

Purushottam Agrawal

Brief

My academic work primarily consists of text-centered criticism and historiography of 'medieval' and early modern Hindi poetry. For the last few years, via my interaction with Kabir and other Nirguna Bhaktas, I have postulated and been engaged in an attempt to develop the concept of Deshaj Adhunikta (roughly, Vernacular Modernity). This is because the trail of primary sources in Awadhi, Braj, Rajasthani and Sanskrit that I have followed has led me to question much of the received wisdom about the advent of modernity in South Asia.

My approach to the problems of the historiography of Bhakti Poetry can be gauged by my work on the Kabir-Ramanand relationship, to establish which I consulted the original Agastya Samhita (circa 12th century AD). I believe I am the only Bhakti scholar to have consulted the original of this work.

Research scholars under my guidance have worked extensively on original manuscripts pertaining to Pushtimarg, Dariya Sahab of Bihar, Sarvangis of Rajjab and Gopaldas and others.

Sustained and critical engagement with vernacular (that is, non-Sanskrit and non-Persian) sources reveals unexpected facets like a growing idea of individual, dilution of the structures of caste and upward mobility of the so-called lower castes in pre-colonial India, casting doubts on its categorization as 'medieval'.

Apart from the above, I am a public intellectual (through print and electronic media), advocating democratic values in the Indian political and cultural space.

Position

Visiting Professor
Centre for the Study of Developing Societies
New Delhi
(Since November 2013)

Date of Birth

25 June 1955

Email

purushottam53@gmail.com

Professional Employment

2007-2013	Member, Union Public Service Commission, New Delhi
2007	Chairman, Centre of Indian Languages, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University
1990-2007	Assistant, Associate and full Professor, Centre of Indian Languages, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University
2002	British Academy Visiting Professor, Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Cambridge
2002	Visiting Professor, El Colegio De México, Mexico City
1982-1990	Assistant Professor, Ramjas College, University of Delhi

Education

1985	Ph.D., Jawaharlal Nehru University (Hindi Literature: “ <i>The Social Meaning of Kabir’s Bhakti</i> ”; advisor: Namwar Singh)
1979	MA, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (Hindi Literature)
1977	MA, Jiwaji University, Gwalior (Political Science)

Languages

Reading, writing, speaking:

Hindi (Khadi boli, Braj, Awadhi, Bundelkhandi)

English

Reading knowledge of:

Urdu, Bengali, Sanskrit

Academic Recognition (Select)

A panel was organized on my book *Akath Kahani Prem Ki: Kabir Ki Kavita aur Unka Samay* (Rajkamal Prakashan, New Delhi, 2009) as part of 40th Wisconsin South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA.

Chair: Thomas Trautmann. Speakers: John S Hawley, David Lorenzon, Pashuara Singh. This was the first panel on a book in a non-European language in the history of the Wisconsin South Asia Conference.

Linda Hess discusses my work on Kabir extensively in her forthcoming book *Bodies of Song: Kabir Oral Traditions and Performative Worlds in Northern India*, Oxford University Press, USA.

The July-September 2012 issue of quarterly Hindi journal *Alochana* (Ed. Namwar Singh) was focused solely on my book *Akath Kahani Prem Ki: Kabir Ki Kavita Aur Unka*

Samay. Contributors: Namwar Singh, David N. Lorenzen, Francesca Orsini, Wagish Shukla, Harish Trivedi and others.

David N. Lorenzen discussed my work extensively in a paper entitled “Dissent in Kabir and the Kabir Panth” presented in an international seminar organized by the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University in February 2010. Proceedings of the seminar have been published by Cambridge University Press.

