridors, rooms, *varandas*, *chowks*, *chattris*, *jharokhas*, and *rawlas*. The architecture of the *Zenani Deodhi* kept the life of inmates quite secret. The inmates living in adjacent apartments lived completely ignorant of the happenings and life of other inmate. These concrete structures also kept the visits of king (to any of the lady) a secret in *Zenani Deodhi*. Long running corridors with doors at the end, were connected to the king's apartment. These doors were always kept closed and sealed for security purpose. These doors were only to be opened on the order of the King.⁷ The *Zenani Deodhi* was guarded round the clock by a retinue of loyal and trustworthy eunuchs called *Nazir*. The highly organised and heavily guarded structure of *Zenani Deodhi* kept the lives and happenings of these women secret and invisible.

Zenani Deodhi was an extensive and highly organised unit of palace where all the rituals, customs and ceremonies were conducted. All the festivals, king's birthday, marriages, child birth were celebrated by all the members of *Rajlok* with pomp and show. The festivities and celebrations inside *Rajlok* kept the inmates occupied. Besides it the *Rajlok* was also a centre for various political and religious rituals. The functions of

³K.S.Lal, *The Mughal Harem*, Aditya Prakashan, New Delhi, 1988.

⁴ Harbans Mukhia, *the Mughals of India*, Blackwell Publishing, USA, reprint 2005.

⁵ Ruby Lal, *Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2005.

⁶ Ramdev p. Kathuria, *Life in the Courts of Rajasthan, during the 18th Century*, S.Chand & Company Ltd., New Delhi, 1987, pp. 300-322.

⁷ Varsha Joshi, *Polygamy and Purdah*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 1995, pp.175-77. Here after *Polygamy and Purdah*.

political and religious importance were all celebrated in different and unique ways. *Rajlok* was also a centre for making and re-emphasising political alliances through rituals, exchange of gifts and bestowing of grants.

The layout of *Zenani Deodhi* is marked by large number of corridors each leading to a separate apartment. The corridors are inclined planes, some of which lead into basement and some will take us to the first and second floor of the building. The corridors are designed by using the principals of geometry, where the person in basement can see the movements of corridors, but a view into the room from the corridor is not possible. The view of each apartment is blocked with number of small walls called *pardhi*.⁸ Each apartment was inclusive of a living room extended with *varamdas*, a *chowk*, *chattris* and *jharokas*. These chowks were mainly used for celebrations and playing games. The *chattris* were stages for playing board games like chess, *chauser* and hosting wine-drinking parties.

The living space of *Majee Sahib* in *Zenani Deodhi* was different in lay out as compared to those of other ladies. It included a big living room, along with two small chambers, one pillared *varanda* and a small room for worship. This structure was specially designed for consulting her on political matters. The individual apartments of other women were called as *rawla*. The *rawlas* are medium size rooms with an adjacent small room. These *rawals* had all the accessories and items required by the inmates. The items were provided by the state keeping in mind all the comforts of these ladies. The expenditure of all the requirements was incurred by state.⁹ The *Zenani Deordi* is a complex architectural structure. The rooms are constructed in rectangular shape, with a square shape *chowk* in the centre, which was a hub of festive celebrations.

The *Rajlok* was not meant only for populating the women associates of the king. *Rajlok* was also a centre for displaying the grandeur of the Kachhwaha kingdom and making political alliances with the *thikanas* (chiefdoms) who were received in the *Rajlok* and honoured. Throughout the year large numbers of occasions and festivals were celebrated and the *thikanadars* and their families were invited which helped in cementing the relations between the king and his chiefs. The occasions on which the *thikanadars* visited the *Rajlok* were not fixed. The *thikanadars* visited *Rajlok* only when the king invited them. The king married a large number of the women. These marriages provided an appropriate solution to political necessities. As the territories of the Rajput states kept on extending and contracting the marriages enabled any ruler or chief to renegotiate power with the others. Norman p. Ziegler aptly says “when Rajputs of different clans and gotras were involved, they usually confirmed settlement of such hostilities through the gifts of daughters in marriages and the formation of alliances (*sagai*) thus creating a new pattern of relationship among themselves.”¹⁰ Even after marriage the ties of women (with their natal clans) continued to be strong that they were referred by their clan names such as Rani Shree Rathornejee¹¹ Rani Bhattiyani¹² etc. Both of them belonged to the Rathore and Bhatti clans respectively. Since the Rajputs rulers strictly believed in clan exogamy they took wives from all the other important clans. In Rajasthan the leading rajputs clans were the Rathores, Sisodiyas, Kachhwahas, Hadas, Chauhans, Bhattis, Solankis, Jhalas, Jadams and Panwars etc.

