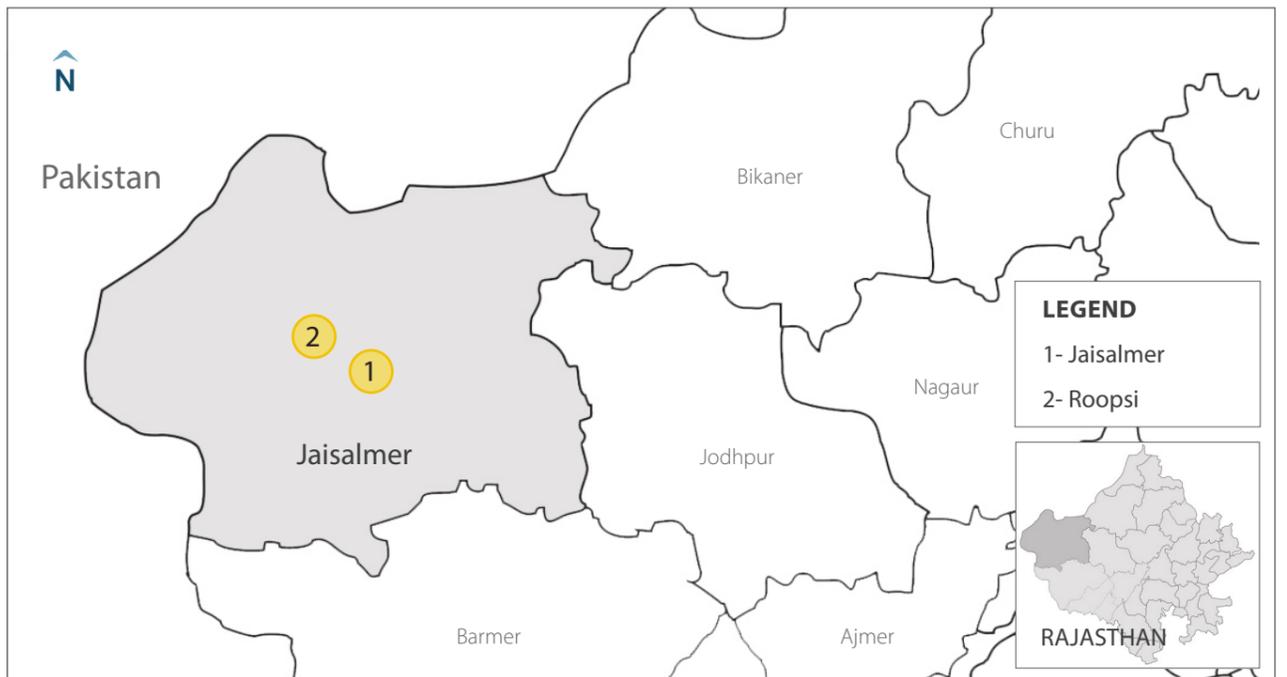


**OVERVIEW**

Places Visited :	2
Distance Traveled :	1100 km
Elements Mapped :	86
Scholars Approached :	3
Craftspeople Approached :	2



Jaisalmer is the largest district of Rajasthan. Central to the Thar desert, it has the most sandy, barren and arid climate. With less rainfall, the geographical conditions allow minimal flora to survive, mostly comprising of desert bushes. The indigenous communities from these regions are traditionally involved in pastoral activities and occasional agrarian activities.

The vernacular furniture identified in Jaisalmer bear similarity to the ones encountered in Barmer. One of the unique furniture elements from Jaisalmer was the **bel**. Found in traditional mud houses, a **bel** is an inbuilt storage shelf used for vessels. These structures are made by the women of the house using an admixture of cow or horse dung, mud and hay; often painted with lime and decorated with mirror work. The same technique is also used to make larders called **kohtiyu** with wooden shutters. The insulating properties of the materials make it ideal to store perishable food products in a region where the difference in day-night temperature is as high as 20 degree celsius. The **kohtiyu** is the only form of enclosed storage observed in the rural region, hence also used as a safe. Other types of vernacular furniture to cater to the act of storage are the **kathathra** and the **tani**. A **kathathra** is a wooden chest used to store quilts, mattresses and

valuables. The wood used to make the **kathathra** is most often from the desert teak locally known as the **Rohida** tree. The species are a prominent feature of the landscape of the Thar desert in India. A **tani** is a hanger made of a wooden log hung from the ceiling supported by **khuti** on the wall. These are used to hang clothes and accessories of everyday use.

A **bajot** is a low wooden table with diverse uses and varying shapes. While there are several **bajot** found in domestic contexts, these are also used in temples as surfaces to place offerings and lamps. The ones used in religious contexts were clad with silver sheets and had motifs embossed on them. The other prominent vernacular furniture in a religious context is the **jhula**. A **jhula** is a cradle used to place idols of the Hindu god Krishna who is worshiped commonly in Rajasthan.

Water pitcher stands are extensively used. These, known as **ghaduchi** in other regions of Rajasthan, are referred to as **ghanuchi** in Jaisalmer. A **ghanuchi** is a wooden trestle with wooden ties strategically fixed to hold water pitchers/pots. **Takht** is another furniture found commonly and used to sleep or sit on.



A monthly report of field visits conducted by Directed Research Project at DICRC, CEPT University, as a part of Study of Vernacular Furniture of North West India.

1. Ghunuchi (water pitcher stand), 2. Kohtiyu (Larder), 3. Bel (Wall shelf), 4. & 5. Kathathra (Chest), 6. Swing Bed, 7. & 8. Bajot (low seat), 9. Deghchi (cooking pot) & 10. Aada (In-built cabinet).