Ramesh Rawat has dedicated his book *Deshaj Adhunikta aur Kabir* (Vijay Publishing House, Aligarh, 2014) on a critique of my work on Kabir and vernacular modernity in India, as reflected in my book *Akath Kahani Prem Ki*

Faculty of Arts, Banaras Hindu University organized a national seminar on my book *Akath Kahani Prem Ki: Kabir Ki Kavita Aur Unka Samay* on 27 September, 2010

Nehru Adhyayan Kendra, MLS University, Udaipur organized a national seminar on my book *Akath Kahani Prem Ki: Kabir Ki Kavita Aur Unka Samay* on 23 October 2010

Ekatra (President: Ashok Vajpayee) organized a panel discussion on my book *Akath Kahani Prem Ki: Kabir Ki Kavita Aur Unka Samay* on 30 November, 2009.
Panelists: Sudhir Chandra, Nityananda Tiwari, Archana Verma and others.

My work on Bhakti and contemporary popular culture in India was studied as part of the course entitled “Public Intellectuals of India” designed and taught by David N. Lorenzen, at the El Colegio De Mexico, Mexico City

Citations and References to my work (select)

Harbans Mukhia, “Subjective Modernities”, History and Society New Series-13, NMML Occasional Papers, 2013

Allison Busch, *Poetry of Kings: The Classical Hindi Literature of Mughal India*, Oxford University Press, USA, 2011

Kamla Vishvesaran, “Gendered States: Rethinking Culture as a Site of South Asian Human Rights Work”, Human Rights Quarterly Volume 6 No. 2, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004

Kausiki Mukhopadhyay and Pallab Paul, “Organizational Differences in Hinduism and Islam and Their Impact on the Women’s Movement on the Indian Subcontinent”, Asian Studies Review, Vol. 27, No. 4, 2003

Francesca Orsini, “The Hindi Public Sphere 1920-1940”, Oxford University Press, 2002

Poornima Mankekar, “Screening Culture, Viewing Politics”, Duke University Press, 1999

Nivedita Menon, "State/Gender/Community: Citizenship in Contemporary India", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol 33 No. 5, 1998

Rajeswari Sundar Rajan, "The Third World Academic in Other Places; Or, the Postcolonial Intellectual Revisited", Critical Inquiry Volume 23 No. 3, Spring 1997

Ziauddin Sardar, "Coming Home: Sex, lies and all the 'I' in India", Futures Vol. 29, Issue 10, 1997

Honours and Awards

2008	First Rajkamal Prakashan Kriti Samman for <i>Akath Kahani Prem Ki: Kabir Ki Kavita Aur Unka Samay</i>
2002	British Academy Fellow, Wolfson College, University of Cambridge
1997	Mukutdhar Pandey Samman for <i>Sanskriti: Varchaswa Aur Pratirodh</i>
1996	Devi Shankar Awasthy Samman for <i>Teesra Rukh</i>

Teaching & Research Supervision

2011	Conducted seminars for students and faculty of El Colegio De Mexico, Mexico City on the themes " <i>Issues in historiography of Indian Literature</i> " and " <i>Gandhi's critique of Western Modernity</i> "
1990-2007	Taught graduate and research students of Centre of Indian Languages, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, JNU. My courses were also regularly offered and audited by students of Centre for Historical Studies, Centre for Political Science, Centre for the Study of Social Systems and other centres of JNU.

MPhil Courses

1. Designed and conducted M.Phil. Course entitled "Comparative Indian Literature (Bhakti)". Topics included: Epistemology and Aesthetics of Bhakti, key concepts in Bhakti Poetry, historical evolution and social context of Bhakti poetry in modern Indian languages (circa 1500-1800), presence of Bhakti sensibility in contemporary public life, contesting reconstructions of Bhakti past including from marginalized and gender perspectives.

