



# Know our Great City

## मेरा बडौदा च्यारा बडौदा

Compiled By  
Dhananjay Wagh & Bhavin Parikh

## History

Baroda State has a rich historical background. The ardent historian can trace Baroda's history over 2000 years and more. The first noted history of the city was of the early trader settlers who settled in the region in 812 A.D. The province was mainly Hindu-dominated with Hindu kings ruling till the year 1297. The Gupta Dynasty was the first power rulers of the region. After fierce battles, the region was taken over by the Chalukya Dynasty. Finally, the kingdom was annexed by the Solankis. By this time the Muslim rule had spread across India, and the reins of power were then snatched by the Delhi Sultans. The city was ruled for a long time by these Sultans, until they were easily overthrown by the grand Mughal emperors. The Mughals biggest problem were the mighty Marathas who slowly but eventually took over the region. It became the capital of the Maratha Gaekwads. Sayaji Rao III was the most able ruler of them, and he made many public and bureaucratic implementations in the region. The British had a major influence on the region but Vadodara remained a princely state till Independence and like all other princely states, Vadodara also joined the Republic of India in 1947

## Origin of name

Two thousand years back, there was a small town known as "Ankottak " (present day Akota) on the western bank of river Vishvamitri. The earliest mention of Vadodara is in a granth or charter of 812 that identifies it as Vadapadraka, a village attached to the nearby town of Ankottaka. In 600 AD severe floods in Vishvamitri forced the inhabitants to move to the eastern side of the river to a village known as "Vatpatrak" (Leaf of Banayan tree) which developed into Vadodara. In the 10th century Vadapadraka replaced Ankottaka as the main town.

The city was once called Chandanavati after its ruler Raja Chandan of Dor tribe of Rajputs, who wrested it from the Jains. The capital had also another name "Virakshetra" or "Virawati" (A Land of Warriors). Later on it was known as Vadpatraka or Wadodará, which according to tradition is a corrupt form of the Sanskrit word Vatodar means 'In the heart of the Banyan tree'. It is now almost impossible to ascertain when the various changes in the name were made; but early English travellers and merchants mention the town as Brodera and it is from this that the name Baroda is derived. Again in 1974, the official name was changed to Vadodara. In 1907, a small Village & Township in Michigan, United States was named after **Baroda**.

## **Old Ankotakka**

The early man lived on the banks of the river Mahi. This river must have formed the flood plain during that age. The movements of this “food gathering” parasites on nature, living on the banks of the river, grubbling the roots and killing animals with crude stone tools made out of the cobbles and pebbles available on the river bank, were necessarily controlled by the availability of convenient raw materials for their tools. There are evidences of the existence of early man in the Mahi river valley at a number of sites within 10 to 20 km to the north-east of Vadodara. No evidences however of the existence of this man are found in and around present Vadodara. This may be because of the absence of gravels and cobbles on the banks of the Vishwamitri rivulet.

The next phase of the pre-historic Vadodara witnessed the first human settlement on the right bank of the river vishwamitri on a group of dunes resting on the alluvium of the river. It also means that men knew about where to set up settlements, as they had selected an elevated land. The Vishwamitri must have been prone to seasonal floods even then. These people still belonged to the stone age, crafting their tools with finely grained stones. From their material culture and physical environment, they seem to have belonged to the same culture as those whose implements were found in the Mahi river valley. This human settlement has been dated 1000 b.c.

Around the beginning of the Christian Era, a small township developed at the same spot as the above mentioned settlement on the right bank of the river. It came to be know as Ankotakka (present day Akota), the mound on which this settlement was established came to be known as Dhantekri. The entire settlement was developed by clearing grazing land and forest of Ankhol and covered an area of  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  sq. km. This is indicative of the presence of thick forests during those times. Due to its location on the ancient trade route between Gujarat and Malva, this small township flourished in to a commercial entre. There was a supposed commercial relation between this township and Rome.

The township of Ankotakka developed during the rules of the Guptas and the Vallabhis. It was subjected to periodical heavy floods. But a severe flood which inundated the renovated public hall, forced the inhabitants to abandon this township and move away from the banks of the Vishwamitri.

The event occurred in 600 A.D. The inhabitants moved to the east of Ankotakka to another elevated portion located on the present kothi area. This formed the nucleus of a new township.

## **Recent history**

The City of Vadodara aptly described by a medieval Jain writer as a “Tilak on the Brove of Lata.” was a nodal center of the costal plain of Gujarat. It is strategically situated at a junction of the main highways linking Gujarat with Rajputana and the Punjab in the north, the Malva and the Gangetic valley in the north east, Konkan in the south and Khandesh in the south-east. Significantly Vadodara today is a junction on the western railway of the lines leading to Ahmedabad, Delhi & Mumbai. This confirms the historic role of Vadodara in the communication pattern for movements of people and culture. The history of Vadodara city amply bears out its cultural and commercial activities during the last two thousand years. Apart from the traditional stories, our knowledge of the history of Vadodara is based mainly on Jain literature and a few old inscriptions pertaining to Vadodara.

### **Baroda state in 1909**

Baroda State was a former Indian State in Western India. Vadodara's more recent history began when the Maratha leader Pilaji Gaekwad (or Gaikwar) conquered Sonagad from the Mughal Empire in 1726. Before the Gaekwars captured Baroda, it was ruled by Babi Nawabs, who were the officers of the Delhi ruler. Moghul rule came to an end in 1732, when Pilaji Rao Gaekwar brought the Maratha activities in Southern Gujarat to a head and captured it. Except for a short period, Baroda continued to be in the reign of the Gaekwars from 1734 to 1948. Initially detailed to collect revenue on behalf of the Peshwa in Gujarat, Pilaji Gaekwad remained there to carve out a kingdom for himself. Damajirao, son and successor of Pilajirao defeated the Mughal armies and conquered Baroda in 1734. He assumed the titles of an independent ruler. His successors consolidated their power over large tracts of Gujarat, becoming easily the most powerful rulers in the region. After the Maratha defeat by the Afghans at the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761, control of the empire by the Peshwas weakened as it became a loose confederacy, and the Gaekwad Maharajas ruled the kingdom until Indian independence. In 1802, the British intervened to defend a Maharaja that had recently inherited the throne from rival claimants, and Vadodara concluded a treaty with the British that recognized the Kingdom as a 'Princely state' and allowed the Maharajas of Baroda internal political sovereignty in return for recognizing British 'Paramountcy', a form of suzerainty where the subject of foreign affairs was completely surrendered.

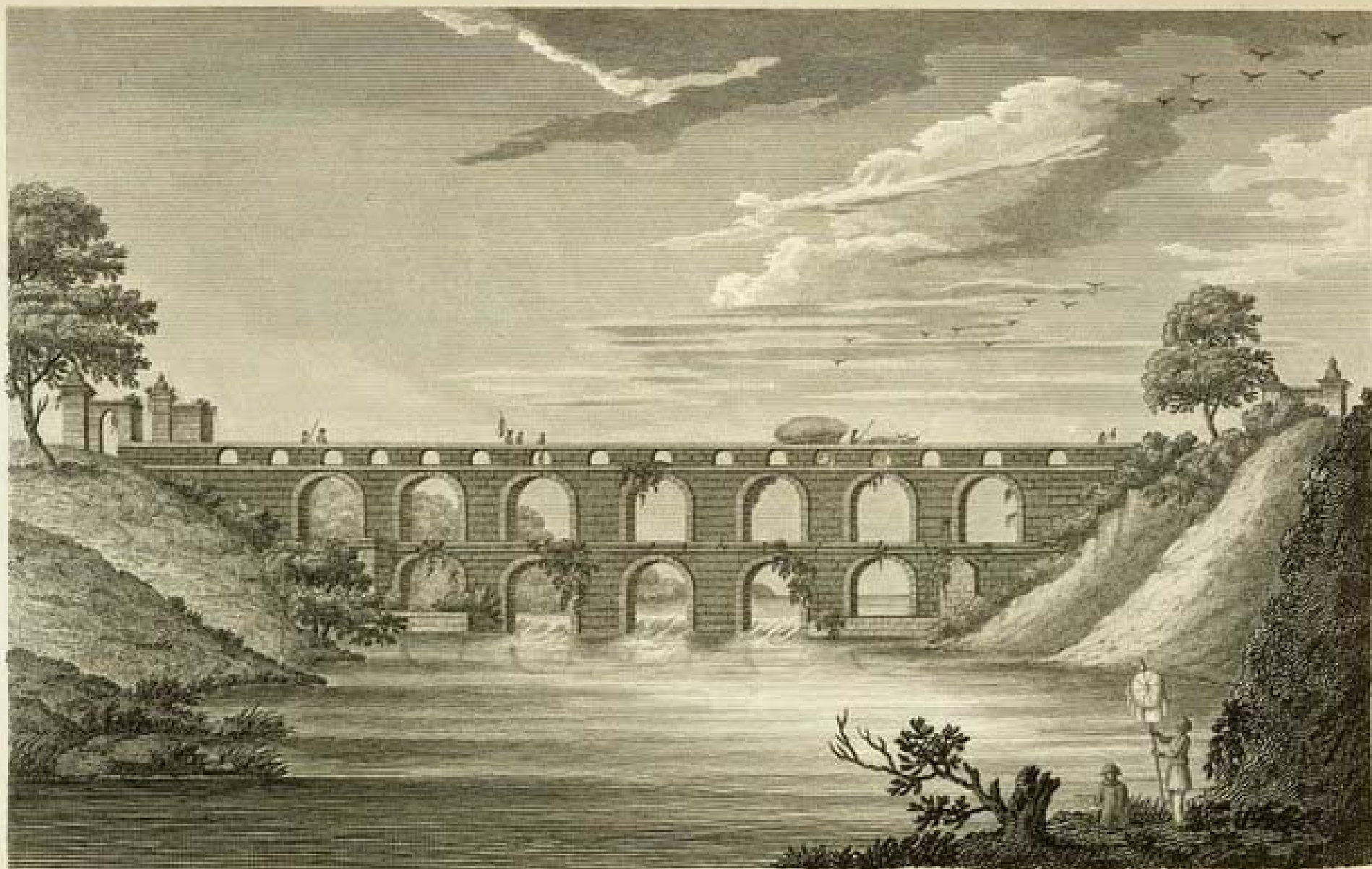
The greatest period in the Maratha rule of Baroda started with the accession of Maharaja Sayajirao III in 1875. It was an era of great progress and constructive achievements in all fields. Maharaja Sayajirao III, who ruled from 1875 to 1939, did much to modernize Baroda, establishing compulsory primary education, a library system, a university, and model textile and tile factories, which helped to create Baroda's modern textile industry. Modern Vadodara is a great and fitting memorial to Maharaja Sayajirao. It was the dream of this able administrator to make Baroda an educational, industrial and commercial centre and he ensured that his dream would come true. For this reason, the city is also referred to as Sayaji Nagari (the town of Sayaji). With India's independence in 1947, the last ruling Maharaja of Baroda acceded to India. Baroda was merged into Bombay State shortly after independence, which was divided into the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra in 1960, with Baroda part of Gujarat.



