

Special Project '96

Image of a City : A Vernacular Pocket

Toa Mukerji
94613012

Guide
Prof. M. Bhandari

MSR -

श्री. ए. ए. ए. पुस्तकालय

I. D. C. LIBRARY

Pd/94-96 (Batch)

Industrial Design Centre
Indian Institute of Technology
Powai, Bombay - 400076

This Product Design Special Project entitled '**Image of a City : A Vernacular Pocket**' is hereby approved as partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Design.

Guide:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Bhandari', written over a horizontal line.

Date:

Acknowledgment

First of all I wish to thank Prof. Bhandari for his invaluable guidance throughout this project.

I am also grateful to the wonderful people of Matharpacady. My special thanks to my friends for their support throughout.

introduction

“Before the city there was hamlet and the shrine and the village:
before the village ,the camp, the cache, the cave, the cairn and
before all these there was a disposition of social life that man
plainly shares with many other animal species.”

Lewis Mumford , *The City in History*

The aim of this study was to study the conflicting coexistence of ethnicity and modernization arising in a city.

From various other aspects denoted by this idea, that of studying the life of a community as a whole; from their arrival to their present status; the development of a life-style in its totality, within the fabric of an urban settlement, formed the central concern of my efforts.

The city of Bombay offers many such examples existing in vernacular pockets throughout the island. The existence of such havens of tradition can only be explained by looking towards the development of Bombay which has not been like that of any traditional Indian city. Out of these- Girgaum, Mazgaon, Bandra, Bhaynder and Mahim come to mind immediately. In all of these precincts, communities have settled more than 200 years back, some even 400 years back, in search of economic stability around or near centres of occupation.

The vernacular pocket of my interest was Mazgaon, where the 250, years old Matharpacady village exists, inhabited mostly by the East Indian Christian community. My study includes a brief introduction to the city of Bombay, the pocket and its origin, the images of the community- its roots and traditions, the families living in Matharpacady- their present status and growth with time, the changes with time in the traditions and life-style of the people in Matharpacady and in the prominent landmarks, as a result of onslaught of modernization.

the city

The fishermen were here first. Before the East India Company Built its Fort... At the dawn of time, when Bombay was a dumbbell-shaped island tapering, at the centre, to a narrow shining strand....when Mazagaon and Worli, Matunga and Mahim, Salsette and Colaba were Islands, too-in short, before reclamation....turned the Seven Isles into a long peninsula like an open outstretched ,grasping hand, reaching westwards into the Arabian sea: in this primeval world before clocktowers, the fishermen -who were called Kolis-sailed in Arab dhows, spreading red sails against the setting sun . They caught pomfret and crabs, and made fish lovers of us all...There were also coconuts and rice. And above it all, the benign presiding influence of the goddess Mumbadevi, whose name -Mumbadevi, Mumbabai,Mumbai- may well have become the city's. But then , the Portuguese named the place Bom Bahia for its harbour, and not for the goddess of the pomfret folk... the Portuguese were the first invaders, using the harbour to shelter their merchant ships and their men-of-war; but then , one day, ... an East India Company Officer... saw the vision.. This vision- a dream of a British Bombay, fortified, defending India's West against all corners-was a notion of such force that it set time in motion."

Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*

Bombay was not a flourishing Indian city on its own. It was a city built by colonial powers. It did not grow around a sacred place nor did it grow along a river with its fertile ground, it was a salty, marshy bunch of islands with its natural harbours, the potential of which the Europeans realised. Right from 6th century onwards different powers started giving Bombay a mixed form, it was the influence of the Portuguese and the British that made Bombay grow as a complete flourishing township.. H-shaped Bombay was one of the seven islands and formed one of the eight administrative divisions of the Portuguese capital that was at Bassien. The Manor house built by Garcia da Orta was perhaps the starting of a settlement in Bombay, in 1554. In 1661 the king of Portugal gifted the Bombay islands to King Charles II of England when he married the Portuguese princess, Catherine of Braganza.

As it was physically separated from the mainland, the battles and political events that touched an affected the rest of India, affected Bombay insignificantly. Wars, natural disasters, political disturbances kept on bringing migrants in search of economic stability. Because of the lack of a planned design or masterplan, which helps in an organised growth of a city, Bombay grew in pockets, each pocket representing a complete town in itself, almost self sufficient in itself. So Bombay grew area by area, like a collage, of varying architectural styles, different urban styles and different ethnic and social groups. These pockets include multiple worlds and cities which have resulted due to different moulding forces, a very distinct set being the vernacular settlements - that are distinct in terms of the inhabitant's life-style and culture, fighting against the effects of time, fighting to hold on to their roots, adapting and adopting. One such city is Mazgaon-the dock city- 400 years old- with its settlement of mainly seafarers-Portuguese converted Indian Roman Catholics- which has been studied in detail.



the pocket

" Nothing is experienced by itself , but always in relation to its surrounding, the sequence of events leading to it , the memory of past experiences."

Kevin Lynch , *The Image of a City*.



The Miranda House



Drawing room in Miranda House

As our taxi took us from Byculla station towards Mazgaon , we could feel the gradual change in the surrounding, the atmosphere, the people and before we could find out why , the church of St. Annes with it's two distinctive steeples stood in front of us. It is known to be the third oldest church in that area. The evening mass had just got over and from the parish receptionist- Mrs. Joan Anderson-an old resident of that area, we came to know about village 'Matharpacady'-around ten minutes walk down the corner. And as we walked on with the high rising complexes on both the sides of the road, sudden glimpses of the old city-tiled roofs, wooden balconies, a mall with buildings set in strange, round cornerish suburban style ,tiny narrow by-lanes, bakeries, restaurants etc. could be seen. But the village? There was no sign of it anywhere- we were quite disappointed as we couldn't find anything remarkable. Slightly disappointed we kept on walking and asking. Looking at our disappointed faces an unknown person suddenly said -"are you students? Mr. Miranda will be able to help you I think, so many students come here...". So we walked on ahead and a sudden pattern began to emerge suddenly-small cottages with country tiled roofs and elongated verandahs supported by wooden balustrades , along very narrow lanes. It was late evening an old couples could be seen sitting in the balconies watching children play. We suddenly felt as if time has stopped - has forgotten this lovely place. A sudden lump came to my throat as of a 'home' was so strong over here. Unlike other places in Bombay, here everyone seemed to know everyone- and we didn't have difficulty in finding out uncle Miranda's house. The double storeyed 200 years old Miranda house where Uncle Francis and his brother stay- yellow coloured with green tiled roofs , is a stunning example if the olden times with wooden Burma teak roofs, sturdy wooden beams, rough stone floor and an incredible collection of carved wooden furniture. Uncle was surprised that we were not architects and we want to know more about the people . He said- " So many students come here but everyone sees the cottages , no one has asked about the people earlier."



