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Media Voices and Power: A decolonial analysis of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media landscape using City Press newspaper as an analytical focus

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Media Voices and Power: A decolonial analysis of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media landscape using City Press newspaper as an analytical focus.

Research Question: How mediated, politicised, racialised and gendered is the notion of 'black voices' in the post-1994 South Africa media era and what does its intersection with coloniality signify for a 'distinctly African' newspaper like *City Press*?

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of media studies.

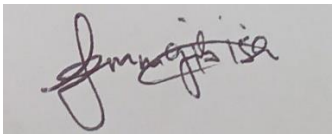
01 March 2023, Johannesburg, South Africa
University of the Witwatersrand

Supervisor: Professor Glenda Daniels
Co-Supervisor: Professor Dilip Menon

DISCLAIMER:
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Declaration

This thesis is a product of my own original work. It has not been previously submitted in any form to another university. Therefore, where any citations have been made out of the work of others, those have been acknowledged accordingly in this thesis.



_____

Mbuyisi Mgibisa

(01 March, 2023)

Writing Declaration

"This is the oppressor's language, yet I need to talk to you." -
Adrienne Rich's words in bell hooks' (1989) *Talking Back, Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black.*

This thesis is a work of decoloniality; however, it has been produced in and through the English language, 'the oppressor's language'. Therefore, I declare that this thesis 'carries the scent of oppression'.[1]

[1] See bell hooks. (1989). *Talking Back, Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. New York: Apex CoVantage, LLC.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents, Mrs Nokholekile Mgibisa and Mr. Mtiwakhe Mgibisa, who despite being deprived of education in apartheid South Africa, worked hard and tirelessly to ensure that their children at least received some form of education. It is also dedicated to "those invisible native sons and daughters who, since nobody know their names, have been the men who cry 'I am!' and the women who demand 'And ain't I woman?" (Charles Mills, 1998: 9-10).

Acknowledgement

Professor Glenda Daniels and Professor Dilip Menon, my supervisor and co-supervisor respectively: thank you for your guidance and mentorship. A tremendous debt is owed for sharing your wealth of knowledge and for the rigour of your engagements with various drafts of this work. Thank you for your suggestions and for clarifying prose at different critical junctures of this work. Thank you for your patience and understanding over many missed deadlines over many years, especially during scary the period of the Covid-19 pandemic. Thank you for treating me like a human being with a *potentiated* ability to bring something new to the world of knowledge and world of theory. And thank you for nurturing me with kindness, respect, and for walking by my side on this tumultuous PhD journey. You are both examples of scholars I look up to with utmost admiration. You are both worthy of emulation when it comes to academic advising, and by emulation I do not mean mimicry. At this stage, I would also like to thank the proposal readers. They offered an important insight to me early-on for me to take *responsibility* for theory because "theory is mine" and "theory belongs to all human beings". Their counsel has been a liberating force throughout the production of this work knowingly that I cannot achieve humanity, liberation and reason on the conditions laid out *only* in the *sacred texts* of Europe and North Americas.

This work is not an individual endeavor by far. Contrary, this work has been cultivated through a network of people through establishing a *relationship* with them and their thoughts and ideas. Yes, it is my oeuvre. Yes, it is my work. Yes, it is my effort. Yes, it is the culmination of my endless hours of labour, but it has been germinated by the *love* of others. Here, I honour my brother Manelisi Mgibisa and my cousins Andisiwe Bango and Pumile Bango for their love, kindness and support throughout this journey. I also honour my friends (you are too many to be mentioned here) for your support, encouragement and gift of social life. A special mention also goes to the National Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS), which provided generous doctoral funds and afforded me with a mentorship programme that deepened my theoretical and methodological insights.

Lastly, to my ancestral lineage starting with the maternal side: MaKrila, MaDlamini, MaGcwanini To my paternal side: Tshawe, Hintsa (*Aaah Zanzolo!)*, Mdange ka Tshiwo, Khawuta, Togu, Phalo, Gcaleka, Velelo. Ndiyakhahlela ngokuzithoba okukhulu. Ndiyabulela namandla enindinika wona mihla le nibambisene noMvel'ingqangqi, uQamata, uSonini-nanini, uMdali weZulu noMhlaba, uNkulunkulu. Camagu.

The PhD-I-don't-write (A poem)

Tell me, did he provide a definition of black voices?
No, not a definite one.
Did he tell the truth about his lived experience in a neoliberal newsroom?
No, the truth could have been on his agenda.
Did he rigorously acquire data?
No, he stayed attuned to the incompleteness of all data regarding human beings, that one makes the approach humanistic.
Did he include reliable data and reportable facts from the field?
No, he wrote reality tied lightly and tightly to shared memories, experiences and understandings.
Did he cite widely and appropriately?
No, he tried his damnedest to avoid appropriation, lest he be damned.
Did he cite writers like Walter Mignolo, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Catherine Walsh, Anibal Quijano, Ramón Grosfoguel, Maria Lugones, Boaventura de Sousa etc. *enough* since this is a decolonial study?
No, but he hopes that he has chosen their words wisely and with love so that he might be close, so close.
Did he include a separate discussion of coloniality and decoloniality?
No, instead he engages in a relational conversation with decolonial concepts from decolonial theorists who have become his Black Consciousness friends.
Did he *even* use *the* B *or* W word?
No, not just the B or C *words,* those B *or* C *words, all of them, in all their finery he wrote them in homage, in awe and in solidarity, in blackness and in consciousness.*
Did he explore literature on decoloniality?
No, he thought and wondered deeply about the c word and his place in it, and im/possibilities of the d word.
Did he explain what he means by lived experience in explicit terms?
No, he wrote through his body implicitly and explicitly for his black experience must be heard and theorized by his mind and body.
Did he follow his original PhD proposal at *all*?
No, because this is the PhD-he-doesn't-write.[2]

[2] This poem is an adaptation, a riff or spin on Elizabeth Mackinlay's work, *Critical Writing for Embodied Approaches: Autoethnography, Feminism and Decoloniality* (2019), Australia: Palgrave MacMillan.

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Preface

Talking Back, Thinking Africana, Thinking Black

> *The irony of our age is that while there is an obsession with appearing smart, thinking has become an indecent activity*. - (Gordon, 2006: 5)[3]

This preface has been inspired by bell hooks' (1989) book titled *Talking Back, Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. In childhood, in some black African contexts, we grew up being told that 'talking back' to adults was a sign of disrespect. It did not matter whether the adult was in the wrong or on the wrong side of the argument. This, then, meant that as a child you could not speak back to or speak against an adult until you reached a certain level of adult maturation. The issue of 'adult maturation' is both ironic and problematic in many levels, however, I will come back to it later. For hooks, however, *talking back* meant 'speaking back to as an equal to an authority figure and daring to disagree and/or have an opinion'.[4] The notion of talking back even spells more trouble for black women who want to emerge under the weight of invisibility linked to voice[5] because the social world still treats women as people who shouldn't be listened to and who shouldn't be heard when they speak. Their speech or voice is rendered as a sound that must be disregarded because it's too 'loud, rude, overbearing, and in relationship with black males dominating and castrating'.[6] Coming back to the question of adult maturity, isn't it ironic that maturity must meet the conditions of adulthood (often age-based) before it can be achieved? How, then, can black liberation be possible in a world that denies maturation to children? Fanon observed that to be black is to be 'locked in underdevelopment, frozen, in other words, in perpetual childhood'.[7] In colonial universities, there are attempts to lock new black scholars in perpetual childhood by discouraging them not to use the 'I' in their writings in preference for 'this thesis', 'this research,' 'this dissertation', 'this study' and so forth. I argue that it is important to insert the 'I' early in scholarly writing in order not to hide one's standpoint. This insertion, however, does not point that one's voice necessarily resides in the use of the 'I'. It challenges the status quo in colonial universities which relegates black voices to third person narrations. I argue that first person

[3] See Gordon, L.R. (2006). *Disciplinary Decadence: Living Thought in Trying Times*. New York: Routledge.
[4] See hooks, b. (1989). Talking Back, Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black. New York: Apex CoVantage, LLC.
[5] See Gordon, L.R. (2018). "Four Kinds of Invisibility from Euromodernity". A UCONN TEDX talk delivered at Peabody Hall, Room 115, University of Connecticut. 10 December 2018.
[6] See Preface to the new edition of bell hooks' *Talking Back, Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. New York: Apex CoVantage, LLC.
[7] See Gordon, L.R. (2005). "The Problem of Maturity in Hip Hop," *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 27, no. 4 (October–December 2005): 367–389.

narrations can be creatively used to make a statement or to talk back to the voice of authority and the voice above, often, a white male European voice, or what Lewis R. Gordon, calls 'the voice of the mirror'.[8] And worse, the academic writing which promotes the use of third person narration militates against the possibility of black people finding maturation in their voices. Talking back to voices of legitimacy and authority has been and continues to be the work that encourages me 'to find and/or celebrate coming to voice, especially folks from exploited and oppressed groups who struggle with breaking silences'.[9] Applying hooks' concept of talking back as part of the theories of coming to voice has created an awareness of critical consciousness and meaningful transformation for the self.

Thinking Africana

Africana is a reference to thought and not to a geographical map or location. One of the things I've been thinking about during this PhD journey is what it means to pursue a decolonial analysis of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media and public sphere at a colonial university like the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) without depending on the *sacred texts* of Europe? How do I undertake this decolonial project under the threat of colonial imposition at methodological and disciplinary levels? I deal with these questions in Chapters 3 and 4 of this study. What I can share for now is that doing decolonial work is a confusing act. More so, doing the critique of the theory of decoloniality is a both a terrifying and liberatory act. The first error I committed during the proposal phase of this thesis was to engage in a *theodician reading*[10] of decolonial texts, especially those texts by Latin American and African decolonial scholars. By theodicean reading I mean all I did was to bring these theories to the study of the decolonial analysis of black voices in post-apartheid South African media and public sphere without questioning the justificatory practices of their ideas. In other words, I treated these theorists as one would a deity. This, then, placed me in the world that is diverted from the historical, cognitive and normative mission of decolonial thought. That world is a world that does not have a critical anthropology of the theory of decoloniality. It is a world that refuses to see decoloniality as in need of decolonising. I then began to realise the importance of taking on the task of critiquing the theory of decoloniality, or the task of decolonising decoloniality itself, hopefully to contribute to

[8] See Gordon, L.R. (2018). "Four Kinds of Invisibility from Euromodernity". A UCONN TEDX talk delivered at Peabody Hall, Room 115, University of Connecticut. 10 December 2018.
[9] See hooks, b. (1989). Talking Back, Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black. New York: Apex CoVantage, LLC.p.15
[10] See Gordon, L.R. (1995). *Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ, by Humanities International Press, 1995.

its growth and development. The next move entailed finding a community of scholars with the task not of commenting on the theory of decoloniality but instead placing it in dialogue with their own. Through my relationship with the thoughts and ideas of Frantz Fanon, Steve Biko, Lewis R. Gordon, among others, I discovered Africana thought. I found value in it because of the extent to which it engaged with issues of shared concerns: dignity, freedom, and reason. To be honest, I have struggled with some of the main concepts of decolonial thought, particular the concepts of the 'coloniality of being' and the 'coloniality of power.' This dialectic struggle was to the extent to which both these concepts could add value to Fanon's ideas of building new concepts for the cultivation of a new humanity. Biko's notion of the "envisioned self"[11] thus brought the universalising force of establishing relations with other forces in the world of relations. It brought the promise of envisioning and reimagining new kinds of human beings – a proverbial new beginning. This also led to the challenge of reconceptualising the notion of power *for*. The ideas of Gordon on the question of power proved instructive and useful. There is an in-depth discussion on these issues on Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Thinking Black

That I am a black (specifically African) person doing theoretical work, however, 'makes the ascription of blackness unavoidable because of the context: I, and many others like me, do something that, under an interpretation of theory that was unfortunately held by a good number of giants of modern thought, we should not be able to do'.[12] This is even though throughout the history of humanity, there have been those people who presented the black side of thought or black thinking. However, it has become easy for new black scholars like myself to become wittingly or unwittingly complicit in the production of modes of thought and ways of being that reinforce rather than challenge structures of the colonisation of knowledge. This is so because there is a tendency to subordinate thinking to other groups of people, often, white European male theorists. In doing this PhD, the first thing I asked myself was which black "side" or paradigm of thought I needed to critically position myself to and which critical philosophical anthropology I needed to assume. Fanon and Biko proved useful. I deal with the question of blackness and the black side of throughout this thesis.

[11] See Steve Biko. (1978). *I Write What I Like*: A Selection of His Writings Edited with a Personal Memoir by Aelred Stubbs (London).

[12] See Lewis. R. Gordon. (2010). Theory in Black: Teleological Suspensions in Philosophy of Culture. *Qui Parle*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 193-214.

Chapter 1
Introduction: Locating the study and the self

> *Reason was confident of victory on every level. I put all the parts back together. But I had to change my tune. That victory played cat and mouse; it made a fool of me. As the other put it, when I was present, it was not; when it was there, I was no longer.* — Frantz Fanon (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 1967: 119-20)[13]

Introduction

This study undertakes a decolonial analysis of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media landscape with specific reference to the *City Press*[14] newspaper, as an example, to elucidate how black voices are subjected under the weight of persistent coloniality in the post-apartheid newsroom and in everyday lives. It also illuminates why voice[15] is essential in our social world of relations and to doing politics. However, in considering the complexities of black voices, as well as the fact that *City Press* is only a tiny part of the larger and complex South African mainstream media landscape, it is almost a near impossible claim to do a decolonial analysis of black voices in the South African media. This would be a monumental undertaking for the project of this magnitude given its limited scope. Instead, this thesis is presented as a form of 'problematising' black voices at *City Press* and other areas of the public sphere. It is a form of 'consciousness raising' (Freire, 1970)[16] about the need to use a decolonial lens by which critical engagement of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media is possible. *City Press* is the not the sole focus of this study as it makes up only two of the four chapters forming the second half of the thesis, where analytical and empirical work is done. The other two chapters on my own lived experience as a black journalist in a neoliberal newsroom and on the Economic Freedom Fighters' (EFF's) posture towards women journalists are just as important. The five questions which frame this research are all-encompassing and underpin all the four empirical chapters. However, I admit that initially the thesis was intended to rely heavily on events at *City Press*. But due to a combination of the Covid-19 pandemic and the refusal of a group of former black journalists at *City Press* to participate in the study through interviews, it became necessary to adjust. The need to extend the focus of the thesis to include other newsrooms and other journalistic experiences in public became obligatory.

[13] See Fanon, F. (1967/1952). *Black Skin, White Masks*. (trans. C. L. Lam Markmann). London: Paladin.

[14] The *City Press* is national newspaper published by Medi24 that carries news from South Africa and the rest of the world. It was previously aimed at black readers and prided itself of being a "distinctly African" newspaper. Although it now attracts a more cosmopolitan readers across racial groups, it is arguably the largest newspaper that caters mainly for a black, middle-class readership (Giffard et. al., 1997).

[15] I use the term 'voice' in a performative deconstructing way, that is, I do not use it in a reductive way that reduces it to audibility, however, the people involved in this study are audible subjects.

[16] See Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

So, where to begin? A graduate student has probably made such an observation or grappled with this question at one point or another. 'Where to begin' may appear like a mundane question to pose at the beginning of a doctoral dissertation but as Lewis R. Gordon (2014) tells us, scholarship hinges on what 'may seem to be the most trivial or peripheral point'.[17] I raise this question because the notion of an "introduction" is a tricky one precisely because it presupposes that an introduction should outline a thesis statement that leads the reader to the entire body of the work. In fact, that is what we have been told throughout our graduate years. This makes the question of an introduction only universal to the extent to which it ignores reality. The reality, however, is that an introduction can begin in *any way*, like Frantz Fanon (1967a) began his *Black Skin, White Masks* with a methodological question. The idea of starting the introduction anyhow also speaks directly to Walter Mignolo's (2009) concept of 'epistemic disobedience'.[18] This then opens the question of an 'introduction', and by extension, the question of a doctoral dissertation, to any number of interpretations.

Standard thesis formats are part of this universal system of knowledge production. Gordon (2012) says he is always 'struck' by the interpretations of the term 'introduction' especially when texts and fields in question study black people.[19] He argues that often the expectation is for a 'beginner's' text with 'summaries of arguments'. It is against such Western/universal models in mind that I have chosen to begin this study with an epigraph on 'reason' from Fanon's (1952/1967) seminal text *Black Skin, White Masks*. The reason for doing so, for my reaching out to reason, is intentional. It is the best way to claim this scholarship, at the basic level, in a Euromodern world[20] that treats 'black' as unreason. A response to this dismissal of '*unreasonably* black unreason' could be a narcissistic rage. However, for me reason thus becomes '*the only weapon*' (Gordon, 2007: 9)[21] in the pursuit of this doctoral dissertation. Enrique Dussel (2005: 45) points out that the use of reason should be understood as 'a critical process, which opens humanity to a new development of the human being' (cited in Solano, 2011: 135).[22] The acceptance of the Euromodern illusion of there not having been black reason is what haunts black thinking today and raises the question of the extent to which black scholars are committed to reason and reality. The presupposition of *black unreason* versus *white reason* brings to the fore a central tension in modern thought today where scholars, particularly black scholars, are continually attempting to rationalise Western thought in *bad faith* (Gordon, 1995).[23] This lived contradiction experienced by some

[17] See Gordon, L.R. (2014). Black Existence in Philosophy. *Diogeneses*. Cool. 59(3-4) 96-105

[18] See Mignolo, W. (2009). 'Epistemic disobedience, independent thought and de-colonial freedom '. *Theory, Culture and Society,* 26 (7-8): 1-23.

[19] See Gordon, L.R. (2012). Reasoning in black: African philosophy under the weight of misguided reason. *Savannah Review.* Africa World Press.

[20] By a Euromodern world I do not mean a reference to European people but to the concept of European modernity where dominated and subordinated people (usually black people) are delegitimised and dehumanised.

[21] See Gordon, L.R. (2007). When I Was There, It Was Not On secretions once lost in the night. *Performance Research*, 12(3), pp.8–15.

[22] See Solano, X.L. (2011). Walking and Doing: About Decolonial Practices. *Collaborative Anthropologies*. Volume 4, 2011.

[23] My simple explanation of bad faith is when a black scholar who struggles to relate to Euromodern scholarship is engaged

black scholars emerges because of the demands often placed upon them by the tenets of Western scholarship in a Westernised university, which, paradoxically, also demands the rejection of black thought. As we have seen in Fanon's experience, to be called to take responsibility for *reason* is a terrifying challenge since reason tends to play 'cat and mouse' and 'make a fool' of someone who is attempting to do so. However, I argue reason must be treated as a responsibility that demands both commitment and political action. Thus, 'the question of reflection, then, of thought and reason' (Gordon, 2012) behind any inquiry is essential. Consequently, reason became the consideration with which I had to contend with throughout the process of putting together this research.

1.1 Background: Locating the study

This study investigates how mediated, politicised, racialised and gendered is the phenomena of black voices in the post-apartheid[24] South African media era and how coloniality as a key feature of our everyday lives means and signifies for a traditionally 'distinctly African'[25] newspaper like *City Press.* In undertaking the decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in the South African mainstream media[26] and public sphere, this thesis draws on *City Press*, as an example or case study, to demonstrate how colonial practices such as the denial of voice and the problem of voice invisibility continues in South Africa's social and political life and in institutions of power such as the media. Through intersectional Black feminism, this study also problematise the political exclusion of women voices in the media and why voice continues to become the central concern in women's writings. I also draw on my lived experience as a black journalist in the neoliberal newsroom and theorise it in relation with the other experiences of black journalists in other newsrooms. Through the decolonial analysis of EFF as black rage, I contend that voice is indispensable to human social and political life.

What does it mean to have a voice? What does it mean to have a voice but still not be heard? In the context of South Africa with its history of colonialism, apartheid and racism, I propose that voice has become even more essentialised, more politicised, more racialised and more gendered in the post-apartheid South African political dispensation. Thus, I address how philosophers and political theorists talk about voicelessness or voice invisibility to illuminate the understanding of how voicelessness functions in our contemporary discussions of societal norms and politics in the South African media and

in a game of self-deception by not being honest. For a philosophical discussion of bad faith, see also Gordon, L.R (1995). *Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism.* Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities International Press.