Few Old Pics from 18<sup>th</sup> century

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Designed by J. P. P.

BRIDGE over the River BISHWAMITRE, near BRODERA.

1783.

1783:- A bridge over Vishvamitri river Presently KalaGhoda

Published by White Columns & Co. Printers, London.

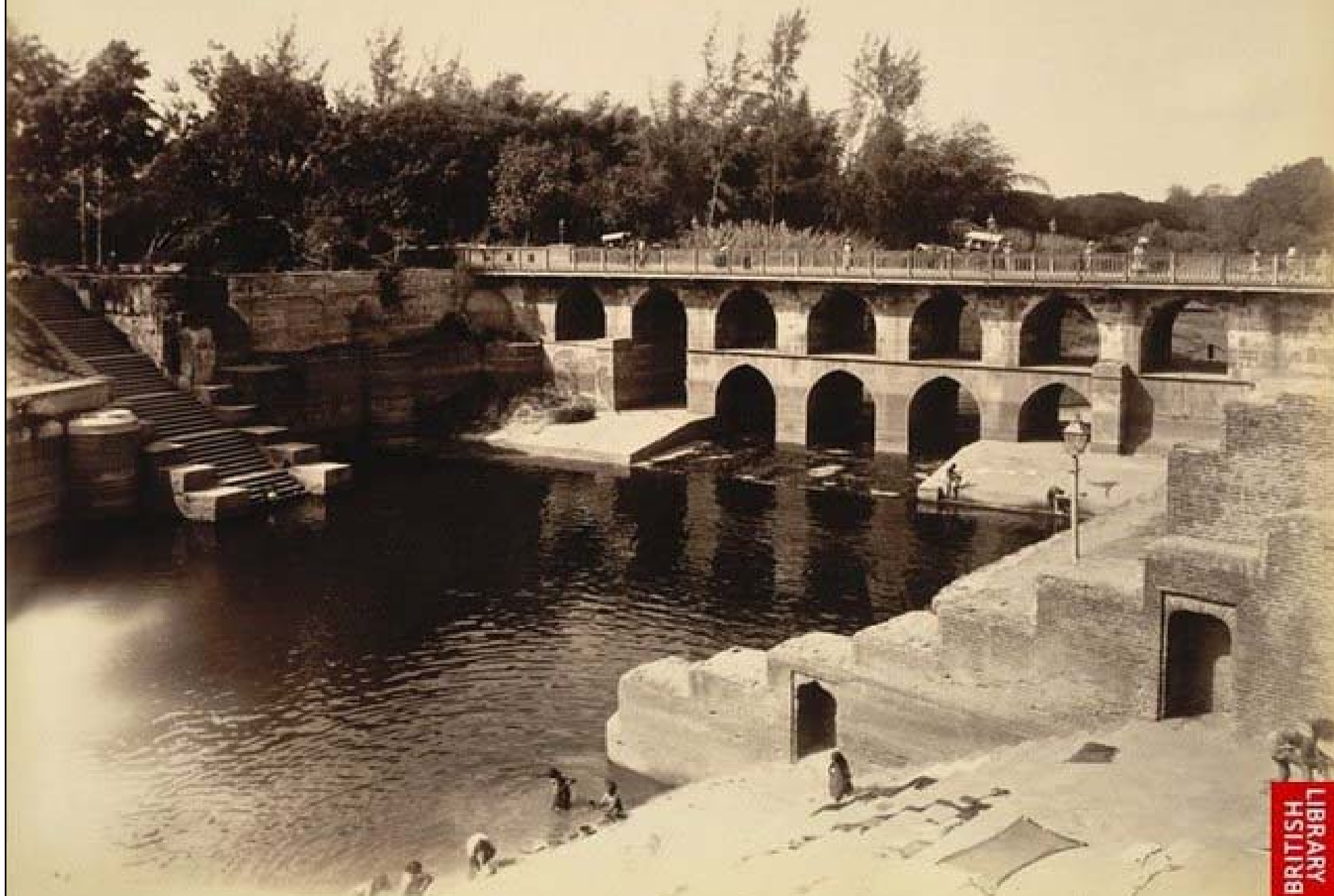


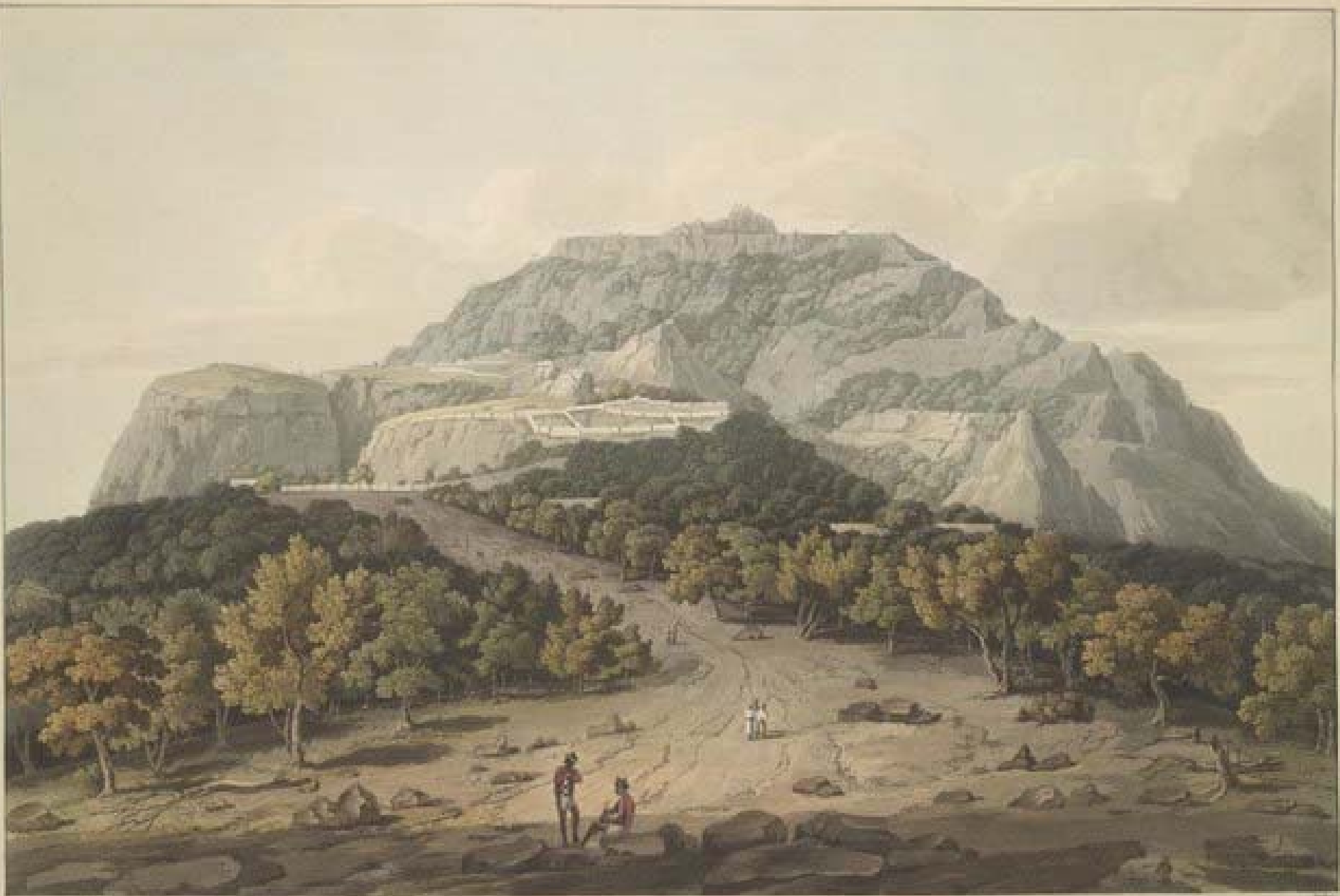
*View of the Bridge near Baroda in Gujarat.*

1806:- A bridge over Vishvamitri river Presently KalaGhoda



1890:- A bridge over Vishvamitri river Presently KalaGhoda





PAVAGARH IN THE PROVINCE OF GUJARAT.