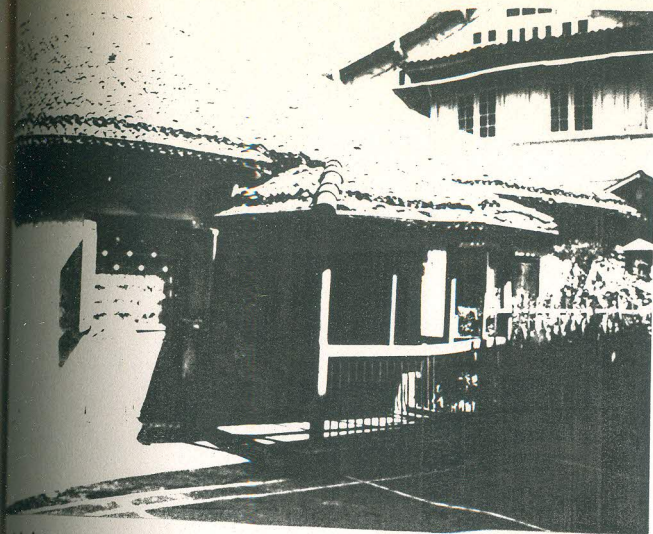
The Burma teak roof of Miranda House



The Lion's Den

He adds "we are East Indian community of Roman Catholics-we are not Goans and we are also not Anglo-Indians , we are Portuguese Christians-Maharashtrian converts-our community is 400 years old. There are three parishes -Rosary, St.Annes &Gloria-we used to go to Gloria but now only Goan christians go there ,Rosary is the east Indian parish. Talking to him we came to know that the full name of the village is 'Matharpacady oart". Many hundred years ago Matharpacady-east of Bombay had only east Indians staying in their Portuguese style cottages, with gardens- the first part of it's name has derived from the Marathi word-'mhatara' meaning old man and the second part from Portuguese'horte' meaning garden-thus the full meaning -'old people's garden'. Similar settlements were there in Kumbharwada in Dadar -which exists largely in the memories of old lives and also in Kotachiwadi in Girgaum. The 'village' as the 100 odd families fondly call it , has managed to maintain the identity the first Portuguese visitors gave it, right through the 18th , 19th century British rules and later the assaults of the Bombay builders. The occupations changed over the centuries from agriculture to several jobs in the dock area and it's shipping companies-British India Steam Company and Peninsula and Oriental-built by the maritime nation Britain, to the employment in Mazagon Dock Ltd., to a new generation of diverse white collared jobs. The village is definitely shrinking, with many of it's Portuguese style dwellings at the edges being replaced by concrete structures. The people have been able to restrain the havoc to some extent through several associations-Matharpacady Resident's Welfare Association is one of them. Now the village features on the heritage list and comes under the Grade III - where internal an external changes would be freely allowed- including extensions etc. but not destroying the special features which determines the character of the locality- and can be representative of the life-style of a particular community or region.

There are two distinct sections or communities staying in the village-the East Indians and the Goans. There are 12 Goan clubs, each belonging to a definite village of Goa- run by the trust of that village.



Uncle's home



Well in Matharpacady

These clubs house Goan youths for a rent as less as 30 Rs. per month or so and it is a home away from home for them, the only problem being that they cannot bring their families along. The Goans started coming to the village only after the British arrived and opened the B.I and P&O companies.

Uncle Miranda took us around the whole village and showed us four to five clubhouses, took us back near his home and walked us around 10 steps leading to the NE end of the village and we saw the beautiful Holy Cross Oratory- the centre of the village around which all the cultural activities, happenings take place. It was erected in 1875 after the great plague hit the village in 1870. This holy cross is housed in a church like structure called the oratory. We ended our tour for the day and decided to come back again to find out more about the wonderfully soft. Spoken and hospitable people of Matharpacady.

"We are" as uncle Miranda puts it "East Indian christians, not Goans, not Anglo-Indians, our mother tongue is Marathi." Intrigued by these I decided to delve more into their roots. I had decided to stay for a longer time in Matharpacady. Aunt Louie readily accepted me as her guest for 2 days.

the images of the community

“The older I grow & the longer I look at landscapes & seek to understand them, the more convinced I am that their beauty is not simply an aspect by their very essence, and that that beauty derives from the human presence.”

John B. Jackson , *Discovering the vernacular Landscape*

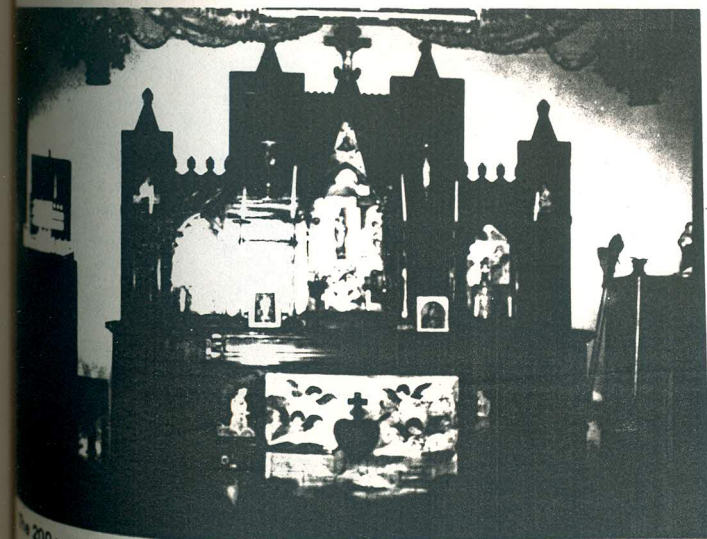
The roots

The history of this village is the history of colonial Bombay. Modern researchers have brought to light that the gospel of Christ was first preached in North Konkan by St. Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles of Christ-thus it was in India even before England or Ireland. It was a flourishing community in 6th century in North Konkan. There is a common belief though that Christianity was brought to the shores of Konkan by the Portuguese in the 16th century because along with their conversion policies they also imposed upon their converts Portuguese patronymics, initiated them into their European dress, taught them their language. The westernized christians in the course of time often came to disown their own customs. These christians were designated Portuguese christians, thus the names-Rodrigues, Baptista, Miranda, D'mello, Valladares. The language in the churches in India which was Syriac was replaced by Latin. All traces of primitive Christianity in N. Konkan was obliterated. The Portuguese came to India with a double object in 1498- to evangelize and trade. All political and economic preferences were bestowed upon the christians. Those who refused to accept the new faith were harassed and suppressed. The Hindus were not allowed to pray in public. Many Hindus were said to have left Salsette and Bassien. There were intermarriages between Indians and Portuguese. The Brahmins, Prabhus & other higher class Hindu converts were treated by the Portuguese with honour and distinction. Whenever the christians were in close contact with the Por. Missionaries, administrators, leaders, traders in Bassiene, Salsette, they grouped themselves into a casteless Christian society.

They were admitted in government offices as supervisors etc. The groups who were engaged in cultivation, fishing and other rural occupations handed down to them by their forefathers were different. They were allowed to continue their cultural life, though were initiated into Portuguese names. Even today the marriage ceremonies are performed in the church but are preceded by Hindu-like customs.



