



**UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA**  
**FACULTY ACADEMIC PROFILE/ CV**

**Full name of the faculty member:** Bishnupriya Basak

**Designation:** Assistant Professor Stage 3

**Specialisation :** Prehistory; Archaeological theory; History of Indian Archaeology;  
Early history and Archaeology of Vietnam



**Contact information :**

Department of Archaeology, 1 Reformatory Street, Alipur campus, Calcutta University,  
Kolkata 700027. Email: basak.bishnupriya@gmail.com

**Academic qualifications:**

College/ university from which the degree was obtained	Abbreviation of the degree
Presidency College, Kolkata	B.A. Honors in History, 1988..
Delhi University	MA in AHistory with specialization in Ancient Indian History, 1991
University of Poona	Ph.D, degree awarded 1998

**Positions held/ holding:**

Assistant Professor Stage 3. Currently head of the Department

**Research interests:**

- Prehistory with special interest in hunter-gatherer studies.....
- Archaeological theory with special interest in Landscape archaeology
- History of Indian Archaeology with special emphasis on Bengal and Eastern India
- Early history and Archaeology of Vietnam with special emphasis on material culture of the region

**Research guidance :**

Number of researchers awarded M.Phil/ Ph.D degrees : 1 (Ph.D.)

Number of researchers pursuing M.Phil/ Ph.D : 4 (Ph.D.)

**Projects :**

***Completed projects :***

1. UPE project ‘Interactions exchanges between India and central and South Vietnam, 1<sup>st</sup>-10 century CE’: Funding agency, University Grants Commission: Duration, 2007-12
2. Research project “Understanding the prehistoric landscape—a holistic study of the microlithic sites of foothill region of Ayodhya hills, Purulia, West Bengal”: Funding agency, Indian Council of Historical Research: 2011-13

***Current projects :***

**Select list of publications:** (2009-16)

a) ***Journals:***

- 2010 ‘Upper Palaeolithic culture in the Chotanagpur plateau region comprising parts of the modern states of Jharkhand, West Bengal and Orissa: a few observations’, **Pratnasamiksha**, pp.1-8
- 2011 ‘The Journey of Kalidas Datta and the construction of regional history in pre and post-independent Bengal, India’, **Public Archaeology**, Volume 10, No.3, August, pp. 132-58.
- 2011 ‘Collecting Objects: Situating the Indian Collections (1884-1945) in Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.’ **Studies in History**, 27 (1), 85-109.
- 2013 ‘Excavation of a microlithic site and exploration in the Ayodhya hills, Purulia, West Bengal: 2011-12 and 2012-13’, **Pratnasamiksha, New Series**.
- 2014 ‘Earliest Dates and implications of Microlithic industries of Late Pleistocene from Mahadebbera and Kana, Purulia District, West Bengal’ with P. Srivastava, S.Dasgupta, Anil Kumar and S.N. Rajaguru, **Current Science**, 107 (7), 10 October, 1167-1171.
- 2014 ‘Recent Discoveries of Black and Red Ware sites in Purba Medinipur, West Bengal,’ with Sharmistha Chatterjee, Kaushik Gangopadhyaya, Rajat Sanyal and Suchandra Ghosh, **Pratnasamiksha, New Series**, 5, pp.1-6.
- 2015 ‘Geoarchaeological investigations in the Ayodhya hills, Purulia district, West Bengal: New paths and Future Directions’, **Pratnasamiksha, New Series**, 6, pp.1-5

b) ***Books/ book chapters :***

- 2014 ‘Interpreting Historical Archaeology of Coastal Bengal: Possibilities and limitations’ in D.N. Jha ed. **The Complex Heritage of Early India: Essays in memory of R.S. Sharma**, pp. 155-179. Manohar: New Delhi.
- 2016 The Prehistory of the Tarafeni valley, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal: Exploring New Dimensions in Hunter-gatherer Studies (forthcoming)
- 2016 Recent Developments in the Prehistory of the Indian Sub-continent (ed. Volume, in press)

c) ***Conference/ seminar volumes:***

- 2009 ‘Valentine Ball and the beginning of Prehistory in India’, in G. Sengupta and K. Gangopadhyay eds. **Archaeology in India: Individuals, Ideas and Institutions**. Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers: New Delhi, pp. .
- 2009 ‘Prehistoric Research in Bengal: On the threshold’, in Ranjana Ray and V.Jayaswal eds. **Status of Prehistoric Studies in the twenty-first century in India, Proceedings of the XV UISPP World Congress (Lisbon, 4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> September, 2006)**. Archaeopress: Oxford.
- 2012 ‘The meaning of Landscape: the perspectives and possibilities of Research’ in B.K. Choudhary ed. *Changing Perspectives and Methodologies in South Asian Archaeology*, K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna., pp. 151-62