[24] For Calvin Warren (2018), the term "post" is rather a misnomer if we think of "post" as an overcoming [*überwunden*]. The term "post" in this thesis is used as a marker of time period after 1994. I am real to the fact that the post-1994 conditions will never overcome pre-1994 conditions. As Warren says, a residue will always remain although there is always hope of reducing the colonial residue and to render it inoperative. The reality in South Africa, however, is the opposite.

[25] "Distinctly African" was the motto introduced by Mathatha Tsedu soon after he took the editorship in 2004.

[26] The South African mainstream media consists of radio, television, newspapers and online media. Due to the advent of social media, most South African mainstream media houses have presence in various social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, to name just a few.

the public sphere. These kinds of voice invisibilities include, but are not limited to, racialised voicelessness, gendered voicelessness, and epistemic voicelessness and voicelessness experienced as a lived reality. While there are efforts to arrest voice, to make some subjects voiceless, as is the expressed rationale of Euromodernity's dark side (Mignolo, 2011),[27] paradoxically voice cannot always be entirely denied; it is not always exhaustively suppressed. Nor is voice necessarily always essentialised, politicised, racialised and gendered. At times, voice is made and mediated. However, the 'social world is such that it is not simply a *formal* mediation' (Gordon, 2015: 23)[28] of voices. This study, then, seeks to examine in-depth the making and mediation of black voices in the post-1994 South African media and public sphere, and the kinds of black subjectivities that are offered by the media, in particular *City Press*. Having briefly considered that voice is indispensable to human life and elucidated the problem of voicelessness, this thesis, then, turns to what is meant by the term 'black voices'.

The meaning and significance of 'black voices'

Central to this study is the recognition and valuing of black people as people with a voice. The valuing of black voices is significant in the context of settler societies such as South Africa since black people were denied voice and political speech by rendering them speechless through some 'imposed muteness' (Chevannes, 2019: 21).[29] This imposed muteness took many forms, including jailing black people who dared speaking out against the unjust and racial system of apartheid and the banning of political parties in the 1960s. For Chavennes, a denial of speech to 'make sense of one's political future – is an assured condemnation to political atrophy' (Ibid). He further argues that Euromodernity's 'undertone' demands the activation of *priori* claims about 'who is licensed to speak, and correspondingly, who gets heard under such regimes of licensing' (Ibid). Then it behooves us to consider black voices in the post-apartheid South African media and public sphere in two ways. First, there is a black voice which is 'the voice of the text (the black)' (Gordon, 2015: 25). Second, there is 'the voice about the text (the theorist and guide)' (Ibid). This thesis argues that black voices have this existential dimension in them. In the first instance, the black voice, 'the voice of the text', is already locked in the ongoing Euromodernity's practice of incarcerating black subjects and their knowledge and aesthetic productions in the objectifying moment. The nature of this subject formation is such that it objectifies black voices as 'voices in the text' and designates them as incapable of transcending the text world. In this way, black voices are 'imprisoned in this overwhelming objectivity' (Fanon, 1967a).[30] In the second instance, 'the

[27] See Mignolo, W. D. (2011). *The darker side of western modernity: global futures, decolonial options.* Durham and London: Duke University Press.
[28] See Gordon, L.R. (2015). *What Fanon Said: A Philosophical Portrait of His Life and Thought.* Johannesburg, SA: Wits University Press.

[29] See Chevannes, D. (2019). "Euromodernity's Undertone: On Reconceptualizing Political Speech." Doctoral Dissertation: University of Connecticut.
[30] Fanon, F. (1967a). *Black Skin, White Masks*. trans. Charles Lamm Markman. New York: Grove Press, 1967a.

[black] voice about the text (the theorist and guide)' demands our taking seriously the notion of *reason* speaking through black voices. This is a move away from the objectifying moment wherein black voices are locked hopelessly in the text; here black voices culminate in a transcendental revolutionary moment in which they assume a peculiar role in the text as both 'textual and metatextual voices' (Gordon, 2000: 32).[31]

A metatextual black voice demands, then, more than interpreting and criticising how black voices are subjected and objectified, but also interpreting and criticising interpretations of black subjectivities offered in the media and the public sphere. This then calls for transcending the 'voice in the text' to the 'voice about the text'. The other thing to bear in mind is that this study takes seriously the delegitimisation of black voices and the demands for existential justification of black voices to be heard. What could black voices offer when it is their very blackness that is called into question? A form of epistemic imperialism has long been at work in which, by way of practice, black voices were ultimately devalued as a source of theoretical reflection themselves (see Gordon 1995b, 1997, 2000). Following Steve Biko (1978), black voices in this research broadly refer to articulations by black Africans, black people of Coloured, Indian, Asian and Chinese descent. Biko's use of the term 'black' was not just a matter of pigmentation; he used it in a political context. Biko explained that blackness was a force that 'marked out' black people out of being subservient beings. Thus, this study acknowledges that a problem with constructing black voices emerges if we see them as *particularised voices* rooted in a historical political specificity since not everyone who is designated as black would necessarily identify as having a black voice. So, the definition of black voices adopted in this study is both signifying and symbolic.

1.2 Reclaiming black voice as worthy of inquiry

Euromodernity requires the violent elimination, delegitimising, erasure and silencing of black voices. So, since colonialism engages the logic of voicelessness as its tool and instrument, this study engages in a decolonial practice by reclaiming the black voices as worthy of academic inquiry. At this point, this study briefly outlines a set of four thematic areas linked to the question of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African mainstream media and public sphere. These thematic areas form a major part of this study and inform its analytical chapters.

[31] Lewis R. Gordon. (2000). *Existentia Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought.* Routledge: New York and London.

1.2.1 Transformation and race at *City Press*

This thesis concerns an incident that occurred in the *City Press* newspaper in 2013 when a group of six black journalists protested against the appointment of two white news editors in that newspaper and also alleged that the paper lacked 'black perspectives' (News24, 2013)[32] as an underlying ethos and practice in its coverage of South African party politics. In theoretical terms, the black journalists were raising a form of epistemic invisibility which is worth noting in the South African context for two reasons. As *City Press* offers 'information' or 'news', it is duty bound to be entangled in colonial relations in terms of who is producing knowledge. The fracas led to accusations of racism between the then editor of *City Press,* Ferial Haffajee and the group of black journalists (Ibid).[33] This thesis argues that the *City Press* incident is instructive for a number of reasons. First, it brings to the fore the question of why specifically a group of black journalists at a formerly 'distinctly African' newspaper which catered largely for a black readership would bring up a matter of the lack of black viewpoints? Second, the incident shows us that colonialism not only affected the material conditions of the dominated and colonised people, it also affected them at the epistemological level, hence, the demand for the appointment of black news editors at *City Press* (*Daily Dispatch*, 2013).[34] Third, it also reveals that though rapid changes had taken place in the South Africa media post-1994, the post-apartheid newsroom is still divided along racial lines; the *City Press* incident resulted in accusations of racism in the newsroom. Although different forces drive editorial content (Daniels, 2012),[35] this thesis argues that it is important that we look at the human world from the perspective of blackness because for a long time black people have been treated as subjects without a point of view even though 'thought - any thought - must be of something, and that relationship is performed in any act of reflection' (Gordon, 2010: 201)[36] by human beings. The history of anti-black racism has taught us that the human world is that which is full of negations. In this thesis, the reference to "black perspectives" is treated with the understanding that not all black voices are enunciated from the 'black side of thought'. This study demonstrates the ways in which black journalists at *City Press* understood the significance of using their voices when doing their journalistic work. It argues that their call for 'black perspectives' can be a transformative ideal in the South African media.

This study further explores the notion of 'black perspectives' from the point of view of the journalists at *City Press* in order to take seriously the question of privileging black views in the post-apartheid newsroom. Claiming a voice is a political project and there is no way that it is possible to disaggregate the issue of voice invisibility from racism. That would be fallacious or acting dishonestly in what

[32] See News24: Journalists accuse Haffajee of racism. 18 October 2013.
[33] Ibid
[34] See *Daily Dispatch*. *City Press* editor, Ferial Haffajee's letter to staff on racism. 18 October 2013.
[35] See Daniels, G. (2012). *Fight for Democracy: The ANC and the media in South Africa.* Wits University Press: Johannesburg.
[36] See Gordon, L.R. (2010). "Theory in Black: Teleological Suspensions in Philosophy of Culture," *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences* 18, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010): 193–214.

Gordon (1995) refers to as *bad faith.*[37] Finally, the study explores the different ways of knowing or what may count as thinking from the 'underside of modernity' and how blackness can contribute to understanding reality. Furthermore, to speak with a black voice is to speak as a member of the community of subordinated and dominated groups of people who are treated as people who must not be listened to even when they speak. I contend that there cannot be a 'unique' black perspective that uniformly applies to the thoughts of every black person. Though the views of this category of people have been ignored in the Euromodern world, however, the focus on 'black perspectives' in this thesis is treated in a way that does not romanticise or fetishize them. That cannot be emphasised enough. Thus, the kinds of Black subjectivities that are offered in this study are always fluid, shifting and open in the search for dialectical meaning in an intersubjective human world. Overall, I argue that the issue of 'black perspectives' is connected to the articulation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media because without a voice one cannot begin to speak about a perspective.

1.2.2 Lived experience in a post-apartheid newsroom

The experiences of black journalists in a post-apartheid South African newsroom are a largely understudied area of scholarship. This thesis considers ways in which autoethnography and Gordon's theories of invisibility can be employed to provide insight into my lived experience in a post-apartheid South African newsroom and the experiences of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013. Gordon's theories of invisibility places emphasis on how social constructions of the black body and blackness in a post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press* shaped the identity of black journalists and their experiences. It also discusses the relevance of the theories of invisibility (i.e., Gordon's racial invisibility linked to quantity) in relation to black journalists at *City Press* in order to provide a conceptual framework for an analysis of identity and 'black perspectives' in relation to race. This research argues that coloniality and whiteness still persists in the post-apartheid South African newsroom simply because 'black lives are still imperiled and devalued by a racial calculus and a political arithmetic that were entrenched centuries ago' (Hartman, 2007: 6).[38] Through the method of autoethnography, this thesis seeks to tell a personal story of my lived experience and to figure it out (theorise it) in relation with the thoughts of others who have had similar experiences of living in the wake of coloniality and whiteness. Like Hartman, I include the personal in this thesis 'to tell a story capable of engaging and countering the violence of abstraction' (Ibid, p.7)[39] suffered over many years of working as a journalist in a post-apartheid newsroom. For Hartman, our black experiences become an abstraction if they are only contained in the body and not told and theorised. So, this thesis argues the value of theorising our lived experiences lies in its relevance; for any theory, 'gains its sustenance from that which it offers *for*

[37] See Gordon, L.R. (1995). *Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities International Press.
[38] See Hartman, S. (2007). *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux 2007, 6-7)
[39] Ibid, p.7

the lived reality of those who those who are expected to formulate it' (Gordon, 2000: 11).

Reflecting on Frantz Fanon's fifth chapter in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), 'The Lived Experience of the Black', and his other revolutionary work *A Dying Colonialism*, Gibson (2001) makes a distinction between two kinds of black experiences. He maintains that whereas Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* emphasised the lived experience of black people as 'the basis of a new humanism', in *A Dying Colonialism*, Fanon revealed the 'lived experience of the revolution' (Ibid). My lived experience explicated in this thesis is the one that reveals that 'the weight of coloniality on black lives is both an unbearable burden and responsibility' (Kamugisha, 2017: 39).[40] Mabogo Percy More (2008) argues that lived experience as a product of philosophy is more than reducing lived experiences of black people to an autobiographical or biographical moment.[41] He contends that there were attempts to reduce black existential philosophers like Biko to a biographical moment, amplifying the Euromodern position of black experience as embodied experience that could only be figured out through white and European interpretations. For Gordon, 'this reality has meant detailed explorations of this dominating factor in the lived experience of African people. It has meant an exploration of their lived experience of blackness' (cited in More, 2008: 50).[42] Fanon bemoaned the lived experience of the black who does not bring the world of black theory into that experience. If black experience is already an experience in 'jeopardy,' I argue, then, that it is 'theory in black' that must figure out black experience. We have come, then, to the important challenge raised by Gordon (2010) in his article, "Theory in Black": it is, in effect, for blackness to face itself.[43] Gordon writes: 'Blackness, in all its metaphors and historical submergence, reaches out to theory, then, as theory split from itself. It is the dark side of theory, which, in the end, is none other than theory itself, understood as self-reflective, outside itself' (2010: 197-198).[44] In essence, blackness must analyse itself.

1.2.3 Women voices and gendered invisibility

Using intersectional Black feminist thought and Gordon's (2018, 2021) theory of gendered invisibility linked to voice, especially black women voices, as a theoretical lens, this study deconstructs black women journalists' experiences in the post-apartheid newsroom such as that of *City Press.* It aims to understand how patriarchy, sexism and misogyny, the 'intersectional triple of violence' (Gqola, 2016: 120),[45] contributed to their interpellation as black women journalists and the many crises they faced in

[40] See Kamugisha, A. (2017). The Black Experience of New World Coloniality. *Small Axe*. 49. March 2017. 129-144.
[41] See More, P.M. (2008). Biko: Africana Existential Philosopher. In *Biko Lives!: Contestations and Conversations*, edited by Amanda Alexander, Nigel Gibson, and Andile Mngxitama. New York: Palgrave, 2008. Pp. 45 – 68.
[42] Ibid, p.50.
[43] See Gordon, L.R. (2010). Theory in Black: Teleological Suspensions in Philosophy of Culture. *Qui Parle*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 193-214.
[44] Ibid, p. 197-198.
[45] See Gqola, P.D. (2016). A peculiar place for a feminist? The New South African woman, *TrueLove* magazine and

male-dominated and patriarchal post-apartheid newsrooms. Black women journalists share their defining moments in their careers as women journalists, not only in the post-apartheid newsroom but also their encounters with newsmakers. This study makes use of the interview data from former black women senior journalists and editors at *City Press* and narratives of black women journalists from other media houses to discuss issues of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny as experienced by them in the post-apartheid newsroom. By exploring the experiences of black women journalists and the subjection of their voices in a post-apartheid newsroom, this thesis wishes to present an oppositional discourse to patriarchy, sexism and misogyny by making their voices more visible as opposed to what is designed to make them invisible. This is important because, as Bennet argues, 'to understand the intersecting vectors of racism and misogyny under current capitalist interests, access to knowledges of women's experiences in the past is crucial" (2000: 4).[46] The study's focus is on the way the black women journalists theorise their experiences and the extent to which their voices provide oppositional discourses to patriarchy, sexism and misogyny. These black women journalists write and speak about their location(s) and subjectivity in the various places they go through in the course of their duties as women journalists.

I argue here that it is no accident that black women journalistic voices have deliberately been marginalised and discriminated against from the unconsecrated spaces that post-apartheid newsrooms have become. In the writings of women literature, dating as far back as Anna Julia Cooper's *A Voice from the South* (1892/1988)[47] in the US context and as far as the writings by Charlotte Maxeke and Nontsizi Mgqwetho in the 1920s (Masola, 2018)[48] in the South African context, there is a thoroughgoing theme of 'silence in voice' and a deep longing for 'having or gaining a voice'. This is so, as Gordon (2022) has pointed out, the history of political exclusion makes having a voice a central part of women's writings[49]. According to bell hooks (1989), Audre Lorde, in her poem "A Litany for Survival" also addressed the issue of silencing of women's voices, urging 'especially black women to break silences by speaking out'.[50] It must be stated that the women voices are visible but are rendered invisible by forces of coloniality working in tandem with patriarchy, sexism and misogyny, which continue to retroactively delegitimise black women journalists' voices in post-apartheid South African newsroom. This thesis advocates that it is imperative that voices of black women journalists 'must be uttered and to which we must listen' (Louis Gates, Jr, 1998).[51] It has been argued that to be a black woman, 'is to be at the bottom of the racial/gender hierarchy" (Gordon, 2000: 130). This thesis asks, if we take seriously the idea that black voices are raced, gendered and sexualised, then, what would be the status

Lebo(gang) Mashile, *Safund*i, 17:2, 119-136.

[46] See Bennett, J. (200)0. "Introduction: The Politics of Writing." Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity 46: 3–12.

[47] See Cooper, A.J. (1892/1988). *A Voice From The South*. Oxford University Press: New York

[48] See Masola, A. (2018). The Politics of the 1920s Black Press: Charlotte Maxeke and Nontsizi Mgqwetho's Critique of Congress, *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies - Multi-, Inter- and Transdisciplinarity*, 13:2, 59-76.

[49] Gordon, L.R. (2022). *Fear of Black Consciousness*. Penguin Books.

[50] See hooks, b. (1989). *Talking Back, Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. New York: Apex CoVantage, LLC.

[51] See Gates, Jr., L.B. (1998). Preface. Anna Julia Cooper's *A Voice from the South*. Oxford University Press: New York.

of black women journalists' voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom considering that their locus of enunciation emerges at the bottom of the racial and gender hierarchy? What happens to their voices if the "antiblack world throws blacks/women into the nonrealm of the existential"? (Ibid, p.132)

Louis Gates, Jr maintains that Cooper argued that neither the white nor black male voice (including myself) could fully comprehend and reproduce the women's voice constant dialectic struggle for meaning. Writing in the context of Black Consciousness Movement (BCM)[52] in South African, Pumla Dineo Gqola (2001) argues that despite the efforts of Black Consciousness (BC) to unite all black South Africans, the philosophy 'prioritized and gave voice to a specific Black experience of oppression' (p.135).[53] Gqola maintains that BC did not accommodate the experiences of gender, class, age, geographical location and sexual orientation as these categories 'were not perceived as consequential enough to warrant inclusion into the discourse of the doctrine' (Ibid, p.136).[54] Likewise at *City Press*, the concerns of black male journalists could not act a mirror for the voices of black women journalists. Thus, the focus on black women journalists' voices is an attempt to bridge the 'physical and existential gulf' (Ibid, p.134)[55] that exists between black male voices and black women's voices. It became essential to include the perspectives, presence, voices, ideas and experiences of black women journalists because 'gender is essentially limited and limiting to all of us' (Jayawardane, 2018 cited in Khan, 2018: 110).[56] While black women journalists engage in speech, this thesis argues that when they are seen as agentic speakers in a post-apartheid newsroom, their 'illicit appearance' (Gordon,)[57] tends to eclipse the content of what they are saying.

