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"Women and the nationalization of literature: Text and image as parallel narratives in a Hindi periodical (1927 - 1941)"

The Hindi literary periodical *Sudha* was first published in 1927 in Lucknow, a north Indian city more known for its Islamic literary culture than for Hindi publishing. It ran through the formative years of the consolidation of nationalist thought in a late-colonial setting. In this paper, I wish to present my reading of the periodical's thematic columns. What crystallizes out of these columns is what many a scholar has described as the nationalization of tradition. Through the medium of print, we can see processes of standardization, indigenization, canonization and scientification not only of the Hindi language, but also of Hindu culture. As I will show, women feature central in these processes:

Much of the information in the columns of this literary journal targeted the female reader although hardly any of it was authored by her. The visual introductions of the columns, however, suggest that women's roles expanded from the domestic private sphere into a professional public sphere. The reader is in fact confronted with two parallel scripts of text and image that often carry conflicting narratives. While the text is predominately authored by men who write for other men as well as for women, the images that accompany a number of columns in the journal suggest that a woman is no longer an agentless body, an icon or the guardian of culture and tradition. She is also no longer merely a consumer, but arises as the maker of knowledge and maker of the periodical. It seems that in the early 1930s, *Sudha* went through a push of becoming a women's journal, or at least a journal targeting the female reader. It is this moment in the history of the journal that I wish to share.

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All are cordially invited!