150 years old lampshade in the Baptista House



200 years old altar inside Amporo Club

The period between the fall of the Portuguese and the British power, there was an interlude of Maratha regime for half a century- then the Indian christians ceased to be the chosen subjects. There was a sudden fall from the leading position and fortunately they were the only people who were able to read Roman Characters and from this class the British government drew it's supply of clerks, assistants and secretaries. The British government in 1720 repelled the Portuguese clergy and thus the Bombay diocese was placed directly under the Pope, while Salsette and Bassiene continued to be under the Portuguese patronage.

The Bombay mission built up schools and colleges and thus helped the Indian christians in securing places in government service and in commercial and industrial concerns owned by the Europeans. From the days of East Indian Company till the introduction of railways and steamships there was a monopoly of the Indian christians in the government jobs. The introduction of steamers company-Sheppard Steamers & B.I. and P.O. companies, brought Goan immigrants pouring in along with christians from Malabar and Mangalore. The local christians and the Goans had the same names as the Portuguese & and both were called Portuguese christians with one fundamental difference that the Bombay christians were British subjects and Goans were Portuguese subjects. The former group thus discarded this name and to show their recognition for the East Indian company, took up the name-East Indian christians. To finish the conflict of churches the Portuguese patronage was removed from the churches and all were placed under the same prelate in 1956. The Gloria church of today is not the original one built in 1596& rebuilt in 1811, under the Padroado or patronage. In 1911 the new church was rebuilt. When the British came to Bombay in 1661, the East Indians were not allowed to enter the Gloria church because of the conflict of church. The exodus brought about the construction of Rosary church in 1794 and was called as Nosso Senhore de Rosar. The immigration of Goans in that area gave rise to the Chemneries or clubs, as they are known.

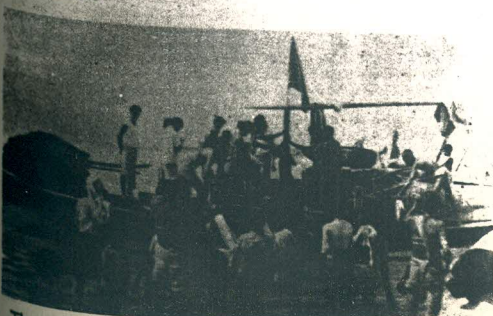


Samvedi women



Fishermen

Playing in the Catch



The Kolls

Social Divisions

In the three areas still separated from each other - Salsette, Bassien and Bombay there exist 5 broad cultural groups of the East Indians. They are- Samvedi Christians, Koli Christians, Vadvals, Salsette Christians and the Urbanised section. It is stated that the Portuguese converted Brahmins, prabhus, panchkalsis, charkalsis, sonars, khattris, bhandaris etc.- all these divisions have merged and given rise to the above mentioned grouped.

a. Samvedi Christians

This is a distinct cultural group in the East Indians, spread over the Northern Half of Bassien & live with their Hindu counterpart by the river Vaitarna. These people who are one of the sectarian divisions of Brahmins are said to have migrated to Sopara between 700 B.C.. & 300 B.C.... A typical identity of Samvedis is a chain with beads like betelnuts in shape- which has a legend behind. Today these people are engaged in agriculture. This shift in occupation from priesthood has given them the name as agricultural Brahmins. These people possess what are generally considered Aryan features- Men are tall, muscular & have sharp aquiline faces but the women are short & more slenderly built- a lot of them are extremely fair & have blue, green or light brown eyes. The only difference between them and their Hindu counterparts is that their conversion by the Portuguese have brought certain changes in dress and dist. The women wear uniform red saris and modest red cholis, whereas their Hindu counterparts wear any colour except red. The men have a red broadcloth cap. In their diet they have adopted the practice of eating mutton.

b. Koli Christians

The Koli Christians are another distinct group among the East Indians, exclusively engaged in the fishing trade. Their sea faring activi-

ties brought them in close touch with the Portuguese which gave the missionaries an opportunity to spread Christianity. The Kolis , both christians and Hindus stay together in little colonies called Koliwadass. Their hamlets are situated along the western coastline and at the entrances to the inland creeks. They are settled in these places mainly- Arnalla, Bassien koliwada, Utan, Gorai, Manori, Madh, Mahim, Dharavi, Sion, Sewri, Worli, Mandvi etc. The early history of Kolis state that they are migratory tribes who spread from the Balaghat & Mahadev hills & reached the shores . It is though difficult to ascertain their time of immigration. The name Kolaba is the derivative if Kola-bhat. The Kolis are not of the fisher caste- such as Machhis, Phois, Dhivars, Vellamars etc. In their dresses they wear any colour.

c. Vadvals

Vadvals , along with their Hindu counterparts are spread over the southern half of Bassien. They live in villages made up of Vadis. These people are mainly panchkalsis or kshatriyas who believe that they are originally fro the warrior class and due to transfer of power from the Hindus to the Mohammedans to the Portuguese, they weer forced to take to agriculture and carpentry. The agriculture group settled in Bassien and were known as Vadvals and the carpenters settled in Salsette and were known as Sutars. The people are generally of medium height, fairly well built and light complexioned.

d. Salsette Christians

There is actually no group in the community designated as Salsette Christians. The name was given by Europeans to christians of upper classes to differentiate them from the lower classes .They were educated in Portuguese and adopted Portuguese as their mother tongue. They have still preserved in their culture a good deal of Portuguese traits and are different from the anglicised Urban group.

e. Urbanised Section

Before the British Came these people were a part of Salsette christians, but during the British period the culture of Salsette christians staying in Bombay changed a lot. The policy of Jesuit fathers to intellectualise the Indian christians and internationalise their outlook towards life-changed the culture. The urbanisation of East Indians was a cultural process and is described as anglicisation. They adopted English as their mother tongue and their dressing, food, manner of eating ,everything is similar to the European lifestyle. The urban section is distributed in the following places-Bandra, Mahim, Dadar, Parel, Wadala, Girgaum, Mazagaon.

Of the five cultural groups in the community, the Salsette Christians and their urban section is grouped on a class basis but the rural section is based on the beliefs and practices common among the Hindu group from where they were converted. In a still broader view there are two groups- the rural and the intelligentsia.

Occupations

Among the occupations the main ones are agriculture, carpentry, fishing and the educated section works as the intelligentsia.

Agriculture involves cultivation of paddy, coconut, coco-palm. The paddy harvest festival is one of the most important festivals of Salsette and Christians. Palm & banana cultivation is very prominent in Bassien.

Carpentry is a very ancient occupation. During the Portuguese regime ships were constructed in Bassiene and Salsette islands. Besides ship building the carpenters were good in church and house building too. The houses of Bassien even within the last century were constructed entirely of highly ornamented wood. Some of these altars and furniture can still be seen in Matharpacady. In Bassien the shipbuilders confine themselves in making fishing boats and large Persian wheels.

Fishing is done all along the coastline from Bombay to Bassiene. This strip is very famous for its fish supply from very early times. The fishing community is quite wealthy and happy and is continuing with their occupation because of large demand and export of fish.

