

# **PUNE - QUEEN OF THE DECCAN**

(The most readable history of Pune)

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## **Preface**

A number of reasons prompted us to write this book. Many friends newly-settled in Pune, as well as visitors to the city and colleagues here and abroad had asked us at various times to suggest a book which would give a fair idea of the city. To our surprise we found that there is not a single book in English describing Pune's entire story -from its earliest past as a small hamlet to its rising importance as one of the country's gateway cities of the new millennium. The works we found were scholarly ones dealing with specific periods, or specific aspects of the city, from the point of view of a historian, a geographer or even a social scientist. We felt the need for a book that would tell the whole story -to construct Pune's urban personality as it evolved and changed through time and in space, and present it to a wider readership, beyond the narrow confines of academia. Talking to many persons from different walks of life convinced us further that the best thing to do was to write one ourselves.

Having spent the better part of our lives here, and being deeply attached to Pune, the book is our tribute to the city. The writing itself" was a journey of discovery: both a challenge and a pleasure. In our interviews with people and our daily explorings of the city, we ourselves learnt a lot and the enduring effects of this project will be the many friends we made. The unstinting help and support we received from everyone we approached, especially the senior citizens who did not mind spending time in reminiscing about the past or digging up old pictures and papers for us, will remain a warm memory. This "goodwill" is what makes our Pune a special place.

## **Introduction**

Inspired by the current trend of rapid urbanization in the million plus cities in India, we feel there is a strong reason to look at Pune's urban development, which has brought in its wake a series of problems, including the inherent evils of sudden city growth. Studies of individual cities, which in the case of Pune are few, can make useful contributions in providing a suitable background to the informed reader. With this objective, a simple biography of Pune is attempted here.

Having said this, it will be in order to clarify, at the outset, that even though this is a biography of the city, it is definitely not a chronological documentation or a list of all events that happened to have taken place in the city. Many events which may be considered important in a general history of the region or even the country as a whole may have taken place in the city, but had nothing to do with the specifics of the place. They neither left a mark on the morphology of the city nor did they affect the process of Pune's urbanization. Therefore such events have been left out.

Many national leaders and personalities have made the city their home; their activities enriched national life and their literary and intellectual efforts were geared towards social

change, especially in the second half of the nineteenth and the first few decades of the twentieth centuries. These discourses, as well as the events of the freedom struggle, properly belong to the general intellectual history of Maharashtra and the national movement, and have been researched and written about in detail by a number of eminent scholars. This book touches on such matters only so far as they affected the municipalization and growth of the city. The aim was to paint the picture with a broad sweep of the brush so that the overall impression does not get bogged down with unnecessary detail.

Pune city, though it has experienced tremendous growth in the past two decades, still remains a place where the past meets the present. Taking a cue from this and drawing upon Pune's unusual circumstances, the many ups and downs in its fortunes, the big and small events in its chequered existence, and all those big moves and small gestures which affected it, have been pieced together to trace the city's contemporary urban form. Rare insight into its social fabric was provided by the shifting footprints of the various castes and communities, which have converged to define an enduring, twin image of Pune: the cultural capital and the leading industrial city of Maharashtra.

Though not of great antiquity, the city occupies a special place in Maharashtrian consciousness from the time young Shivaji and his mother Jijabai set foot in Pune. The myths and fables attached to its location notwithstanding. Pune's origins remain obscure. Vestiges of its earliest form, as a garrison town under Muslim rule, and a small market place under the Marathas, can be seen in what is today Kasba Peth. Most of our knowledge of this indigenous town of medieval times goes back to the last three centuries, during which it was ravaged time and again by invaders and the vagaries of nature.

Pune's good times began with the breakdown of the Mughal Empire, when the Marathas emerged as a significant regional power. Its fortunes changed dramatically in the eighteenth century, when the Peshwas made it their capital city -the ensuing hundred years have been described as the golden age of Pune's past. Pune of the eighteen *peths* or wards was the creation of the Peshwas. Pune at that time was considered the most politically influential city in India. Looking at the city's modest hinterland, with no great locational advantages either, one would never have expected it to grow into a large town, leave alone enjoy a brief stint as the de facto capital of the country. It was the Peshwas who nurtured it, making it their home base and power centre. To the Peshwas goes the credit for transforming this insignificant market town into a thriving city of a hundred thousand souls - comparable in size and importance, though not in design, to many contemporary towns in Europe.

This period in Pune's growth coincides with a major phase of urbanization in eighteenth - century India. Pune largely followed this overall trend, with a few exceptions. Though its urban growth reflected the traditional pattern, its urban space was fashioned within the narrow confines of a caste-based society, moulded by a rigid social structure. In Pune of Peshwa times, though clear-cut functional zoning as such did not exist, there were clearly discernible and distinct characteristics that developed, within each of the peths. In spite of this however, Pune had an unmistakable stamp of Brahmin orthodoxy. The life-style of the upper class was spartan and austere. This was reflected in the townscape too. There were no grand avenues, monumental buildings or ornate

palaces. The Peshwas were no great city builders, but the development of the *wada* as a house form reached its climax in Peshwai Pune and was synonymous with the cityscape, and gave it a distinctive architectural character.

A major turning point in the city's development came in 1818, when the Peshwas' fate was sealed at the Battle of Khadki. The British won the city and occupied Pune. This colonial intrusion interrupted the ongoing indigenous process of urbanization and brought in the first discontinuity. This ushered in the second major urban phase in the city. Pune experienced a sudden upheaval and disturbance in its urban growth, with almost half a century of de-urbanization. With the establishment of the military cantonment alongside the native city, a dual identity and image was forged. A dichotomous urban form developed. The native city of Pune whose heart was encased in *its peths* was, with a few exceptions, a confusing medley of narrow winding lanes, clusters of houses and huts dolled with gardens, shops and numerous temples and shrines of every description, while British Poona or Camp, as the Cantonment and Civil Lines area was called, was a well-laid-out garden suburb with bungalow complexes, barracks, parade grounds, clubs, imposing public buildings and a neat grid pattern layout. These elements complete the picture of the new colonial landscape. Needless to say, these two areas were poles apart, culturally as well as in terms of urban design. Since the purpose of the Cantonment was essentially military, to control the conquered territory, the colonists had to perforce create an awe-inspiring landscape, which they did - all the fine Gothic buildings one finds in the Pune Cantonment are a part of this grand design.

Thus colonial Pune was split into two distinct physical and social worlds-each with its own distinct urban form and cultural flavour. With virtually no interaction, each part also remained terra incognita to the other part, except for, perhaps, official and business purposes. Even though at first largely ignored, the British presence inevitably brought new ideas on education, social reform and civic life - into the old city. This led to the first steps towards municipalization of this area.

Meanwhile, Pune's vernacular landscape was also undergoing metamorphosis and absorbing new developments and other styles of architecture. This blend produced the unique Anglo-Indian landscape in the Camp and beyond the old city. Urban growth, though slow paced, was steady and graceful. The rich business class and the nobility built stately mansions in the Civil Lines. The white collared classes, bureaucrats and professionals built stout stone bungalows across the river- all guided by the prescribed town planning norms. These were to become the planned developments of Pune in Deccan Gymkhana, Prabhat Road, Koregaon Park and Bund Garden areas. Surprisingly, though the native urban landscape and material culture saw many modifications, tradition ruled supreme in old Pune in matters of religious and social conduct. This lasted till well after Independence.

Independence brought drastic changes in the Cantonment society. The bungalows vacated by the British and Anglo-Indians were soon occupied by the Parsis, Christians and migrant Muslims, all communities who had close contact with the British. The new arrivals from Pakistan, mainly Sindhis and Punjabis, preferred to settle in the more cosmopolitan Camp and in the eastern parts of the city, away from its core. The old city's amenities improved with democratic municipal administration after Independence. Road widening, water supply and street lighting progressed apace.

Ironically, before Independence, Pune's location in Bombay's backyard was a major stumbling block to its economic development, as all commerce, trade and industry was concentrated in the port city. After 1960, all this changed. The old Bombay State was bifurcated and this also coincided with Bombay Island getting saturated to the extent it could grow no further. Pune's proximity to Bombay in the changed circumstances became a plus point for diverting all new industries to Pune. With further up gradation of its civic status to that of a Municipal Corporation, infrastructure received a major boost. Migrants from all over were attracted to the city, which suddenly had everything to offer—good education, pleasant climate, a rich cultural and social environment and, more importantly, job opportunities.

Two events in particular in the 1960s radically altered the trajectory of Pune's urban growth: the establishment of the new industrial township of Pimpri-Chinchwad and the disastrous floods of 1961, when large sections of the old city along the river were washed away. In post-flood Pune, as the new contours of the emerging industrial landscape were being etched, side by side, the colonies of flood affected persons were slowly creating the first signs of Pune's urban sprawl. The sixties was a landmark decade in Pune's urban history. The laid-back Pune of yore was virtually being turned inside out with the spread of the suburbs.

In the 1980s, with the widening employment base, came tremendous pressure of population. Migrants from all over flocked to Pune. No longer a pensioners' haven, nor solely an administrative, educational centre, the city began to burst at the seams. Overnight, suburban neighbourhoods grew into unchecked, unregulated sprawls. Almost as an afterthought, the urban planners set out to reorganize the city with bits of grafted connections all along the major transport axes. This led to a ribbon form of development in the urban periphery, bringing on the chaotic commuting and traffic bottlenecks which Pune is now experiencing. With greatly increased demand for living space, the old core began experiencing urban involution. Large scale building activity and urban renewal was also taking place all over the city. Soon the gracious *wadas* and fine bungalows were falling to the builder's hammer and the old Pune was fading away. The new urban scenery was largely conforming to Pune's new role as an industrial city. The demographic profile too was acquiring a cosmopolitan touch as the city's ambience changed from sedate to upbeat.

On the threshold of the new millennium, Pune's urban landscape reveals a mix of *kutchra* and *pucca* elements, interspersed with unauthorized and authorized structures. Modern Pune's urban development is, in theory, controlled by some abstract (and often abstruse) rules or mechanisms of Floor Space Indices and offset rules. In practice, however, these are never sacrosanct, and are blatantly ignored. With the result, all planning exercises—be it Development Plans, Town Planning Schemes or Regional Plans—have only succeeded in making Pune a more chaotic place. But though it is no longer a great place to live in, it still remains a great place to work in. Is this the price one has to pay in the name of development?

In retrospect, the problems of Pune (though not unique to Pune alone, as all the major cities in the country have a similar tale to tell) are related to the existing planning policies: these are hopelessly inadequate in dealing with the huge numbers that invade the city. Most planners tackling the development of the city see it mainly as a design

problem. The reality is that there is a serious mismatch between the socio-economic structure of the population and the speed with which inward migration outgrows the infrastructure. This has been the reason why the quality of the urban environment has steadily deteriorating. Most planners also assume that the future is predictable, and can be controlled by land use plans and Development Control Rules which will deliver the goods how wrong this assumption is has been proved by the haphazard growth that is taking place in Pune.

Inward migration is a fact of urban life, and cannot be wished away. The city needs the low-income migrants, but planning does not provide them with adequate living facilities or basic amenities. With over 40 per cent of the city's population living in slums or substandard localities, the future seems grim. At this juncture we need to take stock of where we are now and where we are heading. Only when we know our minds and start answering these questions correctly, will Pune head in the right direction.

## 1. The Core

*“The city and citizens are indissolubly linked together. The influence of one wove into the life and evolution of the other. Hence there must be continuity in the growth of cities, which in India is from within.”*

### *B. B. Dutt Town-Planning in Ancient India*

Looking at Pune, as at other Indian cities today, the onlooker may be forgiven if he fails to perceive at once the continuity between the traditional past and the chaotic present. “Chaos” is a word too often used in the city of Pune today. Only a few years back, Pune was well-known as a ‘pensioner’s paradise’ and an idyllic town for students, with its many educational institutes. But now, it seems a suitable word to describe the everyday reality of urban life in Pune, which is fast becoming like any other industrializing town of India. And yet, Pune has not completely cut itself off from its moorings; there is still time to look back so that we can understand not only the past, but also the direction in which the city is headed.

These moorings of tradition and continuity are seldom remembered by Puneites of today. Nevertheless, Pune’s hoary past lingers on in the underlying layers of the modern city. In the heart of the city, the core, the past is with us everywhere. Suddenly in a narrow alley there is a graceful, if a little worse for wear, timber-framed *wada*, still using a two hundred-year-old well which is connected to a celebrated aqueduct of equal vintage - its water still as clear and unpolluted as before. The past confronts us in the city’s many temples - their history written into the additions and alterations to their architecture; or in Kumbharwada the potter’s colony where old technology still supports a vibrant craft and popular trade. Many such encounters with the living past are available to the discerning eye. (Unfortunately, this ancient market is soon to be shifted so that the road can be widened.)

## Location

Pune city started out on the right bank of the Mula River that formed its western boundary. Subsequently of course, it jumped across this natural barrier on to the left bank and far beyond, where previously there were jungles and wild beasts. The Mula River meets the Mulha at the north-east tip of the city (the place known as “Sangam”). This joint river formed its northern boundary. The east was bounded by Bhairoba Nala, the small stream flowing into the main river. The southern and south-eastern end of this area slopes upwards towards the Sinhagad and Bhuleshwar hills. Three large streams, now almost stagnant, watered the area, Manik Nala, Nagzhari and the Peshwa Nala (no longer extant). This area with its waterways lies on the eastern margin of the Maval tract of Western Maharashtra, and is known as the ‘Desh’ or plateau region. As it lies in the rain-shadow of the Western Ghats, rainfall is often erratic.

It was on the undulating land stretching from the bank of the Nagzhari stream, westward to the right bank of the Mulha River, where it all began. Nowhere is history so much with us, as in the narrow meandering streets and lanes of the oldest part of Pune city, Kasba Peth. In this stretch of land, now teeming with people and full of decaying old houses, the city began as a small settlement, way back in the past. So small was the settlement, probably only a hamlet, that it finds no mention in old documents, which only talk of the district as a whole. There are no stories, myths or enchanting legends about its birth as there are for other old towns like Lucknow or Hyderabad. We know nothing about any original founders or settlers through proper historical records or archaeological sources.

## How the City was named

The etymology of the city’s name itself is confusing and controversial. Copper plate inscriptions dating from the eighth century, during the reign of the Rashtrakuta dynasty of kings, refer to the region as “Punya Vishaya” or “Punaka Vishaya”. In the tenth century the town itself is mentioned in their records as ‘Punaka Wadi’. This could have been derived from an even older name, ‘Punnaka’ or ‘Purnaka’. From an inscription found at Naneghat on the route to the Konkan coast, it seems logical to deduce that this area was included within the rule of the great Satavahana dynasty as early as the first century. There is also a theory that the original name may have been ‘Punyapur’ (sacred city) because it stood near the confluence of the Mutha and Mula, and such places were regarded as holy.-’ Writing in the sixteenth century, Govind Das, disciple of the Bengali saint Chaitanya, refers to it as ‘Purnanagar’. It is generally now agreed that the modern variant, Pune, came into use as early as the thirteenth century, when the small settlement was named “Kasba Pune” by its Arab commandant.

Though no significant history of ancient Pune town can be prised out of the meagre historical sources, the surrounding region seems to have been well-known. It is often mentioned as an administrative unit (*vishaya or prant*) of the various dynasties that ruled over ancient and medieval Maharashtra at various times. The importance of the district may have been due to the fact that it was close to trade routes and an important pilgrim center as well. About ninety kilometres to its northwest is the source of the river Bhima, where the temple of Bhimashankar houses one of the twelve *Jyotirlingas* of India. Here pilgrims have congregated since ancient times.

At one time, ancient trade routes passed close by Pune. Caravans of pack animals carried goods to and from the Deccan, across the passes like Nane and Bhor through the Sahyadri ranges. They went down to the great ports of Sopara, Chaul, Kalyan etc. Later a major trade route developed between Burhanpur in Malwa, Surat port and to Bijapur to the south. Even if this trade route did not actually pass through Pune, it skirted the district closely. There was always active trade between the Desh and Konkan. Coconut and its by-products, fruits like mango, betel-nut, dried fish, salt and rice were brought up through the passes in the mountains. On their return, the animals and carts took back from the Desh, sugarcane, cotton, garlic, onions, turmeric, tobacco and pulses.<sup>1</sup> This made the region an important one.

A little to the north, the country was fertile and reasonably rich. The town of Junnar was a thriving center of trade and well-known for paper-making. The whole area is replete with rock-cut temples and caves excavated out of living rock. Most celebrated of these are the Manmeda Caves at Junnar and others at Bedsa, Bhaja, Karla and lesser ones at Kondana and Ambivli. Even Pune has a few caves, though not well-known. Across the Mutha River, in what is now an area of heavy urban traffic (Jungli Maharaj Road) there is a rock-cut temple probably dating to the eighth century, known as Pataleshwar. Visitors are always astonished at the juxtaposition of this island of serenity with the cacophony of traffic on the busy road outside. There are also some unfinished caves on the hill-sides of Ganeshkhind, which is another thickly populated area today.

As the dynastic kingdoms rose and fell, succeeding one another in the ancient Deccan, Punaka Vishaya passed from one to another - from the Chalukyas to the Rashtrakutas. to the Western Chalukyas and then to the successor Yadava state centered at Devgiri. By this time, the town known as Punakwadi was already in existence. The Yadavas were the last Hindu dynasty to rule over Pune in the early medieval period. They were defeated by the army of Ala-ud-din Khilji, who later became Sultan of Delhi, in 1295. Though the Yadavas were allowed to rule for some more time, it was only as a tributary state of Delhi; in a few years they were superseded and their kingdom annexed.

The pattern continued through the next couple of centuries, as the authority of Delhi was overthrown with the rise of a Deccan Muslim state known as the Bahamani kingdom, which had control over the Pune region. Later, this state broke up into five successor states, and Pune became a part of the Nizam Shahi kingdom of Ahmednagar.

In India, even though kingdoms rose and fell, life in the rural hinterland enjoyed a high degree of continuity. While the ruling dynasties exercised overall control, general administration was usually left to the local chiefs owing loyalty to the suzerains. They lived in strongholds and ruled over their fiefdoms as autonomous rulers. One such stronghold was Kondana (now Sinhadgad), about thirty kilometers south of Pune. In later times, rulers of Pune sometimes used it to defend themselves, retreating from the unwallled city to take refuge behind its battlements when the city was under threat.

Three other forts that have been inextricably linked to Pune's chequered history are Chakan to the north, Shivneri which guards Junnar, and Purandar on the Karla plateau to the southeast of Pune. These forts, perched as they are on the flat-topped Mils peculiar to the Deccan, overlooked the surrounding countryside, and were probably more practical for defence than any battlemented wall around the city, which was in a relatively flat area. Significantly, such a wall was never built, as we shall see later.

Though there are elaborate rules for the planning of towns in the traditional texts, most The Indian towns were actually unplanned. They originated in a temple, a village, a market or at a natural locational advantage, like a valley, a bend in the river, a strategic point on the coast. Beginning with one or more small villages, they grew organically, through a process of addition, taking in agricultural lands and more villages as the need arose, very much like today. Cities therefore continued to have some primary agricultural activities, and many areas of the town had a distinctly rural flavor.

Pune was no exception to this process. According to a long-held local legend, there were three original villages- Kasarli, Kumbharli and Punewadi which combined in time to form the town. These names echo in the place names Kasar Ali and Kumbharwada in Kasha Peth today. Fishermen and farmers and a few Brahmin households comprised these villages. The temples of Puneshwar, Kedareshwar, Narayaneshwar and Ganpati are said to have marked the boundaries. Memories of three old entrance gates, called *ves*, are echoed in the place names Kumbhar Ves, Kedar Ves and Maval Ves in the Kasha area/

If the three villages did exist, they would have been very close together, going by the area of present Kasba Peth. It is more likely that they were small hamlets rather than villages. (In a colorful account of Pune written in 1868, the author N. V. Joshi gives the interesting information that at the time of writing, there were three families of Watandar Mahars who divided their produce into three parts amongst themselves because they were *watandars* or hereditary employees of the three original villages.”)

Local legend apart, there seems to be no agreement on where the original settlement began. According to the author of the Gazetteer, the starting point was near the Mutha river bank around the old Puneshwar temple (now younger Sheikh Salla tomb). He reasons that the presence of the river attracted the settlement. Moreover, the confluence of the river Mutha and Mula gave the settlement sanctity, while its nearness to the approach route to the Bor pass gave it economical benefit.

The temple of Puneshwar, sometimes called the patron deity of the city (Adhishata Devta), has been mentioned in medieval texts, and was well-known in the time of Namdev (towards the end of the thirteenth century). It is mentioned together with another old temple, Nageshwar, as well as the Nagzhari stream, in the Namdev Gathas. Therefore there may be some truth to this theory about the presumed sanctity of the place. But in spite of this Pune never grew into an important religious center.

Another view is that the site of the original settlement was the area around the present temple of Kasha Ganpati, at the southern end of present Kasha Peth or ward. Since no ancient *ghats* have been found on the Mutha River, the original nucleus must have turned its back on the river, having no need for its water. Its position is fixed by the Ganpati and Kedareshwar temples, which would be situated at the entrance of the town. The sites of the Patil and Watandar family holdings near these temples also provide a clue.”

These two views have become so widely prevalent that later writers have accepted one or the other. But a close look at the topography of Kasha Peth may yield another clue to the original nucleus. It is conceivable that the first settlement, in need of a manageable source of water, found it, not in the wide Mutha River, but in the smaller stream of the Nagzhari to the east. In the monsoon, the undammed Mutha was likely to overflow its banks, and safety from flood waters would be a very important reason not to be too close to it. So the highest spot, away from the main river (as well as higher than the Nagzhari)

seems to be the most likely spot where Kasba originated. This is the raised ground on both banks of the Nagzhari. On the east would have been another small settlement situated around the Nageshwar temple (Somwar Peth), which has ancient origins. We should remember that, traditionally, industries which are associated with noise, smell or smoke pollution would be set up on the outskirts of villages, therefore the potters' colony or Kumbharwada, with its smoking kilns, would mark the boundary on the northwest. Even today, this colony is located on the low ground immediately below the raised areas. It continues to exist as an encapsulated village within the crowded urban growth of the area around it.

The location of old temples or shrines can also provide a clue to boundaries, or at least to the direction in which the settlement was growing. Shrines hardly ever moved from the places of their origin. To the north and west the settlement began expanding towards the Puneshwar and Narayaneshwar temples. (Now the two Sheikh Salla *dargah*). Gradually it extended southward to the Ganpati temple, and to the southeast along the Nagzhari to the Bhavani temple, and perhaps across the stream, where there is a temple with the significant and evocative name of Nivdungya Vithoba.

The Nageshwar temple, also across the stream, may have been surrounded by a settlement too. Parts of this temple are certainly very old. The main shrine has the typical Yadava pattern of structure (known as Hemadpanthi), with a stone roof. It has been enlarged over the centuries by many additions donated by devotees. It may have originated as a shrine, and is connected in local legend with the saints Dnyaneshwar and Tukaram. As mentioned earlier, it seems to have been known in the time of Namdev too. Through this temple, Pune became linked with the exhilarating upsurge of the medieval Bhakti movement. Legend has it that there was a big reservoir near the temple, the waters of which had the magical property of curing leprosy. Another recurring tale is that of the existence of a cremation ground near the temple. This is quite plausible if the temple marked the outer limit of the settlement. The temple today stands within an entrance gate, with its own courtyard, surrounded by smaller shrines and living quarters along the periphery of the compound. It has an onion-shaped *shikhara* and a large hall with the typical cypress columns and cusped arches added during the Peshwa period.

Since no exact record of the town's origin exists, all these theories can at best be only conjectural. The small settlement was obviously more rural in its character than urban, with agricultural activities in the surrounding fields. It had the same socio-economic organization as the traditional Maharashtrian villages, with its own *watandars* and *balutedars*. Traditional craftsmen thrived - the potters and metal workers, and later paper-makers. There were also fishermen (Bhois) and agricultural castes like Malis and Kunbis, and a few Brahmin households. The untouchable castes must have been outside the perimeter of the settlement, probably to the northeast. The street and place names of Kasha Peth today-Bhoi Ali, Kasar Ali, Kagdipura preserve the memory of the old settlement pattern.

A great change came over this original nucleus in the fourteenth century. As mentioned earlier, in 1294-1295, the Turkish Sultan of Delhi defeated Raja Ramdeva Yadava of Devgiri, and thereby changed forever the political structure of the Deccan. The Yadavas became tributaries to the Delhi Sultans and within a few years the whole of the Deccan came under Muslim rule. The local administration of the Pune area was centered

at Chakan fort, which was held by a military commander known as Barya Arab. He is believed to have built a small fort and stationed a garrison in Pune. This fort possibly must have been just big enough to accommodate a small group of soldiers with a well around it.

According to an old document, the three original villages of Kumbharli, Kasarli and Punewadi were unified within a wall, which was known as Pandhari Kot (white wall). Inside were housed the garrison, the administrative offices and government officials. This was named Kasba Pune.” Most of the other people -traders, cultivators, village officials and Brahmins- were left outside the fort.

The limits of the Pandhari Kot have been traced by the Gazetteer from ruins which still existed at the time that it was written (1885). Senior residents of the Kasba too can recall the Juna Kot (old wall) as it is now referred to, and point out some areas where its remnants existed. The wall apparently formed an irregular rectangle and had a thick base of stone with a thinner superstructure, at least thirty feet high. There are also references to another wall, Gao-Kusu (village wall), enclosing a much larger area, perhaps the entire settlement, and running along the bank of the Nagzhari. It had gates which could be closed. Not much more is known about this wall. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the inner garrison was known as ‘Kille Hissar’ (Hissar Fort). At this time two Sufi fakirs came to Pune and converted the Puneshwar and Narayaneshwar temples into *dargahs* later they were buried there. The immigrant Muslim population may have settled around these two establishments.

The garrison or inner fort must have created another nucleus, this time near the river. It is significant that a passable ford in the river was close to this place and the inner fort was strategically located to guard the approach to the town from the river. It is not clear whether Pune had begun to shed its rural character by this time. Not much is known about the city’s development in the next three hundred years. We have only a few stray references to go by.

In the fourteenth century, when the rule of the Sultanate of Delhi was replaced in the Deccan by that of the Bahamanis, Pune became a part of one of its provinces. This province included Daulatabad, Junnar, Beed, Paithan and Chaul, and was an important administrative division. In the next century a Bahamani officer, Malik Tujar, renovated Chakan fort and brought the surrounding countryside under his control.

Being in the rain-shadow, the Desh area was often prey to drought and famine. Famines occurred repeatedly in the last years of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries. During such trying times the country became wasted and the population decimated. Those who managed to remain alive abandoned their fields and went away in search of food. After such troubled times, it would be in the interest of the government to reorganize village land, invite new settlers or try to get the old ones back by tempting them with tax rebates and remission of rents.

. This process of depopulation and repopulating occurred fairly regularly in the drought-prone regions, as well as in times of political troubles. Good rulers tried to alleviate suffering by importing grain and by other welfare measures. During the terrible Mahadurga famine, which lasted for twelve years (1397-1408), Mahammad Shah Bahamani set up orphanages in seven of his main cities, but Pune was not included in the

list. Obviously it was still an insignificant settlement in spite of the military presence in the garrison, and did not merit special measures.

### **Deccan in the Seventeenth Century**

After the break-up of the Bahamani kingdom, the Pune region was in a peculiar geographical position vis-à-vis the successor states. Even though it belonged to the Nizam Shahi State of Ahmednagar, Pune was often prey to the expansionist ambitions of neighboring Bijapur. There is a tantalizing glimpse of Pune around 1510. The Bengali Bhakti saint Chaitanya visited what is referred to as 'Purnanagar'. Govinda Das, his disciple, has referred to a lake around which lived many learned Brahmins, and mentioned the existence of a number of schools. Where was this lake? Could it have been the famous one near the Nageshwar temple? We can merely conjecture. Nothing more, unfortunately, is recorded or known about it.

From the seventeenth century, the history of Pune is inextricably linked with that of the Bhonsle family. Shahaji Bhonsle, a Maratha warrior and father of the great hero-king Shivaji, had become an important political figure at the court of Ahmednagar. An important era in the history of Pune began when he gained from the Nizam Shahi Sultan, the *jagir* of Pune and Supa districts.

Of course, in the fluid political situation of the day, *jagirs* were won and lost easily according to the fortunes of the *jagirdar*, which were more often than not decided by war. Not only were the Deccani kingdoms fighting each other, there was also the intrusion of the Mughal armies from the north. Though Akbar the Mughal emperor had conquered Ahmednagar it was difficult for him to hold on to it. With the brilliant tactics of their famous general, Malik Ambar, the Nizam Shahis regained most of their territories, drove out the Mughals and re-established peace. He also created a revenue system which became the model for later rulers. It helped in fast economic recovery by the peasants after the destruction caused by war.

In these years, Maharashtra was in an unsettled condition. Between 1600 and 1630 "the country around Pune, Nasik and Ahmednagar changed hands at least ten times ... only lasting features were villages, often under the walls of some fort with a citizenry used to fight or flight".

According to fairly reliable records, around 1630, the Deshpande of Pune, Moro Tandeo Honap, raised a revolt against the Bijapur government. The well-known Bijapur general Murar Jagdeo came with a force to put down the revolt and captured Honap. He dealt very harshly with the rebels and "razed the walls of Pune and destroyed the town... The country became a desert". Murar Jagdeo is also supposed to have perpetrated the symbolic horror, equivalent to a curse, of having a plough drawn by an ass go over the land within the Pandhari Kot.

It is not very clear whether the whole Kot was destroyed or not, but obviously Murar Jagdeo meant to destroy its military base, or its capacity for further trouble. He created an alternative fort at Bhuleshwar, 50 km southeast of Pune, near Yewat. He probably realized, even at that early stage, that the particular geographical setting of Pune and its surroundings encouraged insurgency against the settled states like Ahmednagar or Bijapur. Many people fled Pune; the city became desolate. There are also graphic

descriptions of a famine which wasted large areas of the Deccan at this time (1630-1631). Pune's troubles were compounded.

Soon afterwards, Shahaji Bhonsle, now in the service of Bijapur, was able to repossess his Pune-Supa jagir along with Junnar, Indapur and the fort of Chakan. What was Pune like when Shahaji's jagir was restored to him? We know that the surrounding areas had become wasted through high revenue assessment and its ruthless collection by an Abyssinian officer. Large parts of the countryside went out of cultivation, and wolves infested the land. But of Pune town there is little known. Was it becoming important enough within the district for rivals to contend over it? Could this be the reason why Murar Jagdeo treated the town so severely?

It seems that the town, in spite of all its difficulties, had continued to grow. By 1610 there were new areas, rather like tiny suburbs or satellite settlements, outside Kasha Pune. There was Malkapur (now Raviwar Peth), believed to have been settled by Malik Ambar to the south of Kasba; Murtazabad (Shaniwar Peth) founded by Murtaza Nizam Shah, ruler of Ahmednagar, to the west along the river bank; and Shahpura (now Somwar Peth), which must have taken in the old settlement around the Nageshwar temple and the right bank of the Nagzhari. Together with old Kasha, these suburbs constituted the town by the time that the young Shivaji came to live in it.

A new chapter began in the history of Pune around 1636-37, with the momentous Pune under decision of Shahaji to send his wife Jijabai and their young son Shivaji to live in Pune. They were to look after his *jagir* as he had to be away in Karnataka at the orders of the Bijapur king. The care of the family was entrusted to Dadaji Konddev, a loyal and trusted administrator. At the time when the twelve-year-old Shivaji came to Pune, the *jagir* was, as we have seen, in a terrible state. For years it had witnessed continuous wars, and the rebellion of Honap had brought destruction to a town devastated by famine. The surrounding country was infested with wolves; the peasants were afraid to cultivate their lands. The district had passed from the Nizam Shahis to the Adil Shahis of Bijapur, though the new regime had not taken root yet. It was a time favourable for a strong and adventurous *jagirdar* to re-establish peace and carve out an autonomous if not independent holding in this north-western corner of the Bijapur kingdom. The time was ripe for the rise of Shivaji.

Dadaji Konddev set about improving the revenue and re-establishing agriculture. He offered rewards for killing wolves, so that the menace was soon eliminated. Legend has it that to build the people's confidence and bring back good luck to the town and to reverse the damage done by Murar Jagdeo, he had the ruined area within the Pandhari Kot re-ploughed, this time with a golden plough. After this auspicious gesture, a religious ceremony for peace was also performed there. Gradually, Dadaji Konddev's wise management repopulated the district, brought the peasants back to the fields; cultivation was encouraged by liberal tax policies (which owed much to Malik Ambar's system). He also conciliated and controlled the over-ambitious Deshmukhs.

As the town became the center of administration, it started to grow again. Though nothing much is known about the nature of the town, the very fact that *the jagirdar* took up residence in it must have created confidence and provided an impetus for growth. Unfortunately, no exact descriptions of buildings or social life are available. We are told that Shivaji and Jijabai built a house known as Lal Mahal. The land for it was acquired

from the original owners, the Zambres, who were Patils of the area. Administrative offices were probably built nearby. The new nucleus was away from the river, as well as both the Pandhari Kot and the original settlement on the bank of 'the Nagzhari. It was further south, close to the present limits of Kasba Peth, and near the present Kasha Ganpati temple. This did not mean however that the old part of the Kasba ceased to exist. In fact the Kasha became more extended to the south.

We do not have any authentic description of Lal Mahal; even its location is unclear. It could not have been a lavish palace, many storeys high and of great architectural value. It probably looked like a typical Deccan *wada* — built of brick supported by timber-framing with one or more internal courtyards. It was likely to be more like the houses of wealthy rural officials, rather than a kingly palace the kind that falls to ruin rather easily. So much so that the memory of its location was almost obliterated by the end of Peshwa rule. It has been conjectured by the Gazetteer that the Peshwa's *ambarkhana* - store for elephant howdahs may have been the location. But this could have been a mistake on the part of the author. Some attempt was made in later years to keep the memory of the place alive by the early Peshwas, who allotted the space to various individuals at different times, so that they could build their houses in it. The idea, a traditional concept, was to keep the place in use so that it remained auspicious and did not become a wasteland.

### **Kasba Ganpati Temple**

Another landmark in this period was the Kasba Ganpati temple. A charming story is told of how some young shepherd boys found a stone in the form of the deity and began to worship it. When Jijamata heard of this, she was impressed by the piety of the boys, and built a stone temple over it. At this time, those who had settled on the land nearby, mostly Hindu and Muslim weaving castes were moved to the west, in Murtazabad, on the land on which Shaniwar Wada now stands. However, it seems that the Kasba Ganpati temple or some form of it existed before the Shivaji period. Documents dating to 1613-14 mention that the Nizam Shahis gave *imam* grants to the Moreshwar temple in Kasba (Moreshwar is another name for Ganpati). Obviously the temple held some importance even earlier." Like many other temples in the town, this one too grew incrementally as pious worshippers added to it down the years. It acquired a large hall, a tank, a rest house, a column for lamps and other paraphernalia of a full-grown temple complex. Today, with the many additions, the older parts of the temple are hardly visible, and the tank has been filled up. The temple is now regarded as the Grama Devata, the presiding deity of the whole city. Even today, Pune Hindus keep up the tradition of beginning all auspicious ceremonies with a visit to this temple. The first invitation for any wedding is first made to the deity. The temple is still a focus of the religious life of the locality and holds a special place in people's hearts.

### **Growing Kasba**

Thus Kasba Pune was growing in two ways. First there was the natural increase of population and immigration from surrounding areas; and second, the resettling of people after every natural disaster. During such periods, new centers close to the old ones would be created. Since some people always remained in the old settlement area, the spaces

between these nuclei would tend to fill up. A similar process was underway during the Shivaji period.

Though Pune did not become the capital of Shivaji's 'Swarajya', as this honor ultimately went to Raigad, the town remained important. Trade had grown and Malkapur became a well-known settlement of traders. A number of Brahmins from the Desh settled near Lal Mahal. According to local tradition, the eight oldest Brahmin families were collectively known as *aatghare* (*literally*, eight houses). These were, Dehre, Thakar, Shaligram, Kanade, Vaidya, Kabalange, Nilange and Bharait. (Of these, the last three do not exist anymore.) These Deshasth Brahmins held the top jobs and constituted the most privileged section of Pune society. They were not only priests, but many were landowners, administrators or money-lenders. Among other prominent people in the Kasba were the Shitole Deshmukh and Honap Deshpande families who had traditionally held *watans* in the Pune administrative region.

### **Shivaji and Shaista Khan**

Though Shivaji did not actually live in the town for very long (for he soon took to the hills at the beginning of his adventurous career), the importance of Pune is evident in the fact that his major foe, the Mughal general Shaista Khan, made it his objective to capture Pune as quickly as possible to strike at the very root of Shivaji's power. This was achieved in 1660, probably because the town had no defences and Shivaji was away. The Mughals then used Pune as a base in their campaign against Shivaji. Shaista Khan took up residence in the Lal Mahal itself with his harem and his entourage. Close by lay the camp of Maharaja Jaswant Singh the veteran Rajput general of the Mughals, and his army often thousand men. The encampment of the Mughals in the town and the Rajput army just outside must have led to fear and uncertainty among the townsfolk. Many must have fled with whatever valuables they could carry as they had done many times before and would do many times in the future. But there is no evidence to suggest that Shaista Khan sacked the town or punished its people. On the contrary, he is supposed to have established a new *peth* known as Shastapura or Ashtapura (now Mangalwar) to the north of Shahpura (now Somwar). We do not know what this new peth looked like nor do we have any information of its buildings, its people or its bazaars.

The story of how Shivaji surprised the general and almost captured him and how Shaista Khan got away with only the loss of his thumb is the stuff of legend. With four hundred trusted and brave followers Shivaji entered the heavily guarded town, in disguise, with a marriage party. He and his men entered the camp and reached its heart, Lal Mahal. Knowing every nook and corner of the house in which he grew up, Shivaji directed his men to make a hole in the wall of the 'cook house' and was able to enter the harem. The place was a maze of canvas, screen-wall after screen-wall and enclosure within enclosure. Hacking a way through them with his sword Shivaji reached the very bedroom of the Khan. The frightened women roused the Nawab, but before he could use his weapons, Shivaji was upon him and severed his thumb with one stroke of his sword".<sup>21</sup> In the utter confusion that prevailed in the Mughal camp, the Marathas killed the general's son and a number of officers and disappeared into the darkness and the congested lanes of the town.

This daring act and its complete success made Shivaji a greater hero. It invested him, in the popular imagination, with superhuman powers. Those brave youth who were his followers and trained in guerrilla warfare by their hero-leader were sons of the soil. The Maval area on the border of Pune district was not only their cradle but also their training ground. Sure-footed on the hills, trained as daring riders, they knew every range, ridge, valley and *nala*, and the lumbering armies of the established states were no match for them in their own terrain.

