

Samayita Banerjee

Bengaluru, India. +91 9582613099. samayita.banerjee@gmail.com, samayita.banerjee@nias.res.in
Orcid ID: : <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-5697-6784>

PERSONAL PROFILE

I am a Postdoctoral Associate at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), working on nationally funded research focused on cultural heritage landscapes using GIS, remote sensing, and archaeological field methods. My research interests centre on landscape archaeology, spatial history, and human–environment interactions, with a regional focus on eastern and central India. I have sustained teaching experience across undergraduate and postgraduate courses and am actively involved in mentoring research fellows and capacity-building initiatives.

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in History, Ashoka University** Sonipat, Delhi NCR
Thesis: Among Shifting Rivers: Archaeology, Ecology and Space in Deltaic Bengal **2024**
Supervisor: Prof. Nayanjot Lahiri
- M.Phil in History, University of Delhi** Delhi
Thesis: Rethinking Space Through Literature: A study of Deltaic Bengal in the Mangalkavyas **2017**
Supervisors: Profs. Upinder Singh and Farhat Hasan
- M.A in History, Miranda House, University of Delhi** Delhi
Result: First Class **2015**
- B.A in History, Presidency College, University of Calcutta** Kolkata
Result: First Class **2013**

ACADEMIC POSITION

National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) Bengaluru (KA)
IISc Campus
Post-Doctoral Associate **January 2025 - Present**

Project: Towards a National Cultural Landscape Information System: Mapping Heritage Sites for Inclusive Planning

- Leading documentation and spatial analysis of 100+ cultural heritage landscape sites across India using GIS, remote sensing, archival maps, and field-based data
- Conducting region-specific landscape studies in Bengal and preparing peer-reviewed research papers.
- Teaching and contributing to a doctoral-level course
- Training Workshops (July-Aug 2025, Dec 2025-Jan 2026): Involved in national capacity-building initiatives for PhD scholars and faculty in the form of training workshops on geospatial methods for archaeology and heritage research. Played a key role in conceptualization and academic planning, delivering lectures and hands-on sessions on Google Earth for spatial analysis: reading, georeferencing and mapping legacy data; DEM based terrain analysis and hydrology, supported by landscape case studies.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Position	Institution	Course Title	Level	Semester / Year	Course Instructor(s)
Course Instructor	National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS)	Landscape Archaeology and Spatial History: Global and Indian Perspectives	Doctoral (PhD Coursework)	Spring 2026	Prof. M. B. Rajani (Co-Instructor)
Teaching Fellow	Ashoka University	Great Books	Foundation	Monsoon 2024	Profs. Rudrangshu Mukherjee; Gopal Krishna Gandhi
Teaching Fellow	Ashoka University	Reading History	Major / Minor	Spring 2024	Prof. Neeladri Bhattacharya
Teaching Fellow	Ashoka University	Indian Civilizations	Foundation	Spring 2018	Prof. Rudrangshu Mukherjee
Teaching Fellow	Ashoka University	Indian Civilizations	Foundation	Monsoon 2018	Prof. Rudrangshu Mukherjee
Teaching Fellow	Ashoka University	Indian Civilizations	Foundation	Monsoon 2017	Profs. Nayanjot Lahiri; Gopal Krishna Gandhi
Teaching Fellow	Ashoka University	Indian Civilizations	Foundation	Monsoon 2016	Prof. Nayanjot Lahiri

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1. Research Assistant, Bandhavgarh Archaeological Project 2021–2026

Centre for Interdisciplinary Archaeological Research, Ashoka University
Principal Investigator: Professor Nayanjot Lahiri

- Focused on archaeological field survey, satellite imagery interpretation, site mapping, and interdisciplinary spatial analysis
- Contributed to peer-reviewed publications and heritage mapping outputs

2. Walk Leader (Freelance), India Heritage Walks, New Delhi 2017–2019

- Led public heritage walks at Firoz Shah Kotla, Purana Qila, and Qutb Minar complex combining archaeological interpretations with oral histories and contemporary ritual practices. Emphasized monuments as living places, such as the worship of djinns at Firoz Shah Kotla, to illustrate how memory, belief and everyday lives shape historical meaning of a space.

