

RESUME

DEBDATTA CHOWDHURY

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CURRENT POSITION

Assistant Professor in Gender Studies, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta

GENERAL RESEARCH INTEREST

Women in local governance, Gender and Legal Jurisprudence, Border/Partition/Migration Studies

EDUCATION

Name of Examination & Board	Institute/ University	Year	Marks in Percentage	Class/Div
Secondary (X) under West Bengal Board of Secondary Education	Carmel High School, Kolkata, India	2000	86	1 st Div
Higher Secondary (Humanities) (X+II) under West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education	Carmel High School, Kolkata, India	2002	72.3	1 st Div
3-year Bachelor of Arts in History (with English and Political Science as pass subjects)	Presidency College, University of Calcutta	2005	55.75 (Honours)	2 nd Class
2-year Master of Arts in South and Southeast Asian Studies with Special Papers: I) Gender Studies II) Refugee Studies	University of Calcutta	2007	63.88	1 st Class 1 st Position
	Dessertation: 'Portrayal Of Female Refugees In Ritwik Ghatak's Films: <i>Meghe Dhaka Tara</i> , <i>Komal Gandhar</i> , <i>Subarnarekha</i> '.			
Doctor of Philosophy(PhD) in Law	University of Westminster, London	2014		
	Thesis Title: 'Marginal Lives, Peripheral Practices: A Study of Border Narratives along the West Bengal-Bangladesh Border'			

CURRENT RESEARCH INTEREST

My current research aims to critically engage with women-led grassroots level legal advocacy mechanisms as models for feminist legal jurisprudence in India. The primary sites of study are para-state and non-state (civil society led) community-level mechanisms variously named *Nari Adalats*, *Mahila Shalishi*, *Mahila Jamaat*, *Mahila Gram Sabha*, etc which together with state-initiated mechanisms like Mahila Samakhya, Family Courts, Women's Cell and Women's Commission initiatives, will be contextualized within the larger trajectory of women's political activism and legal scholarship in India. The women-led community-level legal advocacy mechanisms will be studied as a framework for women's enhanced participation in local governance in terms of addressing gendered practices of violence and harassment, i.e. as an attempt at gendering local governance. The focus will be on feminist strategizing as a tool for the same. The mechanisms will also be problematized as sites which reflect the complex location of women at the intersection of individual rights, human rights and community rights. To that end, the idea of 'community' will be critically engaged with using a critical legal theory framework.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Book:

- *Identity and Experience at the India-Bangladesh Border: The Crisis of Belonging*. London & New York: Routledge, 2018

Articles/book chapters:

- 'Partitioned Past, Bordered Present: The Need for Dialogue between Partition Studies and Border Studies', in Gorky Chakraborty and Supurna Banerjee (Eds). *Negotiating Borders and Borderlands: The Indian Experience*, Orient BlackSwan, 2023.
- 'Making Higher Education Institutions Gender-Sensitive: Visions and Voices from the Indian Education System', in Anna CohenMiller, Tamsin Hinton-Smith, Fawzia Haeri Mazanderani, Nupur Samuel (Eds.) *Leading Change in Gender and Diversity in Higher Education: From Margins to Mainstream*, Routledge, 2023.
- 'Contesting Common Sense: Smuggling Across the India-Bangladesh Border', Mahmoud Keshavarz and Shahram Khosravi (Eds.). *Seeing like a Smuggler: Ethnographic, Ethical and Material Perspectives*. Pluto Books, 2022.
- Bengal Partitioned, Bengal Claimed: Ethno-Religious Politics across the Bengal Border, in Anindita Ghoshal (Ed.) *Revisiting Partition: Contestation, Narratives and Memories*. Primus, 2022.
- (Forthcoming) Partition's Women: Inherited Memories of Remarkable Lives and Times, in Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, Jayanta Sengupta, Rituparna Roy (Eds.) *The*

Long History of Partition in Bengal: Event, Memory, and Identity. Routledge, 2023