1808:- Pavagarh



1875:- Anglo-Vernacular School Now Music Collage

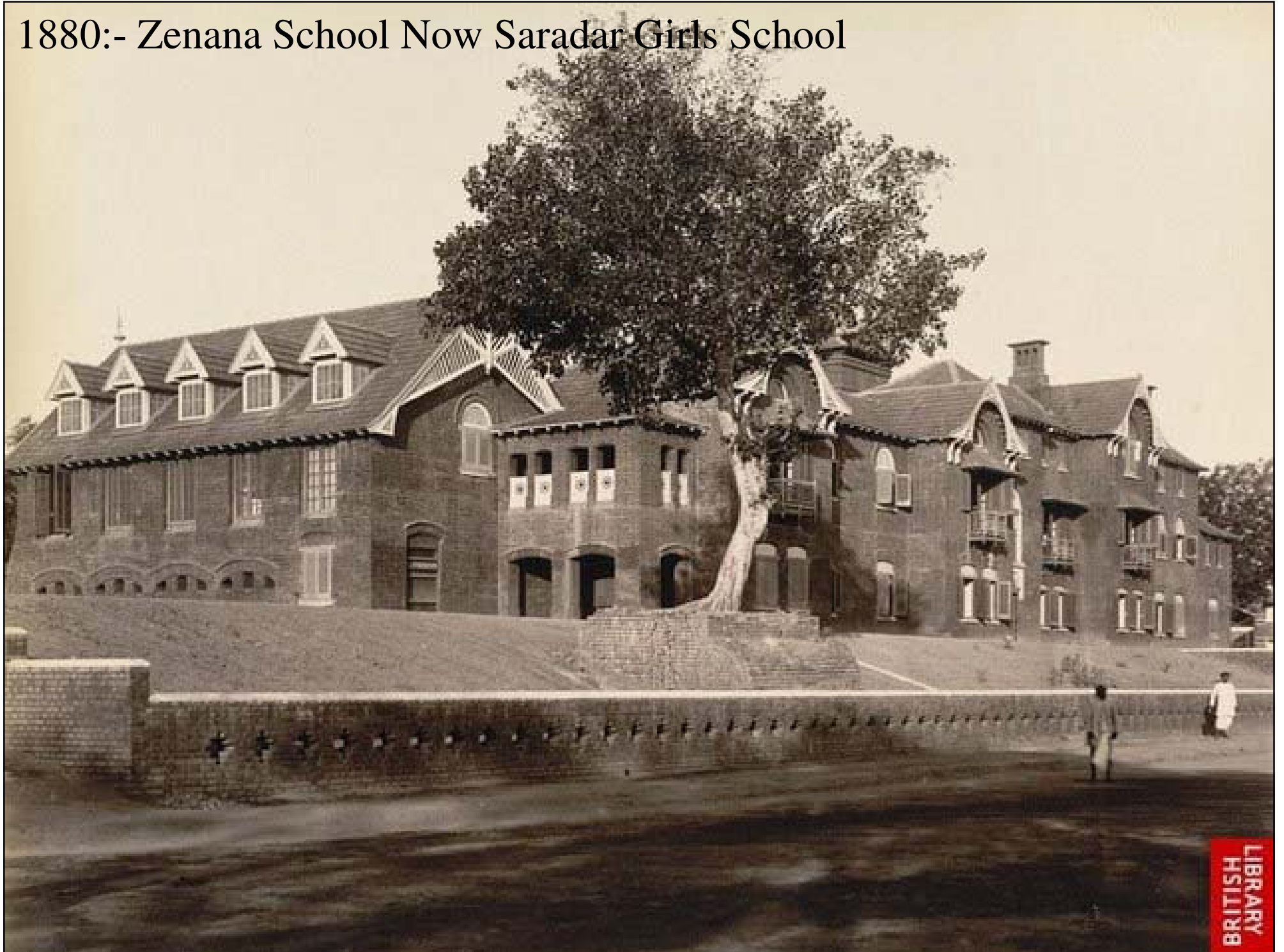
# 1880:- Nazarbaug Palace



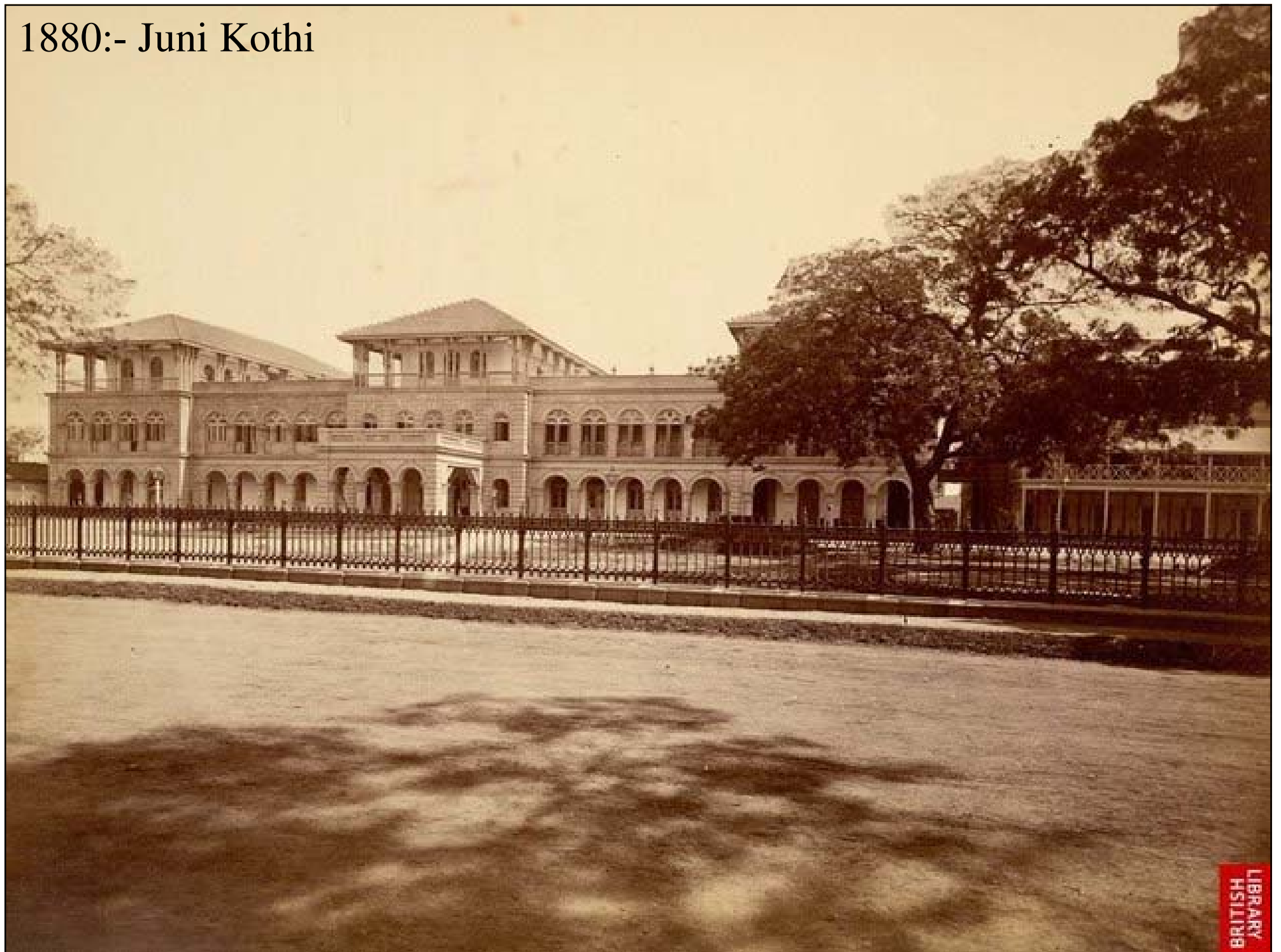
# 1890:- Nazarbaug Palace



1880:- Zenana School Now Saradar Girls School



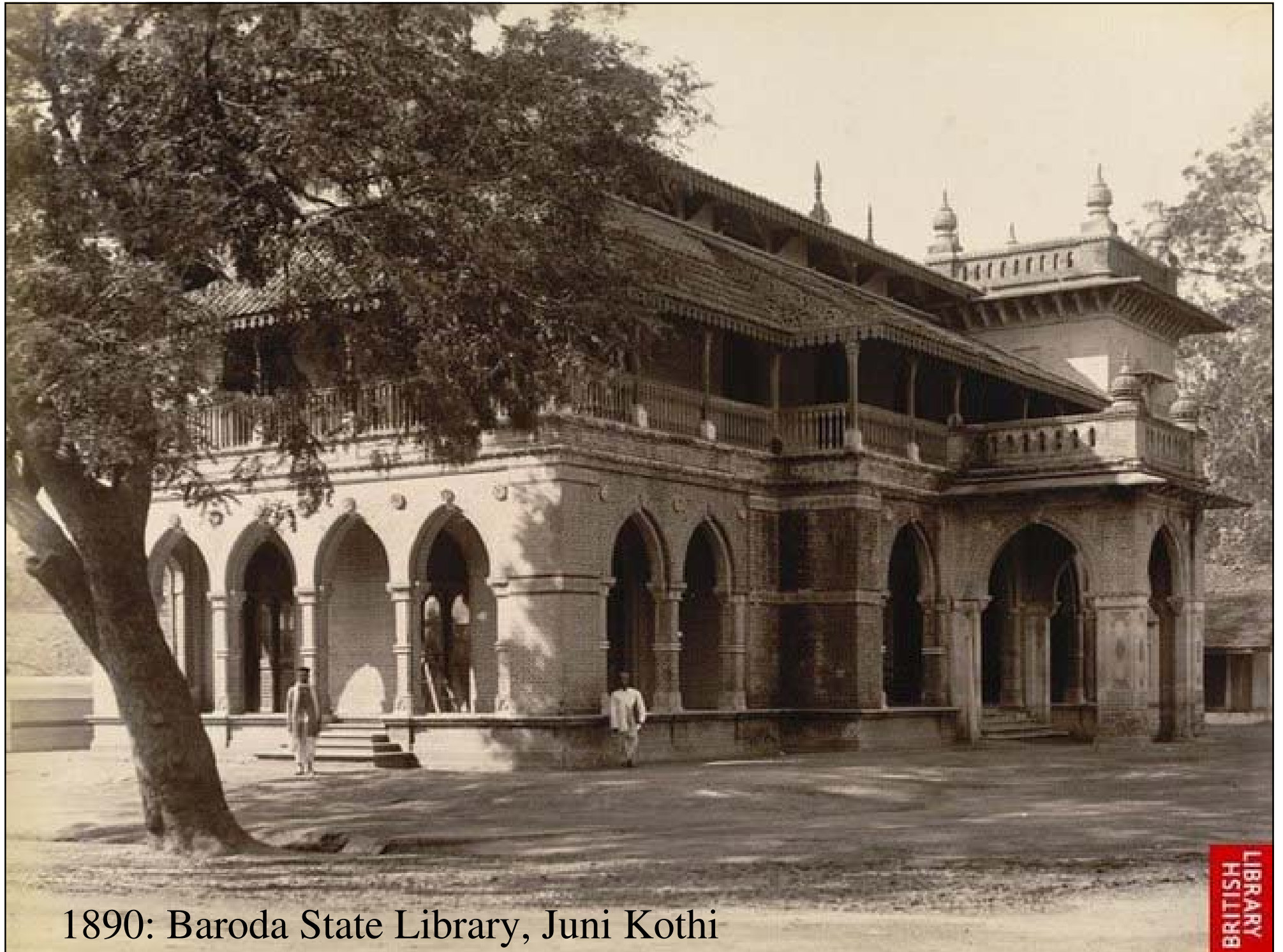
1880:- Juni Kothi



1890:- Juni Kothi







1890: Baroda State Library, Junji Kothi

1890:- Juni Kothi



# 1881:- Central Jail



1890:- Band Stand, Kamati baug



# 1890:- Baroda Museum



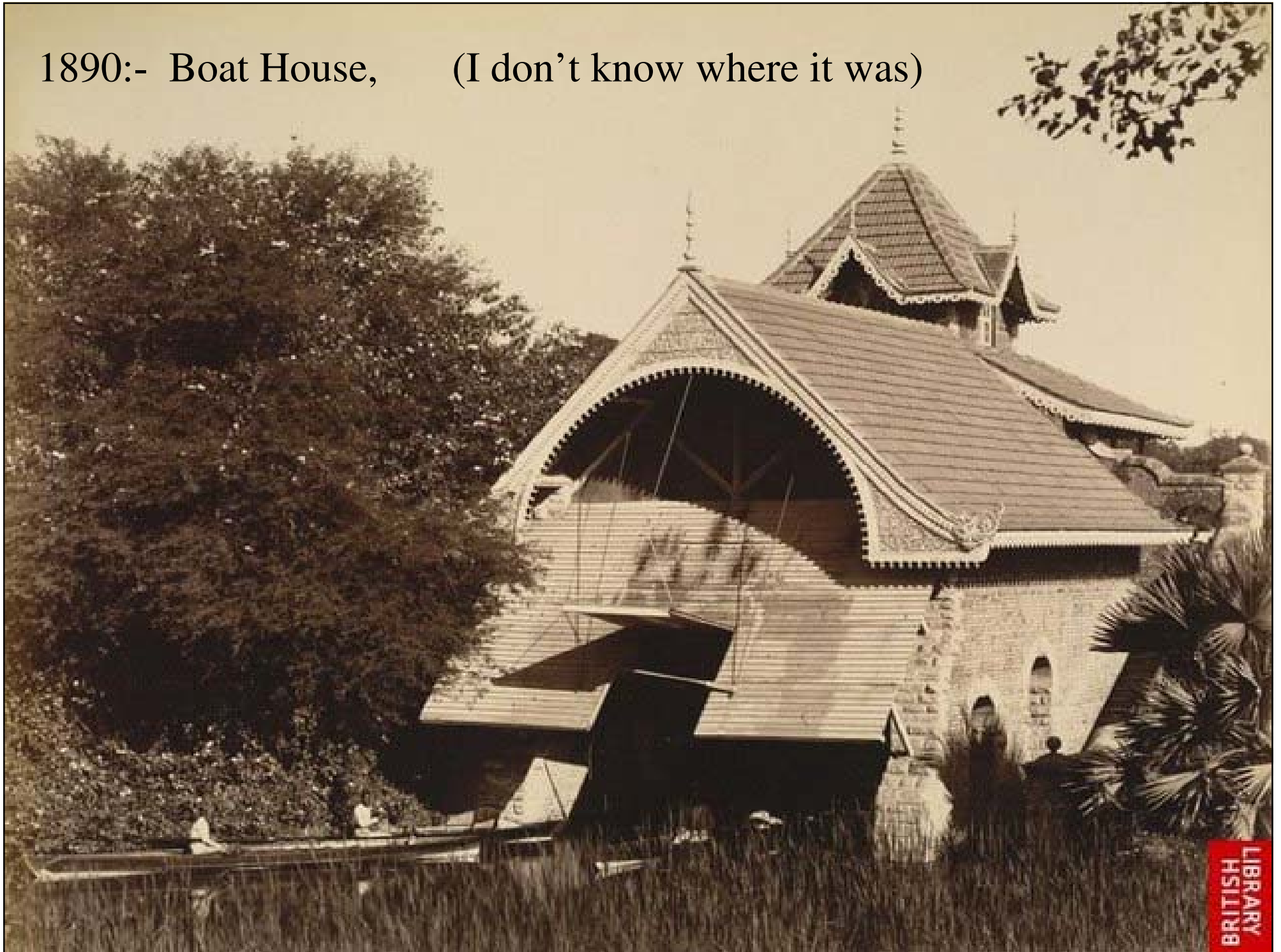