d) ***Other publications :***

### **Membership of Learned Societies:**

- The Asiatic Society. Kolkata, History and Archaeology Committee
- Indian Museum, Calcutta, Physical Verification Committee (2008-15).
- Executive Committee Member, Indian Society for Prehistoric and Quaternary Studies (2009-2012).
- Life member, Indian Society for Prehistoric and Quaternary Studies
- Advisory board of the Asiatic Society for grant of Hemchandra Roychoudhury and RP Chanda medals to distinguished scholars in 2015.

### **Invited lectures delivered :**

- 2009. Quang Ngai, Vietnam. Presented a paper on ‘Sa Huynh culture in the Thu Bon valley, 500 BCE-1<sup>st</sup> CE—some queries and observations on the social context’, at a conference on ‘100 years of the discovery of Sa Huynh culture.’
- 2009, London. Presented a paper on ‘Kalidas Datta: the journey of an amateur archaeologist and the rediscovery of a region’ at the Institute of Archaeology, London, as part of a series of lectures of the Heritage Studies group.
- 2009. Allahabad. Presented a paper on ‘Archaeology and Ethnography--some queries, with particular reference to Ethnoarchaeological Studies in the Indian sub-continent’ at the departmental seminar of Department of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology, University of Allahabad.
- 2010 ‘Special lecture on certain aspects of archaeology’, for Undergraduate course in History Honours, Department of History, Basanti Devi College, Kolkata
- 2010 ‘Lectures on ‘Introduction to Indian Civilization’ for MA course in History, Department of History, West Bengal State University, Barasat.
- 2010. Kolkata. Presented a paper on ‘The Pitt Rivers Collection and the beginning of prehistoric archaeology in the Indian sub-continent’ at the xvth national seminar of the Centre for Archaeological Studies and Training, eastern India, Kolkata.
- 2010 (July), Vienna, Austria. Presented a paper on ‘D.B. Spooner’s vision of Persepolis and the Excavation of Pataliputra, 1912-13, 1913- 14’, at the XXth International conference on South Asian Archaeology.
- 2011 (April), Colombo, Sri Lanka. Presented a paper on microlithic sites in the western upland: A holistic study at the 1st Bienneila conference organized by the International Association for Asian Heritage.
- 2011 (i) ‘A Survey of prehistoric Researches up to Neolithic in West Bengal’  
(ii) ‘A Survey of prehistoric Researches up to Neolithic in Jharkhand’  
Invited lectures in Refresher Course in Prehistory, Bhopal, Archaeological Survey of India through Institute of Archaeology, Regional Directorate (Central region) and Prehistory Branch, 2010-January 2011
- 2012. (September) Presented a paper ‘Understanding the Champa polity from archaeological and epigraphic evidence--a critical stocktaking’ at the European Association of South East Asian archaeology, 14 (EurASEAA 14) at Dublin, Ireland.
- 2012 (November). Presented a paper on ‘Excavation at the microlithic site of Mahadebbera, Ghatbera, Purulia District, West Bengal: A multi-disciplinary study’ at the XL annual conference of the Indian Society for Prehistoric and Quaternary Studies (ISPQS), Baroda, November 22-24.
- 2012 and 2013. Special lectures on ‘Prehistory of Bengal’, Course on Cultural heritage and Museum Studies, Indian Museum

