



Prof Madhu Purnima Kishwar

Madhu Purnima Kishwar is currently **Maulana Azad National Professor, ICSSR**. **Prior to this she was Senior Fellow Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. Prior to joining CSDS in 1991, Kishwar taught in a college of Delhi University. She is an alumnus of Miranada House, Delhi University and Jawahar Lal Nehru University.**

She is also the founder editor of *Manushi- a Journal about Women & Society*, which was started in 1978. *Manushi* was managed by a non-profit organization called **Manushi Trust**. Even though the most visible activity of the Trust was the publication of the journal *Manushi*, the organization has been involved in a whole range of activities from its very inception.

In 1991, a distinct forum called **Manushi Sangathan** was created for the active interventions as well as for providing a platform for organizing citizens for democratic reforms. In 2007, the print edition of the Journal had to be suspended due

to an unprecedented crisis following a series of murderous attacks on Kishwar and other volunteers of Manushi on account of our policy reform work for street vendors. (More details in Section, “History of Doing” on page

Kishwar’s work as an academic covers the following broad categories:

- a) **Laws, Liberty and Livelihoods:** This is aimed at evolving a pro-poor agenda of economic reforms in India. It involves close investigation of various laws and regulation that trap perfectly legitimate occupations of people working in the unorganized sector of the economy in a web of illegality and ways to craft pro people legislation and state policies for self employed poor;
- b) **Indic Studies Project** to promote the study of diverse cultures and faith traditions in the Indic universe. Apart from organizing major international conferences as well as workshops and seminars on contentious issues regarding religion and culture, Kishwar has written and published a whole body of literature in *Manushi* and outside that offers fresh insights into diverse cultures and faith traditions of India.
- c) **Gender Justice Work:** This has involved in-depth studies & critical evaluation of various laws enacted since late 19th century for the ostensible purpose of women’s rights; Study of various social reform movements that put women’s rights issues center stage. This includes study of women in Bhakti movements starting 6th C to 17th Century, 19th century social reforms movements, how women’s issues got dealt with during Gandhi led freedom movements, study of Hindu Code Bill; study of various social movements in post independence India in which women played an active role.

Published Books

- *Modi, Muslims and Media: Voices from Narendra Modi's Gujarat*, Manushi Publications, New Delhi, 2014.
- *Zealous Reformers, Deadly Laws*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2008
- *Deepening Democracy: Challenges of Governance and Globalization in India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2004.
- *Off the Beaten Track: Rethinking Gender Justice for Indian Women*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999
- *Religion at the Service of Nationalism and Other Essays*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1998
- (Ed) *The Dilemma and Other Stories* by Vijaydan Detha, Manushi Publications, 1997.
- *Manushiya Moatu*, (Kannada) A Book of Essays by Madhu Kishwar compiled and translated by L.G. Meera and introduced by D.R. Nagaraj, Akshara Prakashan, Bangalore, 1997.

- *Voices from the Save Himalaya Campaign* (Booklet in Hindi), Manushi Prakashan, New Delhi, 1993.
- *In Search of Answers: Indian Women's Voices from Manushi.* (Co-edited with Ruth Vanita), Zed Books, London, 1984. Second edition, Horizon Books, New Delhi, 1990. Third edition, Manohar, New Delhi, 1996, An abridged version was also published in Japanese by Akashi Shoten, Tokyo, 1990
- *Women Bhakt Poets, Lives and Poetry of Women Mystics in India from 6th to 17th Century* (Co-edited with Ruth Vanita), Manushi Publications, New Delhi, 1989
- *Gandhi and Women*, Manushi Publications, New Delhi, 1986. (Also published in Telugu)

Books in Progress

- *The Quintessential Oneness of Amar Akbar & Anthony—Bollywood's Portrayal of Majority-Minority Relations in India.*
- *Keeping Alive Colonial Tyranny—The Plight of India's Traditional Art Practitioners.*
- *Myth Versus Reality: Of Khaps, Honour Killings & Personal Laws.*
- **Laws, Liberty and Livelihoods** – An ethnographic account of Kishwar's 20 year long experience of law and policy reform for street vendors, rickshaw pullers and India's traditional art performers. The book aims to provide a coherent theoretical framework for a bottom up agenda of economic reforms.