AWARDS AND GRANTS

1. UNESCO – Sahapedia Project Fellow, Sahapedia, New Delhi 2017-2018

Project: *Chandraketugarh: Forgotten Heritage of Bengal*

<https://www.sahapedia.org/chandraketugarh-forgotten-heritage-of-bengal>

2. Centre for Interdisciplinary Archaeological Research Seed Grant, Ashoka University 2025

Project: *How Hungry is the Tide?: Anchoring the Changing Landscapes of Coastal and Deltaic Bengal*

Project abstract: The project aims to select archaeological sites located at the mouth of the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna delta using field surveys, OSL dating methods and remote sensing techniques. These sites are not only important for their archaeological significance, going back to the early medieval period and highlighting the expansion of settlements deep into the delta before the Mughals or the English, but also because of their location in an extreme tidal-fluvial zone undergoing constant geomorphological changes.

RESEARCH SKILLS AND TECHNICAL PROFICIENCIES

- **Field Explorations:** Proficient in GPS-based survey techniques, documentation of surface and structural remains, and correlating field data with satellite imagery—especially in forested and topographically complex regions.
- **Geospatial and Remote Sensing Analysis:** Specialized in using QGIS and Google Earth Pro for archaeological research, including integration of historical satellite data for landscape analysis.
- **Interdisciplinary Spatial Research:** Skilled in combining archaeological, textual, ecological, and hydrological data to reconstruct historical landscapes; experienced in long-term fieldwork and remote sensing.
- **Languages:** Fluent in English, Bengali, and Hindi (Reading, Speaking and Writing)
- **Sanskrit for Research:** Completed Certificate Course (St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi); Advanced Sanskrit for textual analysis (Ashoka University)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

1. **European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art**, Ghent University, Belgium (upcoming July 2026)
2. **XXI INQUA Congress**, Sapienza University, Rome (2023)
3. **Asia-Sorbonne Association**, Sorbonne Université, France (2023)
4. **Animals in South Asian History Symposium**, Ashoka University (2022)
5. **European Conference for South Asian Studies**, University of Vienna (2021)
6. **India-Ireland Conference**, Dublin City University (2019)
7. **Graduate Research Meet**, IIT Guwahati (2018)
8. **Research Scholars Conference**, University of Delhi (2018)
9. **National Conference on Archaeology, Heritage and Religion**, Presidency University (2018)
10. **National Conference**, University of Kerala (2018)

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

1. Lahiri, N., Rajani, M. B., Sanyal, D., & Banerjee, S. (2022). *Exploring the forest and mapping its archaeology: Bandhavgarh National Park and Tiger Reserve, India*. *Current Science*, 123(6).
2. Lahiri, N., Rajani, M. B., Sanyal, D., Banerjee, S., & Tiwari, S. (2023). *Tracing ancient itinerants and early medieval rulers in the forests of Bandhavgarh*. *South Asian Studies*, 39(1).
3. Banerjee, S. (2020). *India: Heritage theft remains a challenge*. *The UNESCO Courier*, 2020(4).

4. Srinivas, A., Banerjee, S., Sanyal, D., & Lahiri, N. *Prehistoric trails of the Bandhavgarh National Park and Tiger Reserve*. Quaternary International (under review).
5. Srinivas, A., & Banerjee, S. *Lithic technological behaviour at Bandhavgarh National Park and Tiger Reserve, Central India*. Lithic Technology (under review).
6. Banerjee, S., & Rajani, M. B. *Chasing myths and mounds: Reconstructing the geo-archaeological landscape of the Bengal Delta through Chandraketugarh's remains*. Archaeological Research in Asia (under review).

Book Chapters

1. Banerjee, S. (2026). *Flooded and forgotten: A geo-spatial study of archaeological sites in deltaic Bengal*. In M. B. Rajani (Ed.), *Spatial Narratives of India's Heritage*. Springer.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-95-0117-5_4
2. Banerjee, S., & Sanyal, D. (Forthcoming 2026). *Where science meets archaeology: Bandhavgarh National Park through remote sensing and GIS*. In N. Lahiri (Ed.), *Bandhavgarh Beyond the Tigers*. Westland Publications)
3. Banerjee, S. (Forthcoming 2026). *A tale of terrified tigers: Non-human actors in the seventeenth-century Raya Mangal Kavya*. In H. Chhabra and A. Chakrabarti (Eds.) *Animals and South Asian History*, Routledge.

REFERENCES

1. **Prof. Nayanjot Lahiri**, Professor of History, Ashoka University
nayanjot.lahiri@ashoka.edu.in
2. **Prof. Upinder Singh**, Professor of History, Ashoka University
upinder.singh@ashoka.edu.in
3. **Prof. Neeladri Bhattacharya**, Professor of History, Ashoka University
neeladri.bhattacharya@ashoka.edu.in
4. **Prof. M. B. Rajani**, Professor, Heritage Science and Society Programme, NIAS
mbrajani@nias.res.in