- ‘Lands and communities in Flux: The Chars in the Ganga-Brahmaputra Deltaic Region’, in Markus Arnold, Corinne Duboin and Judith Misrahi-Barak (Eds.) *Borders and Ecotones in the Indian Ocean: Cultural and Literary Perspectives.* Presses universitaires de la Mediterranee, 2020.
- ‘Çrossers of the peripheries: Some aspects of cross-border livelihood practices along the West Bengal-Bangladesh border’, *Westminster Law Review*, 5(1): 1-11, February 2016.
- ‘Exploring Narratives, Rationalising Data: A Study of the West Bengal-Bangladesh Border’, *Review of Social Studies* 1(1):111-131, Autumn 2014.
- ‘Masculinity at work, masculinity at stake: ‘Male’ negotiations along the West Bengal-Bangladesh border’, in Rohit K. Dasgupta and Steven Baker (Eds.) *Popular Masculine Cultures in India: Critical Essays*, 26-44 Kolkata, Delhi: Setu Prakashani, 2012.
- ‘Territory, Space, Cognition: Revisiting the Bengal-Bangladesh border’, *Perspectives: Asia-Pacific, Proceedings of the Fifth Biennial International Conference, Indian Association for Asian and Pacific Studies*, 170-182. Kolkata 2012.
- ‘Space, identity, territory: Marichjhapi Massacre, 1979’, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 15(5): 664-682, June 2011 (The journal is indexed in Scopus, Print ISSN: 1364-2987 Online ISSN: 1744-053X)

Blog posts:

- ‘Vulnerable Groups in Higher Education Institutions vis a vis the Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Higher Education Institutions’, *Sexual Harassment Law Compliance*, 6 September 2020

Book Reviews:

- Book Review of Rimple Mehta, *Women, Mobility and Incarceration: Love and Recasting of Self Across the Bangladesh-India Border* (London & New York: Routledge, 2018), *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 28(3): 480-483, 26 September 2021 (UGC CARE, Scopus, SSCI; P-ISSN: 9715215).
- ‘Neejbhumey porobashi, tai shoronarathi’, Book Review of Ranabir Samaddar and Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury (Eds.) *Rohingyas in South Asia* (Routledge, 2018), *Anandabazar Patrika*, 11 December 2020.

ONGOING PROJECT

- ICSSR-ERC Funded Project titled ‘Women-led Community-level Legal Advocacy Mechanisms in India: A Model for Feminist Jurisprudence’, March 2023-February 2024.

COMPLETED PROJECT

- Ministry of Culture, Government of India Funded Content Development Project (as part of a team from the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta) for ‘I Am Kolkata: A Virtual-Reality Experiential Museum’, Metcalf Hall, Kolkata, July-November 2018.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & LECTURES

- 1 ‘Feminist Ethnography: A Vision, A Process’, National Online Symposium on Ethnography as a Method: New Perspectives’, part of research project ‘Religion and Caste in an Industrial Town: An Ethnographic Study of Asansol’ under UGC-STRIDE Project Component-1, Kazi Nazrul University, 17 December 2022
- 2 ‘Shimanter Mohilader Jibon O Jeebika’ (Life and Livelihood Concerns of Women in the borderlands), Webinar organized by Political Science Study Circle, Kolkata, 27 June 2022.
- 3 ‘Gendering Education’, Lecture on Gender Sensitization, Dept. of Physics, IQAC and Women’s Cell, Vijaygarh Jyotish Ray College, Kolkata, 30 November 2021.
- 4 ‘The odds and evens of ‘being documented’: Trafficking, sex work, and the state-building agenda, at large’, Webinar on Laws on Travel: Documents, Histories and Practices, School of Law, Governance and Citizenship and Centre for Publishing, Ambedkar University, Delhi, 1 April 2021.
- 5 ‘Law, Gender and Sexuality: Feminist Legal Activism and Writing in India’, Guest Lecture, Jindal School of Liberal Arts and Humanities, O.P. Jindal Global University, 24 March 2021.
- 6 ‘Of Consensus, Contentions and Continuities: Feminist Legal Jurisprudence in India’, Multidisciplinary Online Lecture Series on Gender Studies, Ramkrishna Sarada Mission College, Kolkata, 5 January 2021.
- 7 ‘The Politics and Economics of Illegal Migration: Cross-Border Movement of Semi/Un-Skilled Women in South Asia’, One-Day International Webinar on People, Border and Mobility: Challenges in the India-Bangladesh Relations, Sreegopal Banerjee College, West Bengal, 30 September 2020.
- 8 ‘Gender and Migration: An Overview’, Conference on State, Community, Citizenship: Rewriting Histories of Gender, School of Women’s Studies,