### **Shivaji's return from Agra**

Another exciting moment in Pune's history was the return of Shivaji from the confinement at the Mughal court at Agra. After his daring escape from there, he traveled in disguise till he reached Pune after a long and dangerous journey, pursued by Mughal troops. Once here, he threw off his disguise and announced his return. "The guns in every fortress of the Sahyadris boomed greetings to the well-loved leader. The common soldiers went mad with delight. The officers hastened in thousands to pay their respects and to hear from Shivaji's own lips his romantic story". From Pune Shivaji rode in state to Raigad, his capital, where his mother awaited him.

### **Aurangzeb in Pune**

Soon after Shivaji's death in 1680, the Mughal onslaught on the Deccan increased in intensity. Emperor Aurangzeb came to stay in the Deccan permanently. Pune remained in Mughal hands. Aurangzeb found that the old wards in the town were depopulated and decaying, and overgrown with vegetation. According to a local legend, he issued a directive, *koul*, to a favorite, one Mohanlal, to re-establish these areas, but Mohanlal died before being able to do so. This is the first intimation of a process which took place many times and is well-documented in later years. Parts of the medieval towns decayed regularly due to depopulation or natural causes, and needed an impetus from the state for urban renewal.

A few years later, Aurangzeb himself was camped just outside Pune to the south, in a *borban* a grove of jujube trees. Going by descriptions of Mughal camps, it must have been a huge camp, with a large retinue of non-fighting camp followers-traders, entertainers, women, children, animals, besides the soldiers themselves. Some of them probably stayed on permanently after the camp was moved. This the emperor established as a new ward, Mohyabad (now Budhwar).

As new wards were settled, the original core of Kasba Pune merged with the growing town till finally it was regarded as just one of the wards of the city. Yet it seems to have Kasba retained its original identity, as well as its original name. Perhaps it also continued to thrive as the core area, getting more and more crowded as time passed. Its agricultural areas became settled and urbanized. Perhaps too, this is the reason why it never had to be revitalized like some of the other *peths*, which needed fresh *kouls* from time to time as their population fluctuated. We do not hear of *kouls* being issued for the resettlement of Kasba. This probably meant that this old core had a life of its own which was not much affected by the vicissitudes of the town's fortunes.

As we have seen, the Kasha developed organically, with a number of nuclei established at various times, which merged into one. The settlement, as it grew, was like all medieval towns built for pedestrian and animal driven traffic. It was also a mixed class settlement. In the neighborhoods, particular castes or professions may have dominated, but rich and poor lived close together. The *wadas* of the rich, the smaller courtyard type houses of the reasonably well-to-do, and the *kutchas* huts of the poor could be found in the same locality. Moreover, artisans like Tambats or coppersmiths. Shimpis, or tailors, lived above or behind their workshops selling their wares from their own homes. As in other Indian towns, distinctions between home and shop or office did not exist.

However, neighborhoods were caste-based. Deshasth Brahmin houses were built close to each other, the Shimpis, Tambats. Kasars, Malis etc., had their own neighborhoods as the existing street names show even today. But, though it is true that people of same professions, castes or communities preferred to live close together, there were no ghetto-like formations, except in the case of the untouchables. Though certain streets and localities were predominantly inhabited by a particular group, the various localities were close to each other, and this gave rise to the very typical cell-like formation of Indian urban life. The cell-like localities were further emphasized by their shrines and temples for the worship of local and community deities, like the Goddess Kali temple belonging to the Twasta Kasar community. There was a considerable amount of interaction between the localities and groups. This is obvious when we look at the number of streets named after castes or professions that still exist and see how close to each other they were on the ground. Shimpi and Tambat Alis, Bhoi and Phani Alis, Kumbharwada, Kagdipura, Kasaigali are all a few minutes walk from each other and the whole core can be traversed easily on foot.

As the Kasba filled up by using up the agricultural spaces, the gardens and orchards, the houses large and small became more closely packed together and uninterrupted street facades became a common feature. The streets became narrow and meandered their way up and down the uneven land. They were connected by even narrower winding lanes sometimes not more than three feet wide. Though modern town planning has led to some widening of streets, the Kasha, in its general layout, has remained pretty much the same as it was in the seventeenth century.

### **Kasba after 1728**

Changes took place in the Kasba after the Peshwas made Pune their capital. In 1728, Peshwa Baji Rao I ordered the remnants of the Juna Kot or old fort walls to be pulled down. The space thus cleared was given to his supporters and friends who were to build town houses in Pune. The two earliest mansions built here in the eighteenth century were those of the Purandare and the Chitnis families. They and other families like them represented a new cultural element in Kasba.

With the fresh influx there was also to be a different cultural tone to the city. The focus would shift to the newer and growing wards where most of the Peshwa's friends, families and officials settled, around and beyond Shaniwar Wada. Throughout the Peshwa period the social focus remained on the western wards, which continued to develop as Pune grew in importance to become the central point of a vast empire. The

Kasba became one of the many wards of the bustling city. Crowded and no longer the main part, it would slowly lose its dynamism in the new scheme of things.

Some older Brahmin families continued to live on there. The Bapat, Gupehup, Dhare and Mujumdar families did not leave their ancestral wadas for the new peths the grand Purandare mansion continued as a landmark. Kasha Peth was quite a crowded place in the eighteenth century. Many wealthy people must have had their businesses there, which is probably why it suffered terribly in 1763 when Pune was sacked by the Nizam of Hyderabad. According to available documents, more than 310 houses were damaged and about a half of that number had to be completely rebuilt. This destroyed the remaining importance of Kasha.

Between 1765 and 1819, only one hundred and twenty-two houses were added to this *peth*— obviously too crowded for further development, the Kasba was becoming a down-market area. Its heterogeneous population and its physical structure were not consonant with the new social order. However, even though it was absorbed into the growing town it retained its old physical appearance.

### **Kasba Peth after 1818**

After the British takeover, Kasba was seen as congested and unhealthy, and to be avoided by visitors. It was felt to be an anachronism, something leftover from a bygone era. The only attempt at making any change in the peth before the formation of the Municipality in 1856-57 was to remove the remnants of the old gate or Kumbhar Ves. At the ford on the river Mutha at that point, the bank was raised to build a causeway in 1835.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Kasba Peth was described as being densely packed with no room for further expansion. It had obviously become run-down and sanitation suffered. The death rate was high, and though many mansions of the gentry remained, they were falling into decay, as the original families moved out and the *wadas* were partitioned, or sold or given out on rent. Along some streets, like Shimpi Ali, renewal had taken place, with new houses rebuilt on old plots. These small double-storied houses with narrow verandahs and high plinths used more modern materials like concrete, and the new type of bricks. They had iron railings, some of which were imported. Queen Victoria and Edward VIII, crowns intact, are still to be seen, resplendent on these railings!

The urban nature of Kasba Peth however remained unchanged. Kasba was always more residential than commercial, with only some artisan workshops of brass and copperware or paper manufacture and pottery. This pattern continued in the nineteenth century. There were no shops. Obviously the traders found the other wards more lucrative. Much of the old settlement pattern also continued throughout the century. Even in 1885 there still were “paper-makers in Kagdipura potters in Kumbharwada, fishermen in Bhoi Ali, gardeners in Malivada, and Brahman astrologers and priests in Vyavhar Ali” There was also a sizable Muslim population interspersed with Hindu castes. Even up to the 1930s, we find the picture recognizable, though by now some better-off people had begun to move out to the western wards while a mixed population of lower income groups was moving in. In other words, this oldest part of the city was decaying, though the original patterns were still visible.

## Continuity and Change

Today, Kasba, enveloped within the bustling city, represents continuity amidst change. The cell-like formation of caste groups continues, though it is giving way to modern heterogeneity. In Malivada, there are still large numbers of people of that caste, just as Shimpis still form sixty per cent of the population in Shimpi Ali. Twasta Kasars and Tambats still form the majority in Tambat Ali. Though most people no longer follow the caste professions, there are still some craftsmen who hammer out the distinctive patterns on the brass utensils in an open workshop; and there are still fishermen in Bhoi Ali. In the lane named Phani (comb) Ali the sale of ivory combs having long died out, a cosmopolitan population has settled in. The Zambres, the original Patils, continue to be remembered through the *chavadi* and road named after them.

On the ground Kasba still retains its street patterns, though some streets have been widened and sewerage lines installed. Some of the oldest streets are lined with houses that are about a hundred to a hundred and twenty years old. With short street facades, they present an eclectic mixture of traditional and colonial architecture. Some graceful old *wadas* still exist, though many have been woefully neglected, but most have fallen to make way for modern structures.

Today, glimpses of the original medieval town can be caught, and history relived as we walk through Kasha's narrow winding lanes, cool even under the mid-day sun. Its closely packed houses wrap the streets in a comforting shade, while the narrow lanes form wind-channels, so that there is always some breeze on the streets. The crooked lanes hold many surprises as they suddenly broaden out around a corner or form a cul-de-sac. There are public spaces where small groups congregate for convivial socializing. Usually there is a venerable tree, probably a banyan or peepul with a small shrine beneath. A raised platform is built around the tree. These are the well-known *paars* of Pune. In spite of the invasion of motorized two-wheelers and ubiquitous Marutis which edge their way into the lanes with difficulty, the *paar* continues to function like the village *chowk* or center. The elderly meet there for their evening or early morning chat, children try their hands at cricket or swinging from the long roots of the banyan; teenagers gather in the evening for idle chatter.

In the temples, people congregate everyday, not only during festivals. They are vibrant places for religious and social interaction. At Kasba Ganpati, women gather in the late afternoon for a session of devotional singing. Community feeling still exists in spite of the heterogeneous mixture of people. Even if divided by passing feuds, people still make it their business to contribute to neighborly behavior. One young man, an engineer, moved out to the suburbs recently in search of a better quality of life. But he misses Kasba, where no matter how long he was away at work; he was always secure in the knowledge that the neighbors would look after his old mother should anything happen to her. The Kasba still has some functioning *talims* (gymnasiums), for long associated with Pune, particularly with the Swadeshi movement at the turn of this century. Meant to improve the physical fitness of Pune youth, some are adapting to modern methods of physical training.

But the strongest reminder of the early days is Kumbharwada, the potters' colony where the old trade still thrives. In the short labyrinthine lanes of this locality one can

catch a glimpse of the original village - closely-packed houses with thick stone and mud walls, cow dung plastered floors and tiled roofs. Such villages, encapsulated within the urban setting, can be found in other parts of Pune too. It is as if the village has stood still like an island, letting the flood waters of modern urban growth eddy and whirl all around it.^ Close by are Bhoi Ali where fish is still sold and Kagdipura which has some unimaginative new structures.

The Kasha is a live urban space, where community life has not yet been fully sacrificed to the anonymity of modern city life, nor the pedestrian to the rude demands of the four-wheeler. And yet, there is no denying that this ancient core is now a rundown place- The overall impression amongst residents of other areas is that the people of Kasha are indisciplined; that the young men there are prone to violence; and that it lacks an urbane culture. It is felt to be too congested and uncomfortable. As life-styles change, the inconvenience of living in the old *wadas* with their lack of amenities is driving the young and upwardly mobile away to the outer suburbs like Kothrud. Even a tiny Hat with its own bathroom there is preferable to the old-style *wada* in spite of its larger spaces.

Because of the space constraints and the narrow lanes, new development, or even large-scale rebuilding is much less evident in the Kasba when compared to other *paths*. Whatever rebuilding there is, is unimaginative. Ugly new structures jostle for space with the older buildings, and are trying to rise further and further upwards. The wonderful human scale is in danger of being completely lost unless imaginative rebuilding in tune with the original form of Kasba is not insisted upon immediately.

## 2. THE PESHWAI CITY OF PETHS

*“The city has for many years given the tone to the feeling of the Maratha Empire. It is looked upon with a respect that is quite surprising, and it has been considered by the lower classes (nor can I drive the belief from their heads) that he who rules in Poona governs the world.”*

*H. D. Robertson, First Collector of Pune in a letter to Elphinstone, April 1818*

In Pune’s long history, every time that the city has been on the verge of dying, some specific event of momentous consequence has acted as a timely life-saver. The most important event in the past was of course the arrival of the young Shivaji in 1636 with his mother Jijabai and the trusted administrator Dadaji Konddev, and their decision to make the small Kasha their permanent home.

For seventeen long years after Shivaji’s death in 1680, Pune remained in Mughal hands, as we have seen earlier. The city bore some of the brunt of the fierce anti-Mughal struggle throughout the reigns of his two sons, Sambhaji and Rajaram, as well as under the regency of the latter’s widow, Tarabai. Aurangzeb died in 1707 and his successor released Shahu son of Sambhaji, from captivity at the Mughal court. This was a part of Mughal political strategy to divide the Maratha movement, and it succeeded for a while. But Shahu soon gained control and was recognized as Chhatrapati with his capital at

Satara. At the time of his release, the Pune region, which had been his family's *jagir*, was given back to him by the Mughals. Thus, Pune city once again came into Maratha hands. Shahu handed Pune, as part of a large *jagir* which included the surrounding areas, to his Peshwa (Chief Minister) Balaji Vishwanath Bhatt. Originally belonging to Shrivardhan in Konkan, this Chitpavan Brahmin had risen from humble origins as a revenue clerk to the top position in Shahu's Council of Ministers. Though Pune was his *jagir* he lived mostly in nearby Saswad and appointed his friend Ambaji Trimbak Purandare as administrator of Pune.

After the death of Balaji Vishwanath, his son Baji Rao, a young man of hardly twenty, was given his father's post as Peshwa, by Chhatrapati Shahu. This proved to be another of those momentous occurrences which changed the course of the development of Pune. Baji Rao I decided to move from Saswad to a more convenient location, and decided to make his permanent headquarters at Pune. Pune was already an established town with six peths and it had potential for growth. It was also not too close to Satara, where the sovereign lived, yet that town was quite accessible. In his new headquarters, Baji Rao I could create his own power center, away from the watchful eyes of his sovereign.

From 1728, when this decision was made, till 1818 when it passed into British hands, the fortunes of Pune became inextricably linked with those of the Peshwa family. It became a political city; its *raison d'etre* lay in the politico-military activities of the ruling family. Not only was it the administrative center of the vast territories of the Peshwas but also the capital of a tar-flung Confederate empire, which at its height stretched in a wide swathe through North and South India. Its armies ranged from Mysore in the south, Gujarat and Rajasthan in the west, and the borders of Bengal in the east and up to Attock in the north. The Marathas became the defenders of India against both the Afghan invaders from the northwest as well as the British from the east (Bengal).

How did this political transformation of the Marathas into an all-India power affect the life of Pune and its people? For once, there is a wealth of historical material available, from which we can put together a reasonably clear picture of the transformed city, and see how it acquired a distinctive personality and a specific culture. The Peshwa government kept detailed records of all kinds of activities, including census records of houses in Pune, with lists of citizens. All manner of grants, orders and revenue records were stored carefully packed in cloth bundles in government offices and homes of officials. There were also records of important families, like the Purandares, Jedhes and a number of others. Much has been written by scholars on the military achievements of the Peshwas as well as the intricacies of the politics of the court and the Confederate leaders. We will confine ourselves only to the effect that such events had on the growth of the city itself.

### **An Emerging Identity**

The rise of Pune in the eighteenth century is a part of the general trend in urban growth that took place in the country at that time. As Mughal power became more and more feeble, imperial governors made themselves virtually independent in their provinces, providing a powerful incentive towards urbanization in their respective

provincial centers. These regional towns bloomed into full-fledged capitals. For example: Faizabad-Lucknow in Avadh; Hyderabad under the Nizam; Murshidabad under Murshid Quli Khan in Bengal, all became important centers of regional power. Pune can be included amongst these thriving feudal cities, though ultimately it played a much larger role than the others, because of the military exploits of the Peshwas and their commanders the Shindes, Holkars, Gaikwads and Bhonsles.

Each of these cities developed a distinctive culture which put its stamp on the personality of the city. Though it is difficult to pin-point precisely the intangible 'cultural identity' of a city, such urban identities were important landmarks on the cultural map of India. Even today, people talk about Lucknowi *tehzeeb* or etiquette, Hyderabad's Indo-Persian character, or Delhi's Mughlai culture as fixed points of identification. From the writings of their poets and historians, like Ghalib for Delhi, or Abdul Halim Sharar for Lucknow, we get a glimpse of the grace and courtly life of these cities and their inhabitants, and the highs and lows of urban life.

Pune too had a number of local folk poets, the *shahirs* who wrote *powadas* and *lavni*'s praising her rulers or mourning her disasters. From their writings, and from the vast records preserved by the government of the day, which have been painstakingly worked over by scholars, it is possible to identify the character of Pune. By the mid-eighteenth century, the early layers of culture and settlement had merged with new ones, and Pune was moulded in the image of its rulers. A cohesive organization grew and a tradition was established. The vestiges of rurality disappeared under the glossy surface of the well-known Pune Brahminical culture.

Though it is again difficult to define this specific culture, it was perceived then as now, as one of Brahminical orthodoxy in matters of religious and social behavior. From this resulted a specific urban form, quite different from other contemporary cities. The image of a city is often symbolized through its buildings, or planning, or some sort of man-made focus. Pune, even in its heyday, never evolved a monumental style of architecture. There were no awe-inspiring urban vistas, no wide processional ways, or grand planning schemes in eighteenth century Pune. The only really important structure, and which has become a symbol of the city, is the Shaniwar Wada, the fortress-palace of the ruling house. Nevertheless, the abiding image of Pune, even today, is that of a city *of peths*. Like other traditional towns, Pune grew as each *peth* was added to the original Kasba. But because of the particular way in which the *peths* were organized, the town presented a unified fabric in spite of many basic differences in the composition of the various *peths*.

### **A Focal Point**

Before we describe the organization of *the peths*, let us go back for a moment to Baji Rao I. His desire to settle in Pune led to the building of the palace which would be the focal point of the city. It was called Shaniwar Wada, probably because construction began on a Saturday in January 1730 and ended on a Saturday exactly two years later. According to the well-known and charming local legend, while looking for a site to build his mansion, he saw an astonishing sight. A small hare was chasing a hound over a hillock near the *Mutha* river bank. He decided that this would be the most auspicious spot. Legends apart, historical reasons may have also prompted him, for the palace was

close to where the Lal Mahal of Shivaji once stood. It is said that he brought some earth from Lal Mahal, and with his own hands mixed it with the foundation of his new home, linking his own nature to the history of the founder of the Maratha kingdom in a symbolic gesture.<sup>1</sup>

The previous inhabitants of the five-acre estate, the fishermen and weavers, Hindu and Muslim, who had lived there since Shivaji's time, were resettled elsewhere. Baji Rao I built an elegant two-storied *wada*, planned around three successive courtyards. The estate included offices and audience halls. Fruit trees and ornamental plants in the quadrangles were watered from tanks and fountains. At the north-eastern corner was a special mansion built for his famed mistress, the beautiful and the legendary Mastani, who had many talents.

The Mastani story is of abiding interest because of the romantic aura it casts over the charismatic personality of the dashing young Baji Rao I. This celebrated romance began around 1730. Mastani, a dancing girl, was presented to him by his friend and ally, Chhatrasal of Bundelkhand. According to legend, she was the daughter of a Hindu father and Muslim mother and was an accomplished dancer and singer. She gave public performances and even performed at the wedding festivities of his son Balaji Baji Rao. She was a skilful rider and went with the Peshwa on his campaigns.

The latter's infatuation with her caused general ill-feeling within the family. The orthodox were scandalised when the Peshwa took to eating meat and drinking wine, and Mastani was blamed for it. - Around 1739, when the Peshwa was away from Pune, Mastani was seized and confined by those who resented her influence on him. Baji Rao I heard of this, but his inability to rescue her and the enforced separation is said to have broken his heart. He died in 1740, still pining for her. When the news of his death reached her, Mastani too died - either of shock or by committing suicide. They had a son, Shamsheer Bahadur, who served the state loyally and fell with many others at the Battle of Panipat, that graveyard of the Maratha brave.

The Shaniwar Wada grew into a sumptuous fortified palace complex under the successors of Baji Rao I. Successive Peshwas added halls, courtyards and fountains. There was the Ganapati Rang Mahal, made famous in the painting by Wales and Daniell; there was a mirrored hall, and structures with poetic names, the exact location of which cannot now be established. There were the *meghadambari* (cloud-capped); the *asmani* (sky-reaching); the *hastidanti* (ivory) mansions. There was also a splendid lotus-shaped fountain, with 196 petals known as the Hazari Karanje. Its water source was an underground conduit that came all the way from a lake in Katraj, eighteen kilometers away. The palace was really a fortified house, known locally as *a garhi*, only more impressive and much larger than other *garhis*. It acquired massive stone walls and bastions, as well as a huge main gate with a wooden *nagar khana*, a music gallery, above it. This is all that remains of the *wada* today, as most of it was destroyed by a fire in 1828, after the British takeover of Pune.

The palace was witness to many significant events of Maratha history which took place within its halls, mansions and courtyards. It was probably in the original two storeyed mansion that Baji Rao I took the historic policy decision to send the Maratha armies marching north to Delhi to deliver the *coup d'egrace* to the feeble Mughal Empire. Shaniwar Wada came to hold a special place in the hearts of the people. The eighteenth

century *shahirs* wrote *powadas* describing its elegance. In the imagery of the famous *shahirs* Ram Joshi and Honaji Bala, Shaniwar Wada merits comparison with Lord Krishna's palace at Dwarka.

Shaniwar Wada was built in the area of the old Murtazabad ward, which shared a common boundary with Kasba Peth. This old ward was revitalized by the building of the palace, and through the influx of immigrants who came with the Peshwa in search of opportunities. Kasba Peth too benefited from the new developments. Since there was no longer any need for the Pandhari Kot, this old fortification was removed, and the land given by Baji Ran to his friends and followers, so that they could build their own houses. There were already six *paths* by 1728 (Kasha, Murtazabad, Malkapura, Shahptira, Ashlapura and Mohyabad.) Some were already decaying; some had failed to take off, while others like Kasba remained steady. The commercial areas of Shahpura and Mohyabad were thriving. Baji Rao I added a seventh peth Visapur (later named Shukrawar), to the existing six.

Previously, the mechanism of setting up a *peth* was simple. The ruler issued a *koul*, a permission or an order, to an individual, with implied rights and duties, to set up a *peth*. During the Peshwa period, the system was similar, but much more sophisticated. The ruler wanting to set up a *peth*, or revitalize an old one, entrusted the work to an official known as Shete or Shete-Mahajan. The assignment was often a hereditary grant, though the government reserved the right to withdraw the grant if the results were not satisfactory. The Shete was asked to build roads, divide plots, invite settlers, and provide amenities to ensure that *the peth* grew. Specifically, he had to initiate economic activity by establishing shops and bazaars for both local crafts and imported goods. "You are therefore directed to make *the peth* prosperous. On fulfillment of the agreement for ten years, you are to exercise the prescriptive rights of office. You are to exert yourself to bring merchants and professionals for settlement, and discharge your responsibilities loyally and to the best of your abilities". The rights of the Shete were also set out in the document granting the *watan*. These included the various contributions the Shete could impose on grocers, gardeners, manufacturers, tradesmen and others. The payments could be made in produce or cash. The limits of the *peth* were also laid down and were usually contiguous to an existing ward. This important function connected with urban development was thus a judicious mixture of state initiative and private enterprise.

At first, the peth was probably no more than a well-laid out stone-paved main road, with one or two *wadas* of the well-to-do: probably also the residence of the Shete, and some huts. As migrants, traders, shopkeepers, bankers etc. were enticed to come in and settle the Shete would allot spaces for shops, houses and workshops. He also had to provide water by digging wells and tanks or connecting up *the peth* to the city's elaborate aqueduct system. Soon temples, shrines, a bazaar, orchards, gardens, ward offices and police posts would appear. This is how a locality would grow; though a lot of freedom was left for the building of houses. Lanes and by-lanes were created from leftover spaces between houses. Thus, a certain amount of overall planning was combined with impromptu development in the peths.

Working within the framework of the limits placed on the area of development, the specific goals set and the specific amount of private profit to be made, the Shete-Mahajan became very important for the growth of Pune. Two Shete-Mahajan families made

valuable contributions to the development of the city during Peshwa times, the Tulshibagwales and Khasgivales. Another official connected with the *peth* was called the *karmavisdar*. He collected taxes and kept a percentage for himself; while *he* paid a fixed amount in advance to the government every year. He was also in charge of security and had a small group of irregular soldiers to help him. He kept a watch over bazaar rates too so that traders could not cheat.

At the head of the municipal government of the town was the *kotwal*. It seems that such an office may not have existed in the time of Baji Rao I; however, an abundance of *kotwali* papers are available from 1764, including the list of *kolwals*. His duties were very similar to those of the modern-day District Magistrate. Cleanliness, health and hygiene were in his charge. He had to fix the house-tax and others taxes as well as the salaries of sweepers and municipal servants. He had fixed rights and emoluments when he was appointed. The Pune Kotwal appointed men from the Ramoshi caste to act as policemen. The post was lucrative and carried a lot of power. The best known of the Kotwals of Pune was Ghashiram Sawaldas (1781 -1791) a Brahmin from Kanauj (UP).”

Much of municipal finance was raised from local taxation, then as now. There were taxes on shopkeepers and artisans (*mohturfa*), there was octroi and toll (*zakat*), and tax on liquor (*abkari*). However, the income from the last was very low, as the Peshwa government had a prohibition law. (It was removed after the British takeover so that British-manufactured alcohol could be sold profitably).’ The most interesting was the house tax (*ghar patti*). It generated a lot of income, and documents show that in 1768 in Guruwar Peth, tax collected from 200 houses alone was Rs. 1000. However, a number of individuals from each *peth* were exempt from the tax. This had nothing to do with their financial condition. There is a list of people exempt from house tax in Raviwar Peth or Malkapura which had some of the richest bankers; the list reads like a veritable Who’s Who. The exemptees included the famous firm of Gujarati bankers, Hari Bhakti, government servants of all types including soldiers in the artillery, foundry workers, water carriers, cobblers, palanquin bearers and even a courtesan. Temples, *matths*, *dharamshalas*, government *wadas* and offices and other public institutions were also exempt. Interestingly, in spite of an efficient aqueduct system and plenty of public tanks and wells, no water tax was levied.

So, under the overall control of the town Kotwal, the *peths* evolved through a flexible system of development. If due to any reason, one became static or deserted, the Peshwa entrusted its renewal to another more dynamic officer and it gained new life. For example, Malkapura was redeveloped in 1740; Visapur, set up by Baji Rao I in 1734, had to be renewed within fourteen years. It was created for military-related activities, and its fortunes probably fluctuated due to changes in the number of its military personnel at any given time.

*Peths* developed special personalities. Thus Kasba and Somwar were residential, with little commercial activity. Visapur had many military institutions. The foundry for the manufacture of guns, as well as the Head Quarters of the artillery was there. The Peshwa’s stables, infantry lines, the gymnasium, elephant stables - all were centered here. Malkapur had a bazaar and was a center for important merchants, *sahukars*, jewellers and bankers. It was a business center, where well-known families also resided. It was thickly populated and the richest, with about 1500 houses at its peak in the 1790s. Gujarati and

Jain bankers lived on the upper floors, while wholesale groceries were sold on the ground floor. There was the Moti Chowk, Saraf Ali, and also Bohri Ali (still in existence). The Bohri merchants, welcomed by the government, specialized, then as now, in hardware, iron and tin. Their Jamat Khana was built here in 1730. (In 1839, the Jumma Masjid was added). Hari Pant Phadke, General in service of Sawai Madhav Rao, and also Sardar Ghorpade built their *wadas* here. Phadke's Wada had seven courtyards, a beautiful temple and a special system for distribution of hot water. (Only a small section had survived from a devastating fire till a few years back. Recently even this has been completely replaced by a new building). Murtazabad became the upmarket area where the many great *sardars* and officers but their *wadas*, close to the Peshwa. Sadashiv Peth, set up by Balaji Baji Rao's cousin and General, Sadashiv Rao Bhau in the 1760s, was at first meant for the military and laid out in squares and broad streets. But it came to be known in later years, especially in the nineteenth century, as a center for Brahmin orthodoxy, where a large number of families of that caste resided. Budhwar Peth was another business district. It also housed the Peshwa's cavalry (HuzurPaga) and had two important temples, the Tambdi (red) Jogeshwari and Belbag Vishnu Temple.

Surviving lists of *peth* occupants show that though there were caste-based localities, total segregation by caste or class was absent. In every *peth*, even those dominated by the higher castes, there was a mix of lower castes and professions including—untouchables like Mahars. Thus, there was a reasonable amount of heterogeneity, the hallmark of urbanism though the Mahars lived on the outer edges of the wards.

### **Enlarged Hinterland**

The *peths* grew organically in spite of being officially 'established' by an individual at government initiative. The delicate balance of kinship and community networks, the creation of community spaces and the growth of an urbane culture developed of their own volition. The shrines and *paars*, little cul-de-sacs, sudden widening of tortuous lanes, trees, orchards, gardens, and above all, the inner courtyards and outer *angans*, small yards, created an integrated and spontaneous lownscap. There was always considerable agricultural activity which continued in *the peths*.

Meanwhile, Baji Rao's northward thrust saw the Maratha armies under commanders such as Malhar Rao Holkar, Bhikaji Shinde and Damaji Gaikwad, march north against the Mughals into Gujarat and Malwa. In the 1730s they reached Delhi, the Ganga-Jamuna *doab* and Rajasthan. In the south they went into the Konkan and also invaded the domains of the Nizam of Hyderabad.

With this new era of warfare, there arose a new elite of military commanders or Sardars. They were different from the Deshmukhs, who had been important in the earlier period. Their power came from their ability as military leaders and their loyalty to the Peshwa. In their penetration into Malwa and the northern regions, they collected large amounts of tribute in the form of cash and goods. A large part of this flowed into the Peshwa's coffers at Pune. The hinterland of the city was no longer just its surrounding districts, but the much larger areas through which the Maratha armies passed. Moreover, the agricultural productivity of the areas around Pune increased throughout the eighteenth century due to the encouragement given to agriculture by the Peshwas. The growing of

cash crops like cotton, sugarcane and tobacco was taken up. This increased revenue collection.””

Methods of warfare changed too with growing imperial ambitions. Maratha armies now had to be much larger than the roving bands of the previous era, and the old guerrilla tactics had to be changed. The soldiers could no longer return home, during monsoons or harvests, as they were too far from home. They became full-time professionals. Artillery was used on a larger scale too. All this pushed up the cost of maintaining a full-time army. The need for capital led to the setting up of a rather sophisticated revenue system as well as a banking and credit system.” It also helped monetization all over the Maratha domains, and land revenue was collected mostly in cash rather than in produce. Traders and bankers grew in importance. The bureaucracy also grew stronger. A strong financial market was thus created in Maharashtra, with its center at Pune, increasing the city’s importance.

### **Banking Network**

Bankers became a privileged group in society and many were based in Pune. They benefited from the system of revenue collection and from the impetus to trade both inside and outside Maharashtra. Their network of credit stretched far outwards to Malwa, Rajasthan and North India. The network had centers in all major cities of the Deccan as well. “Millions of rupees were raised regularly in the family firms in Pune, usually borrowed against future tax collections.” They lent money to the Peshwas and other military commanders for financing wars. The topmost layer of this group was formed of families who held high positions in the government and were also tied to the Peshwa’s family by marriage alliances. For example, there was the Raste family, whose main business was finance, but who also held posts in the army, and came into real prominence when a daughter, Gopikabai, was married to Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao. In the next rank were *sahukars* who were involved with the moving of huge amounts of funds from other areas, to the center, and who also made arrangements with the *kamavisdars* to pay revenues in advance. They were important in Pune society.

The names of many of these families belonging to the financial-governmental personal network are still well-known in Pune. Apart from the Rastes, there were Tambekars, Dikshit-Patwardhans, Thattes, Bhides, Gunes, Vaidyas and others. Almost all had a *wada*, if not more than one, in Pune. They constituted the cream of society, and most were Brahmins. Pune society was therefore dominated by that caste. The Peshwas brought in a number of their friends from the Konkan. These were the Chitpavan Brahmin families who gradually became politically, economically and socially dominant. They were military commanders, *sahukars jagirdars*, religious leaders, priests, scholars, and clerks in government offices.

Thus the Brahmins had come to control the levers of power as well as the everyday administrative affairs. They had earlier served in the Deccan kingdoms for generations as clerks and administrators, and were a pool of literate and able men from which the Peshwas could draw loyal and trustworthy officers. But within the financial system were some non-Maharashtrian groups like Gujarati Nagar Brahmins, Muslim Bohris and Jain

Vanis. They had all-India firms and enormous resources, and could handle large movements of tribute. The House of Hari Bhakti was well-known. They handled the transfer of revenue from Gujarat to Pune and had an office and home in Raviwar Peth (Malkapur), enjoying exemption from house tax as a privilege.

### **Development under the Peshwas**

During the reign of Baji Rao I (1720-40), the full potential of growth was not realized in the town. The new rulers, settling into prosperity, had not yet developed a taste for luxury. Their habits and life-styles were still Spartan; even though Baji Rao I was himself open to unorthodox ways. During this period however, some money was spent in digging of wells, tanks and the building of temples. The well-known Amruteshwar temple was built by the Peshwa's sister, Bhiubai. Capt Gordon, envoy to Satara found in 1739 many signs of prosperity and a flourishing agriculture in the districts. The government foundry and ordnance factory was busy and technically good, while cloth from Pune looms was exported to Bombay.

The real development of the city, however, can be traced to the rule of Balaji Baji Rao, or Nanasaheb, as he was called. During this time, 1740-1761, Pune came to be adorned with numerous temples, *ghats*, *wadas* and new *peths*. Old temples falling into decay were renovated and enlarged. So also Visapur, set up in the previous reign, was redeveloped. Vetal and Nagesh-Nihal *peth* were established. On the bank of the river was built the Omkareshwar temple. Another landmark was the temple of Tulshibag, standing on one acre of land. At first there was a small group of temples to Ram, Ganpati and Shiva, but over the years it has grown into an important complex, with shrines, halls, rest rooms, music galleries, and a 140 ft. high *shikhara* which was added in the nineteenth century, as well as a shopping area for brass and copper utensils and a variety of goods. Around the Peshwa's palace, stately *wadas* belonging to various grandees came up. Some two dozen gardens added to the special atmosphere of the city. A wooden bridge (still known as Lakdi Pul, though long since rebuilt in stone) connected the other bank of the Mutha in 1761. Parvati hill, about six kilometers to the south of Pune, became an important landmark at this time. A Shiva temple in the typical Maratha style was built on the summit. Reached by a long flight of steps, it commands a spectacular view of the city. Nanasaheb also built a palace here, in which he was destined to spend his last hours. There was a growing need for 'sweet' drinking water. This was met with the construction of an aqueduct in 1755, which brought water to Pune from two reservoirs all the way from Katraj, eighteen kilometers south of Pune.

Baji Rao I had conceived of building a wall around the city and had even entrusted the work to the Kotwal, Jivajipant Khasgivale. The wall was to be a massive one, 35 ft. high and 15 ft. wide, built partly of stone and partly of bricks. Its size is conjectured from the remnants which could be seen till the 1880's, when the author of the Gazetteer traced its line along the periphery of the town. The wall was never completed. It is significant that though prone to invasions and sacks, Pune never had a defensive arrangement. According to local legend, the Chhatrapati at Satara ordered that the work on the wall should stop, because it would be an affront to the Mughal emperor at Delhi. This story seems rather dubious. The monarch probably felt that a well-defended Pune would allow the Peshwa to become too powerful, which would be a threat to himself. But it is probably more

likely, as Grant Duff, historian of the Marathas says, that the Peshwa himself had second thoughts and decided that the walls might tempt the sovereign to stand a siege in Pune, rather than go to the hill fort of Purandar.

The city had grown to the south of Kasba. In spite of the settlement in Shahpur (Somwar Peth) the Nagzhari did create an obstacle to further growth in the east. A stream known as Peshwa Nala (no longer extant) restricted growth towards the west, flowing past the borders of Visapur (Shukrawar Peth). The new *peths* set up in the 1750s, with a mercantile and craft-based character, were all between these two streams. Nanasaheb was a visionary, under whom the first real attempt was made at a deliberate restructuring of the city's topography. He diverted the Peshwa Nala by a dam and joined the diverted stream to the Ambil Odha. The old Ambil Odha was controlled with dams and sluices, its bottom scooped out, and the whole enlarged to form Parvati Lake. Smaller lakes were created from the old channel so that lotuses could be grown there. Hira Bag, a garden with a pleasure retreat, was built below the Parvati hill, and Saras Bag, another garden, was made on an island on the lake. The damming of the Ambil Odha and changing of its course altered the hydrology of Pune; as a large area of land became free of annual floods, leaving it open for later development. Murtazabad (Shaniwar Peth) could now grow towards that side. Public works in those days too, it appears, moved slowly. According to a well-known story, one day, Nanasaheb, enraged at the slow pace at which his project was progressing, got off his elephant and began to move the stones himself. His officers had no choice but to follow his example; the dam was soon ready!

The visionary efforts of Nanasaheb had brought many improvements to the city and to civic life. The building of the Lakdi Pul was a far-sighted measure, giving easier access to the trans-Mutha region and the routes to the east. A strong local story says that the Lakdi Pul was built so that the Maratha army, defeated in the Battle of Panipat in 1761, could enter the city through the back door as it were. Entering through the front, from the Kumbhar Ves side, was a privilege reserved for victorious troops returning home in glory. However, this may be just one of those stories which add color to the history of Pune, as there is no mention of it in contemporary records. Nanasaheb died, broken in spirit, at the palace on Parvati within a few days after the news of the terrible disaster of Panipat was received in Pune. In this battle perished many of the best and bravest of the Maratha leaders. The city mourned their death. Many years later, in 1817, the last Peshwa, Bajji Rao II, was to witness the saddest event of Maratha history from this hill top - the rout of his army by the British during the Battle of Khadki, which brought to an end the Maratha empire.

Under the dynamic leadership of the fourth Peshwa, Madhav Rao I (1761-1772), the Marathas made a quick recovery after Panipat. The city benefited by the addition of three new *peths* during the next two decades. These were Bhavani (after a temple of Goddess Bhavani); Sadashiv (after its founder, Sadashiv Rao Bhau, uncle of Madhav Rao; it was probably renewed); and Narayan (after the fifth Peshwa Narayan Rao), all set up between 1763 and 1769. This continuous growth however, did not impress everyone. Possibly because of the lack of monumental architecture, combined with simple life-styles of its ruling class, Pune appeared less urbanized than it was. Anquetil Du Perron, a French scholar who came to Pune in 1757, wrote that Pune was an "union of four or five villages in a plain, with a common market and some one-storey houses". Huts were the main form

of housing, and he did not find even one house worthy of notice! Obviously he missed noticing the wadas.

