

JOURNEY
OF
BOMBAY
DUCK

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of
Bombay Duck



A symbol of preservation and loss

For centuries, Kolis, the indigenous fisher-folks of Seven Islands, have lived in more than 250 villages around the shores of Mumbai megalopolis. Though Mumbai as such was inhabited, sustenance was ample along the shore. The city has now outgrown these biophilic indigenous villages, encroaching on fishing areas and poisoning natural breeding grounds. Local fish are getting scarce, and the daily life of local species is getting tough.

Bombay duck forms part of the daily diet of Kolis. The fish is vital to the original inhabitants of Mumbai, but it is becoming endangered. Catch is now scarce, as the shore is getting appropriated and polluted due to the city's waste policies.

Formerly an icon of Mumbai's coastal waters, Bombay duck is now a symbol of loss. There was a time of excess when the fish would be caught, dried, and stored. Changing climate, increasing residue and industrialization have caused the water temperatures to increase, forcing the Bombay duck to shift its grounds.

Journey of the Bombay Duck celebrates the remembrance of the loss of the iconic symbol of Mumbai, and the oral knowledge that revolves around it. In the framework of the exhibition *Critical Zones. In Search of a Common Ground* coproduced by Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Mumbai and ZKM | Karlsruhe, our collaboration comes as a dialogue between our respective practices of archiving sustainable food practices, centring indigenous and peasant food cultures, and exploring community resilience and resistance in changing climates.

During our research on the depleting habitat of Bombay

duck along the shores of Mumbai, we collected evidence, data and first-hand testimonies from fishermen of Colaba Koliwada and Machimar Nagar Koliwada. Koli households of Colaba contributed with dry Bombay duck recipes. Women of Koliwada created and sung songs on Bombay duck as an ambiguous metaphor of preservation and loss.

Performing a collective mummification of Bombay duck in the CSMVS Natural History gallery operated as a metaphor to store and save a form of sustainable knowledge system. The collective mummification gesture dialogues with both Koli fish drying techniques and scientific conservation procedures of the natural history museum. It complicates the modern definitions of science and speculates on indigenous food practices as a community science that encode biological (and biophilic) knowledge.

The performance was followed by food tastings with recipes cooked by women of Colaba, a screening of *Bengalis in the World of Fish* (2001) by Nilanjan Bhattacharya, and a roundtable discussion between the Calcutta-based filmmaker and Parag Tandel, Kadambari Koli-Tandel, Stéphane Verlet Bottéro.

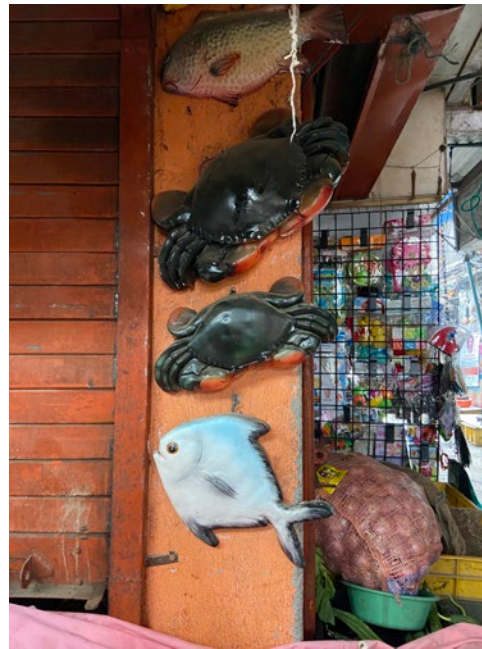




Ocean is the philosophy we follow
Parag Tandel

The first question I ask is: am I still Koli? If I am Koli then what should I think, and more importantly, how should I think? Mumbai city is just 400, maybe 600 years old. Kolis are older than that, but they survive, they're still living, they're still singing. In the next 10 years, it's going to be literally a war on food because of climate change. Now is a time when have to change our own identity or follow someone else's identity (like the West).