Key Bhakti poets covered: Kabir, Chandidas, Namadev, Vemana, Akkha, Mirabai, Nanak, Laalded

Key thinkers: Monier Williams, HH Wilson, William Crooke, Puran Sahib, Daria Sahib, Vishwanath Singh Judeo, Bhagwadacharya, Kshiti

Mohan Sen, Rabindranath Tagore, Ramchandra Shukla, Hazariprasad Dwivedi, Mata Prasad Gupta, Ramvilas Sharma and Namwar Singh

2. Taught MPhil course entitled “Philosophy of Literary History” dealing with various schools of Literary Historiography such as Positivism, Idealism, Marxism and others

MA Courses

Ancient Hindi Poetry (Apabhramasa Raso-poetry, Vidyapati, Kabir and Jayasi)

Medieval Hindi Poetry (Tulsidas, Surdas, Mirabai, Ghananand and Bihari)

History of Hindi Literature up to 1857

History of Hindi Literature since 1857

Sanskrit Poetics (Bhamah, Dandin, Anandvardhan, Abhinavgupta and others)

Formalist Approach to Literature (TS Elliot, IA Richards, American New Criticism, Russian Formalism, Structuralism and Post-Structuralism)

- 2002 Conducted four seminars for students and faculty of El Colegio De Mexico, Mexico City. Topics included: “*Cultural Semiotics of Indian Politics*”, “*The Making of Indian Nationalism*” and “*Issues in the historiography of Indian Literature*”
- 2002 Conducted a series of seminars and lectures (spread over eight weeks) for faculty and students of Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Cambridge on “*19th century Hindi Literature and North Indian culture*” and “*popular culture in contemporary India*”
- 2002 Seminar on “*Identity Discourses in Current Indian Politics*” to students and faculty members at Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge
- 2000 Offered course entitled “*Philosophy of Nirgun and Sagun Bhaktas*” covering Kabir, Tulsidas, Mirabai, Surdas and Nanak to Master of Theology students of Vidyajyoti College of Theology, Delhi
- 1997 Course Director, “*Hindi Literature and Indian Culture*” offered as part of semester-long exchange programme between JNU and University of North Carolina, USA. A group of six visiting research scholars was offered courses in Hindi Literature, Indian history and culture, contemporary cultural practices and popular cinema, by faculty members of Centre of Indian Languages, Centre for Studies in Social Systems and Centre for Historical Studies, JNU

Research Supervision

No of MPhil degrees awarded under my supervision: **42**

No of Ph.D. degrees awarded under my supervision: **27**

Areas in which I have supervised Research:

Textual criticism of Early Modern Hindi Poetry (including Kabir, Dariya Sahab of Bihar, Sarvangis of Rajjab and Gopaldas, Pushtimarg, 16th century anthologies of Bhakti)

19th Century Hindi Literature (Impact of colonialism, the rebellion of 1857,

Making of Modern Hindi Literature, Bhartendu Harischandra)

Philosophy of Literary History (Ramchandra Shukla, Hazariprasad Dwivedi, Ramvilas Sharma)

Culture Studies (post-structural and post-modern trends in Hindi writing, Muktibodh, popular and parallel Indian Cinema)

Literary Theory (Sanskrit and Western poetics)

Gender Studies (women's writing in Hindi- 19th and early 20th centuries)

Fiction (Premchand, Manohar Shyam Joshi, Krishna Sobti, Nirmal Verma)

Publications

Books

(Forthcoming)

Telugu and Urdu translations of *Akath Kahani Prem Ki: Kabir Ki Kavita aur Unka Samay*

Series Editor, Collection of Essays by Monika Horstmann in Hindi translation, as part of *Bhakti Mimansa* series, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi

Series Editor, Collection of Essays by Vasudha Dalmia in Hindi translation, as part of *Bhakti Mimansa* series, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi

(Published)

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| 2012 | <i>Hindi Sarai: Astrakhan via Yerevan</i> (a travelogue), Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi |
| 2012 | Editor, <i>Collage: Ashok Vajpayee</i> (a tribute volume prepared on the occasion of Vajpayee's 70 th birthday), Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi |
| 2010 | Series Editor, <i>Nirgun Santon Ke Swapna</i> by David N. Lorenzen (translation: Dharendra B. Singh) as part of <i>Bhakti Mimansa</i> series, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi |
| 2009 | <i>Akath Kahani Prem Ki: Kabir Ki Kavita Aur Unka Samay</i> , Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi (second edition: 2010) |