- Jadavpur University, 16 March 2020.
- 9 'Writing the Partition, Living the Border: The Journey from Partition Studies to Border Studies', Research Methods Lectures, Ambedkar University Delhi, 16 October 2019.
 - 10 'Nation at its Margins: Gendered Practices across the West Bengal-Bangladesh border', Special Lecture, Ambedkar University Delhi, 6 March 2019.
 - 11 'The Making and Unmaking of Border Towns across the West Bengal-Bangladesh border', Lecture Series, Janki Devi Memorial College, Delhi, 5 March 2019.
 - 12 'Cartographic Consequences of the Partition: Territorial Disparities across the West Bengal-Bangladesh border', Special Lecture, Ambedkar University Delhi, 26 February 2019.
 - 13 'Visual Representation of Caste in India: A Case of Indian Cinema', Introductory Presentation in *Historia* (Department of History), Loreto College, Kolkata, 16 February 2019.
 - 14 'Lands and communities in flux: Riverine border chars as transitional zones', Ecotones 4 Conference, Kolkata, 13-15 December 2018.
 - 15 'Festivals across Fence: Partition, religion and (border) festivities', AAS-in-Asia 2018, New Delhi, 5-8 July 2018.
 - 16 'Research Methodology: Research Insights on Doing Social Science Research', Bengal Institute of Business Studies, Kolkata, 20 March 2018.
 - 17 'Women and Politics', Department of Political Science, Victoria Institution, Kolkata, 24 November 2017.
 - 18 'Partition and its antipathies: Ethno-religious radicalism across the Bengal border', Seminar on Revisiting and Remembering Partition: Issues Related to Eastern and North-Eastern India, Department of History, Diamond Harbour Women's University, Sarisha, 21-22 August 2017.
 - 19 'Linking lives: Renewing lost linkages in a partitioned Bengal', Conference on Partition in Bengal: Looking Back After 70 Years, Victoria Memorial Hall and Indian Museum and New Zealand India Research Institute, Victoria University of Wellington, Kolkata, 17-18 August 2017.
 - 20 'Making Sense of Common Sense: Life and Livelihood Challenges across the West Bengal-Bangladesh Border', SYLFF Lecture Series, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, 11 November 2016.
 - 21 'The Spectre of Partition: Bare Life and Statelessness in the India-Bangladesh Enclaves', Workshop on 'The Long History of Partition in Eastern India', Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, 16-17 June 2014.

- 22 'Being' and 'becoming' the marginal: Interrogating ethno-religious and caste narratives along the West Bengal-Bangladesh border', Australian National University, Canberra, 29 May 2014.
- 23 'Reinterpreting border narratives at the India-Bangladesh border', Annual Conference of the Law Literature and the Humanities Association of Australasia: Interpellations, Australian National University, Canberra, 5-7 December 2013.
- 24 'India-Bangladesh Border', 5th Crossing Over International Symposium, Cleveland State University, Ohio, 11-13 October 2013.
- 25 'Disowned and distressed: Revisiting the India-Bangladesh Enclaves', Queen Mary Postgraduate Legal Research Conference: Reinvigorating Legal Thought in Times of Change, Queen Mary University of London, London, 6 June 2013.
- 26 'To cross or not to cross: Some aspects of cross-border livelihood practices along the West Bengal-Bangladesh border', Westminster Graduate Conference, University of Westminster, London, 16 May 2013.
- 27 'When, what, why': Time, frame and reason in the context of negotiating methodological questions and field data', London Center for Social Studies Conference, King's College London, 19 April 2013.
- 28 'Bordered Existences: Women at the Bengal-Bangladesh border', PECANS Conference, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, 25-26 July 2011.
- 29 'Territory, Space, Cognition: Reflections on the Bengal-Bangladesh border', The Fifth Biennial International Conference of Indian Association for Asian and Pacific Studies at Sikkim University, 10-12 December, 2010.
- 30 'Space, identity, territory: Marichjhapi Massacre, 1979', Graduate Conference, School of Law, University of Westminster, London, June, 2010.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

- 1 Currently, Assistant Professor in Gender Studies, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta
- 2 Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta, March-October 2020.
- 3 Assistant Professor in Gender Studies, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta, June 2016 to May 2019.

- 4 Guest Lecturer in the department of History, Diamond Harbour Women's University, West Bengal, February 2015 to October 2016.
- 5 Guest Lecturer in the department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta, Kolkata, January-March 2015.
- 6 Research Fellow at Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, November 2010.
- 7 Research Fellow at Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata, August-December 2010.
- 8 Guest Lecturer in the Department of History, Gokhale Memorial Girls' College, Kolkata, March-May 2009.
- 9 Associated with a project titled 'Gandhiji in United Bengal' at the Gandhian Studies Centre, University of Calcutta from November 2008 to January 2009.
- 10 Delivered two lectures at the Department of History, Presidency College, Kolkata on "Internal and External Policies of Nehru" in February, 2008.
- 11 Worked as Research Associate in Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group from February-July, 2008; job profile included research activities, in the areas of forced migration, refugee and border studies, gender issues and social justice; seminars, workshops, meetings; editorial work.

