

Explore the Rich Contributions of one of Bombay's oldest Diasporic Communities on the next session of AVID Online

For Immediate Release

What would your answer be if someone asks for your favourite cuisine? Arguably, most of you thought, CHINESE!

The city has always had a soft corner for everything Chinese, but only a few stop to wonder how we came about to embrace the culture of this peaceful community.

With Buddhism and trade forging a link between India and China since ancient times, the growth of this community was triggered by burgeoning trade of silk and opium under the British Raj. India was looked upon as the land of opportunities; giving reason for Chinese travellers, traders and those in the workforce to settle down in the port cities of Calcutta and Bombay. Growing steadily, the community brought with them their tradition and culture, Chinese schools, dental clinics with Hupei doctors, beauty parlours and Mahjong clubs.

However the most celebrated contribution started off with a humble beginning. Chinese settlers brought with them their staple of dimsums, noodle and soup. This has since been adopted and adapted, adding a new chapter to the already rich India cuisine.

The city which once had a flourishing Chinese population today has a mere count of 400 ethnic Chinese families of 3,500 people residing in Mumbai. Although the presence of this community has dwindled rapidly; it has left an indelible mark on the city.

Gateway House and **Avid Learning** present **Uncovering Urban Legacies: The Chinese Heritage of Bombay**, a live session on how the unique culture of these pre-British settlers has historically, geographically and socio-culturally shaped the city of Bombay. To trace the history, tradition, and culture of this community in order to understand the indelible legacy the Chinese left on the city and its surroundings.

On the panel are:

*Photographer, **Vidura Jang Bahadur**,*

*Founder & Lead Hairstylist at Chen's Hair & Beauty, **Annie Chen**,*

*Honorary Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies, Editor, China Report, **Madhavi Thampi** will be in conversation with Author and Bombay History Fellow at Gateway House, **Sifra Lentin***

Join these experts to know more about the fascinating history and enduring legacy of this significant diasporic community in Mumbai!

When: Thursday, 24th March 2022

Time : 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM (IST)

RSVP: www.avidlearning.in

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



Did you know that Bombay was home to a flourishing China town in the 1950's? Have you been to the 100 year old Kwan Kung Temple tucked away in the dockyard streets of Mazgaon? Today what remains of the community and its settlers are the Temple and a few families who think of India as their home country!

In the fourth edition of **Uncovering Urban Legacies**, we present a live session on how the unique culture of these pre-British settlers has historically, geographically and socio-culturally shaped the city of Bombay. To trace the history, tradition, and culture of this community in order to understand the indelible legacy the Chinese left on the city and its surroundings.

Join us to know more about the fascinating history and enduring legacy of this significant diasporic community in Mumbai!

#AVIDONLINE LIVE



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Sifra Lentin

MODERATOR

DATE: **THURSDAY, 24 MARCH '22**
TIME: **6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (IST)**
RSVP: www.avidlearning.in



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About the Speakers:

Vidura Jang Bahadur is a photographer and is currently pursuing a PhD in Communication Studies in the program of Rhetoric and Public Culture at Northwestern University, Evanston. His doctoral thesis explores questions of identity, belonging, and citizenship from the perspective of the ethnic Chinese living across India and in the diaspora. The project builds on Bahadur's extensive photographic work on the community (2003-2015) and disputes easy understandings of nation, national culture, identity, and belonging.

Annie Chen a prominent celebrity hair dresser with over 40 years of experience. She is the 2nd generation of Chinese in India. Her Grandparents are the ones who moved to India during the Japanese Invasion of China. She worked in Dubai for many years and did her training in London, Hongkong, Malaysia. She started her own Chens Hair & Beauty Salon and was the first to start with Japanese rebonding of Hair in India. She went to Japan to be trained for rebonding of hair she feels herself more of an Indian in India than Chinese and love this Country India.

Madhavi Thampi is an Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi, and former editor of the journal China Report. She taught Chinese History at the Department of East Asian Studies of the University of Delhi from 1979 to 2014. Her major publications include Indians in China, 1800-1949 (2005) and China and the Making of Bombay (with Shalini Saksena, 2010). She also edited the volume India and China in the Colonial World (2005). More recently, she has coordinated the project to catalogue materials on modern China in the National Archives of India. Her main research interest lies in uncovering various aspects of the interactions between India and China in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Sifra Lentin is a Mumbai-based writer and the Bombay History Fellow at Gateway House: Indian Council on Global Relations, a foreign policy think tank headquartered in Mumbai. 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) on the 250-year-old history of the eminent Halai Bhatia Dwarkadas Khimji family of Mumbai, and more recently Bombay’s International Linkages (February 2019), a Gateway House publication. She has also been published in three books: MARG’s ‘Indian Jewish Heritage – Ritual, Life-Cycle & Art’ (2002), One India One People’s book on Communities of India (2006), and recently in Primus Publications Mumbai Socio-Cultural Perspectives: Contributions of Ethnic Groups and Communities (2018), where she has written Chapter 10 on ‘Mumbai’s Jewish Community’. Sifra graduated in English Literature (Hons.) from Elphinstone College, Mumbai, and went on to complete her Bachelor’s in General Law (BGL) from Government Law College, Mumbai. Her earlier career was in journalism with a focus on Bombay and South Asian Jewish history. She is currently a Trustee of the Sir Jacob Sassoon School (Byculla, Mumbai).

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