- 2007 *Kabir: Sakhi Aur Sabad*, National Book Trust, Delhi (currently in 7th reprint)
- 2006 *Shivdan Singh Chauhan*, part of *The Makers of Indian Literature* series, Sahitya Akademi, Delhi
- 2005 *Majbooti Ka Naam Mahatma Gandhi*, transcript of lecture delivered at Gandhi Peace Foundation on 2nd October 2005
- 2004 *Nij Brahma Vichar: Dharma Samaj Aur Dharmetar Adhyatma*, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi
- 2002 Ji Pradhanmantriji, in three volumes (English translation by Monisha Shah), Penguin India in association with BBC Worldwide
- 2000 *Vichar Ka Ananta*, Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi (2nd edition: 2010)
- 2000 Editor, *Hindi Nai Chaal Mein Dhali*, Deshkal Prakashan, Delhi
- 1996 *Teesra Rukh*, Vani Prakashan, Delhi
- 1995 *Sanskriti: Varchaswa Aur Pratirodh*, Radhakrishna Prakashan, Delhi (2nd edition: 2008)

Short Stories

- 2014 “Nakohas”, Pakhi – August 2014, New Delhi
- 2014 “Paan Patte ki Goth”, Pakhi – February 2014, New Delhi
- 2013 “Pair Ghanti”, Naya Gyanodaya – June 2013, New Delhi
- 2013 “Cheng Chui” (English translation by Rakshanda Jalil), Indian Literature, May-June 2013, New Delhi
- 2013 “Chaurahe Par Putla”, Naya Gyanodaya – February 2013, New Delhi
- 2012 “Cheng Chui”, Pragatisheel Vasudha – April-June 2012, Bhopal

Published Papers

(English)

- 2012 “Who Was the European Kabir?”, *Khoj – A Series of Modern South Asian Studies Volume 9 -Indian Satire in the Period of First Modernity* (eds. Monika Horstmann, Heidi Rika Maria Pauwels), Harrasowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, Germany
- 2012 “Modernity and Public Sphere in Vernacular”, *Journal of Contemporary Thought* Number 35 (eds. Prafulla C Kar, Sura P Rath, Mukoma Wa Ngugi), Forum on Contemporary Thought, Baroda & Frank W. And Sue Mayborn School of Journalism, University of North Texas, USA
- 2011 “The Erotic to the Divine: Kabir’s Notion of Love and Fertility”, *Poetics and Politics of Sufism and Bhakti in South Asia* (ed. Kavita Punjabi), Orient Blackswan
- 2011 “The Naths in Hindi Literature”, *Yogi Heroes and Poets* (eds. David N Lorenzen and Adrian Munoz), State University of New York Press, Albany, New York

- 2010 “Saguna and Nirguna ”in Brill’s Encyclopedia of Hinduism (eds. Knut A. Jacobson, Helene Basu, Angelika Malinar, Vasudha Narayan)
- 2010 “The Impact of Sectarian Lobbyism on Hindi Literary Historiography: The Fascinating Story of Bhagwadacharya Ramanandi” in Literature and Nationalist Ideology (Ed. Hans Harder), Social Science Press, Delhi
- 2010 “Something will ring...”, India in Translation Through Hindi Literature (eds. Maya Burger and Nicola Pozza), Peter Lang Publications
- 2010 “But for Kabir in this Kaliyuga...” in IIC Quarterly Autumn 2010 (Ed. Ira Pande), India International Centre, Delhi
- 2009 “In Search of Ramanand: The Guru of Kabir and Others” in Ancient to Modern (Eds. Ishita Banerjee-Dube and Saurabh Dube), Oxford University Press, Delhi
Also in Spanish: “En busqueda de Ramanand: el Guru de Kabir y otros, El Colegio De Mexico, Mexico City (Published: 2012)
- 2007 “A Sacred Anarchist” in India 60: Towards A New Paradigm (Ed. Ira Pande), Harper Collins India, Delhi
- 2005 “Why Should We Listen to Her – An essay concerning the voice of Draupadi in the Mahabharat” in The Book Review vol XXIX no. 7 (Eds. Chandra Chari, Uma Iyenger), Delhi
- 2004 “Seeking an Alternative to Religion Itself – The Sadhana of Kabir” in Thematology (Ed. Sibaji Bandopadhyay) , Jadavpur University Press, Kolkata
- 2000 “Reading Kabir in the Times of Identity” in Hindi: Language, Discourse, Writing (Ed. Ashok Vajpayee), Delhi
- 1996 “Surat, Savarkar and Draupadi” in “Women and Right Wing Movements: Experiences from South Asia” (Eds. Urvashi Butalia, Tanika Sarkar), Zed Books, London
- 1994 “Kan Kan Mein Vyaape Ram: Slogan as a Metaphor for Cultural Interrogation” in Oxford Literary Review – Vol 16 (Eds. Suvir Kaul, Ania Lumba)
- 1992 “A Stinking Marsh Pond” in Seminar, no. 400 (Ed. Tejbir Singh), Delhi
- 1991 “Sita and Shambuka: The Common Destiny” in Mainstream 18th May, 1991 (Ed. Nikhil Chakrabarti), Delhi