1.2.4 EFF's (mis)guided black rage towards media

The focus of this theme is on the nexus between voice and politics, which will be examined in this thesis through the concept of Black rage. It begins with the meditation on the 'necessity of rage for advancing decolonisation' (Canham, 2018: 319).[58] Cornel West (2001) defines Black rage as an 'intense love for one's race'.[59] Following Marcus Garvey (1922), this thesis contends that political voice is indispensable

[52] The Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) was not a political formation but a grassroots anti-apartheid activist civic movement established in South Africa in the mid-1960s after the banning of political movements such as the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) following the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960.
[53] Gqola, P.D. (2001). Contradictory Locations: Blackwomen and the Discourse of Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in South Africa. *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism.* 2001, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 130-152.
[54] Ibid, p.136
[55] Ibid, p.134
[56] See Khan, S. (2018). "Thinking Through, Talking Back: Creative Theorisation as Sites of Praxis-Theory" – A creative dialogue between Sharlene Khan, Pumla Dineo Gqola, Yvette Abrahams, Neelika Jayawardane and Betty Govinden,. *Agenda*. 32:3, 109-118.
[57] See Gordon, L.R. (2021). *Freedom, Justice, and Decolonization*. New York: Routledge, 2021.
[58] See Canham, H. (2018). Theorising community rage for decolonial action. *South African Journal of Psychology* 2018, Vol. 48(3) 319–330
[59] See West, C. (2001). *Race matters*. Boston, MA: Beacon.

to doing politics. In the context of South Africa, Black rage, as a historical category, is unimaginable without the 1976 student uprisings and the death of Steve Biko in 1977 at the hands of apartheid police. Rage, in other words, is foundational to South African blackness. Canham posits that rage is under-theorised in South Africa and argues that this is a 'remarkable oversight since we have gained infamy as the world's epicentre of protest action' (Canham, 2018: 319). For the purposes of this study, I do a decolonial reading of Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)[60] protests in relation to rage and how the party worked with it and the implications of this for black women and women journalists. First, I scrutinise how the EFF has worked with "narcissistic rage" or what I call "misguided black rage" to harass and violently attack journalists, in particular women journalists, when doing their work (*Mail & Guardian*, 2018; Boswell, 2020; *News24*, 2021).[61] Second, I problematise how the party's hate for white monopoly capital was used as a form of showing 'decolonial love' or what I call here "potentiated Black rage" to black women natural black hair was racially discriminated against when thousands of EFF members marched to Clicks stores countrywide in 2020 (News24, 2020).[62]

To do so, I revisit the writings of philosophers and political theorists such as Biko and Fanon, among others, to illuminate what it means to speak politically and ask what are the requirements for being heard. Gordon (2008, 2018, 2021) insists that one cannot be a member of polity or be in a political society without voice or speech. For Fanon, 'to speak … means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of civilisation' (1967: 8).[63] In apartheid South Africa, as in the Euromodern world, political speech became essentialised and racialised. Biko creatively used political speeches in his column *Frank Talk*, more than Biko's *nom de plume*, as a revolutionary weapon to counter the racialised nature of political speech that isolated black people from the body polity. According to Chevannes, 'Frank Talk was, by all appearance, a political project on voicing the conditions - materially, ontologically and epistemologically - of Blacks' (2019: 12). He argues that when political speech becomes 'isolated and quarantined; it is secluded from the common interest of the people - it stands as expressing and privileging the will of a few. Such an isolation validates listening to some people while silencing others' (Ibid, p.128).[64] Here I interrogate whether the EFF 'isolates and quarantines' press freedom by listening to some media houses and silencing others. This thesis, therefore, argues that the EFF and rage are entangled in the complex and tragic narrative of a party sucked of the emancipatory potential of rage by its increasingly violent and misogynistic tendencies towards black women journalists.

[60] The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) is a political party in South Africa founded in July 2013 by the former leader of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) Julius Malema. The party is the third largest opposition party after the ANC and the DA. It is a left-leaning radical black voice which has been described by some critics as populist, fascist and racial nationalist.

[61] See *Mail & Guardian*. Shivambu apologises for scuffle with journalist. 20 March 2018; See Boswell, B. (2020). EFF on a collision course with black women. *Mail & Guardian*. 10 September 2020; See *New24*. Sanef condemns alleged harassment of eNCA reporters at EFF protests. 10 June 2021.

[62] See *News24*. Clicks bows to EFF's demands after racist advert. 10 September 2020.

[63] See Fanon, F. (1967 [1952]) *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles L. Markmann. New York: Grove Press.

[64] Ibid, p.128

1.3 Research Question and Aim

How mediated, politicised, racialised and gendered is the notion of 'black voices' in the post-1994 South Africa media era and what does its intersection with coloniality signify for a 'distinctly African' newspaper like *City Press*?

In order to answer the main research question, the subsidiary research questions apply:

1. How can a black voice, which is circumscribed by experiences of voice invisibility and dislocation in language, become a tool of enunciation in post-1994 South Africa media?
2. How systematic and systemic is the marginalisation and erasure of black women's voices in the post-1994 South African media era?
3. What kinds of lived experiences and forms of black subjection emerge out of a post-apartheid South African newsroom?
4. What colonial practices still persist in institutions of power such as the media, especially at *City Press*?
5. What political conditions exists in South Africa for the entanglement or intersection of blackness, rage and political speech in the case of EFF?

The primary thrust of this study is to conduct a close decolonial reading of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-1994 South African media and public sphere with specific reference to *City Press*. The study also considers the different kinds of black subjectivities that are offered in the South African mainstream media using the *City Press* newspaper as an example. Important as 'black perspectives' are to newspaper discourse, this study argues that they need not be treated as 'timeless truths', as Fanon states at the beginning of *Black Skin, White Masks,* or as the product of a 'consciousness illuminated with ultimate radiances' (1967a:7).[65]

I also look at the problem of voicelessness through the forms of gendered and racialised invisibility posed by silenced black women journalists at *City Press* and other media houses. The problem of voice invisibility is unique to women because even when they speak, they are not heard (Gordon, 2018)[66]. Therefore, this study seeks to shift the theoretical and literature terrain from the attention given to 'women voices' and advocates for the act of listening to women's voices because, as Dobson says, "the refusal to listen [to women voices] is itself an exercise of power" (2014: 40 cited in Garman, 2019)[67].

[65] See Fanon, F. 1967a. *Black Skin, White Masks*. trans. Charles Lamm Markman (New York: Grove Press, 1967a).
[66] See Gordon, L.R. (2018). Four Kinds of Invisibility from Modernity. A talk given at the Department of Philosophy, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, University of Georgia. United States. 10 December 2018 (Accessed through the web)
[67] See Garman, A. (2019). The public sphere and journalism. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia: Communication*.

Another important aspect of this work is the question of the intersection or entanglement of blackness, rage and political speech as epitomised in the political figure of EFF. The study is interested in how the EFF employed rage in post-apartheid South Africa through protests and the implications of this for black women and black women journalists. In colonial and apartheid South Africa, rage and political speech emerged from those groups of people who were under the weight of subjection and who were denied their voice. Political speech and rage, then, are at the heart of what means to be political and actionable and serves as "product[s] to be circulated and exchanged in the free marketplace of ideas" (Lacey, 2013: 169).[68]

Here I also critically interrogate the lived experiences of black journalists in the South African mainstream newsroom within the contexts of their work. The focus is also on my *own* lived experience having previously worked as a journalist in various South African neoliberal newsrooms. Lived experiences of black journalists in the neoliberal newsroom are considered in this study beyond the simplified gesture of just telling or narrating black experiences but as an ever-evolving method of black people theorising about their own experiences. Finally, the study also aims to conduct a critique of the theory of decoloniality and argues strongly that decoloniality needs decolonisation. A critique of decolonial and coloniality movements is offered in this study from anti-colonialist theories and perspectives. Another significant aspect of this study is that it aims to bring to the fore the ideas and thoughts of Biko's BC philosophy and other ideas from thinkers mainly from the Black intellectual tradition. Overall, the study seeks to demonstrate how colonial practices, such as the denial of voice and political speech, continue in institutions of power such as the media.

1.4 Rationale

The most fundamental reason for undertaking this study is that the examination of 'voice' through the writings of political theorists and philosophers is crucial, especially in terms of the racialised and engendered nature of the problem of voicelessness and the intersection between voice and political speech. I argue that the gendered and racialised voice invisibilities posed by silenced voices are important foci (Gordon, 2018). The possible pathways on how black women journalists' voices are silenced and rendered both voiceless and invisible by misogynistic and patriarchal systems in the *City Press* newsroom and the EFF will be elucidated in the thesis. The thesis should enable a greater understanding of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-1994 South African mainstream media and public sphere in an unfolding radical democracy within the media. This study argues that there was a greater need for a group of six black journalists at *City Press* newspaper in 2013 to invoke the issue of 'black perspectives' in that formerly 'distinctly African' newspaper that caters largely for a

[68] See Lacey, K. (2013). *Listening Publics*, Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

black readership. Research on the kinds of black subjectivities that are offered by the *City Press* newspaper and the problem of voicelessness experienced by some journalists in that newspaper cannot be emphasised enough (Sithole, 2016).[69] It was important to clarify the issue of 'black perspectives' from the perspectives of journalists themselves and get a nuanced picture on how black voices are subjected in the South African post-apartheid newsroom that is still divided along racial lines. One of the significant reasons for undertaking the research is to make a theoretical contribution to the theory of decoloniality. The rationale for the critique of decoloniality as a framework of thought was to contribute to its development by bringing ideas from BC and Africana thought. Furthermore, the rationale for using BC and Africana thought as the theoretical and philosophical lens throughout this research aims to highlight the intellectual contribution of Steve Biko and Frantz Fanon, to mention just a few, to decolonial thought. This study argues that the theory of decoloniality itself needs decolonisation. To date, the theory of decoloniality has, according to Gordon (2018), 'followed a poststructuralist genealogy forgetting that its genealogy is African thought'. Chiumbu (2016)[70] argues that there appears to be a deficit in the decolonial analysis of the media in post-1994 South Africa. It is that deficit that this thesis aims to fill and to contribute something new to the development of the theory of decoloniality and its concepts in an attempt to doing decolonial theory rather than talking about decolonial theorists. This thesis presented me with an opportunity to take responsibility for a critique of decolonial theory, a commitment to reason that Frantz Fanon, according to Gordon (1995), exhibited throughout his intellectual and revolutionary life. The other reason for carrying out this study is personal. The complicated matter, of course, is that research appears also through comprehension and understanding of lived experience. The rationale for theorising and reflecting about my lived experience is to demonstrate that black people do not live only to tell about their experiences but also have the ability and potential to figure out and thereby theorise critically about their experiences. What could be a better way of 'finding your voice' or of 'gaining your voice' than using lived experience as a transcendental condition for meaningful life? The rationale behind lived experience is to challenge the reductive conceptions of black experience by many scholars in the humanities by bringing into the picture existential and transcendental dimensions of lived experience. Gordon (2011: 54) observes that 'dominated groups abrogate responsibility for the theoretical models by which their experience is understood at their peril'. Rethinking what lived experience of the Black subject has to be interrogated and be looked at in different terms.

[69] See Sithole, T. (2016). The Concept of the Black Subject in Fanon. *Journal of Black Studies*. SAGE. 2016, Vol. 47(1) 24–40

[70] See Chiumbu, S. (2016). Media, Race and Capital: A Decolonial Analysis of Representation of Miners' Strikes in South Africa, *African Studies*, 75:3, 417-435

1.5 Mapping out the theoretical terrain

This thesis engages in a relational reading of the theory of decoloniality together with Black Consciousness (BC) philosophy in order to shed some light on the subjection and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom. Relationality does not mean simply to include BC ideas and concepts into the theory of decoloniality but also means doing a critique of decoloniality and its theoretical entailments. According to Walsh and Mignolo, relationality means there is no 'one way to do and conceive decoloniality' (Walsh and Mignolo, 2018: 1).[71] The body of theory or knowledge on decoloniality is expansive and covers coloniality in all its forms, and reflections on it continue to be discussed among artists and journalists. Why decoloniality now while there is 'a rich history of theorising decolonisation in African and African diasporic thought' (Gordon, 2021: 30)? According to Walsh (2018), decoloniality has a history, *herstory*, and praxis of more than 500 years. In Africa and African diaspora, decoloniality thought has its genealogy in a long list of influential thinkers, for example, Kwame Nkrumah (1962),[72] Frantz Fanon (1952), Steve Biko (1978), Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986)[73] and Gordon (2008).[74] However, it is the Latin American line that, as Gordon has pointed out, has 'become hegemonic in the academy' (2021: 30). Just over the past 20 years, there has been a resurgence of Latin American-inspired decoloniality and it currently informs much of the recent critical discussions on decoloniality. Enrique Dussel (1977/1996)[75] reflected on the concept of the 'underside of modernity'. Aníbal Quijano (1991, 2000)[76] introduced and reflected on the coloniality of power. Walter Mignolo (1995, 2000, 2011)[77] illuminated modernity as coloniality's 'darker side' and brought to the fore the coloniality of knowledge. Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007)[78] meditated on the coloniality of being. Catherine Walsh (2018) advocated for 'decoloniality for'.[79]

[71] See Walsh, C. and Mignolo, W. (2018). *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics and Praxis*. Duke University Press: US.
[72] See Nkrumah, K. (1962). *Towards Colonial Freedom: Africa in the War against Imperialism* (London: Heinemann)
[73] See wa Thiong'o, N. (1986). *Decolonising the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature*. (Nairobi, Kenya: Heinemann).
[74] See Gordon, L.R. (2008). *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
[75] See Dussel, E. (1996). *The Underside of Modernity: Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty, Taylor, and the Philosophy of Liberation*, trans Eduardo Mendieta. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities International Press.
[76] See Quijano, A. (1991). Coloniality and modernity /rationality. *Indigenous Peru*, 13(29): 11–20; See also Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of power and social classification. *Journal of World-Systems Research*, VI(2): 342–386.
[77] See Mignolo, W. (1995). *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization*. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press; See also Mignolo, W. (2000). *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. Ceeton: Princeton University Press; See also Mignolo, W. (2011). *The darker side of western modernity. Global futures, decolonial options*. Durham & London: Duke University Press
[78] See Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). *On the coloniality of being. Cultural Studies* 21(2–3): 240–270.
[79] See Walsh, C. (2018). "Decolonial for: Resurgences, Shifts, and Movements". In Catherine Walsh and Walter Mignolo. (2018*). On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*. Durham : Duke University Press. pp. 15-32.

BC and decolonial thought 'thinking in conviviality'

Theoretically, the guiding principle of this thesis - with no disrespect to decolonial thought and its important contributions to African intellectual thought - is that the proper response to coloniality[80] is to follow the lead of our ancestors, 'transcending rather than dismantling Western ideas' (Gordon and Gordon, 2006)[81] through building our own tools of thought. Decolonial thought 'belongs to us all since it is that without which we could not build our own thought' (Ibid, p.)[82]. When new ways of thinking are built, the hegemony of Western ideas will cease to maintain its imperial status (Ibid)[83] over us. A critique of decoloniality is offered in this study as a framework of thought together-and-in conversation with the thoughts and ideas of others or what Mignolo (2018) has referred to as 'thinking in conviviality,' not in competition. This, therefore, means that decoloniality and BC will 'depart from different genealogies, trajectories and would chart their modes of questioning in different decolonial horizons' (Sithole, 2014)[84]. The critique of decoloniality departs from the affirmed position that the theory of decoloniality needs decolonisation. I argue that decoloniality as a theory needs interrogation like any other mode of thought. In this study, the critique of decoloniality is informed by the view that should decolonial scholars abrogate responsibility to critique decolonial theory and its epistemological standpoint that informs production of knowledge, then the very decolonisation project would be undermined (L Gordon and J Gordon, 2006). They call this consequence *epistemological colonization* (Ibid).

1.6 Methodological considerations

This is a qualitative humanistic research work which encompasses the embedding together of methodological concepts. The concepts, as outlined in Chapter 3 of this study, will be operationalised in order to bring light to the complex and contradictory nature of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media, specifically at *City Press*. First, this study deploys a qualitative humanistic methodological framework in conducting the decolonial analysis of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media landscape using *City Press* as an example. A qualitative humanistic methodological framework affirms the humanity of black people in a way that would lead

[80] While the concept of coloniality was coined by Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano, it has since been expanded on by many decolonial scholars. Coloniality refers to "long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day". (see Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 243).

[81] See Gordon, L.R. and Gordon, J.A. (2006). "NOT ONLY THE MASTER'S TOOLS: African-American Studies in Theory and Practice. Routledge: London and New York.

[82] Ibid, p. ix

[83] Ibid, p. xi

[84] See Sithole, T. (2014). Achille Mbembe: Subject, Subjection and Subjectivity. UNISA Institutional Repository.

to research questions that places issues such as agency, freedom and reason at the centre of inquiry involving the study of black people. As Anna Jane Gordon (2006) has remarked that qualitative humanistic work,

> 'grasps as fully as possible what it means to be a human being. It does not recoil from the immensity of the task or retreat into methods behind which their genuine commitments may be hidden. It refutes bitingly the claim that to introduce substantive commitments [to humanity, agency, freedom and reason] is to open scientific research to fierce battles that promise never to be resolved' (2006: 301)[85] (addition my own)

The humanistic methodological framework follows the groundbreaking methodological work undertaken by W.E.B. Du Bois in 1898 in '*The Study of Negro Problems*'. Second, the interview method, which comprises a reflective commentary, was employed to interview a sample of journalists at *City Press* to enable the drawing together of reflections between Haffajee and the group of black journalists on the meaning of media transformation at *City Press*. However, I encountered dilemmas in obtaining the ethical clearance for this study since the management at *City Press* and the group of black journalists involved in the 2013 fracas did not grant me permission to conduct the interviews. It must be stated, however, that the management at *City Press* and the group of black journalists are aware of this study. Eventually, the ethical clearance certificate was issued by the university (See Appendices A). Of all the journalists that were involved in the 2013 *City Press's* fracas, it was only Haffajee who participated in the study. In addition to Haffajee's interview, the study relies on accounts of events narrated by the group of black journalists through various newspaper data. The other set of interviews were conducted with black women journalists and former black women journalists at *City Press* to get a picture on how their embodied voices were subjected at *City Press*. The interviews were conducted through specific questionnaires (See Appendices B & C). In addition to these interviews, the study also draws on the experiences of other black women journalists in other media houses by making use of newspaper data containing accounts of particular events to reflect on how EFF deployed its misguided black rage to mistreat black women journalists using abuse, harassment, sexism and misogyny. Third, through the method of autoethnography, I seek to tell my own lived experience in the post-apartheid South African newsroom and theorise it in relation to my thoughts and the thoughts of others who have undergone similar experiences in the wake of coloniality and whiteness.

This multi-pronged conceptual and methodological approach combined with discourse analysis has been used primarily to understand the ideological workings in the tensions at *City Press* between Haffajee

[85] See Gordon, J.A. (2006). "Some Reflections on Challenges Posed to Social Science Method by the Study of Race". In *A Companion to African-American Studies*, edited with an introduction by Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

and the group of black journalists over the future direction of that newspaper. The embedding of the methodological and conceptual approaches used in this study enabled them to engage in a 'nagging dialectic, urging on the possibility of greater freedom, the possibility of a richer human existence, never resting on one moment' (Ibid).[86] However, this study is alive to the fact that qualitative research has traditionally functioned as a tool of colonial oppression, producing black people, particularly Indigenous peoples as objects of inquiry (Nanemeka, 2003).[87] To avoid reproducing this pattern of colonial domination, this thesis, through deploying a humanistic methodological framework, seeks to 'put a human face to what is called a body of knowledge and in the process unmasks the presumably faceless body' (Kovach, 2009).[88] For Kovach, a humanistic approach takes seriously the transformation potential and human agency of people being studied (Ibid).[89] The humanistic methodological framework advanced in this study aims to centre black epistemologies and worldviews, which are typically delegitimised in the Western methodological frameworks. An example of such negation can be found in conventional methods such as interviews that treat the researcher as the knower and the participant as an object of study. Black psychologist Chabani Manganyi argues that although method is 'not duly enshrined, it is considered to the extent that it may lead to a better understanding of a human person' (1973: 38).[90] Decolonising methodologies (Smith (1999)[91], combat methodologies (Mafeje, 2000)[92] and methodologies of the oppressed (Sandoval, 2000)[93] question methods that turn away from *reality*. For Mafeje, combat methodology 'create space for the emergence of new styles of thinking.' (Mafeje 2001b: 55-6).[94]

1.7 Positionality: Locating the self

> Who we are and from where we speak is highly relevant for the intellectual projects we are likely to pursue … [they] influence the research questions we deem to be interesting, the projects we judge to be important, the scholars we chose we read and to cite, and the metaphors we use to describe the phenomena we observe (Moya, 2011: 79,81)[95]

That I am a black (specifically African) person 'doing theoretical work, however, makes the ascription

[86] Ibid, p.301
[87] See Nanemeka, O. (2003). "Nego-Feminism: "Theorizing, Practicing, and Pruning Africa's Way," *Signs* 29, no. 2: 363.
[88] See Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
[89] Ibid
[90] See Manganyi, C.N. (1973). *Being black in the world*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Raven Press.
[91] See Smith, L.T. (1999/ 2008). *Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples*. London: Zed.
[92] See Mafeje, A. (2000). Africanity: a combative ontology. *CODESRIA Bulletin*, (1): 66-71.
[93] See Sandoval, C. (2000). *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis: Univ. Minn. Press.
[94] See Mafeje, A. (2001b). *Anthropology in post-independence Africa: end of an era or the problem self-redefinition*. Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Foundation.
[95] See Moya, P.M.L. (2011). Who We Are and From Where We Speak. *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1(2)

of blackness unavoidable because of the context: I, and many others like me, do something that, under an interpretation of theory that was unfortunately held by a good number of giants of modern thought, we should not be able to do' (Gordon, 2010: 196).[96] Such contextual basis for blackness is highly relevant not only as an identity marker but also to highlight the relevance of blackness for the intellectual projects we are likely to pursue (Moya, 2011). Fanon argues that under colonialism there was a 'furious determination to deny other [black] people all attributes of humanity' (1963: 249) (addition my own), including the denial of the human attribute of thinking and reasoning. This systematic negation of black people at the level of epistemology often leads to different kinds of black thoughts, which are premised on raising fundamentally 'ironic self-reflective and metatheoretical questions' (Gordon, 2000: 3). One of those is, *Who am I*? Gordon (2000) argues although this philosophical anthropological question raises identity questions (as in who are black African people?); it also leads to what he calls a teleological question: 'For what ought such people be striving?' (Gordon, 2000: 4). I argue in this thesis that questions of identity at the level of ontology are insufficient in dealing with an intellectual project like this study. However, metatheoretical identity questions are likely to influence 'the research questions we deem to be interesting, the projects we judge to be important, the scholars we choose to read and cite, and the metaphors we use to describe the phenomena we observe' (Moya, 2011: 79,81). Therefore, metatheoretical identity and teleological concerns such as 'What is Africana thought and what should be its methodology? (Gordon, 2000: 4) became part of the struggle as I tried to locate myself within Africana thought and answer the question for what I ought to be striving for.