The women married to a king can be divided into two groups. The primary group consisted of the *Ranis*, and in the secondary groups the *Pardayats* and *Paswans* can be included. The difference among the status of these women existed on the basis of the formal ceremony of marriage. The formal ceremony of marriage was not performed with the women of the secondary group though they were maintained as wives. The women of *Rajlok* can be divided in three broad groups. The first group included the *Rajmats*, *Majee Sahib*, *Ranijee*, and *Patranis*. The second category included concubines’ i.e, *Pardayats* and *Paswans* and *Patars*. The third category was formed by the other relatives of the ruler i.e *Baijee*, *Kawaris* and *Davris*.

In the order of precedence, *Maajee Sahib* occupied the highest and senior most position followed by *Rajmats*, being the mother of the king. The Rajput and Persian tradition both allowed the mother of the reigning king a more dominant authority.¹³

A large numbers of female attendants were attached to the *Rajlok*. They included the *dhaimas* (wet nurses), *dholans* (drummers), *bamanis* (priests), *nayans* (female Barber), *darjans* (female tailors), *Varis* (cooks), and *davris* (female maid servants brought as dowry). Besides, this each *rani* had a separate retinue of servants to organise day to day affairs of her own establishment. The retinue of each queen was known after her like the servants of Rathore queen were known as *Rathorniji ki sarkar*.¹⁴ The chief of the female staff was called *Badaran*.

⁸ A small wall of nearly 10-12 inches thickness and of 6-7 feet high.

⁹ There are numerous instance in the registers no. 24 & 25 of *Dastur Komwar Rajlok* where the requirements of the items like *parda* (curtain), *Raas* (plates), *tharma* (woolen cloth) and *chikado* (a toy for children) etc. were fulfilled from the various *karkhanas* (workshops) of Jaipur state. The *karkhanas* were *mistri-khana*, *kirkiri-kahna* etc.

¹⁰ N.P. Ziegler “Some Notes On Rajput Loyalities During The Mughal Period” in J.F.Richards(ed.) *Kingship and Authority in South Asia*, Madison, 1979, p. 232.

¹¹ *Dastur Komwar- Rajlok*, Register no 24 & 25 p. 367. Here after *DK- Rajlok*.

¹² *Ibid.* P. 257

¹³ K.M.Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the people of Hindustan*, Oriental Publisher, New Delhi, 1970, p.55.

¹⁴ Sobhas Singh Shekhawat, “Rajasthan ke Ranwaso ke Patra”, *Shodh Patrika*, October- December, 1979, p.73.

Apart from individual staff members these were other servants in the royal household. Prominent among these was the *darogha* followed by his assistance. For the purpose of safety, security and administration of *Zenani Deodhi*, *daroghas* were appointed after consultation with the ruler. A large number of eunuchs known as *Khojas* were also employed, who strictly watched all the entrances and the communications of the *Rajlok*. They were also the medium of communication between king and the members of *Zenani Deodhi*. There is a colony called *Mohalla Nadaran* which lies just behind the *Zenani Deodhi* of the City Palace, which indicates to the houses occupied by the Nadars of Jaipur State. Today this colony is not consisting of any *nadar* but the name continues to be same. Anyone who wished to pay a visit in the *Rajlok* needed a prior permission from the palace. The males other than the king who could enter the *Rajlok* were *purohits* and *rajkumars*.