Following long-term sustainable food practices is the most important. You don't have to collect new knowledge for that, you have to spread knowledge, to give back. That Koliness is important for Bombay people to understand. Ocean is the philosophy that we follow. And that is self-sustaining knowledge.



Mutant knowledge
Stéphane V. Bottéro

I'm also thinking about the local structures through which that knowledge of living can be transmitted. Despite the erasure by dominant systems, the expertise can also mutate to survive, in certain conditions that allow it to be passed down across generations.

In my experience, trying to regenerate an orchard meadow with the ZKM in Karlsruhe, was about relearning an ancient peasant practice that has been done for centuries in Central Europe to take care of those old fruit trees. But we faced an issue, which was the access to knowledge, because it's almost entirely disappeared: how to prune the trees, how to interpret the growth of a certain branch, when to harvest, when to leave the trees to rest, similar to what you said of monsoon as a time to let the fish regenerate.

All this knowledge is not scripted. It's not logocentric. What supports it is a deep and ancient accumulation of field observations and interpretations, a form of community empirical science. How to invent schools or learning situations that allow for this knowledge to endure? Because as you said, we need to consume, we need to activate food cycles in a certain way.

Now or never
Kadambari Koli-Tandel

When we talk about knowledge systems, I ask myself: what is the knowledge? Is it the knowledge that I have to practice? What is the knowledge that I actually require? Or is it the indigenous language which is required at certain times? I live by the sea, yet I don't know how to swim. The life practice I need is not the colonial education that is required for me. How do I understand the system of Kolis? Myself a Koli, I don't know how to swim, so I might not survive.

How important is my indigenous knowledge to me, prior to the colonial education that I have? This is a bigger question for me personally. And I think each one of you should also ask yourself, "do I know the knowledge that I really need to know"? Climate is changing. You stay in Bombay, you're going to face it. This is a question for each one of us: how am I going to survive this climate change which is happening, which is coming in some time towards me? We Kolis have a saying: "Aatt nai ta kavach nai". Means: now or never.



A subtle conservation theory

Nilanjan Bhattacharya

In my films I'm looking at the food and hunger relationship in India. So I'm not really talking about so-called preservation, rather about consumption. People need to sell, to eat, so there is a clear, long supply chain. I try to follow and record certain indigenous practices that in my opinion, follow the principles of nature.

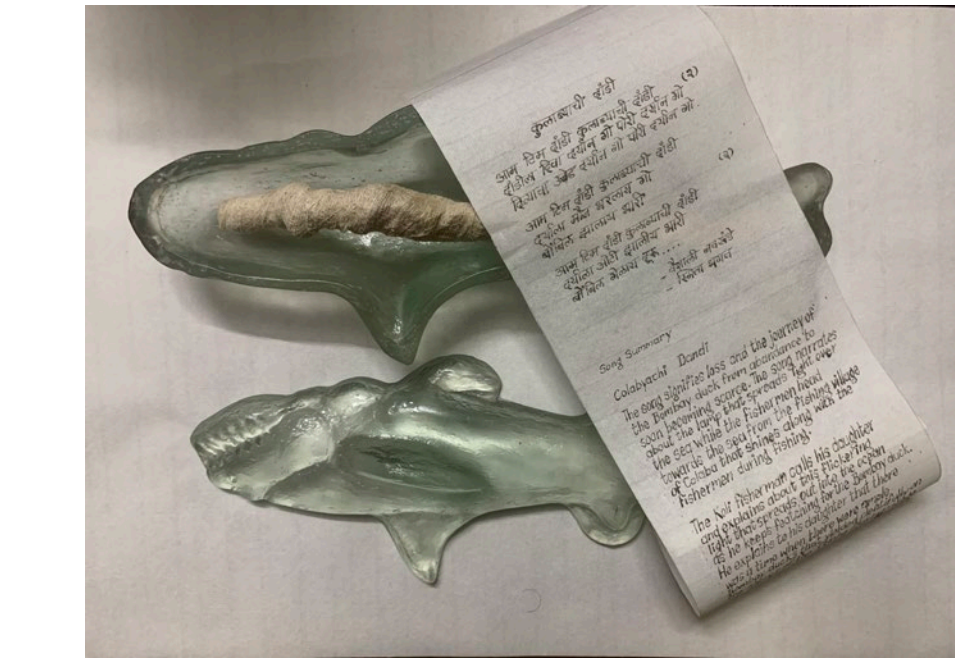
In that way, you can actually navigate deeper, and look at how even consumption can be seen as preservation. Like these dry fish: this is a fascinating idea of preservation. I worked for a long time in Sikkim. I've been fed with beef and pork that were stored and dried or preserved. While Europe is running on refrigerating and freezing, this technology is so simple, and one can't say something like: they're not hygienic. They've been doing it for centuries.

