

Poulomi Dhar Chakrabarti

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Education

Brown University

PhD Candidate, Department of Political Science 2018 (expected)

Exam Fields: Comparative Politics (High Merit) and Political Theory (High Merit)

Dissertation: One Nation, Many Worlds: Varieties of Developmental Regimes in India

Committee: Ashutosh Varshney (Chair), Melani Cammett (Harvard), Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro,
Patrick Heller (Sociology)

MA in Political Science 2012

Trainee, Graduate Program in Development, Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

2007

Masters in City Planning, Department of Urban Studies and Planning

Field: International Development

School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi

2004

Bachelors in Planning

First division. Best Student Prize for the graduating class of 2004

Research

Dissertation

One Nation, Many Worlds: Varieties of Developmental Regimes in India

Why do the political elite in some places ignore economic development and instead focus on identity politics, even when the vast majority of their citizens live in poverty? Why do some states systematically pursue growth-oriented development policies, while others prioritize redistributive goals? My dissertation seeks to explain variation in state priorities in ethnically diverse societies by exploring the case of India. I argue that it is possible to conceptualize states as falling into one of three distinct developmental regimes – growth-oriented, redistributive, and a third category that I develop and define – dignity-enhancing. I argue that understanding variation across developmental regimes requires an exploration of the class and ethnic backgrounds of political elites and the nature of social inequality at the time the political elites assume power. I test this argument using a mixed-methods research design that combines a nation-wide longitudinal analysis of state-level public spending patterns from 1960 to 2012 with a paired comparative historical analysis of six states. I find that upper caste political elites and voters are more likely to support growth-led development. Importantly, contrary to expectations, the policy preference of lower castes is mediated by the level of social inequality. Under conditions of high status inequality, members of lower castes actually prioritize concerns of dignity and recognition over economic redistribution. The politics of dignity is most concretely manifested through reorganizing the ethnic composition of the state bureaucracy to reflect the ethnicity of the ruling coalition. Concerns of redistribution find political support only once some equalization of social hierarchy is achieved through greater representation.

Publications/ Under Review

Inclusion or Exclusion? Emerging Effects of Middle-Class Citizen Participation on Delhi's Urban Poor. *IDS Bulletin* 38.6. 2008: 96-104

Voters, Activists, and Politicians: Forms of Middle Class Political Participation in India (under review)

Popular media coverage: *भारत की तीसरी लोकतान्त्रिक लेहेर*, अमर उजाला, 26 Sep 2016

Urban middle class' tryst with Politics, Hindu Business Line, 27 Sep 2016

Can Growth motivate Redistribution? The Variant Politics of Education and Health in India (with Dinsha Mistree) (under review)

Works in Progress

What have we learned from the last five decades of research on Comparative Subnational Politics in India? – *working paper*

Towards Rights-based Citizenship: Impact of Information Campaigns on the Political Life in Slums (with Bala Posani) – *working paper*

Diversity and Accountability: Intergroup Relations and Sanitation in Delhi, India (with Melani Cammett and David Romney) – *pre-fieldwork stage*

Does the identity of street-level bureaucrats matter for public goods provision? (with Aaditya Dar) – *data collection/processing stage*

Cultural Regions and Public Goods Provision – *data analysis stage*

Identity in Urbanizing India – *data collection/processing stage*

Data

Caste Code: A tool to identify Indian Caste and religious affiliations through Last Names

Comparative Subnational Politics in India: Repository of Data and Literature

Other

'Urban Middle Class Politics: India's Third Democratic Upsurge?' in *India in Transition*, Center for the Study of India (CASI), University of Pennsylvania, September 26, 2016.