Chapters in Books

- 1) Following two chapters published in "Women, War and Violence", Edited by Mariam M Kurtz and Lester R Kurtz, Praeger Security International, California, USA, 2015
 - a) *India's Anti-Rape Law Reform: The Need for a Surgeon's Precision*
 - b) *When Daughters are Unwanted: Sex Determination Test in India*
- 2) "Manushi Swaccha Narayani : Avatar of a Secular Goddess for Street Vendors" in *The Cult of Goddess* edited by Arputha Rani Sengupta, published for IGNC by DK Printworld Pvt Ltd, 2015
- 3) "Critique of Development Paradigm & Feminism in the Global South" in *Companion to Development Studies* edited by Vandana Desai for Routledge Publishers, 2014
- 4) "Women's Marginal Role in Politics" in section on "*Seeking Women's Rights: Fulfilling Constitutional Guarantees: Reality for Women in Politics*" Volume 2 "*Sources of Indian Traditions*" Third Edition, edited by Rachel Fell McDermott,

- Leonard A Gordon, Ainslie T Embree, Frances W Pritchett, and Dennis Dalton, published by Columbia University Press, New York, 2014
- 5) “Women as Moral Touchstones: Durgas and Mother Indias in Bollywood Films”, in *Gender Politics & Performance in South Asia*, edited by Sheema Kermani, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2012
 - 6) “When Police Becomes the Cause of Citizens’ Insecurity: An Ethnographic Account (Volume of essays on police reforms edited by Ajay K Mehra,)”
 - 7) “Reviewing Images of India”, published in *Cross Cultural Conversations*, edited by Anandita Balslav, Sage Publication, 2011
 - 8) “Beyond the Politics of Zennana Dabba”, in *Making News, Breaking News, Her Own Way*, a volume of essays by recipients of Chameli Devi Jain award for best woman journalist of the year, edited by Latika Padgaonkar & Shubha Singh, Tranquelbar, an imprint of Westland Publishers, New Delhi, 2012
 - 9) “Strategies for Combating the Culture of Dowry and Domestic Violence in India”, in *“Daughters of Fire”*, edited by Vimochana Editorial Collective, Streelekha Publications, 2011
 - 10) “Legal Empowerment and Organization of Vulnerable Groups”, in *Human Rights for Development: Ways and Means*”, UNDP, 2011
 - 11) “India and Pakistan—60 Years Later”, published in *“The Great Divide: India and Pakistan”* India International Centre, 2009.
 - 12) “Urban Informal Sector: The Need for a Bottom-up Agenda of Economic Reforms--Case Studies of Cycle Rickshaws and Street Vendors in Delhi”: in *Urban Poverty Report* by Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation Government of India, 2009
 - 13) “Gandhi’s Views on Women's Role in the Struggle for Swaraj”, in *National Movement in India*, edited by Shekhar Bandyopadhyay, Oxford University Press, 2009
 - 14) “Continuing Popularity of Sita as a Role Model” in *In Search of Sita: Revisiting Mythology*”, Edited by Malashri Lal and Namita Gokhle, Penguin Book and Yatra Books, 2009
 - 15) “No’ to Zenana Dabbas : Deghettoizing Women’s Politics and Enhancing Their Representation in Legislatures”, in *India’s Political Parties, Readings in Indian Government and Politic*” edited by Peter Ronald de Souza.E.Sridharan, Sage Publications, New Delhi 2006

