Introduction
History of Jat resistance is a significant aspect in the context of political and administrative history and hence it has found mention in almost all the official sources of Later Mughal period like *Masir-i-Alamgiri, Masir-ul-Umara, Futuhat-i-Alamgiri, Tazkerat-us-Salatin-i-Chaghta, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Shahnama Munawwar Kalam, Iqbalnma*. The Jats occupied considerable area over the core territory of Delhi, Agra and Ajmer. The resistance posed by the Jats covered the large span of time from late seventeenth to early eighteenth century, a period of political instability at the centre when Mughal Empire was losing its grip on peripheral areas.

Father Wendel, a French authority, stayed in India from 1751 to 1803 and in Bharatpur from 1764 to 1768, opines that ‘if only the Jats were not responsible for the decline of the Mughal Empire. The *umaras* who were supposed to support the Empire had initiated in weakening it. But the half work of decline was done by the Jats. They have raised the pillar of their prosperity on the remains of the Empire.'¹

There are three or four trends of historiography set up by the historian regarding these upheavals of eighteenth century. Broadly speaking these approaches are the theory of religious persecution, inefficient working of institution or *jagirdari* crisis, agrarian crisis etc. Jadunath Sarkar extended the theory of religious persecution by Aurangzeb.² Jadunath Sarkar explain the cause of the decline in terms of degeneration in the personalities of the rulers. Sarkar opines that “the revolt of Jats, Satnamis and Sikhs were against the religious persecution of Aurangzeb”. He says that Aurangzeb left the policy of fixing the state demand and protecting *ryots* which his ancestors did and the oppression of the Jat peasants by the Mughal officials in Mathura region provoked the “Hindu Reaction”³

However, Satish Chandra ascribed the cause of the decline to the inefficient working of institutions i.e. *jagirdari* and *mansabdari* system. He says that “Mughal Empire depended, in a very large measure, on the proper working of institution” but due to the expansion of the empire and consequently the influx of Deccani nobles created the problem of *bejagiri* emerged and the surplus was too acute to satisfy the

---

demands of the assignees. M. Athar Ali supporting the view of Satish Chandra gives a very detailed statistical account that the claimant of jagirs more than the jagirs available. He opines that “the scarcity of paibaqi land made the routine working of the jagirdari system impossible.” Satish Chandra in his revised thesis says that the non functionality of the jagirdari system was the crux of the crisis. Increasing inability of jagirdars to resist the growing assertiveness of the zamindars and to protect the interest of the peasantry gave an impetus to a crisis. However, Irfan Habib in his work Agrarian System of the Mughal India (1556-1707) observes that the problem was more agrarian in nature rather than any other cause. He says that it was due to the oppression of peasantry in the form of high revenue demand and the share of the official that the peasants were living on below subsistence level and “there was no choice left to the peasant but that between starvation or slavery and armed resistance.”

**Approaches Regarding the Jat Uprising**

Historians have divergent opinions regarding the Jat resistance in particular. Following the line of J. N. Sarkar the theory of religious persecution was assigned by K.R. Qanungo that in the second half of the seventeenth century because of the orthodox policy of Aurangzeb “Hindu India woke to life again.” K. Narwar Singh also agreed with the view point of K. R. Qanungo that “Aurangzeb’s Islamic policy alienated and offended Hindu sentiment.” Similarly U. N. Sherma also says that Aurangzeb has adopted ruthless policy towards Hindus and that is why the Jats, Sikhs, Satnamis raised their heads against his policies. However, Irfan Habib opined that the Jats did not have any link with any religious movement. The Jat revolt was “under the narrow caste horizons of the peasants and the plundering instincts of their
Sunanda Bhattachrya says that ‘Jats owe their rise due to the religious persecution of the Mughals which drove them to organize revolt’ but the struggle among the Jats, Rajputs and the Mughal Empire was a struggle for the establishment of overlordship. G. C. Dwivedi opines that Aurangzeb’s interference in the traditional way of living and in their institutions provoked the Jat revolt. But R. P. Rana refuting his argument says that G. C. Dwivedi based himself on the evidence provided by M. C. Pradhan’s work “Political System of the Jats of Northern India” which is itself based on oral history, a kind of unreliable source. Further M. C. Pradhan undertakes study of the Jats of upper Doab which is not affected by the Jat uprising. However, R. P. Rana opines that due to the excessive fiscal demand from the peasants, the ambitious zamindars who were replaced by the Mughal jagirdars especially the Amber chief in their ancestral domain got the support of these peasants because of their oppression.