1890:- Baroda Museum



1890:- Baroda Museum



1890:- Boat House, (I don't know where it was)





1890:- Countess of Dufferin Hospital

(I don't know where it was)



1890:- Goldan Ambari ( now Situated in Baroda Museum)



1890:- Goldan Cart ( now Situated in Baroda Museum)



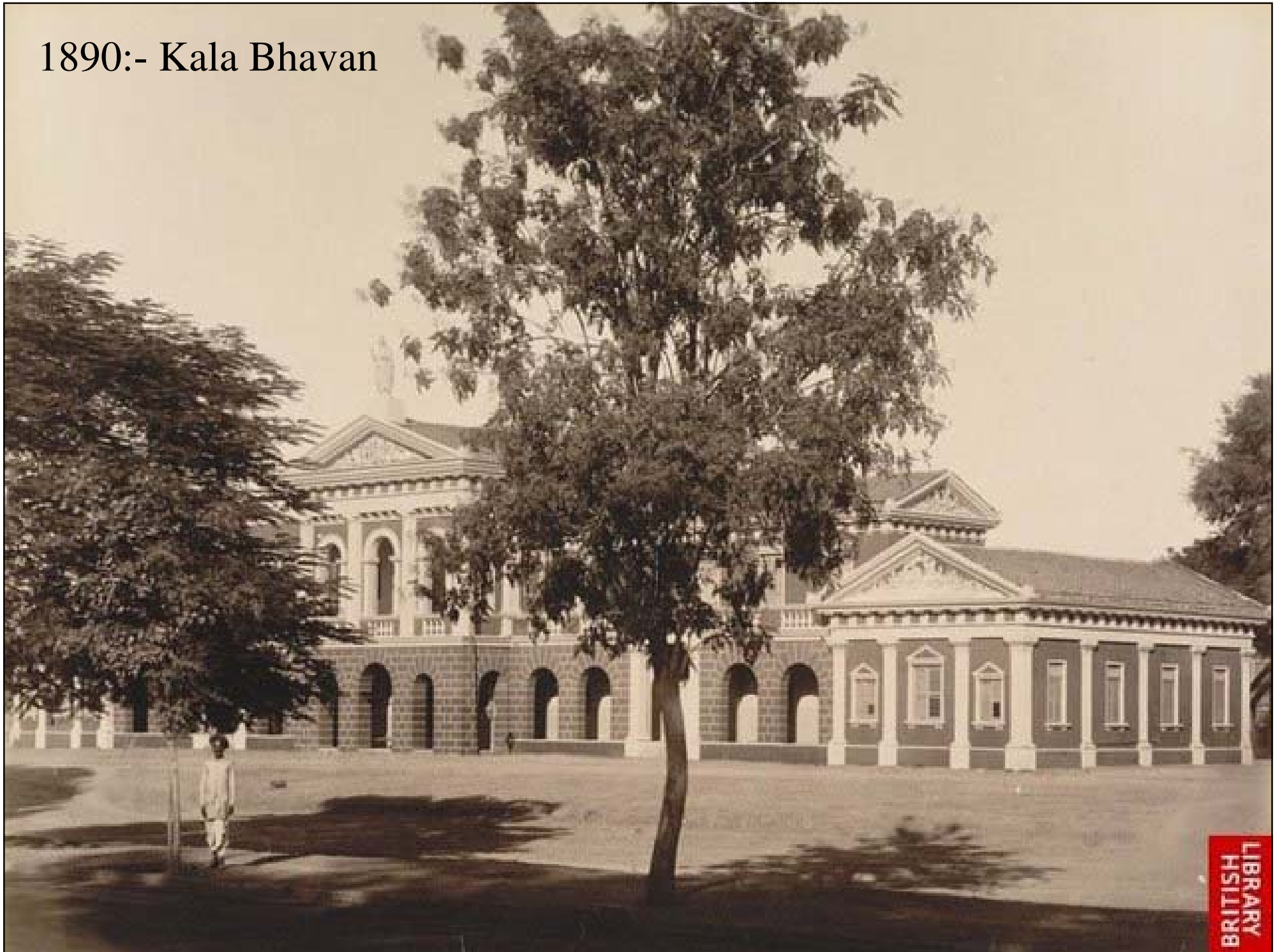
1890:- State Parade



1890:- Cheetah hunting in jungle of Deogadha Baria

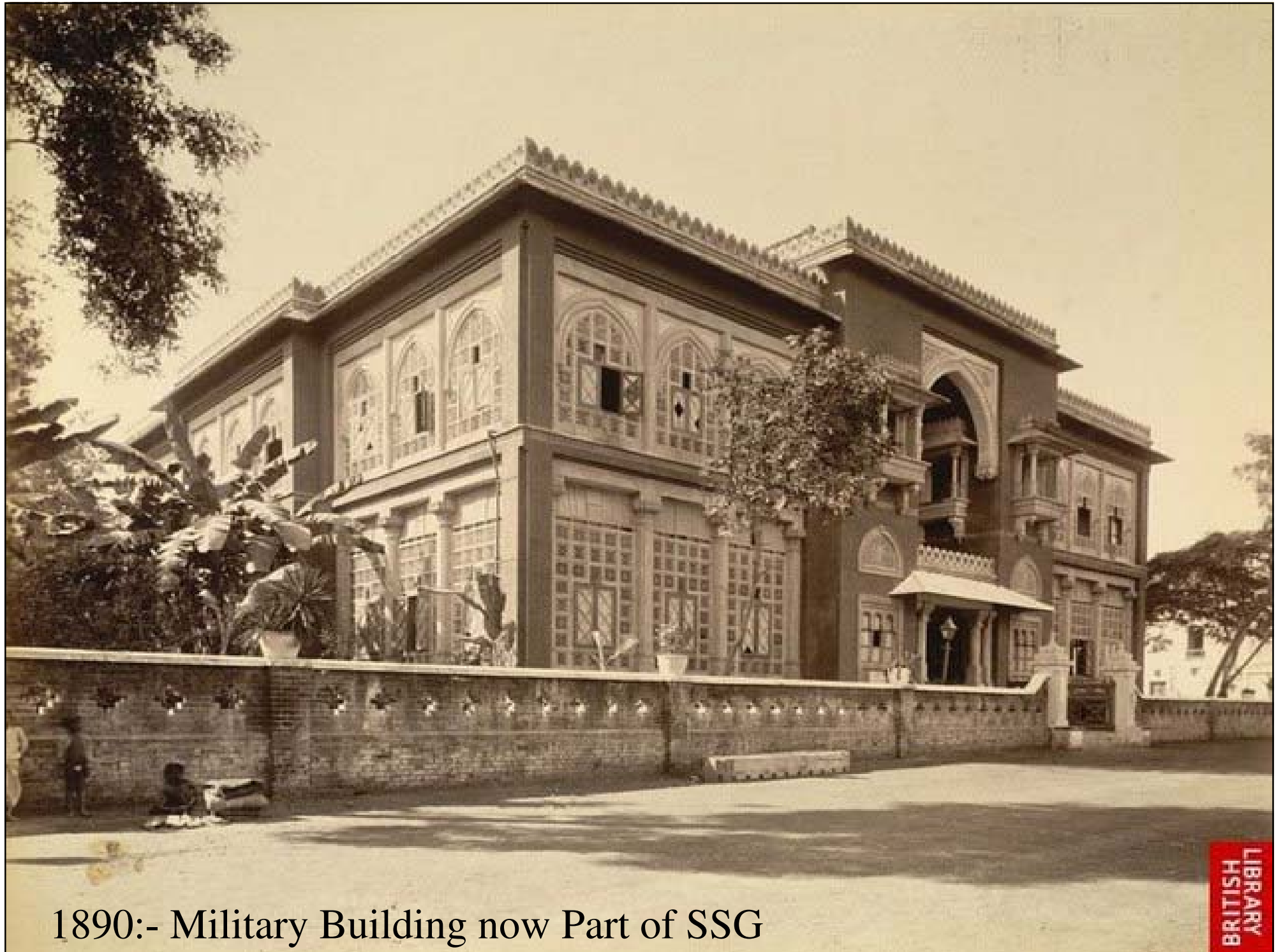


1890:- Kala Bhavan



1890:- Mankari Bhavan ( I don't know where it is )