As stated earlier the concubines residing in the *Zenani Deodhi* were not formally married to the king, the suffix attached to their names suggest a clear hierarchy amongst them. The title of *Pardayat* was given to that women with whom the *chura* (bangle set) ceremony has been performed. It was not a formal marriage ceremony. The title of *Paswan* was bestowed upon the *davris*, dancer (*patars*), singers, and any other women for whom the king took fancy. All of these ladies inhabited in the *Zenani Deodhi*.¹⁵ Once the title of *pardayats* was conferred upon any woman then she was put in *pardha*, by giving them royal status. The wives of the ruler presented them gifts which were tokens of her formal acceptance. The ruler bestowed various titles to these *pardayats*, like *rai*, *sukh* (happiness), *bai*, *chain*, *sahiba* etc.¹⁶ Very few concubines received a number of titles like the *pardayat* of Raja Madho Singh, *Pardayat sahiba shree Pholai rai* and *pardayat Kesar rai bai*.¹⁷ The life of *rani* and *pardayats* was marked by extreme jealousy. Each one of them was competing for the favour and company of the ruler. In the words of Tod, "it is within the *Rawala* that intrigue is enthroned".¹⁸ Obviously, if polygamy solved some political problems of the Raja, it also generated lot of heat and tension in the royal household.

The *Rajlok* was a centre of various social and political functions. Invariably these functions and festivals kept the *ranis* and other inmates occupied. The occasions of celebration in the *Rajlok* were marriages and anniversaries, births and birthdays etc. Besides these occasions festivals such as *Basant Panchami*, *Holi*, *Raksha Bandhan*, *Dusshera*, *Diwali*, *Gangor*, *Teej* and *Janmastmi* were celebrated elaborately in the premises of female apartments. These festivals were also occasions for inviting and receiving guests from the important *thikanas*.¹⁹ As per the custom of clan exogamy the Jaipur king could not form a marriage alliance with any Kachhwaha offshoot. The king himself was a Rajawat. Besides this the Kachhwaha clan had proliferated into many branches. These branches are twelve in number they are known as *Barakotris*.²⁰ There are various other off shoots of these *kotris* such as Rajawat, Naruka, Bankawat and Puranmalot. The dynasties with whom the Jaipur Raja formed marriage alliances were mainly Rathors, Bagels, Bhattis, Dhabai, Ranawats, Sisodiyas, Shaktawats, Bhanots, Hadas, Ranawats.²¹

The natal clans were always close and important to the woman who even after her marriage was known by her clan name, like Jadamijee,²² Rathornijee,²³ Sisodani,²⁴ and Bhatyanijee²⁵ etc. To uphold their family honour these queens rigidly followed the Rajput system of purda and sati. They were brought up in a manner where they would always think and act to save and protect honour of their clan. These ladies were well trained in reading, writing and wTeaponry. The status of the wives and concubines kept on rising and falling. All the elaborate rituals and functions were organised and arranged by the queens. The rituals of *Rajlok* were means for the fulfilment of various political ambitions through the observance of the festivals and celebrations. The most important occasion to receive and honour the daughters of *thikanadars* was *Raksha Bandhan*.²⁶ There are various other occasions also when the daughters of *thikandars* were invited, received and presented gifts. In samvat 1781/1724 A.D. *Bai Vichitar Kawar* was granted *thans* of 3 *gaz* each from *Kirkiri Khana* on the occasion of *rakhi* which included 2 *dupata* of *zari* and 2 sarees of *zari*, *ghagra* of *tas zari* and 2 blouses. All these were sent at Palwal through Baghichand a helper of Ranawat jee.²⁷ There are many instances like this in

¹⁵ Varsha Joshi, *Polygamy and Purdah*, p.119.

¹⁶ DK- *Rajlok*, pp.334-502

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 192, 415-431.

¹⁸ James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Vol. I, p.246.

¹⁹ DK-*Rajlok*, pp. 415-730. There are large number of festivals and occasions on which the guests are coming to Rajlok. Mainly on Dusharra and Raksha Bandhan.