In the next period of expansion, between 1780 and 1790, four new *peths* -Rasta, Nana, Ghorpade and Ganj - were added, taking the total to eighteen. Also called Shivpuri, Rasta Peth owed its origin to Anandrao Lakshman Raste, the hereditary commander of the Peshwa's cavalry and a relative of the Peshwa family by marriage. Raste built his magnificent *wada* here. A huge mansion, enclosed by a wall, it had two large courtyards, a number of halls and a detached ceremonial *darbar* hall. Curved brackets and ceilings supported by the typical *suru*, or cypress-shaped wooden columns, made it a truly impressive structure and reflected the power and status of the owner. Originally meant for his troops, the *peth* was well laid out with straight broad roads, and neat plots. Later, it became cosmopolitan, attracting immigrants because of its civic amenities. The *peth* had a mixed population of different castes, though Brahmins and Gujarati Vanis predominated. Its planned layout and healthy surroundings probably attracted non-Maharashtrian immigrants in the nineteenth century- Mudaliars from Madras and Bene-Israel Jews from the Konkan.

The other three *peths* were more commercial in character, with few Brahmins and more of the occupational castes and traders. Nana Peth was named after Nana Phadnis, the most powerful minister in Pune during Sawai Madhav Rao's time (1774-1795). It was set up as a center of wholesale grain trade, mostly controlled by Marwari and Gujarati Vanis; hence the carting center was also here. *Ghorpade peth*, originally meant for a cavalry unit under the command of the officer of that name, was a non-Brahmin locality with many lower caste people, while Ganj Peth, as the name implies, was a commercial *path*, with a large salt store, and predominated by traders, weavers and a large Muslim population of artisans. The culturally identifiable parts of the city could thus be recognized by the end of the eighteenth century. A dominant Brahmin culture in western wards, mixed neighborhoods in the older *peths* of Kasba and Shahpura; a predominantly commercial culture in the central wards of Malkapur and Mohyabad as well as the eastern and south eastern wards, with a mixture of immigrant and low caste and professional groups.

During this time Nana Phadnis renamed the seven older *peths* each after a day of the week. This was how the *pet/is* were named in Satara, from where Nana probably got the idea. Thus Murtazabad, in which Shaniwar Wada stood, became Shaniwar Peth; Malkapura- Raviwar; Shahpura- Somwar; Ashtapura-Mangalwar; Mohyabad Budhwar; Vetar - Guruwar and Visapur- Shukrawar. There is no evidence that links these names to market days in the different *peths* as is sometimes believed.

By the end of the eighteenth century, Pune had grown into a typical medieval town with the Shaniwar Palace as its focal point, and the administrative elite living in comfort and luxury. On both sides of the streets, two or three-storeyed houses stood packed together, casting cool shadows. The line of *wadas* presented a blank wall at the street level, a massive wooden door as the only opening. On the upper floor were a number of arched wooden windows beautifully carved from where the scenes of the street could be watched. In 1792, the Englishman Captain Moor described Pune as set amidst cypress groves, mango orchards, and gardens. Writing thirty five years after Perron had found Pune quite rural, Captain Moor described the city in 1792 as "being around two miles".

He found the mansions of the Sardars elegant, though the Shaniwar Wada, he felt, was not grand enough for a royal palace. He too did not find the city elegant or handsome, but markets were thriving with imported luxury-items, and there was a large government foundry employing many people. The peths now had a network of permanent and temporary markets, and eighteen years before the British conquest, Robertson (later to be first Collector) found “wealth flowing into Poona. The city was bright with bands of armed men, handsome houses, rich palanquins and gorgeous elephants. Messengers ran from place to place and all was gay with sports, dances and merry making. It is obvious that Pune had reached its peak as a feudal city both in economy and cultural development.

### **Urban Luxuries**

Throughout the previous decades, the old simple ways of the ruling class in Pune were undergoing change. Their association with north India and the Mughal way of life had brought in a more lavish life-style. With a growing love of display and a more luxurious style, demand for goods raised consumption in the city. Trade was inevitably stimulated.

Luxury goods came in from far-flung places. Fine silks and cloth was imported from the famed weavers of Paithan and Yeola; turbans and silk cloth was brought to Pune from Banaras by the trading Gosavi sect. Kashmiri shawls, inlaid stoneware from Agra, bidri-ware from the south, ivory, gold and silver all had a lucrative market in Pune.” Soon, some weavers from Paithan and Yeola were settled in the city to produce the expensive silks with their distinctive weave, for the rich clientele. From Bombay came mirrors, furniture, lamps and other imported articles. The bazaars of the city were rich and thriving.

European visitors have left snippets of descriptions of the urban scene in Pune. Captain Moor describes the markets as large, with one long street of English looking-glasses, globe lamps and other finery. At the turn of the century, Captain Robertson found the markets full of watermelons, figs, mangoes, bananas, pomegranates and country vegetables. Even earlier, consumption had been on the rise. Du Perron, as we have seen, though generally unimpressed by the city in 1757, described the market to be a broad street crossing the town from end to end full of goods from Asia and Europe imported through Bombay.

### **Burgeoning Building Activity**

There was a flurry of building activity throughout the second half of the century. The Peshwas spent on improving civic amenities. The building of *wadas* reached its height in the second half of the eighteenth century and the *wada* came to be regarded as the typical residential structure of the Marathas. A number of government *-wadas* were built in the various *peths*. Shaniwar Wada was renovated and buildings and embellishments added to it. The *wadas* became larger and more lavish. Their timber supports, wooden ceilings and brackets acquired rich and intricate carved designs. The large *diwan khanus* were adorned by the cypress-shaped columns, which became associated with Maratha architecture. Raised on a high stone plinth with walls of brick and lime plaster strengthened with timber-frames, the *wada* was arranged around a series of courtyards.

Usually two-storeyed, some *wadas* became higher during this period. On the street front they presented stark blank walls, while the open courtyards inside were surrounded by columns and arched galleries. The inner courtyard or *madhyagriha* was mostly appropriated by the women of the household, while the outer one was for the activities of the men - the office, the place where clerks and accountants sat, and the entertainment of male visitors. Ornamental windows, chandeliers, mirrors, glass paintings added to the feeling of opulence. Individualism was indulged in the extras that were added to the basic *wada*. One minister, Morobadada Phadnis, had an ivory inlaid hall as well as one covered in copper; the Ghorpades had a large cistern with a room in the middle (called *jala mandir*) for the hot summer nights. Haripant Phadke's *wada* had seven courtyards; many even had Persian wheels and the facility to lift water up to the higher floors. The *wadas* thus flowered into beautiful and luxurious mansions.

Prosperity backed by military campaigns had changed the city and its surroundings by the end of the eighteenth century. Much money was spent on building new temples or renovating and enlarging old ones. The Peshwas and their family members and the *sardars* and *sahukars* invested money in temple-building as a pious act. This also included making *ghats* on the river bank and digging wells. Though Pune's temples were not like the grand affairs of South India, the city was dotted with temples surrounded with gardens and courtyards, which became a vital part of the people's lives. Shrines and halls were added to the older temples like Kasba Ganpati, Nageshwar, Omkareshwar, Amruteshwar and Tulshibag. Legends and stories became attached to some temples, showing their identification with the popular mind. In Ganesh Peth the deity of Dulya (rocking) Maruti got its name from the belief that, like the rest of Punt, indeed the rest of Maharashtra, he rocked in grief when the Marathas were being destroyed at the battle field of Panipat. In Sadashiv Peth, the Khunya (killer) Murlidhar temple built by a rich devotee is associated with a bloody fracas between the Arabs who were appointed to guard it and the East India Company soldiers, on the day of the installation of the deity.

One of the most outstanding achievements of the Peshwa government was the solution The City's to the grave municipal problem of providing enough clean water for the growing population. Though the Mulha River would have been the major source of water in normal circumstances, being rain-fed, the volume of water decreases drastically after the monsoon. Therefore alternative arrangements had to be thought of. As mentioned earlier, Nanasaheb Peshwa had ordered the construction of two reservoirs at Katraj in 1755. The water was impounded by masonry dams. It was carried in arched masonry ducts and released in a number of dipping wells, known as *uchchwas*, in different parts of the city. This public aqueduct also carried water into Shaniwar Wada. Subsequently, three more underground aqueducts were built, though the government one from Katraj remained the major one. Nana Phadnis built one, which came from Ambegaon on the outskirts, and brought good drinking water mainly to the western Sadashiv Peth. The Rastes, when they established Rasta Peth, provided water to it and their mansion through an aqueduct sourced at Kondwa to the southeast; the fourth one, built by Rupram Chaudhary, also had its source at Kondwa and supplied water to the eastern *peths* of Shukrawar and Bhavani. The water from these channels was distributed at various points in small public tanks or *howds* and private *wadas* and dipping wells in Shukrawar (Kala Howd). Budhwar and Ganesh *peths*, along the Katraj aqueduct. An important *howd* called Pushkarni in Sadashiv Peth lay on the Ambegaon line. There were at least five along the

Raste's line, and another live or six including the well-known Panch Howd on the Chaudhary line. Some of these exist today, but are in a filthy state.

There were innumerable wells all over the city. In the Indian tradition it was considered a pious act to dig wells for the public, and many well-to-do people did so at important locations or at times of water shortage. There were separate wells for the low-caste colonies, and privately owned ones within the wadas.

As in most pre-industrial medieval towns, the advances made in water dispersal did not correspond to the waste disposal problem. This was done manually by the untouchables. Privies were located at the corners of courtyards near the boundary walls and opened on to the back lane. There were open drains which ran along the sides of stone paved roads into which the sewage from the houses drained out. In some places these drains were covered with flat stone slabs. Visiting foreigners have all remarked on the narrow cobbled streets and the drains for rainwater and sewage along the sides, sometimes covered with long stone slabs. Sometime after 1782, a large drain was cut near the river and lined with stone. The roadside drains were joined to it, and the dirty water was taken up behind the Kumbhar Ves and released there outside the town. This was known as *gandhanala* (literally, dirty channel). It released the dirty water at a place where it obviously polluted the river water often used for drinking.

Generally a policy of religious tolerance was followed, and immigrant communities Religious were allowed to set up their places of worship. Bohras, welcomed as expert traders, settled along Bohri Ali in Raviwar Peth. Here they were allowed to build their Jamaat Khana in 1730, which has over the years been enlarged and added to. The Gosavis settled in Gosavipura built temples and *matths*. A group of stone temples and *samadhis* built by them in Somwar Peth added a new type of monument to the city. Peshwa Sawai Madhav Rao (1774-1795) granted land and money to Catholic missionaries who built a church and a school (Ornella's) and in gratitude accepted the Peshwa's flag (*zaripataka*) as their symbol.

An interesting feature was how popular the establishment of *taboots* used during Mohurram by Muslims had become to all communities and castes. Both Hindus and Muslims are listed as having *taboots* in their names in the different peths. Even in Sadashiv Peth, the heart of Brahmin orthodoxy, there were seven *taboots* listed in the name of Hindus. Even the British continued the practise of patronizing taboots, and Mountstuart Elphinstone, the first Commissioner of the Deccan, had one in his name. Elphinstone describes a Mohurram procession when he was Resident. "At the moment a procession is passing of Mahammadans dressed like Arabs, performing a frantic dance and flourishing their drawn swords in honor of the sons of Ali of whose martyrdom this is the anniversary. The whole town is ringing with drumming trumpeting and shouting, occasioned by the same festival. Madhav Rao I donated money for the repair of the Sheikh Salla *dargah* in 1768. Sometimes however, the public processions created trouble, when different groups clashed over routes. The processions of Sheikh Salla and Sayed Sadat quarrelled often, causing lawlessness. Offenders had to be punished and specific routes laid down by special decrees.

Religious intolerance was in evidence when it came to quarrels between sects of Hindus. There are instances of persecution against the Mahanubhava sect. There was also an on-going feud between the Deshasth and Konkanasth Brahmins. For reasons

unexplained, this intolerance was also shown to the Jains who had settled in Pune and contributed so much to its economy. They were not allowed to build a temple in the city. It was only after persuading the Shankaracharya to mediate on their behalf that they were given space, in an area called Kalevavur, then outside the Brahmin area, near Guruwar Peth. They built two temples, known as Pareshnath, which had to be enclosed by high walls so that the sounds of Jain worship might not reach the orthodox Hindus! It may be that at the specific time when the Jains approached the government, it was passing through a period of increased orthodoxy under Balaji Baji Rao (1740-1761).

In fact the whole caste system became extremely rigid during this time; violations of caste or pollution rules were severely punished according to traditional laws. The treatment of untouchables was deplorable throughout the period, and remained a blot on Pune society as elsewhere India. Their services were needed for the menial and degrading jobs and therefore they had a presence in every *peth*, but they were settled at the extreme outer limits in the degraded or most unhealthy areas and in barren tracts. (For example, there was a very old settlement of untouchables in the unhealthy, wet area at the mouth of the Manik and Nagzhari *nalas* in Ashtapur or Mangalwar). This was a replication of the morphology of village settlements. Where there was new development or extension of an old *peths*, the untouchables' colonies were the first to be uprooted. There were other forms of discrimination too, which had an effect on the town. There were separate sources of water and untouchables could not use the same wells as those of the upper aisles. There are references to a separate tank for them in Somvar Peth. The untouchables' entry into the *peths* was restricted to noon, when the length of shadows are shortest; at other times the longer shadows might have accidentally 'defiled' the upper castes. Though in traditional Maharashtrian society, Mahars had some importance and were the main *balutedars* of a village, this did not prevent them from being harassed. There were quarrels between Mahars and Mhangs over certain ritual riles, which were arbitrated by the authorities. Census lists do not record the huts of the Mahars and Mhangs, which makes it difficult to pin-point their locations.

### **Influx of People**

The Peshwa government counted the houses in the various *paths* from time to time. This type of census data is available in records, and sometimes we find detailed lists of occupants. These were usually made in times of crises. For instance, when Pune was sacked by the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1763, Madhav Rao I had a detailed house census taken to assess the damage done to the people. Analysis of this data has led to a figure of around one hundred thousand population at the end of the eighteenth century. Visitors, perhaps confused by the crowded streets, have left unrealistic and impressionistic figures going up to 600,000. But even at one hundred thousand, Pune would have been a sizable city in those days.

The population influx throughout the second half of the century has been commented on by Charles Malet, Resident at Pune in 1788. "Poonah is still a large village to which people of all denominations and professions are now beginning to resort from the other ruined parts of Hindustan, particularly, from the mined Moghul cities. Its reputation for security since the abortive (British) expeditions from Bombay has greatly tended to promote its increase in population, as wealthier Brahmins in consequence began to

employ some of their hidden riches in building which ... Gives employment to great number and great variety of artificers....”

Migrants flocked into the city from all over, Telegu-speaking Kamathis settled in Visapur and Vetal Peth provided skilled labor for construction. Others connected with building activity were Badhais (carpenters) from the North and masons from Kathiawar and Kutch. Pardeshi (outsider) potters settled in the mixed eastern wards, while new Marwari and Gujarati Vani and Kutchi traders found the commercial wards lucrative and convenient for their activities.

The population would have swollen during festivals and special days; or during events like the birth of an heir, or the accession of a new Peshwa. Campaign season, which began after the monsoons, saw hundreds of recruits; soldiers and contractors of various kinds come into the city. This occasional floating population was bound to have stimulated the economy and benefited the traders, but must have put an unbearable pressure on the civic government

Baji Rao I had started the custom of distributing alms to Brahmins in the month of Shravan (July/August). This practice continued under his successors. For this Dakshina (gift giving) festival, people came from all parts of the Deccan and South India. Lavish alms were distributed to Brahmins, both to reputed scholars as well as to poor priests. The festival drew crowds of Brahmins, estimated between 30,000 to 60,000.

During the marriage of Sawai Madhav Rao II at the tender age of nine, the festivities went on for several days, with lavish feasts for various guests. Guests were entertained throughout the day and night by bands of performers, while fireworks and crackers lit up the night sky. This young prince loved animals and had a menagerie at the foot of Parvati hill. Nana Phadnis set up a separate government department for its upkeep. Different species of birds, reptiles, fish and other animals were kept there. There were even a lion and a rhinoceros. Malet, who presented some exotic species of birds and animals to the Peshwa, described an occasion when specially trained antelopes swayed and danced to music. At Dassehra, which marked the beginning of the campaigning season, the various chiefs congregated at Pune and received gilts and robes of honor. Huge bodies of their followers used to camp on any open field and devastate the crops. Often there were scuffles with the townsfolk. Spectacles to keep the crowds busy were held -wrestling competitions, animal fights, especially elephant against elephant, and horse riding displays.

An important political event was celebrated in Pune in 1792. Mahadji Shinde had returned triumphant from the north, having forced the ineffective Mughal king to invest Peshwa Sawai Madhav Rao with the office of Vakil-Mutalik, and had brought with him the robes, *khillat* and nine symbolic objects signifying this imperial honor. Though a rather empty honor from the political point of view, it created a great impression on the people. Officers and *sardars* came from all over to present their gifts; extravagant displays of pomp were seen. Shinde probably camped on the plains between Sangam and Khadki on the river bank, or on the Bhamburda plains across the river but where exactly this ceremony took place within the city is not known.

## **Cultural Life**

Holi, Diwali, Ganesh festival and Vasant Panchami were celebrated with gay abandon. Dancing girls were much in demand and some became quite well-to-do, as their names sometimes appear on property lists. For the ordinary people of the time, there was always the folk and religious forms of entertainment. The *powada* touched the pride of the people with its recital of the heroic deeds of well known personages. Recited by the *shahirs*, it eulogized the deeds of Shivaji and other heroes, creating powerful myths for the community. “Flushed with intoxicating smell of victories on the battlefields, the *shahirs* became bards of the new empire. They extolled the courage of their leaders and mourned the collective tragedies, which included human and natural disasters. These events were also written about in a new genre of poetry that is believed to have taken root during the Peshwa period, the *lavni*. Many *shahirs* and *lavni* composers found patronage in Pune. *Tamasha* was another form of dramatic entertainment which become very popular at this time. Other popular forms of entertainment - *gondhal*, *lalita*, *katha* and *kirtan* - were performed during religious festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi.

Though the ancient tradition of painting had disappeared in the eighteenth century painting received patronage from the Peshwas and the other courtiers. Cultural contact with the Mughal court, with Rajasthan and Gujarat, and parts of the South brought new life into what was probably a very old though moribund tradition. Artists from other areas came to Pune; local artists may have been influenced by them. There were also orders placed by men like Nana Phadnis for Delhi paintings in the late Mughal style. Names of painters are available. The artists found enough employment, as most temples, *wadas* and other buildings were adorned with murals on the inside as well as outside. In addition there was a demand for ritual *patas*, portraits and paintings on paper, on wooden book-covers and illustration of manuscripts. Thus both mural and miniature painting nourished through the patronage of the upper classes, and by 1760, one scholar states, and a distinctive Maratha style of painting evolved. In the nineteenth century, this brief flowering of painting as an art almost disappeared with the banishing of the Peshwa court by the British?’

### **Dark Clouds on the Horizon**

This apparent prosperity and gaiety hid for the moment the ominous dark clouds that had been gathering on the horizon. The ruling family had become riven with dissension and their politico-military intrigues had begun to leave their mark, since life in the city revolved around the doings of the Peshwa family. Even though Maratha power had recovered briefly from the killing fields of Panipat under the brilliant stewardship of Madhav Rao I, the seeds of future destruction were sown at this time.

Unity within the ruling family began to break down due to the political ambitions of Raghunath Rao, brother of Balaji Baji Rao and uncle of the young Madhav Rao. This was at a time when many enemies were ready to grab at the Maratha territories after the defeat at Panipat. Nizam Ali of Hyderabad cast greedy eyes at some territories and was pushing towards Pune. The British (not the British lot) were ready and waiting to improve their position. Though Madhav Rao prevented the division of the state, he could not prevent the invasion of Pune by Nizam Ali in 1763.

On occasions like this, it was useless to oppose an invading force in the city. It had no defences, and it was always safer for the rulers to take refuge in Sinhagad or Purandhar to

stand a siege. Left to their own devices, the people too carried as much of their property as they could and fled to the hill forts or took refuge in the countryside, or in the Konkan. The Peshwa's family and state papers were sent off hurriedly to Sinhagad. Nizam Ali camped just outside the city while his army had a free rein to plunder the city. They sacked the peths extracting valuables from the terrified shroffs and merchants; they tore down houses and dug up floors in search of treasure; they forced people to ransom their own houses. Those which could not be ransomed were burnt down, before the Nizam's army moved on to Purandar.

After it was over, Madhav Rao, in an effort at rebuilding, ordered the first house census to be taken in the various *peths* to ascertain the amount of damage suffered. Most of the peths which had wealthy citizens suffered great loss; Raviwar Peth, where some of the richest traders and bankers lived, suffered the most. It could only be rebuilt by levying a tax on professions.

In the last year of Madhav Rao's rule, in 1772, the East India Company appointed a resident envoy to the Pune court, and a new element entered the city. Mostyn had visited Pune on an earlier mission; now he arrived a few days before the Peshwa's death. He was at first housed in a garden, possibly under temporary sheds, in one Govind Sewaram's garden. Later, Raja Durjan Singh's mansion was given to him. Mostyn kept his eyes and ears open as to what was happening in the city and diligently passed on everything to the Bombay government.

It was Mostyn who described in detail the cruel murder of the eighteen-year-old Peshwa Narayan Rao, brother of Madhav Rao, who had succeeded to the *gaddi*, and earned the wrath of his uncle, Raghunath Rao. The murderous deed was actually committed by the *gardis* the mercenary soldiers who were discontented because they had not been paid for some time. Led by Sumer Singh (who had a house in Guruwar Peth where the gardis lived), they entered the palace through an unfinished door and cut him down while he clung to his uncle for safety and pleaded to be saved. This mutinous conduct of the troops created a great commotion in Pune. "The people in the city heard of a tumult, armed men thronged the streets, the shops were shut, and the inhabitants ran to and fro in consternation, asking what had happened."

### **Last Days of Glory**

After this incident, the Maratha polity went rapidly downhill, leaving the way open for the intrusion of the British. Though the general perception was of financial constraints, an empty treasury and government debt in the forty-five years after 1771, the city administration continued to function, and new peths went on being added till the end. Building activity also continued. Even a few years before the British takeover, government *wadas* were planned and built. Baji Rao II was keen to build a "European-type house, but we do not know whether it actually materialized. That most impressive *wada* known as Vishrambag, was built between 1803 and 1809 at a cost of over 75,000 rupees only a few years before the end of Peshwa rule. A timber-framed two-storeyed mansion, most of it was burnt down at a later date. Only the facade and a small part of the building exists in its original state today. The former is dominated by a curvilinear wooden *nagar khana* often referred to as 'Meghadambari' by local people. Whatever

remains of the timber elements, both on the facade and the hall inside, is a splendid example of the wood-carving skills of the local craftsmen.

Peshwa *wadas* to house government offices were also built in Budhwar Peth, and in Ganesh Peth, only four years before the end. The five-storey Shukrawar Wada was renovated at a large cost. (Most of these government buildings burnt down in the nineteenth century). Lord Valentia, as well as Sir James Macintosh, who was the Chief Justice of Bombay, visited Pune between 1804 and 1805, and found a thriving town with five markets and several large houses. The streets were paved with stone and Macintosh thought it the 'best built native town in India'. This really means that though the end of Peshwa rule was near, the city did not yet feel its lengthening shadow.

### **Traumatic Events**

In any case, uncertainty due to military defeats or political intrigues was something that Puneites had probably learnt to live with. They had learnt how to snatch a few valuables and flee the city at short notice. There was not much else they could do in view of the fact that there were no town defences, and that the government as well as the ruler abandoned the city first. Thus when Raghunath Rao defeated the troops of his rivals, the ministers' party, at Pandharpur in 1774, the people packed their property and fled for safety to the village and hill-forts. In 1781, when the British General Godard approached Pune, the government decided on a scorched earth policy. They filled the houses with straw and planned to move the population to Satara. Fortunately, the plan did not have to be carried out as the British retreated. The power struggle in Pune between Nana Phadnis and the last Peshwa Bajji Rao II (son of Raghunath) continued in the next decade, and Bajji Rao sought help from both Sindhia and Holkar alternately. When Nana Phadnis was imprisoned by Daulat Rao Sindhia in 1796-97 and many of his followers were stripped, maimed and some killed, parties of lawless soldiers plundered not only his but also other's houses. "The city was as if taken by storm and firing continued the whole night and next day. The roads were stopped on every side; all was uproar, plunder and bloodshed, the alarm was universal.

In 1798 occurred one of the most cruel sacks that Pune had to bear, this time with the connivance of its own ruler, Bajji Rao II. There was an on-going rivalry between the two powerful chiefs, Shinde and Holkar, over control of Pune affairs. In an effort to raise money, Shinde's Dewan, Sarjerao Ghatge, was given a free hand by Bajji Rao. He first tortured and scourged the wealthy men of high positions who were Nana's followers, till they were forced to give up their wealth. One died as he was tied to a heated gun. Similar cruelties were perpetrated on merchants, bankers and other wealthy people. There were many such frays and alarms raised in the city in the last years of the Maratha state. There was also, as a part of the ongoing contest, the capture of Pune by Yashvantrao Holkar in 1802. After a battle fought with Shinde on the plains between Hadapsar and the present cantonment, east of the city, he again tortured the people. We can only imagine the fear and anxiety in an undefended town during a time like this, since citizens were always at the mercy of the victor. "Every respectable householder of Poona, possessed of property, was seized and forced, by any means to give up his wealth. Several men died under the tortures they underwent".

## The British Enclave

Meanwhile, the British presence in Pune had increased with the advent of Sir Charles Malet in 1792. He is supposed to have built the Residency at Sangam after getting permission from the Peshwa to move out of the old place where Mostyn used to live, which was in a congested area. At this place, the *Mutha* and *Mutha* combined to flow in a sluggish stream eastward. The place had a spectacular view of the river, and was strategically better for the British, as it was away from the watchful eyes of the government at Shaniwar Wada. Malet built a set of bungalows here, a new house-type in Pune.

It was during Malet's tenure as envoy that the diplomatically significant treaty was signed between the Marathas and the British against Tipu Sultan of Mysore in 1790. The signing of the treaty was commemorated in a celebrated painting, first drawn out and planned by James Wales, an artist who was staying <sup>1</sup> with Malet, soon after the event. Some ten years later, after Wales died, the famous duo of painters, the Daniells, made it up into an impressive painting. It shows the Maratha darbar, with the young Sawai Madhav Rao seated on his *gaddi* with his paraphernalia of symbolic objects before him. To the side is seated Malet himself. The whole group of figures, including the courtiers, is placed against the backdrop of a hall festooned with heavy curtains along the famous cypress shaped columns and cusped arches. A huge image of Ganpati looms over all in the distant background. This is the only known visual record of the inside of Shaniwar Wada that has come down to us.

After the treaty, Malet's importance in Pune grew and the members of his entourage became more visible. The house he built at Sangam became the nucleus of a small European settlement. We are told that the envoy always moved about with considerable pomp when he went into the city. He was preceded by scarlet-coated couriers on camels, and mace-bearers similarly dressed, and an escort of sepoys. He and his party were always on either horses or elephants. All this was for the benefit of the local population, to impress them with the power and important status of the British envoy. Malet made the Residency a comfortable place with a number of bungalows to house his staff, and a large garden. Water from the river was lifted by means of aqueducts so that it remained green all the year round. It produced enough local vegetables for the needs of the large household, and also had an excellent vineyard. Malet experimented by planting apple and peach trees, which surprisingly seemed to thrive in this climate. He had also a stable of forty to fifty Arab horses and several elephants. According to Capt. Moor, "... the Sangam is the most enviable residence we ever saw in India". On the opposite shore from the house, there was a *ghat* where Sati was sometimes committed, and the flames could be seen on the opposite bank.

With Malet as host, James Wales the artist and his assistant Robert Mabon found a warm welcome and a lucrative practice as painters. Malet himself commissioned a number of paintings as did other members of his staff. One realistic portrait of Bibi Amber Kaur shows a lovely Indian lady with limpid and expressive eyes, dressed in a delicate gauze-like fabric. She was Malet's mistress for many years, and gave him three children, who later went to England with their father. Wales was also introduced to the Court nobles and the Peshwa, and was commissioned to make a number of portraits. These included paintings of Mahadaji Shinde, Nana Phadnis, Haripant Phadke and

Bahiro Raghunath Mehendele. Many sketches were also made of Sawai Madhav Rao for the *darbar* scene mentioned earlier. Though most of his paintings are lost today, it is from the remaining ones that we have the only authentic portraits of these personages. The work of Wales generated an interest in European academic art amongst the courtiers, and Wales was even allowed to set up a school in the palace, where a number of Indians became his students.

The Sangam also introduced some medical practitioners to Pune. The city was often ravaged by epidemics of small pox and other diseases. The European doctors rendered valuable services not only to important men at the court, but also to the general public. It is interesting to note that in spite of religious constraints put up by orthodox elements, many important people did not hesitate to avail of the services of these men. One Dr. Findlay roused the young Peshwa's interest in geography and astronomy. The best known was Dr. Coats, who introduced vaccination to Pune. In the six years between 1806 and 1812, more than ten thousand people in Pune were vaccinated by Dr. Coats and his assistants and it was reported that "the small-pox is nearly, if not entirely extirpated in Poona and the country round it.

The Resident and distinguished British visitors were sometimes received by the Peshwa and invited to banquets. Lord Valentia describes one such dinner at Hira Bag. "In the further verandah a white cloth was spread with plantain leaves and on each leaf was laid out a Brahman's dinner." The menu described by the foreigner makes interesting reading, since it was obviously a vegetarian dinner of "rice plain and sweet, pastry cakes, bread and peas pudding. Along one side was a row of sweets, like paints on a pallet. On the other side were seven different kinds of curried vegetables. On one side of the leaf were rice-milk, clarified butters and some other liquids in small plantain leaf pans (sic) which were excellent of their kind." The guests had carried along their cutlery in their pockets and proceeded to use them so as to do justice to the food. Bajji Rao II watched benignly from outside the room. Later betel leaves were distributed to guests who accepted them willingly.

Let us leave the small European community at Sangam and get back to the city. The turn of the century brought more devastating events, which were precursors to the final denouement. These events, which left their mark on the city itself, were bound up with political affairs and the disintegration of any cohesion in the Maratha polity. They have been discussed at length by many scholars and fall outside the scope of this book. One important political event was the suicide of the young Peshwa Sawai Madhav Rao in 1795 within Shaniwar Wada. This led to a series of internal quarrels, a power struggle in the Peshwa family, a short-lived accession of a rival, and finally the accession of the handsome and scholarly Bajji Rao II, destined to be the last of the line.

With Bajji Rao II's occupation of the gaddi, the tortuous processes of Maratha politics, the intrigues, the dissensions and outright disloyalties came to a climax. The rivalry between the powerful chiefs, Shinde and Holkar, led to Bajji Rao II fleeing his capital and seeking refuge with the British at Bassein in 1802, where he signed a treaty with them. This was an ominous development, because the Peshwa had thereby put himself under the protection of the British. Henceforth British troops would guard him from his own subjects. For Pune city it meant that a body of East India Company troops would have to be put up close to, if not within the town. These troops would not owe loyalty to the ruler,

but to a British Resident. One brigade of these troops was cantoned on the outskirts, north of the city the very first cantonment of British troops in Pune - while the rest were to be in Siroor on the road to Ahmednagar.

### **More Tribulations**

Already reeling from the pillage and plunder by the rival chiefs Shinde and Holkar, More Pune and its immediate hinterland were overwhelmed by a terrible famine in 1803. The depredations of Holkar's troops had mined the standing crops and the prospect of a good harvest. Roving Pindhari bands had added to the destruction. Though Bajji Rao II had encouraged import of grain through convoys of the nomadic Lamans and Charans, and ordered its free distribution, this hardly improved the situation. Hundreds fled to Konkan or Gujarat. Hunger and cholera claimed thousands. The river Mutha was filled with dead and rotting bodies. The government tried to assuage hardship by tax remissions while the rich tried to do their bit through distribution of food. Even the English at Sangam raised money to feed the destitute. The horror of this man-made famine remained fresh in people's memory for a long time. The city's population of around 1, 50, 000 was reduced to about 1, 13,000 by the time of the British conquest. The *shahirs* have left descriptions full of pathos. Ram Joshi's *lavni* gives a vivid description of the famine:

*The mind is benumbed al the sight of devastation caused by the famine,  
Even the dogs are weary of/ceding on the dismembered bodies  
Not a morsel to eat even on festival days-Nat getting any vegetables,  
people wander amongst the fields collecting dried vegetables.  
Children weep at the sight of dead animal carcasses being dragged out of doors.  
So many have filled their stomachs with water and died  
So many weeping, ho/ding close to them, the corpses of their children  
Everyone is stunned by the effects of nature's fury  
With a dead countenance people beg for a piece of bhakri  
So many people have put their families to sleep, by feeding them poison  
What havoc this famine has wrought!*

In this way, the dark days of Pune, which began at the turn of the century, continued, even though, within a few years, the mood improved enough to celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi and Dassehra with enthusiasm. The last Dassehra was celebrated by Bajji Rao in Pune in October 1817. Within a month, war broke out with the British. At the Battle of Khadki, the Peshwa's armies were defeated, and the British flag hoisted on the Shaniwar Wada under a royal salute, bringing to an end Pune's days of glory. During the battle, when the fate of the Marathas was finally decided, the last Peshwa watched with dismay, from the Parvati temple, the rout of the once-invincible Maratha army.

### **Kasba Peth**

The earliest peth, as also the earliest settlement, it began to be called Kasba from the thirteenth century. It had a heterogeneous population, with mixed castes and professions, and was mainly residential. A very crowded *peth* it grew slowly after 1765 when it had 923 houses; in 1819, during the first British census, it had 1048 houses.

### **Murtazabad (Shaniwar Peth)**

Named after Murtaza Nizam Shah of the Nizam Shahi dynasty of Ahmednagar. Probably established at the end of the sixteenth century. It existed before the arrival of Shivaji (1636) but was probably not thriving. At the time of Baji Rao I. it is said that the area close to Kasba Peth was occupied by Kolis and Muslim weavers, who were resettled further away so that Shaniwar Wada could be built. It grew in size and importance under Peshwa rule when many important Brahmins built *their wadas*. Two important temples were built here at the time, Amruteshwar and Omkareshwar. In 1765, it had 374 houses; eight years into British rule, by 1827, the number of houses in this peth fell by 42.5 percent.

### **Malkapur (Raviwar Peth)**

Named after Malik Amber, the famous general and minister of Ahmednagar (d. 1626). Always known as a commercial *peth*, it also existed before the arrival of Shivaji. It was redeveloped in 1740-41 through the Shete Mahajan Vyavahare Joshi. This was the main commercial sector, where the important bankers and traders had their offices and shops, with residences above the shops. One account, of 1868, says that the shops and lanes were laid out according to what they were selling - the main street was called Moti Chowk (pearls); there were also Saraf Ali (money changers), Bohri Ali (hardware); Kapad Ganj (cloth market); a number of other professions thrived here. The massive *wada* of Haripanl Phadke, as well as the Bohra Jamal Khana came up here. It was a peth with mixed castes and communities, including *kalavantis*. This was a very crowded *peth* - at its peak, around 1800, it had almost 2,000 houses. There was a great decline with the establishment of British rule, when only 666 houses are recorded in 1830.

### **Shahpur (Somvar Peth)**

Another very *old peth*, probably first settled from the earliest time. The city's oldest extant temple, Nageshwar, is close to the right bank of the Nagzhari. It was mainly a residential *peth*, with mixed castes who settled close to each other. It was not a large *peth*. There was a Gosavi settlement, as well as eighteen large *wadas* belonging to important *sardars* and bankers. Housing peaked in 1799, with 414 houses, and remained more or less stable till 1823, when it lost 166. It may have received a facelift during the period of Balaji Baji Rao (1740-1761) as the Nageshwar temple was revitalized and enlarged. A tank for untouchables has been referred to.

### **Ashtapur (Mangalwar Peth)**

Supposed to have been set up by Shaista Khan in 1663 when he conquered Pune from the Marathas and set up his camp here. According to a document of house tax records, it was a mixed caste neighborhood but predominated by Brahmins and Maratha Kunbis. Some of the former were sahuks. There was also a settlement of untouchables. However, by 1854, it had degenerated into an untidy, unplanned *peth*, with a predominant population of lowest castes (Mahars, Hallalkhore) and its importance was diminished.

### **Mohyabad (Budhwar Peth)**

First established by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in 1703, who camped here, south of the city, supposedly in a *borban* or jujube garden. The *peth* was redeveloped by the Shete Govind Shivram Khasgiwale during the time of the fourth Peshwa, Madhav Rao I (1761 - 1772). He is said to have widened the roads and encouraged the setting up of proper shops. It became an important commercial area. Later a government mansion, Budhwar Wada was built here (it burnt down in 1879). Nana Phadnis built the Belbag Vishnu temple. The large Tulshibag temple complex, a police station called Kotwal Chavdi (demolished in 1995), and the Tambdi Jogeshwari temple were all built in this *peth*. The goddess at the latter temple is traditionally 'invited' to weddings in Pune households, even today. There were some large *wadas* here, like the Morobadada Phadnis Wada. The *peth* peaked in 1795-96 but declined in the next few years-the number of houses, went down from 627 to 359 by 1805-06.

### **Visapur (Shukrawar Peth)**

In 1734, Baji Rao I issued a *koul* to two brothers, Harshett and Somshett, as Shete *watan* holders, to set up the *peth*. But the settlement probably did not take off successfully, and had to be redeveloped within a few years. Balaji Baji Rao issued a *koul* to Jivajipant Khasgivale, a powerful Kotwal of Pune, around 1748-50. He broadened the lanes and acquired land for building quarters for government servants. This *peth* had many military and government institutions as well as residences. The Peshwa's foundry, the infantry lines, the stables, the gymnasium, and the headquarters of the artillery were housed here. Khasgivale was also supposed to have built another government mansion, Shukrawar Wada, as well as one for himself.

This was a very mixed *path*, with houses of some of the richest citizens, like Pant Sachiv of Bhor. Later laborers, domestic servants and foundry workers resided here. It grew fast between 1797 to 1819, from 664 to 1,743 houses at one estimate but declined by 660 houses in 1828, probably due to the removal of military personnel. Bhikaji Naik Baramatikar, an important courtier, built his second house here when his original home was burnt down at Shaniwar Peth during the Nizam's raid in 1763. Rupram Chaudhuri who built the aqueduct known by his name had his mansion in this *peth*. His said that Tarabai, the wife of Shivaji's son Rajaram lived here for some time. (She is remembered for her courage and bravery. After her husband's death, she led the Maratha resistance against the Mughals.) It is interesting to note that Khasgivale built an apartment block, known as Bavankhani, where prostitutes and courtesans could live in one place (and perhaps be kept under supervision). This is said to have improved their condition.