- 16) "Creative Retailing" in *Fast Forward: The Future of India's Creativity*, in a Report by National Mission for Creative and Cultural Industries, Planning Commission of India, 2006
- 17) "Gandhi on Women", in "*Debating Gandhi--A READER*" edited by A. Raghuramaraju, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 2006.
- 18) "Beginning With Our Own Lives: A Call for Dowry Boycott", in *Dowry & Inheritance*", edited by Smt Basu, Women Unlimited & Kali for Women, New Delhi 2005.
- 19) "*Dowry and Inheritance Rights*", in "*Dowry & Inheritance*" edited by Smt. Basu, Women Unlimited & Kali for Women, New Delhi 2005.
- 20) "Enhancing Women's Representation in Legislatures: An Alternative to the Government Bill for Women's Reservation" (with Jayaprakash Narayan, Dhirubhai Sheth & Yogendra Yadav) , in "Electoral Reforms in India", edited by Anjoo Sharan Upadhyaya, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi 2005.
- 21) "The Idea of India - Bollywood Style", in *The India Mosaic: Searching for an Identity*, edited by Bibek Debroy & D. Shyam Babu, Academic Foundation and Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies, New Delhi, 2004.
- 22) "Arthik Azadi Ka Swawal", in *Bharat Ka Bhumandalikaran*, (Hindi) edited by Abhay Dube, Vani Prakashan, Delhi, 2003
- 23) "Shah bano Ka Mukkadama", in *Secularism Banam Personal Law*, (Hindi) edited by, Abhay Dube, Vani Prakashan, Delhi 2003
- 24) "Yes to Sita, No to Ram: The Continuing Popularity of Sita in India", in "*Questioning Ramayana*", edited by Paula Richman, University of California Press, USA and Oxford University Press, New Delhi, September 2000.
- 25) "Majoritarianism vs. Minoritarianism" in *Minority Identities and the Nation State*, edited by D.L. Sheth and Gurpreet Mahajan , Oxford University Press, 1999.
- 26) "Learning to Take People Seriously" in "*Anthropological Journeys*", edited by Meenakshi Thapan , Orient Longman, 1998.
- 27) "Mothers and Disappearing Daughters: Sex Determination Tests in India", in, *The Politics of Motherhood: Activist Voices from Left to Right*, edited by Alexis Jetter, Annelise Orleck and Diana Taylor, University Press of New England, 1997.

- 28) "Scholar, Fighter, Mother: The Life of Ratnamayi Devi", in *Representation of Gender and Identity Politics in South Asia*”, edited by Renuka Sharma, Indian Book Centre, New Delhi, 1995.
- 29) "Learning to Take People Seriously” in *The Changing Face of India*, edited by Ved Bhasin and Om Prakash Saraf, Konarak Press, New Delhi, 1994.
- 30) "A Horror of Isms" in, *The Woman’s Question*, edited by Marry Evans, Sage Publications, London, 1994.
- 31) "Prem aur Vivah” in, *Stree Ke Liye Jagah*, edited by Raj Kishore, Vani Prakashan, 1994.
- 32) "Sampradayik Hinsa se Sangharsh Kaise Karen” in, *Ayodhya aur Usse Aage*, edited by Raj Kishore, Vani Prakashan, New Delhi, 1993.
- 33) "Khuli Duniya, Bandhe Log” in, *Vinash Ko Nimantran*, edited by Rajkishore, Vani Prakashan, New Delhi, 1993.
- 34) "Some Aspects of Bondage: The Denial of Fundamental Rights to Women” in, *Expanding Government Lawlessness and Organised Struggles*, edited by A.R. Desai, Popular Prakashan, 1991.
- 35) "Scattering the Seeds" in, *On Being a Teacher*, edited by Amrik Singh, Konarak Publishers, New Delhi, 1990.
- 36) "Indian Women: a Decade of New Ferment" (with Ruth Vanita), in *India Briefings*”, edited by Marshal M. Boutton and Philip Oldenburg, West View Press, 1989.
- 37) "The Daughters of Aryavarta: Women in the Arya Samaj Movement, Punjab" in, *Women in Colonial India; Essays on Survival, Work and the State*”, edited by J. Krishnamurthy, Oxford University Press, 1989.
- 38) "The Continuing Deficit of Women in India and the Impact of Amniocentesis ” in, *Man Made Women*, edited by Gena Corea, et al, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, 1987.
- 39) "Pro Women or Anti Muslim?” in, *The Shahbano Controversy*, edited by Asghar Ali Engineer, Orient Longman, 1987.
- 40) “Women’s Bondage”, in, *The Emerging Christian Woman, Church and Society Perspectives*”, edited by Stella Faria & Jessie Tellis Nayak, Sat Prakashan Sanchar Kendra, 1984.
- 41) "Family Life: The Unequal Deal: Women’s Condition and Family Life among Small Peasant and Agricultural Labourers in a Punjab Village” , in *“In Search of*

Answers” with B. Horowitz edited by Madhu Kishwar, Ruth Vanita, Zed Books, London 1984.

- 42) "Woman Power in Print”, in *Opening Eyes and Ears*, edited by Kathy Lowe, World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1983.
- 43) "Aspects of Dowry”, in *Third World, Second Sex*, edited by Miranda Davies, Zed Books, London 1983.
- 44) "Drought--God-sent or Man-Made Disaster?" in *Third World, Second Sex*, edited by Miranda Davies, Zed Books, London, 1983.
- 45) "Female Infanticide" in, *Reclaim the Earth* edited by Leonie Coldecott & Stephanic Leland, The Women’s Press, London, 1983.