- 2012. 'Indic themes in the history of South East Asia: The case of the kingdom of Champa', invited lecture in Refresher course in History, Department of History, Calcutta University.
- 2013 (February). Presented a paper on 'Archaeological Aspects of South-east Asia and Continuing Influences: Central and South Vietnam—A report' with Suchandra Ghosh at a Workshop on *India and Southeast Asia in the Changing World*, organized by ICWA-IFPS, University of Calcutta, Sapru House, New Delhi.
- 2013. 'State and Society in early South east Asia: Case studies Champa and Funan', invited lecture in Refresher course in History, Department of History, Jadavpur University.
- 2013. 'Archaeological Understanding of History in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Bengal, Khudiram Bose Central College, Kolkata .
- 2013. 'Understanding 'Chiefdoms' from Iron Age remains in Central Vietnam: A prelude to State formation?' 'Understanding 'Chiefdoms' from Iron Age remains in Central Vietnam: A prelude to State formation?' Adhir Chakravarti Memorial lecture, organized by Adhir Charavarti Memorial Committee in collaboration with Indian Museum.
- 2013 'Upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic Cultures of India', two lectures, invited by the Centre for Archaeological Studies and Training eastern India, Kolkata
- 2013 'Managing prehistoric heritage: means and possibilities.' Invited by UGC-Academic Staff College, University of Calcutta, UGC-Academic Staff College, University of Calcutta, in the summer school organized by the Department of Museology.
- 2014 (i) R.C. Majumdar and the 'construction' of Champa in *Greater India: any contemporary relevance?*  
 ii) Understanding 'chiefdom' from Iron Age remains in Mainland and Island Southeast Asia, with particular reference to central Vietnam: A prelude to 'state' formation? Invited to present these papers at the conference of Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association, Siem Reap, Cambodia.
- 2014. Presented a paper on Late Pleistocene microlithic industries of Ayodhya hills, Purulia, West Bengal: Analysis and implications at *Robert Bruce Foote Memorial Seminar*, held at Asiatic Society, Kolkata.
- 2014. Presented a paper on 'Late Pleistocene Microlithic Industries in the Ayodhya hills, West Bengal, Eastern India: reconstructing a past view of landscape', 22<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of European association of South Asian archaeology and Art, held at National Museum of World Culture, Stokholm, Sweden, June 30<sup>th</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> July.
- 2014. Presented a paper on 'Late Pleistocene microlithic sites of Ayodhya hills, Purulia, West Bengal: new light on chronology and context', Joint conference of ISPQS, IAS, IHCS held at Deccan College, Pune.
- 2014. Presented a paper on 'Reconstructing a hunter-gatherer landscape of the Late Pleistocene: a multi-disciplinary study of the prehistory of Ayodhya hills, Purulia District, West Bengal' at the 27<sup>th</sup> IGI (Indian Institute of Geomorphologists) conference on **Geomorphology and Geospatial Technology in Environment Management and Societal Development** at Digha, organized by Vidyasagar University, Midnapore.
- 2015. Invited by the Institute of Foreign Policy, and the China Center, Calcutta University to speak on 'The Archaeological Survey of India Abroad, Opportunities, Initiatives and Limitations.'
- 2015. Invited by State Department of Archaeology, Bihar and Bihar Purabid Society to deliver a keynote address on Pataliputra.

### **Awards:**

- 2009 Received the UK Travel Award 2009-10 from the Nehru Trust for the Indian Collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum, New Delhi for a short term Project on *Understanding the antiquity of mankind: the beginnings of prehistoric archaeology in the Indian sub-continent with special reference to eastern India* to work at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford and the Royal Anthropological Institute, London.
- 2009 Received a short term grant from the Fondation maison des sciences de l'homme (FMSH) Paris to conduct research on 'early history and archaeology of central Vietnam: revisiting *Indianization*.
- 2011. Received a research grant from The Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi to work on "Understanding the prehistoric landscape—a holistic study of the microlithic sites of foothill region of Ayodhya hills, Purulia, West Bengal" for two years.
  - 2015. Received a short term research grant from the Society of Antiquaries of London to do archival work in London and Edinburgh in Autumn, 2015.

### **Other notable activities:**

1. **Appointed as the Honorary Lecturer** in the Institute of Archaeology, London from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012, extended till September 2016.
2. **Chairmanship/organizers organizers of academic panels at National/International seminars**
  - Organizer, with Dr. Suchandra Ghosh, of the academic session: 'Understanding Champa: rereading art, archaeology, inscriptions and text' at the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association Congress 2014 (IPPA 2014), Siem Reap, Cambodia
  - Chairmanship of an open session at the Joint annual conference of ISPQS, IAS and IHCS, 2014, Pune.
3. **Refereed papers for international journals** like *Quaternary International* ; evaluated proposals/reports of research grants awarded by the Indian Council of Historical Research.
4. **Preparation of teaching material for undergraduate and postgraduate courses:**
  - Prepared teaching material in Early Indian history and archaeology for undergraduates as part of the University Grants Commission distance learning program, organized by the EMMRC (Educational Multimedia research Centre), St. Xavier's Autonomous College, Kolkata.
  - Prepared courses for MA program in History and Anthropology for the Indira Gandhi National Open University .