### **Vetal (Guruwar Peth)**

Set up in 1750, it took its name Irani the Vetal Temple. Jivajipant Khasgivale initiated the establishment of *the peth* by issuing a *koul* to two brothers, Gangaram and Dayaram Khattri. They were appointed joint Shetes. A *peth* of mixed castes and professions, like oil pressers, goldsmiths, tailors, potters, carpenters, saddlers, washer men, gardeners, fishermen, prostitutes etc. The Gardis, who were the household guards of the ruling family, had their settlement here, including the mansion of their commander, the infamous Sumer Singh. There were very few Brahmin houses. The Jain temple of Pareshnath was built just on the outskirts, but was later included in this *peth*. This *peth* seems to have declined steadily from 1765 till the house census of 1826; during this time, the number of houses declined from 722 to 331.

### **Nagesh Nyahal Peth**

Named after a servant of Kotwal Khasgivale, it was set up around 1755, and always remained a very small *peth*. Not much is known about this ward, except that it was mainly residential. It shows a steady decline between 1765 and 1818 when it lost 59.42 percent of its houses. It was divided and merged partly with Somwar and other contiguous *peths* some time in the early decades of this century.

### **Ganesh Peth**

It is probable that this *peth* was set up around the same time as Nagesh-Nyahal Peth also by Jivajipant Khasgivale. It is said to have become prosperous after it was renewed and rebuilt after The Nizam's raid in 1763, in which 88.45 percent of its houses were destroyed. It was redeveloped in 1789 again, though not much more is known about this. It had a mixed population which kept fluctuating, as is seen in the house censuses. By the end of the nineteenth century, it had become rather decayed, with a poor and low caste population, and was known for its timber stores. The most important building here is the Dulya Maruti temple built in the late seventeenth century but enlarged in 1780 by a Brahmin lady. There was a Peshwa Wada in this *peth*.

### **Narayan Peth**

This was the western-most ward of Pune on the river and may have been settled as early as 1761 and redeveloped or renamed after the fifth Peshwa, Narayan Rao, who reigned in 1773. In 1781, the Shete office was held by one Lakshman Vishvanath. Being at the west, *the peth* became a center for the rice trade as rice imported by Marwadi traders from the hinterland entered the city here. It became a prestigious *peth* as many wealthy Brahmins built spacious *wadas* in large compounds, throughout the eighteenth century. It therefore was regarded as a Brahmin *peth* though Brahmin houses formed 56.48 percent of the total. The rest of the people were mixed - Kunbi, Lakadwale, Kumbhar, Gavli etc. The rice trade was dominated by the Marwadi Jains who are supposed to have established control of the Maval rice growers. There are six temples, the best known being Modicha Ganpati and Maticha Ganpati. There were gardens and

quite a large number of vacant plots, as in 1819 there were only 353 houses. It became more popular for upper castes throughout the British period, when the vacant plots were built up.

### **Bhavani Peth**

Named after the temple of Bhavani here, it was established during the regime of Madhav Rao I. One Mahadev Vishwanath Limaye was given the *koul* to establish this peth, probably at the instance of Nana Phadnis. This peth had mansions of many significant persons, and became important from 1773 onwards. It became a commercial center for traders; it had warehouses for storing grain, and acquired the reputation of being a merchant's *peth* - though it did need to be given a push from time to time through incentives to shopkeepers. The Gaikwad of Baroda had his palace here (later the office of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's *Kesri* and *Mahratta*). It had three police stations, two *dharmashalas*, five temples, and four Muslim *tazias* for *fakirs*. A mixed population *peth* with a large number of houses with Kamathis, this peth being to the east, prospered after the establishment of the cantonment. Ghashiram Kotwal's mansion is believed to have been within this peth, but this probably means that the peth extended into what is today the Sadar Bazaar area of the Cantonment and the mansion was at its *very* edge. Most of this area must have been open fields or agricultural land.

### **Muzzafarganj**

Set up in 1768 by a commander in the army of Malojirao Ghorpade, an important *sardar*. Meant probably for soldiers, it was a small *peth*; there were a large number of Muslims and immigrants. It showed a steady decline in the number of houses, till in 1884 it had only 90 people. This *path* does not exist now.

### **Sadashiv Peth**

Set up by Sadashiv Rao Bhau, cousin of Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao. There is a doubt about the date of its establishment, which is generally regarded as 1769. But it probably existed already in 1761, because his troops were put up here. However, one document of 1768-69 entrusts the work of Shete to one Appaji Mudhe. This *peth* had the famous Khajina Vihar constructed by Nana Phadnis and connected to the aqueduct bringing water from Ambegaon. It also had important landmarks like the Khunya Murlidhar temple, the Vishrambaug Wada of Peshwa Baji Rao II, and the Lakdi Pul which connected Pune to the other bank of the Mutha river. The peth had a large area, most of which was open gardens or fields and stretched to the Parvati Hill, so that Hira Bag was included within its limits. It was a prestigious *peths*, which had many shops to begin with, but it did not become a commercial ward, and the shops soon vanished. It became mainly residential, dominated by wealthy Brahmins who built large and spacious *wadas*. Beginning with only 87 houses, it grew till there were 752 houses in 1819. It had wide streets and regular plots. In British times it continued to develop and came to be known as the Brahmin heart of the city.

### **Ghorpade Peth**

Built in the time of Peshwa Madhav Rao II, in 1781, by Vyankatrao Ghorpade, who was in charge of the royal standard, the Jari Pataka. Originally meant for the cavalry, it had no Brahmin houses and was dominated by lower castes like Malis and Chambhars, though other castes were present as well. At the beginning of British rule in 1819 it had 269 houses, which declined to 79 in two years.

### **Rasta Peth**

Also known as Shivpuri because of a Shiva temple built by the founder of the peth, Anandrao Laxman Raste commander of the Peshwa's cavalry in 1783. Since it was meant first to settle troops, it was planned on a grid pattern with straight roads and regular plots. He also had fresh water brought from Kondwa in an aqueduct to the *peth* and to the impressive *wada* complex that he built for himself. A mixed caste ward, it had 423 houses in 1818, which declined to 131 houses by 1822. It is possible that the end of Peshwa rule led many of those dependent on Raste's cavalry to leave. Later, it attracted migrants like the Bene-Israelis and South Indians like the Mudaliars.

### **Nana Peth**

Also known as Hanmant Peth, was established by Nana Phadnis in 1789-90. The eastern-most ward, its Shete was one Phirangoji Khonde. It was meant to be a commercial peth, with wholesale merchants and trading facilities. Its population was very mixed, with about 30 Brahmin and 77 Kunbi households; there were a large number of Chambhars too. An interesting shrine here is Ghodepir. This Muslim shrine was set up by a servant of Nana, Nathu Khan, in his name. He also instituted a tazia in Nana's name during Mohurram. The Nivdungya Vithoba temple is situated here. This *peth* also suffered from the British conquest, as its 457 houses in 1819 went down to 294 within one year. But later in the century it grew and became quite cosmopolitan, attracting new migrants.

### **Ganj Peth**

The establishment of this *peth* is sometimes attributed to Nana Phadnis, but it existed before 1765, as the house census of that year shows. As its name indicates, it was highly commercial and had a big market. It had the main salt store of the city. It grew phenomenally from 493 houses in 1765 to 861 in 1819, though there was a sharp drop thereafter. A large number of Jain or Vani traders lived here with other castes. No Brahmins are recorded.

## **3. The Battle for the City**

*“Poona when approached is unchanged in appearance, but the destruction of all our houses destroys every feeling of quiet and home, and the absence of the Hindu government occasions a void that alters the effect of everything,”*

*Mountstuart Eliphinstone*

The pre-eminence of Pune under the Peshwas created such an overarching image of the importance of the city that it obscured the underlying reality of the political situation. To the populace it was the great capital where the “Srimanta”, as the Peshwa was called, resided. It was also perceived as the Brahmin city, the seat of Hindu orthodoxy. The *shahirs imagination* had transformed Pune into the fabled Dwarka of Lord Krishna. The tendency to view Pune as the center of the world (as remarked by Robertson, its first Collector and reproduced at the beginning of the previous chapter) became a part of the psyche of its ruling classes. A story is often told, that Nana Phadnis, instructing the young Peshwa in geography, always emphasized that Pune was the center of the world, and all other countries surrounded it at varying distances! Like many other such anecdotes, this is most probably one of those apocryphal stories which show us the prevailing mood of the times.

The decades after 1803, as we have seen, were surprisingly prosperous for the city. Revenue collection increased for a number of reasons, and Baji Rao II amassed a considerable sum of money. Though this was mainly for the purpose of raising troops as well as to pay the British their treaty dues, some of it was lavished on the city. The outward show of stability continued. The Peshwa’s religious observations, the festivals and the distribution of *dakshina* and other charities continued as if there was no tomorrow. A number of palaces were built in the various *paths* in these last few years. In spite of this, out of twelve million rupees collected from the prosperous hinterland, the Peshwa could still save half, and his treasury was overflowing.’ But this was only the glow of the sunset.

The long shadow of British imperialism had already been cast on the Maratha polity. The days when all the chiefs could come together and tight the British (as in the First Anglo-Maratha War) were long since over. The fragile Maratha alliance crumbled with the weight of its own inner inconsistencies and as a result of clever British diplomacy. Baji Rao II played into their hands when he allowed himself to be reinstated in office at Pune with their help in 1803 against the machinations of Yashwant Rao Holkar. The treaty made between the Peshwa and the British at Bassein, where the former had taken refuge, ultimately led to the Second Anglo-Maratha War (1802-I 809). This war was fought over a vast area across North and Central India. At the end of it, the power of the Maratha chiefs was completely curbed. They were limited individually when they lost their revenue producing territories after their armies were defeated; and each became tied directly to the British and had to accept interference in the internal relations amongst themselves. Thus the Peshwas were co-opted into the infamous Subsidiary Alliances system.

Baji Rao II had to accept a British Resident at Pune who became the real center of power, as well as a British force, called the Subsidiary Force, ostensibly meant to protect him, but in reality to restrict any signs of independence in him. He lost his power over the local chieftains, the Deshmukhs, whose differences with him were often sorted out by the

Resident. The Peshwa was thus left only with the outward form but not the real substance of power.

### **The Final Denouement**

The final British onslaught (the Third Anglo-Maratha War) was to be soon precipitated Denouement by various economic and political pressures on the East India Company. The tutelage imposed on the Peshwa by the earlier treaties was somehow bearable under the Resident, Col. Close. But in 1811, Mountstuart Elphinstone became the Resident. Dynamic and able, Elphinstone was an excellent agent of British imperialism. He was determined to intensify the tutelage and leave the Peshwa very little room for manoeuvre. Bajji Rao II's desire to regain some of the initiative at the political level led to the most traumatic event in the history of Pune city - the last trial of strength between the head of the enfeebled Maratha polity and the almost invincible might of the British military advance: The Battle of Khadki which put Pune in British hands. The battle was fought close to the city, on the broad plain between Chaturshringi Hill at Ganeshkhind on the west, and the village of Khadki on the east. Its denouement, as is well-known, sealed the fate of Pune as well as its first family. Before this, Pune had faced famine and drought; the populace had been terrorized by invasions and sackings. But these were temporary aberrations, terrible though they were, and the economy recovered soon enough. The city now faced a different type of danger. It was complete and permanent conquest, not temporary looting or pillaging. Here the damage faced by large groups of peoples was much longer lasting, though there was very little looting. The institutions, the economy, the whole way of life, indeed the *raison d'être* of the political capital of the Peshwas, was deeply shaken, and this altered the whole context of the city.

Preparations for war became evident soon after the last gay celebration of Dassehra in the city in October 1817. Maratha troops were being raised by Bajji Rao II's officers at least since then. Wherever open spaces were available around the city, camps were set up by the various chieftains. The vacant spaces around the foot of the Parvati Hill to the south were filling up with camps. Eighteen thousand cavalry, eight hundred infantry, fourteen artillery pieces with their attendant gunners, soldiers, animals, plus innumerable contractors, carpet-baggers and other hangers-on had gathered around Pune and more were expected. The mind boggles at the thought of how the infrastructure, such as it was, coped with the influx, with hordes roaming the city streets and bazaars, and excitement running high. It is obvious that the troops had to fan out as much as they could eastwards, possibly around the southern outskirts.

The British troops, on the other hand, were small in number and scattered in three groups- a contingent as personal guard at the Residency; the largest part in tents at a cantonment at a place called Garpir to the east of the city; and a battalion (Poona Auxiliary Force) raised for the Peshwa by a British officer. Major Ford, stationed at Dapodi west of Khadki village on the left bank of the Mula. This force though raised for the Peshwa was expected to come over to the British side with Major Ford. Not counting this force, the British had about two thousand two hundred and fifty men and six guns. Compared to the Maratha troops, this was a small number.

In his three-volume *History of the Marathas*, Capt. James Grant Duff, who was a member of Elphinstone's entourage, has left an eyewitness account of this momentous

event. According to him, as the numbers of Maratha troops grew, they spread on to the open land to the east of the town, which was divided into plots by hedges. Under cover of the hedges, the Maratha troops began to crowd in around the British contingent at Garpir in a threatening manner. Elphinstone decided to move his troops out of Garpir across the Mulha, north, to the village of Khadki, though talks between both sides were taking place, to avoid war.

The battle began on the 5th of November, 1817, the talks having finally broken down. The Peshwa left Shaniwar Wada, and made his way in procession through the town to Parvati Hill. Today, it would be difficult for someone standing on top of the hill and looking towards Ganeshkhind and Bhamburda to visualize the scene of battle on that day. What is now an almost entirely built-up concrete jungle was then an open field, mostly barren, with some amount of crops growing at various places. Baji Rao II, guarded by five thousand cavalry and two thousand foot soldiers, was ready to watch the battle, probably through his telescope, from the top of the hill.

### **The Clash**

The Meanwhile, from his vantage point on a ridge to the west of Bhamburda, Grant Duff watched the happenings immediately preceding the battle. Though well-known to scholars, this description of the Maratha host readying for war is worth repeating:

“...the plain beneath presented at the moment a most imposing spectacle. This plain then covered with grain terminates on the west by a range of small hills, while on the east it is bounded by the city of Poona, and the small hills already partially occupied by infantry. A mass of cavalry covered nearly the whole extent of it, and towards the city endless streams of horsemen were pouring from every avenue... Those only who have witnessed the Bore in the Gulf of Cambay and have seen in perfection the approach of that roaring tide, can form the exact idea presented to the author at the sight of the Peshwa’s army. It was towards the afternoon of a very sultry day; there was dead calm, and no sound was heard except the rushing the trampling and neighing of horses, and the rumbling of the gun-wheels. The effect was heightened by seeing the peaceful peasantry flying from their work in the fields, the bullocks breaking from their yokes, the wild antelopes startled from sleep, bounding off, and then turning for a moment to gaze on this tremendous inundation which swept all before it, levelled the hedges and standing corn and completely overwhelmed every ordinary barrier as it moved.

Seeing the moving host, Elphinstone abandoned the idea of defending the Residency at Sangam and hastened to join his troops at Khadki. He took the longer route, crossing the Mula behind his house, and galloping along its left bank with his escort of five hundred men; he crossed it again at Holkar Bridge and met up with his army at Khadki. This route kept the river between him and the Maratha troops pressing up from Bhamburda towards the Residency. Within minutes of his departure the Residency was attacked and set fire to. The trees planted by Malet were uprooted, and all of Elphinstone’s belongings, including his books and papers, were reduced to ashes.

The battle began, and as the two armies met, the Marathas almost swamped the British force, but at a crucial moment, the famed Maratha cavalry, charging full tilt, floundered, it is believed, in a deep morass whose existence had been unknown, and the impact of the

charge was broken. Ultimately the day was won by the British, who having taken the Maratha position, returned to Khadki. Two thousand eight hundred British troops had defeated a Maratha army of about thirty thousand.

The Battle of Khadki did not immediately put Pune in British hands. There was a lull for the next ten days. Reinforcements for Elphinstone arrived from the British cantonment at Siroor under General Smith at Khadki. The Peshwa returned to the city and continued to collect more troops. The five hundred men lost at Khadki were soon made up for as more jagirdars brought in their soldiers. Finally, the two forces were to have met in a decisive battle at the village of Yerawada, but this turned out to be a brief skirmish, as the Peshwa abandoned the struggle and fled towards Satara. The British army crossed the Mutha-Mula and marched into the city. Left with hardly any force to defend it, Pune was surrendered on 17th November 1817, and the British flag was hoisted on Shaniwar Wada on the same day.

One can only imagine the consternation and fear of the populace at the turn of events, left leaderless with an alien occupying force. No doubt the memory of previous invasions must have led many to flee the city. But Elphinstone had the larger imperial goal in mind. Since British control was to be permanent, the townspeople were to be conciliated. He and General Smith prevented the city from being sacked by their soldiers and tried to establish order as soon as possible. A banker, named Hurree Rao, who had worked for the British, begged them to give protection to the bankers and merchants of the city. This was agreed to and guards were posted near their homes, and at important public places, especially at Shaniwar Wada. There was some plundering by the occupying forces, but this was controlled soon. As for the Peshwa, he was pursued from place to place for over six months, till he was finally cornered and captured. The ending was tame and rather inglorious. Baji Rao II was sent away to Bithur, near Kanpur (in U.P.) forbidden ever to return to the city of his predecessors, and dependent on a British pension.

### **The City Bereft**

The exile of the Peshwa from Pune was akin to the city becoming bereft of its very reason for existence. It was not only the Peshwa and his family who had to leave, but also his whole entourage. The bustle and the pomp of the court suddenly vanished behind the dust of war. Pune had been not only an administrative city but a capital with a resident court, and all that went with it. Now there was silence where its heart had been, and an alien flag flew over the palace of Shaniwar Wada.

Nothing exemplifies the change so much as the condition of the palace itself. This symbol of the previous regime was immediately occupied as a temporary camp for the British troops and for H. D. Robertson, who was appointed the first Collector. The contrast between the pomp and glitter of a royal court, and the spartan headquarters of a mere Collector could not have been greater. Robertson occupied the Durbar Hall, and a small room off it. Stripped of its sumptuous curtains and other furnishings, its rows of graceful, carved cypress pillars stood bare. The lofty Ganesh Mahal which had been depicted at the height of its glory in the painting by Wales was forlorn, as the Ganesh image had been removed. White dust-sheets covered everything. The only decoration, rather apt for an impromptu office, were the pictures of Wellesley and Barry Close that had been stuck on the wall of Robertson's room "with a bit of wax". After Robertson

moved, the deteriorating structure was used as a jail, as a store, a dispensary and a lunatic asylum.' Later it housed the Small Causes Court for a while. In spite of this deliberate down-grading, Shaniwar Wada continued to be a focal point and a symbol of the city's days of glory and to occupy an important position in the eyes of the people. In 1828, a devastating fire broke out within its walls and continued to burn and smoulder for fifteen days. All the buildings inside were destroyed, only their foundations and the outer wall with the Delhi Gate remained. It is a mystery as to how the fire started, and why the palace was allowed to burn down totally. No attempt was ever made to rebuild it again. Before this too, fires had broken out at Shaniwar Wada, at least three times, but each time they had been quickly contained and the damage repaired. In the new dispensation however, there was naturally no impetus to rebuild. In any case the cost would have been prohibitive.

The fire was a traumatic event for the populace and left an emotional void, as can be seen from a description written about forty years after the event. The author had either witnessed the fire as a child or had graphic descriptions of it from other witnesses:

“(The fire) was a bad thing to happen. The Wada could not be rebuilt again. It was the most important symbol of Pune. Many people had tears in their eyes, and many avoided looking at the ruins while passing. Puneites were very sad. Some went to the site and pointed out the place where different buildings like Gokak Dewankhana and others used to be.... People took some of the ash home.”

### **Period of Stagnation**

The destruction of Shaniwar Wada somehow removed the symbolic link with the past, stressing new realities. The most conspicuous of these was the halting of the urbanization process in the old core areas of the city. There was a massive depopulation almost at once after the Battle of Khadki. Large numbers of ordinary people fled even as the British army was entering the city. They melted into the surrounding villages as they had done many times before. A number of merchants carrying their valuables had taken refuge at Sinhagad. But when British troops captured the fort, their possessions were taken away as booty.

The Brahmin *sahukars* and *mahajans*, whose money-lending and banking business was inextricably linked to the old military and political set up, suffered great losses. With the removal of the court and the disbanding of the army, their business activities - advancement of monetary payments to the commanders and officers - virtually collapsed.” Many left the city and went to what was left of their rural holdings. A number went to Wai, then comparatively peaceful and a place of sanctity, with its many temples. In 1818, Elphinstone visited Wai, and found it crowded with the “respectable inhabitants of Poona”. Many called on him and “assured him of their loyalty”. The houses of many of these *sardars* in Pune were empty and locked when Elphinstone came to the city in March 1818.

According to Robertson, the *sahukars* suffered more than any other class. Their wealth had depended not only on the borrowings of the military and nobles, but also on the system of revenue farming and money-lending to a variety of tradesmen. One of the first acts of the new government was to abolish the system of revenue farming, and this struck

a great blow to a whole range of intermediary tax collectors who lived by the system. The consuming class in the city was therefore wiped out; consequently, trade as well as manufacturing crafts suffered. The dealers, as well as weavers of fine cloth and silk, and the tailors lost their patrons and became impoverished. Some went to other places, and many took up different professions. Never having had a strong manufacturing base, the economic foundation of the old city withered. The few industries like silk weaving, coin minting, and the ordnance factory closed down, and the masons and other construction workers lost their clientele.

The change in government therefore actually led to a long period of economic stagnation and de-urbanization in the old city. Before the court was removed, Pune had been a rich city where large sums of money were spent on purchase of luxury goods. After the conquest, trade in these goods almost disappeared. One-third of the original capital was driven out of the market. The bankers and money-lenders lost their livelihood. Many of the landed gentry who had borrowed from them were now broken men, and could not repay, and rich bankers fell into poverty. The period 1818-1850 was one of greatest economic depression suffered by Pune.

Though the large military station of the cantonment was set up to the east of city, and though Pune was saved from total oblivion due to this as well as to the fact that it remained the headquarters of the district, very few of the townspeople could benefit immediately from these developments. Moreover, the district suffered severe drought, and there were epidemics of cholera almost every alternate year between 1819 and 1825. The ensuing panic saw large numbers flee the district. In 1823, the price of rice was the highest ever, and people died in the streets for want. Distress due to drought dogged the region till the mid-nineteenth century; this contributed to the depopulation within the city. To alleviate the misery of the people, the government tried to employ as many able and fit people as it could in the newly-opened public works to improve the routes between Pune and the Konkan. The roads through the Karkamb and Bapdeo passes were improved with this 'distressed' labor. Scanty rainfall, drought and consequent distress continued to dog Pune well into the 1840s.

When the British look over Pune, the estimated population was one hundred and ten thousand; it fell to about eighty-one thousand by 1825 and continued to fall in the next twenty-five years to a low of about seventy-three thousand in 1850. The scale of depopulation had never been greater. Thousands of unemployed and disbanded soldiers roamed around the district, leaderless, posing a constant hazard to peace and often coming into the city. Robbery became endemic, and feelings against the British were quite strong, though not expressed openly.

### **The City Pacified**

Elphinstone understood clearly the importance of Pune in the Maratha psyche, and The City was fully alive to the need for conciliating the people. To pacify the city and the newly- acquired territories of the Peshwa, it was vital to gain the acquiescence if not the support of the people of Pune for the new regime. He therefore determined on a policy of 'no change' and 'no innovation'. Nothing was to be done in a hurry. Existing systems of justice, land rights, religious endowments and stale charities were continued with a view to winning over the upper classes. All kinds of hereditary rights and pensions given by

the Peshwa government were continued for the next few years. Apart from a few exceptions, the British kept up many ceremonies for the Brahmins, and desisted from dismissing people from service even if they were redundant. Robertson found this policy sometimes irksome. He was ordered to keep up paying Rs.27,000 for the annual ceremony for rain, and other traditional rites. He also doubted the use of maintaining one hundred and twenty night watchmen, in Pune city, who were divided into squads 'preceded by a trumpeter'! We are told that he was asked to continue the practice so that the "notion of security attached to the sounding of the hour might be maintained among the people."

### **'No Change' POLICY**

In the administration of the city, the existing divisions as well as the traditional officials were retained to look after law and order. No new taxes were imposed for some time. This bending over backwards to please the populace, especially the Brahmins, was unprecedented in British colonial history in India. It is a telling comment on the salesmanship of administrators like Elphinstone, to whom the pacification of a defeated citizenry had to go hand-in-hand with the ultimate goal of conciliation and willing loyalty. The new regime continued to give the Brahmins much of their grants, the temples, their endowments and even the *dakshina* tradition was continued for some time, though with some reduction in the amount of handouts. Many *jagirdars*, especially those who had shown friendship towards the British, retained their privileges and some Indians were appointed in the lower administrative strata's.

The one important change was, of course, the appointment of the Collector as all-powerful head of the administration in the city and the district. This new 'ruler' was judge, magistrate, and executive and in charge of the police force; though the source of his power was different than in the previous regime, the exercise of it was similar, as there was no separation of the functions of the different branches of the government. Another change was that the old *wadas* of Baji Rao II were now used for other purposes, symbolizing the passing of the old order. The remnants of the live-storied Shukrawar Wada, which had been destroyed by the fire, were dismantled and the materials taken to the cantonment where some of it may have been used in other constructions.<sup>15</sup> Budhwar Wada was used to house the administrative offices of the new government till they were moved to the Civil Lines. Vishrambag Wada was to be home to the Poona Sanskrit College, the first British-sponsored educational institute.

Gradually, the sullen populace calmed down and came to accept the inevitable passing of the old order. Opposition was no longer feasible, and for the majority, it was practical to make the best of the situation. 'Respectable' people's attitude changed to neutrality and then open collaboration. "Everyone is striving hard to be taken into consideration... With the merchants and lower classes, the popularity of the government continues to increase"

### **Discontent below the Surface**

On the face of it, the city looked normal to a casual observer who found the well-stocked shops open and the streets full of busy men. But this was probably only an

apparent normalcy. Cities in India are well-known to recover their outward calm after cataclysmic events rather quickly, and Pune itself had done so, many times.

The perspicacious Robertson realized that all was not as it seemed: “the parade and bustle of the former government have subsided into a comparative calm”. The sensitive Elphinstone too remarked on the change: “Poona when approached is unchanged in appearance, but the destruction of all our houses destroys every feeling of quiet and home, and the absence of the Hindu government occasions a void that alters the effect of everything. Our respect for the place is gone, and the change is melancholy. How must the natives feel this when even we feel it?”

Robertson writes of the smaller businessmen who went away to the Konkan or lapsed into agriculture. A large group of about 600 unemployed men went idly around the city, frequenting brothels and steadily becoming steeped in poverty; people were overcome with distress when grain prices arose in 1825. At the time, the city “presented the lameness of poverty; the people led aimless idle lives without employment and without an object. Scarcely a horse passed along the listless streets which were empty except for starving tailors and better-fed butter dealers”.

It is clear that though officially the ‘no innovation’ policy was adopted, change was inevitable. For instance, the one major change in revenue collection, the abolition of fanning out of the tax, itself shook the economic foundation of Pune society. There were other subtler changes that may have led to various pockets of discontent. That discontent did simmer under the surface is quite clear from a number of incidents that took place in the two or three decades after the conquest. The persistent conditions of drought usually led to a great rise in the price of grain. In the grain markets in Pune, imports slowed down and the merchants were often quick to double the price. The government order to prohibit the raising of prices did not have much effect. In 1832, there were grain robberies in the city and the outskirts, and there was evidence of general discontent. In November of that year, when complaints to the city magistrate did not have any effect, people gathered in their thousands in the bazaar and attacked the grain dealers, looted grain and manhandled the shopkeepers. The looting continued for four hours till the police came and established control by arresting the ringleaders and some merchants. There was panic in the city; shops were closed for two days.

Even before this, within a short time after the takeover of the city, a disturbance, political in nature, had occurred. Elphinstone detected a plot by a group of Brahmins to kill all the Europeans and establish an independent kingdom. The leaders were arrested and a ruthless and exemplary punishment meted out to three of them. They were blown off the mouth of a cannon gun as an example to others. In the next three decades there were a number of uprisings amongst the Bhil and Koli tribesmen in the surrounding districts of Pune, which necessitated the reinforcement of the city’s small police force. The Ramoshis’ revolt could only be ended when they were co-opted into the system as hill-police and conciliated with land grants.

### **Changes Within**

The events led to demographic change within the city. Though migration to the city core virtually stopped, within *the paths* some movements were seen. A number of

Brahmin families began to move away from other *peths* and concentrated towards the still low-density western *peths* of Narayan and Sadashiv-which were soon to acquire their well-known orthodox Brahmin image, still prized by their residents. Some non-Marathi speaking traders like the Marwadis and Bohris moved from the central *peths* of Budhwar and Raviwar towards the eastern *peths*, to be nearer the camp. This was especially true of the grain traders. Many lower castes and Muslims moved to the extreme eastern *peths* like Mangalwar, Ganj, and Nana, as they found easy employment and less discrimination in the cantonment. New migrants, who had come in the wake of the British army, found it congenial to settle in the eastern *peths* closest to the cantonment, like Bhavani and Rasta Peths. Parsis, Jews, the Mudaliars and other non-Brahmin professional castes found these areas to be more spacious and socially less orthodox.

The demographic changes in Mangalwar are interesting. This *peth*, as is seen from a list dating to about 1809, was known as a well-to-do *peth*, where some well-known *sahukars* and *mutsuddis* lived. Its population was mixed, with forty-two Brahmin families and other professional groups. A reasonably large amount of house-tax was collected from it, though every group had a few tax-free people. There were temples and four government chowkis. However, in the thirty years following the conquest, its population fell and then rose again. But the new population was composed of the lower castes and untouchables. By the 1880s it became known for its large untouchable settlement, with no shops, and where “several ruined mansions bear traces of former prosperity. *Peths* were changing their character, becoming depressed or improved depending on demographic changes in this period. Thus a polarization was taking place within the city, which was a new phenomenon in the settlement pattern, and this inevitably affected the spaces within.

As far as morphological changes went, there was very little done in terms of actual development in the thirty years preceding 1860. One important event was the declaration in 1835 that Pune would be the Monsoon Capital of the Governor of Bombay and his council from June to October every year. This raised the importance of the city, though the decision would affect the development in the cantonment and Civil Lines areas more directly.

### **Communication Links**

During this period it also became necessary to improve the east-west communication routes between the city and the newly established cantonment. By now the political and administrative power had shifted from the city eastward to the cantonment and the Civil Lines, where the new rulers lived. The old routes within the city had been aligned north-south, due to the way Pune had grown, limited by the Mutha River and the Nagzhari stream. Now a number of causeway and a bridge were built to cross the Manik Nala and the Nagzhari to gain access to the city from the east.

Along the Nagzhari, from north to south, six small bridges were built in the decade after 1830. Most of them were built by the government, but private donations also helped the process. Rasta, Nana and Bhavani *peths* were joined to Ganesh, Raviwar and Ganj by these bridges. The one large bridge, known as Daruwala Pul, which gave access from the business area of Raviwar to Somwar and Rasta Peths, was not however built till 1870 by the municipality.

Meanwhile, across the Manik Nala, which divides the cantonment from the city's eastern wards, was built a massive masonry structure, known as Hallalkhor Bridge. This made it possible to negotiate the almost impassable stretch of land where the *nala* met the Nagzhari and there was a back-wash from the river. Another smaller bridge opened up Rasta Peth to the Civil Lines. These bridges made an east-west link, which though unsatisfactory and tortuous, at least made communication between the city and the cantonment easier for the movement of goods.

Access to the Bombay road so far had been only over the old Lakdi Pul of Peshwa times. Crossing the Mutha had to be made more convenient. Therefore the old Kumbhar Ves causeway was strengthened, and the Lakdi Pul was dismantled and remade in stone. A second major bridge, named after Wellesley, was built in wood and later replaced with strong masonry in 1839. (The present bridge was built in 1875). Communication within the cantonment and the city and the crossing of the Mutha for access to the Bombay route thus became easier by 1840.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the morphology of Pune thus showed three distinct spatial patterns. The old traditional city to the west, with its high-density *pet/is* and narrow streets; the British cantonment to the east together with the Civil Lines, with its new and distinctive plan; and an intermediary zone made up of some of the eastern-most wards of the old city- Nana, Rasta, Mangalwar, Somwar and Ganj Peths, where the population was mixed both caste and community-wise and where new non-Marathi speaking immigrants would find it easier to settle.

The story of Pune now shifts to the new British settlement, the 'camp' as it is still called, together with the Civil Lines or suburb, which was soon to become the locus of the administration as well as the capital of the Bombay Presidency for five months of the year.

#### 4. The Cantonment

*“... There are two Poonas almost as far removed from each other as the North and South poles.”*

*Rev. V. Elwin, Thirty Years in Poona City*

The Bombay Government's policy of treating the territories conquered from the Peshwas in a very special way led to a delay in directly annexing the Pune region to the Bombay Presidency. A special administrative body, called the Deccan Commissionerate, was set up under the charge of Mountstuart Elphinstone, the first Deccan Commissioner, who took up residence in Pune. It became necessary for this new administration to set itself up outside the old city. Even the occupying force and the Collector's temporary office within the Shaniwar Wada needed to be moved away. The presence of alien conquering troops within the town was a constant reminder of defeat and humiliation for the population and it was politically prudent to remove such sources of friction.

The choice of site at first fell naturally on the old Garpir Cantonment where the British Subsidiary troops had been encamped before the Battle of Khadki. Though the old

barracks had been destroyed, the location was quite strategic and had been originally suggested by Wellesley because of this. Since the war had not yet ended, and the Peshwa was still being pursued, the Garpir location could control the entry points into Pune from the Deccan. The residence of the Deccan Commissioner, which was a large bungalow, was built in 1819. (It was located near the present General Post Office. Destroyed by a fire in 1863, the site was used to build the present St. Paul's Church.) The troops - a European regiment, an artillery detail, the Light Cavalry regiment and the three battalions of Native Infantry - were camped in tents close to this bungalow. Apart from allowing better control of the hinterland, the position afforded easy access to the city for the quelling of any kind of uprising there. However, soon after this, more troops were sent to Pune and a larger area was required. The camp was moved further to the east, leaving a wider berth between it and the city. The belt of fields and gardens became a natural barrier, and the vacated Garpir was used to set up the Civil Lines, where British civil officers lived.

An immediate necessity was to make communications between Bombay and Pune as easy and as fast as possible. The newly conquered city and its hinterland had not only to be integrated without delay into the economic network through which revenues could be transferred to Bombay (and on to England), but also the administrative integration had to be completed. This could not be done if the road link was not improved immediately. The journey from Bombay to Pune could previously take up to four days, travelling by carriage or palanquin, crossing the Indrayani and negotiating the difficult *ghat* passes. The route between Panvel (Thane) and Pune, through the Bhor Pass, was improved, so that travelling time could be shortened. But this pass continued to present difficulties, in spite of several efforts over the years to improve it. Carriages could not be driven over the steep gradient. Passengers had to leave their coach at the top of the *ghat* and be carried down in palanquins and then get on to another coach for the rest of the journey. Private carriages had to be carried up and down *the ghat* swinging from poles carried by workmen. The improvements, such as they were, did ease the problem of communication with Bombay considerably, and this was the main artery, till the coming of the railways around the mid-nineteenth century brought a modern rapid transport system to the area.

### **The Permanent Camp**

The Cantonment was set up by the Collector, Robertson, and the military commandant Col. Gifford according to Regulation I of 1819. These two men had the task of choosing the exact area and fixing the limits. An extensive open area between the two natural streams, the Manik Nala on the west and Bhairoba Nala on the east, and including two villages, Ghorpadi and Wanawadi, was designated for the encampment. This land was owned privately by a number of people, mostly feudal landlords. For acquisition of this land, negotiations had to be held with the original owners, the *inamdars*, *mirasdars* and *jagirdars* for adequate compensation; the Sindhia family, for instance, owned an extensive tract in Wanawadi. After many discussions, claims and counter-claims, the amounts were settled. It was not till 1827 that the boundaries were finally fixed after this tortuous process.

By the time that the legal processes were completed, the Cantonment was already in place. Lady West, the wife of a judge visiting Pune in the early 1820s, described the

house she stayed in as a “very pretty English house with a nice garden”. Already, the Cantonment houses and the general ambience was leading to nostalgia for ‘home’ amongst the colonial community. The wide tree-lined roads flanked by riding paths and the typical secluded cottage-like bungalows in neat plots were in place by the time Bishop Heber, the first Bishop of Calcutta, visited Pune in 1825. He writes of an existing library, a regimental school and a church, St. Mary’s, which he consecrated.

At around the same time, a smaller Cantonment was setup near the village of Khadki on the small Hat plain within the meandering curve of the Mula River to the north. Here the European troops of the 4th Light Dragoons were stationed, and a bazaar established for them. This was also the place chosen for the only industry that the Cantonment boasted of- the government-owned Gunpowder and Small Arms and Ammunition Factory. Later, Khadki also became the center for the Bombay Sappers and Miners. Other troops replaced the European cavalry regiment, and the British increased the number of troops at Khadki. Workshops of the arms factory, housing for the workers, barracks, horse sheds, gun sheds and bungalows for officers were built. Together with the bazaar population settlement, Khadki became a complete unit with its own administration and its own military hospital. Khadki’s resemblance to the larger Poona Cantonment was almost complete.

Together, the two Cantonments put a large stretch of space at the disposal of the military, where a new type of settlement pattern could be created in keeping with not only the needs of military training or military control of the nearby town, but also the specific socio-cultural requirements of the colonial community. Both were laid out in a similar way; indeed cantonments all over India tended to have a uniform look, almost indistinguishable from one another, except for variations of topography and climate.

The Cantonment of Pune, stretching over four and a quarter square miles by the end of the century, had a very small population compared to the city. The type of development in most of its areas can be called low-density as well as low-rise. A small European population, mostly army officers and their families, lived in large bungalows, each set in their own garden plots. The size of plot as well as the house was in accordance with the strict hierarchical ranking system of the army- the largest were naturally allotted to senior officers. Like other Cantonments, Pune was divided into roughly three types of land-use areas - military, bungalow and bazaar areas.

### **Military Architecture The Barracks**

A central belt of about 130 acres had to be kept open exclusively for military use -that is, for training, drills, parades and sports. The parade ground was the most important chunk of space. There were also firing and shooting ranges (remembered today in names of areas such as Golibar Maidan) and polo or cricket grounds. The rest of the area around this open, barren space, was used to set up barracks for troops, both European and native, and for messes, stores, armories, hospitals, and other such structures. The main arsenal was set up near the ordnance lines with a watch tower. This was at Arsenal Road, now Ambedkar Road. The watch tower still exists, while the arsenal is now the Stores Depot.

A large part of this section was taken up with housing for the troops. The early tents were soon replaced by temporary low, single-storey structures with tiled roofs,

sometimes referred to by the military as 'hutments'. The earliest set of permanent barracks for European troops was built in Ghorpadi in 1842. These were blocks containing a long barrack room together with the sergeant's quarters, for single men; there was a set of blocks for married soldiers as well. More were built at Wanawadi.