²⁰ R.P. Rana, "A dominant class in upheaval: the zamindars of a North Indian region in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 24,4, Sage, New Delhi,1987,p.404. the twelve kotris are Kilanot, Chatrbhujot, Nathawat, Balibhadrot, Khangarot, Sultanote, Panchanot, Gugawat, Kumbhani, Khumbhawat, Shivbhrampota and Banbirpota.

²¹ DK-*Rajlok*, register no. 24 & 25. All the queens were known by their natal clan names which appear throughout the document.

²² *Ibid.*, P. 531.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.101, 367.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.963-970.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.849, 853.

²⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 415-733.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 415.

the *Dastur Komwar* which depict the importance of these occasions. If the daughter of some important *thikanedar* was unable to visit the *Rajlok* then gifts were sent to her through an important official.

As some *thikanas* became very powerful during the 18th century, the state had to make and renew alliances with them. If the *thikanadar* is of the same clan then sending *rakhi* was the only means to keep the ties strong. In the 18th century Jait Singh of Pahadnawala was constantly increasing his military strength for which the Jaipur state made a regular contact with him and every year his daughter was invited on the day of *rakhi*.²⁸ Every year between 1718 and 1733 A.D Bai Laad Kawar daughter of Jait Singh Pahadnawala got *rakhi*.²⁹ Every year she was given Rs. 40 as *vida* (seeing off) of *rakhi*. The other *thikanas* who were close associates of the king for long time were given separate and special treatment and their daughters were presented with money and gifts. In 1733 A.D Bai Laal Kawar, daughter of Guman Singh Kilanot got *rakhi* for the king she was received in the *Rajlok* and she was presented 57 *thans* from Kirkiri Khana. Along with it a *sevgo* of Rs. 47 and 2 *anna*, one sari of Rs 26 and 2 *anna*, a *ghagra* made of mashru with floral pattern (*msahru butadar*) of Rs. 14 and 1 *anna*, 1 blouse with floral designs made of *zari* costing Rs 7, 2 *sevgos* of Rs 9 and 2 *anna* of 6 *thans* each, 2 sarees of print costing Rs 2 and 1 *anna*, 2 *ghaghra* of print costing Rs 1 and 3 *paisa* and 1 blouse coloured of 1 and ½ metre.³⁰ A section in *Dastur Komwar- Rajlok* contains information of the *rakhi's* received by the Jaipur Raja Sawai Jai Singh in 1734 A.D. On *miti Fagun Budi* 12 as per the *rakhi's* received the following were given of *vida* (seeing off) which amounted to a total of 25 *mohars* and Rs 2459 and 2 *anna*.³¹ In Samvat 1790/1733 A.D. in all 18 *mohars* and Rs. 2420 and three *annas* were presented to the *baijees* who got *rakhi* for *Shree jee* (king).

The distribution of money and *mohars* is as follows³²:-

s.no	Name	Rs. In total	Shree jee	kawar Madho Singh	mohars
1.	Bai Amar Kawar	841.2 <i>anna</i>	600	241.2 <i>anna</i>	----
2.	Bai shree Vichitar Kawar jee	691.2 <i>anna</i>	450	241.2 <i>anna</i>	----
3.	Bai Kishan Kawar jee	586.2 <i>anna</i>	345	241.2 <i>anna</i>	----
4.	Bai Prem Kawar jee	----	----	-----	10
5.	3 Daughter's of Fateh Singh Rajawat	116.1 <i>anna</i>	-----	-----	-----
6.	Bai Lad Kawar jee	38.3 <i>anna</i>	-----	-----	-----
7.	Bai Sukhna of Chandoli	25	-----	-----	-----
8.	Bai Umaid Kawar	28	-----	-----	-----
	D/o Chawad Singh				
9.	2 daughter from Khirni	58	-----	-----	-----
10.	Bai Maya Kawar D/o Devi Singh Rajawat of Chandoli		-----	-----	1
11.	Bai achal Kawar D/o Payo Singh Rajawat of Khirni		-----	-----	1
12.	Bai Dalail Kawar D/o Inder Singh Rajawat of Khirni		-----	-----	1
13.	Dai khusyal Kawar D/o Sobhag Singh Rajawat of Khirni		-----	-----	1
14.	Bai Khushal kawar D/o Raghunath Singh Rajawat of Khirni		-----	-----	1
15.	Bai Sirdar Kawar, Bai Jaskawar D/o Ajab Singh Rajawat		-----	-----	2
16.	Bai Sujan kawar D/o Chawad Singh Rajawat		-----	-----	1

