

## A K S H A R A R A V I S H A N K A R P A R M E S W A R A N

Postdoctoral Fellow

Ghent University

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## EDUCATION

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<b>Sep 2016 – Aug 2024</b> <i>PhD Candidate</i> <i>South Asian Languages</i> <i>and Civilizations</i>	University of Chicago	Chicago
<b>Sep 2016 - March 2023</b> <i>Master of Arts</i> <i>South Asian Languages</i> <i>and Civilizations</i>	University of Chicago	Chicago
<b>Jul 2012 – Aug 2015</b> <i>MPhil (Philosophy)</i> <i>"Understanding Evil Action:</i> <i>Sin and the Demonic in the</i> <i>Bhagavad Gita"</i>	University of Delhi	Delhi
<b>Jun 2009 – Nov 2011</b> <i>Master of Arts (Philosophy)</i>	University of Hyderabad	Hyderabad
<b>July 2005 – May 2008</b> <i>Bachelor of Arts (Philosophy)</i>	Miranda House, University of Delhi	Delhi

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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<b>2024</b>	<b>Ghent University, Department of Languages and Cultures</b> Guest Lecturer <i>Animals, Humans, and the Environment in Asian Studies</i> <i>Cultures in Perspective</i> <i>Society and Current Affairs of South Asia</i>
<b>2022</b>	<b>DePaul University, Department of Religion</b> Adjunct Instructor <i>Hindu Religious Worlds</i>
<b>2021</b>	<b>University of Chicago, South Asian Languages and</b>

**Civilizations**

Lecturer  
First-Year Sanskrit

- 2020**                      **University of Chicago, Divinity School**  
Course Assistant  
*The Bhagavad Gītā: Contested Readings of a World Classic*
- 2019**                      **University of Chicago, South Asian Languages and Civilizations**  
Course Assistant  
*First-Year Hindi*  
*Second-Year (Intermediate) Sanskrit*
- 2018**                      **University of Chicago, Humanities Core**  
Writing Intern  
*Readings in World Literature*
- 2015-2016**              **Gargi College, University of Delhi, Department of Philosophy**  
Assistant Professor (Ad Hoc)  
*Continental Philosophy*  
*Logic I*  
*Philosophy of Science*  
*Ethics in the Public Domain*  
*Introduction to Philosophy*

## PUBLICATIONS

"Scholarly Worlds and Popular Texts: The Bhagavad Gītā's Reading Communities in Eighteenth-Century North India," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 58, no. 1 (2024): 31-56.

"Hidden Meanings for World-Wearied Princes: Omission as Interpretative Strategy in Theghnāth's *Gītā Bhāṣā*," in *Early Modern Literatures in North India: Current Research*. Eds. Monika Horstmann, Kiyokazu Okita and Hiroko Nagasaki. Heidelberg: Heidelberg Asian Studies Publishing, forthcoming.

"Absence and Excess: Was There a Sixteenth-Century Way of Thinking about the Bhagavad Gītā?" in *Are There Indian Ways of Thinking?* Ed. Jyotirmaya Sharma. Routledge India, forthcoming.

"I Will Make a *Ṭīkā*': Translation, Commentary and Tradition in Nājar Anandrām's *Paramānanda Prabodha*" forthcoming in a special issue of *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*.

In Progress: "Thinking Like an Outsider: Commentarial Practices and Gendered Histories in Premodern Commentary," co-authored paper with Talia Ariav, abstract accepted for inclusion in a special issue of *New Literary History*.

## CONFERENCES / WORKSHOPS

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**European Conference on South Asian Studies, Heidelberg (2025):** Upcoming paper presentation, titled "The Essence of the *Śāstras*: The *Bhagavad Gita Māhātmya* in Vernacular North India"

**Rajasthani Summer School, Udaipur, Rajasthan (2025):** Upcoming; as participant

**Old Hindi Reading Workshop, Canberra (2025):** Upcoming; as participant

**15th International Conference on Early Modern Literatures of North India (ICEMLNI), Canberra (2025):** Upcoming presentation titled "The Text, Alone: Śrīdhara Svāmī's *Subodhinī* in Eighteenth Century North India"

**Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin, Madison (October 2024):** Co-organizer and presenter at a day-long symposium titled "Countless Eyes, Countless Mouths: New Dialogues in the Study of Multivocal Bhagavad Gītās."

Presentation at workshop for a volume, "Are There Indian Ways of Thinking?"  
**Department of Political Science, University of Hyderabad (2024).**

**American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Antonio Texas (2023):** Paper presentation titled "Even the Wise Grieve: Narrative, Dharma, and Violence in Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's *Gūḍhārthadīpikā*."

**Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin, Madison (2023):** Paper presentation titled "Form, Structure, and Narrative in Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's *Gūḍhārthadīpikā*."

**European Conference on South Asian Studies, Torino (2023):** Paper presentation titled "The Popular Scholastic: Philosophical Translation and the Early Modern Bhagavad Gītā."

**Transmission, Alteration, and Voices: Texts and Performative Traditions in South Asia in the Early Modern and Colonial Periods, Jagiellonian University, Krakow (2022):** Paper presentation titled "Re-use and Adaptation in Nājar Anandrām's *Paramānanda Prabodha*."

**Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin, Madison (2022):** Paper presentation titled "Translating Commentary: Nājar Anandrām's *Paramānanda Prabodha*."

**Braj and Beyond: Hindavi Reading Workshop, University of Seattle, Washington, (2022):** Workshop participant.

**14th International Conference on Early Modern Literatures of North India (ICEMLNI), Osaka (2022):** "Form, Genre, and Scholasticism in Two Early Hindi Bhagavad Gītās."