As the century progressed, the barracks underwent some changes in form. The development of this form of military architecture had to do with the health of the European troops. Since, in India, the climate and tropical diseases took a high toll of lives, the military and bungalow areas of the Cantonment were to be made environmentally as healthy as possible. Not only was the location of cantonments often regulated by such concerns, even the spatial distribution of structures within the cantonments was geared to the new theories of health and hygiene prevalent in nineteenth century Europe. The prevalent ethno-medical theories blamed diseases such as malaria and cholera on humidity, 'bad air' and even smells. A Royal Commission set up to study the condition of the health of the British Indian Army in 1863 made recommendations based on these new (if incorrect) theories. The later barracks at Ghorpadi and Wanawadi reflected these recommendations. Amount of 'air space' measured in cubic feet for each soldier was drastically raised. 'Noxious Vapors' arising from the ground that were believed to cause humidity and fever had to be avoided, and for this the barrack rooms were raised on very high plinths, and surrounded by deep verandahs to keep out the sun; room heights were raised too. The structures were utilitarian; being built of stone, with their round arched verandah facades and echeloned at an angle in rows to allow for maximum air circulation, they developed a robust military character-clustered in phalanxes like stoic soldiers standing in solid formations. (A number of these solid blocks still exist within the campus of what is now the Armed Forces Medical College and the Command Hospital, and are being used as wards and offices).

The military barracks 'improved' with every new project up to the 1880s. The need to control heat led to the simple but effective device of the deep verandah, which prevented the sun's rays from reaching the walls of the main rooms. Ceilings were raised, and ventilation improved by small windows high upon the main walls. Doors acquired fan-light openings above; Venetian shutters and outer shades protected the windows from both sun and rain.

Since native troops were used to the climate and had a different way of life, the quarters for both married and single Indian men were built much more easily and cheaply. Generally, they were sets of long, low one-storey blocks with sloping tiled roofs, a wide verandah and smaller rooms; the plinths were generally low or non-existent. These barracks were similar to the temporary 'hutment' type referred to before.

### **The Garrison Church**

Built between the military area and the beginning of the bungalow area where the officers lived, St. Mary's Church became the focal point of the religious life of the European troops and officers. It was the first Protestant church in Pune, meant for the use of the garrison. Like a number of Georgian churches in India, this one too is inspired by a famous prototype in London - St. Martin-in-the-field, designed by James Gibbs, at Trafalgar Square. London. Its plan, similar to English parish churches, was adapted to the local climate, with large windows, Venetian blinds, and deep porches. Its somewhat

square steeple and the fact that it was painted in a “blue wash picked out in white” did not impress Bishop Heber, who thought it was in bad taste. (The offending steeple has been raised, and the colors changed long since). This brick-and-plaster church, adorned with beautiful stained-glass windows imported from England, was designed by an army engineer, Lt. Nash -these army engineers were versatile men being called upon to survey, build roads, bridges and irrigation systems, and also design buildings, churches, clubs, schools, offices and markets. They generally followed the popular architectural style of the time from books imported from England.

St. Mary’s was the only church for Europeans for a long time and is inextricably connected with the history of the British Indian Army and Pune Cantonment. The insignia of a number of regiments were kept in it and commemorative stones of distinguished soldiers killed in battle are set in its floor and walls. The land on which it stands probably belonged to the Peshwa government, and there are references to an old Peshwa *wada* perhaps a garden retreat, which was pulled down to make way for the church. (Close to it was Ghashiram Kotwal’s lank, and his mansion was a little further to the west. Today only a fragment of its gate exists within the grounds of a military depot - AFMSD). It is easy to picture the church as the focal point of the early military station, where Europeans gathered for Sunday mass, for christenings and for funerals. Later, a Baptist Chapel was built in 1858 for British soldiers and St. Patrick’s Church was built in 1855 for the Catholics.

### **The Bungalow Unit**

The bungalow area constituted a large chunk of land, where the residences of officers were concentrated. They were clustered in the areas behind and around the European troops barracks in the Ghorpadi and Wanawadi Lines; in the Right Flank lines in the south; in the Neutral Staff and Petty Staff Lines in the west and northwest. In the beginning, only Europeans lived in the single-unit bungalows surrounded by large compounds laid out to look like English gardens. (Visitors of the time described the bungalow gardens as a riot of color. The bungalows of Pune reminded them of the cottages of the English countryside, and the weather during the ‘season’ seemed to them almost like the English summer).

Here the plots were neatly laid out according to the strict hierarchy of the army, the largest ones meant for senior officers, often with two acres of land. Within these compounds each bungalow stood in solitary splendor, shielded from the road by (lowering hedges and from each other by fences. Entry to the compound was through a gate and through a long curving driveway to the porch. The porch shielded the visitor alighting from his carriage from the sun as well as the rain. Alighting there, the visitor climbed the steps to a deep verandah. This was the most versatile part of the house and was a sort of intermediary space between the inner or more private rooms and the compound. The verandah often ran all around the house. In the rainy season it afforded an after-dinner walk, and it was also the place where afternoon tea was taken or morning visitors entertained. The back verandah was used for various chores by the servants. Tradesmen interacted with the lady of the house there. It was also where the tailor sat to stitch clothes for the family, the shoemakers to make shoes to order, or even the jeweler to craft a new ornament.

The inner rooms were planned symmetrically. There was usually a large sitting room and a dining room at the center, flanked by bedrooms on either side with their attached dressing and hath rooms. The ceilings were high, their timber frames covered by tiles. Inside these cavernous inner rooms the sun could only cast a weak glow through the attic windows high up near the ceiling, and they remained cool in the hottest of summers. Like the barracks, the bungalows too were an attempt to control the environment, to beat the heat and the tropical diseases that took such a toll of European lives. As in the case of the barracks, the prevalent ethno-medical theories led to a number of design inputs into the basic structure of the bungalow, which became a norm throughout India. The bungalow too had high plinths to reduce humidity and the influence of 'vapors' rising from the ground. The inner rooms were shielded from the heat by the thick walls, the high ceilings and the deep verandah. Doors and windows were placed opposite each other to catch any stray breeze and send it around the house. When *punkah* came to be used widely, they added to the efforts of keeping cool. The only *punkah* that still exists is at an Officer's Mess of the Bombay Engineering Group at Khadki. A fine cloth flounce stretched across a long pole, it still blows a whiff of cool air over the dining table on mess nights. Being in an Engineers' mess, it is appropriate that it has been motorized and is now operated by the flick of a switch. Later refinements to the Camp bungalows included Tuscan columns on porches and verandahs and trellis-work screens. Windows acquired carved wooden *chajjas*; arches and entablatures adorned the facades.

The bungalow compound, with its lawns and flower-beds, also had its own well from which the *mail* or gardener would lift the water, and the *bheesti* or water carrier would take it to storage tubs in the house. (At this time, only dry sanitation existed in Pune. The first 'water closet', a rather primitive Hushing system, was installed at Government House, Ganeshkhind, after the First World War). Servants' quarters, stables, carriage sheds and even office rooms were built usually at the back of the house. Kitchens were in separate blocks at the back to keep away the cooking smells and the smoke. Together with all these structures, the bungalow became a self-contained unit. Life here was comfortable insofar as available pre-industrial technology allowed it to be. The large number of servants per family made for a life-style which most European officers would not be able to follow at home.

### **Social life in the camp**

For the Europeans, social life in the camp revolved around the clubs, the Gymkhana, the sports fields and the parties and balls at the Governor's residence first at Dapodi, then at Ganeshkhind. The Club of Western India was the oldest club, set up in 1830. It grew from a single nucleus of an old bungalow to include blocks of residential accommodation, lawns, a covered racket court and other facilities, like card and reading rooms, a library, a large dining room, and a billiards room.

There was also racing, which became the focus of entertainment during the 'Season', when the Governor was in residence at Pune. The race course, originally situated close to the river bank in the Civil Lines area, was later moved to the heart of the Cantonment, to a part of the Parade Ground. It was the hub for all Europeans, civil and military, and the various racing events regarded as brilliant social occasions. Balls and tea parties were

held at the Turf Club after the races. The Gymkhana (now Poona Club) was set up in 1880, a sports club with wide areas of open space for tennis, cricket, polo and badminton.

Much of the colonial military officer's life in Pune was spent in his comfortable bungalow, the nearest thing to a cottage that he and his wife had left behind them. He tried to furnish it in exactly the same way a cottage in England would be furnished—including the obligatory fire place, not very useful in Pune. If not a real one, a dummy would do as well, as long as there was a mantel shelf for family photographs, Toby jugs and other memorabilia of home to be displayed.” Here he entertained his friends and tried to create a social atmosphere that would help to keep his homesickness at bay. Naming his bungalow after Scottish or English landmarks helped too.

### **A Suburban Townscape**

The kind of townscape that came up in the bungalow areas was quite different to that of the city. It was more akin to a suburb than an urban environment. It was where the ruling elite lived, and its exclusive nature was reinforced through segregation and emphasis on its separateness from the old *city*. To this extent, it was a planned settlement which symbolized dominance and political power, at one level. At another level, it can also be understood as a product of nostalgia, of the longing of a community in voluntary exile to recreate the ambience of their home in alien surroundings.

We must remember too, that the colonial community created this settlement due to its immediate cultural and political needs; it was not a permanent community. Individuals within it were constantly being ‘posted out or in’. It became convenient therefore not to actually invest in or own property in the Cantonment. The few officers who owned their bungalows had to sell them to the incoming ones when they moved away, perhaps never to return. It was more useful to allow Indians from the city or bazaar to lease Cantonment plots, put up bungalows on them and then rent them out to the Europeans. Indians were not, of course, allowed to live in their bungalows till the end of the century, but it was a profitable rentier business and benefited both sides.

The bungalow-area of the Camp was seen as the exact opposite of the old city by the people of both places. The former was green, quiet, almost monotonous, in the kind of roadscape that the bungalows presented, each isolated and enclosed within its private garden. The city, teeming with people, with its narrow winding lanes, crowded noisy bazaars and continuous street facades was a real urban figuration. The Camp was hardly ‘urban’. This type of planning had never before been seen in Pune. Yet it was not a direct import from Europe either. Contemporary European cities did not look anything like Pune Camp or indeed any other military Cantonment in India, not even the new suburbs that were being built just outside London or Paris in the nineteenth century. In fact it would be difficult to find the amount of space required to create the sprawl of the Indian cantonment in any European city.

The Camp was a rather unique phenomenon, and grew out of not only the military needs of the British forces, but also medical and health concerns as well as the aesthetic perceptions of the Europeans who set it up. The people of the city looked on it as a curiosity at first, as the “White Camp” (Gora Chhavni) something that had no direct bearing on the daily urban round. Later, the quiet, the spacious planning and the

cleanliness of the Camp were admired, though from a distance, but not as a place they wished to live in.

### **Indians in the Bungalows**

The strict racial segregation of the bungalow area was lifted towards the end of the nineteenth century, though the precise date is not available. Around this time, sufficiently well-to-do and westernized Indians, mostly Parsis, were allowed to move into their bungalows. Some built new and rather grand mansions in the plots they held on lease from the authorities. A typical example is the mansion built by the Adenwalas, a wealthy merchant family which made its fortune in Aden. Its baroque facade, ornamental *chajjas* and ornate garden furniture point to the flamboyant style of a past age when acquisition of wealth was creating a new consuming class under colonial rule. (After years of neglect, the mansion, situated on Elphinstone Road near Bishop's School, has now been restored by its new owners). Another mansion, less exuberant, but more stately and faintly neo-Gothic, is Bright Lands, belonging to the family of Sir Feroze Sethna a well-known and important Parsi gentleman of the time. This mansion (on the road leading to the headquarters of the Southern Command) has the distinction of being designed by George Wittet, the architect of the Gateway of India, Bombay.

The Indian bungalows became more elaborate, with columns and barge boards, ornamental windows and stucco work on the inside, compared to the more utilitarian ones built for the Europeans. By 1876, the Parsis owned houses on Arsenal Road and the once exclusive areas of Alexandra, Napier, Parvati Villas, and Wellesley Road, and the even more exclusive Queen's Gardens and Wanawadi Lines. Other Indians, Hindu and Muslim, followed suit, and by the turn of century there were Goan Christians and other well-to-do businessmen in the Wanawadi and Ghorpadi areas too. Indians had to be really wealthy and westernized, with a certain status, before they were allowed to live in the Camp and feel comfortable about it. It also meant that the family had to adapt to the new westernized life-style, or 'bungalow culture', that went with the move of residence. The bungalow was not like the traditional inward looking courtyard type house which afforded complete privacy to the women folk. Here there was hardly any privacy for the women of the house, who would now have to interact with outsiders more openly because of the very structure of the bungalow. Moreover, it did not allow for a mixed use of floor space, as in the traditional houses. Separate spaces being earmarked for dining, studying, sitting, sleeping, not to mention the separate kitchen, pantry etc., led to quite a change in everyday life. The bungalow plan seems to have been accepted in its fully evolved form by Indians who moved into them. Hardly any major changes were made to adapt them to a traditional way of life. Only a few minor changes, like keeping aside a room for worship, or adding some traditional motifs to the decoration were incorporated.<sup>7</sup>

It became important, as a status symbol, for the Indians moving into Camp bungalows to take on all the paraphernalia of western material culture, such as the furniture, crockery, cutlery and social interactions, even social drinking, hitherto frowned upon in traditional Pune society. Bungalow life played havoc with traditional caste pollution rules. Though the English elite guarded its privileges as jealously as any Brahmin did his caste ascendancy, this did not prevent Indians from adopting the external symbols of westernization, which raised their status among other Indians. Bungalow ownership

acquired a 'class' connotation as well as a cultural one '*Bangla-vargi*' (bungalow-class) became an adjective for a successful westernized Indian family. Gradually, this class-based westernized group in the Camp cut across caste and community and included a cosmopolitan heterogeneous people who were mostly non-Marathi speaking.

It is interesting to find that the Indians who moved into the Camp bungalows belonged mostly to the new immigrant groups who originally lived in the Sadar Bazaar area and had come to Pune with the setting up of the Cantonment. The change in the material culture of these groups was qualitatively different from the westernization seen in the city after the mid-nineteenth century. In the city, the old hierarchy and intellectual groups, mostly Brahmins, were going through deep and far-reaching changes affecting the realm of ideas. But the more superficial aspects of material cultural change did not penetrate the city as fast as in the Camp. Perhaps the urge was not strong because they were already at the top of the social hierarchy. Moreover, the Camp was not close enough to affect their daily lives.

It is a fact, however, that even in the Camp it was difficult to completely break free of ethnic and caste considerations. There were separate schools and clubs for different groups. There were separate Parsi and Muslim schools; the Parsi Gymkhana was an exclusive Parsi Club; Goans formed their own club. Each group had their separate places of worship. Inter-dining was not common and inter-marriage was taboo.

### **The Sadar Bazaar**

Though the residential areas were segregated, interaction with the Indian population was necessary in other aspects of life. Daily provisions like grain, fuel, vegetables, and crafted articles like shoes, saddles and imported luxury goods were needed by both troops and officers resident in the Camp. For this, space was allocated to the west of the bungalow areas for commercial activity. This was known as the Sadar Bazaar, which catered to the Europeans in the camp and in the Civil Lines. Three other smaller bazaars were set up at Wanawadi, Ghorpadi and on the Sholapur Road. These catered to the sepoys, lascars, camp followers and others. The traders in these bazaars were mostly Bohra Muslims and Parsis; there were a few Anglo-Indians or Goan Christians.

The Sadar Bazaar area leads from the Camp to the city, and here there was a large concentration of Indians. At first, government encouraged grain dealers and traders who could supply goods for the army to settle. Two rows of thatched huts were set up by the traders along Main Street (now Mahatma Gandhi Road) and Taboot Street. Soon these became permanent structures, as a street pattern was laid out, with four wide north-south roads (Main, Centre, East and West Streets) intersected by narrower roads in an east-west direction. Along both sides of these streets Indian traders were allowed to build their shops, with living quarters above. The street plan and building laws were strictly implemented. Shops were often inspected and cleanliness maintained, but residents had freedom in the design of their houses.

By the end of the century there were more than two thousand four hundred houses and seven hundred shops. The roads of the bazaar, especially Main Street, were lined with trees, with open gutters on either side of roads; in some places they were covered with slabs of stone. The earliest shops were of the Marwari or Gujarati Vani grain dealers,

who came in the wake of the army, as suppliers. There already was a substantial grain trade in the city, much of which had been in the hands of these dealers. Some of them opened branches in the Camp or shifted their base from the older *peths* to the eastern Nana Peth so that they could be nearer the Camp. They bought the grain in the city to retail it in the Camp. Apart from grain and pulse, they also dealt in textiles, mainly finished piece goods from Europe, as well as locally made merchandise. Money-lending was also an important line of business for them. By the 1880s, their shops were also selling tea, coffee, sugar, tobacco and kerosene, all imported from Bombay.

The economic axis of Pune had by this time shifted - through the conduit of the Cantonment and the immigrant traders who had bases or contacts in Bombay. Imports were now made through that city. Though the wholesale trade in grain was organized in the city, most other things came in from the Konkan and Bombay into the Camp Bazaar for the Europeans of the Cantonment and the Civil Lines. The hinterland had therefore shrunk considerably since the defeat of the Peshwa. The clientele was different too. The city's old *sardars* and courtiers were no longer able to afford their luxurious life-styles. The demands of the new consumers, the European army officers and their families, were very different. They did not have as much to spend on luxury goods as the old courtiers, but they were the new focus of commerce.

### **New Settlers in the Camp**

Amongst other newcomers, the earliest were the Parsi traders who came from Sirur, where they had been suppliers to the Subsidiary Force stationed there before the Battle of Khadki. Eater, other Parsis came up from Bombay. Parsis specialized in a new kind of establishment, which came to be known as "Europe Shops". Watches, clocks, haberdashery, groceries, textiles, were some of the things available in these shops for the first time in Pune. Parsis also specialized in the sale of European liquor and owned a number of wine stores. The first ice-making factory in Pune, as well as two photograph studios, was set up in the bazaar by Parsis a few years later. Watch making, book-binding, carpentry, and coach building were other professions followed by them. As the community prospered, they invested in leasehold land in the camp and other property in the Civil Lines. They built houses on these to be let out to Europeans. A number of hotels were run by them too. Gradually, the Parsis came to own large amounts of landed property.

A good example of an early Parsi family to settle in the Camp was that of Pestonjee Sorabji, who started business in Pune with a Europe Shop. Eater the family took on the new and lucrative business of the government Mail Contract, delivering mail between Poona and Bombay and to Aurangabad and Nagpur. The scale of this contract was significant: it involved 500 runs and needed around that many horses at least. Keeping the service intact during crises, especially during the Uprising of 1857 won awards for the family and the title of Khan Bahadur for Pestonjee. His descendants went on to create a number of charitable institutions, take part in Municipal affairs, and to setup an early industry in Pune (Poona-Deccan Papers Mills Co. Ltd.), a cotton factory and a bank. Though originally they had settled in the eastern peth of Bhavani in the city, they came to own extensive properties in Civil Lines and East Street.

Similar success stories are to be found among other communities as well. The Bohra Muslims had been an important commercial group in eighteenth-century Pune mostly settled in Bohri Ali in Ravivvar Peth. In the nineteenth century, many Bohras were to be found in the Cantonment, having come in from Bombay. They were well-known in the Peshwa period for trading in hardware, and had a large network outside Pune. In the Camp too, they set up hardware shops and much of their merchandise was imported directly from England. They also sold English chinaware and silk or cotton piece goods. Apart from these Gujarati-speaking Bohra traders, there were also the Gujarati or Kutchi-speaking Memmon Muslim traders who came from Bombay in 1835. At first they were hawkers selling cloth and woollens, and later they came to own shops selling English millinery, imported crockery, glass, saddles, harnesses, even horses and carriages. Much of their goods too were imported directly from Europe. They also specialized in European furniture, and some of the best shops were owned by them. Later they invested their profits in land and built property in the Cantonment and Civil Lines. At first they lived above their shops in the Sadar Bazaar; some of them made the transition to bungalow life in the early decades of this century.

One such businessman was Haji Kasam Lodha who came originally from Karachi and set up an office on Main Street, above which he lived with his family. It had a courtyard whose outstanding feature was a large tree around which the house seemed to have grown. His business was timber, furniture, general goods, and contracts for supplies for the army. The family changed their surname to Moledina and moved into a bungalow in the exclusive European area. His son and grandchildren received a western education in the Camp schools; they went on to set up community charities and a school, and took active part in civic affairs. Mr. Moledina presided over the Cantonment Citizen's Association, and was a member of the Cantonment Board."

The Bene-Israels are said to have come to Pune around the mid-nineteenth century. Some were soldiers in the British army, other set up shops in the bazaar. Some were known for their profession as oil pressers or *telis*, and because Saturday was their religious day of closing, they were given the epithet of Shaniwar Teli (Saturday oil pressers). These Jews were well-to-do and have been described as 'a rising class', living in large houses two or more storeys high, and owning other properties. Many Jews also settled in Rasta Peth, close to the Cantonment. Though the Jewish community in Pune has dwindled, there is still a 'Jew Street' and a synagogue in that *peth*.

Goan Christians and Eurasians made up other significant groups. A number of them owned shops in the bazaar. Some also lived in the smaller bazaars at Ghorpadi and Wanawadi. Goans owned private dispensaries, cigar shops and bakeries, living above their shops like most other traders in the Sadar Bazaar. In addition, there were also shops owned by Europeans, one being a branch of a joint stock company, Treacher and Co., general merchants and druggists. Europeans specialized in millinery, hair-cutting, watch-making, clothing and general merchandise. Apart from these migrants, there were also other castes and groups in the bazaar. Telegu-speaking *kamathis*, who were masons and later became well-to-do contractors, were centered around the Malcolm's Tank area near the vegetable and meat market. Tamil-speaking shoemakers began an industry manufacturing "European' shoes and boots, which were in demand not only in Bombay, but all over the Deccan. Hindi-speaking cobblers from North India also exported their handmade boots through Memmon traders to Bombay. In the bazaar also lived Marathi-

speaking groups. A few were Deshasth Brahmins who worked as clerks in the government and private offices. There were a large number of Shimpis, tailors who also sold cloth, and a few well-to-do gold and silversmiths whose clientele included Indians and Europeans.

The Indian population in the Sadar Bazaar were assigned plots along the eight major streets to set up their shops. Though in the beginning there were light thatched structures, they were soon transformed into two or three-storeyed houses, with business premises and shops on the ground floor, off the street, and living quarters above. This was the traditional pattern in Pune and other Indian cities – a system of mixed land use, very convenient in pre motor days. Another traditional element of Indian urbanism was replicated in the Bazaar area. Wherever and whenever possible, there were small ethnic enclaves or profession based areas in miniature replication of the *alis*, *gallis* and *puras* of the old city. Within the lanes and by lanes of Main, East, West and Center Streets, there were Shimpi Ali, Kolsa Galli, Teli Ali, Momminpura, Katarkhana. Dana Ali and even a Coachman Ali, and as a commentary on changing times, a Butler Mohalla. Some of these names endure even though streets and localities have long since changed their ethnic composition. Even under the strict and uniform planning by Cantonment authorities, therefore, room for some traditional clustering existed.

The Sadar Bazaar was (and still is) a fairly heterogeneous and cosmopolitan area. The architecture and street facade as it evolved reflected the cosmopolitan nature of the population and developed an eclectic mixture of Indian and European elements, which gave it a personality of its own. There were also Hindu and Jain temples, *masjids* and *dargahs*, churches of various denominations and an *agiary*, reflecting the various religious groups within the population. In the bazaar's *chowks*, like Babajan and Sarbatwala Chowks in and around its main market (built in 1884 on Strafford Square), and in its tea shops and restaurants, an urban social fabric grew, quite distinct from that of the city in its heterogeneity. In 1912, a travelling cinema was first introduced by A.C. Patel (who was also a pioneer of cinema in Bombay), and the first permanent cinema house was set up in 1914. This was Napier Cinema (later West End), showing silent films. (It was not till 1931 that this became a 'talkies' theatre.) Another cinema house, Capitol, was built in the bazaar area later in the 1930s. The cinemas introduced new form of entertainment to the public in the Camp.

People in the bazaar did not quite form a part of the European social life in the Camp. Even though some lived in the bungalows and some amount of social interaction had begun from the earlier years of the twentieth century, there never was any social integration; the Indians in the Camp, especially in the Bazaar, formed a special enclave of migrants different ethnic communities living together in a small area, whose *raison d'etre* was the commercial connection with the European settlement and the army, and the lucrative contracts the latter afforded to the merchants.

People in the bazaar also did not belong to the old city either culturally, or ethnically. They did not themselves feel the need to be considered as a part of the city population, nor did the people of the city consider them as such. The spatial and geographical divide accentuated this, though there were no physical barriers - such as walls or a gale - which prevented interaction between the two. The small settlement became a microcosm of the

larger world outside, yet had the “gossipy intimacy of the neighborhoods” of small towns.”

The geographical divide with the city has remained a part of the perception of the people of Sadar Bazaar till today. Sachapir Street, which leads from the Cantonment to the city, was perceived as the perimeter. “The Chowk was the heart of our neighborhood, two hundred yards down Sachapir Street from where I lived. Our side of the Chowk was the city side and the other, towards Main Street, was the Cantonment side. ...Sarbatwala Chowk and our neighborhood ... were distinctly in the bazaar part of the camp, where no soldiers or administrators would ever have lived, but where they would have been allowed to wander to the shops and cafes and markets and tumble-down growth of a no-man’s land between the narrow streets of the city and the spacious squares of the camp with its barracks and bungalows. Even the rickshawallas recognized Sachapir Street and the Chowk as the last outpost of the Cantonment. When they dropped my aunts or my grandfather outside our door, they would argue about the extra money they wanted to charge for crossing the city limits from their normal beat. The chowk was certainly the last stronghold of the hustlers of the camp, the touts and bookies who never expected clientele from the city but were jealous of the business they cornered from Laxmi Road to East Street”.

### **Architecture of the Bazaar**

Though Cantonment building rules were strictly implemented, shops inspected regularly, and the street pattern maintained, within these constraints Indians were allowed to follow their inclination as far as plan, design or facades were concerned. The houses they put up varied in size and shape. The courtyard type of plan continued to be popular, even on the small plots. Owners created the familiar facades of their places of origin on the streets of Sadar Bazaar. So there was the beautifully carved wooden brackets and pillars of the Gujarati home; the typical cusped arch and *suru* or cypress columns of Maharashtra; the glass-paneled enclosed balconies and protruding ornamental windows of Goa, all juxtaposed with Corinthian or Tuscan pilasters, sloping tiled roofs, and neo-Gothic or neo-Classical ornamentation. The streetscape, no doubt hybrid - with its eclectic mix of all kinds of architectural styles became vital and interesting, with an organic cohesion. From the tops of these two or three-storey houses could be seen an unbroken vista of tiled roofing closely packed together. The very narrow streets separating the blocks and connecting the wider roads were however straight and not winding, as per the grid pattern that had to be followed.

### **Managing the Cantonment**

The distinctly differentiated areas of military use, bungalow and bazaar presented a problem of management. It was necessary to allow freedom of commercial activity for the advantage of all, yet to keep strict control over urban space; to allow differing life-style yet avoid conflict. The solution, as always with British rule, was towards centralization. A committee, made up of a majority of ex-officio members and non-officials, was put in charge of managing the Cantonment. However, the Cantonment

Magistrate, often called Bazaar Master, became the most important official for the residents. He was the executive head and was in charge of the civil administration.

This all-important functionary had a variety of powers with which he could become involved with the daily lives of the people. He was Magistrate as well as Civil Judge; he was in charge of the police as well as the jail; he was Registrar of Documents; he managed the conservancy and sanitation and functioned as Municipal Commissioner. As one resident put it, he also felt it incumbent upon himself to advise the housewives on matters regarding their servants and tradesmen.” The tendency of any official with such varied powers to interfere in all aspects of daily life led to subdued protests, and his powers were slowly reduced from time to time. By the 1880s, his duties were embodied in the Cantonment Code, and some control was exercised over him by the Cantonment Committee.

This Committee now functioned as a military municipality. Some local civilian members, from among the well-to-do and respectable people, were nominated as non-official members to the committee. They generally voted with the official group. Meanwhile, as the civil population in the Camp grew, there were further protests against the autocratic rule of the Bazaar Master. The presence of the nominated members in the committee did not ease the situation, as they were considered ‘Yes Men’ by the protesters.<sup>17</sup> This was the period of a general policy of decentralization all over India, when local self-governing bodies were setup with some financial powers.

However, though by 1883, Pune City Municipality had already held its first election, and representatives of the people were in charge of municipal affairs, the Cantonment residents had to continue under the old type of administration till well into the twentieth century. As far as finances went, the chief source of income was a share of the octroi collected by the city municipality. Property rates, licenses and passes also brought in enough income, independent of the city.

The Camp thus evolved into a self-sufficient urban entity with its own administration, recreational facilities and its different land uses. Because there was no industrial activity (except for the government-owned ammunition factory), the civil population attracted to it were traders, shopkeepers, contractors, labor, domestic servants and artisans pursuing small crafts like boot or saddle makers. The Camp developed a more cosmopolitan culture due to its ethnically mixed population, which did not have to follow the old traditional caste/occupational segregation practices prevalent in the city. Racial segregation though, existed in the military and bungalow areas.

### **The Civil Lines**

The original Camp area around the old grave of Garpir became empty when the Cantonment was shifted to the southeast. This area, lying northwest of the Camp, grew into the Civil Lines, an enclave for the British civil officers. The area actually formed a sort of bridge between the old city to its west and the Camp.

Soon after the conquest of the city, it became necessary to build a new house for the first Deccan Commissioner, Mountstuart Elphinstone. (His earlier home, the Residency at Sangam, had been completely destroyed during the Battle of Khadki.) This may have been a large bungalow with a heavy tiled roof, which Elphinstone described as “a tiled

palace on wooden posts, 12 feet high, and “not traditionally magnificent. Obviously, the accent was on comfort, and coolness, and not on grandeur. Around this were set up the Collector’s office, the Pay Office, a European graveyard, a Post Office, hotels and a traveller’s bungalow. Bungalows for the residence of the Revenue Commissioner, Collector, the Bishop of Bombay, Civil Surgeon and other European civil officers came up close-by. A civil hospital and lunatic asylum were set up as well. A race course was also laid out near the river (in the present area of Boat Club and was later moved to the Camp, though at what precise date racing started is not known); the Club of Western India was set up at the other end of the Civil Lines. The Civil Lines grew fast and many Indians invested in land and in building houses to be let out to the European officers. Since the Camp was close by, the Sadar Bazaar was used by residents of the Civil Lines. In general layout, this area was similar to that of the Camp, with individual bungalows standing in separate plots.

### **The Season**

The Civil Lines area grew rather fast throughout the second half of the nineteenth century as an elite area, especially when the Governor of Bombay began spending the monsoons in Pune, bringing not only his personal retinue, but his whole government for the ‘Season’. In fact, after the Maratha Wars, the Bombay Governors began to lead a rather itinerant life. They only spent a short winter in Bombay. At the beginning of summer they went up to Mahabaleshwar. As soon as the rains started, they came to Pune to spend the balmy monsoon here. From the 1830s, the Governors, their staff, officers, and even clerks and peons look to visiting Pune every year. Their arrival started off the gay season, with its balls and banquets and *durbars*, and the races and crowds at the Band Stand in the Bund Garden.

### **First Government House**

It was John Malcolm who first thought of having a proper government house in Pune. In 1828 he bought and renovated the house which had belonged to Colonel Ford (who had trained and commanded a force for the Peshwa and contributed to the British victory at Khadki) at Dapodi, on the Bombay-Pune road. It seemed an ideal place for the Governor. The seventy-one acres of ground, skirted by the Pavna River, were lovely in the monsoons: “...creepers burst into blossoms running over large trees and hanging in graceful festoons or garlands”. It was a collection of bungalows, and not a stately mansion. The main house was converted into the State Apartments. A tower and a flagpole were added. Reception rooms and an eighty-foot long ballroom were its main features. Another large bungalow had the private living quarters, and the officers of the entourage were given another one near the river. Quarters for the secretarial staff, ADCs and servants; cowsheds, stables, and storerooms were all built separately on the estate.

The Government House at Dapodi became the center of social life for the European civilians as well as the Indian Princes who congregated in Pune to be near the seat of power. A part of the Governor’s job involved public relations, and entertainment was on a lavish scale. Though socializing between Indians and the English was always restricted, at Government House, the Indian land-owning classes and the native Princes were always

welcome. The *maharajas*, *rajas*, *amirs*, *zamindars* and *sardars* were invited to important functions as well as at *darbars*. Later, other wealthy Indians, such as some Parsi businessmen, were also invited.

The ballroom was the scene of many social events. Lady Falkland, in her amusing account of her days in India, describes one such ball at which the Amirs of Sind were present, and which she named the “Blisterfly Ball”. At this dance, held on a typically wet night, the guests arrived late after their difficult ride through the slush all the way from the Camp. As soon as the music started, swarms of obnoxious blister flies invaded the ballroom. (Pune in the past was rather notorious for these). They “climbed into flounces, hid themselves in folds of net, visited mysterious recesses of complicated trimmings; some crept up gentlemen’s sleeves, others concealed themselves in a jungle of whiskers, and there was something very attractive in a bald head, the owner of which, in removing the insect was sure to blister his hand or skull or both”. At the end of the dance, the white floor cloth was black with the squashed remains of the insects!

However, the Dapodi house was too far from the center of administration. In the 1860s it was sold for a profit to build a grand house at Ganeshkhind. The old house, sadly, degenerated from a residence to a storehouse, then to a brewery and then to ruin by 1930 (one of its bungalows was extant till 1984; the estate was incorporated within the compound of the government Irrigation Department Workshops.)

The population in the Civil Lines rose during the Season, peopled as it was with European government officers and wealthy Indian businessmen. A number of Native Princes built seasonal residences in this area. The development of this section really took place after the mid-nineteenth century and belongs to the next phase of Pune history. Before that, much of the area was open farmland or wooded, except for a small portion in the Garpir area, where the European civilians lived. The Camp and Civil Lines together formed a new suburban type of development, “growing out of the old city like a green branch on a wizened trunk”.

## 5. The Colonial City

*“For almost a month people with nothing to do would go and stare at the train ... Some old ladies even greeted the train with a namaskar.”*

- N.V. Joshi. *Pune Shaharache Varnan*

Two major events that shaped the civic growth of Pune took place in the 1850s. In this decade, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway reached Pune, and the city acquired a municipality. A third event of all India importance, the Uprising of 1857, which raged in significant areas of the Deccan, had little or no effect on the city. Except for a couple of minor incidents and a general feeling of anticipation and excitement in the city, all was quiet.

There can be no two opinions on the impact of the railways on Pune. The completion of the line was, for civic Pune, the most important event of the nineteenth century. Begun

in 1853, the line reached Pune in 1858, with a gap at the Bhor Ghat. The *ghat* section was finally inaugurated in 1863 by the then Governor of Bombay, Sir Bartle Frere. The approach of the line led to the construction of a railway bridge across the Mutha, close to the Sangam. Skirting past Khadki Cantonment and thus linking it to the route, the line cut across the open fields of what is now Shivajinagar crossed the river over this new bridge and arrived at the outskirts of the Civil Lines. This was a convenient spot because there was enough open space to the east for the later extension of the line out of Pune. Yet it was close enough to the Cantonment in case it became necessary to move troops in a hurry.

### **GIP Railways**

The Railway Station, a kilometer northwest of the cantonment, was at first a small group of stone buildings with three platforms and the usual sheds and stores. Soon it became a focal point for a settlement of railway staff and some Europeans and Indians. A number of bungalows too came up nearby. This new colony extended the Civil Lines area towards the station.

The importance attached to the railways by the British Government is well known, and the wider imperialistic concerns were never forgotten. The line was meant to open up the Deccan to faster trade, provide for the more efficient extraction of revenues from the hinterland to the ports and get the troops out to a scene of disturbance much faster than before. It was also seen as a great ‘civilizer’ that would increase the moral influence of the rulers.

Be that as it may, this direct link cut down the journey time to Bombay to six hours, where earlier it took up to four days, travelling by carriage or palanquin, crossing the Indrayani and negotiating the difficult ghat passes. Goods could now be imported from Bombay and later from Ahmednagar and Satara much faster and in greater volumes. There was great excitement in the city when the train first arrived. A popular ditty shows what Puneites thought of it all:

“In Pune City the English have made a conspiracy,  
Along iron tracks they make the fire-engines run.”

According to an almost contemporary description: “For almost a month people with nothing to do would go and stare at the train. There was a lot of talk about rails and wheels and stations. Many took a ride up to Khadki and then kept describing their experience to all and sundry. Some old ladies even greeted the train with a *namaskar*.”

Together with the telegraph line between Pune and Bombay in 1854 and the Post Office set up the next year, the fifties saw the communications links with the port city completed. After 1858, the mail was brought to Pune by rail, but this new arrangement took some time to stabilize. There were complaints about delayed deliveries, which had to be synchronized with the train timings.

This great leap forward in communication had its effect on the economy of the city. The old crafts like silk and gold thread weaving had become moribund, but the railways

now facilitated some new trades and industries. The import of metal sheets from places like Australia and England to Pune by rail gave rise to the new craft of making brass and copper utensils. Interestingly, the new industry was based in Kasha, where dealers in metal ware had been historically located since Peshwa times. Even today the typical sound of hammer against copper and brass is still heard in old Tambat and Kasar Alis. The old weaving industry started to revive after 1860, through the import of machine-made yarn. This revival was the work of migrants who settled in different areas from traditional weaver settlements. There were also short-lived crafts, which rose due to special demands, like the wooden and clay toys highly appreciated by the British.

### **Municipal Administration**

The second important event of the decade was the setting up of the Poona Municipality. It started functioning the same year that the rail link to Bombay was finished. Though a number of other towns had already got their municipalities, Pune's case had been delayed by the Puneites themselves. Realizing the financial benefits of decentralization to itself, the Government of India wanted to encourage the handing over of municipal affairs to local communities. Citizens had to make a unanimous appeal to the respective Provincial governments for the formation of a municipality. The hapless task of persuading reluctant townsmen to set up institutions to tax themselves fell on the Collectors. In the next few years people of a variety of towns were persuaded to ask for municipalities. In Pune, in 1854, the Collector gathered eleven hundred and ninety-one "eminent" and "respectable" people to persuade them to appeal to the Bombay Government to permit the setting up of a municipality.

After the initial enthusiasm, the reaction came swiftly. Once property owners realized that the whole affair was nothing but a ploy to get them to agree to tax themselves, they sent a counter petition opposing the move. This lack of unanimity forced the Bombay Government to defer the whole issue. Puneites feared the imposition of a heavy house-tax and rather than having to pay that, they felt they could do without a municipality. It was not till three years later and after much patient persuasion by a new Collector that a fresh petition was sent and accepted. But again there was a delay due to the great Uprising of 1857 then raging across India. Finally, it was only in May 1858 that Pune got a municipality. People had withdrawn their objections to having a municipal body in the hope that money urgently required for road repairs and other public works would be met by the government, or through an indirect tax like an octroi on imports. This octroi went on to become the mainstay of municipal finance, though a house tax was also soon levied.