The clannish ties also compelled the peasants to support their leaders. In response to the theory of Jadunath Srakar that the Jat uprising was provoked by Aurangzeb religious policy, says that the Jats did not belong to any particular religious tradition. Satish Chandra opines that the “Jat uprising had all the characteristic of the peasant uprising”. Ram Pande in his work “Bharatpur Upto 1826” says that the “Jat movement, was basically a movement of Jat zamindars, with the massive support of the peasants. Earlier the historians were much influenced by the approach set up by J. N. Sarkar but later on the historian analysed the problem on more secular basis and accepted that the crisis was more of administrative and agrarian in nature rather than religious.

**Counter perspective Approach**

Counter perspective approach of writing history, a new trend, started with the works of Shail Mayaram and Lokesh Bharti. Shail Mayaram has done the works like

---

11. Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556-1707, op. cit., p. 393.
12. Sunanda Bhattacharya, *Role of the Jats and Rajputs in the Mughal Empire*, (1707-1740), Jodhpur, 1979, p. 44.
"Against History: Against State"\textsuperscript{16} and "Resisting Regimes"\textsuperscript{17} on Meo tribe. One of her articles "Mughal State Formation- A Mewati Counter Perspective"\textsuperscript{18} was also written on this subject. Lokesh Bharti has submitted thesis related to counter perspective approach Her work is on Meenas.\textsuperscript{19} These writings highlights “a subject group’s perspective” or “response of a local community” towards the state.

Counter perspective approach was adopted in history writing in order to counter or cleanse the writings set up by the official chronicles. The tribes like Meenas, Gujars, Narukas, Jat etc. in official histories were treated as criminals or law breakers. As in case of Jats we find that in official records they were cited in abusive language which shows the official wrath against them. Even the regional records like Arzdashts and Vakils Reports mention them as mufsidan, rahzanana, Jat-i-badzat etc. No record is made about their grievances even in the official histories. They are mostly treated as subjects or revenue payers who defied revenue and became seditious at that time. Muntakhab-ul-Lubab mentions Churaman as the one who is rebellious by nature (mufsid pasha-i-mashhur bood) and (mala’een) evil breed.\textsuperscript{20} Tazkerat mentions them as the Churaman Jat is a rebel (mufsid ast) and voilant (maghuraan).\textsuperscript{21} Aurangzebnama mentions the Jats as (kafir) infidel,\textsuperscript{22} (fasad peshan) one who create disturbance,\textsuperscript{23} Jataan haramkhor qata-ut-tareeq (highway robbers),\textsuperscript{24} etc.

In contemporary period we find the emergence of oral history of these tribes in vogue. The oral tradition of these tribes was “recited” and “re-enacted"\textsuperscript{25} at repeated

