

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

For Immediate Release

"Mumbai is not just a mosaic of India but of the world."

-Urban Historian Manjiri Kamat

'Ek bun maska Irani' is a quintessential Mumbai refrain and finds its origin in a cultural staple of the city- the Irani Café. This is but one of the many influences brought by the Iranis, an important sub-community in Bombay. The Iranian community, originating in Persia, is made up of Zoroastrians and Muslim Shias and has been a recognisable part of Mumbai since the late 19th century.

They most significantly founded cafes and indelibly shaped the food culture and cuisine of the city, but they were also responsible for important mercantile links between the city, the country and Persia. They also were instrumental in the cementing and spread of lesser-known faiths like Baha'i and also have made architectural impact on the city especially in the Dongri area with the building of iconic mosques like Mughal Masjid. The community's presence in the city and their contribution to Bombay remains substantial.

As part of **AVID Online**, **Gateway House** and **Avid Learning** present **Uncovering Urban Legacies: The Irani Diaspora in Bombay**, a live session on how this small but unique community and its rich culture and legacy have historically, economically and socio-culturally shaped the city of Bombay.

Please read on for more details:

Archivist, Oral Historian and Founder of Irani Chai, Mumbai **Bruce Carter**, *Owner, Libran Seafoods* **Iqbal Durazi** and *Co-owner of Davar & Co.* **Mahvash Rowhani** will be in conversation with *Author and Bombay History Fellow at Gateway House* **Sifra Lentin** to trace the history, tradition, and culture of this community in order to understand the Irani diaspora in their Indian setting.

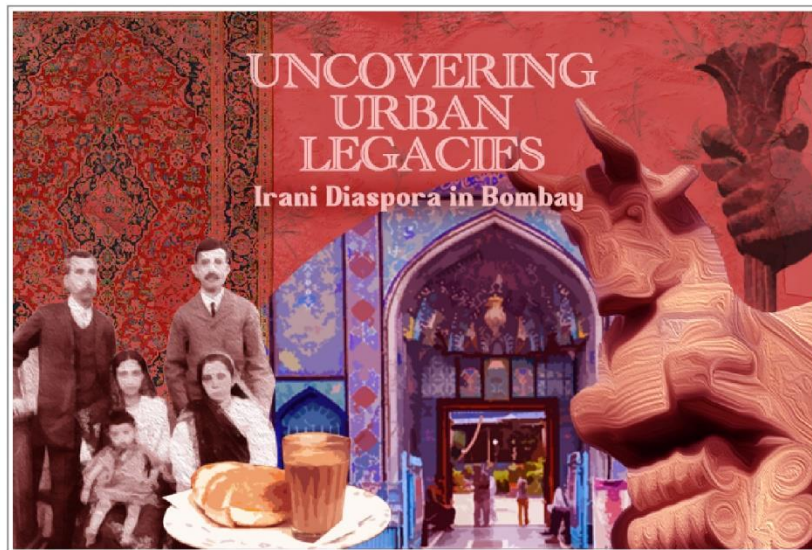
These experts will discuss the assimilative power and generous spirit of this community. They will examine the Irani diaspora's impact on the city's restaurant and retail history, economic and geopolitical influence of the community, architectural growth, social history, built and intangible heritage and even Irani influence on rituals and customs of Bombay. These experts will also discuss Irani contribution to diversifying the socio-religious aspects of the city and the cultural assimilations smaller religions like the Baha'i brought.

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

When: Thursday, 8th July 2021 | 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

RSVP: www.avidlearning.in

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

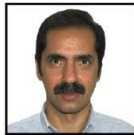


Did you know that some of Mumbai's most iconic cultures, eateries and structures were built and donated by one of its most prominent and influential benefactors who came from one of the most prosperous diasporic communities? The Iranian community has made monumental contributions to Bombay's cultural and urban landscape. Join us for a fascinating session on this inspiring community's influence on the life of Mumbai and to trace the history, tradition, and culture of this community in order to understand the Irani diaspora in the Indian setting.

#AVIDONLINE **LIVE**



Archivist, Oral Historian
and Founder of
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Bruce Carter



Owner,
Libran Seafoods
Iqbal Durazi



Co-owner of
Davar & Co.
Mahvash Rowhani



Author and
Bombay History Fellow
at Gateway House
Sifra Lentin

MODERATOR

DATE: **THURSDAY, 08 JULY '21**
TIME: **6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (IST)**
REGISTER: **www.avidlearning.in**



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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, 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).

Mahvash Rowhani has spent over 4 decades in Bombay as an active member of the Baha'i community and bringing up her two children. She is currently a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Bombay and holds regular prayer meetings, study circles and values education for children and youth at her home. She has travelled through interior Maharashtra, building social bonds with people from different backgrounds and communities, sharing the importance of education, the equality of women and girls, and community building for the future. A co-owner of Davar & Co., an 'Irani cold drink house' in Nalbazar, she has also completed a counselling course and spends her spare time working with NGOs and with families in her neighbourhood.

Bruce Carter has worked on community history projects since 2000. These have included oral history, exhibition curation, walking tours, writing and research. He holds qualifications in public history and library & archives management and in 2020 completed his [PhD thesis](#) at University of Technology, Sydney. Based in Sydney, Australia, he is a member of [Professional Historians Association](#) (NSW), [the Oral History Association Australia](#) (NSW branch) and the [Association of Critical Heritage Studies](#).

Iqbal Durazi is an entrepreneur and owner of Libran Seafoods. He and his siblings are descendants of Haji Ebrahim Busheri, a wealthy and successful Persian merchant who prospered in Bombay in the early 1900s. From their paternal side, the Durazis' are half Iranian and half Bahraini, taking their surname from Duraz, a small town in Bahrain: their paternal grandfather was a pearl diver and trader, and used to frequent Bombay to sell pearls.

Gateway house Blurb :

Gateway House: Indian Council on Global Relations is a foreign policy think tank based in Mumbai, India, established to engage India's leading corporations and individuals in debate and scholarship on India's foreign policy and the nation's role in global affairs. Gateway House is independent, non-partisan and membership-based working towards co-designing perspectives on global issues that are important to India with a focus to taking India from a global rule taker to rule maker.

Our key areas of study are geopolitics, geoeconomics, energy & environment, space and ocean studies, international security (maritime, cyber and digital), international law and Bombay history.

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