Papers in Academic Journals

- 1) “When Communities Become Nationalities: Politics of Intercommunity Relations in India”: *Beyond Borders: The SAARC Journal*, 2008
- 2) “A New Plebiscite Deal for J&K”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, January 15, 2003
- 3) “History of Affirmative Action for Women in India”, Paper for Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development, Thailand, 2002
- 4) "Traditional Female Moral Exemplars in India", "*Education about Asia*”, Vol. 6, No. 3, Winter 2001.
- 5) "Equality of Opportunities vs. Equality of Results: Needed Improvements in the Women's Reservation Bill", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXV. Nov 47, November 18, 2000.
- 6) "Women and Politics: Beyond Quotas”. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 31, No. 43, October 26, 1996.
- 7) "Breakdown of Conflict Resolution Mechanisms in Contemporary India".in a symposium on the “*Limits of Tolerance*” in *Seminar*, 435, November, 1995.
- 8) "The Primacy of Cultural Issues in Manushi". *Journal of Culture and Policy*, Institute for Cultural Policy Studies, Australia, Vol. 6, No. 2, 1994
- 9) "Codified Hindu Law: Myth and Reality", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXIX, No. 33, August 13, 1994.
- 10) "Ways to Combat Communal Violence", *Alternatives*, 1991.

- 11) "Violence on Gurupurab in Jammu". (With Smithu Kothari), *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 15, 1989.
- 12) "Struggle of Indian Women". *Philosophy and Social Action*, 14(4), 1988.
- 13) "Integrity in Women's Issues". *Seminar*, April, 1988.
- 14) "Nature of Women's Mobilization in Rural India", *Economic and Political Weekly*, (in two parts) December 24 and 31, 1988.
- 15) "The Burning of Roop Kanwar". (With Ruth Vanita), *Race and Class*, July-Sep., 1988.
- 16) "The Struggle of Indian Women". *Philosophy and Social Action*, 14(4), 1988.
- 17) "Mahilayon Ke bare Gandhiji ke Vichar". *Arthshastri*, Oct-Nov., 1988.
- 18) "Toiling Without Rights: Ho women of Singhbhum", *Economic and Political Weekly*, (in three parts) Vol. 22, No.s 3-4-5, January, 1987.
- 19) "The Daughters of Aryavarta: Women in the Arya Samaj Movement in Punjab", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, February 23, 1986.
- 20) "Arya Samaj and Women's Education: Case Study of the Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Jalandhar". *Economic and Political Weekly*, 31(17), 1986.
- 21) "Gandhi and Women". *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XX, Nos. 40, & 41, 1985. (This has been translated and published in Telugu as a book.) Reprinted in *Race and Class*, London, summer, 1986).

In addition to the above, Kishwar has written over 150 articles, many of them research based, in *Manushi* journal. She also writes for various mainstream newspapers.

Audio Visual Media Work

- 1) **News Watch:** Kishwar researched, conceptualized, scripted and anchored a prime-time programme called *News Watch* on DD Channel 1. This was an investigative weekly programme of media review, providing an informed critique of media reports on important issues covering the content, as well as the presentation of media reports;
- 2) **Manushi Geet:** a cassette of songs on the need to strengthen women's rights within the parental family and non discriminatory upbringing of the girl child. Some of these songs were part of a street play titled *Roshni* staged by Manushi all over Delhi.
- 3) **Manas series:** A series of six documentaries for Doordarshan on the following themes:

(a) ***Dahej: Zaroorat ya Majboori*** (Dowry: Compulsion vs. Need): This deals with social and economic dynamics behind the spread of culture of dowry despite stringent legislation.

(b) ***Aurtein: na ghar ki, na ghat ki*** (The disinheritance of women from parental property): Parents might spend lakhs in buying consumer goods for their daughters as dowry, but very few are willing to give a share of the parental property to daughters. This documentary explores the implications of the growing culture of disinheritance of women in our country.