I intentionally use the word 'locate' instead of 'position' because of the complexities of positionality in black studies that take seriously the idea of the fluidity of blackness. The idea of 'fluidity' placed alongside the idea of 'blackness' makes it difficult to achieve positionality between 'the fact of blackness' and the 'lived experience of the black man' as Fred Moten (cited in Raengo, 2014: 9)[97] has argued. Fluid blackness, therefore, traverses the space unaccounted for between the fact of blackness and the lived black experience and 'there is no subject position or object that can fill it and no positive ontology that can ground it. For us, this is the space that needs attention. Our hope is not only to understand more subtly what blackness does, licenses, facilitates or absorbs in our contemporary culture, but to leverage this gap as it affords new possibilities for *both* experience and expression' (Raengo, 2014: 8) (emphasis original). Webber (2012) argues that Fanon's 'intricately coded subjective positions' in *Black Skin, White Masks* 'open up a *space* in which this [new] humanism can unfurl' (2012: 1)[98] (emphasis original). This paradox of a positionless positionality rather points out to the fluid nature of our positionalities regarding any subject matter or phenomenon from time to time. My intellectual and

[96] See Gordon, L.R. (2010). Theory in Black: Teleological Suspensions in Philosophy of Culture. *Qui Parle* , Vol. 18, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 193-214.
[97] See Raengo, A. (2014). Blackness, aesthetics, liquidity. *liquid blackness*. April 2014. p.8
[98] See Webber, N. (2012). Subjective Elasticity, the "Zone of Nonbeing" and Fanon's New Humanism in *Black Skin, White Masks. Postcolonial Text*, Vol 7, No 4.

epistemological home is any body of thought or ideas (African, Western or otherwise) that bring to the fore 'the project of making people and their ideas at home in the world as a fundamental demand for freedom' (Gordon, 2014: 104)'. Taking a cue from Moya (2011), I have subjectively chosen the scholars I preferred to read and cite in this study. While issues of identity and location in relation to positionality (Moya, 2011) are important, I have chosen not to base my black identity as a location of thought since there is an idolising of identity and the closing-off of identity as a possibility. I prefer to see identities as relationships and not as standpoints because 'one can be morphologically black politically and socially and still be existentially white' (Ibid, p.103)[99]. Although the location from where we speak is crucial in positioning our thoughts in the 'geopolitics of knowledge' (Mignolo, 2009), I refuse to be constrained by it because a location 'need not be a formal domicile. It could also be symbolic and epistemological' (Gordon, 2014: 104). Finally, I must spell out from the outset that I do not have an uncritical affection for decolonial thought, Black Consciousness (BC) philosophy or Africana thought. I am not a decolonial thought nationalist or a BC nationalist. It is also vital to make clear that my intention in this study is not to take the position of a researcher who intends to 'give a voice to the voiceless' because the human subjects being studied here have agency, and therefore, have a voice.

Conclusion

This chapter has been largely introductory, explanatory and foundational. It has located the background to the study and provided justificatory reasons why the problems of 'voice' and 'invisibility' are important foci. The chapter has also elucidated the four analytical theses which form an integral part of this research and how those themes are connected to black voices in the post-apartheid South African mainstream media and public sphere. This chapter has also outlined the aims of the study and has highlighted the most significance and fundamental reasons for undertaking the work. It has also mapped out the main thinking underpinning the study. Finally, the chapter has provided notes on some of the theoretical and methodological considerations informing this work, including the centring of the black subject as a knowledge producing subject and not the object or the problem of the study. This thesis will build on this chapter, starting with the review of the relevant literature.

[99] Ibid, p.103

Chapter 2

The crisis of black voices and their subjection in the post-apartheid South African media

This chapter presents a review of the relevant literature that informs this study. More fundamentally, the essence of this literature review is to locate and frame conceptually and discursively the debates and discussions centred around the articulation and mediation of black voices in the post-1994 South African media with specific reference to the *City Press* newspaper. The scholarly debates explicated here are generally linked to what media theorist Couldry (2008) aptly describes as the 'crisis of voice'[100] prevalent in contemporary institutions of power such as the media. This literature review is organised thematically in such a way that it also delineates the major themes that underpin this study, namely, (1) black perspectives in the post-apartheid South African newsroom; (2) lived experiences of black journalists (and mine) in a post-apartheid South African newsroom; (3) black women journalists' voices under the weight of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny; and (4) the intersection of voice and political speech in the case of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF).[101]

2.1 The media and the 'crisis of voice'

The reflection on the articulation and mediation of black voices in the post-1994 South African media came to the fore again in 2011. I argued then that we needed to pay attention to black journalistic voices that 'blew in the wind' in the South African post-apartheid newsroom (*The Media Online*, 2011).[102] I argued, then, that there was an increasing consolidation of white voices in some of the country's major newspapers despite of the fact black editors were predominantly in charge (Ibid). There has been scholarly attention given on the need for the post-apartheid media in South Africa to adopt a different ethical and normative framework that gives voice to silenced and marginalised voices (Mgibisa, 2005; Malila, 2014; Chiumbu, 2016; Garman and Malila 2016)[103] and work that analyses and discusses the

[100] See Couldry, N. (2008). "Media and the problem of voice." In: Carpentier, Nico and de Cleen, Benjamin, (eds.) *Participation and media production: critical reflections on content creation*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle, pp. 15-26.

[101] The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) is a South African left-wing to far-left pan-Africanist and Marxist–Leninist political party. It was founded by expelled former African National Congress Youth League President Julius Malema, and his allies, in 2013.

[102] See Mgibisa, M. 2011. Black journalists' voices blowing in the wind? *The Media Online*. 14 September 2011.

[103] See Mgibisa, M. 2005. It's the community in community radio. *Rhodes Journalism Review* 25, November 2005 47; See Malila, V. (2014). The voiceless generation – (non-) representations of young citizens in the coverage of education stories by South African newspapers. *Communicare* Volume 33 (1) July 2014. 21-34; See Chiumbu, S. (2016). Media, Race and Capital: A Decolonial Analysis of Representation of Miners' Strikes in South Africa, *African Studies*, 75:3, 417-435; and also see Garman, A. and Malila, V. (2017). Listening and the ambiguities of voice in South African journalism. *South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*. Volume 43.

trends in representation of women's voices in the South African media over time (Daniels and Skinner, 2022).[104] However, as Couldry has argued elsewhere, there is a 'crisis of voice' affecting many aspects of our contemporary life and 'media institutions are no less implicated in this crisis of voice than political or economic [and cultural] institutions' (2008: 1; addition my own). Although it is not a constitutional requirement, media organisations in South Africa are generally expected to offer voice to the public so that members of the public can raise whatever issues that affect them in their everyday lives. Malila (2014) states that the media in South Africa has always held a 'strong perception' of its role as the 'voice of the voiceless.' In this sense, these powerful media institutions 'embody voice' at some level and if citizens are to have any legitimate voice, then, the 'impending crisis of voice should affect our priorities for media research in the next decade' (Couldry 2008: 2). This embodiment of voice by the media places the media as an institution that acts as the 'voice of the people' (Garman and Malila, 2017). As this study will demonstrate in Chapters 5 and 7 respectively of this study, the 'embodiment of voice' by media organisations such as *City Press* is problematic since it simultaneously offers a voice but also the systematic subjection of black voices through various forms of silencing, invisibility and marginalisation. So, the 'crisis of voice' as formulated by Couldry (2010), manifests itself in the denial and marginalisation of silenced voices. This simultaneous invocation and withdrawal of voice, which Couldry (2008) describes as a 'deficit,' is not only experienced at *City Press,* but also in all aspects of political, economic and cultural life.

2.1.2 Mediation and subjection of black voices in the media

This thesis argues that the articulation and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media such as *City Press* needs closer scrutiny because 'media have, for much of their history and in most places, been *channels for voice,* indeed for extending the range of voices that can be heard, even as media institutions have themselves relied on a historically entrenched concentration of the symbolic resources through which voices can be heard' (Couldry 2008: 9; emphasis added). I argue that if we accept Couldry's argument that the media faces a crisis of voice, then media institutions in South Africa are implicated in this crisis of voice. Various scholars have also placed a demand on the post-apartheid South African media to open up spaces for the emergence of 'new voices' (Louw and Milton, 2012; Wasserman, 2017).[105] They argue that opening up of spaces within the media to other voices deepens the diversity and plurality of voices and promotes the inclusivity of marginalised and silenced voices. Radicalised, media diversity, according to Garman, can unsettle the media and public sphere's powerful

[104] See Daniels, G. and Skinner, K. (2022). Reflections: Re-imagining Journalism for a Feminist Future. In *Women Journalists in South Africa: Democracy in the Age of Social Media* (pp. 143-155). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

[105] See Wasserman, H. (2017). South Africa's media should beware of being the voice of only some. *The Conversation*. October 19, 2017; See Louw, P.E and Milton, V.C. (2012). *New voices over the air: The transformation of the South African Broadcasting Corporation in a changing South Africa*. Hampton Press: New York.

reliance on a particular form of 'rational-critical modus operandi with its powerful adherence to logos (the argument, the statement) over ethos (the person/positionality from which the statement comes)' (2018: 2).[106] Therefore, it would be strange if the silenced voices do not, at the least, reflect on the 'person/positionality' from which the hegemonic voices come from in the post-apartheid newsroom. This was certainly the case when a group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 raised concerns about the appointment of white editors in that paper's news desk, and subsequent to that, also complained about the paper's lack of 'black perspectives' (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013)[107] in the coverage of politics. I argue in Chapter 5 of this thesis, black voices at *City Press* are interrogated as agential voices capable of defining their own subjectivity. The decolonial analysis of black voices at *City Press* seeks to respond to Couldry's call that the media's offer of voice should be the one that needs to be 'problematised in analysing contemporary media' (2008: 9). It is in the acknowledgement of this crisis of voice that should re-orient our research in the Global South into how the media, through its internal processes, enables the systematic marginalisation and withdrawal of silenced voices. The marginalisation of women voices is an ongoing challenge in the post-apartheid South African media. The agenda-setting power of the media needs to be assessed more clearly because of the 'media's own privileged position in the distribution of social power' (Couldry, 2005: 65)[108] within the newsroom.

2.1.3 A Bikonian and Fanonian perspective on voice

There is a historical connection between Black Consciousness (BC) and the voice of the oppressed in South Africa. Biko became the best-known voice of BC, and consequently used Black existentialism to express his views and to critique white domination (More, 2004).[109] Likewise, the black journalists at *City Press* expressed their views on the appointment of two white news editors at that paper in 2013 (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013) and critiqued the whiteness of the news desk. This thesis argues that Biko's voice offered a counter-narrative to Euromodernity's idea of black people as having no point of view. Biko highlighted that the suppression of voice cannot be separated from black experience. For Biko, the theorising of black experience through the white voice was problematic in so far as it merely served to silence the voice of the oppressed. Gibson argues that a central thesis of Fanonian practice is 'having one's ears open to voices and the thinking that came from unexpected spaces' (2011: 6),[110] in particular, from silenced voices of black women in the media. It is argued here that silenced voices of black women transgresses the boundaries set by the male voices shifting the geography of speaking in an ongoing

[106] See Garman, A. (2018). Anger, pain, the body and power: a rethink of logos-based rationality and voice in the South African public sphere. ICA Conference, Prague.
[107] See Sapa. (2013). *City Press* editor takes leave amid racism furore. *Mail & Guardian*. 20 October 2013.
[108] See Couldry, N. (2005). "Media Rituals. Beyond Functionalism." In Rhothenbuhler, Eric W. and Coman, Mihai (eds.) *Media Anthropology*. Sage Publications, Inc., Thousands Oaks, CA. USA. pp 56 -69.
[109] See More, P.M. (2004). *Alternation* 11,1 (2004) 79 – 108.
[110] See Gibson, N. (2011). *Fanonian practices in South Africa*. Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

commitment that necessitates what Gibson calls 'the revolution of listening' (Ibid). For Fanon, argues Gibson, 'the great challenge to those who want to engage in a liberatory praxis is to find new ways to listen to those who continue to be silenced and dehumanised but who are now gaining their voices, and to become 'faithful' to those events of self-determination when they occur' (Ibid, p.40). This requires us to explore a set of complex dynamics and relations that exist within a newsroom since black journalists' relationship to the wider space of society and culture remains problematic in a neoliberal newsroom (Couldry, 2005).[111] This thesis contends that the question of media power requires a shift in the way scholars have looked at it, mostly from the critical political economy paradigm, since 'it is here in our choices of theoretical tools that some difficult choices must be made when we consider the entanglement of today's media forms with power' (Couldry 2008: 161). In essence, delivering a voice requires more than having the media giving the public a platform to voice their opinions on the decision-making processes that affect their everyday lives. Gordon (2022) has argued that 'where black men face a similar phenomenon, the question of voices emarges for the transformation from black to Black. In his book, *Fear of Black Consciousness* (2022), Gordon provides the names of ancestors such as Biko, Garvey, King, and Malcom X who are the greated Black male exemplars who faced the greatest denial of their voices. For them, speaking out meant facing death.

2.2 Transformation debates at *City Press*

At the heart of the transformation debates at *City Press* in 2013 was the question of the appointment of two white editors in that paper and the alleged issue of the lack of 'black perspectives' in that paper's coverage of politics (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013).[112] To a group of black journalists at City Press, transformation of the media meant the appointment of black news editors on the news desk to enable the privileging of 'black perspectives.' On the other hand, to Ferial Haffajee, the then editor of *City Press*, it meant diversifying the newsroom by employing white news editors in order to push the paper's 'non-racial' and 'Afropolitan' narrative. According to Steenveld, the core debates concerning the transformation of the media in South Africa relate to the 'relationship of the media to the broader social context in which they operate' (2004: 92).[113] This thesis argues that the media operates in a non-homogenous post-apartheid South African society in which issues of class and race inform the debates on transformation. Steenveld argues that discussions of the relationship between the media and society tended to 'generally presume a homogenous society in which class is presumed to be the key axis of power (and are generally silent on issues of 'race' and gender)' (Ibid, p.101). In *City Press*, given its history of allegiance to a 'Distinctly African' black audience, the discourse of transformation invoked

[111] See Couldry, N. (2005). Media Rituals. Beyond Functionalism. In Rhothenbuhler, Eric W. and Coman, Mihai (eds.) *Media Anthropology*. Sage Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA. USA. Pp 56 -69.
[112] See *Mail & Guardian*. (2013). City Press to investigate racism claims at paper. 18 October 2013.
[113] See Steenveld, L. (2004). Transforming the media: A cultural approach, *Critical Arts*, 18:1, 92-115

issues of identity understood primarily in racial terms. The significance of these racialised discourses brings to the fore the sharp division on the meaning of transformation in the media. It is my contention that there is no common understanding on the meaning of transformation in the media and that the term is always contested depending on which poles of the debate one finds himself or herself or themselves in. What is clear is that what counts as transformation is contested. The questions about media transformation in this thesis focus on the extent to which the media promotes a sense of belonging and inclusion to silenced and marginalised voices. It also focuses on whether journalists in post-apartheid South African media such as *City Press* have the potential power to counter the institutional forces within the newsroom that seeks to tilt their voices towards a particular ideological or market-driven narrative. This in light of the fact the 'South African commercial press marginalises alternative and counter-hegemonic voices partly due to its location in the capitalist power structures' (Radebe and Chiumbu, 2022: 89).[114] According to Berger (1999),[115] the changes in the media owing to transformation brought new and previously excluded players such as blacks, not only in terms of ownership and structure, but there were also 'significant changes in personnel' (Garman, 2009).[116]

This transformational epoch in the media saw a number of black editors appointed in some of the country's major newspapers. Notably among those was Ferial Haffajee who became the first black woman editor to be at the helm of the *Mail & Guardian* and *City Press,* respectively. Drawing from a body of work on racial capitalism, Chiumbu and Radebe argue that it is important to ask whether the South African commercial media derives value in rendering blackness as a commodity wherein black voices 'get utilised, paradoxically, to further entrench whiteness and in many ways further disadvantage[s] black people' (2020: 11).[117] I argue that this is worth investigating in future research especially in settler societies such as South Africa in which issues of race, diversity, and transformation are contested in the post-apartheid newsroom against the backdrop of racial capitalism and global coloniality. Chiumbu states that media transformation in the country did not address the 'structural and systematic racialised nature of the media, power, and knowledge' (2016: 422). She argues that this has led to an emphasis on 'deracialising boardrooms and news content at the expense of overhauling structural practices that reproduce racialised power relations' (Ibid). It is argued here that the *City Press* 2013 fracas caused by the appointment of two white news editors, Nicky Gules and Natasha Joseph, in a traditionally black-oriented newspaper, speaks to the 'structural practices that reproduce racial power relations' between white and black journalists. It also expresses a desire to address the 'structural and

[114] See Radebe, M.J and Chiumbu, S.H. (2022). Frames and Marginalisation of Counter-hegemonic Voices: Media Representation of the Land Debate in South Africa, *African Journalism Studies*, 43:1, 89-106.
[115] See Berger, G. 1999. 'Towards an analysis of the South African media and transformation, 1994–99' . *Transformation* 38: 82–116.
[116] See Garman, H. 2009. Transformation in the media and teaching journalism. Panel discussion notes. 28 October 2009.
[117] See Chiumbu, S. H., and M. Radebe. (2020). "Towards a Decolonial Critical Political Economy of the Media: Some Initial Thoughts." *Communicatio* 46 (1): 1–20

racialised nature of the media, power and knowledge' wherein black voices are systematically marginalised and silenced inside the post-apartheid newsroom or are forced to see themselves through the eyes of the 'white Other.'

2.3 Critique of modernism and neoliberalism

In discussing modernity, one must always bear in mind the presupposition of modernity's only being European. Gordon argues that 'understood as a relational phenomenon' (Gordon, 2013: 68),[118] modernity could be read as referring to different epochs in our lives in terms of 'what human beings in a given region consider to be the future' (Ibid). This thesis argues that a decolonial analysis of black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom like *City Press* must take into account that 'the black' is a white construction' (Gordon, 2015: 24). According to Gordon, 'racial constructions are leeches on all manifestations of human ways of living: language, sex, labour (material and aesthetic), socialising (reciprocal recognition), consciousness' and the 'soul' (Ibid). Consequently, the Euromodernity's racial and dehumanising constructs and narratives continue to treat black people as a 'the black' (Warren, 2018)[119] - (a thing) without a voice, and subsequently, a thing with no point of view. Gordon says before the advent of slavery, colonialism and racism, our ancestors who today are called black Africans 'had no reason to think of themselves as either African or black prior to the emergence of a series of historical events that fell upon them as if out of the sky' (Gordon 2012: 2). To be black[120] also raises epistemological questions because Euromodernity presents a white voice as the universal and normative voice. Biko understood the importance of embodying agential voices when doing politics. In theologian logic, Biko remarked: 'if the white God has been doing the talking all along, at some stage the black God will have to raise *His voice* and make Himself heard over and above noises from His counterpart' (Biko 1978: 30; emphasis added). Biko realised that the danger of not speaking leads into a collapse into silence under the weight of a master's (white) voice. His insight is useful in analysing the 2013 *City Press* fractious battle between Haffajee and a group of black journalists over the appointment of two white editors, and subsequent to that, allegations of lack of 'black perspectives' in that paper's coverage of politics. It is my contention that for the black journalists, if the white editors

[118] See Gordon, L.R. (2013). "Thoughts on Dussel's 'Anti-Cartesian Meditations,'" *Human Architecture XI*, no. 1 (Fall 2013): 25–29.