Up to 1862, the municipal body was made up of only officials and nominated members. The component of ex-officio members like the Magistrate and the judge and others was quite high. The Collector was the President. Out of the thirteen members, the government nominated seven from amongst the townspeople. The responsibilities of this small group were rather limited; they had to keep the city clean. For this they had the right to raise small amounts through fines and were allowed to fix their own rules regarding cleanliness. These meager powers have been derisively referred to as "broom autonomy"

From such small beginnings, the functions and powers of the municipal administration grew with every successive dose of change towards decentralization enacted by the government. The fiscal powers were increased in 1861; the Municipality became a corporate body in the 1870s; and the act also allowed election of members. This, however, was denied even though Puneites wanted to hold elections in 1876. Finally, following an all-India law on local self-government, Pune was able to get a more representative body. The first election was held in March 1883 and half of the twenty-four members were elected. Another big step towards self-government was that the chairman would now no longer be the Collector, but a person elected by the members from among themselves. The first elected chairman was a nominated member, Sirdar Dorabji Pudumjee. It was only in 1918 that the first President from amongst the elected members, Sir N. C. Kelkar, took office.

Though Ripon's 1882 Resolution is generally felt to have been implemented in a hall-hearted manner in Bombay Presidency, elected members did acquire much more power than before over both expenditure as well as the raising of new taxes. From now on Pune like other towns would have to raise much of the revenue for its own administration. Funds from the government would now virtually stop. Maintenance of a police force, of health, sanitation, public works and education were to be looked after by the Municipality itself.

The first election held in March 1883 created great curiosity among the general public. Two constituencies were created. The 'General Ward' for educated professional and respectable people and an 'Election Ward' for the rest of the rate payers. Some women who had the right to vote also had a special privilege, the vote by proxy, in case they found it difficult to leave their household duties on Election Day. Many eminent members of the Municipality, both nominated and elected, went on to become national leaders - Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Lokmanya Tilak, Hari Narayan Apte, Annasaheb Patwardhan and others set high traditions of democracy in municipal administration.

There was from the beginning of the election system, a dichotomy in municipal affairs. On the one hand, in spite of the policy of decentralization, the Provincial Government was always reluctant to loosen its hold over the affairs of the city. Within the municipal administration it tried to exercise this control through the officials over the executive body and the nominated members, against the elected councilors. Up to 1921, the former remained a majority, so conflict was minimized. The 1890s saw the outbreak of plague in the city, which the government wanted to tackle on an urgent basis. The officials wanted to gain full control of the city administration. They feared that the elected members would not cooperate with the coercive methods they wanted to use to control the epidemic. An old rule was revived to supersede the authority of the Municipality and appoint officials to deal with the situation. Soldiers were called in from the cantonment, and an officer, Rand, was put in charge of anti-plague measures.

After another dose of constitutional change (Government of India Act 1919), local self-government was transferred to elected ministers in the provinces and Pune's municipal administration was fully restored to its elected representatives. The number of the latter increased, as did their control over daily matters. As most of them were nationalists, conflict between them and the official executives like the Collector became a

regular affair. Many a memorable conflict took place over such issues as the erection of a statue to Lokmanya Tilak, raising the national flag on the municipal building, ban on liquor and boycott of foreign goods, issues very much on the agenda of the nationalists. It was only after 1937, when a Congress government came to power in Bombay with the advent of Provincial Autonomy, that the conflicts abated. After Independence, all constraints on self-government were removed. The Suburban Municipality set up in the 1880s (and described later) and Poona City Municipality were merged, and the Poona Municipal Corporation was formed in 1950. The two Cantonments continue to be under their own separate Boards till date.

### **Civil Lines to Suburban Municipality**

The period after 1860 is full of interest for the history of Indian cities. Not only was it important for the growth of municipal government in a colonial context, but also the growth of modern planning, colonial architecture, development of urban services and infrastructure such as sanitation, drinking water, health and education. Bombay in particular saw the growth of its infrastructure needs as well as the great neo-Gothic buildings for which the city is famous. Projects for water works and the improvement of sanitation changed that city greatly. These changes were almost contemporary with an economic boom associated with the American Civil War and cotton exports to English mills from Bombay. Some of this prosperity spilled over to the second capital of the Presidency, Pune.

The arrival of the whole Bombay Government, with its complement of staff at the beginning of the monsoons, necessitated suitable buildings to house them. These new buildings soon changed the morphology of the city. They added to the urban texture and extended the areas around the small Civil Lines described earlier. The most significant physical developments in Pune in the nineteenth century were in this area, filling up the space between the city and the Cantonment, spreading up to the river and taking in the railway station.

A number of impressive public buildings as well as churches, hotels and clubs made their appearance here. Pune has a heritage of Victorian Gothic buildings. These came up not only in the Civil Lines area, but also scattered in other parts of the city. They include the two significant structures in red brick, the Council Hall and the Synagogue. The rest are built of the grey trap rock so commonly found in the Deccan. This stone gives them a heavy, brooding presence in tune with the countryside and the flat-topped rocky hills. The Deccan College, Records Office, Engineering College, Fergusson College, Reay Market, the GPO, some hotels and churches are fine surviving examples of this architecture.

On the rising ground on the left bank towards Khadki stands the neo-Gothic Deccan College, built in 1868. Its sloping roofs with iron crestings and finials and the grey trap stone walls blend well with the surrounding rocky terrain. As was usual at the time, it was designed by a military engineer, General St. Clair Wilkins, who had also designed a number of other buildings in Pune and Bombay. Its double-storeyed arched facade is broken by picturesquely spaced stairway lowers. It has a unique vaulted carriage porch, which once carried a 108-foot tower. This tower was destroyed by lightning some decades ago. Even so, the building is one of the most impressive nineteenth century

structures in Pune. It was an eminently suitable home for the historic college which began life as the Poona Sanskrit College in the 1820s, the earliest educational institution to be set up by the British in Pune. It was erected through the generosity of Sir Jamshetji Jeejeebhoy who again gave timely help. The college attracted students from all over the city and beyond and was the alma mater of distinguished scholars like B.C. Tilak and G. G. Agarkar.

### **Council Hall**

To get back to the Civil Lines, an Italianate Council Hall was completed in 1870 with a square campanile tower and set in a large garden. It stands at an impressive vantage point on an important crossroad. (Its incongruous oval extension is a much later addition). It was meant for the meetings of the Governor-in-Council, when the government was in Pune for the season.

### **Records Office**

Virtually opposite the red brick Council Hall and in direct contrast to it, is the grey stone Records Office, popularly known as the Peshwe Daftar as many records of the Peshwa government are stored there. Later, other archival material was housed in it; it is now the official archives at Pune. An elegant cut-stone building completed in 1891, it has a central courtyard. The structure is specially constructed to reduce the risk of fire. Wood was used minimally in its construction, and an elaborate arrangement of water hoses connected to a central tank was set up. This tank is ingeniously camouflaged inside an ornamental gallery around a stone canopy, which stands atop a high tower. The facade is a highly ornamental one and the curving lines give the structure a restless Baroque look.

### **Poona Gymkhana**

On the same road was also the Poona (Gymkhana (now the Poona Club). It was the hub of social activity for the Europeans and mainly used for a variety of sports like badminton, croquet, lawn-tennis and pigeon shooting. Begun in 1879, the Gymkhana soon acquired an impressive clubhouse set amidst extensive verdant grounds. (The present building is a new one.)

### **Synagogue**

In 1867, Sir David Sassoon, a Baghdadi Jew and a prominent Bombay merchant, was instrumental in the construction of a beautiful synagogue on the road leading from the Arsenal (Moledina Road now). This too was designed by General St. Clair Wilkins. The church-like structure known as the Lal Dewal (literally Red Temple) because of the red brick with which it is built is a conspicuous landmark in Pune. The red brick is contrasted with the grey stone of the window mullions, columns and arches, and produces a dramatic effect. The Synagogue has a high clock tower, which is visible for miles around. But its most unique feature is the apse at the west end made up of curved and angular projections.

## **GPO**

The General Post office was built close to the station, replacing the original simple structure in 1873-74. The present building was probably reconstructed from the original in the early decades of the twentieth century.

## **St. Paul's Church**

Opposite the post-office where the old bungalow of the Deccan Commissioner had stood before it was gulled in a fire, an elaborate Gothic-revival church was built in 1866. Its original design was supposed to have been based on the famous Sainte Chapelle in Paris. The heavy chamfered buttresses throw dramatic shadows on the walls in the afternoons. This Anglican Church was often used by the Governor and the high-ranking officials during the season.

## **Hotels**

To cater to the seasonal influx, a number of good hotels were constructed in the vicinity of the station. The Poona Hotel, Royal Family Hotel, Napier Hotel and others came up in the 1860s. Another magnificent private structure was Connaught House, with its arched verandahs and ornamental facade (now demolished).

## **Engineering College**

Amongst the other Victorian buildings is the Engineering College, built in 1865, on the road from the Sangam, close to the Judges Bungalow (Old Residency). One of the earliest technical schools in India, the building has a picturesque effect with its tower, its battlemented parapets, pinnacles and *chhatris*. It combines Indian details with Gothic elements, and is an early attempt at the Indo-Saracenic style, which became so popular later in Bombay and other places. A rather late example of this style is the New Poona College (Sir Parshuram Bhau College) on Tilak Road, built in 1926.

The neo-Gothic style continued to be popular, and an Indian architect, Rao Bahadur Vasudeo Bapuji Kanitkar, was associated with a number of such buildings, like the Reay Market or Mandai (1885) and the Fergusson College (1895). He also experimented with the Indo-Saracenic style at the library known as the Nagar Vachan Mandir.

## **Reay Market - Mandai**

The central market, named after Governor Reay (now Jyotiba Phule Market, and referred to as Mandai) consists of a large octagonal central tower with Gothic features and arms radiating from it. This had become a common plan for nineteenth century markets all over India. The arms housed the vendor's stalls, while the tower was used as municipal offices.

## **Fergusson College**

The college is a starkly picturesque neo-Gothic structure with arched verandahs and a steeply pitched roof. Its grey stone walls and high roof made it a landmark on the left bank. Designed by Vasudeo Bapuji Kanitkar in 1895, it was an important addition to the clutch of Victorian buildings of the time in Pune.

### **Churches**

Pune's churches are not distinguished for their size or grandeur, but they make up for this by being rather pretty. St. Patrick's, built in 1871, with its crenellated gable and pinnacles, commands a wide view over the race course. There is Christ Church at Khadki in a heavy Gothic style, St. Andrew's at Wanawadi, all with a marked resemblance to English parish churches in plan.

### **Bund**

The river had been dammed in 1850 to form a system of water works meant to bring a regular supply of clean water to the arid cantonment. It was made possible by the munificent merchant prince of Bombay, Sir Jamsheji Jeejeebhoy Bart. The bund was therefore named after him. Close to the dam, a scenic garden was laid out in 1869, which became an attraction for the public, especially when the Military band regaled the audience. The dammed river gave a great opportunity for boating and a boat club was set up on the bank (Royal Connaught Boat Club). The handsome Fitzgerald Bridge was built across the Mula-Mutha just below the dam in 1867, linking the Civil Lines to the left bank and Yerawada and ultimately to the vital Ahmednagar road.

### **Mansions and palaces**

The ordered growth of the Civil Lines and the moderate climate of Pune even tempted one of the Governors, Sir George Clerk (1860-62), to toy with the idea of permanently shilling the Provincial Government to the city to escape the congestion of Bombay." Though this plan did not materialize the very fact of the seasonal shift to Pune and the inevitable influx of temporary residents led to the building of many private houses, mansions and palaces of the princely states. Most Europeans, when they came in for the season, hired bungalows owned by Indians, or stayed in the hotels, which enjoyed a thriving business at this time.

The princes as well as the smaller feudal landlords acquired land and built large and elaborate mansions and bungalows. Just as they had built their *wadas* in the city during Peshwa rule to be near the court, now they built their colonial homes to be near the government in the Civil Lines, to be seen at the social events, the balls, banquets and the races. So the Gaikwads, Rampur, Khairpur (in Sindh, now in Pakistan) and the Aga Khan built mansions in the most developing part of the town. The Aga Khan Palace was built as an act of charity to provide employment to famine afflicted people. This building is a splendid example of the kind of eclectic style of architecture used by the rich and famous at the time.

The millionaire Bombay *shetias*, Parsi, Muslim and Hindu, also helped to develop this part of the city. The Jeejeebhoy, Jamshejee and Byramjee, had extensive properties near

the Post Office. One spectacular mansion (now with the Sadhu Vaswani Mission) still dominates the surrounding precinct. The Sassoons also had large properties, one of which, Ashley House (opposite Wadia College), is a big bungalow with stucco work ceilings standing in a huge compound. Their other property on the road to Bombay was a mansion called Garden Reach. A picturesque and opulent Gothic mansion, it reflects the wealthy life-styles of the merchant princes of the time. (This house was later sold and is at present with the Cowasji Jehangir Readymoney family). The Karrimbhoys owned an elaborate colonial mansion on the Bund Garden road, now in ruins (Mobo's Hotel). There were many other such houses more or less elaborate or ornamental. They were an eclectic mixture of European and Indian architectural elements, quite different from traditional *wadas*. In plan they were like the bungalows and most of them did not have internal courtyards. Many European features were put together without much regard for authenticity. The idea was to make the house look grand, larger than life, so as to establish the status of the owner. Interiors were furnished lavishly with ornamental stucco-work, wood paneling, carved wood work, imported chandeliers and European furniture.

### **Koregaon Park**

To the east of the Civil Lines lay an unkempt area, remembered even today as a jungle and a hideout for anti-social elements who preyed upon the railway cargo. At first a few mansions had been built at the edge of this wasteland, but in the 1920s to 1940s, the area was systematically developed and came to be known as Koregaon Park. The land was cleared and plots sold. Many of the Indian princes built their mansions here. Later government officials also acquired plots. With its tree-lined roads, large plots and opulent residences, Koregaon Park grew into an exclusive colony. Bungalows also appeared along the river bank (Boat Club Road) and strung out along the roads leading to the Bund Garden and to Koregaon Park. Spacious plots and serene tree-lined roads made this a desirable address for a wealthy and cosmopolitan elite.

### **Anglo-Indian Poona**

It was now that Pune acquired an image which linked it with the legends and stories of European social life and the British Raj. Europeans generally ignored the old part of the city, and in all descriptions of their social life, it is as if it hardly existed, except as an exotic teeming backdrop to their presence in Pune. Both the city and the European settlement preferred to ignore each other in their daily life. For the Europeans, life apparently revolved around their social round and cultural activities, and the problems of the city hardly impinged on these. "Long the seat of Hindu orthodoxy [Poona] became in an extraordinarily short time the Poona of Anglo-Indian saga."

### **Pune as Capital of India.**

So popular had Pune become as a pleasant station with the colonial community, that it was briefly considered as a permanent capital for the Government. This was in the 1860s in the aftermath of the Uprising of 1857, when the need to replace Calcutta with a more centrally located capital was felt. The Viceroy, Sir John Lawrence wanted to get away

from the heat of the north Indian plains, and a number of cities were suggested instead of Calcutta. Lawrence briefly favored Pune because of its balmy climate and close communication link with Bombay and thence England. But Pune was not really central enough, and the idea was rejected. Ultimately Lawrence was only allowed to move to the hills temporarily in summer, and Simla became the seasonal capital of India. One can only conjecture on the effect on Pune and its surrounding areas, had the city actually been chosen as India's capital.

### **Sir Bartle Frere**

Much credit for the building projects and the ultimate transformation of the small Civil Lines goes to Sir Bartle Frere, the Governor of Bombay from 1862 to 1867. It was during his time that many of the neo-Gothic buildings had been projected and a plan for a Suburban Municipality mooted. Riding on the crest of a wave of commercial prosperity in the wake of the American Civil War, Bartle Frere presided over the new development plans, which were to remake Bombay into a "modern" city. The temporary monsoon capital of Pune also benefited. However, all the projects started by him could not be completed during his tenure, because the boom ended as suddenly as it began; the economy collapsed with the end of the Civil War and the flow of capital dried up.

### **Government House**

One major building begun by Frere, but not completed till after his departure, was the new Government House. The collection of old bungalows on the estate purchased from Major Ford at Dapodi in 1829 was difficult to maintain and too far from the town. A new residence was now planned at Ganeshkhind, three miles northwest of Pune city, close to what had been the western edge of the battlefield of Khadki. It was the only full-scale gubernatorial residence in the Presidency, the Bombay house being only a collection of bungalows. It stands majestically in the midst of 512 acres of parkland at the end of a long drive. The garden, terraced and ornamented with a fountain and verdant lawns, was laid out like the parks of the aristocratic mansions of nineteenth century England. Standing within this man-made landscape, with the backdrop of the Sahyadri Ranges, the horizontal lines of the grey stone building blend well with the surrounding scenery.

Its tall tower, crowned by an iron cupola, bore not only the flagpole, but also artfully concealed a water tank. The tower is an outstanding landmark even today. A sprawling structure with not one but two porches, it is a mixture of styles with round arches Gothic details and a covered space for an indoor garden. The frieze along the facade is made up of the coat of arms of all the previous governors of Bombay. The grand Durbar Hall, with its beautiful chandeliers, a formal banquet hall with an exquisitely ornamental ceiling and paneled walls bearing portraits of the governors and the anterooms make up one side of the house. The banquet hall was connected to the kitchen some distance away by a long underground tunnel. Liveried servants scurried with the food trolleys along it, warming the dishes on the *chains* and ovens half way down the long passage in case the food got cold on the way. The private quarters were in the north wing. It had a large entrance hall, a wooden staircase, a library and sitting and bedroom; marble mantel shelves and wooden floors completed the picture of comfort and luxury. However, in spite of its size and the

huge amount spent on it much to the disapproval of the Central government, there was apparently not much space to accommodate the full staff of the Governor-in-residence. (Unfortunately Frere never got to live in the house as it was still incomplete when he left India). The house was designed by an architect (and not an army engineer) J. Trubshawe, well-known for his works in Bombay. It was much admired by Frere's successors, even though it had its drawbacks. Other structures were added to the grounds, including a turreted and battlemented guard-house with an enormous clock, staff bungalows, kitchen, stables, coach houses and barracks for the ceremonial band and the bodyguard.

Some bungalows had already been built on the Ganeshkhind road, even before the Government House, but now this area became further developed. Its open spaces however remained verdant and shady till recently and the road leading to the Governor's residence was an avenue lined with magnificent trees. (Recently many were cut down to widen the road, now a busy artery with heavy traffic.)

### **The Old City 1860-1920**

By the 1880s, the growth outside the city had been so phenomenal that a new urban administration had to be created. This was called the Suburban Municipality. The economic boom of the 1860s that fueled development in the Suburban Municipality area did not have a corresponding effect on the city. There was little urban renewal in the crowded core, and only one new peth was added at the extreme west, known as the Navi Peth. It was meant for the storage of fodder, firewood, timber and other such commodities and was peopled with peasants, leather workers and Mhangs. The *peth* never became sustainable and is often spoken of as merely an adjunct of Sadashiv Peth.

The formation of the Municipality too does not seem to have had an immediate effect on the condition of the city. There are graphic descriptions of this in contemporary literature. The narrow lanes were muddy and dirty, and though the broader streets were paved with stone, it was difficult for wheeled carriages to pass through them. Bulls roamed the streets and played havoc with the roadside shops. Frequently these animals attacked each other, and people had to clear the streets till they stopped.

The bazaars however were full of signs of activity, especially those in Raviwar and Budhwar, the commercial *peths*. The population figures began to show an upward trend by the 1860s, but the old residential areas still bore signs of depression and even ruin. The *wadas* in Mangalwar were in a ruinous state; the *peth* declined quickly; by 1884, this was a blighted sector. Somwar too had many ruined houses. Many *sardars* and *sahukars* had sold their *wadas* in other *peths* too and many were demolished. The *wadas* were also getting sub-divided. "When in a town houses decay and ruinous spaces appear, or houses keep changing hands, then the days of prosperity are ending, just as the day wanes when the sun crosses the noon sky." opined the *Dnyanprakash* in 1855.

For both rich and poor, the popular entertainment was the *tamasha*. Street corners and open spaces in crowded areas were cordoned off, and these popular song-and-dance performances were held through the night. But they were increasingly frowned upon by the growing western-educated middle-class. The 'immoral' or 'vulgar' connotations that became attached to this form of theatre led to a demand for banning it. "... it made people unbalanced. Because of it young men were led astray.... every night they would thus

spend (immorally) and return home unwell. Their studies suffered. There are many lovers of *tamasha* in Pune who would not let a night pass without watching one". The ban did take place, and presumably the *tamasha* retreated to more secluded places and to rural audiences. At the temple of Tulshibag, crowds thronged all day. It was a gathering of all types of people - householders who came for their daily worship, mendicants and holy men of all kinds who came to sing *bhajans*. There were story-tellers and balladeers showing off their skills; and at the festival of Ramnavami there was a big celebration.

Notwithstanding this impression of vibrant urban activities, however, the city urgently needed relief from its most pressing problems. The narrow roads had been encroached upon. Sanitation had been neglected for years and the need for more drinking water had to be met soon. All this would require massive expenditure on public works, but the fledgling Municipality hardly had any funds. Though it was allowed to spend the taxes it collected on health, education and local public works, in the early 1860s, its dependence on the Provincial Government was unavoidable. The time had come for a serious attempt to come to grips with municipal problems.

### **The Age of Surveys**

The contemporary Victorian age in England saw a great push towards the reform of the urban environment. The problems faced by people in London and the new industrial towns are described in the literature of the period. A number of detailed scientific surveys on various aspects of urban life were made. These brought home to the ruling classes the full horrors of the urban situation in industrializing England. The statistical surveys combined with growing scientific and medical knowledge resulted in the recognition of the connection between filth and the spread of disease. It was realized that the raging epidemics of cholera and such diseases could be controlled by creating a better, cleaner environment. 'Sanitation' and "health" became the watchwords for both the control of disease as well as of lower class disaffection - a panacea for all urban ills. The most famous of the reports was the one made by Edwin Chadwick in the 1840s. His work together with those of others like Charles Kingsley, led to a series of Public Health Acts which transformed the Victorian cities in England.

In many cities in India too, epidemics regularly swept away large numbers of people. However, epidemics did not respect geographical or racial differentiations and spread through both 'black' and 'white' towns. It was realized that the conditions in the native areas and the slums had to be improved if only to safe-guard the secluded European town, which in this respect was not so secluded after all. The upshot of these concerns was a valuable series of surveys, mortality statistics, maps and plans of various kinds, undertaken by dedicated British officials. It was in the 1860s that the great concern with filth and sanitation caught up with Bombay. A British official, Dr. Andrew H. Leith, Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals, studied the mortality rates and the sanitary conditions of Bombay. His work ultimately led to the appointment of Sanitary Commissioners both at the Center and the Provinces.

### **Leith's Reports**

In 1863, Sir Bartle Frere put Leith in charge of an inquiry into the sanitary conditions of Pune city and cantonment. Leith's report was buttressed by a second independent survey by one Major Martin, an officer of the Fourth (King's Own) Regiment of foot. Both reports were mainly concerned with the sanitary conditions of the city and all other considerations were subordinated to this objective. Leith found the older *peths* of Kasba, Somwar and Shaniwar to be run-down and many houses ruined or derelict. In many, once spacious courtyards were overrun with huts and hovels and the *wadas* sub-divided.

The congestion evident everywhere was the greatest in the seven oldest *peths*. The natural drainage had become inadequate and the three main streams were now referred to as '*nallahs*'. The Ambil Odha, Nagzhari and Manik Nala had become stagnant and polluted, as night soil and sewage was regularly deposited in them. The old underground drains were choked as also the open rain water ditches on the roadsides. Only in the monsoons did the whole system get flushed out. The Manik Nala was not only filthy with sewage but red with blood from the discharge of a tannery on its bank.

The river, the main source of water for drinking, bathing and washing for all the wards along its banks, was hardly better. It was the depository of night soil, filth, sewage, ash and other remains of the cremation grounds, and emitted a foul smell, even the water collected above the Jamshetjee Bund and meant to supply the Cantonment remained stagnant and polluted. Inadequate numbers of privies and inefficient removal of night soil exacerbated the pollution of the waterways. Privies of houses opened on to the back alleys and side lanes. They were seldom cleaned and their contents spilled on to the lanes, forming cesspools near the entrances, posing a serious health hazard.

Leith's major concern was with thoroughfares. He drew attention to the narrow roads which "blocked the free How of air". There were no through east-west routes and the journey in that direction was very tortuous. The main north-south streets, though wide in parts, were crooked, which made it difficult for wheeled traffic to pass through as well as for the free flow of air. He advocated the need for straightening and widening of the lanes and roads. This was very much in keeping with general nineteenth century principles of town planning. Making roads cutting through congested areas was seen as a means not only to improve traffic congestion but to remove slums and densely settled areas. It would also open up air passages and make the city cleaner and healthier. Sanitation and road making had become inextricably linked, and the two had become watchwords in town planning for the colonial government.

Leith therefore proposed drastic ways of ventilating the dense parts of the city. An east-west road was to be cut from Rasta Peth in the east, right through to the Omkareshwar temple in the west. Another should be similarly cut further south. That these areas were packed with *wadas* and houses did occur to him of course, but he brushed aside the problem. The major obsession was with ventilation and the contemporary ideas of hygiene built around the theory that disease is caused by 'miasma' or 'vapors' or 'smells'; a considerable part of his report is taken up by how to destroy the high and ubiquitous prickly pear hedges which blocked the free flow of air and trapped the miasma. But his most drastic measure to improve ventilation is suggested in the last paragraph of his report. With scant regard for history or historical sentiments, Leith recommended that the remaining walls of Shaniwar Wada be demolished and the space be turned into a garden to improve the ventilation of the city. It is indeed fortunate for us

that the whole of Leith's report was never implemented. Leith and Martin were also unsparing in their criticism of the unhygienic conditions in the Sadar Bazaar, Civil Lines and Railway areas. They wanted all the polluting trades like brick and tile kilns and the tanneries to be banned within Pune as a whole and the existing ones shifted out. Proper provisions should be made for their refuse (ash, offal, blood, bones etc.) to be disposed hygienically. More public privies should be provided; Leith even suggested a workable design. There were no slaughter houses in the city and animals were killed on the roadside, therefore the Municipality should make provisions for hygienic abattoirs. He wanted the police to punish those who broke sanitary laws; the Magistrate to enforce sanitary measures; the revenue department to fix the boundaries properly; the judicial authority to improve the conservancy of the jail, the military authorities to comply with his list of suggestions to improve the bazaar, and railway authorities to prevent undesirable people from living near the station. One important suggestion was that proper mortuary records be maintained, so that a watch could be kept on the health of the people to help the control of disease. All deaths, burials, cremations and causes of death needed to be recorded for this.

The Bombay Government was quick to accept Leith's report in its entirety in 1863 itself, and records show that it instructed the authorities concerned to implement his suggestions quickly. They were even willing to sanction whatever funds were needed because "the size and importance of Poona and its close connection with the largest military station in western India render the condition of the city a matter of more than local or municipal importance and the Governor-in-Council will give all the aid which can be reasonably looked for from the government towards its improvement"

### **Urban Reform and Survey map**

It now remains to be seen what effect the exertions of Leith actually had on the city as a whole. His survey in Bombay had set in motion the wheels of municipal improvement and had led to the Municipal Act of 1865. Leith's report on Pune prompted the chief secretary to call for a detailed plan of the city. A Major Francis was put in charge of conducting a survey and the making of a map on a scale which would be practical for the changes to be planned. It is not clear what happened to Major Francis, but two maps of the 1870s now exist. One was made in 1869-1872 on a scale of 200 feet to an inch and was made by a Mr. R. R. Light; a much more detailed one on a scale of 50 feet to an inch, and known as the Survey Map was made around 1876-78. This last is a series of sectional maps so detailed as to show almost every house, lane, garden and courtyard in the old city. The entire map is a masterpiece of meticulous drafting. Of enormous value to the urban historian of Pune, this was a major result of Leith's report. The map shows that though street fronts were continuously built up, there was surprisingly much open space in gardens, orchards, unbuilt lots and above all the internal courtyards and *angans*. Sadashiv Peth, in spite of its importance, shows up as a small settlement, Vishrambag Wada being almost the outer limit. The rest was open agricultural land.

Another result of Leith's report was the appointment of a European officer to act as 'sanitary reporter' and oversee sanitary arrangements. Usually the Civil Surgeon held additional charge of this job, and it added to his importance. One of his duties was to submit annually a report on the steps taken so far. This was attached as an appendix to the

annual administrative reports of the Municipality. It was only after Leith's suggestion that mortality statistics of each ward were added to the annual reports. This was a great step forward in the better assessment of the health needs of the city.

Brick kilns and tanneries were gradually moved out of city limits and rules made for the abattoirs. But the major concern of the report had been sanitation, drainage and sewage disposal. Here the progress was slow. It was not till 1878 that a proper conservancy service was created. Though an effort was made to clean the clogged underground drains (which had been made in the eighteenth century) and flush out the gutters, a new sewage system would not materialize for years, mainly due to financial constraints.

### **A Vexed ISSUE**

The history of the sewage system in Pune is full of ups and downs. Since the 1880s, various schemes were prepared for a modern system of underground disposal of sewage to a place at least six miles outside the city. Three plans prepared by engineers were discarded as too expensive. Three decades went by since the first plan was mooted, and it was only after the First World War that a system was finally approved and begun. Sewage was to be carried by pipes to Hadapsar for treatment and disposal. But the system remained inadequate and is still a problem. The first flushing latrines also made their appearance around this time, though the basket or iron pan-type remained the major form till well after the Second World War.

### **Water Concerns**

Another major concern was the provision of potable water for the city and the Cantonment. Though the old Peshwa aqueducts still functioned quite efficiently, they were hopelessly inadequate *for* the growing city. The wells and tanks which had earlier made up any shortfalls were now contaminated *or* dried up. The dammed up part of the river, so useful for the supply of good water to the Cantonment, was now contaminated and stagnant. Frere's government became instrumental in sanctioning a giant reservoir which would be created by damming the Mulha ten miles southwest of the Camp. Known as Lake Fife (now Khadakvasla Lake), after the army engineer who planned and worked on it, this lake is eleven miles long and the source of two canals, the Mulha Right and Left Bank canals, which carry water to Pune and Khadki Cantonments, to the ammunition factory and to the agricultural land around Pune. This water-work, an immense project for the time, changed the hydrology of the entire district.

### **Famine of 1876**

When the great famine of 1876-79 struck the countryside, the water-works and building activity in Pune proved useful, as many drought hit people from the rural areas flocked to the city. Ten thousand people were employed in the waterworks project, everyday for fourteen months. The government imported grains from the Central Provinces and Gujarat in an effort to hold down the spiraling prices. The expectation of starving migrants flooding the city led to the setting up of relief camps at Khadki and

Dhankawadi. Many were employed in the buildings and other public works then in progress in Pune.

By the end of the century, the water problems were somewhat eased, but it must have been an unwelcome experience for Punes to have to pay the water-tax imposed in the late 1860s - under the Peshwa government, water had been free from tax in Pune. The supply of piped water through taps in individual houses began around the second decade of the twentieth century, and the people began to depend less on the aqueduct system, which naturally suffered from neglect. Instead of incorporating this excellent system into the new arrangements, it was left to decay, and a good source of precious water was lost.

### **Street Lighting**

The lighting of the streets had always left much to be desired; the dark streets had naturally restricted people's movements after sunset. An early system of street lamps placed at long distances from each other was inadequate. Set in glass cases, these coconut oil and wick lamps shed only a dim glow. After the 1880s, these were gradually replaced by kerosene oil lamps. It was in the 1920s that the first electric lights were seen on Pune's streets, put up by the Killick Nixon Company. With the improvement of street lighting, there was obviously much more activity on the streets well into the night. The age of the kerosene lamp is still remembered by a few today. They were not very efficient and cast an eerie glow and were difficult to maintain. But when they first appeared, they were a novelty and knots of people gathered around them every evening to watch them being lit.

### **Modes of Transport**

The wards being contiguous, the city was essentially meant for pedestrians, but horse and carriage soon became ubiquitous. The most popular form of transport was the public *tonga*, drawn by one horse the ordinary ones charged 'second class' fares, whereas the more spruced-up versions were of 'first class' standard. Both types were to be found in all parts of the city. There were also the larger Victorias and buggies. Many of these were private, owned by the well-off. Some were well-known for their smart appearance and excellent horses. The best private equipages were apparently owned by some of the *sardar* families, the Mujumdars, the Purandares and the Rastes. There were also *palkis* or palanquins, which were cheaper to hire than *tongas*, and the *dhamanis*, cumbersome bullock-drawn carts that carried the girls of Huzur Paga to school in curtained carriages.

In the twenties and thirties, the bicycle became the most popular form of transport, especially for workers, office-goers and students travelling long distances to work or to study. Drove of workers with their tiffin boxes hanging from the handles and cycling to the ammunition factory or to the government offices in the Suburban Municipality or the Cantonment became a common sight.

The first car was seen on the streets of the Cantonment around 1905 it was a 12 H.P. Orleans belonging to one Mr. Lamb. Cars were quite unpopular as they frightened the horses and frequently broke down, having to be towed away by bullock carts. Pessimistic owners ordered relays of carts to wait along the route of the evening drive!

## **New Roads**

Leith's survey spurred the making of three carriage-ways, but all were north-south - one along Ganj-Ganesh-Mangalwar Peths; another along Shukrawar-Budhwar (now a section of Shivaji Road), and the third along Vetal, Raviwar and Kasha Peths. In spite of this, the overall road improvement work proceeded slowly; funds were always a problem. Inadequate drainage made the new *murum* roads slushy. The Councilors were often criticized by the newspapers for the condition of the roads and the drainage. The great need for an east-west route would not be met for many years yet.

## **Mandai Market**

In 1886, the main market or Mandai was shifted from the open space north of Shaniwar Wada further to the south on the same axis, to Shukrawar Peth. For years the market had been held in the large open space between the Peshwa's palace and the river bank, sprawling all over it and around the Batata Maruti temple, which got its name from the potato stalls surrounding it. The idea of moving the market to a permanent building had been mooted for a long time. Finally the Municipality was able to acquire a properly close to the Tulshibagh temple complex. The neo-Gothic structure named after the then Governor, Lord Reay (now Mahatma Phule Market or Mandai), was built there. A major commercial activity had thus been shifted more to the center of town, and to the south of Shaniwar Wada. It proved a lucrative investment for the municipal authorities because of the high rents they could now charge the shopkeepers. It was natural that the move should arouse vehement opposition. The *Kesari* took up the cause of the shopkeepers in its characteristic outspoken way. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule too was severely critical on the grounds that the new building would be too expensive and that the money could be spent better elsewhere. The stall owners were forced to move and the opposition of the women vendors was broken up by force. An interesting structure, the market has an octagonal tower at the center with covered areas or passages for stalls, projecting outward from it like rays. The lower is juxtaposed against the *shikhara* of the Tulshibagh Temple to its side and forms a curious contrast, signifying two historical periods. The Municipal office was soon shifted into the tower and remained there for years.

## **Stagnation**

In 1896, the dreaded bubonic plague made its appearance in the city and continued to wreak its havoc for the next fourteen years, with an annual epidemic. Hundreds died, especially in the more congested older *peths*, and the most severe strain was put on the inadequate infrastructure and resources of the Municipality. The authorities feared that the disease, unless checked at once through drastic measures, would reach the European settlement and the barracks in no time. They took up an obscure emergency clause in the municipal rules to supersede the power of the Councilors and take over the administration. The plague dominated not only civic life but all government energies for fifteen years. All development projects virtually came to a halt as soldiers were called out from the barracks and put in charge of implementing the sanitary measures. The officer put in charge of plague measures, Mr. Rand, and his soldiers displayed a marked insensitivity to popular feelings; the excesses committed by the soldiers and the

ruthlessness with which the measures were taken up violated privacy and led to popular anger in a time of grave civic crisis. There was the inevitable political fall-out, which led to the first militant act, the assassination of Mr. Rand and Lt. Ayerst by the Chaphekar brothers on Ganeshkhind Road, while the two were returning from festivities at the Governor's residence. The incident is a well-documented part of the story of revolutionary nationalism and need not be recounted here. In one of those ironical twists of history, the memorials to Rand and Ayerst now almost forgotten and rather insignificant, stand almost next to the prominent memorials to the Chaphekar brothers, known and visited by many. The fury of the epidemics abated by 1911 soon after the discovery of the plague vaccine. Preventive vaccinations on a massive scale helped to control the disease, but by then fifty-three thousand people were dead.

Thoughts of development remained in the background for some more years as funds became scarce with the outbreak of the First World War (1914-18). But the plague had brought the realization of how congested and unhygienic the city had become. The left bank of the Mutha now beckoned as a healthier area for settlement and the next major development is to be looked for there.

### **The Western Suburb 1920-1945**

From the way that the city had grown throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, it became evident that further development could only take place across the river, unless it was to extend inconveniently to the south in a linear way. The barrier of the river had remained a hindrance for too long. The main thrust of development after the First World War was therefore to be in the villages and open spaces across the river at Bhamburda, Erandawane and towards Ganeshkhind. The left bank of the Mutha had only a few European garden houses near Bhamburda village. In the rest of the area there was a cattle fair held twice a week and large stores of fodder and fuel stored in huge stacks in open fields. The unbuilt spaces were an attraction for educational institutions, which required large grounds, unavailable in the city. One of the earliest such bodies was Fergusson College, run by Deccan Education Society. Its neo-Gothic building was inaugurated in 1895 by the Governor Lord Sandhurst. The college is inextricably linked with the memories of national leaders like Lokmanya Tilak and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and to acts and events of the freedom struggle. It soon became a center for the spread of modern education and intellectual debate.

In 1896, at Hingne, much to the south of Fergusson College (and a few miles to the west of the city) Maharshi D. K. Karve's girls' school and widow's home was set up, and in 1916, the Indian Women's University was added to it. This complex, though rather far out of town, was to become a focal point of women's education over the years.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale, reformer and national leader, built his bungalow not far from Fergusson College, and set up his Servants of India Society in 1905 (which became the Gokhale Institute of Economics in 1930). Other educational and research institutions followed in quick succession. The Ranade Research Institute at Erandawane and the College of Agriculture were both set up around 1908. The Bhandarkar Research Institute was housed in a grey cut-stone Indo-Saracenic building. With the already well-established Engineering College near the Sangam the left bank developed into an 'education sector'.

The movement across the river was accelerated when the new bridge was built across it, in front of Shaniwar Wada. After the removal of the Mandai, Lloyds Bridge (now Shivaji Bridge or Nava Pul) was constructed in 1924 as part of a new town-planning scheme. The move across the river became official and planned when the villages of Erandawane and Bhamburda were brought into city limits the same year. From 1920 till the Second World War was a period of rapid growth of the city in terms of space. This was more pronounced since it was juxtaposed with the previous period of stagnation.