1890:- Military Building now Part of SSG



1890:- Motibaug Palace





1890:- Officers Club

1890:- Palace Near Mandavi



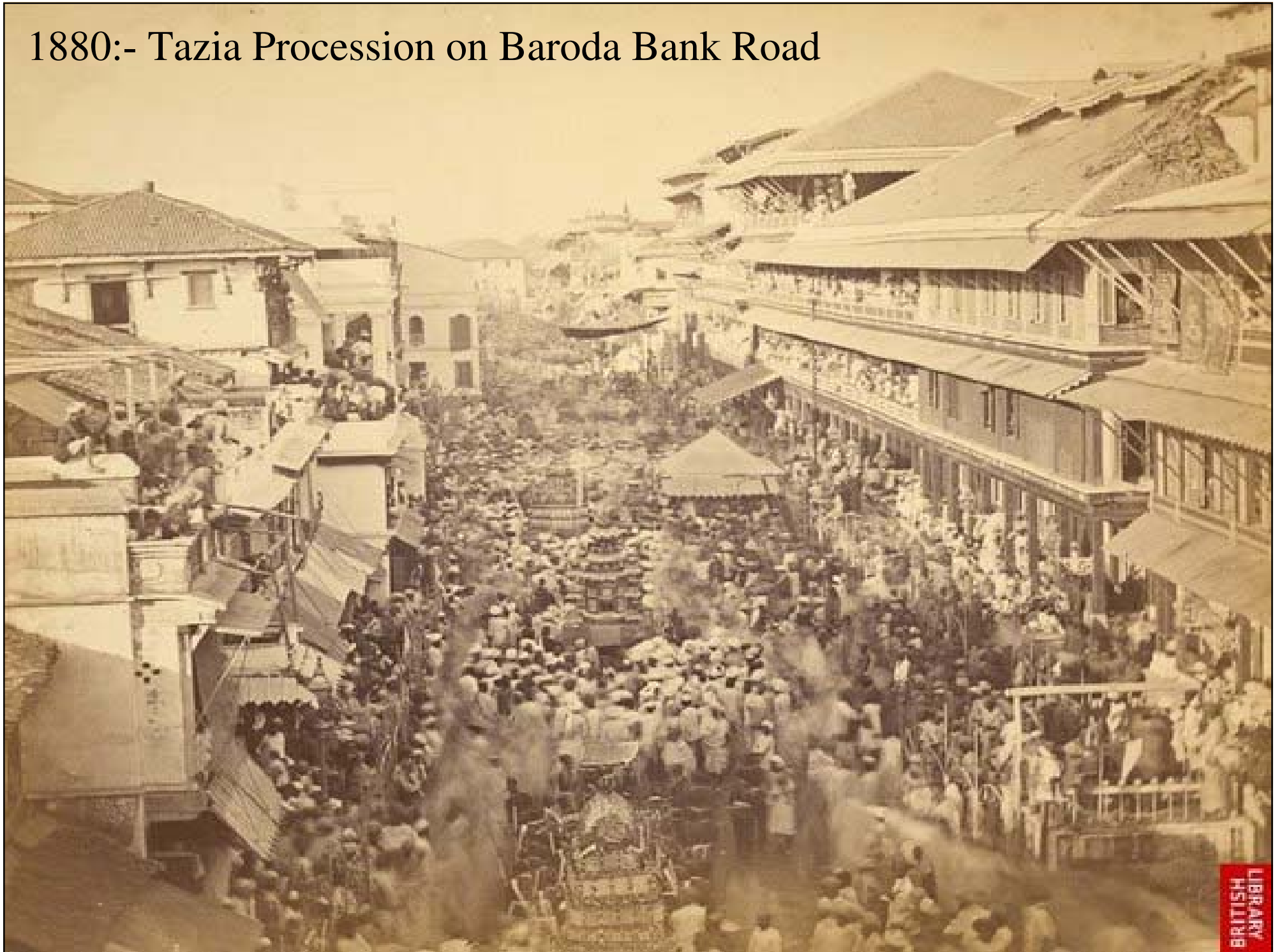
1890:- Mandvi



# 1880:- State Procession on M G Road



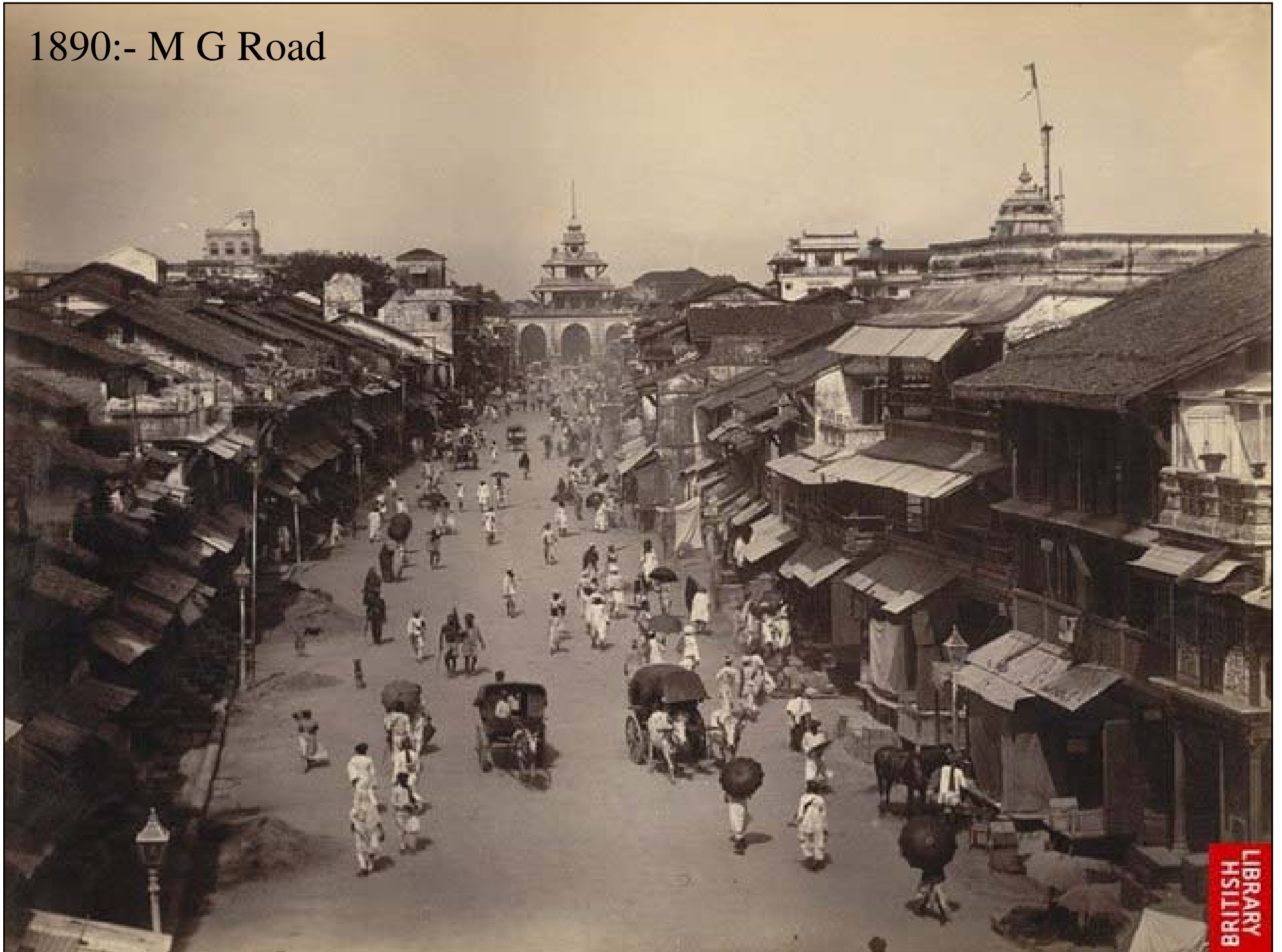
1880:- Tazia Procession on Baroda Bank Road



