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How the print media globalises South Africa from outside and within: a neo-Gramscian perspective

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Abstract

Due to the need to gain global political legitimacy after the 1994 democratic dispensation, the South African government embarked on a neoliberal political trajectory. This became evident because of the ways in which the South African state was integrated back into the international economy through adopting neoliberal economic policies. This included a free-market economy with no state intervention, trade liberalisation through the lowering of barriers for foreign investment, and liberalisation of the media complex which was tightly controlled by the state. These were prescribed as an effective way of consolidating the new fragile democratic South Africa thereby seeing the new government accepting a neoliberal policy path. This was part of the embrace of the new won democracy and relationship with the international community after many years of economic sanctioning, political isolation and pariah status. The aim of this study is to examine the ways in which South African print media reproduce the dominance of neo-liberal discourses by globalising South Africa from outside and within. In addition, this study specifically seeks to look at how South Africa's print media legitimises and authorises macro-economic policy. Thus, entrenching the ideas of a neo-liberal stance as well as analysing the perceptions of the print media's class orientation in relation to the ruling historic bloc. The historic bloc is all levels of society [political, social, civil] coming together to form a dominant social class. This study will make use of interviews transcripts from 7 audio recorded and one email interview as well as the *Business Day* and *Mail & Guardian*'s reports on the Budget Speech from 2011-2014. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Country Reports on South Africa were also used as data, and also analysed during the same period. These will be used to analyse how these newspapers report on macro-economic issues through the abovementioned case studies. This study employed the mixed research method which uses quantitative and qualitative tools to analyse the data which is a convergent design also known as triangulation. The quantitative tool used was content analysis for its numerical value and the qualitative tool used was the thematic analysis which is an inductive reading of the reports and transcripts. These tools exposed interesting results which echoed historical trends of ownership, values and norms illustrating an important but narrow function of the selected newspapers.

Keywords:

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