These elaborate gifts and presents suggest the political importance of these rituals performed in the *Rajlok*. All these festivals were closely watched by the King himself. The chief queen herself looked after the arrangements. Every year these *Baijees* (daughters) use to come for the festival of Raksha Bandhan and were honoured accordingly. In 1735 A.D. the number of *mohars* presented on the festival of Raksha Bandhan increased to 28 and the Rs came down to Rs 280.³³

An interesting aspect of *parda* is visible in these documents where the names of *bai's* (daughters) are constantly appearing but the queens were referred by their clan names. The *parda* was applicable to the queens where their name was a secret to others. This might have been due to the popular culture and strict adherence to the *purda* which was applicable to the queens. The queens followed it to uphold the name of their clan.

The treatment given to the individual *thikanedars* and their female members in *Rajlok* depended upon the political significance of *thikana*. The *thikanas* with which only a formal relationship was maintained were treated differently and the value of gifts was also reduced. In 1788 A.D. on *miti sawan sudi* 15, Wednesday a

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 515-517.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 515-518.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 518, in samvat 1790/1733A.D., on *miti posh budi* 6.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 708.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 709-711.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 712.

Rakhi was received from *Dera Rampur* of *Purgana* Chatsu, for which Rs. 5 and one than of Mushra was presented and Rs. 1 was bestowed at time of seeing off (*vida*).³⁴

The festivals were not only the occasions for the exchange of gifts and bestowing honours. The other occasions for gift giving and bestowing *sirpao's* were death³⁵, condolence meetings (*matami*)³⁶, marriages³⁷, and child birth³⁸ and *Bhai Duj*.³⁹

The highest position in *Rajlok* in term of receiving gifts and honours was of the *Baijees*. The daughter and sisters of the reigning king were always presented gifts of higher values in comparison to the daughter of the other *Thikanas*. In Samvat 1790/1733 when the sister of Madho Singh and daughters of Sawai Jai Singh visited *Rajlok* on the occasion of Raksh Bandhan along with *Baijees* of the other *thikanadars*, they were given a large amount of money by king and the prince.⁴⁰

Other occasions on which the mothers, wives, sister and daughters of the *thikanadars* visited the *Rajlok* were Diwali, Holi, Marriage ceremonies, Bhai Duj, Dusherra, Teej, Gangor and Sog (condolence). These are very few instances where the mothers and grandmothers of *thikanadars* visited king and the *Rajlok*. In 1766 A.D. the grandmother of Raja Hari Singh of Kama came along with her grandson to Jaipur, special arrangements were made for her stay at Badanpura.⁴¹

Many a times *Rajlok* also participated and made arrangement for marriage celebrations of the daughters of *thikanadars*. The *Rajlok* then acted as a centre for strengthening political alliances with the *thikanadars* and non-Kachhawa other dynasties. For instance in 1769 A.D. the *sagai* ceremony of Bai Chandan Kawari (d/o Raja Hari Singh jee Rajawat) was performed at Jaipur with Sisodan (s/o Maharaja Bhiv Singh ji Nathjee of Jodhpur). The arrangements for the ceremony of *sagai* were made in *Zenani Deodhi* of *Majee Shree Chandowt jee*. The male members who followed the bride-groom in *Deodhi* were *Purohit* Fateh Kishen of Madhu Sudan, *Purohit* Mansaram Kamdar of *Majee shree Chandawatjee*, Gulam Singh; Naib of *Zenani deodhi*. The *Majee sahib* presented them 1 coconut, 2 gold *mohars*, supari and 5 units of *mukara*.⁴²