(Hindi)

- 2009 “*Un Dino JNU*” in *JNU Mein Namwar Singh* (Ed. Suman Keshari), Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi
- 2005 “*Kaam Milave Ram Kun...*” in *Akar* July issue (Ed. Giriraj Kishore), Kanpur
- 2005 “*Ek Abhage Nibandh Ki Vyatha Katha*” in *Vasudha* March issue (Ed. Kamla Prasad), Bhopal
- 2003 “*Akbar Naam Leta Hai Khuda Ka...*” in *Tadbhav* April Issue (Ed. Akhilesh), Lucknow

- 2003 “*Mujh Ko Dar Aatishegul Se Hai...*” in *Kathadesh* March Issue (Ed. Harinarayan Sharma), Delhi
- 2001 “*Jaat Hi Poocho Sadhu Ki...*” in *Bahuvachan* July-September (Ed. Ashok Vajpayee), Delhi
- 2001 “*Bhartendu aur Ramvilasji Ke Bhartendu*” in *Alochana* July-September (Ed. Namwar Singh), Delhi
- 2000 “*Kabir aur Ramanand: Kya Batatin Hain Kimvdantian*” in *Bahuvachan* April-June (Ed. Ashok Vajpayee), Delhi
- 1999 “*Yeh Masaile Tasawwuf*” in *Bahuvachan* July-September (Ed. Ashok Vajpayee), Delhi
- 1995 “*Hindi Pradesh Ka Vaicharik Sankat*” in *Hans* Vol 10 No.1 (Ed. Rajendra Yadav), Delhi
- 1992 “*Sahitya Aur Shastra Ka Mukhamukham*” in *Samas-1* (Ed. Ashok Vajpayee), Delhi
- 1991 “*Aur Kya Honge Abhi*” in *Hans* Vol 6 No. 5 (Ed. Rajendra Yadav), Delhi
- 1988 “*Kisan Chetna Ke Kavya Pratiman*” in *Alochana-84* (ed. Namwar Singh), Delhi
- 1986 “*Arth Amit Akhar Ati Thore*” in *Sakshatkar* 81-84 (Ed. Somdatta), Bhopal
- 1986 “*Rashtrakavi Ki Rashtriye Chetna*” in *Alochana-79* (Ed. Namwar Singh), Delhi

Presentations in Academic Conferences and Seminars (since 1999)