Education among fishermen is not very popular and occupational shift is not so prominent, but the case of carpenters is very different, the art of craftsmen is fast disappearing and education has found great favours among them and quite a large number have established themselves in clerical professions.

Coming to the urban area the growth of the city had deprived them of their lands at a very early date. But educational facilities both in the academic and the technical spheres have given them the opportunity to secure better appointments.

The occupational shift in the community during the last three generations has been from farming and crafts to skilled workmanship to professionals. Although the shift occurred under economic circumstances the community never entered the lower walks of life. The ruralites are undergoing hardships - thus it suggests that a day will come when the ruralites will cease to pursue agriculture as a major occupation.

Domestic life

- a. The village home and furniture.
- b. Eating habits
- c. Traditional dresses

a. The village, home and furniture

The villages differ according to the nature of the occupation of the inhabitants.

The agriculture class has parallel rows of independent houses connected by means of winding alleyways. These villages are situated at great distances from one another as the lands and fields surround their hamlets. The common examples are the villages of Salsette and Bassien.

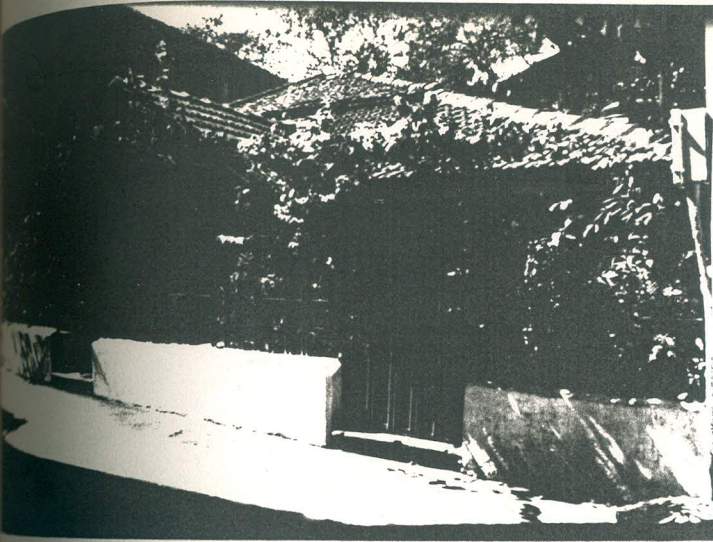
The second type is composed of a collection of plantation gardens called 'bhats' or 'vadis'. These villages are inhabited by the Samvedi christians and Vadvals. The homes are surrounded by wells, tanks and gardens. No definite arrangement of houses are followed.

Another type of village is the Kolivada-along the coast and at entrances to large creeks exclusively occupied by the fishermen. Arrangement of houses is haphazard but they have alleyways. The most striking feature of Koliwadass is the community well.

The villages in Matharpacady and Kotachiwadi still resemble the rural Salsette villages in their catholic atmosphere except that they are no longer surrounded by fields.

The most striking feature of East Indian villages is their catholic atmosphere comparable to the catholic countries like Ireland etc.

The life rotates around the church and a parish comprises of a number of villages but in urban area the parish comprises of the individuals living in a certain demarcated area and the church in the area is regarded as the parish church. At the entrance to every village there is a large stone cross and the village is dotted over with smaller crosses-erected to ward off the influence of evil. The feast of cross is celebrated yearly at the main cross.



The Coceslo House resembling a Vadi

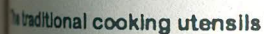
The homes: The Salsette christians have tiled roofs, stone floors , walls of brick or stone, a passage with front entrance leading to the rear and in this passage a stair way to go to the upper floor. Prominently displayed is the family altar . Furnitures are less in number. The Salsette christians do not believe in housing more than one family under a roof.

In Bassien the Samvedis and the Vadvals have more spacious homes. Construction and design is also different . Tiled roof , walls mainly built of wood. The front beams, doors windows, carved entrances everything is of wood and the entrance has a long verandah occupying the full frontage. A large front room in which the family altar is kept and from this room a stairway leads to the upper rooms.

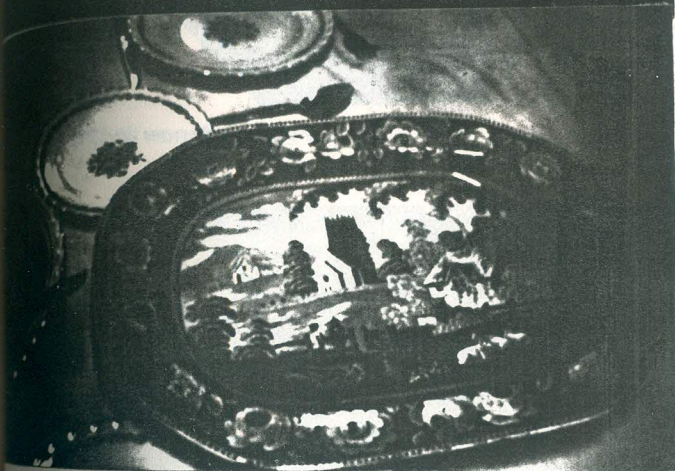
The koli Christian houses are different from all these settlements. The roofs are tiled and the walls are made of bricks, they have a running pattern at a definite height from the floor all along the walls. In the front verandah all the fishing equipment is kept. In all the Koli houses. A prominent construction in every koli Christian home is a 'tanki' to store a solution for strengthening the nets.

The urbanised group generally does not follow any definite pattern. The old villages have dwellings similar to the Salsette villages.

Furniture: The groups that had into closer contacts with the Portuguese manifest greater evidences of westernisation in the choice of furniture. Salsette christians have greater a profusion of tables and desks, wooden bedsteads, cupboards and crockery than the Samvedis, Vadvals and the Kolis. Similar is the case in the urbanised section as can be seen in Matharpacady.



East Indian cookery is very unique and different, though basically Indian, Portuguese names are given to many of their dishes and sweets. Bhakri is used and prepared in East Indian homes and is preferred more than bakery made bread. A speciality of East Indian cooking is the use of dry masalas - a curry powder prepared by pounding together a lot of selected ingredients. I was just in time to see auntie Louie



Assortment of rich crockery



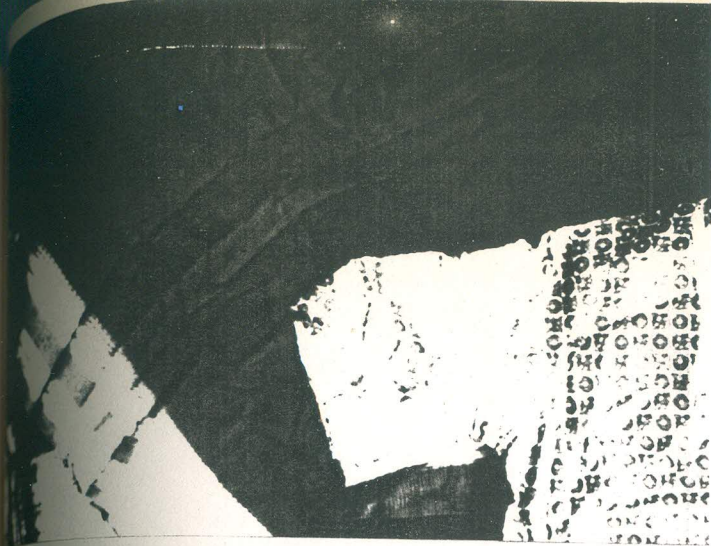
Dining room of the Urbanized section

prepare the whole years stock for the village. This masala is prepared in the months of April, May and bottled and stored for the year. The dishes prepared with this masala are many namely-Moile, Lonvas, Fritath, Temprath, Sak-sak, Indal, Baffath, Salpatel. A lot of sweet dishes are prepared during the festivities- Christmas cake, Bole de rai, Bolinha, Nankatais, Dho-dhol etc.