Further the marriage expenses of Raja Hari Singh's daughter were borne by *Majee Shree Chandawat jee* from her own resources and *Purohit* Mansaram Kamdar was made incharge to look into the expenses individually.⁴³ The *jeeman* (feast of marriage) was also arranged in *Deodhi* of *Majee Shree Chandawat jee* instead of *darbar*.⁴⁴

These celebrations helped in reinventing and cementing the political alliances. The regularity of celebrations kept the relations intact. Special arrangements were made to receive any dignitary of importance. The entrance of *Zenani Deodhi* was highly guarded. The ladies apartments existed in complete exclusion. *Sukh Niwas* was the palace occupied by the Chief Queen. It was a heavily guarded palace. As it was residence of the queen, complete seclusion was maintained. But, there are few instances in the records which confirm that important guests of state were received and honoured in *Sukh Niwas*. In 1820 A.D. Nopal Singh s/o Bahadur Singh of Jhilai (an important Rajawat *thikana*) came to Jaipur from Bikaner. His formal admission into state service was accepted in the *Sukh Niwas*. He offered a *nazar* of Rs. 5 to *Shree jee* and *Majee Sahib* separately and gave Rs 4 of *nichrawal* (money which symbolizes warding off evil spirit).⁴⁵

Raja Badan Singh of Bharatpur was a close associate of Sawai Jai Singh. In 1731 A.D. Bisham Singh S/o Badan Singh Jat and his wife visited Jaipur to meet *Maharani jee Shree Rathor jee*. For honouring the wife of Bisham Singh Jat valuable items given were:- 10 *thans* of 1 meter and 8 *gaz* each, 4 *thans* of 1 *gaz* each, 2 sarees of *zari* costing Rs. 34, 2 *ghaghras* of *mashru butadar* each of Rs. 12 *anna* and 3 *paisa* and Rs. 12 and 12 *anna* and 1 *paisa*, respectively. A blouse of 2 *gaj* made of *zari* costing Rs. 8 *annas*, one blouse of 2 *gaj* of print.⁴⁶ Such a welcome extended to Badan Singh's family shows close ties between Bharatpur and Jaipur kingdoms.

Various other women from different dynasties and *thikanas* were also invited. Whenever, they paid visit a formal ceremony was organised in order to recognise and honour their presence. The functions and rituals, associated with *jamana* (birthday), *janaiu parawan* (ceremony of sacred thread), *mundan* (head shaving

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.733.

³⁵ *DK-Jat, Jadam Nathawat Naruka and Jogi etc.*, lot of information is available about the *Sirpao's* sent by the Jaipur king in all the 36 Registers of *Dastur Komwar*. For example Register no -7(jat, Jadam), pp. 350, 449 and Register no-26(Nathawat and Narukas), pp. 404,429, 437-439 etc

³⁶ *Ibid.*,

³⁷ *Dastur Komwar- Rajlok*, pp.415, 509, 519, 523-525.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 166, 412.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 521-522.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 709-10.

⁴¹ *DK*, Register no. 26 (Nathawat), p.734.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 741-743.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 743.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 744.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 429.

⁴⁶ *DK- Register no-7*, p. 448.

ceremony of child), *chhati* (sixth day celebration after child-birth) were also celebrated in the *Rajlok*. These functions reveal a clear hierarchy in the *Rajlok*. Here, *Majee Sahib* and *Maharani jee* had an upper hand over other women of *Zenani Deodhi*. On *miti baisakh budi 2*, Sunday the *janaiu parawan* of prince was done and on this occasion *kawar jee* was presented 71 *mohars*, and Rs. 50 and Rs. 100 were given for *nichrawal*. The *guru mantra* (a verse for recitation) was given by Bhatt jee Shree Govind Ramjee for granting of *mantra* he was presented 5 *mohars* and a *threma pashmina butaadar* (a shawl made of pashmina wool with floral pattern). The *Gujarati* guru *bishabnath gaur jee* presented *janaiu* so he was given Rupees-----.⁴⁷ Though the *purohits*, *gurus*, *mahants* and the *nazirs* could enter the *Rajlok* but their movement was also limited. The *gurus*, *mahants*, and *purohits* were consulted by the queens and *Majee Sahibs* on various political and religious matters, and whenever they visited the *Rajlok* their area was marked beyond which they could never go. The *nazirs* were allowed free movement inside *Zenani Deodhi* as they were responsible for administration and organisation of *Zenani Deodhi*. The safety and security of *Zenani Deodhi* was also a responsibility of *nazirs*.