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{16} Shail, Mayaram, Against History, Against State- Counter Perspective From the Margins, Columbia University Press, New York, 2003.
\textsuperscript{17} Shail, Mayaram, Resisting Regimes: Myth, Memory, And The Shaping Of A Muslim Idetity, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1997.
\textsuperscript{18} Shail, Mayaram, Mughal State Formation: The Mewati Counter-Perspective, The Indian Economic And Social History Review, 34, 2, (1997)
\textsuperscript{19} Lokesh Bharti, Reconstructing the Image of Meenas, M Phil. Dissertation, Centre For Historical Studies, 1998.
\textsuperscript{20} Khafi Khan,Muntakhab-ul-Lubab (MS) ,Ed. By.Maulvi Kabir Al Din Ahmad,Part II,1874,Calcutta., f. 776.
\textsuperscript{22} Munshi Devi Prasad,Aurangzebnama,Tr. By. Ashok Kumar, 2001, Jaipur. p. 53-55.
\textsuperscript{23} Saqi Mustaid Khan,Maasir-i-Alamgiri,(MS) Ed. By Agha Ahmad Ali.1871, Asiatic Society of Bengal, f. 93.
\textsuperscript{24} Tazkerat, op. cit., f. 235-236.
\textsuperscript{25} Mughal State Formation: The Mewati Counter-Perspective, op. cit., p. 177-195.
\end{flushleft}
performances signifies a powerful counter cultural oral tradition. In the oral histories of these tribes we find the antagonism against the policies of the state.

In case of Jats, who attach much value to the deeds of valour there is great likelihood of oral tradition originating and spreading. The Sakhas are the famous oral history of the Jats portrays the unpleasant side of history. Sakha literature percolate from one generation to other through professional singers.26

These tribes now educated themselves gained social status. They started cleansing their ancestral history from such blames. In order to present the clean image of their tribe, the counter perspective approach started. They tried to show the valour, competence and heroic deeds of their ancestors by avoiding the negative aspects. In writing Jat history the later Jat rulers are more highlighted for providing an identity to the community rather than the earlier leaders like Raja Ram and Churaman. Glimpses of such approach is found in the writings of Natwar Singh, Dharmachandra Vidyalankar, Vir Singh etc.

The works undertaken on the Jat history have an Empire centric approach. The historians have treated the problem from above. There is a need to study the problem from the side of the common people also and their grievances and conditions which compelled them to become seditious Another problem is that mostly the works on Jat history were based on official chronicles and foreign accounts that is why it lacks in representing the complete picture because they are treating the problem from one side.

Fortunately, we have rich information available to us regarding the Jat uprising in the regional records also. As Amber Raja most of the time was appointed to deal with the Jat problem, a comprehensive nature of information was recorded which throws some new light on the matter. These documents are preserved in Rajasthan State Archives.

The documents like Farmans and Nishsans, Arzdashts, Vakils Report, Khatoots, Kharitas, Taqsims, Muwazana, Akhbarat preserved in Rajasthan State

Archives and *Kapad Dwara* document preserved in the Sawai ManSingh Museum, Jaipur, are utilized here.

The other important sources are the various contemporary Persian Sources and the French foreign account of Father X. Wendel. The regional sources corroborated by these contemporary source will surely help us in representing the complete picture. It will also help us to understand that whether the nature of information in both these sources are identical or contradictory to each other.

*Farmans* as is evident from its name, it is the order of the Mughal Emperor to his officials and nobles. Large number of Farman send by the Mughal Emperor to the Raja of Amber regarding Jat problem are preserved in Rajasthan State Archives.

*Vakils* Report were the letters of the agent (*vakil*) of the Raja of Amber at the Mughal court. These cover day to day development in the political, social, economic and administrative spheres of the Mughal Empire. It is written both in Persian as well as in Rajasthan language. It covers the period of 1681 to 1715. These *vakils* were expected to safeguard the interests of their masters at the Mughal court.

*Arzdashts* were the letters of the officials of Amber Raja posted at different places in various *parganas*. The basic theme of these letters is the political economic and administrative condition as in the *Vakils* Report. The letters throw good information regarding the activities of rebels and the action taken against them. The effect of these upheavals at pargana level can clearly be noticed in these documents.

*Taqsims* are the summary account of revenue in the *pargana*, gives villagewise account. It generally gives the ten years account. The total area of *pargana*, the uncultivable land, area under cultivable land, the area under *punya-udik* is also mentioned. The total cultivable area as well as the area under each harvest of *rabi* and *kharif* is also mention. Sometimes the distance from *qasba* and the direction was also mentioned.