[119] See Warren, C. (2018). *Ontological Terror: Blackness, Nihilism and Emancipation*, Duke University Press: Durham and London. Warren argues that a reference to "the black" as a thing forces one to take a step backwards and ask fundamental question: is the black, in fact, a human *being*? Or can black(ness) ground itself in the *being* of the human? If it cannot, then on what basis can we assert the mattering of black existence?

[120] In everyday life, use of the term 'black' when referring to individuals or groups of the so-called "people of colour" is much more complex, fluid and complicated in the context of South Africa because not everyone who is racially classified as black identifies himself or herself or themselves as such. The context alone cannot account for a more definitive understanding and meaning of blackness. Therefore, the term "black" is both used as a "racial" designator although the social context may differ depending on its use. Following Biko, this thesis deploys the term 'blacks' to refer primarily to black people in South Africa today, including black Africans, and people of Coloured, Indian and Chinese descent, though some of what I say here can also be extended to blacks living in other places as well.

were doing all the talking all along, at some stage the black journalists will have to raise their voices and make them heard over the noise of the white gaze. Euromodernity tends to treat black voices in ways that involve some form of '*bad faith'* (Gordon, 1995)[121] at work. Black people thus face an ironic existential situation in which one has a voice but his or her voice is retroactively delegitimised through centripetal forces such as the hegemonic norms of unhearing. Black voice, then, becomes 'isolated and quarantined; it is secluded from the common interest of people – it stands as expressing and privileging the will of a few. Such an isolation validates listening to some people while silencing others' (Chevannes, 2019: 128).[122] It is Euromodernity's modus operandi that informs the 'isolation and quarantining' of marginalised and silenced voices in the media and such isolation validates neoliberal discourses and elite interests. It also validates listening to elite voices. Here, particular voices (white voices) are deemed as deserving of being heard, while others (black voices) are silenced and thus, rendered invisible.

I posit that the post-apartheid South African mainstream media, including the *City Press* newspaper, is an affiliate of neoliberalism. By the term neoliberalism, I mean a social order dominated by the logic of the market (Phelan, 2014).[123] Various scholars have given different inflections to the effect of neoliberalism in the media. For instance, Couldry (2010) focused on the cultural politics of voice and the 'crisis of voice' within media institutions. The decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in a post-apartheid newsroom like *City Press* embarked on in this thesis is an attempt to engage in a critique of neoliberalism in the media. This thesis argues that neoliberalism in the media is premised on the growing inequality of voices, and in order for this system to survive, it depends on the systemic and systematically marginalisation of silenced voices. According to Duncan, the capitalist nature of South Africa's media system has made the 'domestication of neoliberalism easier' (2013: 19).[124] More than two decades into democracy, argues Duncan, the South African media still caters for neoliberal discourses and elite interests. She paints a picture that is worth quoting at length:

> 'the South African media still constitutes an elite public sphere: the number of business publications and business journalists, relative to the number of labour voices attests to this. The unemployed have little voice in the media, except as social problems (such as violent protestors) or as victims. Women and young people continue to be marginalised. This means that media discourses come to the South African public inherently unbalanced. Nothing short of a commitment to social justice, and to affirming society's most marginalised voices, will correct

[121] Gordon, L. R. (1995). *Bad faith and antiblack racism*. Amherst, NY: Humanity/Prometheus Books.
[122] See Chevannes, D. (2019). "Euromodernity's Undertone: On Reconceptualizing Political Speech" (2019). Doctoral Dissertation: University of Connecticut.
[123] See Phelan, S. (2014). "Critiquing "Neoliberalism": Three Interrogations and a Defense." In Lievrouw, Leah A (Ed.). (2014). *Challenging Communication Research* (pp. 27-41)
[124] See Duncan, J. (2013). South African journalism and the Marikana massacre: A case study of an editorial failure. *The Political Economy of Communication* 1(2), 1–24.

this imbalance.' (Ibid, p.19)

Duncan is less optimistic that the post-apartheid South African media will go out of one's way to 'tell stories that those in positions of authority would prefer to remain buried' (Ibid). Similarly, it may be suggested that the neoliberalisation of the post-apartheid South African media makes the inclusion of marginalised and silenced voices impossible. It is my contention that decolonial scholarship on the 'crisis of voice' in the neoliberal media should therefore consider whether the diversity and plurality of voices in strengthening the media and deepening democracy necessitates a departure from capitalist media or at least challenging its neoliberalism. It also begs the question to what extent are big media houses such as Media24, which publishes the *City Press*, the beneficiaries of the ANC[125] 'government's neoliberal turn' (Ibid, p.18). It is argued here that it would be a mistake to construe the media as a system that is coherent and devoid of contradictions. The decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices at *City Press* can arise only when all contradictions and paradoxes in capitalist and neoliberal media institutions are taken into consideration. When thinking about the decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media such as *City Press*, 'western-centric political economy of the media approaches is likely to be completely satisfactory' (Chiumbi, 2016: 431) with the systemic and systematic isolation and marginalisation of silenced voices. It is not surprising the western-centric media approaches will be satisfied with the marginalisation of black voices because in South Africa, the structural operations of the media take place under the 'colonial matrix of power' (Grosfoguel 2011)[126] where issues of global capital, subjectivity and race are ignored.

2.4 Black Consciousness

Using a Black Consciousness lens, this study explores the meaning of 'black perspectives' raised by a group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 to understand why there 'remain patterns of history that repeat themselves in the politics of Black liberation' (Matandela, 2017: 10).[127] It uses the 2013 *City Press* fractious battle between Haffajee, the then *City Press* editor, and a group of black journalists over issues of transformation in that paper (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013) as a case study in order to understand the ideologies which emerge from the journalists such as Black Consciousness, Black feminism, non-racialism and Afropolitanism. These developments in theory emerge in black journalists and black

[125] The African National Congress (ANC) is the governing political party in South Africa since the country's first democratic elections were held in 1994.

[126] See Grosfoguel, R. (2011). 'Decolonising post-colonial studies and paradigms of political-economy: Transmodernity, decolonial thinking and global coloniality'. *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 1(1).

[127] See Matandela, M. (2017). Redefining Black Consciousness and resistance: The intersection of Black Consciousness and Black feminist thought, *Agenda*, 31:3-4, 10-28

women journalists' voices and are discussed in detail in Chapter 5 of this thesis. I argue that the deployment of BC thought in this study is relevant because the category 'black' is not only a racial category or 'a white construction' (Gordon, 2015). The term 'black' is also a political identity. Biko defines those who are black as 'those who by law or tradition politically, economically and socially discriminated against as a group in the South African society' (1996: 52).[128] It is argued here that the black journalists at *City Press* acted in group solidarity against the appointment of white editors in that paper in 2013 because they felt that their voices were discriminated and marginalised as a group in the post-apartheid South African media.

Black identity and solidarity

The idea of liberating black voices from oppressive forms such as silencing, invisibility and marginalisation in the post-apartheid South African media involves questions about the means to overcome that oppression. How should black journalists at *City Press* constitute themselves against a post-apartheid newsroom that threatened to relegate their voices and 'black perspectives' to the margins? Put in a specific context, how should black journalists, respond when a traditionally black-oriented newspaper like *City Press* appoints two white news editors at its news desk? According to More, black identity and solidarity has been one of the 'favourable responses and rallying call for social justice and liberation for most black people' (2018).[129] In the context of post-apartheid South African mainstream media, black identity and solidarity has recently been expressed through the re-launch of a highly controversial organisation, the Forum for Black Journalists (FBJ) in 2008 (*Mail & Guardian*, 2008).[130] In her book, *Fight for Democracy: The ANC and the media in South Africa* (2012), Daniels scrutinises FBJ's revival within a non-racial, democratic South Africa, and then 'its quick implosion in the light of the majority of black journalists having stated that they saw no place for such a forum in a new South Africa' (2012: 14). To this end, the FBJ has ceased to exist. However, this thesis argues that a group of black journalists at *City Press* utilised black solidarity to organise themselves into a group collective because they felt marginalised not only from the paper's political discourse, but also and more importantly, from the news desk in which the production of knowledge takes place. It is also my contention that terrains such as news desks in the post-apartheid South African media have been dominated mainly by white male editors and the way to correct this imbalance at *City Press* required the organisation of black journalists into a group collective.

According to More, the critics of black solidarity and similar organisations such as the FBJ 'wonder why black solidarity is needed at all, especially since apartheid is "dead" (2018). He asks: Should we

[128] See Biko, S. (1996) *I Write What I Like*. 2nd ed. London: Bowerdean.
[129] See More, M. P. (2018). *Looking through philosophy in Black: Memoirs*. London, England: Rowman & Littlefield.
[130] See *Mail & Guardian.* Storm brews over journalists' forum. 22 February 2008.

not just reject black solidarity and embrace interracial or cross-racial antiracist solidarity instead? (Ibid). This thesis seeks to defend the 'emancipatory racial solidarity tradition' (Ibid) exemplified by a group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 against the interpellation mounted by Haffajee and Media24, the publishers of *City Press*, which required them to endorse the 'rebrand [of] the paper as a "nonracial read" (Jacobs, 2018)[131]. Important to note here is that the solidarity that emerged during the 2013 *City Press* fracas was founded in and fundamentally the product the marginalisation of and 'black perspectives' and voices. In a way, it was a 'a common racial response to the danger' (More, 2018) posed by whiteness and its gaze on black voices and 'black perspectives' at *City Press*. It is contended here that racial group solidarity at *City Press*, therefore, did not emerge out of racist intentions (*The Media Online*, 2013)[132] but against such oppressive forms of black invisibility that threatened to push the voices to the margins. Journalists, from other racial groups, for obvious reasons, did not participate in the *City Press* fight. To sum, the black journalists' use of the term 'black perspectives' is a reference to a group. It is argued here that oppressive forms of voice silencing, invisibility and marginalisation cannot be a phenomenon directed against a single individual. Consequently, as More (2018) argues, human beings always exist as 'collective wholes, and their identities inhere in those collectives. To such a consciousness, human beings will always appear as Blacks, Whites, or Indians' (Ibid). The kind of black solidarity explicated in this study is bound to evoke questions of race because 'any decolonisation project that moves away from centring issues of race … is bound to fail" (Dei 2017: 2).[133] For those black journalists at City Press, the reality of the marginalisation of voice "is not a passing intrusion on their consciousness" (Hooker 2009: 4)[134] but a daily reality in their lived experiences in the newsroom.

2.5 Decolonisation

In recent years, 'decolonisation' has become so popular in the Global South that we can now speak of there being what Moosavi (2020) calls a 'decolonial bandwagon.'[135] The origins of this renewed interest in decolonising the academy in South Africa can be traced back to two predominantly student-led movements which appeared in 2015 – 'Rhodes Must Fall' and 'Fees Must Fall.' Both movements challenged what Mbembe (2016) has termed the 'global Apartheid in higher education' (p. 38).[136] The debates on decolonisation provided a lexicon that stimulated conversations within and beyond academia, including in the area of study known as media studies.

[131] See Jacobs, S. (2018). Battle of ideas in the newsroom. *Mail & Guardian*. 14 December 2018.
[132] See *The Media Online*. Exclusive: Haffajee draws a line in the sand over racism. 17 October 2013.
[133] See Dei, G.J.S. (2017). Reframing Blackness and Black Solidarities through Anti-colonial and Decolonial Prisms, *Critical Studies of Education* 4, Springer International Publishing AG.
[134] See Hooker, J. (2009). *Race and the Politics of Solidarity*. Oxford University Press.
[135] See Moosavi, L. (2020). The decolonial bandwagon and the dangers of intellectual decolonisation, *International Review of Sociology*, 30:2, 332-354.
[136] See Mbembe, A. (2016). Decolonizing the university: New directions. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 15(1), 29–45.

Decolonising media studies

I argue that problems emerge when calls for the decolonisation of academic fields are made because it raises the question whether those disciplines in question have been colonised in their production of thoughts and knowledges. Mirzoeff and Halberstam (2018) state that 'in South Africa, media studies are committed to decolonising, including decolonising the curriculum' (2018: 121).[137] It is difficult for me to understand what led to Mirzoeff and Halberstam to arrive at these definite conclusions. The calls for decolonising media studies were made as early as 1999 when scholars such as Berger (1999) argued for the rethinking of media studies in South Africa. He argued that research about the media tended to be produced in the post-1994 South Africa period broadly through the lens of a 'neo-Marxist political paradigm.' Whilst Berger did not explicitly call for the decolonisation of media studies, the research trends and patterns that emerged afterwards pointed towards this move. It was during this period that Tomaselli (1997), Steenveld (2004) and Wasserman & De Beer (2005),[138] to mention but a few, focused their research on tracking trends and patterns of media transformation in South Africa in terms of ownership, staffing, content, and audiences. The economic relations and ownership patterns in the South Africa media became their foci. That period was then followed by a growing body of alternative approaches to the study of media which sought to 'de-westernise' journalism ethics by bringing forth, for example, the South African value of *ubuntu* as part of media and journalism ethics in Africa (see Christians, 2004; Rao & Wasserman, 2007; Fourie, 2008; Sesanti, 2010, Chasi and Rodny-Gumede, 2016).[139] Another different take in the study of the media emerged from theoretical approaches outside the field of the media. Notable, among these, was a study undertaken by Daniels (2012),[140] who according to Hadland (2013), viewed the South African media from a "quite a different perspective" (2013: 361).[141] In her book, *Fight for Democracy: The ANC and the Media in South Africa*, Daniels describes the theoretical approaches she adopted as "a blend of radical democratic theory and psychoanalysis theory, interlaced with a postmodern approach" (2012: 15).

[137] See Mirzoeff, N. and Halberstam, J. (2018). Decolonize Media: Tactics, Manifestos, Histories. *Cinema Journal* 57, No. 4. Summer 2018

[138] See Tomaselli, K. (1997). 'Ownership and control in the South African print media: Black empowerment after apartheid, 1990–1997'. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies* 18(1): 21–68; See Steenveld, L. (2004). 'Transforming the media: A cultural approach'. *Critical Arts* 18(1): 92–115; Wasserman, H. & De Beer, A. (2005). 'Which public? Whose interest? The South African media and its role in the first ten years of democracy'. *Critical Arts* 19 (1/2): 36–51.

[139] See Rao, S. & Wasserman, H. (2007). 'Global media ethics revisited: A postcolonial critique'. *Global Media and Communication* 3(1): 29–50; See Fourie, P. (2008). 'Ubuntuism as a framework for South Africa media practice and performance: Can it work?' *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research* 34(1): 53–79; See Christians, C. (2004). 'Ubuntu and communitarianism in media ethics'. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies* 25(1): 235–56; See Sesanti, S. (2010). 'The concept of "respect" in African culture in the context of journalism practice: An Afrocentric intervention'. *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research* 36(3): 343–58; See Chasi, C. & Rodny-Gumede, Y. (2016). *Ubuntu* journalism and nation building magic, *Critical Arts*, 30:5, 728-744.

[140] Daniels, G. (2012). *Fight for Democracy: The ANC and the Media in South Africa*. Wits University Press: Johannesburg.

[141] See Hadland, A. (2013). Fight for Democracy: The ANC and the Media in South Africa by Daniels, G., reviewed in *Safundi*, 14(3), 360-362.

More direct calls for the decolonisation of the media studies were made by Duncan (2014)[142] and Chiumbu (2016). Duncan's and Chiumbu's theoretical and empirical works on the Marikana massacre exposed the media's sympathy towards neoliberal discourses and elite voices. Chiumbu's research revealed how silenced voices, such as those of the 34 miners that were killed during the massacre in 2012, were neglected. She found that although some media 'depict the strike sympathetically, this is done with narrow neoliberal discourses' (Chiumbu, 2016: 424). She suggested that the South African media still 'operates in a global 'colonial matrix of power' that (re)produces dominant discourses and ideologies that favour elite interests' (Ibid, p.417). The decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media, in particular at *City Press*, is conducted here with this in mind. This thesis will interrogate how the 'colonial matrix of power' affects the subjection of black voices in the post-apartheid newsroom that 'reproduces dominant discourses and ideologies that favour elite interests.' Chiumbu (2015)[143] advances three arguments for the decolonisation of media studies. First, she argues that the normative media frameworks are Euromodernity's projects that 'emerged through a relationship of exploitation, violence and control that Southern Europe practiced against its African and American others' (Suarez-Krabbe, 2013: 83).[144] She further argues that the neo-liberal media reforms that emerged in Sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1990s resembles a form of coloniality. Lastly, Chiumbu contends that narratives and ideas framing media studies and media debates essentially emerge from Euro-American epistemic sites and this leads to some form of 'epistemic coloniality'. For her, decolonising media studies calls for a move towards theories which are 'broadly committed to theorising the problematic of colonisation, (post)coloniality and decolonisation' (Chiumbu, 2015). In similar fashion, Reid (2018)[145] calls for the rethinking of media studies research practice and pedagogical decolonisation that critically visits traditional teaching practices within media and communication studies. Collis-Buthelezi (2017: 7) argues that most of the research produced 'on South Africa or by South Africans is, by default, research on *black experiences* in South Africa' (emphasis original).[146] The lived experience of black journalists in white and neoliberal spaces within the media are highlighted in this study and are theorised through theories that take seriously the question of the humanity, freedom, dignity and liberation of black people and those who are oppressed.

[142] See Duncan, J. (2014). 'South African journalism and the Marikana massacre: A case study of an editorial failure'. *The Political Economy of Communication* 1(2): 65–88.

[143] See Chiumbu, S. (2015). *Interrogating Media and Democracy in Southern Africa: Decolonial Perspectives.* Creating African Futures in an Era of Global Transformations: Challenges and Prospects. 8-12 June 2015. Dakar, Senegal. Codesria14.

[144] See Suarez-Krabbe, J. (2013). Race, Social Struggles, and Human' Rights : Contributions from the Global South. *Journal of Critical Globalisation Studies*, No. 6, 2013, p. 78-102.

[145] See Reid, J. (2018). Decolonizing Education and Research by Countering the Myths We Live By. *Cinema Journal* 57, No. 4, Summer 2018.

[146] See Collis-Buthelezi, V.J. (2017). The Case for Black Studies in South Africa. *The Black Scholar*. Vol. 47, No. 2, 7-21.

2.6 Black feminist intersectionality

Black feminist intersectionality is deployed in this thesis to analyse the subjection of black women journalists' voices under the weight of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny in the post-apartheid South African newsroom such as *City Press*. Intersectionality works here to reorient the analysis black voices in the media from the important work done by Duncan (2013) and Chiumbu (2016) respectively in looking at how neoliberalism and 'colonial matrix of power' worked in tandem in the media to systematically marginalise and silence the voices of the miners during the Marikana massacre in 2021. Using a combination of decolonial and ne-Marxist political economy approaches, Duncan and Chiumbu highlighted the fact that women have little voice in the media. However, this thesis argues that their approaches are inadequate in addressing the subjection of black women voices and their sexualised bodies in a patriarchal post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press*. According to subaltern studies scholar Chakrabarty (2000), 'no human society is a tabula rasa' and 'our historical differences make a difference' (cited in Roy, 2023).[147] Similarly, Gqola pointed to this 'division and difference' (2001: 32) to expose the fact that black women who participated in the activities of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in South Africa in the 70s experienced different and unique lived experiences than those of men because theirs were intertwined in 'multiple, overlapping and co-existent systems of power and oppression' (Roy, 2023). In the context of the post-apartheid newsroom, women journalists have 'lost voice through a backlash against feminism' (Daniels, 2020: 1).[148] This black feminist backlash causes injury to women voices at *City Press* and in other newsrooms since women journalists are 'damned for daring to occupy the public space of journalism and for speaking out' (Ibid, p.7). Damnation can take various forms of oppression for women journalists from being trolled online to threats of rape and murder.

