

Book Review: Making News in Global India: Media, Publics, Politics by Sahana Udupa

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Recommended Citation

Devi, Sudeshna () "Book Review: Making News in Global India: Media, Publics, Politics by Sahana Udupa," *International Social Science Review*: Vol. 93 : Iss. 1 , Article 20.

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/issr/vol93/iss1/20>

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Udupa, Sahana. *Making News in Global India: Media, Publics, Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. xiv + 278 pages. Hardcover, \$117.95.

Sahana Udupa's ethnographic work looks at the phenomenon of urban transformation through the prism of commercial news media. Set amidst the growth of the silicon valley of India, namely Bangalore, the book argues for a more nuanced understanding of news media as being an object and an agent in the urbanization of the city. The book is anchored with extensive ethnographic observations and interactions carried out with the major newspapers published in English and Kannada, primarily with the Times of India Group, during the period 2008-2012.

Udupa, a Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute with several years of experience as a bilingual journalist in India, makes three crucial arguments in her work. Firstly, she contends that it is imperative to set aside the existing paradigms in the field of media studies, that is, the commodification model as propounded by Sonwalker in '*Murdochization*' of the Indian press: from by-line to bottom-line (2002), Thussu in *The 'Murdochization' of news? The case of Star TV in India* (2007), and Thomas in *Political Economy of Communications in India* (2010), as well as the democratic resurgence model discussed by Ninan in *Headlines From The Heartland: Reinventing the Hindi Public Sphere* (2007) and Neyazi in *Politics after Vernacularization: Hindi Media and Indian Democracy* (2011). Instead, the author proposes that a new framework of *desire-visibility* is a more compelling model to grasp the complexities of the media scene in this globalizing context. The mediated desire model traverses beyond commodity consumption to new imaginations of civic activism, cultural ascent, social mobility, and the re-imagination of the body and the self. Similarly, the structured visibility model that is used to give space to diverse voices is couched around norms of sociality, cultural values, and political cultures. Udupa states that there is an inherent tension when both these models collude to frame the urban milieu. This tension opens up new possibilities of addressing the issues of space, consumption, and citizenship in liberalizing economies.

Secondly, Udupa argues that a disjunction exists in the framing of news discourse between English-language media and the regional-language media. In fact, Udupa defines Bhasha media as not simply regional language media, but as a culmination of sentiments and activities anchored on the cultural logics of region, caste, and language that play out as journalists in both regional and English language medium engage in the everyday news discourse.

Thirdly, Udupa contends that the modernist tone of development propagated by the news media is shaped not only by the working of global and regional capital but also social and cultural factors like caste, linguistic, and regional politics that are embodied within the news field. This argument draws its essence from the Bhasha media theorization that the author strongly advocates for in her study.

Udupa does a commendable job of weaving together the politics of the social locations of the journalists with their work culture. Navigating through the alleys of caste, linguistic, and regional politics, she shows how media content produced by the journalists is enmeshed in the everyday framing of news discourse. The author also brings in the new aspect of reading media texts. She achieves this by not limiting herself to a content analysis of the media text, but by extending beyond newspaper content and developing an understanding of how activities like news campaigns and promotional events facilitate the process of urban reimagining. Udupa also contextualizes the influence of social factors on news production by providing an engaging historical account on the evolution of the profession of journalism in Bangalore. This contextualization helps in mapping out a coherent analysis of the changes that are being witnessed in contemporary times. A limitation of this study, acknowledged by the author, is the omission of audience reception. A news text is produced to meet a specific target audience. Along with dealing with the politics of news production, some reference to the politics of reception does bode well to provide an even more comprehensive analysis.

Making News in Global India: Media, Publics, Politics is a welcome addition to the growing literature of media studies. Along with introducing new exciting theoretical frameworks for future studies, this work is commendable in bringing out the social and political intricacies that strongly impact any form of production in an Indian context. This book is beneficial for researchers in media and communication studies and for all those who engage with media in their everyday life.

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