*Muwazana* documents contain history of various villages, arranged in strict alphabetical order and were compiled in the eighteenth century with the help of other documents like *raqba bandi* and *Arhsattas* of different kind. The documents contain
the number of villages, the area of arable land, land under cultivation, waste, forest, pools, nullah, hilly strips. These documents also mention about the jama figures. The details of village under different heads like khalisa, jagir, ina'm, ijara, varhdar, punya-udik etc.

_Khatoots_ contains information about day to day functioning of administration at _pargana_ level. The economic and political dimensions of local administration are the theme of most of the letters.

_Kapad Dwara_ is a collection of an exceptionally large mass of maps plans and notes on the planning. These documents belong to the period of 1583 to 1803 and are presently preserved in the City Palace Museum, Jaipur. These maps plans and notes are available in Rajasthani as well as in Persian language. It also throws good information regarding the physiographic condition and fortification of the Jat area. The maps illustrates the forts and physical features of the Jat Belt. Some of these maps being enclosed in the present study.

_Akhbarat_ are the records of the daily proceedings of the Mughal court. A news writer (akhbar navis) is always present at the court to record each and every incident of the Mughal court. This category of document also contains rich information on the topic.

Here an attempt is made to study the circumstances under which the Jats became able to carve out an independent state of their own. The problem became more acute because of the weakening of central authority. It should not, however, be seen only in terms of the struggle between the State and the efforts of the Jats to carve out an independent principality. There were other interesting dimensions of the Jat uprising such as to why these revolts took more frequently since the time of Aurangzeb.

The geography of the Jat area is also very important. We should see the contribution of geography, the worth of the Jat belt, the physiography of the region, the agricultural or the economic significance etc.
The reaction of the state against the activities of the Jats. The reason behind choosing the Raja of Amber as a proper instrument to deal with the Jat problem and why he himself was so much interested in taking this arduous task. What are the policies of Amber chief in dealing with the Jats. Did he ever adopt a conciliatory attitude or force always remain as means of his policy or the policies of Amber Raja at the local level. These are the various interesting aspects to look into it.

The contradictory interests of the various sections in Mughal hierarchy like the jagirdars, zamindars and the peasants and the position of the zamindars in the Mughal hierarchy. The noticeable feature regarding these uprisings is that the zamindars and peasants have clashing interests. The profit of one lies in the impoverishment of the other. So, there is need to look into the circumstances in which the both strata of society get united against the state. The role of the peasantry in the whole development, the nature of their participation, the peasants of those villages under direct control of the state are the diverse facets of the problem.

The other important thing is that the factors for the success of the Jat because it is very surprising that the Jats were living in the core of the Empire and the state can keep check on their activities more easily rather than to operate in any far flung area. Besides being opposed by the Mughal Emperor and Amber Raja the Jat became successful in achieving their plans. The source of their power should also be taken into account. The means of their power like the support of biradari, the support of other zamindars, the forts of the Jats, the arms, tactics adopted by them need to be studied also.

How they trained themselves into the art of warfare, the importance of the certain pockets in the Jat Belt, the contribution of individual Jat rulers.

The aspects related to the Jat uprising and the formation of Bharatpur State are so numerous to be assembled at one place. There were certain developments which were if not directly but partially played a role in the history of Jats like the role of the Sayyid Brothers at the Mughal court and their relation with the Jats, the resistance posed by Narukas, Panwars, Chauhans, Kalyanots, Rajawats, Badgujars, Meos etc. which were simultaneous to the Jat uprising. These are vast subjects to deal here, yet
somewhat connected with the Jat uprising. The Jat resistance is much wider and multi-dimensional subject in itself. We intend to focus the broad framework of the Jat resistance in the course of discussion in our chapters.