So I'm very interested about these daily practices of consumption, and to show that through them, there are principles that are coded in a certain way or circulated in a certain way, sometimes under the guise of belief systems. It's about how to maintain consumption, how to control it, how to stick to the seasons.

Modern societies never cared about these so-called unscientific knowledge systems. These are traditions that might look like religious, but there will be a subtle conservation theory encoded in it.







Colabyachi Dandi

Song composed by Mrs Vaishali Navkhande

The song signifies loss and the journey of the Bombay duck from being abundantly present to soon becoming scarce. The song narrates about the lamp that spreads light over the sea while the fishermen head towards the sea from the fishing village of Colaba that shines along with the fishermen during fishing.

The Koli fisherman calls his daughter and explains about this flickering light that spreads out into the ocean as he keeps fetching for the Bombay ducks.

He explains to his daughter that there was a time when there were ample Bombay ducks that yielded plentifully on the shores of the Colaba fishing village like the high tide of the ocean, one that signifies giving in abundance.

Now, there is a scarcity of Bombay duck which are sufficiently available only if the fishermen of Colaba go far fetching it in deep the oceans. A low tide or the scarceness of these Bombay ducks from the shores of Colaba (a species due to which the fishing village is distinguished), is losing its identity.

Mi Hi Koli

A Koli from the shores of Mumbai set off to the open ocean. On his return, he came back with a Big catch and an assortment of fish like Ghol (Black Spotted Croaker), Sarga (Butterfish), Halwa (Pomfret), Jhinga (Shrimp) as well as Pala (Ilish).

He calls out to Paru one of the fisherwomen to come to see the fresh catch. He earnestly tells her that together will carry on our heads the fresh catch in a basket to the Vesava market for selling, but Paru is reluctant to go to the market today. He tries to assure her that by taking such a good, fresh, and big catch, people at the market will come to her to buy the fish.

He says now she should get ready as the other Koli women have come to go to the market. To sell such a good catch which is fresh and glittering like silver.

ജനുവരി

पदस्थचिन्ता:- सुखा वेदनायां चरति

पदार्थानि प्रमाणं !
 वीथि, रुक्मी मिरची, मसूर, मीठ, तेल

ॐ नमो

'બોધિલ' સાથે જાનના શેઠાશી પ્રાણત દુઝન
 લેળી નંતર 'તે' મુળે કરાવે 'નંતર' તે બોધિલ-વાગ્દે માનુજ
 આવે કડકા. મગ લાવના મગે લટલા મુળી મિર-ચી મીઠ
 દાઢુજ તે સર્વ વાટલ મગના વાગે. નંતર ગૌસ
 લાવજ સાલાવર પાતેલે ટેવજ ગરમ વાગના મગ તેજ
 લાગેલે શેઠાશી નંતર દાઢ તેજ મગે દે સર્વ વાટલ
 લેતીને બોધિલ મિર-ચી મીઠ લાટના મગના વાટલ
 દોતને તે તોલાવર પદાવત મંદ કાચેવર વાટલ
 શેઠાચ લેઠાત તે મુળે કાળે ની મગ ડાલકડ
 'શેઠ' જાગર, કાળે ની મગ મગા કલાત કરના દેવો

