

Tune in for an enlightening discussion on ‘Mercantile Bombay: A Journey of Trade, Finance and Enterprise’ with a special focus on the merchants, commerce and culture that shaped our city.

“More dreams are realised and extinguished in Bombay than anywhere else in India”

- Gregory David Roberts

For Immediate Release

Mumbai is a crown jewel of India that attracts many star-crossed dreamers. But what makes it so attractive? Is it because of the entertainment and fashion industry today or something else? Something that happened in the 19 th century to be precise?

It could certainly be the fact that Mumbai alone accounts for 6.16% of India’s GDP which is about USD 240 Billion making up for 25% of industrial production, 17.2% of Indian maritime trade and 70% of capital transactions to the Indian economy. It is the richest city in India and the 12 th richest in the world.

But it wasn’t always this rich.

Gateway House Mumbai, Live History India and Avid Learning present “**Mercantile Bombay: A Journey of Trade, Finance and Enterprise,**” a panel discussion on the book by the same name, authored by Sifra Lentin.

*Associate Professor at the History Department, Sophia College, **Dr Rashna Poncha**;*
*Author and former central banker, **Bazil Shaikh**;* *Author and Bombay History*
*Fellow at Gateway House, **Sifra Lentin**, will be in conversation with Author and Co-Founder*
*& Editor of Live History India, **Mini Menon**.*

Join our panel of experts to find out why immigrants and migrants chose this city, the trade wars it survived, the fallout of the American Civil War and how rivalries between local rulers, European colonial powers and merchant families shaped these seven sleepy islands into India’s most important port city and financial capital.

This book reclaims Mumbai’s legacy as a global financial centre by highlighting all the virtuous elements it still possesses: global networks of trade, finance, institutions, and most importantly trading communities, whose presence in the city goes back to its heydays as a trading, financial, commercial and manufacturing hub, albeit in a globalized colonial world. The book explores how the city flourished in a globalised 19th and early 20th Century world as a trading, financial, commercial and manufacturing hub . While the city’s importance as a nodal financial hub in the global economy ebbed post India’s Independence and the Second World War, the multi-cultural city found renewed importance following the forex crisis of 1991. Institutions (the RBI, SEBI and State Bank of India headquarters), capacities, experiences, communities and talent centred in Mumbai revived its position, while managing the transition to a more open economy.

Mumbai is not yet an international financial centre (financial SEZ) like London, New York, Dubai, Singapore, Hong Kong. The discussion will explore why it has all the essential elements to become one today and how it is the city for traders, global finance and enterprise.

Attending this will be beneficial for scholars and researchers of economics, business studies and commerce. It will be of great interest to policymakers, city-headquartered business houses, financial institutions and its people.

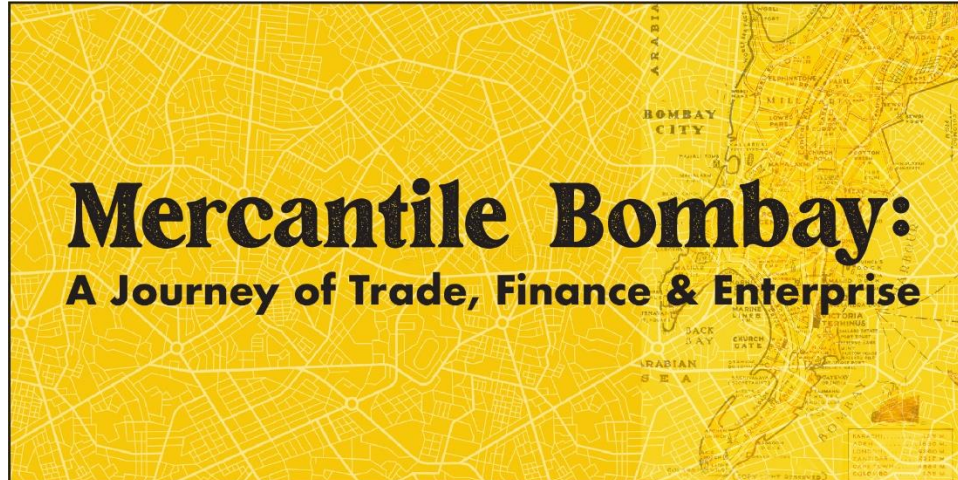
When: Wednesday 11th May. 6.30- 8 pm

Format: Live in Person

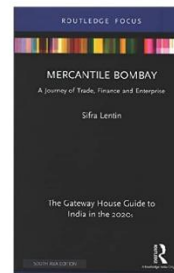
Where: Essar House, 11 K K Marg, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai

RSVP: www.avidlearning.in

Press Email: Ayesha Dadachanji on ayeshah.avid@gmail.com



Would you like to know why Mumbai has always attracted the entrepreneurial spirit and what makes it a money magnet? Join our panel discussion on “Mercantile Bombay: A Journey of Trade, Finance and Enterprise.” The expert panellists will discuss Mumbai’s commerce and culture, ports, migrants, finance, its rich mercantile history and how it helped develop a multicultural city. The discussion will cover why immigrants and migrants chose this city, the trade wars it survived, the fallout of the American Civil War, and how rivalries between local rulers, European colonial powers and merchant families shaped these tiny seven islands into India’s most important port city and financial capital.



Author and
Bombay History Fellow
at Gateway House
Sifra Lentin



Associate Professor at
the History Department,
Sophia College
Dr Rashna Poncha



Author and
former Central Banker
Bazil Shaikh

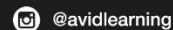


Author and
Co-Founder & Editor
of Live History India
Mini Menon

Where: Essar House, 11, K.K.Marg, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai

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About the Speakers

Sifra Lentin is a Mumbai-based writer and the Bombay History Fellow at Gateway House: Indian Council on Global Relations. She was awarded the 2018-19 Herbert Katz Fellowship for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania for her ongoing project on “Karachi’s Jewish Community”. The books written by her are: the Indian Navy’s Western Fleet coffee table book ‘A Salute to The Sword Arm – A Photo Essay on The Western Fleet’ (April 2007); Our Legacy: the Dwarkadas family of Bombay (March 2018), and more recently Bombay’s International Linkages (February 2019), a Gateway House publication. She has contributed chapters on Bombay’s Jewish community to three books.

Dr. Rashna Poncha is Associate Professor at the History Department, Sophia College (Autonomous). She is passionate about teaching and about History. She completed her Ph.D. thesis on 'A Study of Frere Town, Bombay (1862-1947)' in 2016 and was awarded the Ph.D. degree in 2018. Her area of specialisation is 19th century Bombay history. She is the co-editor of the books 'Mumbai-Socio-Cultural Perspectives: Contributions of Ethnic Groups and Communities' and 'Down the Corridors of Wisdom', the history of Sophia College. Dr. Poncha has presented papers on the Parsis, Forts, the history of Bombay city and her architectural heritage at both international and national conferences.

Bazil Shaikh, author and former central banker, served with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in different capacities, including Secretary to the Board. His work areas spanned trade, forex, reserves management, precious metals, rural development, human resource management and governance amongst others. He had headed the team which conceived, researched and curated the RBI Monetary Museum, Mumbai. He served on Committees of Government of India, RBI, Nabard, SEBI, as well as the National Archives. He read Economics at the Gokhale Institute of Politics & Economics, Pune and Public Policy at Princeton University, Princeton. His doctoral thesis was on the *Evolution of Early Banking in India: The Free Banking Experience*. He has authored several websites and publications, notably, *The Paper and the Promise (2000)*, *Mint Road Milestones: RBI at 75 (2010)*, and *The Conjuror's Trick: An Interpretive History of Paper Money in India (2021)*.

Mini Menon is the Co-Founder and Editor of Live History India, a first of its kind digital platform focussed on creating and putting out multi-media content on Indian history and cultural legacy. Since launch, Live History India has reached over 100 million people across India and the world. It has also brought together over 150 historians and experts on its platform. An award winning journalist and author, Mini has also reported on the changing face of politics and business in India for the last 20 years Her last assignment was as Executive Editor of Bloomberg TV India. In 2013 Mini's first book, 'Riding the Wave' was published by HarperCollins. Mini has been awarded the Rajiv Gandhi Award for Excellence, as a young achiever and in 2009 she was adjudged the Best Business News Anchor by the Indian Broadcasting Federation.

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