ACADEMIC WORKSHOPS/PANEL DISCUSSIONS

1. Panelist in 'Beyond the Borders and Pathways of Difficult Narrations', a panel discussion organized by Academic Writing Lab-Humanities Initiative, Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi, 19 May, 2023.
2. Chaired lecture by Prof. Srimati Basu, Professor of Gender and Women's Studies and Anthropology, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Kentucky, 19 March 2022.
3. Organizing committee member and participant in workshop on Doing Ambedkarism Today: Issues of Caste, Gender and Community organized by Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, held in Kolkata, 19-22 February 2018.
4. Participant in a roundtable presentation on Gendered Forms of Violence: Issues and Strategies organized by Institute of Development Studies Kolkata, held in Kolkata, 6 March 2017.
5. Participant in a roundtable discussion on Women in Politics organized by the School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University, held in Kolkata, 21 September 2016.

6. Participated in The Third CRG Workshop on Internal Displacement in India: Causes, Linkages, Responses, And Durable Solutions organized by the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, held in Kolkata, September, 2007.
7. Participated in the Second Critical Studies Conference on 'Spheres of Justice' organized by the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, held in Kolkata, September, 2007.
8. Organized and participated in the Three-Day Workshop on Gender and Forced Migration organized by Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group and Asmita Resource Centre for Women, held in Hyderabad, February, 2008.
9. Organized and participated in the Two-Day Indo-French Seminar on State Formation, Citizenship and Gender organized by Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group in collaboration with Indian Council of Social Science Research (Eastern Regional Centre), held in Kolkata, March 2008.
10. Organized and participated in the Three-Day Consultative Meeting on Development, Democracy and Governance organized by Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, held in Bhubaneswar, May, 2008.
11. Participated in The Sixth Annual Winter Course on Forced Migration organized by the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group and supported by The Government of Finland, the Brookings Institution and UNHCR (1-15 December 2008).
12. Attended sessions on Learning, Teaching and Assessment in Higher Education, Westminster Exchange, University of Westminster, London, 17 February and 24 February 2010.

ACADEMIC OUTREACH

- Resource Person at Training on Gender, Sex and Sexuality, a one-day training workshop organized by Amra Padatik, Dubar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, 11 May, 2023.
- Resource Person at Summer Course on Gender and Development organized by A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna in collaboration with Centre for Catalyzing Change-Sakshamaa, Bihar, 20-25 June 2022.
- External Mphil Examiner for MPhil dissertations for IDS, Kolkata and Diamond Harbour Women's University, West Bengal.
- Resource Person and course designer on Gender Awareness at IISER, Kolkata.
- Manuscript reviewer for Oxford University Press, Indian Journal of Gender

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

1. Currently pursuing Post-Graduate Diploma in Human Rights Law (Distance Education Programme), National Law School of India University, Bengaluru
2. Arabic Language Basic and Advanced Course, SNAP Academy, Kolkata in collaboration with Maulana Azad College, Kolkata, 2020-2021
3. POSH Virtual Training Workshop on “The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013 and the “UGC (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015, conducted by SHLC–Sexual Harassment Law Compliance Advisory, 23-30 June 2020.

COURSES TAUGHT

- M.Phil course, *Feminism and the Social Sciences*, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta
- M.Phil course, *Institutions and Identities in Contemporary India*, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta

RESEARCH SUPERVISION

M.Phil:

Completed: 4

Ongoing: 1

PhD:

Ongoing: 4

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (IN CSSSC)

- Convenor, Publications Sub-Committee, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta, April 2023-present Member of Durbar Ethics Review Board, Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, September 2022-present.

- Seminar Convenor, Seminar Sub-Committee, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta, Nov 2020-Till date, May 2018 to May 2019.
- Seminar Convenor, Seminar Sub-Committee, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta, May 2018 to May 2019.
- Member of Ph.D Interview Board, Ph.D Sub Committee, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta September Nov 2020-Till date, 2018 to May 2019.
- Chairperson, Committee on Gender Sensitization and Sexual Harassment, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta, from October 2016 to October 2018.

EXTERNAL POSTS HELD

- Member of Durbar Ethics Review Board, Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, September 2022-present.

LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, BANGLA, HINDI

DECLARATION:

I hereby declare that the above information is correct to the best of my knowledge.



Debdatta Chowdhury
Kolkata, May 2023