### **Modern Town Planning**

In 1915, the Bombay Town Planning Act was passed to empower the municipalities of smaller towns in the province so that they could develop local resources to improve their towns. The Act was made applicable to Pune in the next year. Because of the various financial constraints and the ongoing war, the law did not have any immediate effect. However, together with the Land Acquisition Act, it armed the Municipality with wider powers than before, and it was now possible to plan the development of the new areas. Thus when the time came, the Municipality was already legally empowered to oversee the orderly growth of the left bank.

The next two decades after the war were eventful. Modern town planning techniques were used to develop the outlying areas as well as to improve communications within the city. This was done by adopting a series of small schemes over limited areas, rather than a grand overall plan, and possibly therefore proved successful. The left bank from Lakdi Pul to Fergusson College was empty and barren, and only the small temple on Chaturshringi Hill came alive during the Navaratri festival when Puneites thronged the place. Pune's Town Plan No. 1 was made to develop thirteen hundred acres of this area up to Ganeshkhind. Though the scheme was put into practice, it naturally took a long time to complete, as much of it envisaged residential buildings. The layout developed into the modern spider's web pattern which was felt to be more convenient than a linear one. Around the same time, the Suburban Municipality also took up a Town Plan scheme for the part of Ganeshkhind under its charge and the part of Bhamburda that had been added to it. The road leading towards the Governor's residence was soon much improved, special attention being paid to Wakdewadi and the area around the Agricultural College, The college building is a symmetrical neo-classical one with a dominating central dome, and served very well for some time as a hospital.

Both administrations therefore worked to develop the new areas. In the plan of the city Municipality, which was adopted in 1917, the importance of constructing a new bridge opposite the Shaniwar Wada was recognized. The Nava Pul or Lloyds Bridge, already mentioned, was therefore a part of the scheme. Plots for middle class housing, public playgrounds, schools, gardens, markets were reserved. There were provisions also for metalling and widening of roads and laying of culverts. The work continued up to the 1940s.

As the land was laid out into plots ranging from one acre to one-twelfth of an acre, co-operative housing societies and residential colonies were built. Owned by the upper middle class, the housing was mixed. The well-to-do built single bungalows, while smaller semi-detached double-storeyed houses with small gardens were more common. The area around the club known as Deccan Gymkhana, especially Prabhat Road and its

lanes, became a much-sought-after address for government servants, professionals and other middle-class people.

It is significant that the style of housing adopted was not the inward looking courtyard type, but outward facing houses with symmetrical plans. In fact *wada* type housing was felt to be unsuitable in the new age, and the Gazetteer records that scarce any were built since the last decades of the nineteenth century, even in the old city. But there were one or two exceptions. An outstanding example is Nagarkar Wada or Dagdi Wada in Budhwar Peth (Tapkir Gali), planned like a traditional *wada*, with an Indo-Saracenic facade.

A second Town Planning Scheme was made for Mangalwar Peth and its surrounding areas comprising about fifty acres, an area which was once well-to-do but had become very unhealthy and blighted. This part of the town had a stretch of marshy land in the area where the Nagzhari meets the river. Here the emphasis was on laying of new roads and widening of lanes. A water supply system was proposed. Iron pipes were to be laid to carry water; arrangements for a drainage pipeline were to be made; street lighting and culverts across Manik Nala were meant to upgrade this *peth*, which had fallen on bad times. The *nala* also needed to be cleaned and its bed smoothed for a better flow. However, the scheme provided for this in a very limited way.

An early experiment in municipal housing for the poor was a plot set aside in Shivajinagar for a colony of displaced Mhangs and tenement blocks built for them. This was reasonably successful and more such housing was planned later. Sometimes, the Municipality built huts instead of tenements on plots reserved for the purpose. As in other cities, so too in Pune the progress in this area was slow and not enough thought was given to it.

### **The East-West Route**

This was also the period when an ambitious road-making program was started. The most important of these was the scheme to give the city a much needed east-west thoroughfare, first proposed by Leith. The scheme was sanctioned in 1916 and begun four years later, but was only completed thirty years later. Beginning at the western end of the old city at Lakdi Pul, it cut across the town through some of the most congested *peths* up to the western limits of the Cantonment, at Sadar Bazaar. Laxmi Road, as it was named, for the first time allowed easy communication between the two sections of the town. In the process of land acquisition, leveling and clearing, some unhealthy areas were cleared and upgraded. Because it passed through densely congested areas, land acquisition became complicated and slow, which explains the delay. Laxmi Road went on to become a thriving commercial street; a large part of it was taken up by textile merchants and clothiers. Even today it is the center of the cloth trade, but is also a vibrant and crowded bazaar; it is the city's most popular shopping area.

Another planned road was Tilak Road, which begins at Lakdi Pul and stretches up to Swargate to the south of the city in a west-south direction. This road was completed much faster because it passed mainly through open agricultural land and acquisition was cheaper and easier. The land on the either side of the road was sold in plots in order to recover the cost. But it was too far out at that time, and demand for the plots was not keen

at first. Other, shorter roads within the old city were begun. But difficulties in acquisition of land made the progress of new roads very slow. However, metalling and widening of existing roads, making of covered gutters for rainwater and tarring and asphaltting experiments continued. In the 1930s, tarring was taken up with enthusiasm and made brisk progress. This became a massive project in the 1950s, after the Municipality became a Corporation. Other Town Planning Schemes covered large areas in the process of development on the south and east of the city; there was even an attempt to prepare a blueprint for the development of the whole city by a team of experts.

But the Second World War intervened, and the various schemes made very slow progress or were shelved for the time being.

The underground drainage and sewage treatment schemes begun in the 1920s continued to make progress throughout the next twenty years. The Municipality was exercised over waste disposal for the whole city, including the Cantonment and Suburban Municipality and the problem of where to locate the outfall works and the treatment plants. Electric street lights made their appearance in larger numbers in the thirties and the first public bus service began in 1941, started by a private company, Silver Jubilee Motor Transport Company.

### **Wadia College**

In the Suburban Municipality too, there was further urban development. Apart from the mission schools in the Cantonment, which mainly catered to Europeans, there were a few schools for Indians in the Camp. Some Parsi and Muslim institutions were already popular and primary and secondary schools had been set up by the cantonment and suburban administrations. But facilities for higher education in the area came up only after a group of dedicated people set up a new college with a handsome donation from the famous Wadia family of Bombay. The Nowrosjee Wadia College, run by the Modern Education Society, was at first housed in a baroque building near the station called Connaught House, in 1931. It soon moved to its own premises, which was at a prime location on a prominent intersection of the Bund Garden and Council Hall Road, both major traffic arteries now. A group of impressive stone buildings comprised of two long structures with a hall in the middle became a symbol of the cosmopolitan culture of this part of the town. Set back from the playing grounds, the deep verandahs of its upper storey have a series of massive coupled Doric columns supporting the pitched roof, which is visible from quite a distance. It was a great boon for students on this side of the city, who found the left bank institutions and those in the city too far.

The thirties and forties saw a building boom in all areas and even the Second World War could not dampen it for long. The extension of the railway line and construction of a railway station at Bhamburda in 1925 (now Shivajinagar) met a long-felt need of the population on this side. It was also more convenient for those living in the city. It also facilitated the linking of the new settlement to other cities and stimulated commercial activity.

This was also the age of housing estates and the first small double or triple-storey apartment blocks. Housing colonies came up at the edge of the Cantonment abutting the eastern Nana and Rasta peths. Most were built by Parsi charities or developers. Ardeshir

Irani Bag and Pudumjee Park are outstanding examples of well-built flats whose accent was on comfort and affordability.

Rapid building of bungalows and housing colonies also transformed the western wards. The large agricultural spaces of Sadashiv Peth, already sliced through by Tilak Road, were filled up, especially on either side of the road, by middle class housing with an almost exclusive upper caste or Brahmin population. In the other *peths* too, urban renewal took place. The old smaller timber framed houses were taken down and rebuilt on the same plots. Even in congested Kasha, some of this renewed housing still exists. Though they kept their inner courtyards, the facades are quite different from the typical *wadas*. Windows face the road even on the ground floor; balconies with iron railings often ornamented with medallions carrying the bust of Queen Victoria or George V were new features in Pune housing.

To the south, at the foot of Parvati Hill, the famous lake of the Peshwas and the pleasure garden of Hirabag saw a great change. Though the Ganpati temple (Talyatla Ganpati) remained, the lake had deteriorated and become a receptacle for all kinds of filth. It was gradually filled up by dumping rubble and street sweepings collected from all over the city. Two major arteries came up, Baji Rao Road and Tilak Road, skirting the area on two sides. One part of the filled lake was set aside as an open public ground, now known as Sanas Maidan. The long-felt need for a modern playing field was provided by the neglected old Peshwa garden, which was then used for cricket matches; a large area has been turned into a public garden, Saras Bag. A modern sports stadium, a later addition (Nehru Stadium), has now completely changed the look of this great expanse of space so lovingly nurtured by the Peshwas. Only two continuities with the past remain. Pune's small zoo (Peshwe Park) was located here, perhaps in memory of Peshwa Madhav Rao's menagerie. Though the pleasure mansion or Ranjan Mahal was turned into a modern civic meeting place or Town Hall in 1877, its committee preserved a part of the original hall with its carved wooden ceiling, its typical cusped arches and wooden columns.

### **Limited Industrial Activity**

The first fifty years of the twentieth century were the seminal years for Pune, during which it had prepared itself unknowingly for a new future after Independence. It was only then that the Pune Municipal Corporation came into existence, with total self-government. But the pace of growth in civic amenities had been slow, and the overwhelming economic image of the city was one of stagnation. There were only three industries in Pune the biggest being the government-run arms and ammunition factory at Khadki. It had grown to all-India importance as centers at other places were dismantled and the manufacture of ammunition concentrated here. It grew even larger during the Second World War, and employed numbers of people, many of whom were settled closely around it and at the village of Yerawada.

In 1885, the Deccan Paper Mills was set up on the eastern outskirts at Mundwa. A private company, owned by the Parsi Pudumji family, it was proud of the fact that it was completely built and run by Indians and was able to supply paper at competitive rates against imported ones. The emotive connection with the mood of the times was clear from its advertised claim that the first editions of Lokmanya Tilak's *Gita Rahasya* and

Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography were printed on paper produced by the mill. But it had limited capacity for employment.

The third factory was even more closely related to the Swadeshi movement and Tilak. The Poona Cotton and Silk Manufacturing Company, set up in 1888, was the direct result of the exertions and encouragement of Lokmanya Tilak who exhorted the businessmen of Pune to set up industries as the only way to reclaim the lost glory of the city. The mill did not do well however, and was soon bought over by the Pune family and renamed Raja Bahadur Motilal Poona Mills. The mill was set up close to the railway station and the river. This was an ideal location. The riverside areas around it soon attracted migrant labor and other related population. Unfortunately, the settlement was never properly regulated and therefore the tendency to overcrowding led to slummy conditions. These industries obviously could not on their own give Pune a dynamic image or displace (the persistent one of 'a sleepy 'pensioner's paradise'.

### **Intellectual Ferment**

Though the 'sleepy' image was true in terms of the economic life of Pune, the socio-cultural or political scene was a different matter altogether. In these spheres, Pune was not somnolent. The city and its citizens were rather well integrated with the happenings elsewhere in the country. Though regarded as the fountainhead of orthodoxy in Western India, the intellectual ferment that agitated the minds of the urban middle class elsewhere in the country had its counterpart in Pune too. Pune's nearness to Bombay and the events taking place there, together with the remarkable concentration of talent and intellect within the city itself, saw to it that society was constantly pushed in the direction of change. In fact, the presence of the strongly entrenched orthodox elements made for more turmoil and conflict, making the debates livelier. The intellectual ferment, the controversies between the various national leaders and the events which linked Pune through these people with the all-India scene, have been studied, recorded and analyzed by many scholars. They form a part of the larger intellectual history of Maharashtra as well as of the freedom struggle. They are also too well-known to be retold here and a new analysis of them is much beyond the scope of this book. Only those events will be mentioned here as are directly related to the developments of the urban morphology and which brought about actual changes in the physical shape of the city. The broad currents of thought had their effects on the spaces of the city, which naturally affected its future. For example, the educational reforms and the setting up of such institutions had a visible role in spatial terms. The first government institution, set up as early as 1821, was the Poona Sanskrit College, housed at the old Vishrambag palace. It changed its function to impart western education and was renamed Poona College some years later. In the 1860s, its name was changed to Deccan College, and was housed in the picturesque neo-Gothic structure mentioned earlier. The college was affiliated to the Bombay University and produced its first graduates in the 1860s. Its alumni included many eminent men and drew its students mostly from the city. They were a dedicated lot - to get to the college they had to cross the river by ferry and walk a long distance. Most therefore preferred to live in the hostels.

As Puneites themselves became interested in the spread of western education, the movement became more popular and successful amongst the upper castes. Usually a

society was formed by a group of like-minded people, who raised resources to start schools and colleges. The founders were highly motivated and idealistic, often working for a pittance, keeping the fees very low for the sake of the poorer students, who were again mostly from the upper caste. The upper castes comprised the traditional literate class, and were now able to take the opportunities offered by these new educational institutions much more easily than the lower castes. The Deccan Education Society, the Maharashtra Education Society, Modern Education Society and others, all ran schools and colleges through the ideal of self-help and dedication. Most of the new schools, like Nutan Marathi, New English, and Bhave School, were set up in the old city, from where they were able to get more students. The morphology of the city did not change due to them, especially as they were originally set up in one or other old *wada*. Only Fergusson College, Deccan College and Engineering Colleges had a definite impact on the urban pattern. Though they were rather far away from the heart of the city, students made a great effort to get to them.

There were the few missionary schools, the Panch Howd Mission being the most prominent in the city. The whole education movement, with its attendant emphasis on libraries, technical or scientific concerns, encouragement of public speaking and formal debating, created a tremendous impetus towards social reform in the direction of women's education, widow remarriage and other ways to improve their position in society.

In orthodox Pune, though it was difficult in the beginning, the impulse to change came from various directions - from the liberal reformers, or *sudharaks*, represented by figures such as Ranade, Agarkar and Gokhale and from the anti-Brahmin movement represented by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and the Satyasodhak samaj. The intense social tensions created by these new forces impacting against the traditional orthodox groups, which were still quite powerful, had a number of effects on the city in a variety of ways.

Women's education made progress when Puneites themselves took the initiative for it. Of the major girls' schools, the best known was the Huzur Paga School, set up by the efforts of a few prominent citizens and aided by the government. At first this famous school began its life in Warwekar Wada, and then shifted to Kibe Wada in Budhwar Peth, till it got its own building in 1896. It was housed where the Peshwa's stables used to be, hence its name, and was looked upon as a rather elite institution. Other well-known schools were the Kanyashala at Narayan Peth, an orphanage founded by Maharshi D.K. Karve; and Seva Sadan, founded by Ramabai Ranade. Jyotiba Phule's schools for girls were first housed in old *wadas*, showing how these old houses could be put to versatile uses. The first of his girl's schools was in Govande Wada in Sadashiv Peth. Maharshi Karve's widows home was moved from an old *wada* in the city to Hingne; a complex of institutions grew there.

Jyotiba Phule's schools for the lower castes were usually away from (the orthodox city areas. They were on the outskirts where the concentrations of lower castes were to be found, like Ramoshiwadi and Quarter Gate in the Suburban Municipality. Other reformers, like S. M. Mate, working for the education of low castes, founded schools in Mhang and Mahar colonies some of which were near the banks of the Nagzhari and the brick kilns across the river where the Municipal Corporation office now stands.

The cause of widow remarriage was taken up in Pune by stalwarts like Lokhitwadi Gopal Hari Deshmukh and others. Marathi literature, as it developed in new directions, through novels and plays, took up the cause of widows and women in general. Pune contributed to the growth of Marathi literature through the presence of some of the best known writers who lived here. The cultural life of the city was dominated by Sadashiv Peth. It was here, in the predominantly Brahmin locality, that the first new schools appeared, and the lead was taken towards deep and far-reaching changes, in spite of its orthodoxy. Regarded as the literary *peth* or the cultural node, it became the barometer for Pune's cultural climate. Important since Peshwa times, this western ward had a limited settlement till quite late. Residential homes of upper caste and middle-class people were to be found only up to Vishramhag Wada, even in the 1870s, as the survey map shows. But the open fields filled up with middle-class housing, as many upper caste families shifted Irani the eastern wards to this *peth* over the next fifty years.

As Pune's educational facilities grew, it attracted migration from rural areas and the smaller towns. Availability of English education, printed books, job opportunities in government offices and the new socio-cultural ferment proved a powerful attraction for all young people for whom Bombay was too far away or too expensive. In Pune, room rents were cheap and indigent Brahmin students could sustain themselves through the system of 'Madhukari'. The reputation of the city as the cultural capital of Maharashtra was well set by the 1920s. Speaking of the well-known personalities living in Pune as contemporaries, P. K. Atre comments that in those days Puneites did not need to go out to gain knowledge. "Every year during the Ganpati festival and the spring season, all the knowledge and scholarship of India and Maharashtra walked on its own feet to Pune. No school or college could give such valuable education as one could get just by living in Pune. This is Pune's greatness, Pune's strength and Pune's specialty." He was referring to the lectures known as 'Vasant Vyakhyanmala' held every spring, an occasion for the congregation of eminent intellectuals in Pune. This image of the city, painted by one of its most prominent citizens, shows that in spite of economic or commercial stagnation, the city had reason to be proud of its cultural heritage.

The reform movement created an atmosphere of intense debate and discussion, of intellectual turmoil and conflict between the orthodox and the reformers. The various associations or groups, the *sabhas*, *mandalis* and *samajs*, made new demands for congregational space. The earliest social reform or political meetings were small affairs and often held in the *wadas* of their patrons and members. The *wadas* thus played an important part in the cultural history of the city. Not only could schools be housed in them but their courtyards and halls were ideal for meetings, literary gatherings, felicitations and debates. For instance, the first of the 'Vasant Vyakhyanmala' series of lectures was held in Bhide Wada in Budhwar Peth. The meetings of the early political associations were also held in *wadas* like Chaudhari Wada; a larger meeting against child-marriage was organized in Moroba Wada and was addressed by Agarkar, Ranade and Lokhitwadi. Tilak lived for a time in Vinchurkar Wada in Sadashiv Peth where the great Bengali leader Vivekananda visited him, and where his public or Sarvajanic Ganpati festival was held in 1894. Later he shifted to Gaikwad Wada in Narayan Peth, where he setup his *Kesari* and *Mahratta* newspaper offices. The versatile *wadas* were thus being put to new uses.

## **Town Hall**

As the period of controversy and debate continued and political issues began to dominate, larger congregations of people required larger spaces. A citizens' committee decided to acquire the old Peshwa mansion of Hirabag and convert it into a town hall. This was the first civic hall and provided the people with a formal space for meetings. It was here that a crowded and historic meeting was held in 1878 against the discriminatory and unpopular Vernacular Press Act, which had sought to censor the Indian language press. The first industrial exhibition where indigenous products were displayed was organized here by Mahadeo Ballal Namjoshi at the behest of Lokmanya Tilak. The first session of the Indian National Congress was scheduled to be held in the Town Hall in 1885, but due to the fears of a cholera epidemic, the venue was shifted to Bombay.

## **Other Halls**

Other indoor meeting spaces were created. The Prarthana Samaj, founded in Pune in 1870, required its own meeting hall. This was built in 1878 in a large plot in the heart of Budhwar Peth. It was renovated in 1909, and came to be known as the Harimandir. A grand stone structure, it has a large hall with galleries on all sides, very similar to the inside of a church. The ashes of R. G. Bhandarkar, one of the founders and a great scholar, are kept in a small stupa-like memorial within the compound. The Sarvajanik Sabha had its own hall. Shivaji Mandir in Sadashiv Peth was another important place for gatherings. But even so the days of decorous meetings in enclosed halls were numbered. Pune's integration into the social and political upheavals of the national movement saw to it that the mobilization of larger and larger numbers became essential for the success of the various movements. From the 1870s, when he came to live in Pune, till his death in 1901, M. G. Ranade remained the great intellectual giant presiding over the city's reform movement, though the growing influence of Bal Gangadhar Tilak was also being felt in the city and on the national front.

## **Political Spaces**

The great storm that brewed over the Age of Consent Bill in the 1890s required larger spaces for the mobilization of supporters on both sides. If women came out in significant numbers at Tulshibag at the meeting in support of the bill, Tilak and his followers gathered a larger crowd in the open space in front of Shaniwar Wada. This space was used by him more than once, giving it an identity as a public space for political meetings, a space of unexpected utility which the people made their own. Against the background of its historic walls and the brooding solemnity of the Delhi Gate, this place was appropriated by a new generation for a new use. In colonial Pune, no large public spaces had been planned for large gatherings, and therefore the most historically symbolic space in Pune was now taken over by its people and adopted for political use. Even before this, Vasudeo Balwant Phadke an ex-clerk and a Chitpavan Brahmin, had started his unique revolution to oust the British, by giving lectures in the streets of Pune and in front of Shaniwar Wada, in 1878-79. He collected a band of followers, which included not only some Brahmin youth but also low castes and tribes like Ramoshis, Mhangs, Kolis and Dhangars from the surrounding areas. He targeted moneylenders in the districts; panic

spread in Pune city itself, especially among the *sarafs* and merchants in Raviwar and Budhwar Peths. After his rebellion was crushed, he was captured and brought to Pune and tried here. The courtroom was filled with an angry crowd which protested against the sentence of deportation to Aden. For the first time, Pune railway station saw a large and sullen crowd when this first political prisoner was taken to be put on the train.

It was however Tilak who, without a doubt, redefined Pune's urban spaces, bringing the protests, the gatherings and politically motivated festivals on to the streets and open spaces and into the hearts of the people. From 1894 to 1920 was the age of Tilak, when his personality overshadowed all others. A number of eminent people had visited the city since Ranade had come to live here. These included Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the reformist Arya Samaj whose visit led to a confrontation with the orthodox Brahmins. But it was Tilak who drew a series of famous visitors to the city. It was again Tilak who brought agitations and protests out on to the streets. The revival of the Ganpati festival had, for him, a political meaning - he made it a, *sarvajanik* public festival, with the purpose of mobilizing and unifying the people. Soon these festivals were being held at various places in the city and on the day of the immersion, long processions wound their way through the streets to the Lakdi Pul. Tilak's perception of what the city streets should mean to the people makes a lively contrast with the neat and rigid concepts of modern planning. "For the last fifteen days all Pune roads are full of people. In every *peth*, in most *alis*, there are festivities. Kotval Chavdi. Reay Market, Shalukar Bol, Raviwar, Bhaji Ali, Shukrawar, Mahimpura, Ganesh Peth all had good Ganpatis ... at 2 p.m. Ganpatis from different *alis* went towards Reay Market. Some came from surrounding villages as well. Loud cries of 'Ganpati Bappa Morya' rent the air. Sounds of *lezim*, *ghunghroo*, *jhanjhar* and *shehnai* can be heard from various places. From Reay Market Lo the gate of Appa Balwant's house was full of people watching. With gulal and slogans and with the scattering of *batasha* the procession reached Lakdi Pul". The streets too were thus co-opted into the movement.

As part of the Swadeshi movement, bonfires of foreign cloth had to be held in open spaces; a convenient spot was near Lakdi Pul at the beginning of Karve Road. A large crowd was mobilized under the direction of V. D. Savarkar, and a spectacular bonfire was held at this place. The crowd was addressed by Tilak and other leaders. The open space around Reay Market (now Mahatma Phule Market) was another convenient spot utilized by the Congress for public meetings. When the eleventh session of the Indian National Congress was held at Pune in 1895, the gathering was too large to be accommodated in the Town Hall. It had now to be held at Bhamburda where large open spaces were still available for the setting up of a temporary camp for the meeting.

The use of the streets for political purposes continued throughout the national movement. In the twenties and thirties, streets of the old city often came alive with the 'Prabhat Pheris' (morning processions singing patriotic songs) and the sudden emptying of schools, their students spilling on to the streets, marching with the fluttering tricolor.<sup>16</sup> Huge protest rallies gathered in front of Shaniwar Wada, where orators spoke to the crowds or sang patriotic songs without the benefit of microphones. Moti Chowk and the wider streets in Raviwar Peth, Budhwar Chowk and such areas were used for processions and meetings and boycott bonfires. The hitherto sleepy streets of Pune saw the first *lathi charges* by the police during the Civil Disobedience movement of the 1930s.

In 1942, during the Quit India movement, soldiers from the Cantonment, brought in army trucks, made their appearance after a long time in the city. White officers commanding troops from other regions of India were a new sight for Pune. There were incidents of firing around Vishrambag Wada. The city also became a focus of attention for all of India when Mahatma Gandhi was incarcerated in Yerawada jail in January 1932. It was here that he began the historic 'fast unto death', against the Communal Award of the British Government. He spent most of his days under the thick shade of a mango tree in the jail courtyard, while all of India turned its gaze on Pune. A constant stream of national leaders came and went; Ravindranath Tagore arrived from distant Calcutta to be with Gandhi. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar resided in the Suburban Municipality while the negotiations for the Poona Pact were brought to a successful end, and Gandhi's life was saved. In the forties, Gandhi was again put under arrest in the large and spacious Aga Khan Palace on the Ahmednagar road. It was here that Kasturba Gandhi passed away, as also his secretary Mahadev Desai. Their simple and beautiful memorials are visited by many tourists today. The historic declaration of Purna Swaraj (full independence) was celebrated on 26th January 1930 at Shivaji Mandir, with the hoisting of the tricolor and the reading of the oath of Independence.

### **Social Space**

Meanwhile, subtle as well as open social change was visible in the city in other directions too. Modern theatre, with the proscenium stage, had already made its appearance as early as the 1860s, with the Anandodbhav Theatre at Budhwar Peth. As Marathi drama advanced, more theatrical performances were held and became quite popular. One memorable performance was Annasaheb Kirloskar's *Sangeet Shakuntal*, which introduced verse in the play and was performed in October 1880. Pune theatre became nationally known when the legendary Bal Gandharva performed in his heyday in the first half of this century. Women were out in the streets and at work and in colleges in larger numbers, especially after the World War. Many were now fashionably dressed in the six-yard sari, though the traditional nine-yard sari was still popular. Politics had become a popular subject of discussion wherever there was a gathering of people for a *guppa* session - when views and opinions flowed freely.

It seems that there were not many entertainments for the young in Pune, and the town became quiet after 8.30 at night. This need was met somewhat when the first cinemas made their appearance. The Kirloskar Theatre showed silent movies, and Pune became an important center for the making of films in the 1930s and 40s. A large piece of land in the western suburb was taken up by Prabhat Film Company, which was moved from Kolhapur to Pune by V. Shantaram, the doyen of Indian cinema. (This is now the Film and Television Institute of India, a prestigious training institution for film-makers). The original building stands in the institute and is still used as a studio. Other film companies came up in Pune Agarwal Film Company, Deccan Pictures, Navyug Films - all of which were, however, short-lived.

The Pune middle-class was also being introduced to the pleasures of eating out. At first the earliest eateries were unexceptional, serving *missal*, *batata vada* and such traditional fare. Of these, the best known were Malekar's Santosh Bhawan and the famous Maharashtra Bhawan. These were in the old city. Later the elite Deccan

Gymkhana sprouted the first Irani eatery, Lucky Restaurant. Apart from cake or the flaky pastry, *khari*, which were unorthodox fare, it also served the forbidden eggs and bread. To go in there was itself an act of courage for the young men of the city and to order an omelet an act of revolutionary dimensions! Lucky Restaurant became a part of the consciousness and nostalgia for generations of students who passed time there discussing politics or pursuing a romance.

### **Differentiated Spaces**

By the mid-twentieth century, Pune had been transformed from a medieval feudal capital to a colonial city, albeit still following the traditional function of being the administrative and cultural center of Maharashtra. It became only a temporary capital of Bombay Presidency, but was at least saved from total obscurity, which was the lot of many of the older eighteenth-century capitals. The period of trauma and de-urbanization that had overtaken the city in the first half of the nineteenth century was slowly lifted as the population limped back to pre-British levels again. By the time that recovery became evident it was also clear that Pune had been drastically changed and large areas added to suit the convenience of British administrators. Control, sanitation and planning were the new watchwords of the administration.

The Cantonment and Civil Lines set up close to the old city were the centers of this control, but they also set new norms of planning, with their own precise arrangements of urban space, quite different to the traditional concept of the city. In short, Pune acquired the aspect of a colonial city with its typical duality - a traditional Indian city with its jostling crowds and narrow lanes and vibrant 'disorderliness' contrasted with a European settlement based on order, neatness and hierarchy, an exclusive suburb for the ruling elite who lived in the security of their seclusion.

Apart from these two main divisions based on race and geography, Pune as a colonial city had several other more subtle differentiations on both the physical as well as the cultural planes. Within the Cantonment itself, there was the obvious difference between the fully European military and bungalow areas, and the Sadar Bazaar, a purely Indian settlement and a buffer between the city and the cantonment. Old residents remember that there were hardly any social interactions between Europeans and the Indians in the Sadar Bazaar. The former were seen there only when they came to shop or for other specific reasons.

Within the city too there were various distinctions between different localities, each of which developed separate identities and thus contributed towards the differentiation in space. They developed, in the process, distinct self-images, which tended to become persistent and stereotyped. The western wards like Sadashiv, Narayan and a part of Shaniwar came to be known as upper-caste and well-to-do residential wards. Their population gave the whole city its predominant image of Brahmin orthodoxy, which persisted well into the present century.

The *large* middle belt of *peths* (Raviwar, Ganj, Ganesh and Shukrawar), as well as the eastern ones (Nana and Bhavani) were predominantly commercial, with a mixed population though always with a considerable residential component. This belt, if

considered together with the Sadar Bazaar of the Cantonment, was like a vast network of markets, an intermediary plane between two poles - the Brahmin elite in the west and the European elite in the extreme east. Though most *peths* usually had some permanent shops for daily groceries and fuel, markets for fresh vegetables were set up in every locality, mostly in the mornings. With the bankers, moneylenders, jewelers and the hardware shops at Bohri Ah in Raviwar; the grain and timber trade at Nana and Bhavani; the main vegetable market (Mandai) at Shukrawar; and the varied shops that stocked articles for the Europeans at Sadar Bazaar, this sector, though it cannot be designated as a Central Business District as such, was quite clearly a commercial district or market network.

The distinct socio-cultural differentiation through which the localities developed their self-images were often in contrast to the images constructed of them by others. Both sides created stereotypes. The Brahmins prided themselves on their homogenous and elitist *peths* of Sadashiv and Narayan, which were considered the home of Marathi culture and literature. There was a decisive cultural difference between them and the other upper class neighborhood of Deccan Gymkhana (which grew in the third and fourth decades of this century), whose residents, also mostly upper caste, were considered to be westernized and belonging to the 'bungalow-culture'. Within the city, the north-south Shivaji Road became the great divide between the Brahmin west and the mixed commercial area.

The old core of Kasba, dense and sinking into urban decay, was thought of as heterogeneous (mixed class, caste and community), lacking in culture and urban city graces. The people of the Camp or Sadar Bazaar, when thought of at all, were regarded as commercial, uncultured and 'different'; while Camp people believed themselves to be cosmopolitan, open and more westernized as against the orthodox and unchanging people in the 'city'. The European settlements hardly impinged on the consciousness of the Indians in the city. As we have seen, in the memoirs and descriptions of the Europeans, Pune city hardly finds mention, except when danger threatened in the form of revolt or disease.

In spite of these many layers of cultural and social diversity, despite the social, political and cultural integration of Pune with the larger Indian scene, and in spite of the fact that in many areas non-Marathi-speaking people dominated the population, the abiding image of the city remained, till the mid-twentieth century at least, as one of Maharashtrian Hindu and Brahmin culture- a continuity with the Peshwai past (though those who created the image in the new age were a different class from that of the previous age).

With a stagnant economy and a differentiated spatial pattern with its many subtle cultural divisions, it seemed that the city was ill-prepared for the new role that was soon to be thrust upon it in the coming age of Independence, after 1947. From a quiet colonial city, Pune would soon have to metamorphosis into a thriving, tumultuous, crowded industrial city, due to various circumstances that will be the matter of the next chapter.

## **6. Towards a Metropolis**

*“The richest crop for any field  
Is a crop of bricks for it to yield.  
The richest crop that it can grow,  
Is a crop of houses in a row.”*

*(A ditty about large scale projects in seventeenth century London)*

*“It would be sheer iconoclasm if a civic architect did not respect the ancient historical relies of the place, if he pulled down and demolished everything that stood in the way of successful execution of his fanciful scheme to advertise his own originality and left no trace of the past which were interwoven with the tradition and sanctity of the place. It is not right and proper that the new city should be cut off from its moorings because for a healthy civic life and for the traditional sanctity of the city, these historical reminiscences are essential and indispensable...”*

*(B. B. Dull, Town Planning in Ancient India)*

Independence, when it came, etched out a different kind of role for Indian cities in general. Among nationalist leaders, there had often been ambivalence towards the city, especially the colonial city. Mahatma Gandhi had never hidden his antipathy for the colonial city. But the cities obviously could not be wished away and would now have to be adapted and moulded to the new vision of nationalist India, a vision of modernism and secular nationalism.

Pune too, like other Indian cities, saw a flush of nationalistic fervor as many streets, crossroads and *chowks* were renamed after national leaders. In the heart of the erstwhile British Cantonment, Main Street became Mahatma Gandhi Road; other roads were named after Indian generals. National leaders were commemorated in the various roads of the city. Soon enough (in 1962), the ‘Poona’ of Anglo-Indian saga would revert to its original name so full of historical associations- Pune.

Within a few years, the city would also have a sports stadium, Nehru Stadium, a large auditorium, Bal Gandharva Rangamandir, named after Maharashtra’s most famous performer, and the Tilak Smarak Mandir, after Pune’s great nationalist leader. These were manifestations of the new role of the municipal administration as a patron of sports and culture. There were also those who opposed the projects - Socialist corporators and leaders like S.M. Joshi of the Socialist Party of India questioned the expenditure of about seven million rupees on these projects, which they wanted to be used for the improvement of slums. The trend of the future was thus set - opposing views in a democratic city on how public funds should be spent.

Another more serious and ominous incident was the anti-Brahmin riots which broke out in Pune after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi at Delhi, in January 1948. Free from communal riots so far, this was a portent that the Pune streets could easily fall prey to what had happened and would happen many times in the future to other cities across the country. Partition too, which put an enormous strain on the cities of the north, had a significant effect on Pune and its morphology, with the arrival of refugees from Pakistan. The traditional spaces of the ethnic and caste based communities were faced with the

prospect of absorbing newcomers. Sindhi and Punjabi immigrants to the city at first found it difficult to break through into the traditional society of Pune. They had to settle in the more cosmopolitan areas, and on the leftover spaces, literally sandwiched between the Maharashtrian and non-Maharashtrian speaking areas. These were at the periphery of the eastern *peths*, Bhavani and Nana, which acted as a dividing line between the locals and the non-locals. The Sadar Bazaar at the end of the Cantonment was also capable of absorbing some of the influx. A camp for the immediate needs of the refugees was set up at Pimpri, while others settled near the station and on its fringes. Thus, not caste per se, but community based enclaves were added to those parts of the town which were already settled with a majority of non-Marathi speaking community groups.

The unparalleled speed with which large numbers of displaced people poured in brought the first serious strain on the city's infrastructure. In a city like Pune, where there was very little mobility (less than four percent of the total population lived outside the state of birth), the problem of resettlement, economic provision and public order posed severe difficulties for the fledgling Pune Municipal Corporation formed in 1950. The temporary refugee camps soon became permanent ramshackle colonies, like the ones in Pimpri village on the outskirts of Pune. The city's economy still relied heavily on the growth of activities connected with administration and education.- It therefore had the usual limitations that apply to a city whose urban base does not favor fast economic development.'

In the immediate post-Independence era too, it seemed as if the pattern would continue. In 1949, in recognition of its importance as an educational center, the University of Poona was started, freeing the colleges of the city and the district of Ahmednagar and Nashik and other educational institutions from the hold of the University of Bombay. As a befitting end to the British Raj, the University was housed in the Governor's monsoon residence built by Sir Bartle Frere in the 1860s. Its sprawling campus of over five hundred acres and the sylvan surroundings make it one of the best located universities in India.

With its traditional importance as a military center, Pune was selected out of a number of contending places as the home of the National Defence Academy (NDA). The then Government of Bombay donated six thousand four hundred acres of land near the scenic Khadakvasla Dam as the site for this cradle of nature defence services officers of Independent India. Interestingly, the genesis of the institution lay in a generous gesture of the Government of Sudan, which in 1941 donated a hundred thousand pounds to build a memorial to the Indian troops who fought in South Africa. NDA's imposing main building with its huge dome is therefore named Sudan Block.

Another academic institution, the National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), was set up in 1949. The city got its own station of the All India Radio, enhancing both its cultural image and its communications with the rest of the country. In the fifties, a number of State and Central government offices were also set up in Pune, for example, the Headquarters of the Revenue Department and as many as ten State Government Directorates. Up to 1960, Pune remained the second capital of the state, and the Monsoon Session of the State Legislature was held here.

## **Pune Municipal Corporation**

The city's traditional academic-cum-administrative character notwithstanding, the thirties and sixties were a preparation for the change in Pune's role to that of an industrial city. This occurred through the rapid improvement of infrastructure, particularly road construction and widening, growth of public transport and improvement in health care through the control of epidemics. These improvements were due to the most important civic event that took place in 1950: the Poona Municipality was raised to the status of a Corporation. Though this was, really speaking; only a change in form, it was quite an event, as it stepped up people's expectation from the civic body. It followed the Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporation Act 1949, through which certain cities were allowed to change the status of their municipalities. Efforts to convert the Poona Municipality to a Corporation had been initiated way back in 1933, when it was proposed to merge the four local authorities, the city Municipality, the Suburban Municipality and the Poona and Khadki Cantonment Boards into one. But the request was turned down due to the imminent recurrence of the plague epidemic which it was feared might spread to the Cantonments. The request, repeated in 1939, was again rejected due to the War. Finally, a committee under the chairmanship of M.D. Bhat recommended the setting up of the Corporation, which came into being on 15 February 1950, by amalgamating the city and Suburban Municipalities. The two Cantonments remain separate entities to this day.

### **Problems of the Corporation**

The first elections to the Corporations were held in March 1952; S. G. Barve had already been appointed as the first Municipal Commissioner. As mentioned earlier, the road construction and widening schemes got immediate priority and were taken up on a massive scale. Strides were also made in the control of epidemics and the laying of drainage and sewage lines and removal of garbage. But the Corporation faced enormous problems from its very inception. When it came into being, the population of Pune was four hundred and eighty thousand. The city was not a cohesive and single urban entity. Two distinct areas of development were visible on the urban landscape at the time of Independence. These coincided with the roles the city had to play at different periods of its evolution, as described in the earlier chapters.

