



Headlines From the Heartland: Reinventing the Hindi Public Sphere

By Sevanti Ninan

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Based on over 150 interviews with journalists, readers, publishers, politicians, administrators, and activists, as well as expert content analysis, this book tells the ongoing story of the press in the Hindi heartland. Against the backdrop of the relationship between press and society, author Sevanti Ninan describes the emergence of a local public sphere; reinvention of the public sphere by the new non-elite readership; the effect on politics, administration, and social activism; the consequences of making newspapers reader rather than editor-led; the democratization of the Hindi press with the advent of village-level citizen journalists; and the impact of caste and communalism on the Hindi press.

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Editorial Review

Review

Sevanti Ninan's remarkable book draws readers deep into the media revolution that is changing India. Ninan's sweeping research project, which takes her from small-town print shops across north India to the share-markets of Mumbai, describes how Hindi-language newspapers are carrying politics and consumption into towns and villages. Ninan mourns three things: the collapse of small, "printing-shop" newspapers, obliterated by capitalist rivals; the demise of independent, "intellectual" editors, replaced by marketing managers and pushy young members of the owners' families; and the loss of wider regional identities as burgeoning newspapers become obsessed with village-well news. Yet rural people are drawn into political participation and world awareness unknown to their parents. Ninan strives to connect her richly woven stories into the larger pattern of media and newspaper development throughout the world in the past 200 years. This is a book for everyone interested in modern India, and in how print and capitalism shape societies. (Robin Jeffrey)

This is a fascinating and richly textured study of the rise to influence and power of the Hindi press across northern India. Basing herself on a huge amount of original research, yet wearing her learning lightly, Sevanti Ninan deftly links the world of the journal (and journalist) to wider trends in politics and economics. The developments that she narrates, with such verve and skill, have had a transformative impact on modern India. Therefore, no student of Indian society, politics or history can afford to be without this book.

(Ramachandra Guha)

Headlines... is a must-read not just for those in the Hindi heartland, but for anybody who compulsively has a newspaper, of any language, beside his morning cuppa. For the battles, lost and won in the Hindu belt, are similar to those that newspapers of all languages are waging across the country.

(Daily News Analysis)

This Book is a valuable contribution to the study of media and society and required reading for anyone with a serious interest in the way the market, media and society interact. The excerpts of interviews that pepper the text remain with you long after you close the book.

(Book Review)

Sevanti's book braids together painstakingly gathered journalistic information with the history of post-Independence India. She argues her case with clarity and skill as she uncovers how Hindi journalism has constantly mutated and grown in India. (Mrinal Pande)

This book delves into the Hindi newspaper revolution which has been kickstarted by a host of causes—rising literacy rates, increasing political involvement, news channels and whetting appetites for news and acceleration of panchayat level politics.... It is a valuable book for those working in the industry, specifically, the Hindi newspaper industry and provides a detailed account of the dynamics taking place in the industry. Well-researched and meticulously documented, the book highlights an important part of the

Indian media.

(Pitch)

Rarely do journalists focus inwards. But to her credit, Sevanti Ninan, in a brilliant exposition of the as-yet-unfinished media revolution in the Hindi heartland, has for the first time focused on the growth and increasing localization of news.... Anyone remotely interested in the transformation of rural communities into avid news and views consumers would stand to profit immensely from Ninan's well-researched study dissecting threadbare the phenomenal growth of the Hindi newspapers since the early 90s.

(Afternoon Despatch & Courier)

A compelling book...on the role and growth of Hindi media across northern and central India.... The book brings alive India's ongoing Hindi newspaper revolution and studies its impact on politics, administration and society with interesting examples. Set against the socio-economic and political changes in the countryside, the book traces the flowering of journalism in unexpected and unorthodox ways.

(The Indian Express)

The story of newspapers going local.... **Headlines from the Heartland** is the first account of the changes wrought by the newspaper revolution in India's Hindi speaking states, looking at how they have localised furiously as they race to compete for readership.

(The Financial Express)

Her latest book, '**Headlines from the Heartland** : Reinventing the Hindi Public Sphere', has been described by author and critic Robin Jeffery as a 'remarkable... draws readers deep into the media revolution that is changing India'.

(Indiaenews.com)

Rarely do journalists focus inwards. But to her credit, Sevanti Ninan, in a brilliant exposition of the as-yet-unfinished media revolution in the Hindi heartland, has for the first time focused on the growth and increasing localization of news.

(Cybernoon.com)

It documents the changing face of Hindi journalism in post liberalization India, as well as the consequences of newspaper localization for small town India.

(ndtv.com)

The author brings alive India's ongoing Hindi newspaper revolution and its impact on politics, administration and society.

(Deccan Herald, Bangalore)

Sevanti Ninan brilliantly brings alive India's ongoing Hindi newspaper revolution, and its impact on politics, administration and society. Set against the socio economic and political changes in the countryside, it is a remarkable story of how journalism flowered in unexpected and unorthodox ways, and colourful media marketing unfurled in the Hindi heartland.... "a story of expansion, localization, fragmentation".... Sachin Pilot called it "trivialization of the newspaper".... "Headlines from the Heartland" as the first serious effort to capture the Hindi Press" not by a foreigner, but by an Indian.... "Ninan strives to connect her richly woven stories into larger pattern of media and newspaper development throughout the world in the past 200 years. This is a book for everyone interested in modern India, and in how print and capitalism shape societies.".... Famous author and columnist Ramchandra Guha describes the book as "fascinating and richly textured study of the rise to influence and power of the Hindi press across northern India (yahoo.com)

Users Review

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Jerry Day:

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