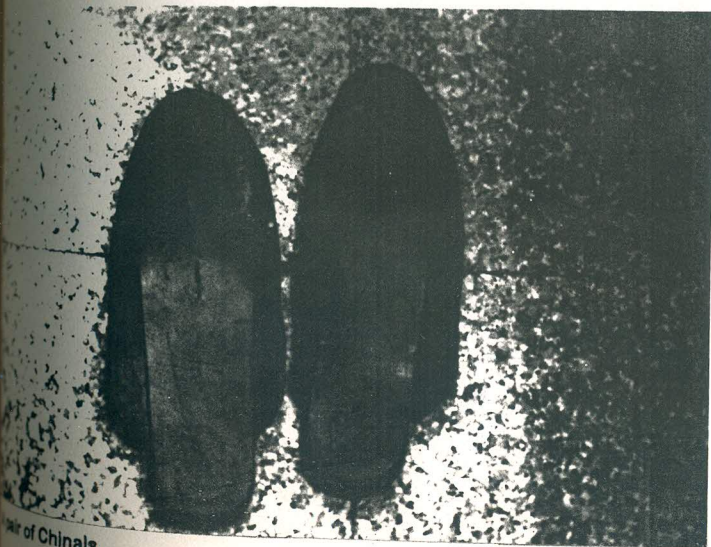
c. Traditional dresses

one of the most distinguishing features of different groups is the sari or lugade the women wear. With exception of the Kolis there is a uniformity in the colour of saris worn by Samvedis, Vadvals and Salsettis. The background of their sari is always a shade of red with faint white or black horizontal stripes or checks. These have two lengthwise borders in sharp contrast and two breadthwise borders at the ends out of which the aanchal or padara is richer of the two. Though the colour is same there is difference in the lengths - 9 or 10 yards for Salsatti women as they wear it lower and 6-6.5 yards for Samvedis and Vadvalis. A choli is worn too. On ordinary days the Salsetti christians wear a cotton choli with floral pattern and on festivals and marriages they wear a silk one with embroidered sleeves. As for widows the lugade is dark blue with red border and cholis of blue print. A married woman also wears a pink chundri for visiting purposes and a widow wears a blue one. As for the footwear a peculiar patterned footwear is used called a chinal- it is made of plain leather. The chinal is made of red velvet and embroidered with gold thread for a bride to be worn for her wedding ceremony. The use of a footwear is not very popular among the Samvedis and Kolis.

The ornaments of the women are gifts received at the time of marriage. Samvedis wear a profusion of ornaments-at least 6 kinds necklaces, 5 pairs of earrings, Mangalsutra & four kinds of hair ornaments. They also wear an armful of green bangles with gold or silver bangles at either end. The . In the legs they wear a pair of silver zanjeri. The mangalsutras are not to be removed before widowhood. The



The Lugada and Choli worn by widows



Pair of Chinals

Salsette women and Vadvals wear less amount of jewelry. A simple Poth: a gold necklace with a cross, Peroz, Poulaperoz, Fugdor: a necklace of precious stones and Surre: a plain gold chain are the customary neck ornaments. For the hair they have two ornaments and for the ears a maximum of three earrings. Silver anklets are worn in the legs. There are also marriage rings. The marriage rings and the Poth are not to be removed before widowhood. Only the Samvedis and the Kolis wear a single earring in the left ear.

Educational & Social activities

The rural population is not very educated but in comparison to their Hindu counterparts they are more educated because though the Portuguese did not do much in terms of education but the Jesuit fathers did a lot of enlightening while propagation of faith. The Salsette Christians are quite educated and are into the service line since generations. Whereas the urbanised section has the culture and inclination for higher studies as almost all the parish churches have a school within the boundaries.

As regards cultural activities-music is the favourite field and the study of music is considered as an accomplishment. The urban crowd around 70% like western music, 2% like Indian and the rest like both, whereas the rural crowd still retains a fondness for Indian music- not classical or popular Indian music but East Indian music. East Indian music comprises of folk songs in the East Indian Marathi dialect set to music, having a peculiar melody which may be regarded as a blending of Indian and western rhythms. Some tunes are the popular tunes sung in the Goan region, some are Portuguese tunes. The instruments used are ghumat, bullentare, tambarin, butav, dholkam, payi and pawa-all locally made.

The urbanised have been totally westernised. Besides the violin and piano, which almost 50% of them can play, the people have learnt to play a wide variety of instruments like -mandolin, guitar, harmonica, accordion, saw(musical), drums, trumpet, saxophone, cello etc. Almost every family has a piano- a grand old one.

On May 3rd the feast of Holy cross is celebrated. In Matharpacady a lot of cultural activities take place, there is a cultural league-called Matharpacady Oart Cultural League. The Holy Cross oratory is decorated during Christmas & new year and a lot of cultural activities-fancy dresses, fashion shows are organised. A grand carnival is organised on Valentine's eve.

Wedding ceremonies

The tradition is to marry within their own fold. The Kolis are one such cultural group where endogamy is strictly enforced by the jamat. The Salsette christians are an endogamous group but due to the differences in income and education girls of lower Salsette are not given in marriage to the upper Salsette boys. The girls of upper Salsette though are given to boys of lower Salsette. The urbanised section, though, can marry within the whole community.