Illicit hearing

It is my contention that black women journalists' voices are visible in the media but are systematically rendered silent and invisible through an act on unhearing or what I call here 'illicit hearing.' Following Gordon's notions of "illicit seeing" and "illicit appearance" (2010), I argue that illicit hearing is a form of unhearing that designates women voices as outside the realm of acceptable speaking in which an ethical relationship can emerge between the speaker and the listener. Outside of that ethical relation, women journalists in a post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press* cannot be heard or listened to even when they speak. It is argued here that their voices are pushed into that realm which Frantz Fanon has

[147] See Roy, S. (2023). 21 From travel to arrival Mapping intersectionality's landings in the Global South. *The Routledge Companion to Intersectionalities*.

[148] Daniels, G. (2020). *Power and Loss in South African Journalism: News in the age of social media*, Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

characterised as 'zone of nonbeing.' Gqola has pointed out to a number of contradictions black women voices faced within the BCM since the organisation 'prioritised and gave to a *specific* Black experience of oppression' (Gqola, 2001: 135)[149]. That specific black experience is that of black men. She argued that women's voices must be examined in relation to the 'ambiguities and subtleties in how discourses of liberation as articulated in the early Black Consciousness Movement of South Africa define the role and positions of the category of 'Blackwomen'" (Ibid, p.120).[150] The presupposition that black male voices spoke on behalf of all black voices within the BCM led Gqola to conclude that the experiences of gender and sexual orientation were "not perceived as consequential" in the struggle for the liberation of black people. Instead, race, not gender and sexual orientation, was further asserted as the 'chief and perhaps sole oppressive force in South Africa for all Black people' (Ibid, p.136)[151]. She observed that numerous conjectures were made by proponents of BC, including the claim to the notion of *complete* liberation when "patriarchal tendencies were unexamined as an obstacle to the liberation of all Black people" (Ibid, p.137). Chapter 7 of this study highlights the lived experiences of black women journalists in the post-apartheid South African media and centres *City Press* as a site useful for 'embodied interrogation' (Khan 2018: 109)[152] by which black-African feminist critiques and theorisations emerge. In undertaking a decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in *City Press*, the work of theorist Jayawardene (2018) becomes important to weave 'women's perspectives, presence, their voices, ideas and experiences, and [acknowledge] that gender is essentially limited and limiting to all of us' (cited in Khan 2018: 110). Jayawardene argues that women voices should not be the 'mirror of male voices.'

2.7 Rethinking voice as embodied experience

This study dives into the lived experiences of black journalists in the post-apartheid newsroom (including mine) in order to examine the conditions and circumstances that circumvent their voices, narratives, and lived experiences in the post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press*. Using Black feminism and intersectionality, the study also centres the lived experiences of black women journalists in a patriarchal and male-dominated South African post-apartheid newsroom from the standpoint of black women, with the goal revealing how race, class and gender define their experiences. In addition, the objective is also to understand how those experiences contributed to their persistence as black women journalists. Here black women journalists are provided a platform where they, as black women,

[149] See Gqola, P.D. (2001). Contradictory Locations: Blackwomen and the Discourse of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in South Africa. *Meridians*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2001), pp. 130-152.
[150] Ibid, p.120
[151] Ibid, p.136
[152] See Khan, S. (2018) "Thinking Through, Talking Back: Creative Theorisation as Sites of Praxis-Theory" – A creative dialogue between Sharlene Khan, Pumla Dineo Gqola, Yvette Abrahams, Neelika Jayawardane and Betty Govinden, *Agenda*, 32:3, 109-118.

make the voices and lived experience visible as opposed to a patriarchal discourse designed to make them invisible. It is my contention that black people do not just live to tell their experiences but also 'figure out' (or theorise) their everyday experiences. I argue that, as a black person, theorising one's experience serves as the embodiment of resistance and transgression against a black experience canon largely theorised and dominated by white Eurocentric interpretations (Gordon, 2015).[153] Fanon contextualises the importance of theorising from your own standpoint albeit his use of masculine language:

> When a Black man is willing and able to quote and use European philosophy in efforts to name his oppression and proclaim his existence, then he is surely starting something and should be watched. (Fanon, 1952/2008)[154]

Fanon profoundly reveals to one the perplexing ironies of theoretical work on black experience – a tendency of seeing black experience through Eurocentric lens. This thesis argues that this practice often leads to the exclusion of any serious discussion of black experience by the black authors who, perhaps more than any of their white contemporaries, seek a black experience that would express and theorise the radical reality of black existence in the social world of relations. This thesis also pays attention to the lived experience of black voices in relation to the 'historical, temporal and spatial dimensions of what it means to be black; the embodied, affective and psychical components of black subjectivity' (Stevens et. al., 2016).[155] Such interrogations of lived blackness in the media are critical in showing it is far from being 'the concrete gut level experience [that should be] conceived either as opposing or having no connection to abstract thinking and the production of critical theory' (hooks, 1990, para.1 cited in Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo, 2017: 1)[156]. For Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo, black people do not all experience their blackness in the same way. In other words, there is a 'multiplicity of "blackness" and a diversity of black experiences and black subjectivities' (2017: 3). I argue that this relational account of lived experiences of both black male journalists and black women journalists allows for a multi-modal-approach, divorcing lived black experience from a 'uni-modal, essentialist account' (Chevannes, 2019: 52).

2.6 Speech and the politics of rage

Over the last few years, South Africa has witnessed an extraordinary visibility of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) anger against journalists. This study argues that EFF's rage against journalists seems to

[153] See Gordon, L.R. (2015). *What Fanon said: A philosophical introduction to his life and thought*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
[154] See Fanon, F. (1952/2008). *Black Skin, White Masks.* (R. Philcox, Trans.) New York: Grove Press.
[155] See Stevens, G., Bell, D., Sonn, C. C., Canham, H., and Clennon, O. (2017). Transnational perspectives on Black subjectivity. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 47(4), 459–469
[156] See Mapedzahama, V., and Kwansah-Aidoo, K. (2017). Blackness as Burden? The Lived Experience of Black Africans in Australia. *SAGE Open*, 7 (3), 1–13; See also hooks, b. (1990). Postmodern blackness. *Postmodern Culture*, 1, 1-15.

be registering in ways that are misguided and is occurring not only in the sphere of politics and protest as it is normatively understood. EFF's rage, conceptualised in this study as '(mis)guided Black rage', is used by the EFF as a tool to harass and intimidate journalists when doing their work. The study has found that EFF's rage is also used as a form of silencing the media by rendering journalists voiceless. Black woman journalist Nobesuthu Hejana of *eNCA* was covering the EFF protests in Clicks stores when a group of EFF supporters 'put their hands on her, then shoving her away from the entrance to the Clicks store being blockaded' (Boswell, 2020)[157]. Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, a member of parliament and former EFF spokesperson, defended the incident in a tweet by stating: "I really do not see harassment here. Merely touching her is not harassment. The touch has to be violent, invasive, or harmful to become harassment!" Boswell described Ndlozi's response as 'a shameful statement given the backdrop of gender-based violence, perpetrated by mobs of men, which made the headlines in less than a week, while the protests against Clicks were ongoing' (Boswell, 2020). The study argues that rage thus becomes a political assault not only on Hejana who was reporting on the EFF activities because (mis)guided Black rage plays itself out 'as a silencing of one is a silencing of all' (Chevannes, 2019: 23). This study posits that it is telling that EFF's Black rage has rarely been interrogated and analysed as a concept or category in its own right. Feminist thinkers such as Audre Lorde ([1997], 1981) have taught us rage can be 'energising'.[158] However, this study argues that EFF's (mis)guided Black rage against journalists and some media houses is unleashed in a way that brings to bear notions of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny. The research concludes by pointing out that EFF's misguided Black rage falls under the umbrella of W.E.B. Du Bois's first, negative stage of double consciousness (see Chapter 3) or what Walker has termed 'toxic double consciousness' (2019: 122).[159] Toxic double consciousness holds within itself intriguing details under which the EFF is unable to combat patriarchy, sexism and misogyny against the media.

EFF's decolonial love as resistance to racism

The 'negro problem' (the race problem), as it was called by W.E.B. Du Bois, is still prevalent in post-apartheid South Africa today as this study has demonstrated pertaining to allegations of racism in *City Press* in 2013 between Haffajee and a group of black journalists. This study argues that Frantz Fanon's concern with violence and love is also a concern for the EFF. Fanon writes: "Today we believe in the possibility of love" (Fanon, 2008: 24).[160] Indeed, it may be surprising to twin violence with love, yet love occasioned by racism is what Chela Sandoval (2000) has termed 'decolonial love.'[161] Decolonial love is love that makes the forces of racism extremely uncomfortable, for as Sandoval reminds us, "it is love that can access and guide our theoretical and political '*movidas*' - revolutionary maneuvers toward

[157] See Boswell, B. (2020). EFF on a collision course with dissident black women. *Mail & Guardian*. 10 September 2020.
[158] See Lorde, A. (1997/1981). "The Uses of Anger." *Women's Studies Quarterly* 25 (1/2): 278–285.
[159] See Walker, L. E. (2019). Double consciousness in today's Black America. *Stance*, 12(1), 116–123.
[160] See Fanon, F. (2008). *Black Skin, White Masks*. Trans. Richard Philcox. New York: Grove Press.
[161] See Sandoval, C. (2000). *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

decolonised being" (Sandoval, 2000: 141).[162] This study contends that South Africa, like the US, continues to be a racist society - 'a melting pot threatening to boil over' (Walker, 2019: 117). This research has unpacked the way in which decolonial love has been constructed and engaged in by the EFF to empower black women as they navigate experiences of racism and discrimination against their natural hair and other intersecting forms of marginalisation inherent in colonial and apartheid rule in South Africa. This study argues that the discrimination and racism perpetrated by Clicks stores against black women's natural hair (News24, 2020)[163] demands decolonial love that does not neglect historical oppression and violence against the natural hair of black women in South Africa. Daniels says at the heart of decolonial theory is the love for women (2020: 109). Black women, this study argues, are at the centre of discrimination against their natural hair. The study further argues that by deploying decolonial love through the shutdown of Clicks stores (Ibid), the EFF espouses Maldonado-Torres' 'liberatory politics inspired by the "decolonial attitude" – to create a transmodern world "in which many worlds fit" (2008: 244) and where the discrimination against black women's hair no longer reigns. This thesis argues that EFF's violence against Clicks stores (eNCA, 2016),[164] when viewed through a decolonial lens, was justified if one looks at it from the perspectives of black women whose hair has suffered the violence of discrimination, racism and coloniality. It further suggests that violence on racism and decolonial love in the EFF do not stand as separate, non-interlaced elements. On the contrary , they are co-constitutive, one animating and substantiating the other. It posits that the interplay between violence on racism and decolonial love delimits the power racism and discrimination. Finally, the study has demonstrated the two distinct ways in which the EFF deploys Black rage beyond the party's sexist and misogynistic treatment of women journalists and towards a philosophy of decolonial love.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the literature on black voices and their subjection in the post-apartheid South Africa media such as *City Press* and in other aspects of political and public sphere. This overview, therefore, will enable for a decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media landscape with specific reference to the *City Press* newspaper as a locus of analysis. The cogent and contextual analysis of black voices and the transformation debates at *City Press* and the media in general pertaining to black voices and black subjectivities in a post-apartheid neoliberal newsroom has been provided in this chapter. This literature overview has also focused how black women journalists' voices are subjected under the weight of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny when doing their work through Canham and Williams's (2017)

[162] Ibid, p.141

[163] See News24. Clicks bows to EFF's demands after racist advert. 10 September 2020.

[164] See eNCA. (2016). Defamation case against former *City Press* editor withdrawn. Thursday 18 August 2016.

concept of ‘marshalling black rage.’ It also makes a case that black lived experience and black subjectivity should not hold a place within Euromodernity as a commodified object to be theorised through the white gaze, whose sole desire is to state the desires of the ‘white Other.’ Furthermore, this literature overview has highlighted how the EFF’s rage should be theorised through affect, conceptualised and suggested here as ‘misguided black rage.’ The next chapter will outline the theoretical mapping and conceptual framework through which the corpus of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media, in particular *City Press*, will be analysed in this study

Chapter 3

Making sense of theory: Decoloniality and Black Consciousness

> *Theory is not inherently healing, liberatory, or revolutionary. It fulfils this function only when we ask that it do so and direct our theorizing towards this end*. - bell hooks

Introduction

My purpose in this chapter is to develop a theoretical and conceptual framework of this research which will guide the decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African media landscape using *City Press* newspaper as an analytical focus. This chapter is organised in two major parts. The first part provides a more comprehensive discussion on the theory of decoloniality and outlines its three main components, i.e., the coloniality of being, the coloniality of power, and the coloniality of knowledge. It will then present a discussion on Black Consciousness (BC) philosophy that integrates Steve Biko's (2004) concept of 'envisioned self' or 'envisaged self'[165] together with Lewis Gordon's (2006)[166] conception of power. Decoloniality is blended with BC here because both argue for the bringing of the voices of the damned or the wretched of the earth to the centre. Although 'decoloniality exists in tandem with the 'decolonial turn'' (Daniels, 2020: 155)[167], the theoretical argument here is that the theory of decoloniality is in need of decolonisation. Consequently, this study embarks on the critique of decoloniality and its two concepts, the coloniality of being and coloniality of power. The second part of this study presents the main conceptual tools that are deployed in this study in order to analyse the subjection of black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom such as *City Press* newspaper. Gordon's (2021) theories of invisibility[168] and Black feminist intersectionality, including theoretical concepts from political philosophy of blackness, double consciousness, power, interpellation and 'illicit' hearing have been useful in this thesis for many of the chapters.

3.1 Coming of Age: Theoretical awakening

> Coming: "Due to happen or just beginning."[169]
>
> Of: "Expressing the relationship between a verb and an indirect object."[170]

[165] See Biko, S. (2004). *I write what I like: Steve Biko: A selection of his writings* (A. Stubbs, Ed.). Johannesburg: Picador Africa.
[166] See Gordon, L.R. (2006). *Disciplinary Decadence: Living Thought in Trying Times*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
[167] See Daniels, G.. (2020). *Power and Loss in South African Journalism: News in the age of social media*. Wits Press: Johannesburg.
[168] See Gordon, L.R. (2021). *Freedom, Justice and Decolonization*. New York: Routledge, 2021.
[169] *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2011), s.v. "coming.
[170] Ibid., s.v., "of."

Age: "A particular stage in a person's life."[171]

I once opined in 2020 to a class of third-year media studies students at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, that the process of seeing is a form of theorising. Little did I know or expect that my contention would be met with laughter. Clearly, I had said something wrong that should not have been said. However, I did not understand the point being made by the students through their laughter. Feeling impelled, I then asked them what they understood by theory, what theory meant to them, and what theory looked like in practice. The responses given by them were significantly different[172], however, some were adamant that there was no way theorising can be conceptualised as a form of seeing. As we debated what counts as theory, it became clear to me, at this stage, that the difficulties I had experienced in understanding theorising were not just particular to myself; others experienced something similar. This was the start of my coming of age to theory. Since then, I have had to come to terms with the feelings of confusion and at times anxiety about theory in the various stages of this research.

This thesis bears the imprint of my thinking and interpretations, notwithstanding that I build on the theories of others. The inclusion of a theoretical or conceptual chapter in this thesis does not bring the process or practice of theorising into being as 'concurrently one may practice theorising without ever knowing/possessing the term' (hooks, 1994: 62).[173] I raise this to give freedom to the term 'theory'. Making theory is a challenge placed before all of us, 'for in its production lies the hope of our liberation' (Ibid, p.75).[174] This thesis argues that critique is indispensable to theory. It suggests that in its production lies the possibility of decolonising theory, including, paradoxically, the decolonisation of decolonial theory itself. Thus my theoretical perspectives in this thesis have emerged from the mutually illuminating interplay of anti-colonial, decolonial and BC thought. This complex and unique blending of multiple perspectives, which all have overlaps with each other, has been my engaging standpoint from which to think through throughout the production of this work. It has made it possible for me to imagine and enact decolonial theory that engages directly the concern for interrogating presuppositions that re-inscribe systems of coloniality within decolonial theory or decolonial thought.

3.2 Coloniality and Decoloniality

In the past few years there has been a surge of academic inquiry in the Global South about decolonisation. These calls for decolonisation wish to undo the legacy of colonialism within the

[171] Ibid., s.v., "age."
[172] Some students said theory helps us explain things. Others explained that theory helps us to have some theoretical perspectives. There were also those students who said they didn't have a clue what theory is. The good thing is that none of these explanations are wrong.
[173] See hooks, b. (1964). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.
[174] Ibid.p.75.

academia due to the belief that 'coloniality continues to impact how academia is experienced, as well as what is researched, published, cited, and taught' (Moosavi, 2020: 332).[175] There is a rich history of theorising decolonisation in African and African diasporic thought and a list of the many influential writings[176] in the area of decolonial thought include Frantz Fanon (1952/1967), Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986), Steve Biko (1978/2004), and recently Gordon (2008). However, Gordon argues that it is 'the Latin American line that has become hegemonic in the academia' (2021: 30) but he fails to provide reasons that have given rise to it. For a Latin American genealogy and recent critical discussion on coloniality and decoloniality, see Anibal Quijano (2000, 2007), Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007), Walter Mignolo and Catherine Walsh (2018), Suàrez-Krabbe (2015) and Ricardo Sanín-Restrepo (2016).[177]

The colonial nature of our society in the post-apartheid South African era remains a source of debate among scholars and activists. The media is at the core of the divergent arguments and contesting ideologies about decolonisation. Decolonisation, in the context of the post-apartheid newsroom, is tightly linked with the media's transformation agenda. This thesis argues that this requires a critical, theoretical and intellectual discourse on the decolonial analysis of black voices in the post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press* newspaper. Although there is a symbiotic relationship between coloniality and decoloniality, in this thesis the two are not treated as antithetical. Instead, a nuanced understanding and reading of coloniality and decoloniality is preferred with an understanding that decoloniality is not intrinsically liberatory or revolutionary. As bell hooks reminds us in the opening epigraph of this chapter, 'theory is not inherently healing, liberatory, or revolutionary. It fulfils this function only when we ask that it do so and direct our theorising towards this end' (1994: 61). At this point, this study draws from a number of decolonial scholars in the Global South to explicate what is meant by coloniality and decoloniality. The discussions that follow are meant to situate and understand coloniality as occurring in previously colonised spaces such as in the post-apartheid newsroom like *City Press* where coloniality can be 'covertly political but overtly social, economic and cultural' (Oyedemi, 2018: 2).[178]

[175] See Moosavi, L. (2020). The decolonial bandwagon and the dangers of intellectual decolonisation, *International Review of Sociology*, 30:2, 332-354.

[176] See wa Thiong'o, N. (1986). Decolonising the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature. Nairobi, Kenya: Heinemann; See also Gordon, L.R. (2008). *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

[177] See Quijano, A. (2007). "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality." *Cultural Studies* 21 (2-3): 168–78; See Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of power, ethnocentrism, and Latin America. *Nepantla,* 1(3), 533–580; See Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). On the coloniality of being. *Cultural Studies*, 21, 240- 270; See also Suàrez-Krabbe, J. (2016). *Race, Rights and Rebels: Alternatives beyond Human Rights and Development.* London, UK: Rowman & Littlefield International; and see also Sanín-Restrepo. R. (2016). *Decolonizing Democracy*. London, UK; Rowman & Littlefield International.

[178] See Oyedemi, T. (2018). "(De) Coloniality and South African Academe." *Critical Studies in Education* 1–17.