Improving the Public Expenditure Outcomes of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme through Social Accountability Interventions in Sirohi District, Rajasthan, India (with Darshana Patel, Parmesh Shah, Om Prakash Arya, George Cheriyan, and Sanjay Agarwal), *Social Accountability Series*, World Bank, 2009

City as a Phoenix: Role of Local Governments in the Resilience of Cities, World Bank Institute, 2008

Life in the Hood: Ethnography of a Chemistry Research Laboratory at MIT (for MIT Anthropology Department), 2008

Masters Thesis: How the rise of Middle Class Activism in Indian Cities is changing the face of Local Governance, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, MIT, 2007

Manila: Perceptions of Life and Development, in Reinhard Goethert. Ed. *Reflections from the Manila Workshop*: Special Interest Group in Urban Settlement (SIGUS), MIT, 2006

Awards & Distinctions

External Awards

- International Growth Centre (IGC), Research Grant, 2015-17
- Taraknath Das Scholarship, South Asia Institute, Columbia University, 2016-17 and 2006-07
- The Tobin Project Graduate Student Fellowship and Forum, 2015-16
- World Politics and Statecraft Fellowship, Smith Richardson Foundation, 2014-15
- Junior Research Fellowship, American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS), 2014-15
- Florence Tan Moeson Fellowship, Asian Division, The Library of Congress, 2013-14
- Foundation for Urban and Regional Studies Studentship, Oxford University, 2012-13
- Consortium on Qualitative Research Methods (CQRM) Scholarship to attend Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, 2012
- Prafulla C. Mukerji Foundation Graduate Scholarship, 2010-11 and 2006-07
- Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Sussex research funding to carry out fieldwork for MCP thesis, 2006-07
- Semi-finalist, MIT 100K Entrepreneurship Competition: Social Impact Prize - Business Plan for providing low-cost durable shelter in post-disaster situations, 2006
- Paul Foundation Scholarship, India, 2006
- Bharat Petroleum Scholarship for Higher Education, India, 2006

University-wide Awards

- Graduate School/ Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Brown University, 2015-16
- India Initiative Graduate Fellowship, Brown University, 2015 and 2013
- Joukowsky Summer Research Travel Award, Graduate School, Brown University, 2014
- Research Travel Fellowship, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Brown University, 2016, 2014, 2013, 2012 and 2011
- International Affairs Travel Fellowship, Graduate School, Brown University, 2016, 2014, 2013, 2012 and 2011
- Department of Political Science Dissertation Fellowship, Brown University, 2013-14
- Graduate Program in Development Summer Fellowship, Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs, Brown University, 2013, 2012 and 2011
- P. Terrence Hopmann Award for Excellence in Teaching, Brown University, 2013
- Graduate Fellow, Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs, Brown University, 2012-13
- Graduate International Colloquium Grant, Office of International Studies, Brown University on 'Caste and Inequality in Urban India' (with Trina Vithayathil, Gayatri Singh and Jamie McPike), 2013

Stanley J. Bernstein 1965 Graduate Fellowship, Brown University, 2010-11
Department of Urban Studies and Planning Graduate Fellowship, MIT, 2006-07
Harold Horowitz Student Research Fund Award, MIT, 2006
Program on Human Rights and Justice, Summer Internship Award, MIT, 2006
Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Public Service Centre (DUSP-PSC) Career Development Summer Internships in International Public Service Award, MIT, 2006
Ross Silberberg Memorial Fund for Social Justice and Design Award, MIT, 2006
Gold Medal, Best Student Bachelor in Planning Class of 2004, School of Planning and Architecture, India, 2005
General Proficiency Prize, Bachelor in Planning, Class of 2004, School of Planning and Architecture, India, 2005
Distinction in Undergraduate Thesis, School of Planning and Architecture, India, 2005

Additional Training

University of Michigan Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)	Summer 2014
Maxwell School, Syracuse University Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQRM)	Summer 2012

Teaching

Brown University

Facilitator (Proposal Writing), *Ethnicity, Conflict and Inequality in Global Perspective*, Brown International Advanced Research Institutes (BIARI), Summer 2016 & 2017
Teaching Assistant for *Introduction to Comparative Politics* (POLS 0200), Prof Edward Steinfeld (Enrollment: 149), Spring 2016.
Guest lecture on 'Statistics for Social Sciences' in *The Politics of Health in the Global South* (POLS 1822), Prof Melani Cammett, Fall 2014.
Teaching Assistant for *Politics, Economy and Society in India* (POLS 1280), Prof Ashutosh Varshney (Enrollment: 48), Spring 2012. Awarded *P. Terrence Hopmann Award* for Excellence for Teaching.