**Theory and Practice of South Asia Workshop, Committee on Southern Asian Studies (COSAS), University of Chicago (2022):** "Tell Me That Tale: Genre and Translation in Theghnāth's *Gītā Bhāṣā*."

**South Asia as a Transnational Area of Study Workshop, University of Chicago Centre, Paris (2022):** Co-presented paper with Talia Ariav entitled "Thinking Like an Outsider: Commentarial Practices and Gendered Histories in Premodern South Asian Traditions."

**Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin, Madison (2021):** Co-convened panel "Interpreting the Margins: Textual Peripheries in South Asia," presenting a paper entitled "Genre, Function, and Meaning in Vernacular *Gītā* Traditions."

**European Conference on South Asian Studies, Vienna (2021):** presented paper entitled "Vernacular Commentary and the Bhagavad *Gītā*: Questions of Transition and Circulation."

**Annual Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, Seattle (2021):** Presented paper entitled "Narrative and Pedagogy: The Bhagavad *Gītā* in 16th Century Gwalior"

**17th Annual South Asia Graduate Conference, University of Chicago (2020):** Co-convened conference, entitled "Reception, Tradition and Canonization: Pasts and Presents in South Asia."

**Sixth Braj Bhasha/Early Hindi Workshop, Gatchina, Russia (2019):** Workshop participant.

**Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin, Madison (2018):** Presented paper entitled "Transmission, Translation and Commentary in an 18th Century Bhagavad *Gītā* *Ṭīkā*."

**Backwaters Collective 6th Annual Conference on Metaphysics and Politics, Kochi (2016):** Presented paper entitled "Sin and the Demonic in the Bhagavad *Gītā*."

## AWARDS and GRANTS

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**FWO Junior Postdoctoral Fellowship, UGent (2024-2027)**

**NPR Throughline Fellowship/UChicagoGrad Grad Global Impact (GGI) Pitch Internship (2023)**

**Martin Marty Center Junior Fellowship** awarded by the Martin Marty Center for the Public Understanding of Religion, Divinity School, University of Chicago (2022-23)

**Dissertation Research Fellowship** awarded by the Committee on South Asian Studies (COSAS), The University of Chicago (2020)

**Nicholson Graduate Research Fellowship** awarded by Nicholson Centre for British Studies, University of Chicago (2020)

**Summer Language Study Fellowship** awarded by the Committee on South Asian Studies (COSAS), The University of Chicago (2019)

**Pre-Dissertation Fellowship** awarded by the Committee on South Asian Studies (COSAS), The University of Chicago (2018)

## LANGUAGES

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**Hindi** (including Early Hindi): Near native reading, writing, and speaking proficiency

**Sanskrit**: Advanced reading and writing proficiency

**German**: Basic reading proficiency

**Tamil**: Basic speaking proficiency

**Malayalam**: Basic speaking proficiency

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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**Throughline Fellowship, National Public Radio**: Worked with the research and production team of NPR's Throughline history podcast to develop episodes on a range of topics, and to produce public-facing scholarship and content for the podcast.

**Martin Marty Center Junior Fellowship on the Public Understanding of Religion**: Participated in seminar sessions with an interdisciplinary group of Religious Studies scholars.

**Pedagogies of Writing, Writing Center, University of Chicago**: Participated in a quarter-long workshop on teaching undergraduate students to write essays in the Humanities.

**Language Pedagogy for the Contemporary Classroom, Chicago Center for Teaching, University of Chicago**: Participated in a quarter-long workshop on modern and ancient language pedagogy.

## SERVICE TO THE FIELD

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**Social Chair, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of**

**Chicago (2019-2020)**

Organized, alongside co-chair, department events and social outings, including end-of-quarter department gatherings.

**Student Liaison, South Asian Languages and Civilizations Student Association (SALCSA) (2019-2020)**

Co-convened student meetings and collectively drafted letters to the faculty regarding student welfare.

**Student Representative, Department of Philosophy, University of Hyderabad (2010-2011)****Student Representative, Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), University of Delhi (2007-2008)****VOLUNTEER / OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE**

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**Member***Saheli Women's Resource Centre, New Delhi***2006 – 2016**

Saheli is a Delhi-based autonomous feminist collective and campaign group that has worked on issues of women's rights, health, communalism, etc. for over thirty years. As a member of the collective I contributed to the writing and editing of various publications including the Saheli newsletter, the facilitating of workshops on gender and sexual harassment and the production of street plays, in addition to the day-to-day work of the collective.

**Researcher***Gene Campaign, New Delhi***2012**

Assisted with the editing of a book on genetically modified foods, authored by Dr. Suman Sahai, environmentalist and Director, Gene Campaign.

**Member***Nigah, Delhi***2007-2013**

A queer collective engaged with issues relating to gender and sexuality. I was involved in a range of activities, including workshops on sexuality for students in Delhi University, the organizing of the Nigah QueerFest (an annual festival which comprised a film festival, photo exhibitions, performances, etc.) as well as fundraising activities.

**Workshop Facilitator***Kargil Degree College, Kashmir; SECMOL, Ladakh***2010**

Facilitated workshops on issues relating to gender and sexuality for college and high school students.

**Program Officer**

*Zubaan Books, New Delhi*

**2008-2009**

Zubaan is an independent publishing house based in Delhi. As programme officer on the project Poster Women, I was involved in studying and archiving posters from Indian feminist movements, as well as conducting workshops on visual histories and archiving for students at SNDT University (Mumbai), Pune University, and the Department of Women's Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University.