The *pardayats* and *paswans* were admitted into *Zenani Deodhi* after a formal ceremony of *Chura Parawan* (giving of bangles). The lives of these *Pardayats* and *Paswans* were also marked by large number of events and festivals throughout the year. The occasion of celebration for the *pardayat* and *paswan* were marriages of their children and the festivals like *holi* and *dushera*. In the marriage ceremonies of their children the *pardayat* looked after the arrangements themselves. The *pardayats* were not wedded wife, but were accepted after the *chura* ceremony, but once they were admitted into the *Zenani Deodhi*, they were provided all the facilities available to the queens. To get good husbands for their daughters the *pardayats* used their influence and exerted their authority to make the celebration of marriage a success. The *pardayats* also participated in all the celebrations arranged by the queens in the *Rajlok*. Specially, the marriages⁴⁸, and child birth⁴⁹ and festivals like *Diwali*, *Dushara*, *Holi* etc. At times they were formally invited. The condolence and funeral ceremonies were also the events where they presented themselves.⁵⁰

Some of the *pardayats* became influential to the extent that the ceremonies associated with various functions were performed in their respective apartments. In 1889A.D. *pardayat* Pholi Rai became so powerful that her apartment was the centre for the celebration of the marriages.⁵¹ Around the same time during the reign of Sawai Ram Singh *pardayat* Bhurai Rai also acquired lot of influence. The power she exerted is indicated by the large number of gifts and items she received. The gifts presented to her included horse, elephant of mark (*hathi nishhan ka*), horse with leash (*ghoda lagam ka*), *chandani* (tent), *sarpeach*, *kanat*, *lavajmo of zenani deodhi*, *palanquin* and money etc.⁵²

Bhurai Rai a *paswan* of Raja Ram Singh also acquired lot of wealth and power through her influences. By 1872 A.D. her influence rose to the level that while she was going to her natal family for the attending her brother's marriage she was presented with ceremonial gifts. A large number of the gifts and items were bestowed upon her which were specially meant for the queens.⁵³

The Dastur Komwar shows a large number of *pardayats*, *paswans* and *pattars* living in *Zenani Deodhi*. The treatment given to the *pardayats* was better than that meted out to *paswans* and *pattars* (dancers). For instance *pardayat* Pholai Rai was called as *pardayat Sahiba Pholai Rai jee*. She was the only *pardayat* who was given grants and gifts for the celebration of her birthday⁵⁴ and through her contacts she got her daughter *Bai jee lal* married to Inder singh s/o Rao Raja Tej Singh of Jodhpur.⁵⁵ The reason for Pholai rai to attain such a status was the birth of a male child. In 1884 A.D. she gave birth to a male child. After the birth of this child she began to be addressed as *pardayat jee sahiba shree pholai rai*.⁵⁶ Before, it she was merely called *pardayat pholai rai*.⁵⁷ On birth of the male child she was presented Rs. 8011 and the child *Chimnaji* (prince) was honoured with a gold bangles, 9 *mohars* and Rs. 341.⁵⁸ The birth of a male child in palaces was always desired and it also enhanced a woman's status. Mother of male child could become the chief queen and *Majee Sahib* respectively.