World Bank Institute

Co-instructor for *Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Framework* (April-May 2010) for development practitioners in South East Asia (Enrollment: 103).

Conferences and Invited Talks

International Growth Center Workshop, Patna, December 2017 (*scheduled*)
International Studies Association Northeast Region Conference, Providence, November 2017 (*scheduled*)
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington DC, October 2017 (*scheduled*)

Urban South Asia Group, Watson Institute, Brown University, Providence, May 2017

Asian Development Research Institute, *Conference on Bihar and Jharkhand: Shared History to Shared Vision*, Patna, March 2017

Development and Governance Seminar, Watson Institute, Brown University, Providence, February 2017

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 2016, 2012, 2011

International Growth Center (IGC) *Bihar Growth Conference*, Patna, Bihar, July 2016

Annual Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, Seattle, March 2016

Asian Development Research Institute *Conference on Development: Experience and Theories*, Patna, March 2016

Annual Conference on South Asia, Madison, October 2015

Jagjivan Ram Institute of Political and Parliamentary Research, Patna, June 2014

Study for Developing Societies, New Delhi, April 2014

Conference on *Questioning Marginality: Dalits and Muslims in Urban India*, Brown University, April 2013

Field Experience & Skills

Fieldwork

Fieldwork experience in the following regions: Delhi (2015, 2013-14, 2011-12, 2009, 2006-07); Bihar (2016, 2015, 2014, 2012); Himachal Pradesh (2015); Gujarat (2016, 2012); Tamil Nadu (2015); Kerala (2016); Punjab (2015); Lesotho (2007); Manila (2006); Kashmir, India (2004).

Software

STATA, R, Atlas.ti, NVivo, Arc GIS, AutoCad

Language

Hindi and English (native), Bengali, Dogri/Pahari, Punjabi (basic conversational), Urdu (conversational and basic written)

Professional Experience

World Bank Group , Washington, DC	Jan 2008 – April 2009
<i>Consultant</i>	Dec 2009 – June 2010
Provided research and policy support on decentralization and local governance.	
Center for Policy Research , New Delhi	May 2009 – Oct 2009
<i>Consultant</i>	
Designed and led research on the impact of civil engagement on local politics in India.	
Synergetic Power/ Solar Turbine Group , Lesotho	Sep 2006 – Jan 2007
<i>Consultant</i> (part-time, pro-bono)	
Prepared a business plan for a start-up company to expand solar turbine technology in Lesotho.	
The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) , New Delhi	Sep 2004 – June 2005
<i>Consultant</i>	
Carried out research on urban environment and infrastructure in India.	

Professional Service

Conference/Panel Organization

Panel on *'The Politics of Uneven Development: Subnational Perspectives from China and India'* in the Annual Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, Seattle, March 2016; Conference on *'Questioning Marginality: Dalits and Muslims in Urban India'* at Brown University, April 2013; Workshop Series on *'Caste and Inequality in Urban India'*, Brown University, 2012-13.

Referee

Asian Journal of Comparative Politics, Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, African Journal of Political Science and International Relations

Affiliations

American Political Science Association, 2010 onwards.
Association of Asian Studies, 2015 onwards.
Center for Policy Research, New Delhi, 2013-14.
Center for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi, 2014-16.
Asian Development Research Institute, Patna, 2015-17.

Editorial Service

Managing Editor, *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Brown University, 2017-18
Associate Editor, *MIT International Review*, 2008-09.
Co-editor, National Organization of Students of Planning Magazine, *Forum*, India, 2003-04.

References

Ashutosh Varshney (*Dissertation Chair*)

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Sol Goldman Professor of International Studies and
the Social Sciences
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Melani Cammett

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Secondary faculty appointment, Global Health and
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