ABSTRACT

The present theme of Ph.D. thesis deals with the process of foundation and early history of the Jaipur City, from its foundation in 1727 A.D. till the death of its founder Sawai Jai Singh in 1743 A.D. Though, many works have been done on the political life of Sawai Jai Singh and his achievements in Astronomy, no serious attempt has been made to study the process of the foundation of the Jaipur City along with its early history during the life time of Sawai Jai Singh. It also comprises the town planning and organization of space into different functional units, with water conservation and management system. Further more his rare contribution in the field of mathematics and his efforts in institutionalizing the scientific knowledge in India would be emphasized anew. Hence, the present study is an attempt to fill this gap in Indian History in general and Rajasthan History in particular.

Jaipur, after its foundation, acquired the fame as one of the most graceful and planned cities - based on ‘Grid-Iron Pattern’ of street planning - of India, where it emerged as one of the major cities of Northern India during the 18th century.

Though, the eighteenth century is generally considered as a period of stagnation and general decline in India, scholars are widely divided on its nature. A group of historians in their monumental works came out with their conclusion that there was a general decline in the 18th Century because of the decline of the
Mughal Empire, though they have cited different causes of the decline of the Empire. Later on a number of scholars have challenged the whole thesis of general decline so far as eighteenth century India is concerned, and declared that the eighteenth century was not a period of overall decline in India and it was a period of economic prosperity - growth of trade and commerce and emergence of some new cities - and cultural progress at the regional level.

In context of the above mentioned debate, it is very imperative to assess foundation of Jaipur in the wider scenario of the eighteenth century. The present study helps not only to show Jai Singh’s efforts and achievements but also contributes and gives a new direction to the ‘Eighteenth-Century Debate’. It will definitely change our understanding of the 18th Century India and helps in understanding its history and culture in a proper perspective.

An attempt has been made to analyze the factors which were responsible for the transfer of the Kachhwaha Capital from Amber to the newly built city of Jaipur, its founding process and planning, fortifications, buildings, city as a centre of scientific learning- particularly Astro-mathematical, the motives, approach and methodology behind Jai Singh’s scientific pursuits, together with the problem of institutionalization of the scientific learning in India. Jaipur as a centre of trade and commerce, an estimation of the city’s population, its hydraulic system - rain water management, its conservation and supply, and the structure and functioning
of its administrative system along with elements of change and continuity in
different related fields, have also been given due space in the present work.

The whole work has been divided into seven chapters, besides introduction
and conclusion. An outline of the chapters is as follows:

The first chapter is divided into two sections – (A) geographical profile and
(B) historical background. The first section deals with the geographical features of
the Jaipur City, such as, its location and situation; topography—land, soil and its
texture; dimensions of the city and its geographical limitations; weather and
climate – temperature, rainfall, winds, etc.; sources of water—rivers, lakes, ponds,
etc.; agricultural conditions; flora and fauna; and natural resources of the region.
The second section analyses the historical background of the region—particularly
the political developments in the state of Jaipur (Amber), from its origin in the 11th
Century till the period of Sawai Jai Singh (first half of the 18th Century), along
with the origin and nomenclature of the State’s ruling dynasty.

Second chapter is composed of two parts—(A) foundation of the Jaipur City
and (B) town planning of the City. The first part contains five sub-sections. In its
first sub-section, factors responsible for the shift of the Kachhwa Capital from
Amber to Jaipur, has been discussed. Second sub-section analyses the founding
process of the Jaipur City. Third sub-section deals with the grant of Imperial
recognition to the new Capital City. Fourth sub-section deals with the ruler’s
invitations to different socio-economic classes of the State to build their shops and
houses in the newly founded city. And, the fifth sub-section evaluates the
nomenclature of the localities. The second part consists of three sub-sections,
besides discussing the concepts of town planning in its introductory part. The first
sub-section analyses the historical background of the Grid-Iron System of street
planning in India before Jaipur. Second sub-section, on the basis of the physical
survey and contemporary sources, explains and evaluates the town planning of the
walled city of Jaipur. The last sub-section discusses about the town planners of the
city.

Third chapter is consisted of six sections. The first section deals with the
physical description of the city walls and its gateways. Second section discusses
general characteristics of the commercial buildings i.e. shops, and houses on the
main roads or the chief markets. Second section explains the features of the
building within the Palace Complex, such as, entry gateways, Palace, Diwan-i-Am,
Diwan-i-Khas, royal garden and temple, and other buildings within ‘Sarhad’ or
the boundary of the Palace Complex. Forth section deals with havelis or the
mansions- their structure and location, and other buildings within the walled city.
Fifth section deals with buildings in the outskirts of the city, such as, ‘Jal-Mahal’
or the Water Palace, ‘Ghat-ki-Guni’ or the ‘Purana-Ghat’ and the Jaigarh and
Nahargarh forts. The Mughal influence on building architecture of Jaipur is also
discussed in this section. The last section informs about the building material used
in the construction of buildings in the city.
Forth chapter defines foundation of the Jaipur City as a centre of scientific learning. It composed of four sections. First section analyses literary activities at Jaipur under the patronage of Sawai Jai Singh. Second section evaluates the scientific - Astro-mathematical, pursuits of Jai Singh, his objectives, and approach and methodology followed by him. In this section, special attention has been given to his mathematical contribution - particularly in the field of theorization. Third section estimates the scientific work of Jai Singh, his achievements in the fields of Astronomy and Mathematics and his limitations. A comparative approach has been adopted in analyzing his work. And, finally the forth section highlights the problem of institutionalization of the scientific knowledge in India, and various degenerative factors which led to the stagnation and decline of the scientific temper in India, especially after Sawai Jai Singh.

The fifth chapter entitled “emergence of the city as a commercial hub” is composed of six sections. The first section deals with the trade-routes connecting the Jaipur City from different trade centers, and the means of transportation in the first half of the 18th Century. Second section analyses the socio-economic structure of society, classification of different commercial groups and an estimation of the city’s total population, in the mid-18th Century, has been estimated by two different methods. Third section deals with the marketing system in the City-markets, their agencies and their organization, and items of transaction. Forth section deals with the main industries of Jaipur, including the royal manufacturing
departments. Fifth section elaborates the taxation system—nature and types of taxes and fines collected from different commercial classes. The last section estimates the state-policy towards various commercial groups and the role of state in promoting trade and commerce.

Sixth chapter explains and analyses the water management system at Jaipur, as evolved by Sawai Jai Singh. It deals with the sources of water—seasonal rivers and rain water collected in the hilly regions and its valleys, and their channelization through artificial canals. Water conservation and its management, through a number of water bodies, such as, lakes, dams, ponds, tanks, wells and step-wells, interconnected by a network of masonry canals and underground aqueducts or conduits, is given due space in this chapter. The general architectural features of these water bodies are also discussed in this chapter.

The last chapter evaluates and analyses the structure and functioning of the administrative system in the Jaipur City, as modified and implemented by Sawai Jai Singh. This chapter consists of four sections. The first section deals with duties and functions of the city-officials, their co-ordination with the state-officials, and fixing of their responsibilities both locally and collectively. Second section deals with the intelligence service or the spy system as evolved by Jai Singh. Third section analyses the structure and working of the judicial system of government in Jaipur. The last section deals with the role of the city-officials in the collection of different taxes and fines.