- 2014 Resource person in ‘Early Hindi/ Brajbhasha workshop’ organized by Sofia University, Bansco (Bulgaria)
- 2014 Keynote address to ‘Bishuv Milan’, annual conference of Odiya writers, Cuttack
- 2014 Presented paper in the session on “Towards a theory of Indian Poetics” and presided over the session on “The status of Literary Criticism in India” in the national seminar on literary criticism organised by the Sahitya Akademi as part of its annual ‘Sahityotsva’, New Delhi
- 2014 Acharya Gothial Memorial Lecture, “The Future of Democracy in India”, Dehradun
- 2014 Keynote address to a national seminar on “Various Dimensions of Reading Bhakti Poetry”, Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi
- 2014 Valedictory address on “Teaching Humanities and Literature in the Age of Technology and Management”, 2nd Winter School in Humanities and Foreign Languages, Academic Staff College, Jawaharlal Nehru University
- 2013 Kameshwar Narain Singh Memorial Lecture, “The Idea of Vernacular Modernity”, Darbhanga
- 2013 Addresses at literary conferences in Lima (Peru) and Havana (Cuba) as part of a Sahitya Akademi delegation of Indian writers
- 2010 “Who was the European Kabir?” at the European Conference of Modern South Asian Studies (ECMSAS), Bonn, Germany
- 2010 “Public Sphere of Bhakti” at the conference on Alternative Modernities organized by Department of English, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

- 2008 “Translating Kabir and his Life” at the international symposium on “Translating India: The Construction of Cultural India through Translating Hindi Literature” organized by the University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland
- 2007 Keynote address to the international conference on “Yoga in Indian Traditions: Naths, Tantriks and Sufis” organized by El Colegio De Mexico, Mexico City
- 2007 “Ramanand and Kabir: Rethinking the Ulatbansi of Improbability” at the international conference on the theme “After Timur Came” organized by the Department of Languages and Cultures of South Asia, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
- 2007 “An Unknown Saga of Laxmi Bai” at the national seminar on “The Rising of 1857: Colonialism, Literature and March to Freedom” held as part of the Sahitya Akademi’s Annual Festival of Letters, Delhi.
- 2006 “An Indian View of Irish Literature” at Writers’ House, Dublin, Ireland
- 2006 “Religious Sects and Literary Historiography” at the international conference on “Nationalist Ideology and the Historiography of Literature in South Asian Cultures” organized by the Halle University, Halle, Germany.
- 2005 “Religion and Identity in the Post-Colony”, Annual Conference of the American Academy of Religion, Philadelphia, USA.
- 2004 Lecture at the conference on “Understanding our Offense: Academic Studies of Hinduism” at Eshalen Institute, San Francisco, USA
- 2004 Conducted seminars for faculty and students at Columbia University (New York), Emory University (Atlanta) and Rice University (Houston) on the theme “*Cultural identities, gender and literature in India*”
- 2003 “The Meaning of Kabir’s Sadhana” at the conference on “The Religions in the Indic Civilization” organized as part of the annual meeting of the International Association of Historians of Religion, New Delhi
- 2003 “Finding an Alternative to Religion itself: The Dialectics of agony in Kabir’s Sadhna” at the annual conference of the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, USA.
- 2003 Keynote Address to the international conference on “Diversity and Co-existence in South Asia” organized by the International Centre of Ethnic Studies, Kandalama, Sri Lanka
- 1999 “Politics of Culture” at Fondation Maison des sciences de l’homme, Paris.
- 1999 “Poetry of Kabir” at Sorbonne, Paris
- 1999 “Reading Kabir in the Times of Identity” at the international conference on Kabir at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University, Heidelberg, Germany.

Consultancy

- 2005-07 Chief Advisor, Hindi textbooks, National Council of Educational Research and Training. Chaired committee of academicians and educationists to design Hindi textbooks for classes VI-XII used by schools affiliated to

- Central Board of Secondary Education, Indian Schools Council and various state boards.
- 2003-07 Founder Trustee, Aman Trust, Delhi
Oversaw project on non-violent conflict resolution
- 2001 Scripted and directed two documentaries entitled “*Sabad Nirantar*” (for Government of Madhya Pradesh) and “*Lok Kabir*” (for Oxfam International) on popular memories of Kabir amongst the Dalits and other marginalized groups in Malwa, Bundelkhand, Bhojpur and Chhattisgarh
- 1998-2003 Consultant, Violence Mitigation and Amelioration Project, Oxfam India
As part of this project, I organized interfaces of scholars, artists and social activists in Marwar, Saurashtra, Vidarbha, Awadh, Bhojpur, Bundelkhand and Punjab, including an interface between Kabir Panthis and research scholars of Kabir and a dialogue on the theme *Spirituality without Religion*

