

India is home to a tiny community namely, Jews from the Middle East. Arabic –Speaking Jews, known as Baghdadis, came to India as traders. Adept in business and finance, they chose to settle in Calcutta. They constructed a rich socio-spatial identity. The community unravelled rapidly following Indian independence and the foundation of the State of Israel. Calcutta still nurtures her Jews along with other citizens and can take pride in the fact that the mere existence of this minuscule minority has contributed in its own way to enrich its multifaceted-culture and diversified its identity.

Dr. Kaustav Chakrabarti, presently Assistant Professor of History at City College, graduated with Honours in History and Masters from Jadavpur University. He has done his M.Phil and PhD from the University of Calcutta, and, had been Visiting Research Fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.

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Friendship and Cooperation

KAUSTAV CHAKRABARTI

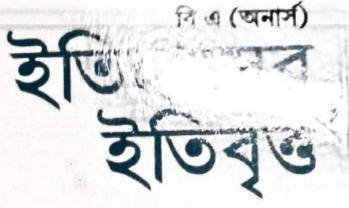
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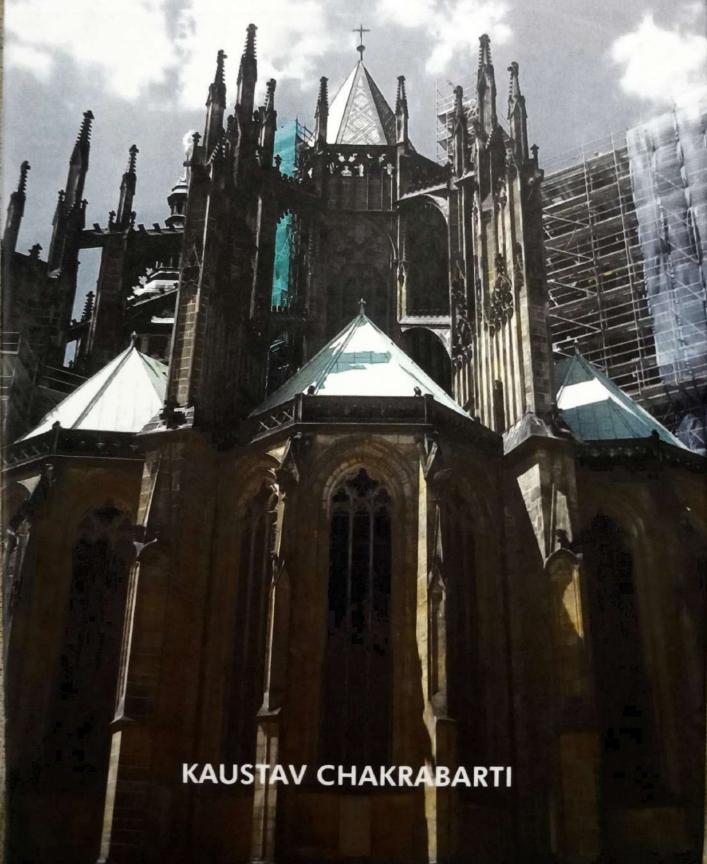
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completed his graduation and Masters at Jadavpur University in Modern History with American History as Special Paper, he submitted his M.Phil dissertation on the History of the Jews of Calcutta at the University of Calcutta. He has been Visiting Research Fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, on an Israel

Government Scholarship programme for the academic session 2005-06. He did a project on European Jewish Immigrants in India between the two world wars under the supervision of Prof. Irene Eber, Professor, East Asian Studies, of the said University. He has a doctorate from the University of Calcutta. Dr. Kaustav Chakrabarti is a strong proponent of India-Israel ties and has contributed articles of interest on Jews, Israel and Zionism for University journals and websites. He has also lectured on Calcutta Jews and Zionism before the students and Faculty of Narendrapur Ramakrishna Mission Residential College. He has authored a book on the history of the Zionist Movement (A Brief Introduction to the Rise and Rhythm of Zionism, Firma Klm, Kolkata), which gave birth to the State of Israel. Presently, he is Assistant Professor of History at City College, Kolkata, and Guest Lecturer in the Department of Islamic History and Culture at the University of Calcutta. Besides his interest in Jewish history and culture, Dr. Chakrabarti is equally interested in Russian and East European studies. He has written a book on India-Russia Relations (India-Russia Relations: The Soviet Interlude, Firma Klm) with due emphasis on the Soviet period. He has a knack for languages and is able to read and write Hebrew. His PhD dissertation on the Calcutta Jewish Community (Glimpses into the Jewish Life of Calcutta 1798-1948, Readers Service, Kolkata) has been recently published and is a must read for anyone interested in the life of a onceflourishing community.

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