The city of *peths* had derived its structure from it being occupied by distinct social and ethnic groups and not through clearly differentiated land use. Kasha Peth, though decaying rapidly, continued to have different or mixed non-Brahmin castes, including artisans. The Brahmins continued to be in their bastion of the western *peths*- Shaniwar, Narayan and Sadashiv; the lower castes, especially the 'untouchables' and the poor, were concentrated in the low-lying areas near the Nagzhari in Somwar and Mangalwar Peths. The business center continued to be in Raviwar and Budhwar Peths, though it would move along the entire axis of Laxmi Road after it was completed. Two major north-south axes defined the pre-industrial form of Pune - Bajirao Road and Shivaji Road, and the Tilak Road and Kumthekar Road. The *nalas* gave a special pattern to Pune's *peths*, which presented a distinctive urban structure of closely built up well-defined wards, occupying barely five square kilometers of the municipal area. But this was densely packed and was home to over a third of the city's population.

Another type of development, more recent, was influenced by the grid pattern of the Cantonment. It attracted middle-class residents to the areas between Deccan Gymkhana

and Ganeshkhind Road. These planned developments in which one could also include Koregaon Park and Bund Garden, virtually formed a cordon around most of the old city. These neighborhoods developed as elite ones, with the emergence of the modern professional and business classes.

Faced with the problems of the old city and the different ways in which it had developed, the new Municipality found the going difficult. Pune citizens had become more aware of their rights regarding civic services, which they expected the Corporation to provide, especially due to the inevitable comparisons with Bombay. Therefore the Corporators were forced to announce new schemes with each budget. Due to recurring financial problems, adequate finances for newer schemes could not be found as the limited resources of the civic body were already tied up with the earlier schemes. This created major problems over the years, and complicated matters, since providing for the completion of the old schemes became increasingly difficult. This encouraged the tendency to make token provisions as a strategy, like earmarking a few thousand for a scheme that would actually cost several. This strategy led to failure or improper execution of schemes. The result was that the credibility of the Corporation was eroded, leading to a cynicism and lack of trust in its ability to implement projects. By taking up grandiose projects for creation of capital assets, priority schemes like increase of water supply, extension of drainage, or adoption of measures for public health had to be set aside. Thus when budgets were diverted to schemes outside the priority list, essential services felt the resource crunch; this resulted in a backlog in those services.

Apart from all this, almost immediately after its formation, the Corporation had to face the unprecedented increase in population due to sudden migration from the rural hinterland and the arrival of refugees after Partition. There was also the expansion of municipal limits from a mere 44 sq. kms to 139 sq. kms, when the Corporation was formed. This brought a large rural segment into the city limits, giving rise to a duality in urban development. The dilemma was whether to concentrate funds in the old areas to improve amenities or divert them to develop the new peripheral areas. This was an issue almost impossible to resolve.

### **The Flood of 1961**

As the second decade of the existence of the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) began, the city was struck with sudden disaster. The normally peaceful, banded and virtually dry Mutha was in spate because of incessant rain in its upper reaches. Modern Puneites had never seen the Mutha in such a swift fury, with massive waves thrashing against bridges and buildings on the riverfront. By afternoon of 2nd July 1961, huge amounts of water unleashed by the collapse of Panshet Dam upstream reached Pune, overtopping the bridges, destroying homes, washing away people's belongings, inundating temples and vast areas of the city lying on either bank.<sup>5</sup>

The old city along the banks of the Mutha literally crumbled. The authorities were totally unprepared for such a disaster, and the authorities at Panshet were not prepared either. "The dam was overtopped at about 6.30 on the morning of 12 July and the authorities in Poona came to know of this immediately. The water-column reached the city after three hours. Within this time the authorities could have organized rescue

measures, alerting the police and the home guard, mobilizing vehicles from private and official sources and requisitioning boats and other help from the military.

Cutting a wide swathe through Pune, the furious river dislocated civic life. By the time that the water went down next day, it had done as much damage as the Nizam's invasion almost two centuries back. It left behind huge amounts of debris and rotting grain, disrupted the water supply, electricity and drainage. About seventy-eight relief centers had to be set up for the homeless, in schools, colleges and wedding halls. Pune's citizens pitched in with voluntary help by setting up food kitchens. Help from the Army had to be sought, as the PMC was incapable of handling such a disaster. Five thousand jawans with clearing equipment needed almost two weeks to clear the roads and lanes.

Following the Hoods, the old face of the city was greatly changed. Its compact form broke and it began to rapidly spread outwards like a sheet of water. A number of people could not or would not return to their destroyed homes, and colonies of flood-affected people sprouted almost overnight near Parvati, on the Satara Road (Sahakarnagar), and at Kothrud, which soon became a haven for many who had found the old city too restrictive and congested. It is said that it was usually the young who wished to move out of the decaying *wadas* and the crowded *alis* to the fresh air of Kothrud, leaving behind the older generation, too set in their ways, to move out to new places. In the next two decades, Kothrud became the most attractive area for many Puneites and was talked about as the fastest growing suburb in India. Unfortunately, an opportunity to redevelop the flooded-out parts of the city and improve the amenities while keeping the historic character intact was wasted. Kothrud too was not developed according to the plans laid down. It became a rather featureless tract of architecturally dull apartment blocks.

### **The Slums**

As the city had suddenly broken its bounds, it became absolutely essential to control and channelize the growth. On the one hand, middle-class residential areas were moving outwards, while the flow of rural migrants was moving into slums which came up on the peripheries of the middle-class localities, along railway tracks, along the river banks and in the interstices of developed areas. They continued to grow, creeping up the hill slopes and in any vacant area that was available.

The city had always had concentrations of the poor, mostly groups of low castes or 'untouchables' settled at the peripheries of the wards. It has already been mentioned that there was one large settlement in Mangalwar Peth and also in the eastern ones of Bhavani and Nana. But there was a rapid growth in the shanty settlements. As waves of rural poor from drought-stricken eastern Maharashtra came in, they settled in the area north of Parvati Hill. Shanty settlements came up at Erandawane, at Kothrud where many workers settled after the early industries began there, and at Hadapsar and Khadki. An old low-income settlement at Yerawada also grew rapidly.

As Pune became more industrial, rural population came in search of factory jobs. Unlike in the other metropolitan cities, it was not only single males who came here, but whole families, because they were landless and impoverished in the villages. By 1976, the slums contained more than a quarter million people; today about 40 per cent of Pune's population lives in slums. One scholar has pointed out that "the shanty settlements

in Poona (sic) have grown by accretion. In most cases, existing settlements of the poor and the socially underprivileged have received more low-income population.” Poor migrants tended to find their way to an environment that is culturally familiar. They usually joined existing kin or village members.

These enclaves became the starting point for further growth in the old low-income localities in the city and in the incorporated villages and older settlements of brick-kiln and quarry workers and other labor. Usually, land cast aside by building rules as unsuitable or unhealthy for better class housing - is where the poor settle. The unhealthy conditions- lack of clean drinking water or sewage systems - make these areas highly prone to disease. Most epidemics start in the slums. In the Revised Development Plan (1991-2000), the land declared surplus under the Urban Land Ceiling Act (ULC) has been earmarked for slum rehabilitation programs and economically Weaker Section housing schemes. But nothing much has happened so far, and we are at the end of the decade already.

### **The Plans**

Given the way the city grew since the 1950s, it would seem to be an unplanned city. However, the modern process of planned development-which really means public or administrative intervention to control private initiative for the good of all citizens - made its appearance in Pune eight decades ago. The rather successful Town Planning Schemes begun in the thirties and forties, though small, saw the planned development across the river at Bhamburda (Shivajinagar) and Ganeshkhind. But ‘total planning’ intervention - that is, the age of the Master Plan - arrived with Independence. Even before the PMC came into existence, the Municipal Commissioner, visualizing the need for a comprehensive framework to ensure planned development, began efforts to formulate a Master Plan in 1949.

The need for strict planning norms were clearly appreciated in the resulting Master Plan of 1952, when it stated that “The process of evolution of Poona (sic) into a bigger city cannot be permitted to be left to chance as it is certain that such a process is bound to be expensive and harsh, as it depends upon successive corrections of mistakes and hence a preconceived plan would be far better to rely on. This statement, made forty-six years ago, is valid even today. Though a number of planning efforts have taken place since then each one larger in its scope and the powers it gave to planners; each one based on modern and sophisticated methods and on statistical projections they seem to have all gone awry in their implementation.

For example, the first Master Plan (1952) for Greater Poona was a thoughtful document, laying down the norms of planning for the city. Its main points related to zoning and reservation of land for public use; building bye-laws; widening of roads and streamlining of traffic and improvement of water supply as well as slums. Strangely though, it did not have a time-span for implementation. But since it was the first such plan, it is worth going into some of its details.

It suggested eight new Town Planning Schemes in various parts of the city. Here zoning of land was to be followed, land demarcated for various types of residential patterns (bungalows, *chawls*, group-housing, tenements); for industries of all kinds (light,

medium and heavy); educational institutions; markets; for administrative use; and above all, for parks and gardens. Moreover, it recommended that land should be kept aside, in the areas which would be urbanized soon, for roads, water-supply and drainage schemes. Building bye-laws were to be strictly implemented and elevations of buildings were to be aesthetic. The Plan recommended that land demarcated should be immediately frozen, especially the road sites.

In the city, Laxmi Road and fifteen other roads, as well as Lakdi Pul, were to be widened and other bridges built. The water-supply from Khadakvasla was to be filtered. There was also a river improvement scheme, which was meant to train the river into flowing faster. Slums-improvement schemes were mooted, but seem rather inadequate. It was suggested that plinths and sanitary facilities be made on sixty acres for nine thousand slum dwellers in Bhavani Peth and on Satara and Sinhagad Road. Lastly, it recommended the developing of an industrial estate at Hadapsar to encourage industries and improve the economy.

The planners also felt that the existing laws for town planning were inadequate and that help from the State Government was needed for successful development. It was necessary, the document said, to formulate appropriate planning standards so that development benefits could also reach the lower income groups, if shanties and squatter settlements were not to engulf the city. Prophetic words indeed. However, all the efforts put into this plan were wasted; before it could even be commissioned, it was superseded by a new law, The Bombay Town Planning Act 1954. The new law thus required the preparation of a fresh Development Plan for Pune. This took ten years to finally become operative in 1966.

### **Development Plan of 1966**

This plan had two parts: one dealt with the problems of the old city - its traffic conditions, the need for widening of its roads, and the creation of open spaces to serve as green lungs for the congested core. Slum improvement and slum 'clearance' was one of its major concerns. The second part dealt with the problems of controlling development in the areas around and outside the old city. Since this area had more open space, it was felt that controlling growth of slums or planning of roads should be easier here. It also suggested that the authority which should implement this plan should be the Corporation. The ground reality, however, was that the funds required for implementing both parts of the Plan were not available. The Corporation realized the great difficulty in acquiring so much land in the first place, even if somehow it could raise the funds for it. It was therefore important to prune the Plan to a more realistic level and only implement the priority schemes.

### **The Poona Metropolitan Region 1967**

Soon, however, the old Bombay Town Planning Act (1954) was replaced by the Maharashtra Regional Town Planning Act of 1966 (MRTP). This was in response to the unrestricted industrial growth in the Bombay-Pune Region and the felt need to have a more integrated and coordinated development of the metropolitan region falling within the influence of Bombay. Under the chairmanship of D. R. Gadgil, a new plan was

formulated which became law as the M.R.T.P. Act. Under this new law, the State Government established a special area known as Poona Metropolitan Region (PMR), and set up a Planning Authority Board for another plan this time for a much wider area than the previous attempts. At last it was understood that planning had to take place in not only the town itself but the hinterland as well.

### **Regional Plan**

The Regional Plan for Pune was finally ready in 1970 and sanctioned in 1976. It was meant for the PMR region, which included the Pune Municipal area; Pune, Khadki and Dehu Road cantonments; the three municipal towns of Talegaon-Dabhade, Pimpri-Chinchwad and Alandi; and 127 villages - a total area of 1605 sq. km and a projected population of two million six hundred thousand by 1991. However, over thirty years have passed since the first Regional Plan was sanctioned; there has been very little progress on its recommendations. The Development Plan, which was to run concurrently with it, also floundered, and till 1992 only eighteen per cent of the Plan was implemented. The problem was that these plans created programs only in physical terms and did not lay down measures for raising funds to implement them - sums required ran into many millions with no means to raise the money in ten or twenty years. Actually, the whole planning and re-planning exercise has been upside down. The Regional Plan should have come first, followed by the Development Plan for Pune, with smaller sector-wise plans and others for the towns included in the PMR.”

In view of the poor performance of the Regional Plan and Development Plan, the government appointed a working group under the chairmanship of Dr. K. G Paranjape, former chief secretary to the government of Maharashtra, to review the problems of implementation, particularly in the provision of infrastructure. The working group in its report reiterated the need for a Metropolitan Authority for Pune since the scope of planning had vastly increased with the inclusion of 36 fringe villages within the PMC. Micro-level surveys and detailed plans are required for each of these villages if haphazard development is to be avoided. This task is well beyond the existing infrastructure available with the Town Planning Department and the PMC. The planning process has been further plagued by frequent and sudden de-reservation of plots, changing their land use from what it had been originally earmarked for. This tendency has been on the rise since the mid-1980s, when urban land values started escalating to dizzying heights and land-sharks and builders manipulated the land market. The builder lobby, with its political connections, often makes a mockery of plans, with land use colors changed overnight with a mere signature. Private greed at the cost of public good makes open spaces disappear; road-widening measures become a farce, as vehicle parking spaces are used up for commercial gain, often with the connivance of politicians and public servants. There seems to be a total lack of political will to safeguard the urban environment, as well as an apathy to lap any resource, human or economic, to positively affect the city's development.

### **The Industrial City**

Meanwhile, undeterred by the failure or success of 'total planning', the city continued to expand, as post-Independence urban areas did elsewhere in India. The Pune of the 1960s was to be transformed from a 'pensioner's paradise' and a center for education and administrative institutions to an industrial city, a growing conurbation.

Earlier, Swadeshi and other attempts had been made to start modern industries in Pune. One or two factories did come up, but these remained sporadic attempts and did not set into motion any continued industrial growth. It was Bombay which was the great industrial center, and it completely overshadowed Pune in economic importance. . But three critical events in the 1960s, acting almost in tandem, propelled Pune into becoming a modern industrial metropolis. The erstwhile Bombay State was divided, and two new states, Gujarat and Maharashtra, came into being. Bombay became the capital of Maharashtra. Around this time, a decision was taken to restrict the growth of Bombay by preventing the setting up of new industries in Metropolitan Bombay. The third event was the establishment of the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC). This institution was to develop an industrial estate of four thousand acres in Bhosari, about fourteen km from Pune on the Bombay Road. Since there were already a few industries located here, this area was chosen as the best to locate future ones. It soon extended in a linear direction. Pimpri-Chinchwad-Bhosari industrial complex is today the largest in Maharashtra, with seven thousand units.

The decision to restrict industrial growth in Bombay, which had reached saturation point, pushed Pune towards industrialization, as the spill-over units were attracted to the city. As the new state capital, Bombay too needed to connect with its political hinterland, since it had lost its geographical hinterland, Gujarat. Pune's proximity and communication links with Bombay, its congenial climate, its educated and skilled workforce and the availability of some basic infrastructure made it an obvious choice for the location of new industries.

The establishment of public-sector Hindustan Antibiotics at Pimpri in 1953 and Kirloskar Oil Engines at Khadki had already pointed to the future. Other units began to move in the 1960s - Ruston and Hornsby, Cooper Engineering Works; and other Swedish and German companies, Sandvik Asia, Buckau-Wolf, Atlas Copco, Alfa Laval and KSB Pumps. But the big gesture came with the shift of giants like Telco and other multinationals like Philips, which put Pune on the industrial map of the country. These industries came up in an axial or linear development along the Bombay-Pune road and railway corridor. This decade set the stage for the heavy industries and high technology which have come to dominate the economic character of Pune today.

There is also a concentration of vehicle manufacturers, which came about in the 1970s and 1980s, with the Tatas, Bajaj Auto, Mahindras and Kinetic Engineering together employing over fifty thousand workers, making Pune the auto capital of the country. Besides the engineering sector, basic metals, electronics, chemicals, paper, plastic, glass and petroleum product manufacturers employ an impressive number of the workforce. The big industries have inevitably also spawned ancillaries. It is ironic that this phenomenal rate of industrial growth was considered a distant dream only a few years before. When Hadapsar Industrial Estate was developed by the PMC and the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, there were hardly any takers for it. While he demarcated a sum of a hundred thousand rupees for its development, the Municipal Commissioner had

remarked that “this has been included in the optimistic belief that one fine day this Cinderella’s Prince Charming will arrive. We can only hope that the sooner some concrete development takes place on this estate the better.”<sup>12</sup>

The support and impetus for this industrial growth came from a number of sources. One agency closely involved with it from the initial stages was the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce and Industries (MCCI). As early as 1935, it promoted the Bank of Maharashtra to finance local entrepreneurs; today it runs useful advisory consultancy and other services. There was also the social overhead capital in the city its complex of research institutions. The contribution of the Pune University itself is considerable, through its affiliated technical colleges; in addition there are computer engineering and professional institutions which produce skilled professionals. The government-run polytechnics and bodies such as Automotive Research Association, National Chemical Laboratory, Central Institute of Road and Transport etc. also provide the research back-up. There are also the research institutions of the defence services like the Armament Research and Development Establishment and the College of Military Engineering, which provide inputs to industry. The software sector has developed in the last five years, with the Government of India’s Department of Electronics selecting Pune as a center for software export. With a direct satellite link-up with the USA, new investments are pouring in.

As industry developed and people were absorbed in the factories, the percentage of people engaged in agriculture in the PMR fell. Pune also witnessed two types of immigration: the impoverished rural labor which came in search of employment either in the organized factory system or in the unorganized tertiary sector of unskilled labor, or for service-oriented jobs; and the white collar, highly qualified professionals from other states, who swelled the ranks of the middle class and demanded quality residential accommodation and services. The latter came from all parts of the country, creating sizable ethnic communities which enrich the city’s cultural life with their own religious and social festivals, emphasizing Pune’s new cosmopolitan garb.

Pune’s industrial development has some peculiarities. It has a diversified structure and is not dependant on one type of manufacture alone. Location wise, the factories are uniformly distributed on all sides of Pune in well-defined pockets. To the northwest of the city lies the Pimpri-Chinchwad-Bhosari-Dehu Road belt, in a linear stretch along the Bombay-Pune highway. To the east, on the road to Ahmednagar, is the emerging Ranjangaon Complex, In the south, industries are coming up along the Satara Road, while within the city they are concentrated along Karve and Shankerseth Roads and in Parvati and Gultekdi areas.

Recently, a ban has been imposed on the entry of large scale units in the PMR, so new units have had to settle on the outskirts of the metropolitan region; but their ancillaries are located within the region.<sup>13</sup> This restrictive policy has led to fragmentation or splitting of the manufacturing sector. Sub-contracting and ancillarization has led to many unproductive union-management conditions. The labor laws which regulated the number of workers for different sizes and types of units favor small and tiny scale industries. This has resulted in the further splitting into smaller and smaller units and some into unregistered, invisible ones to escape the Factories Regulation Act. So the structure of Pune’s industrial development is made up of a core of large scale units which stand out as

islands of high wages and labor organized into trade unions; the ancillaries make up for a sizable amount of production but are dependent on the large-scale units and numerous tiny units (over ten thousand) which are in the non-formal sector. This results in an intensely competitive milieu in which worker safety, social services, pollution control and adequate wages are ignored to cut costs.

### **Pimpri-Chinchwad The New Industrial City**

Any account of industrial growth would be incomplete without a special reference to the case of Pimpri-Chinchwad. Till about the 1950s, these were two sleepy villages along the Pavna River. They had some stone quarries and the latter village was a minor pilgrimage site, with its connection with the saint Moraya Gosavi. After Independence, these two villages got caught up in the urbanization of Pune as they lay along the railway line to Bombay. The National Highway (Bombay-Pune) also cut across the area. Immediately after Partition, a large influx of Sindhi refugees were placed in camps here, while the public sector Hindustan Antibiotics was set up by the Central Government. The latter built a colony for its workers, complete with shopping centers, gardens, schools, a hospital, a theatre, and a regular bus service to Pune proper. Today more than one thousand five hundred industrial units are located there. Some of the large-scale industries, like Telco and Bajaj Auto, have created an environment where workers housing, training and educational facilities are provided within the complex. Tatas also have provided community development programs through employment of women in home-based industries. They converted a tract of barren land into a green oasis by planting trees and creating lakes by impounding rain water. (The two lakes thus created attract migratory birds, and it is no wonder that they became one of the haunts of the celebrated ornithologist, Dr. Salim Ali.)

By and large, however, most workers here got absorbed in the small and medium scale industries, which could not take such a holistic approach to industrial growth. Workers and their families had to fend for themselves and shanty settlements came up around the modern factories. The Municipal Council was upgraded to a Municipal Corporation in 1970 (PCMC), and Pimpri-Chinchwad was brought into the planning process through establishments such as Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC), Pimpri-Chinchwad New Town Development Authority (PCNTDA), and Maharashtra Housing Area Development Authority (MHADA). In spite of the Master Plan sanctioned twenty years ago, the performance of the PCMC on this count has been poor and has added to the haphazard and chaotic growth of this industrial town. Like elsewhere, planning has been reduced to juggling statistical data and making projections for the future, but on the ground, the land-use is changed as most reservations on lands for the use of public amenities have been de-reserved for private gain through political influence or money power. The population of Pimpri-Chinchwad has crossed a million today and the town has grown in a peculiar way. It has a large central core of industries with residential areas enclosing it. The manufacturing belt runs linearly, with the center along the Mumbai-Pune rail and roadway.

Normally it would be the other way round. Moreover, since other amenities like good educational institutions, up-market shopping centers and recreational activities were slow in developing, most people preferred to live in Pune. We find commuters from the dense

residential area of Pune city moving out to Pimpri-Chinchwad in large numbers. The commuting pattern therefore is very unusual as far as modern urbanization goes, since it starts from the central residential areas to the peripheries. The hordes of cyclists and two-wheeler commuters swirling out of the old city in the morning and homing-in in the evening are a familiar sight to Puneites.

Though now there is a large residential labor drawn from the surrounding area (mostly in shanties), students, shoppers, and those with official work also pour into Pune's center. This causes heavy cross-commutation, and a confusing, often chaotic traffic flow between the two towns. Comprehensive planning could have reduced this, but the dreams of planners to make it into an 'ideal industrial city' floundered as its growth was so fast that it left the planners behind.

Even though the Pimpri-Chinchwad New Town Development Authority (PCNTDA) was set up as per the Regional Plan (1976), it was not able to provide infrastructure and housing to the projected half a million people - nor could it curb unregulated growth. The result is that Pimpri-Chinchwad neither developed as a twin city of Pune, nor is it an industrial satellite. It has an amorphous character which is neither aesthetically pleasing nor functionally efficient. The PCMC's role as coordinator of the various planning bodies like MIDC, PCNTDA, MHADA etc. has not met the expectations of the people.

The Corporation's concept of development is more towards creating a grandiose multi-storeyed Singapore-style vegetable market, or a granite coated stadium, while basic facilities like roads, sewers, and water-supply or slum rehabilitation are neglected. Moreover, since a large number of people who work in the industries of Pimpri and Chinchwad live in Pune, the PCMC collects all the taxes while Pune provides the infrastructure for both, those living in the city as well as those who live in Pimpri-Chinchwad. Though the industrial belt has led to widening of the economic base of the city, in terms of improved infrastructure and a better quality of life, its effect on Puneites has been virtually negative.

### **Transport Trauma**

An important issue that has exercised the minds of planners as well as citizens is the lack of public transport. The bus service is totally inadequate for the growing numbers. A proposal to setup a unified Transport Authority by merging the Pune Municipal Transport with the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Transport has yet to get the approval of both the civic bodies. Similarly, the recommendation for a High Capacity Mass Transportation System (HCMTS) for the Metropolitan Region is still pending. Besides this, a number of road widening schemes along with a number of bridges across the river and flyovers at traffic junctions are being sanctioned to ensure smooth flow of traffic within the city. Despite all these grandiose schemes, the need for adequate transport is being felt acutely, ever since suburbanization has taken people to the instant suburbs. Once well-known for its hordes of cyclists, Pune soon became the deal for the motorized two-wheelers of all kinds - mopeds, scooters and motorbikes. In the absence of a proper bus service which provided an adequate and reasonably cheap transport system, workers, students and younger professionals have had to go in for their own private vehicles. The only other form of transport is the three-seater auto-rickshaw. These are expensive for the common man and they contribute to the general indiscipline of road traffic. Of late, six-

seater rickshaws have made their appearance too. A growing number of cars are being seen on the Pune roads every year, due to a rather prosperous middle-class.

The various modes of transport, all with their different speeds, have clogged the roads and have contributed to air pollution. At peak hours, the pollution level is so high that many two-wheeler drivers have to use pollution masks or wrap up their faces to filter the air they breathe. On top of all this, Pune also acts as a 'funnel' for the flow of goods between Bombay and regions to the south and the east. Heavily polluting through traffic, mostly trucks of various kinds, which bring no economic bounty to the city, are allowed to plough through the very heart of the city, adding to the chaos on the roads and to the air-pollution. It is now proposed to construct a northerly diversion to the National Highway between Talegaon and Loni Kalbhor to by-pass Pune.

In spite of all the plans and good intentions of planners, the ground realities always defeat them. A sort of *laissez-faire* attitude pervades in which individuals are forced to look out for themselves and never have time or inclination to think of the general good of others. Whenever confronted by the growing number of vehicles and almost total indiscipline of the traffic, the first solution is widening of the roads. Planners go on planning only for vehicular traffic and hardly any thought is given to the pedestrian. Consequently, footpaths get narrower and jay-walking is the only option left for pedestrians. Corruption and apathy in Municipal administration allows commercial establishments to break building bye-laws with impunity. Basements and parking lots are converted to commercial use as cafes, restaurants and hawker zones, while cars have to be parked on busy thoroughfares, making a mockery of the whole exercise of road-widening. Law enforcement authorities either lack the political will or are too inefficient to prevent this rampant use of public space for private greed. In the Revised Development Plan of 1991, concrete steps are being taken for pedestrianization of the old city and an independent cycle network to ease intra-city movement in (the compact core areas is being planned).

As Pune expands and the agricultural land around it becomes urbanized, farmers either move out or become laborers in the new factories. It is literally more lucrative for them to sell their soil for the making of bricks or the stones for buildings than actually trying to grow produce on the barren land. The ditty at the beginning of this chapter, though about seventeenth century London, could just as well refer to present day Pune or any other fast-growing Indian city. (However, in spite of the creeping concrete jungle around them, parts of the fringe villages remain unaltered as distinct islands of rurality, in Kothrud, Bhamburda, Wanawadi, etc.)

The city also has moved away from its one beautiful natural resource, the river. The Mula-Mulha has been degraded and polluted by sewage, garbage and chemical effluents that are allowed to flow into it; and its waters remain virtually stagnant throughout most of the year due to the dams and bunds upstream. The decision to create a flood-control line where no buildings were allowed ultimately led to the city turning its back to the river. The river front, which could have provided much needed recreational areas, and allowed citizens some respite from congestion, was taken up unnecessarily by two broad (100 feet) roads by raising the height of the banks on either side and building massive retaining walls. Puneites and the river were thus permanently separated.

Today, the only open spaces with an abundance of trees are the three cantonments, especially the military and bungalow areas. Though it has been postulated that (he cantonments were an obstacle to the logical development of the city in (he east and northeast, they are actually playing the role of a green bell or lung while the concrete jungle rapidly encircles them. With their low density settlements, they create 'cool pools' in the midst of the healed concrete fabric. The government of Maharashtra has now adopted some Special Development Control Rules to allow development in the green belts and hill slopes. Already private developers are putting up large townships and dormitory suburbs in the fringe areas. One fears that the new policy may lead to a degradation of Pune's hills - so dear to Puneites.

### **Demise of the Wadas**

Meanwhile, with the spread of the suburbs, the inner city began to be neglected. The old core of the Kasba, and the other older wards like Somwar Peth have a distinct look of typical urban blight. The graceful *wadas* could no longer be maintained by their owners their timber frames were attacked by woodworm and the plaster on the brick walls peeled off, leaving large parts of the facades open to ravages of rain while the damp creeps into the rooms. Economic reasons were not the only cause of the blight which descended on the *wadas*. Though many of the old families did find it difficult to keep up the maintenance, the family structure itself has changed over the last few decades. The joint family is no longer the basic structure of society. As younger members moved out of the Kasba and the ancestral *wada* with their small nuclear families, they looked for a different quality of life in the new suburbs. The social base of *wada* life itself has broken down. The older couples who were left behind found it difficult to maintain the old houses.

Subsequently, the *wadas* were let out to others not as a whole, but in tenements of one or two rooms. Modern technology in the form of flush toilets and water taps had to be added on quickly before renting out the rooms. These were built without any aesthetic considerations, as cheaply as possible. The large courtyards were thus disfigured with unsightly whitewashed toilet blocks. Rooms were partitioned and sometimes more than twenty families occupied a *wada*. Litigation regarding property amongst the owner's family members increased the problem of maintenance. The *wadas* were orphaned, so to speak, with no one willing to take the responsibility of looking after them. Small or large, they soon looked dilapidated, and the city core, though still densely packed, was avoided by the upwardly mobile as a place of residence.

The Development Plan of 1981-91, in an effort to decongest the old city, has a proposal to shift the steel and timber markets to peripheral areas; this has not happened so far. Today, there is some renewal in the blighted core, but the new concrete structures, faceless and ugly, have to follow the Floor Space Index and building bye-laws. These require set-backs and other such restrictions. As a result, the 'match-box' housing that is replacing the older housing stock is destroying the street facade and the unique architectural fabric of the old city. Vast areas of the city and the suburbs are now the happy hunting ground of the promoter-builder, whose prime motive is profit and a desire to maximize the use of every square inch of space available with the Floor Space Index, or by violating the laws.

The rising numbers of the upwardly mobile middle class in Pune create their own demand for ostentatious designs, and for modern comforts. Living in single bungalows is a luxury which only the very rich can afford any more. Puneites are reconciled to layered living in apartment blocks, flats, duplex and row-houses with marble flooring and fanciful designs; which are the demand of this class. The industrialization of the city has also increased the demand for hotels of various grades. These compete with each other in glitzy exteriors clad in Dholpur stone, foyers in shiny granite and interiors of pure kitsch, often inspired by the fantasies of Hindi film sets. This kind of architecture feeds the market and is of course dependent on the forces of supply and demand. The facades are usually a mixture of florid ornamentation without relevance to the older buildings around it or to the city's historical-architectural fabric. In the commercial areas, shopping complexes, hotels and apartment blocks mock at the Floor Space Index Regulations. Of late, a new kind of symbolism has evolved for commercial structures, a post-modernistic eclecticism, where European classical elements, pediments, gables, Tuscan and Corinthian columns reproduced in RCC seem to depict corporate or commercial hubris.

This form of architecture has lost touch with reality and with the roots of the architectural tradition in the city. Not only is the wonderful human scale of the past architecture lost, the new buildings are divorced from both the history and the culture of Pune. The post-modernist fantasies in chrome and glass defy the laws of gravity and dwarf the human shopper. The opportunity to create a coherent urban form with a symbiotic relationship with the life of Puneites and their traditions seems to be slipping by. The *laissez-faire* development which has taken place in Pune during the last ten-fifteen years, fuelled by new found prosperity and building boom has swamped the city with ubiquitous and ugly apartment blocks.

### **Outstanding Architecture**

Fortunately, all is not lost, as at the other end of the scale, some outstanding contemporary architects have created a few modern buildings in touch with Pune's heritage as well as completely modern in architectural language. Their designs are examples of deep thought and a concern with the climate and tradition of the place. As an example, we can cite the buildings of Charles Correa in Pune. The most outstanding is the Inter University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) within the campus of the Pune University. Its bastion-like walls, its central court, its individualistic use of color, and the statues of eminent scientists makes it one of the most successful modern buildings of Pune, without divorcing it from the context of its surroundings. The *samadhi* of Kasturba Gandhi at the Aga Khan Palace, designed by the same architect, is symbolic in its dignified simplicity.

Another noteworthy structure is the National Institute of Bank Management (NIBM) at Kondwa. Architects Kanvinde, Rai and Chowdhury have built a modern complex, and yet it does not arrogantly stress its modernity; neither does it try to copy the traditional architecture. It succeeds in blending with the terrain by using the local stone and somehow creates a rootedness to the city's past. There are a few other such buildings, which have shown the way as to how architects can be original and individualistic, yet build within the context of their surrounding architectural heritage. They accepted the tact that their buildings have a relationship with Pune and its traditions. Above all they

avoided the architectural rudeness of juxtaposing multi-storeyed futuristic blocks which defy gravity in neighborhoods where traditional buildings, serene with the patina of ages, created a streetscape which was human in scale.

Other such structures which show how the architect's individuality can be used without copying the past or forgetting the surroundings are the Yashwant Rao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YASHDA) by the famous B. V. Doshi, The National Insurance Academy by Kanvinde, Rai and Chowdhury; the Centre for Development Studies and the Mahindra United World College of India by Christopher Benninger; and the Training Centre for Hindustan Petroleum at Akurdi by Revathi and Vasant Kamath. These and few other architects have shown that it is possible to build modern structures within the context of their surroundings, yet not deny the history or tradition of this city. Fortunately for us, the tribe of architects who are not completely caught up in the consumerist mode and are thinking deeply about the context and meaning of their work is growing. But customer demand also needs to be changed if Pune's architectural heritage and tradition are not to become irrelevant. To be only driven by market forces and the pursuit of glitz is to destroy the carefully constructed and fully evolved local tradition without which Pune will become like any other of the fast growing upstart cities in the country. The second quotation at the head of the chapter which says "it is not right and proper that the new city should be cut off from its moorings" is rather apt for Pune today.

But as the city moves away from its moorings, there is also concern among many thinking citizens to reverse this alienation. In a number of ways, continuities can be traced to the present day. One important symbol for modern Pune is the Shaniwar Wada, built almost three centuries ago. Ageing and decaying though it is, it is used by many institutions as its insignia. To most modern Punees, this burnt out fortress-palace, whose walls alone remain, evokes Pune and all that the city implies- its historical and cultural past.

Despite its growing importance as an industrial city, Pune has also held on to its love for music. Vocal classical music has always had an impressive following in Pune. Even today there are a large number of organizations which present music concerts and festivals, of which the most important is the Sawai Gandharva Mahotsava. A three day soiree held through the night it attracts hundreds of people, young and old including children, who get a chance to hear the great masters at least once a year. The great vocalists Hirabai Barodekar and Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, both of the Kirana *gharana* attract large and appreciative audiences, giving the lie to the pessimists who believe that satellite TV has distorted the musical sense of the younger generation. Pune has also held on to the tradition of theatre, both professional and amateur. A number of groups like the PTA. Theatre Academy, Bharat Natya Sanshodhan Mandir perform in a competitive milieu at a national level. Classical dance, though not so popular, has now been accepted by the middle class, and the number of girls wanting to learn has increased during the years. Marathi Cinema, quite productive in the 1940s and 1950s, has unfortunately lost out to Mumbai. However, the tradition set by the old Prabhat Studio lives on, albeit through a tenuous link the modern Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) continues to spawn many of the country's successful film makers, technicians and artists.

Pune Festival, the new *avtaar* Tilak's community celebrations of Ganesh Utsav, continues to be the most popular cultural event in the city. Thanks to the initiative of the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), reputed artists from all over the country are invited to perform in the ten-day-long cultural extravaganza. A new entrant on Pune's social landscape is the Osho International Commune, which has placed Pune on the world's tourist map. Visited by thousands of tourists throughout the year the commune organizes meditation courses and other activities in the Ashram.

It is heartening to note that, of late, conservation has been a major national concern with the realization that both our natural and man-made heritage is rapidly being lost to unsustainable development. Puneites are usually blamed for an apathetic outlook to their heritage, and their undisciplined squandering of precious natural resources. But lately there is a definite awareness towards these issues among the public as well as planners and architects that it is important to save the built heritage as well as the natural one. A city needs its links with its past and the built heritage is the link between the two and just as important as the trees, the green belts, the river and the culture. By conserving them we do ourselves a favor. It is a very hopeful sign that Pune now has a large number of non-governmental groups (NGOs), associations and clubs who work towards improving the environment and conserving the built heritage. The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), through its Pune chapter, has listed heritage precincts and buildings and strives to preserve the precious ones from meaningless destruction. Among other successful partnerships which have contributed to the city's development is the Pune-Bremen City Solidarity Forum, Pune-Bremen sister city co-operation and the joint research projects of the two Universities. Pune and Bremen have strengthened academic and commercial contacts and have also helped to create a platform for the citizens of these premier cities to exchange and share valuable information in the field of health education, rural development and biogas technology. There are also groups working for better disposal of garbage, popularizing of vermiculture; planting of trees and opposing of meaningless destruction of beautiful trees for road-widening, and other such public concerns. At one recent census of trees it has been found that the tree cover over Pune has increased to two million as people have voluntarily taken up tree plantation drives.

The traditional role of the city with its image of being the quintessential center of Maharashtrian culture has not been lost as its roots run deep into the soil. But at the same time, its branches are spreading wide to bring under its shade many modernities. Puneri *misal*, Chitale's sweets and *bakarvadis*, Kayani's Shrewsbury biscuits and Lakshmi Narayan *chivda* continue to be as popular as ever. These Pune specialties, including the famous Poona saree, figure prominently on every visitor's shopping list. Yet in the last live or six years, orthodox tastes have given way to an enthusiasm for international cuisine. Few restaurants served non-Maharashtrian food in the city until recently. Today, Chinese, Thai, Mongolian, Continental and fast food restaurants do thriving business along with the south Indian *dosa* and coffee shops. Boutiques with fashionable ensembles and shops selling international brand names abound. Thus, though the conservative image of the city remains its overarching one, many elements of city life have changed, as the tradition bound, thrifty citizens who put a premium on simplicity as a way of life take to modern luxuries, through the new eating places and take their pick of the latest cars.

The city has "arrived", in the modern sense of the term. Perhaps no other city of comparable size in India has seen the kind of change that Pune has in the last ten to

fifteen years. From a quiet town, exuding an air of academics, art and culture, to a bustling industrial metropolis, Pune has come a long way. To the labels 'Pensioner's Paradise', and 'Oxford of the East', have been added the 'Detroit of India'. It is today's sunrise city and tomorrow's software capital. In the next millennium, many predict, it will be one of India's gateway cities. Pune is now poised on the borderline: a traditional small city metamorphosing into cosmopolitan urbanism. How carefully it chooses the traditions it wishes to keep and the ones it wishes to jettison, and how much it wishes to embrace the new, only time will tell.

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