(c) ***Sharaab: Kaun pilaye, kaun rukaye?*** (Liquor and State Policy: why anti-liquor movements inevitably turn anti-state?) This film challenges some of the popular myths about anti-liquor movements in India and reviews the economic and political dynamics of anti-liquor movements in four different states: Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

(d) ***Mera Bharat Pareshan***—Socialist era statist controls on agriculture and the consequent rural-urban divide promoted through Nehruvian farm policy

(e) ***Udaarikaran: Kewal Oopar ka Udaar*** (License Permit Raj: a view from below). This film explores how the working of the License-Permit-Raid-Raj thwarts the earning ability and efforts of the poor city migrants such as street vendors and cycle rickshaw pullers to move out of the poverty trap. It provides moving glimpses as to how the poorest of the poor are fleeced of their earning and the urgent need to evolve a bottoms-up approach to economic reforms.

(f) ***Banaye Ajoobe, Kehlayein Picchde*** (The impoverishment and marginalization of India's traditional technologists and artisans). Today India is considered a poor agricultural country. But until about 200 years back, our country was regarded as the world's leading manufacturing society. Europeans took hazardous voyages to India, attracted by its wealth and exquisite luxury goods. This technological legacy was the inheritance of a group of jatis known as 'Vishwakarma', who are found in every Indian city and village. Tragically enough, the jatis who elevated our country's technological, craft and industrial skills to such astonishing levels over centuries have today been declared as "Backward" and "Most Backward Castes". Why and how have their skills and art become obsolete? What impact has their devaluation had on the rest of society? These are some of the questions explored in this documentary.

The films on street vendors and cycle rickshaw pullers have played a vital role in mobilizing opinion for policy and far reaching law reform for these two sectors.

4) ***Kisse Kanoon Ke:*** A series of 13 programme commissioned by Doordarshan reviewing the actual fallout of various laws that have been enacted for the ostensible

purpose of protecting or strengthening women's rights in post independence India. The legislations covered include the following:

- a) Laws to protect women against domestic violence
- b) Anti-rape laws.
- c) Laws against obscenity and indecent portrayal of women.
- d) Equal Remuneration Act.
- e) Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act
- f) Reservation for women in panchayats and zilla parishads
- g) Law against bigamy.
- h) Bill to provide 33 per cent reservation for women in legislatures.
- i) Laws to curb Sex Determination Tests.
- j) Muslim Women's Protection Act of 1986.
- k) Laws to curb prostitution
- l) Sati Prohibition Act.
- m) Inheritance laws for women
- n) Anti dowry laws.

Awards & Recognition

1. Order of Human Rights: All India Sikh Conference, 1985.
2. Chameli Devi Jain Award, Best Woman Journalist of the Year, Media Foundation, New Delhi, 1986
3. Haldi Ghati Award, Outstanding Journalist of the Year, Rana Mewar Foundation, Udaipur, 1993
4. Prabha Puruskar, for "distinguished service to the cause of women" Keshav Smarak Sansthan, Lucknow, 1997
5. Vidula Samman, instituted by Vikas, An Institution Dedicated to the Cause of Education and Knowledge, Calcutta, 1998
6. Deshasnehi Award, India Development Foundation, Bangalore, 1998
7. Award received from Indians for Collective Action, USA for strengthening the rights of urban self employed poor, 2009

Organizational Affiliations

- Founder and Managing Trustee, Manushi Trust (1979 onwards)
- Founder Editor, *Manushi — A Journal About Women and Society* (1978 onwards)
- Founder President, Manushi Sangathan, Forum for Democratic Reforms
- Expert Committee of Delhi Government for drafting a new legislation for implementation of the National Policy for Street Vendors.(2010-2013)
- Member of the Delhi government's Supreme Court appointed Special Task Force for the reform of cycle rickshaw and NMV policy and drafting new law for NMV (2010—2014)
- Member, COURT of Central University, Jammu (2012 onwards)
- Secretary, Kashmir Committee, headed by former Law Minister Ram Jethmalani
- Life Member, Editor's Guild of India

- Governing Board Member, Janaagraha, Centre for Democracy and Governance, Bangalore
- Board of Governors, Indian Council of Cultural Relations (2009-2013)
- Governing Board, Common Cause, New Delhi (2008 to present)
- Committee to deal with complaints of sexual harassment of women at work place in the Ministry of Culture, 2009 to 2012
- Governing Board of Delhi International Arts Festival (2011-2013)
- Chairperson, Central Adoption Resource Agency (1999)
- Member, Board of Trustees, Sambhavna Trust, Bhopal People's Health and Documentation Clinic for Victims of Gas Tragedy (1999-2002)
- Member, Board of Trustees, Indian Social Studies Trust (1997-2016)
- Member, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Society (1989-2003)