3.2.1 The matrix of coloniality

Coloniality is not the same thing as colonialism (Maldonado-Torres, 2017).[179] According to Maldonado-Torres, coloniality refers to the persistent features of colonialism long after the colonialism era has ended and despite the struggles for decolonisation in Africa and elsewhere. In the context of South African media, coloniality refers to the persistent features of domination and discrimination long after apartheid era has ended and despite the struggle to transform the South African post-apartheid media. In essence, coloniality, as argued by Sithole (2015), is the 'continuity of the colonial infrastructure within the absence of the colonial administration' (2015: 2).[180] In the case of *City Press* newspaper, this could mean the existence of whiteness in the newsroom structures within the presence or absence of white editors. Or it could also mean that the existence of coloniality in the South African media post-apartheid era mirrors the conditions that existed in the media during the apartheid era. If the South African media is caught in the colonial imagination, it therefore follows that black voices will be eclipsed as the question of what it means to be black in a neoliberal newsroom such as *City Press* and this, I will argue, continues to haunt South African journalists today, as Manganyi (1973, 2016)[181] also notes. Coloniality, as Grosfoguel (2008: 8)[182] argues, also points to the colonial patterns of power that came along in colonised nations as a direct result of colonialisation that continue to deeply affect our everyday lives well beyond contexts of colonial administrations. By this, he means that along with the transformations brought by decolonisation, the ideas of liberation and democracy were also continuing forms of colonisation through coloniality.

The question, therefore, is not so much about whether coloniality manifests itself in our everyday lives but how it does so. For instance, how does coloniality shape, sustain, and define the South African media and its systems of domination? How has it functioned differently in the post-apartheid South African media era? How does it operate within the post-apartheid newsroom in the making, mediation and subjection of black voices? Sithole (2015) argues that global coloniality continues to undermine and frustrate decolonial initiatives in the Global South aimed at creating 'post-colonial futures' free from coloniality.[183] It is my contention, however, that considering the problematics of postcoloniality as a concept, 'particularly the debates around the meaning and implications of the prefix post' (Oyedemi, 2018: 2), Sithole's 'post-colonial futures' free from coloniality offers a relatively unequivocal meaning.

[179] See Maldonado-Torres, N. (2017). On the Coloniality of Human Rights. *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, 114, December 2017: 117-136

[180] See Sithole, T. (2015). Coloniality of being, imperial reason, and the myth of African futures. *CODESRIA*. 08-12 June 2015, Dakar: Senegal.

[181] See Manganyi, C.N. (1973). *Being black in the world*. Johannesburg: SPRO-CAS/Ravan Press; See also Manganyi, C.N. (2016). *Apartheid and the making of a black psychologist.* Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

[182] See Grosfoguel, R. 2008. "Transmodernity, Border Thinking, and Global Coloniality: Decolonizing Political Economy and Postcolonial Studies." *Eurozine*.

[183] See Sithole, T. (2015): Coloniality of being, imperial reason, and the myth of African futures. *CODESRIA*. 08-12 June 2015, Dakar: Senegal.

This thesis now turns to race and the construction Maldonado-Torres' concept of the coloniality of being. It critiques the notion of the coloniality of being and argues for the notions of beings situated within the framework of BC philosophy rather than the more familiar decolonial formations of identity that emphasise coloniality in black beings. Importantly, it questions and interrogates whether the black journalists at City Press would accept the concept that reduces black people to their body and being.

3.2.2 Race and the Coloniality of Being

> *no attempt must be made to encase man*
> - Frantz Fanon (I967a:230)[184]

The 1970s in South Africa became a critical moment of engaging the question of what it means to be a human being. It was during this period that black psychologist and philosopher Chabani Noel Manganyi published his work *Being-black-in-the-world* (1973).[185] Back then, the notion of the 'coloniality of being' did not exist. This thesis argues that there was no reason why black people would regard themselves as embodying a colonial being. This begs a number of pertinent questions: What does coloniality of being mean? What is the ontology of colonial being? Is it desired? And if it is, under what conditions and for whom? Maldonado-Torres' "On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the development of the concept" (2007) is the foundational text from which to begin about the concept of the coloniality of being. Maldonado-Torres posits that coloniality of being produces effects of coloniality that affect the lived experiences of colonised subjects *qua* 'the genetic, the existential, and the historical dimensions where Being shows most evidently its colonial side and its fractures' (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 243).[186] His important work on the notion of coloniality of being has been taken up and elaborated by South African decolonial scholars such as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013)[187] and Sithole (2015)[188] with exemplary care. For Sithole (2015),[189] coloniality of being refers to '*the being without*,' that is to say, 'the being without a soul, a civilisation, history, ethics, invention, knowledge.' Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012) understands the coloniality of being as a means to justify the inferiority of the black people under colonialism and presently within the structures of 'global coloniality where Westerners have remained at the top of racial hierarchies rooted in colonial modernity' (2012: 425).[190]

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[184] See Fanon, F. (1967a). Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin White Masks,* translated by Charles Lam Markmann. New York, Grove Press 1967a.
[185] See Manganyi, N. C. (1973). *Being-black-in-the-world.* Johannesburg: Spro-cas / Ravan.
[186] See Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). ON THE COLONIALITY OF BEING, *Cultural Studies*, 21:2-3, 240-270.
[187] See Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2013). *Coloniality of power in postcolonial Africa: myths of decolonization*. Dakar: CODESRIA
[188] See Sithole, T. (2015). Coloniality of being, imperial reason, and the myth of African futures. *CODESRIA*. 08-12 June 2015, Dakar, Senegal.
[189] Sithole, T. (2015). Coloniality of being, imperial reason, and the myth of African futures. *CODESRIA*. 08-12 June 2015, Dakar, Senegal.
[190] See Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2012). Beyond the Equator There Are No Sins Coloniality and Violence in Africa. *Journal of Developing Societies* 28, 4 (2012): 419–440

At the heart of the coloniality of being, Chiumbu (2016) argues, is the recognition that black voices in the post-apartheid and neoliberal South African media are, in Fanonian language, damned.[191] For Maldonado-Torres, at the core of the coloniality of being is that 'invisibility and dehumanization are the primary expressions of the coloniality of being' (2007: 257). The coloniality of being is extended in this thesis to frame black journalists at City Press as the *damned* whose voices have been made invisible and relegated to the margins and wasteland of the neoliberal media empire.

Critique and Coloniality of Being

This thesis argues that the concept of the coloniality of being as an interpretative framework must be the object of sustained critique precisely because the 'being' has been fundamental to Euromodernity's construction of the human being. However, it is pertinent to revisit the question posed earlier on what it means to be a coloniality of being. Sithole explains:

> The Black Being is the property of coloniality. To be a property of coloniality means that the black being is not a Being for itself but a being of coloniality. In such a state, the ontological standing and demands of the black being are collapsed and coloniality has the power over the black [Being] by 'conferring life and death on it' (Sithole, 2016: 35)[192]

Sithole's assertion in the quote above suggests that to be subject to the coloniality of being means, by definition, to be forever indebted to coloniality. To be in debt casts a perpetual shadow over one's ability to overcome the fate of coloniality. According to Jane Anna Gordon, in colonial and post-colonial settings, 'the debt of the colonised is not only economic. It is also ontological. One owes what is legitimate about one's being to those who oppress one' (2007: 144).[193] Lewis Gordon has argued that the 'being' in Euromodernity 'imagines itself legitimate and pure through the expurgation of blackness' (Gordon, 2013: 729).[194] This thesis argues that this conception of a coloniality of being presented by Sithole has a catastrophic consequence of offering models of human beings 'made supposedly rigours through the expulsion of human elements' (Ibid, 2013: 67). As early as the twentieth century, W.E.B du Bois (1903)[195] observed this phenomenon and explained it as the problem of the 'expurgation of blackness.' The coloniality of being, one must elaborate on this logic, finds itself in the fate of its own

[191] See Chiumbu, S. (2016). Media, Race and Capital: A Decolonial Analysis of Representation of Miners' Strikes in South Africa, *African Studies*, 75:3, 417-435

[192] See Sithole, T. (2016). 'The concept of the black subject in Fanon', in *Journal of Black Studies*, 47, 1, 24–40.

[193] See Gordon, J.A. (2007). "The Gift of Double Consciousness: Some Obstacles to Grasping the Contributions of the Colonized," in Nalini Persram (ed.), *Postcolonialism and Political Theory* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), 143–161.

[194] See Gordon, L.R. (2013). Race, Theodicy, and the Normative Emancipatory Challenges of Blackness. South Atlantic Quarterly. 112:4. Duke University Press. p.729.

[195] See Du Bois, W. E. B. 1903. *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches*. Chicago: A. C. McClurg.

colonial particularity. Within this framework, it is a being without agency having not done its homework in a social world of relations in which coloniality could be transcended and wherein new values and norms can be forged. As property of coloniality, the black beings 'belong outside of their beings. In effect, they belong nowhere' (Gordon, 2007: 125).[196] Coloniality becomes the necessary condition for their existence.

Although Manganyi wrote about decolonisation in 1973, much before the idea of decoloniality was theorised, he argued that the ontological characteristics of the black being do not tell us much about black people, let alone the nature of their beings. He posits that those interested in the ontological manifestation of the black being should conceptualise 'Being' as always in a situation '(the existential situation in which it finds itself)'. Therefore, 'Being' is not a closed phenomenon. The problem with the concept of the coloniality of being is that the black being has been so colonised that its ontology or production would be a form of colonising instead of a decolonial practice. Its logic denies black being of agency. It treats the black being as intrinsically colonial. Clearly it is a concept that is in collision course with decolonial thought. I have come to the conclusion that, framed in this way, coloniality of being cannot explain the agency displayed by a group of black journalists at *City Press* in fighting for their 'black perspectives' to be heard and in voicing their concerns following the appointment of two white editors in the paper that has traditionally served mostly a black readership. This would place the black journalists in a handicapped position of having been compelled to think back to coloniality instead of *envisioning* a *City Press* where their black perspectives could be heard. Ultimately, this critique of the coloniality of being allows us to understand that it 'does not permit us to understand the being of the black man. For not only must the black man be black; but he must be black in relation to the white man [coloniality]' (Fanon 1967) (addition my own).

3.2.3 Critique and Coloniality of Power

At the heart of media is power. In considering power in the post-apartheid newsroom like *City Press*, this thesis considers the idea of the coloniality of power. According to Grosfoguel, 'coloniality refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism and continues to deeply influence knowledge production, subjectivity, gender relations, the economy, and relations of authority' (2008: 126). I contend here that the post-apartheid South African media, as a political and epistemological decolonial project, has remained an 'unfinished business' because power is always contingent to the colonial 'matrix of power' (Maldonado-Torres 2004).[197] The root of the idea of the

[196] See Gordon, L. R. (2007). "Problematic People and Epistemic Decolonization: Toward the Postcolonial in Africana Political Thought." *Postcolonialism and Political Theory*. Ed. Nalini Persram. New York: Lexington, 2007. 121–42.
[197] See Maldonado-Torres, N. (2004). 'The topology of being and the geopolitics of knowledge'. *City* 8(1): 29– 56.

'coloniality of power' is credited to Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano (2000).[198] Chiumbu has argued that the media in South Africa continues to operate in a 'global colonial matrix of power and reproduces dominant discourses and ideologies' (2016: 417) that speak to those in power or elite interests. For the black journalists at *City Press* in 2013, the dominant epistemic locus of enunciation of power stems from one's location in the power structures (Mignolo, 2000)[199] within the post-apartheid newsroom. In this study, I argue that the appointment in 2013 of two white news editors at *City Press*, a traditionally black-oriented newspaper, was an expression of the coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000, 2007; Mignolo, 2007) manifested in the imposition of whiteness in the news desk. Extending the coloniality of power in the decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom like *City Press* is important because power in the media is always contingent to the 'colonial matrix of power.' The concept of the coloniality of power is deployed here to mark the positioning of black journalists at *City Press* who seek to 'transgress and interrupt the colonial matrix of power' (Walsh, 2020: 606)[200] by bringing black voices from the margins to the centre. It will also be deployed in this thesis to interrogate whether the appointment of white news editors at *City Press* should be understood as an expression of the coloniality of power manifested in the violent imposition of whiteness in the news desk which could lead to the expulsion of 'black perspectives'. Through the concept, I explore the multiple dimensions of coloniality in a post-apartheid newsroom for identifying ways of resisting epistemic colonisation at the level of the news desk at *City Press* and resisting the white gaze. I apply this theorising to my argument about *City Press* because of a concern for how the post-apartheid newsroom could be made to engage with the fundamental challenge of making visible struggles and strategies against the subjection of black voices through whiteness, thinking not just from the paradigm of race, but also from black journalists' social, political and epistemic practice.

Limitations of coloniality of power

This study argues that one of the limitations of the coloniality of power is that it requires forms of disempowering others through the concentration of power in 'special groups' of people (Gordon, 2021). In context of the post-apartheid newsroom, power is concentrated in the special groups of people and a few elites who are voices of authority. These would include the senior editorial staff in the post-apartheid newsroom. This thesis posits that sustenance of colonialism and racism, and other forms of oppressive regimes, depend on negative forms of power exemplified by Quijano's concept of the coloniality of power. This thesis argues that the notion of the coloniality of power is fundamentally patriarchal and coercive in nature. As a concept, its usefulness is limited in analysing forms of oppressive regimes such

[198] See Quijano, A. (2000). "The Coloniality of Power and Social Classification," *Journal of World Systems* 6:2 (Summer/Fall 2000): 342-386.
[199] See Mignolo, W.D. (2000). '*Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Sulbatern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000.
[200] See Walsh, C.E. (2020) Decolonial learnings, askings and musings, *Postcolonial Studies,* 23:4, 604-611.

as patriarchy, sexism and misogyny against black women journalists at *City Press* and in other post-apartheid newsrooms. Coloniality of power relies on physical force, and as a result, it fails to protect us against 'elements, malediction, and infelicitous aims of our human beings' (Gordon, 2021: 40). What, after all, is the point of an avowed freedom of the media when it offers no power to the journalists? It is my contention that the post-apartheid newsroom should be about imagining new forms of power and 'extending flourishing forms of power' (Ibid, p.66) that will end the scourge of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny in the South African media. This will require, in Gordon's words, a 'teleological suspension of power, where decadent power (coercive power) is transcended for the sake of open power (empowering freedom)' (Ibid). It will also demand reflections on the 'geopolitical dimensions of power' and raises the importance of not reducing power to a single element like coloniality or reducing it to editors in the context of the post-apartheid newsroom. The argument made here is that where white editors lack power over Blacks, they lose relevance. In sum, coloniality of power is a function of unequal power. To identify with power, one must be in a relation to it. This relational matter requires looking beyond power as inherently colonial in order to understand power. This means moving from the conception of power as a fixed category of coloniality.

3.2.4 Knowledges versus Coloniality of Knowledge

Colonialism and racism excluded black people from the domain of producing and contributing to knowledge. According to Tyali (2021), historically, media institutions were at the service of 'the colonising empire.'[201] He argues that media institutions were set up to advance the ideology of the colonisers in colonies. Coloniality of knowledge is a concept imposed by Euromodernity to organise and circulate knowledge according to its norms and rules whilst at the same time discarding or provincialising other knowledges through the logic of particularity (Mignolo and Escobar, 2008).[202] It is an analytical and conceptual tool useful in critically analysing how coloniality's 'darker side' functions in a way that makes no 'attempt a[t] deconstruction of epistemic and discursive grounds of the modern/colonial project and seldom ventures into the depths of the philosophy of science in order to manifest its dominant colonialist roots' (Tlostanova, 2015: 40).[203] The 'coloniality of knowledge' (Mignolo, 2008) within this context means that the production of knowledge in the post-apartheid South African newsroom such as *City Press* continues to be explained through 'imperialistic knowledge outlook' (Tyali, 2021) that renders black perspectives and black voices, especially of women, remain largely unseen and unheard.

[201] See Tyali, S.M. (2021**).** Challenging the internet's colonial structure starts with looking to media history. *The Conversation*. August 31, 2021.
[202] See Mignolo, W. and A. Escobar. (2009) (eds.) *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*. London, UK: Routledge.
[203] See Tlostanova, M. (2015). Can the post-soviet think? Intersections. *East European Journal of Society and Politics* 1 (2): 38–58.

Coloniality of knowledge is extended in this thesis to consider the main challenge faced by black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 in the configuration of knowledge, marked by omnipresent whiteness in the paper's news desk. This situation, which manifested through the appointment of white news editors at that paper, can be described as the general invisibility of 'black perspectives' in a paper that traditionally catered mostly to a black-oriented readership. In the case of City Press, black perspectives face the danger of either being excluded or equalised with non-racial and Afropolitan discourses. The notion of the coloniality of knowledge is useful in highlighting continued forms of epistemic and knowledge colonisation, following Quijano, through the denial of voice or through rendering invisible other knowledges. It tends to treat subordinated groups of people, who happen to be mostly Black, as inferior and non-thinking subjects who can be easily collapsed into their culture, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, race and gender. The other argument advanced here is that the context in which we talk about the coloniality of knowledge is a very strange one because there is a tendency to equate knowledge with Europe. The way Euromodernity works is that it has to first identify people, usually black people, it has designated as non-thinking subjects or 'zero sums' and inform them that their knowledge does not matter. Gordon (1995) describes this phenomenon as a form of *bad faith*[204] at work. He says the logic of Euromodernity dictates that only knowledge emanating from the Global North matters. This form of bad faith is closely tied to Gordon's (2018, 2021) theory of invisibilities, which are in this chapter later.

3.3 BC and Double Consciousness

> [B]lack consciousness is immanent in its own eyes. I am not a potentiality of something [coloniality], I am wholly what I am. I do not have to look for the universal [coloniality]. No probability [of coloniality] has any place inside me. My Negro [black] consciousness does not hold itself out as a lack. It is. It is its own follower (Fanon, 1967) (*my addition*)

BC thought is a relational concept. To think of BC as a relational concept means to imagine it in relation to something else. BC is blended here with Du Bois' (1903) notion of double consciousness because, after all, the path to black consciousness is located within its negative moments and positive ones. Following Catherine Walsh's (2018) theorising of decoloniality as 'decoloniality for,'[205] I argue that BC raises not only the question of Du Bois' negative moment of black person seeing himself, herself or themselves through the eye of the white other but also, in agreement with Walsh, its positive one, which is well articulated by Jane Anna Gordon (2006) as 'potentiated double consciousness'. Biko captures this double dimension of BC in the opening epigraph to this section. It is Biko's awareness of Du Bois' negative moment of double consciousness that leads him to conclude that he is not 'a potentiality of

[204] See Gordon, L.R. (1995). *Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities International Press.
[205] See Walsh, C. (2018). "Decolonial For." In *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*, edited by Walter Mignolo, and Catherine Walsh, 33–56. Durham: Duke University Press.

something' and that his black consciousness 'does not hold itself as a lack.' Like Du Bois, Biko understood that double consciousness could be limbo, in which it can construct black people as 'problematic beings' (Gordon, 2015: 22) locked in what Fanon calls 'a zone of nonbeing.' For black people, generally, seeing yourself through the white other means affirming white normativity '*under circumstances where whites control the conditions* that these problems of dehumanisation and subordination occur" (Gordon 2021, 75). This insight is important in understanding why a group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 protested against the appointment of two white editors. The problematic they raised is how they would articulate their 'black perspectives' under the circumstances where the white editors were in control of the conditions of the newsroom. Biko was clear that black consciousness 'invests meaning in those who embody it' (Ibid, p.7). The black journalists at *City Press* were faced with a situation wherein they could toe the new ideological line of the paper based on the idea of nonracialism and Afropolitanism and 'withdraw in despair, wear 'white masks'' (Paget, 2000: 93);[206] or imagine their voices and perspectives 'legitimate and pure through the expurgation of blackness' (Gordon: 2021: 87).

Potentiated double consciousness

Drawing on Jane Anna Gordon's notion of 'potentiated double consciousness,' I seek to expose whiteness in the *City Press* newsroom as a practice that is invested in masking its historically contingent structure in the South African media. Potentiated double consciousness will be used to challenge the fallacy that whiteness is completely unconditioned and dislocated as the hegemonic site of power in the post-apartheid newsroom. I investigate whether BC philosophy inspired a group of black journalists to raise the issue of the lack of 'black perspectives' in that paper (*Daily Maverick*, 2013).[207] It is my contention that they understood that 'for the basis of whiteness is a subordinated black-life world, the denial of its reality as a legitimate point of view for consciousness' (Jane Anna Gordon, 2006: 4).[208] Further, I argue the displacement of black editors by white news editors could be a constitutive act 'through which white ego consciousness reconstructs the meaning of black existence' (Henry, 2000: 150).