Ceremonies are a mixture of Christian and Hindu cultures. Kolis and Samvedis do not exchange rings whereas Vadvals do and after engagement none of these groups allow free mixing. Whereas it is different in the urban group, Salsette christians though are strict about free mixing before engagement relax after engagement. Marriage ceremonies in the rural area continue for 4-5 days. Marriages are solemnised on Saturdays and Mondays so that the ceremonies get over before Friday, which is a day of abstinence for all Catholics. Mass marriages are a common feature. Marriages have to be preceded by the reading of 'banns' in the parish church on three consecutive Sundays. The rural and the urban marriages differ a lot as the urban section is totally westernised. In the rural section these are the differences. A purification bath has to be taken by the bride early morning on the day of marriage. Then the next event is the bridegroom leaving for the church after taking blessing of his parents. The bride does not leave until the groom sends a 'shatar' and 'wazantri' and in the meantime she is decked with white flowers, dressed in a red silk sari with a rich gold border known as the 'sonkari'. No part of it should be taken over the shoulder. And a pair of red velvet gold embroidered 'chinel'. Among the Vadvals, the groom brings a pair of silver anklets. After that the ritual in the church takes place. The bridegroom places the ring on the third finger of the bride's left hand. In the bride's home an important ceremony called the 'sara' takes place. The bridegroom's party brings under the 'shatar'. The groom's gift- a rich heavy necklace-the poth, a gold bordered red silk sari, a rich brocaded blouse or choli, a new comb and



Wedding dress of Salsetti women



wedding carriage of olden times

sweets- all contained in a steel box. In the afternoon a sumptuous meal is served to the assembled guests. With the exception of Salsette christians food is served in typically Indian fashion , on large mats. Kolis and Samvedis also serve Indian dishes but the Vadvals and the Salsette groups serve East Indian food and they also serve pork dishes. The Salsette christians call their marriage feasts 'janthars'. The table is tastefully decorated with their sweets. Fruits are cut and spread over in fanciful shapes. Toasts are raised. Throughout the day singing and dancing continues and late in the evening the bridal pair gets ready to leave for the groom's house.

The urbanised celebrate their marriage in the westernised manner. There are no ceremonies after or before nuptials. As soon as the guests receive their invitation cards , they begin sending their presents . The bridal pair dressed in a typically western mode leaves from their homes for teh church. After the church ceremony is over, the bridal pair leave for the place where the reception is to be given. On arrival, the band plays a wedding march. The bridal pair walks to the table where a huge wedding cake is placed and the bride and groom cut the cake together. Toasts are raised. Refreshments are served and ball room dancing continues for a few hours.

Family structures

There is a strong tendency of having a joint family among the East-Indians. In case of a joint family composed of three or more generations, the ancestral property is held in common and passes from father to eldest son and so on. On the eldest members's death the property goes to the widow, though she doesn't own it she is only a caretaker. It is only through her will that the eldest son assumes charge. These joint families have a combined kitchen or 'chulha'. The urban families even if they have a single chulha, are not similar to the rural undivided families. They are not nuclear families either.

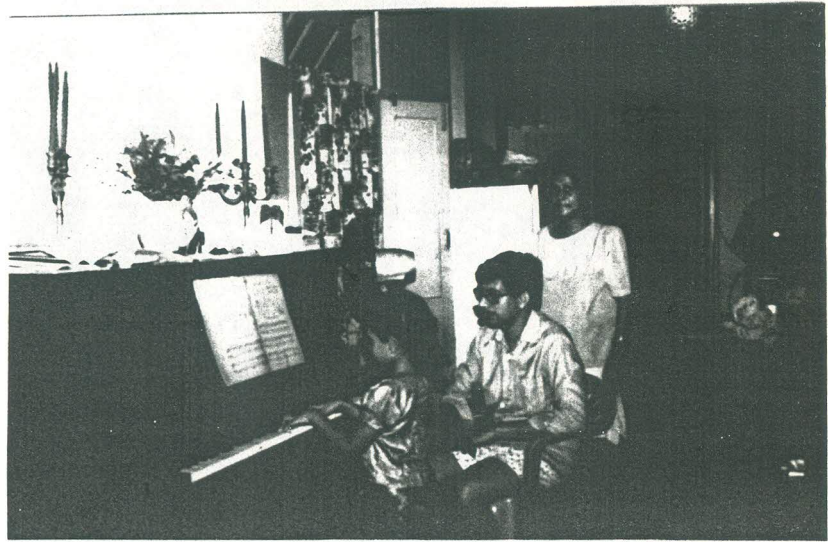
The daughter has no property rights in her father's house. She may own property in her husband's house after his death. When the property is partitioned, she is a co-sharer with her sons.

This is in short the image of the history and culture of the community as a whole. 'Matharpacady' is a good example of urbanised group still living in a village. Uncle Miranda and Uncle Baptista took me around from family to family to get glimpses of the urbanised section as they are living now in the changed circumstances.

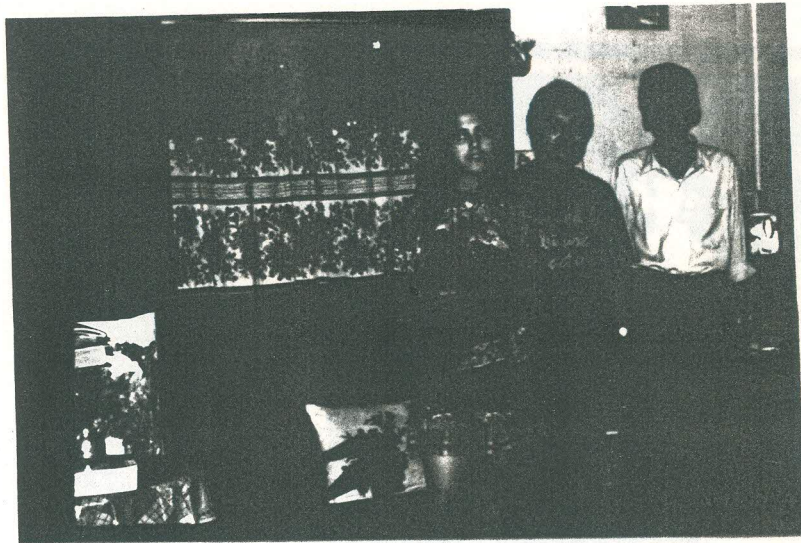
the people

“Moving elements in a city and in particular the people and their activities are as important as the stationary physical parts. We are not simple observers of this spectacle , but are ourselves a part of it,.....”.

Kevin Lynch , *The Image of a City*



The Gonsalves: Their family is staying in this village since the last 200 years. Mr. Gonsalves is in the Shipping Corporation of India and Mrs. Gonsalves is working with Kodak, young Arantza is three years old and is quite an expert piano-player. They are a music loving family.



The Baptistas: family 2: Donwin Baptista is Dennis Baptista's cousin. In the same house his elder brother's widow is staying. Theirs is not a joint family, his mother, when alive, used to stay in the neighboring house. Uncle Donwin's family consists of four members; him, Mrs. Philomina Baptista-and their two daughters- Shaila and her sister. He is in a Govt. job- Shaila is studying and her sister Glenda is teaching in a school in Mussourie.