1890:- M G Road



1890:- M G Road

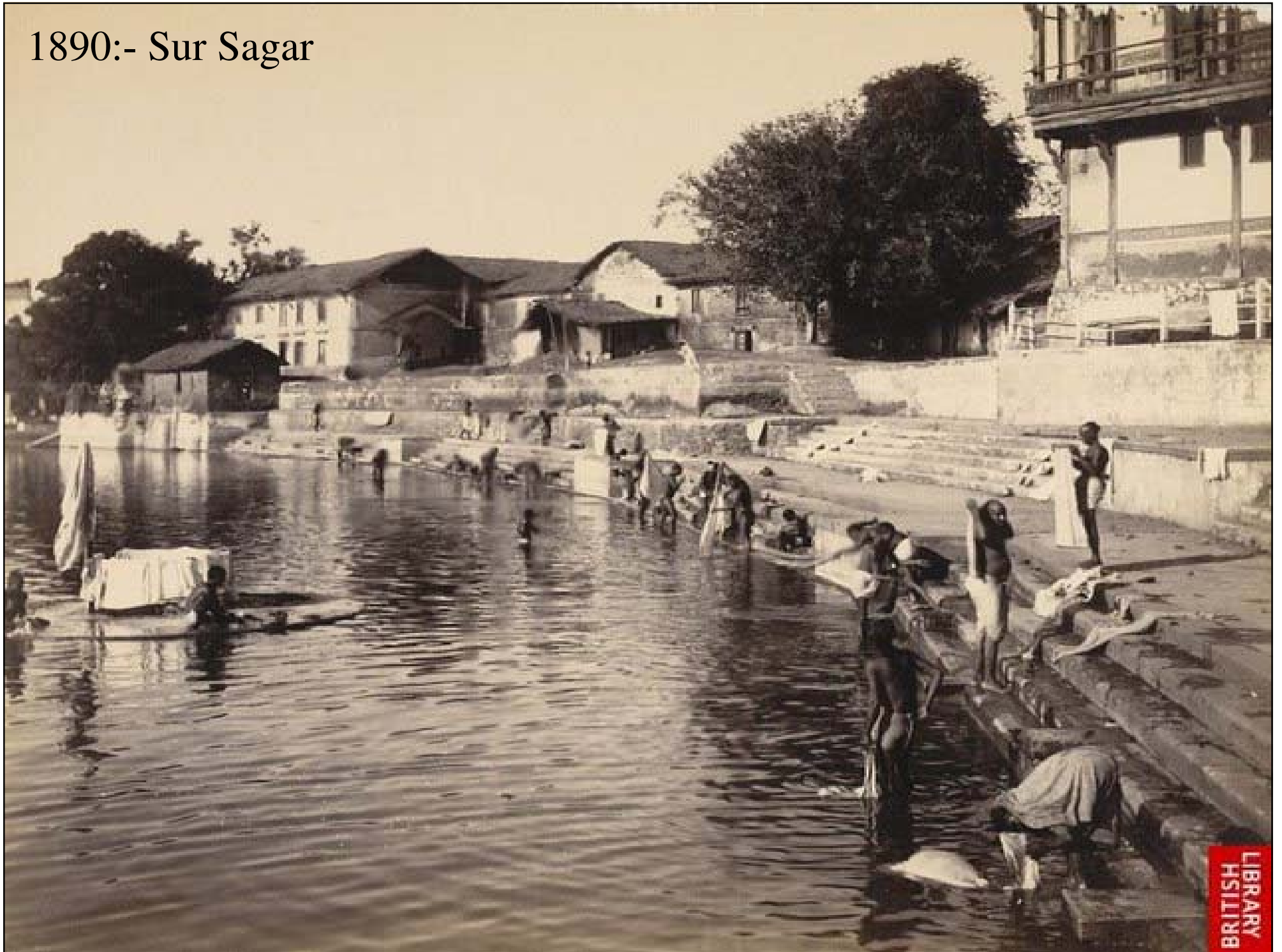




1890:- Sur Sagar



1890:- Sur Sagar



1890:- Chimna Bai Nyay Mandir



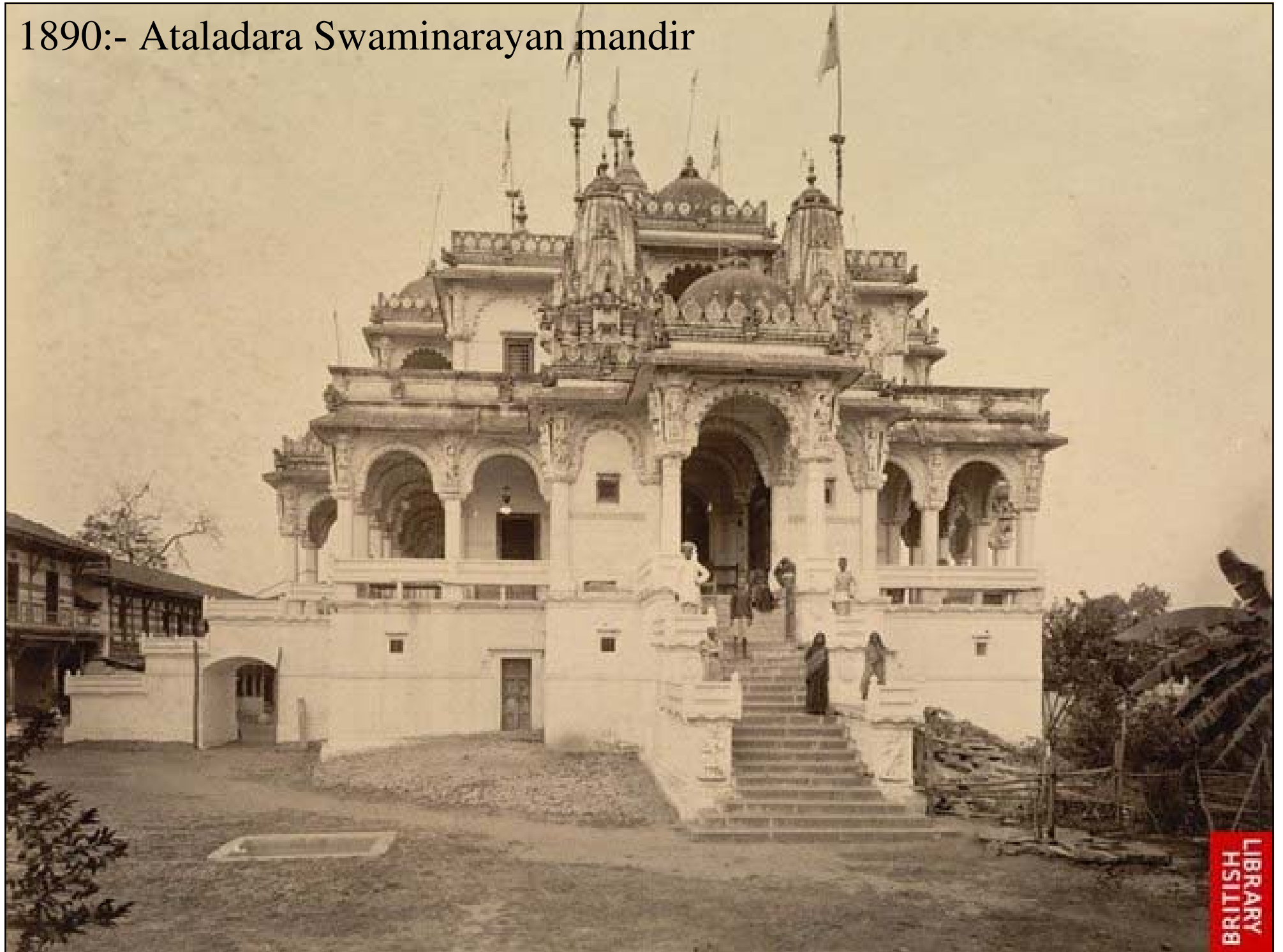
# 1890:- Chimna Bai Nyay Mandir



1890:- Chimna Bai Tower



1890:- Ataladara Swaminarayan mandir



1890:- Ataladara Swaminarayan mandir



1890:- Residency House ( I don't know where it is )