A large number of the *pardayats* were living in *Zenani deorhi*.⁵⁹ The title of *pardayat* was prefixed to their name like *pardayat Jawahar rai*,⁶⁰ *pardayat Bhurai rai ji*⁶¹, *pardayat Mahtab rai jee*⁶², *pardayat Kesar rai jee*⁶³,

⁴⁷ DK- *Rajlok*, p. 181. The amount of money presented to guru and year are missing because the document is destroyed.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 195.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 158-165.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 155-157.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 413, 415.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 419-434.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 413-439.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 412.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 412

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 130-470.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

pardayat Manak rai jee⁶⁴ etc. The *paswans* and *patars* were also given considerable importance as it is reflected in the records. The rituals associated with death were also strictly followed for *Pardayats*. In 1889 A.D. when *pardayat* Bhurai Rai died, all the rituals of funeral and crimation were followed.⁶⁵ In 1914 A.D., *pardayat* Jawar Rai of Mewar died and the condolence feast called *Baikuti* was organised.⁶⁶

Some *pardayat* enjoyed immense trust of the queens. It is reflected from the participation in the festivals and feasts where they were invited by queens. In Samvat 1953/1896 A.D., the Bai Jee Lal (younger daughter) of *pardayat* Keshar rai was married. The pre-marriage feast (*banoro*) of her was organised by Maharani jee Sahib Shree Jhalijee, Maharani jee Sahib Shree Chandawat jee and Maharani jee Sahib Shree Tawar jee together.⁶⁷

The servants employed for taking care of the daily requirements of *Zenani Deodhi* were mainly from the families who were for generations dependent on the state for their livelihood. Many a times these servants rose to important position and exercised a lot of influence on the royal family members. One such case in Jaipur was of Rupa *Badaran* who became the virtual ruler of Jaipur for fifteen years.⁶⁸ The *davris* (maid servants) rose to the status of *Badaran*. The *Badarans* were members of queen's personal staff whom she maintained for the day to day functioning of her *Rawala*.

The large numbers of eunuchs (*khojas*) were also employed by the state to guard the female apartments. In their official capacity they were known as *nazirs*. The eunuchs were well trained in the art of weaponry and communication skills. These eunuchs closely guarded and kept vigilance on the happenings all around the *Rajlok*. All entries to the *Rajlok* were scrutinized by *Nazir* and only after full satisfaction of quarries the entry was allowed. At times this important and respectable position allowed these *Nazirs* to acquire prominent positions in the state. A *Nazir* called Mohan Ram in 1818 A.D. got the nine year old son on the throne of Jaipur, with the title of Maharaja Sawai Man Singh. It was possible due to his influence on the *Majees*.⁶⁹ Panna Miyan and Mohan Nazir became very famous during the reign of Sawai Jai Singh and Jagat Singh respectively. Panna Miyan was so well versed in his work that Sawai Jai Singh orders him to engrave his name below Panna Miyan's name on the state seal. Then the nazir got "Ghulamast Panna, Badikosafi, Maharaj Agharaj Jai Singh Sawai" engraved on the state seal.

III. Conclusion

The paper focuses on the manipulations and complexes of the Jaipur household. Through the official connections the nobles tried to seek proximity to the king. The close association with the king was always rewarding for the Jaipur officials. The political relations of state were maintained from Darbar. For various state functions the Darbar was not only the arena. The Royal household of kachhwaha kings was also utilized to forge the political ties. The *Rajlok* was a centre where all the members of royal family lived together. But this space was never free of hostilities and jealousies. The defined hierarchies kept the relationships in a close knitted network of *Rajlok*. The princes were brought up under the guidance and care of *Rajmata*. While bringing up the prince the queens always tried to exert their influence over him because that influence would ultimately help to determine their positions in the *Rajlok*. Beside the *Rajmata*, the other queens constantly made efforts to take charge of the necessities through which they can seek favour from the *kawar*. All the religious ceremonies and festivities observed in the *Rajlok* had clear political under tones. In the *Rajlok* some relationships limits of the norm and other failed to catch up with it. Unlike in the Mughal harem there are signs of understanding concubines in the *Rajlok*. However this point needs to be further propped up.

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⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 838-842.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁶⁸ Varsha Joshi, *Polygamy and Purdah*, p. 167.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 173.