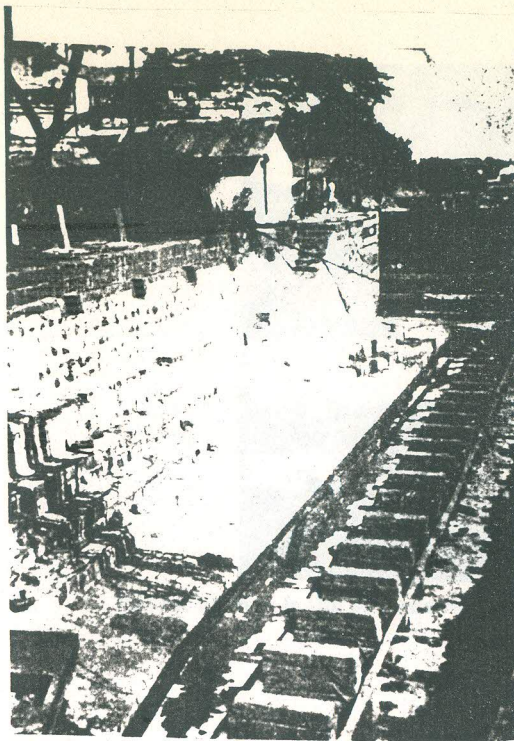


The D'Sylvas: Their's is a joint family .Norburt D'Sylva, Mrs. D'Sylva ("girlie" to her husband), their son, daughter-in-law and two grandsons all stay together. Norburt was born in Matharpacady in 1915 and Mrs. D'Sylva was born in 1918 in the village too. Norburt was also in a government job and his son is in the Indian Navy.

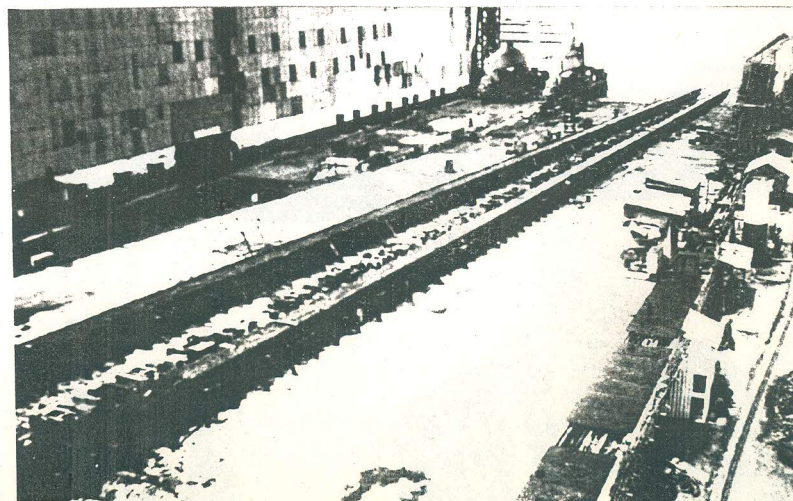


The Alphonsos: Their's is a family of four. Cydil Alphonso is working in the Indian Navy. Mathias , his son is studying in the college and his daughter is a teacher in U.S.A. His wife is new to the village. Mathias plans to settle down out of the village. Cydil is also a cousin of Dennis Baptista.

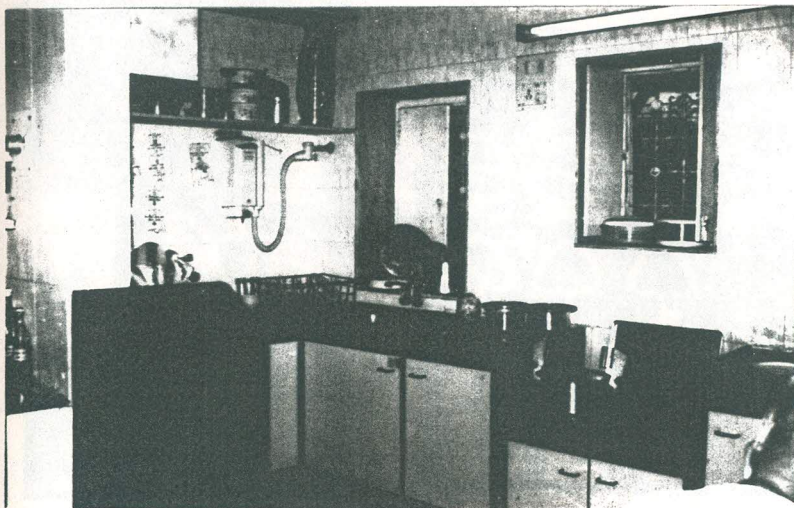
the changes with time



Mazgaon Dock in the 16th century.



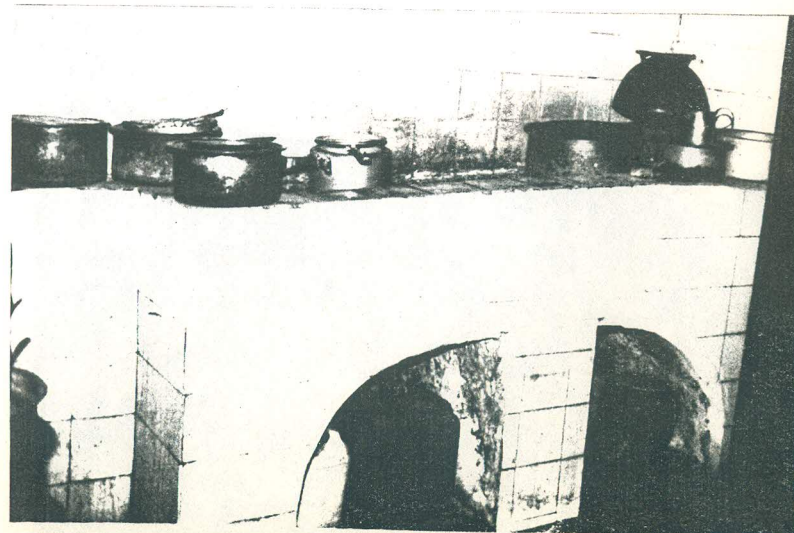
Mazgaon Dock today, the same area.



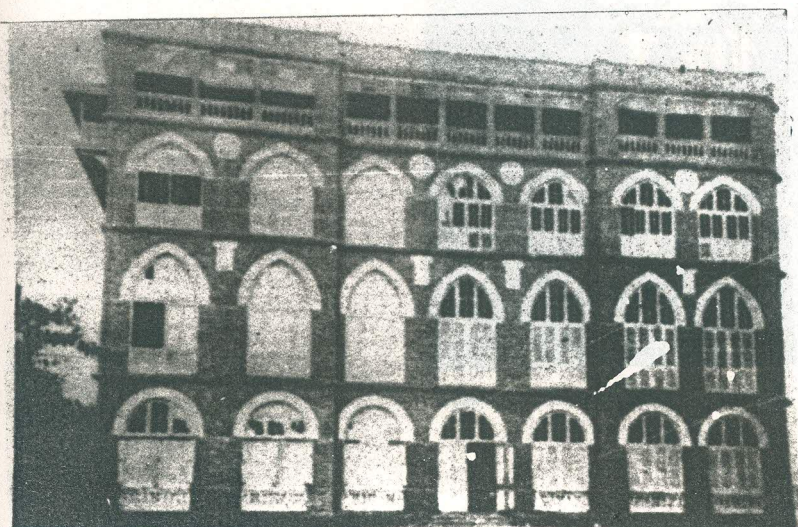
A modern kitchen in the D'Sylva House.