नाव:- राजडी विनारी नाखवा
मुलाखा

ബുദ്ധി

पक्षीशास्त्रे नाव

ଆସିଲା

પદાર્થોનો પ્રમાણ

30, 35 લોલિંગ. લોલી અસામા.
4 વાર્ષિક ભૂજ 25.30 પાનખાલી.

५ चाचे मसूदा २५.३० पासून २॥

साथ मंगल । वादी भरत, हिरवी
पिसवी ६, चिंच लक्ष्मण वादी भरत
लक्ष्मण भर वाडुंग देवो, वारिण चमत्ता
देवो, चवी गुरार गीट, तेल

သူ၏

પાલેડો લોલિયંટ સાથા બાસના ભાસના
લુડગ દેલો ગંતર, ભડંગ આપીલોર
ઝીરની, મહાલા, દુધડ, પિંચા દે પલ
ભાડુન દોલો. નાંતર દોન ગરમ
ભાસન ભોતના મહેલો દે રલ
વારાન રાગુન યરતગાચે ગંતર
ભાચા મહેલો શોરો પાણી જાગુન
ઝીર જાગો. નાંતર જાગલો
ઝાલો ભાં ગોલિયંટ રાગુન
મળ આગની દો. કાણી ઝાગોળ
ઠરલો.

પેશાલી નવસંકે :
 સવિતા ત્રે :

* लखलेले घोंबील *

साहित्यः

1) बाबिल = 25

2) મીઠ = 3 ચમચે

3) लेन = 2 वाली

५) हलद = 2 चमचे

ह) कीली मसाला = 3 चमचे

६) गिंची पावडर = २ चमचे

7) सांदळचे पीठ आणि शवा = 1 वाटी

પુત્રી: પ્રથમ બૌદ્ધિક શાફ વચ્ચે, ત્યાંના અચ્છા
પાકા દોળે.

नंतर मीठ लावून वीस मिनिट ठेवणे, नंतर लवच पाणी नितळवून देणे.

बीबलाला स्वयं, मन्नाला, मिचि पावडर लावणे.

तुल्यात लेल म्हास करणे मग बांबलाला लांढळ्याच्या
मिठान दाखल म्हास ले लेनास म्हासि मोंड म्हास म्हास

पिबत दाबून मग ते तेलाला टाकण, गॅस मध्यम ठेवण
मग पाच मिनिटांनी इतर कंठो देवारी बाज बा

की राग "लळनेले बांबील तयार".

[illegible]

* धातुके लेखित *

बादली गोवा,
हेमलता अग्रवाल

* वसाहित्य :-

1) बॉलीवुड - 25

2) मरुत = 3 अक्षर

3) हिरण मिश्र - 5

g) $\log x - 2 \ln x$

5) $\frac{1}{x^2} = x^{-2}$ — 2-й раз

6) केली भस्माला - 3 चपचे

१) मिर्च पावडर - २ चमचे

१) तेल - 3 डावी

2- कोविड - 19

10) कोशिकाएँ - 3 वादी

पूनी :- प्रथम लोकल रजुन वांगुकर प्रहलद शाले
 त्यास पाणी मिळवून द्यावे त्याकडे की मठा
 ते त्याच करणे मठा लोक्याचे वेग तुम्हादे करणे
 पाणी मठा मठा पातल्यान तेव काय करणे लघुन,
 हिरवी मिथी फोफोनी केले नंतर त्याघावर हल्ला

Dried Bombay Duck Chutney

Recipe by Mrs. Rajashree Vijay Nakhwa

Ingredients:

20 Bombay Ducks
10-12 peeled cloves of garlic
5 Red dried chilies
Salt to taste
3 tsp Oil

Method:

Clean the dried Bombay ducks by removing the head, fins and tail. Dry roast them thoroughly till they are crispy. Create a mixture by grinding the roasted Bombay ducks, garlic cloves, dried red chilies together. Add oil to a pan and add the mixture into it. Stir gently on low flame until it is dry roasted. Take off the heat and let it cool completely to room temperature. You can store it in an airtight container to consume it later. Consume it in 8-10 days.