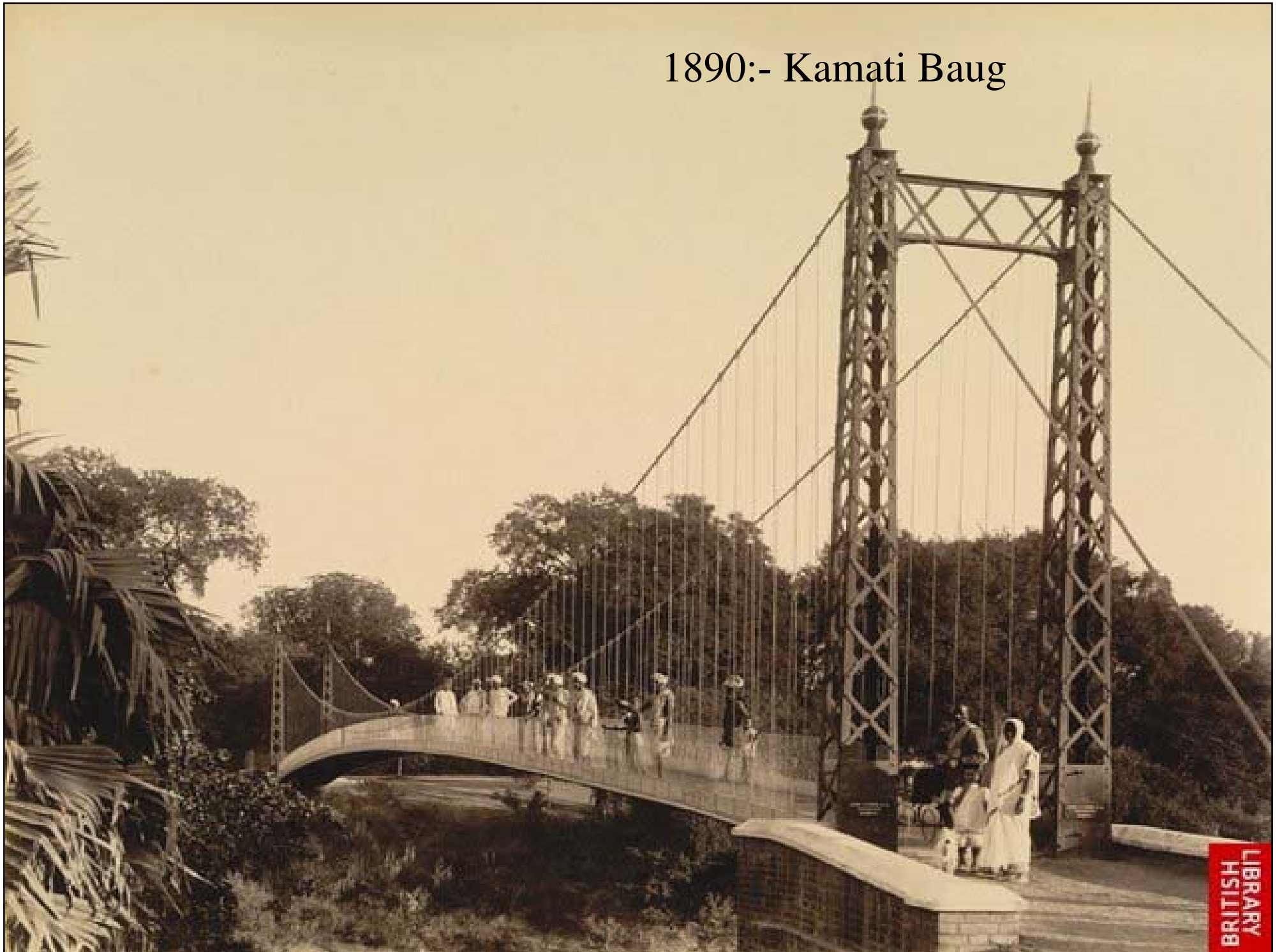




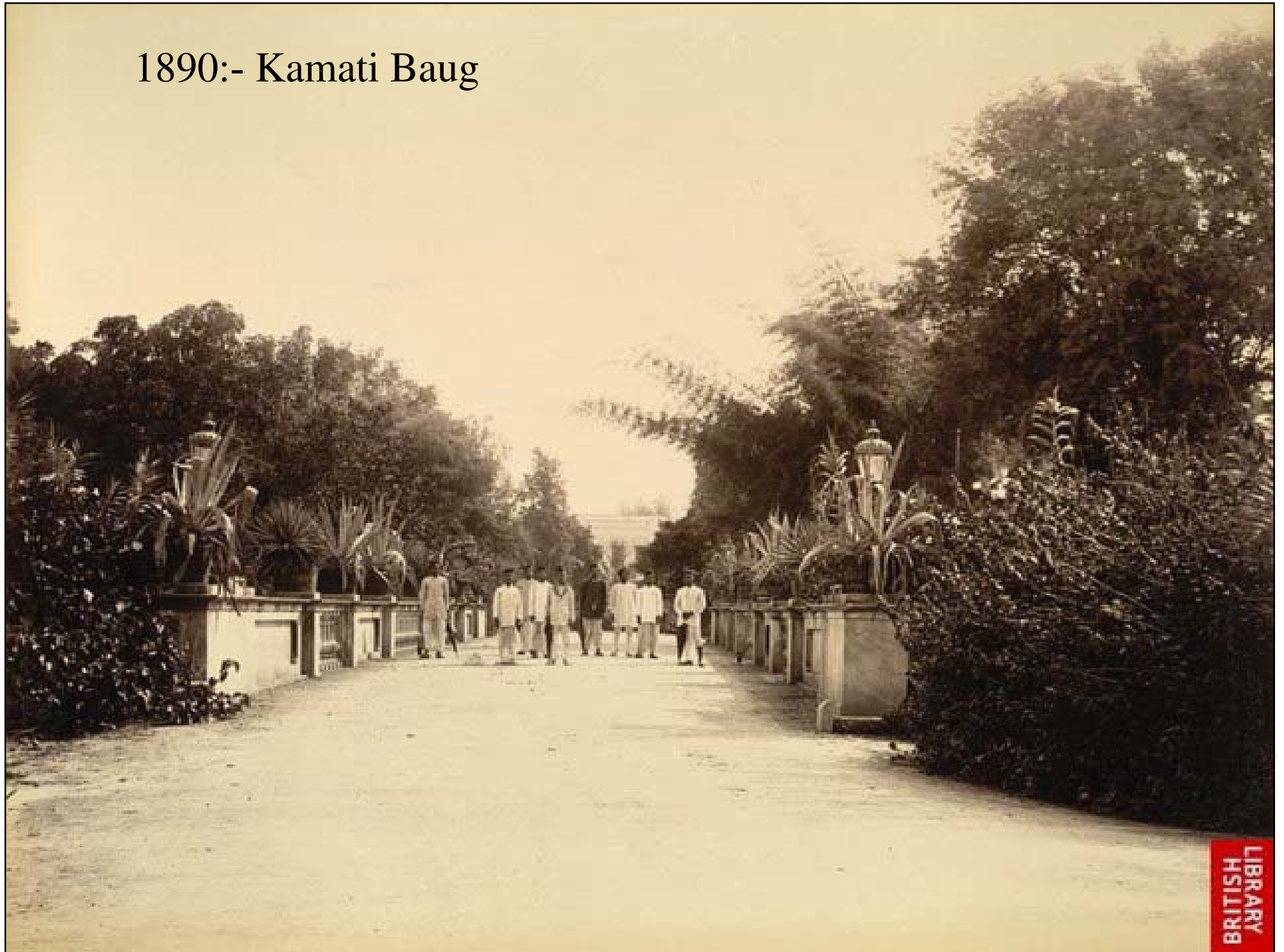
1890:- Kamati Baug



1890:- Kamati Baug



1890:- Kamati Baug



1890:- Kamati Baug





1890:- Kamati Baug

1890:- Kamati Baug



1890:- Kamnath mandir, Kamati Baug



1890:- M S University

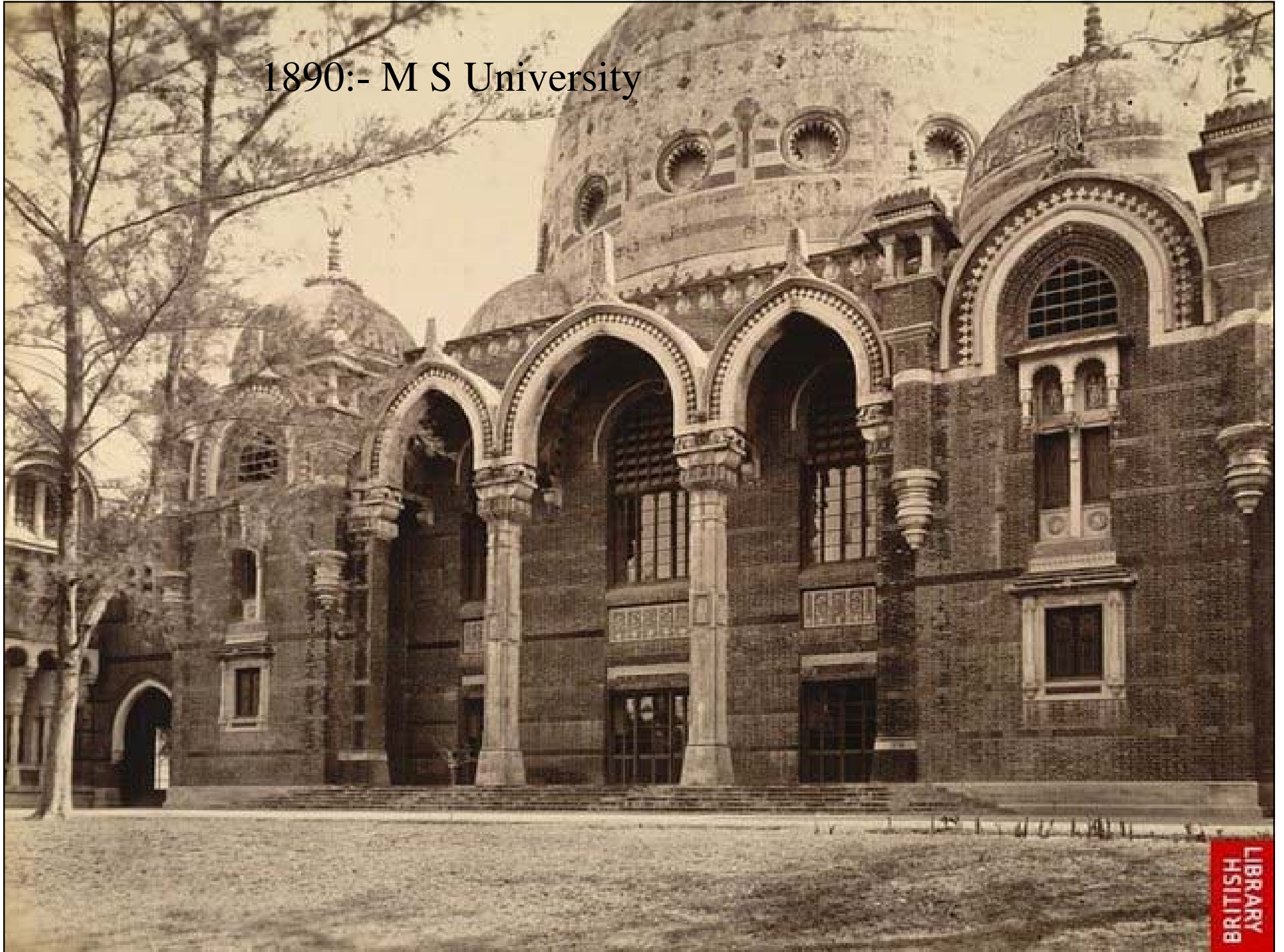


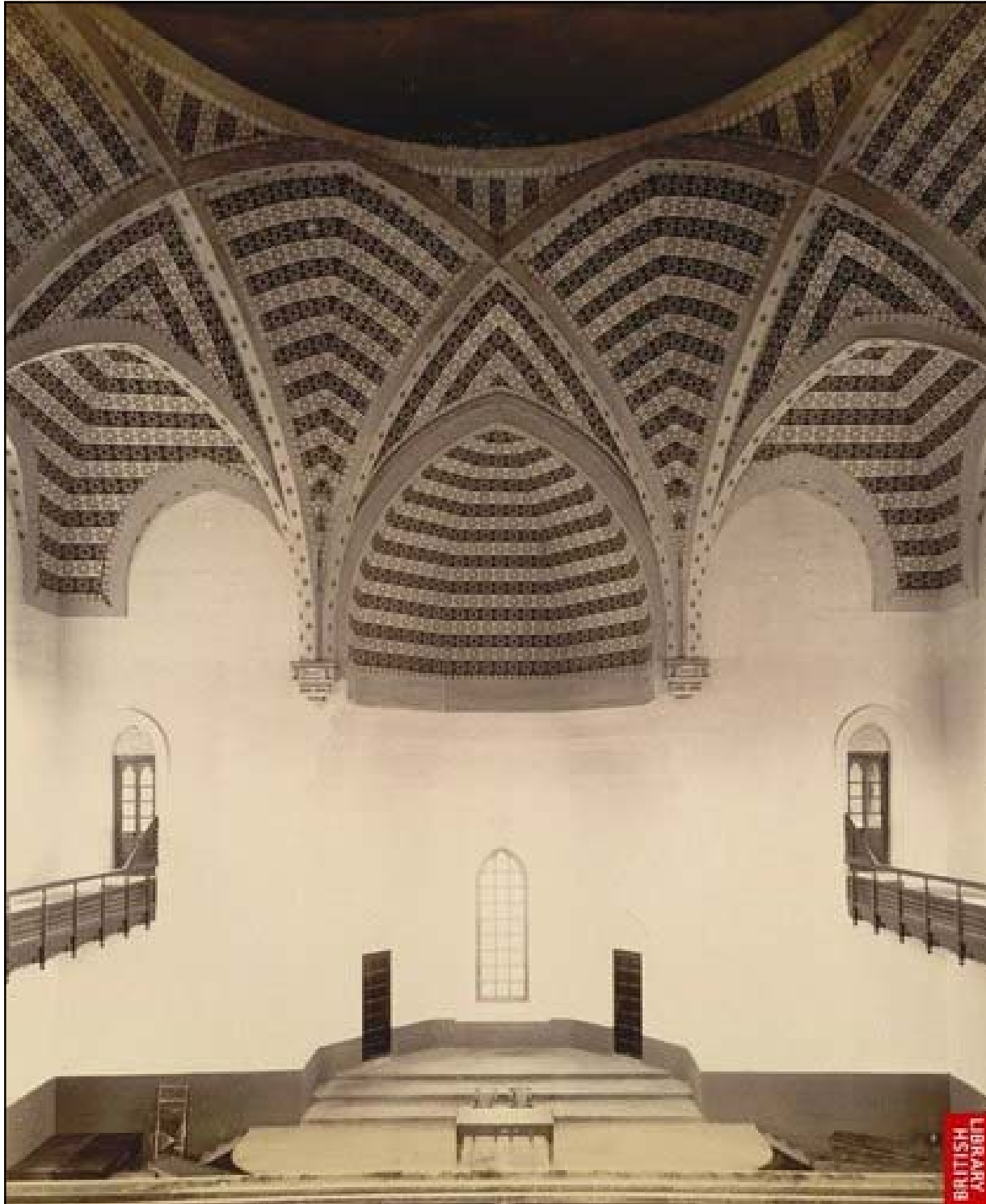


1890:- M S University



1890:- M S University





1890:- M S University

1890:- Laxmi Vilas Palace

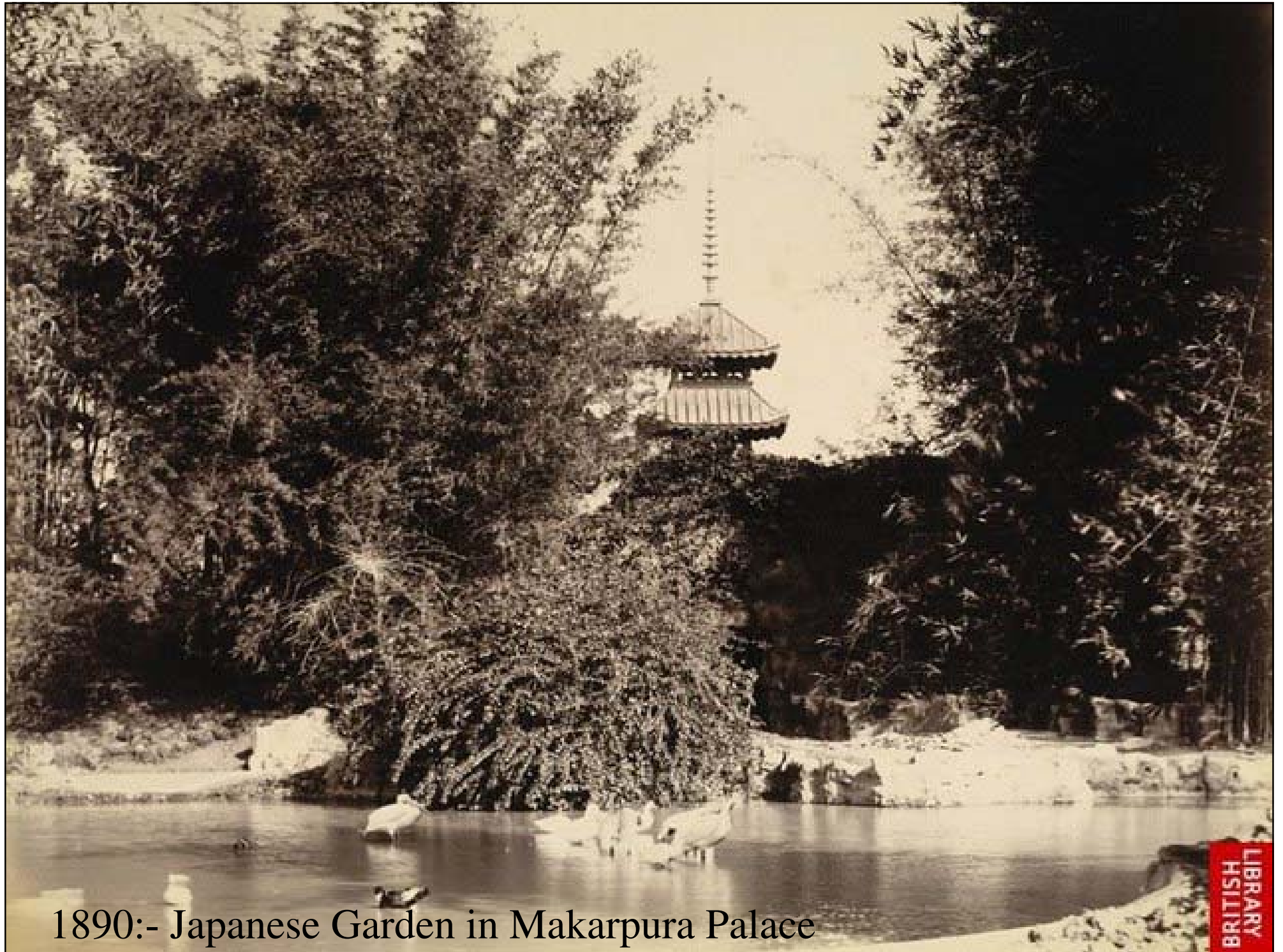


1890:- Laxmi Vilas Palace





1890:- Darbar Hall Laxmi Vilas Palace



1890:- Japanese Garden in Makarpura Palace

# 1890:- Makarpura Palace





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1890:- Makarpura Palace



# Places or Interest in Vadodara

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## Aurobindo Ashrama,



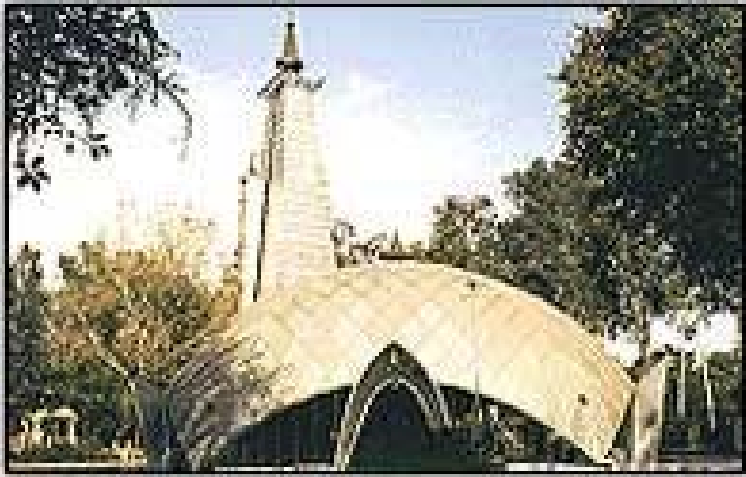
**Maharshi Aurobindo Ghosh** who one of the eminent freedom fighters and also a renowned philosopher resided in Vadodara from 1894 to 1906 as a private secretary to **Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad**. He also worked as vice principal and professor of English in Baroda college. His residence popularly known as Aurobindo Society is situated in Dandia Bazar area is the only national memorial. Yoga and meditation are taught here regularly. Surrounded by a nicely maintained garden this magnificent building provides an opportunity to pass a few minutes in solace. Various useful articles prepared at Pondichery are sold in an emporium on the ground floor. A nicely displayed small museum on the life of Shri Aurobindo's contribution can also be visited here.

Considered as one of the most famous museums of the country it was built in 1894. The picture gallery which offers an excellent collection of originals by famous British painters Turner and Constable and many others attract tourists from every part of the country. The Egyptian mummy and skeleton of a blue whale are major attractions for those who visit the museum. Other treasure includes the famous Akota bronzes dating the 5th Century A.D., A collection of Mughal miniatures, a full fledged gallery of Tibetan Art and oils by several European masters.

## Baroda, Museum



## EME Temple



Situated in the cantonment near Fatehgunj is the beautiful Shiva temple. Managed and maintained by the "Jawans" of E.M.E., this temple is made of alluminium and some alloys. Unlike all other temples, this beautiful Shiva temple is made of alluminium and it is a place of religious armony. A cultural centre has also been developed by the E.M.E. around the temple here good sculptures of Gujarat, pavilions etc. are nicely preserved. Idols of Gods and Godesses are beautifully placed on both the side walkways and they look very attractive when illuminated at night everyday. Visit to this temple is a must for everyone who visit Vadodara.

## Khanderao Market

This is a palatial building erected by Sayaji Rao ||| in 1906-07 at a cost of about Rs. 5 lakhs. It was presented by him as a gift to the Municipality on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of his administration. The Municipal Offices are located in this building. The main entrance resembles in architecture with that of the gate of Dabhoi Fort. The perforated stone perapers are after style of the Agra Screens.



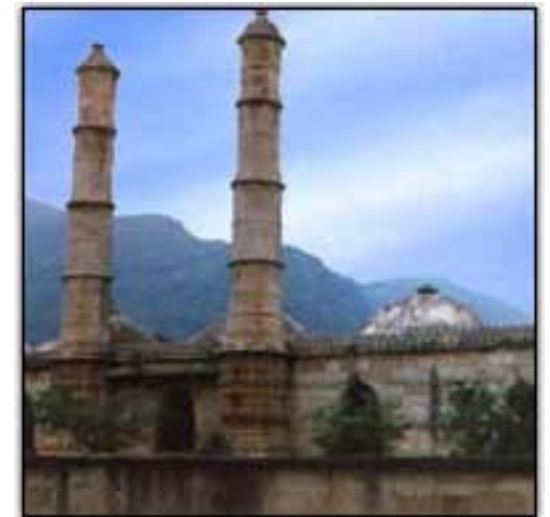