Contributions to Newspapers and Magazines (highly selected)

- 2014- Monthly column on political and cultural issues to Governance Now magazine
- 2014 “CSAT is not anti-Hindi”, Economic Times, 7 August, New Delhi
- 2014 “Gunwatta Ka Sawaal” (on the debate over UPSC’s Civil Services Aptitude Test), Jansatta, 27 July, New Delhi
- 2007 “Affirmative Action in India” published in French Translation, Le Monde Diplomatique, Paris
- 2006 “Beyond Caste” in Tehelka May 13 issue, Delhi. Reproduced by The Little Magazine, New Quest and Hindustan Times.
- 2003-2006 Contributed fortnightly column “Mukhamukham” to Hindi daily Jansatta, part of the Indian Express Group
- 1999 “Indian Elections Polluted by Identity Debate”, published in French Translation, Le Monde Diplomatique, Paris
- 1998 “A Modern Kabir”, Outlook, 23 Nov, Delhi
- 1994 “The Meaning of Michael Jackson”, Mainstream 1st Jan 1994 (Ed. Sumit Chakrabarti), Delhi

Public Speaking (highly selected)

- 2014 Invited panelist at Patna Literary Festival
- 2013 Part of panel on Kumbh Mela, Jaipur Literature Festival. Co-panelists: Diana Eck, James Mallinson
- 2013 Lecture on “Gandhi in the 21st century”, Department of International Relations, South Asian University, New Delhi
- 2013 Inaugural lecture to Thunchan Vidyarambham Kalotsavam, organized by Thunchan Memorial Trust in collaboration with Sahitya Akademi, Thirur
- 2012 Keynote Address on “Bhakti Poetry”, Jaipur Literature Festival

2012	“The idea of Indian Modernity” organized by Department of Political Science, University of Allahabad
2011	“Contextualizing Kabir”, Bombay University
2010	“Science and Poetry”, annual Rajendra Lal Mitra Memorial Lecture of the Indian Academy for the Cultivation of Sciences, Kolkata
2010	“Towards a Non-violent Modernity” at Indraprastha College, University of Delhi, Delhi
2009	“Sacred Space: Reading Gandhi and Kabir” at the Fez Sacred Music Festival, Fez, Morocco
2006	“Love and Laughter” on the occasion of Valentine’s Day, Delhi School of Economics, Delhi
2005	“Mazbooti Ka Naam Mahatma Gandhi”, annual lecture of Gandhi Peace Foundation, Delhi
2000	Keynote Address at a youth seminar on “Education in India” organized by the German-Indo Society and the Evengelischen Akademie, Bad Boll, Germany
1999	Series of three lectures on The Mahabharata at India Habitat Centre organized by Youth Peace

Membership of Bodies

2010-13	Governing Body, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi
2007	Academic Council, Jawaharlal Nehru University
2003-07	Member, Board of Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University
2005-09	Research Council, Department of Hindi, University of Allahabad
2004-06	Governing Council, Central Hindi Institute, Agra
2004-06	Academic Advisory Committee, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan
1996-00	Academic Council, Babasaheb Ambedkar University, Lucknow

Miscellaneous

2001	Adapted and translated the BBC Television series “Yes, Prime Minister’ as “ <i>Ji Pradhantriji</i> ” for NDTV and Star TV
1983-1984	Published and edited <i>Jigyasa</i> , the first interdisciplinary journal in the humanities and social sciences in Hindi
1997-	Commentator on political, social and cultural matters on Television and Radio including BBC Worldwide, BBC Hindi radio, NDTV, IBN, Doordarshan, Lok Sabha TV, Rajya Sabha TV and others