Bombay Duck curry

Recipe by Mrs. Rajashree Vijay Nakhwa

Ingredients:

30-35 Bombay Ducks
1 tsp turmeric
4 tsp Koli masala*
25-30 peeled cloves of garlic
7 Green chilies
1 bowl of coriander leaves
1 small bowl of tamarind pulp
Salt to taste
3 bowls Oil

Method:

Clean the Bombay ducks by removing the head, fins and tail. Grind garlic cloves, coriander leaves and green chilies together. Heat the oil in a deep flat utensil then add the mixture to the hot oil and cook it for 3-4 minutes. Then add turmeric powder, Koli masala and the tamarind pulp to this cooked mixture and cook it for another 5-7 minutes until the oil separates. Add 1 glass of water and salt and bring it to a boil, then gently add the Bombay ducks. Let it simmer and cook for 5 minutes and then turn off the heat.

* Koli Masala is a homemade dry mixture of spices and is used frequently in the marinating and cooking of fish by the Kolis. It usually consists of red chilies, cloves, cinammon, black cardamon, star anise, etc. (the exact recipe will differ slightly from family to family).

Fried Bombay Duck

Recipe by Mrs. Vaishali Navkhande and Mrs. Savita Tare

Ingredients:

25 Bombay Ducks
3 tsp Salt
2 tsp turmeric
3 tsp Koli masala
2 tsp Red Chili powder
1 bowl Rice flour
1 bowl semolina
2 bowls Oil

Method:

Clean the Bombay ducks by removing the head, fins and tail. Cut them into 2 pieces and wash them in running water. Apply the salt to the Bombay Ducks and let it stay for 20 minutes. Later strain out all the water that has seeped out of the salted Bombay Ducks. Apply turmeric, Koli masala, and red chili powder to the salted Bombay Ducks. Heat the oil in a cast iron pan. Meanwhile mix the Rice flour and fine semolina and place the mixture on a medium plate. Take one Bombay duck at a time and coat it completely by pressing the mixture of rice flour and semolina onto the flesh. Let the gas be on medium flame before you start frying. Tap the excess coating and then gently put the Bombay Ducks into the hot oil. Let there be some space between each Bombay duck as you fry. After two minutes turn the Bombay duck to the other side and let, it fry for another five minutes. Once they are fried and cooked, remove them from the oil and put them onto a

dish.

Bamburke Bombil (Half dried Bombay Ducks)

Recipe by Mrs. Bharti Goa and Mrs. Hemlata Bhagat

Ingredients:

25 Bombay Ducks
3 bulbs of Garlic (peeled cloves)
5 Green chilies
2 tsp turmeric
3 tsp Koli masala
2 tsp Red Chili powder
1 bowl coriander leaves
10 Kokum/ Garcinia Indica
3 bowls of Oil

Method:

Wash the Bombay ducks and hang them to dry by locking their heads on a Bamboo stick for a whole day. They will look half dried when you take them off the bamboo. Clean them by removing the head, fins and tail and cut them into 2 pieces.

Heat the oil in a deep flat utensil. Then add garlic cloves and green chilies to the hot oil. Followed by coriander leaves, Koli masala, Red chili powder, Kokam and salt to taste. Let the whole mixture cook and then add 1 glass of water to it. Let it simmer for 10 minutes. Now add the Bombay Ducks gently to the simmering mixture. Turn off the heat after 10 minutes when the Bombay ducks are cooked.

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