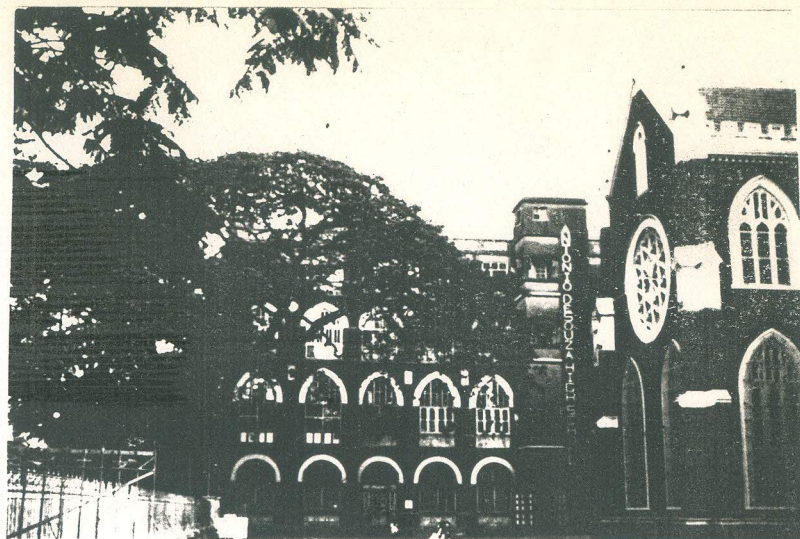
The old kitchen in the Miranda House, with its fireplace .



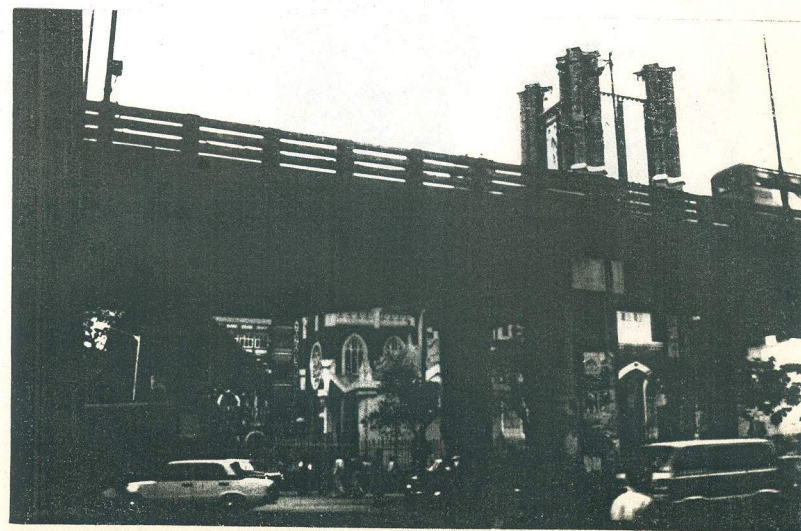
The renovated kitchen , the fireplace used as a storage space



The Anton D'Sylva school , Byculla, 200 years back.



Now , with the Gloria church built in front of it .



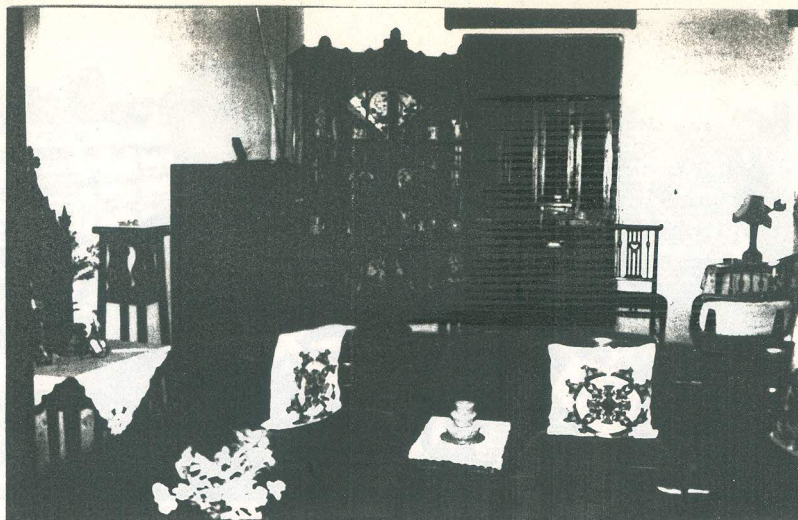
As it looks from the other side of the road



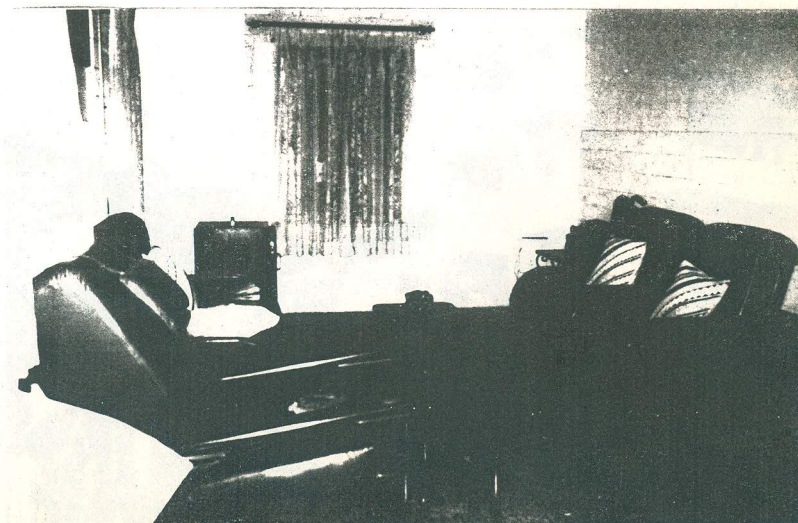
Shalla Baptista's grandparents in the traditional marriage attire.



Shalla's parents, during their marriage.



The traditionally furnished drawing room in the Baptista House.



The modern drawing room in the D'Sylva House.



A top view of the area showing the village flanked by tall rising buildings all around it.



The Milita apartment, right opposite to the Lion's Den where a sprawling bungalow used to stand in 1992.

conclusion

As the study was not aimed towards fixed results, conclusions can only be in the form of observations. As the new generation is leaving the village in search of better opportunities and as it is becoming more and more difficult to maintain the old ancestral homes, a time might come when the community gets totally scattered, intermingling with the crowd outside hardly recognizable as different. The village might not get abolished though, as, it is recognized as a Heritage III category landscape.

References

1. The Image of a City : Kevin Lynch
2. The City in History :Its Origins, Its transformations, And its Prospects :
Lewis Mumford
3. Listing of Heritage Grades : D.T. Joseph,
Secretary to the Gov. of Maharashtra, 1991.
4. The History of Rosary Church: Eusebius Miranda
5. Bombay; Social Changes 1813-1857: Vijaya Gupchup
6. The East Indians: Elsie Baptista
7. Bombay Dockyard and Wadia Master Builders: R.A.Wadia
8. Bombay: The Cities Within :Sharada Dwivedi and Rahul Mehrotra

MSR-

L. D. G. LIBRARY

L. D. G. LIBRARY

PD/94-96 Batch