## Kirti Mandir



Kirti Mandir is situated on the north of the statue of Prince Fatehsinhrao Gaekwad near the Vishwamitri Bridge. With a cluster of shiva temples it was built to commemorate the cremation of the members of the Gaekwad family. This "E" shaped large magnificent stone building with domes, terraces, balconies and central sikhara rising to about 33 metres. According to Sayajirao Gaekwad it was built to commemurate the benefactors of his state irrespective of their race, caste or creed. Built by Maharaja Sayajirao at the cost of Rs.50,000, it preserves in its various rooms the statues and photogaphs of the members of the royal family. The interior of this elegant structure is marble finished and on the walls of the central hall are the murals Gangavataran, battle of Mahabharat, Life of Meera and Natir Pooja-executed by the famous Bengali artist Nandalal Bose. It can be visited by everybody between 9 & 12 in the morning and 2.30 & 5.30 in the evening.

It is situated 47 kms from Vadodara. The town of Champaner was subjugated by Sultan Mehmud Begara in 1484 and made it his new capital. Champaner lies at the foot of Pavagarh fort. The ruins of its mosques and palaces reflected in the lake are some of the most picturesque sights in India. Citadel of Mahmud Beghada is a perfect rectangle about three-quarters of a mile long and 280 yards broad, the citadel is enclosed by a wall of massive blocks of freestone, known as Mahmud Beghada's Wall. It is strengthened by bastions at regular intervals and beautified by small carved balconies in the best Islamic style. Jama Masjid, on account of its massive grandeur and perfect finish, the Jama Masjid is one of the grandest Islamic monuments in Western India. Nagina Masjid is also called the Jewel Mosque as it is built of pure white stone.

## Champaner





## Makarpura Palace

A beautiful palace designed in the Italianate style, the Makarpura is now used as a training school of the Indian Air Force.



## Maharaja Fatehsinh Museum in Vadodara

The museum has the royal collection of art treasures and works of old masters like Raphael, Titian and Murillo as well as modern western and Indian paintings, Graeco-Roman exhibits, Chinese and Japanese art, and a large collection of contemporary Indian art.



## Mandvi Gate in Vadodara

This imposing structure was built during the Mughal period and was restored in 1736 A.D. by the Governor, Malharoa Maloji under the orders of Damaji Roa II (1732-1768 A.D.).



## Nazarbaug Palace in Vadodara

Built in old classical style, the palace was used on ceremonial occasions by the Gaekwads. The royal family heirlooms are on display.

## Pratap Vilas Palace at Lalbaug



Built as the residence of the royal family, the Pratap Vilas is an extravagant and flamboyant building in the Indo-Sarcenic style. The palace houses a remarkable collection of old armory and sculptures in bronze, marble and terracotta. The palace is a riot of columns and arches drawn from South Indian, Central Indian, North Indian and Islamic traditions. Its porticoed entrance has exquisite carvings and is embellished by stuffed tigers. The Darbar Hall however is the piece-de-resistance with mosaic floors, seven domes, 12 chandeliers, intricately sculpted cedar balconies and a silver throne. It is spread over an area of 720 acres with gardens and a golf course. One can visit Shastragar to see the Royal armory.

## Sayaji Baug.



Sayaji Baug (the famous park) is situated on river Vishwamitri and was built by Sayajirao III in 1879. Sprawling over 113 acres, it also includes an excellent zoo, the Baroda Museum and Picture Gallery, the Museum of Health and Hygiene and the Sardar Patel Planetarium. A major attraction for children is the 3.5 kms joy ride through the park on the toy train.

## Sayaji Sarovar



The Sayaji Sarovar or Ajwa lake, 22 kms away from the city is the principal source of water. It is formed by damming the Surya river and Vaghali Nala. Work on the scheme was started in 1885 and was completed in 1890. The gardens at Ajwa are patterned after the famous Brindavan Gardens of Mysore. The illumination of fountains is a major attraction for tourists