BC at City Press

According to media commentator Gill Moodie, *City Press* was a paper read by 'people who loved the paper for its strong "Black Consciousness" voice – its pride in boldly being a newspaper for black

[206] See Henry, P. (2000). *Caliban's Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy*. New York: Routledge.
[207] See Naidu, B. (2013). Media's transformation dream deferred. *Daily Maverick*. 22 October 2013.
[208] See Gordon, J.A. Legitimacy from Modernity's Underside: Potentiated Double Consciousness. *Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise*. (Fall, 2006). 1-21.

Africans (Moodie, 2013).[209] The value of BC thought in the decolonial analysis of black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom like *City Press* should be viewed in this light. Echoing her, Jacobs states that historically the paper was 'designed for black readers (on the margins of apartheid's all white sphere' (2018).[210] Theoretically, the ideas that are undergirding this doctoral study, with no disrespect to decolonial thought and its contribution to black intellectual tradition, are inspired by the writings, teachings and ideas of Biko and other thinkers rooted in the BC tradition. This thesis argues that BC demands that we follow the lead of our ancestors. Gordon (2018) complains that there is much to be done on how the thought on decolonisation is deployed singularly through Fanon with 'occasional reference' to Biko, 'yet the complicated history of how decolonial theory has its origins in African thought is often elided.' Biko's ideas are brought to the fore in this thesis in order to highlight 'the breadth of Black intellectual production in the service of overcoming continued forms of intellectual dependency' (Ibid). Biko is centred here as a 'knowledge- producing subject' (Grosfoguel, 2007)[211] who is better situated to interrogate the subjection of black voices in the *City Press* and the political sphere. I argue that BC offers the possibility of breathing ourselves out of the historical coloniality canon by centring the potentiality of blackness, its positive moment. In essence, BC stays away from fixed and determined notions of coloniality and is forward-looking in its posture as it considers coloniality not as 'unduly enshrined,' to invoke wa Thiongo. In this way, BC engages in a constant dialectic struggle with the forces that seek to undermine blackness. It is my contention that the marginalisation of black voices in post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press* becomes a major aspect of BC when treated as an intellectual enterprise. This is so because of a prevailing 'need to explore the themes of Black thought in the face of Euromodernity' (Gordon, 2018: 29).[212] Mngxitama et. al. (2008) elaborates on the significance of voice scholarship in the context of the post-apartheid South Africa:

> The new black resistance does not yet fully speak for itself; it relies in major ways on the white left for illuminating its voice, often with the consequence that this resistance's demands are reduced to the most basic necessities to keep body and soul together and constitute a residual insult of colonialism and apartheid…If a politics that transcends the current reality is to emerge, it would be in all likelihood emerge as these new movements and forms of self-activity continue to develop their voice. (Mngxitama et. al. 2008:19)[213]

The major thrust of Mngxitama's et al (2008) argument is that to aim at becoming white undermines blackness. I argue that the decolonial analysis of making and mediation of black voices at *City Press* is significant if journalism 'that transcends the current reality is to emerge,' it would be in all likelihood

[209] See Moodie, G. (2013). *Grubstree*t: Many agendas in City Press Race Row. *GrubstreetSA*. 23 October 2013.
[210] See Jacobs, S. (2018). Battle of ideas in the newsroom. *Mail & Guardian Online*. 14 December 2018.
[211] See Grosfoguel, R. (2007). The epistemic decolonial turn. *Cultural Studies* 21(2–3): 211–223.
[212] See Gordon, L.R. (2018). Black Aesthetics, Black Value**.** *Public Culture* 30, no. 1, (2008): 19-34
[213] See Gordon, L.R. (2008). "Phenomenology of Biko's Black Consciousness." In *Biko Lives!: Contestations and Conversations*, edited by Amanda Alexander, Nigel Gibson, and Andile Mngxitama. New York: Palgrave, 2008. Pp. 83-93.

emerge from a collective of black journalists acting in solidarity with each other. Biko was the embodiment of voice. He used his speeches under the pseudonym of Frank Talk to 'render *politics* Black' (Gordon, 2008: 89)[214] (emphasis original). According to More (2014), besides the existential implications of double consciousness qua being 'a painful self-consciousness' (Du Bois) and qua 'being-for-others and seeing oneself through the eyes of the Other,' it also resonated with 'Being-Black-in-South Africa' (More, 2014: 188).[215] For More, one was born a South African but not a citizen by virtue of being black. In this way, the broader and inclusive nature of BC resonated with Du Bois' notion of double consciousness. Thus Biko describes a situation wherein sometimes black people had to confront a 'two-faced attitude of the black man to this whole question of existence' in South Africa (1996: 103). Using the lens of double consciousness, I analyse how a group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 faced this 'two-faced' situation of having to define their writing and perspectives through the ideology of nonracialism and Afropolitanism whilst trying to hang on their passionate attachment to the ideals of BC disavowed through the paper's rejection of its 'Distinctly African' motto under Haffajee's reign as the editor.

3.3.1 BC, Black feminist intersectionality and women voices

This thesis pays attention to the gendered nature of voice invisibility by examining the subjection of black women journalists' voices at *City Press* and in other post-apartheid newsrooms. It is argued here that women's voices has not been without their problematics within the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in South Africa during the 1970s. Black feminist Pumla Gqola (2001) argues that BC 'prioritised and gave voice to a specific Black experience of oppression … [and] denied the existence of alternative views or experiences' (2001: 131). For her, black subjection is experienced differently as the intersecting categories of gender, class and race come to the fore in patriarchal societies such as South Africa. Therefore, I seek to centre the subjection of women voices in the post-apartheid newsroom through the intersectional categories of gender and race. For Gqola, black male voices within the BCM failed to 'reproduce the exact voice of the black woman" (Smith, 1989: 63 cited in Gqola, 2001: 136)[216] despite their attempt to speak on behalf of women.

[214] Ibid

[215] See More, P.M. (2014). "The Intellectual Foundations of the Black Consciousness Movement," in *Intellectual Traditions in South Africa: Ideas, Individuals and Institutions*, eds. Peter Vale, Lawrence Hamilton, and Estelle Prinsloo (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2014), 173–96

[216] Ibid

3.3.2 Biko's concepts of 'envisioned self'

> Liberation is of paramount importance in the concept of Black Consciousness, for we cannot be conscious of ourselves and yet remain in bondage [of coloniality]. We want to attain the envisioned self which is a free self. (Steve Biko, 1978) (my addition, my emphasis).[217]

This thesis deploys Biko's concept of 'envisioned self' (1978: 21) and proposes it as an alternative concept that can be used in the decolonial readings and understandings of black beings outside the logic of colonial fixity. As Biko says, liberation, not coloniality, 'is of paramount importance in the concept of Black Consciousness.' Therefore, I argue that any concepts that seeks to understand the black being must bring to the fore questions of freedom, dignity and liberation, 'for we cannot be conscious of ourselves and yet remain in bondage' of coloniality. It is argued here that Biko's notion of 'envisioned self' places the responsibility on the black being to envision itself with others as a 'free self' in the social world of relations. It is a 'free self' that is not a closed and determined category of being; a "free being, a being with the future, who constructs meaning in a world already created by other such beings" (Gordon, 2010: 195).[218]

In his foreword to the 40th anniversary edition of Biko's *I Write What I like*, Njabulo Ndebele posits that the 'envisioned self' is capable of imagining itself in both signifying and symbolic ways. In other words, it is a self that sees itself 'in its own eyes' (Fanon, 1952) and the one that rejects being merely 'a potentiality' of coloniality, and thus, has 'no probability' that coloniality has any place inside it. Therefore, this envisioned self 'does not hold itself as a lack … It is [itself]. It is its follower' (Biko). If it so happens that black beings are a "different kind of beings, that is because they have their own things" (Mbembe, 2002).[219] According to Webber, a black conscious self 'has no determined essence or fixity; it must create itself through acting in the world" (2012: 8). Thus, Gordon explains at length the essence of an open self:

> The self is not a complete formation of itself but a dialectal unfolding of overcoming through which selves and correlated concepts of domination, bondage, and freedom emerge. The self, so to speak, is always struggling with its own fragmentation and incompleteness in relation to a world that resists it and through which other selves emerge through such struggles. A point of realisation is the understanding that the self cannot be self *by itself*. In transcendental terms, the only meaningful understanding of selfhood and freedom is that [it's] manifested in a world of others (Gordon 2006: 84).

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[217] See Biko, S. (1978). *I Write What I Like*: A Selection of His Writings Edited with a Personal Memoir by Aelred Stubbs (London).

[218] See Gordon, L.R. (2010) Theory in Black. Teleological Suspensions in Philosophy of Culture. *Qui Parle* , Vol. 18, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 193-214

[219] See Mbembe, A. (2002). African modes of self-writing. Translated by S. Rendall. *Public Culture* 14 (1): 239–73.

Gordon's understanding of the 'self' explicated in the statement above resists theorising the self through the negative dialectic of coloniality. Instead, his analysis of the self is empowering because, at times, 'the power of understanding (analysis) is sometimes incompatible with the need to empower (struggle)" (Wilderson 2007: 104).[220] Within this BC framework, Maldonado-Torres' 2007 'coloniality of being' is transformed from 'disempowerment and objectification into an empowering ability to inject [Fanonian] invention into existence' (Webber 2012: 8)[221] (addition my own). Biko's notion of the envisioned self now expresses the hope of exponentially extending this invention. This invention, driven by imagination, continues in perpetuity. Free from the ocular imprisonment of colonial thinking, a free being and an envisioned self (Biko) and a being that invents itself into existence (Fanon) can emerge at the heart of the 'colonial being,' if it so exists, 'to the open door of very consciousness' (Fanon, 1967).

BC gives rise to the new being

To encounter the black being in the 'envisioned self' (Biko, 1978) and in the 'inversion into existence' (Fanon, 1952) both materially and as a problem of thought requires turning away from existing disciplinary solutions to blackness's ongoing abjection from the realm of the human. That the coloniality of being and the coloniality of power are ideas said with such regularity in decolonial theory about black people and blackness leads to the suspension of thinking and ultimately what Gordon (2006) calls 'epistemic closure'. Biko's concept of the envisioned self is not one of pastness. It is the language of belonging to the future. With this logic in mind, I want to suggest what is birthed here is the potentiality of blackness. As I continue to think with Biko's and Fanon's grammar, it seems to me that envisioning oneself is testament to a 'non-essentialising approach to blackness, recognising it as a multifaceted and sometimes contradictory character' (Stevens et. al., 2017: 5).[222] It is an envisioned self that embodies every consciousness imaginable and confronts any particular situation freely with others in the social world. The sophistication of Biko's conception of the being recapitulates Fanon's insistence for a new humanity that give rise to the new being. Both Biko's and Fanon's conceptions indicate how, in the post-1994 South Africa, it is not enough to talk about the coloniality of being because it is precisely this thinking that is in collision course with Black Consciousness and other traditions of radical black thought. The central issue in 'the envisioning' is a quest 'to search, listen to and develop new concepts' (Mngxitama et. al. 2008: 5).[223] This envisioning is not only a negation but positively creates the possibility of the new self and new humanism. In other words, the envisioned self does not seek to return

[220] See Wilderson, III, F.B. (2008). Biko and the Problematic of Presence. In *Biko Lives!: Contestations and Conversations*, edited by Amanda Alexander, Nigel Gibson, and Andile Mngxitama. New York: Palgrave, 2008. Pp. 83-93.
[221] See Webber, N. (2012). Subjective Elasticity, the "Zone of Nonbeing" and Fanon's New Humanism in *Black Skin, White Masks. Postcolonial Text*, Vol 7, No 4.
[222] See Stevens, G., Bell, D., Sonn, C. C., Canham, H., & Clennon, . (2017). Transnational perspectives on black subjectivity. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 47, 459–469.
[223] See Mngxitama, A., Alexander, A. and Gibson, N.C. (2008). Biko Lives. In *Biko Lives!: Contestations and Conversations*, edited by Amanda Alexander, Nigel Gibson, and Andile Mngxitama. New York: Palgrave, 2008. Pp. 83-93.

to the past but seeks a new beginning.

3.3.3 Power *for*

> Power is the ability to live outwardly, to make choices that would initiate a chain of effects in the social world that would constitute the set of norms and institutions that would affirm one's belonging in the world instead of stimulating from it to an infinitesimal, inwardly directed path of madness and despair. (Gordon, 2006: 105)

This study situates the concept of power on a decolonial praxis. In other words, it conceptualises power in the post-apartheid South African newsroom such as *City Press* outside and beyond coercive forms of power exemplified by Quijano's (2000) concept of the 'coloniality of power.' The conception of power that is formulated in this thesis is what I call 'power *for*'. Its formulation follows that of decolonial scholar Catherine Walsh (2018) in her articulation of decoloniality as 'decoloniality *for*.' Walsh's formulation has since been taken up by Gordon (2021) in his articulation of liberation as "liberation *for*". It is contended here that power raises not only 'the question of its negative moment' (Gordon, 2021: 22) – power *from* – but also, 'it's positive one' (Ibid, p.23) – power *for*. Gordon (2021) posits that Walsh 'argues for shifting the geography of legitimacy in which reason could only come *from* colonial models of power and thought' (2021: 16; emphasis original). It is my contention in this study that power could *not* only come from coloniality. Power *for* rearticulates the notion of power outside colonial models of power and thought. However, this does not necessarily mean that the modern world has completely eroded the effects of coloniality and the aftermath of colonialism in our everyday lives. As Warren (2018) warns us, "a residue will *always* remain" (2018: 5; emphasis original), although there is always hope, through using our power, of reducing the colonial residue and to render it inoperative.

The political dimensions of power *for*

In simple terms, Gordon defines power as 'the ability to make things happen, to make the possible actual' (2021: 41), but also crucially, *with access to conditions of doing so*. In effect, he does not argue that abilities can work by or in and of themselves. I would like to add that access to conditions do not avail themselves freely but require agency and political action. Gordon elaborates that power need not be exclusively coercive power but it can also be enabling. He writes: 'This positive idea of power, often characterized as *empowerment*, is part of the mythological life of our species (Ibid, p.41; emphasis original). I contend, then, that power *for* is deployed to understand the idea of a 'transformative and liberatory agenda' (Cohen and Jackson, 2015) at *City Press*. Therefore, I suggest that the question of agency, liberation and actionality were at the heart of the actions taken by a group of black journalists at *City Press in* 2013. It is power that is intimately linked to political agency, in which Gordon argues,

is about 'the participation in the production of power for all – in a word, citizenship' (2021). Harnessing their collective power and solidarity, I argue that black journalists are at the heart of the concept of power *for*. I further propose that power *for* relies on the "rallying of creative resources for possibility" (Gordon, 2021). Gordon posits that the question of citizenship became a weapon that was used by the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in South Africa to challenge and interrogate 'white legitimacy *in political terms*' (2008: 88; emphasis original). He stresses that Biko's 'genius included rendering the politics *black*' (Ibid). In rendering the politics black, he was also rendering power *black* since "he was able to pose a genuinely revolutionary question of social transformation" (Ibid). Power *for* is articulated here with an understanding that the people who preceded us, like Biko, and who fought in the struggle for liberation and freedom in South Africa could not have waged those struggles and actions successfully "without a *slight modicum* of power" (Gordon, 2014). In Fanonian terms, in identifying and acting to fulfil their generational mission, they participated in the production and expansion of power since they understood that "power is a key feature of political action" (Gordon, 2008: 29). Biko understood that power was identical to political life. He declared that 'no group, however benevolent, can ever hand power to the vanquished on a plate' (Biko, 2002: 91). The condition of one's freedom, as Gordon (2021) suggests, 'requires power as empowerment and processes of growth'. For Gordon, this form of power is premised on the idea that power resides within people and that 'the circumstance shifts as the basis for such power becomes their investment – their willingness, in effect, for power to consolidate in institutions and the individuals who represent them' (2021: 42). Power *for*, then, becomes the necessary condition for human flourishing and a realisation that what the Global South actually has, as its greatest strength, are 'the concepts and methods that are based on the existential, political and historical reality of having to survive on the conditions in which they were not meant to survive' (Gordon, 2014). After all, power *for* is power expressed beyond the confines of the human body and its reach. It is power that is expressed through resources such as language, writing and technology which enable 'human beings to reach each other, other creatures, and things beyond the location of our physical bodies' (Gordon, 2021).

3.4 Gordon's theories of invisibility

This study deploys Gordon's (2018, 2021) theories of invisibility in order to reveal ways in which different kinds of black invisibilities are mobilised in the post-apartheid newsroom like *City Press.* These theories will help us interrogate how the logic of Euromodernity brings about the erasure of black voices or at least their invisibility in the production of human phenomenon. Gordon says the central problem of Black thought is Euromodernity's 'systemic presupposition of legitimate black invisibility and bondage' (Gordon, 2018: 30). According to Gordon, these invisibilities can take many forms, however, for the purposes of this study, I would like focus of three invisibilities, namely, 1) gendered

invisibility linked to voices, especially of women, 2) racial invisibility linked to quantity, especially of blackness, and 3) epistemic invisibility linked to the question of black people as beings with a 'non-point of view.' Invisibility thus becomes a major theoretical focus for this study. It is my contention that the conflict [224] between Haffajee and a group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 over issues of media transformation in that paper, in particular the appointment of two white news editors, brings the concerns of black invisibility to the fore. The alleged lack of 'black perspectives' (*Mail & Guardian, 2013*)[225] at *City Press* is a case in point. For this thesis, it is not about who 'owns' black perspectives or who has the 'right' to articulate them but about 'what needs to be thought, the kind of thinking and experiencing worth fighting for in the quest for aesthetic self-respect (Gordon, 2018: 32).

Gendered invisibility

This study considers ways in which Gordon's (2018, 2021) theory of gendered invisibility linked to voice, especially of women, can be employed to provide insights into lived experiences of black women journalists at *City Press* and in other post-apartheid South African newsrooms. According to Gordon, gendered invisibility functions through speech because it goes directly to the heart of gender politics. He argues that women are often ignored when they speak and as such 'not heard, they, in effect have no voice' (Gordon, 2021: 24). I argue that the black women journalists' voices are visible, but the problem lies in oppressive forms such as patriarchy, sexism and misogyny that violently render women voices invisible. In the context of South Africa, speaking is not a 'historically a heavily gendered experience' (Ibid) as in European and Asian countries in which 'to speak was a properly male phenomenon' (Ibid). However, political exclusion often render women voices mute. Gordon argues for elaborating the details of the history of voice and why it was different in many pre-European colonial societies of the Global South. The main thing for Gordon is that this gendered invisibility linked to voice is predominantly female. I argue here that the refusal to listen to women journalists' voices is informed by the patriarchal, sexist and misogynistic attitudes harboured by male journalists in a patriarchal post-apartheid South African newsroom. It is those women journalists affected by it at *City Press* and other post-apartheid newsrooms that are the foci of this chapter. Couldry (2009) argues that voice is inextricably linked to listening or what Wasserman (2013) calls the 'ethics of listening.'[226] Couldry explains the significance of this ethic of listening to women voices thus:

[224] See Naidu, B. (2013). Media transformation dream deferred. *Daily Maverick*. 24 October 2013.
[225] See *Mail & Guardian*. *City Press* editor takes leave amid racism furore. 20 October 2013.
[226] See Wasserman, H. (2013). Journalism in a new democracy: the ethics of listening. *Communicatio*, 39(1):67–84.

> 'that [which] is embodied in the process of mutually recognising our claims on each other as reflexive human agents, each with an account to give, an account of our lives that needs to be registered and heard, our stories endlessly entangled in each other' (Couldry, 2009: 580)[227].

The significance of this should be evident in how the intersection of patriarchy and gendered invisibility that have led to the harassment of women journalists, particularly in online spaces, that have led to the social invisibility of women journalists in South Africa.

Racialised invisibility

Racialised invisibility, explains Gordon, focuses on the quantity of black people in anti-black societies. He states that in US parlance there are always 'too many blacks,' which makes them 'what the French call *de trop* (rough, unnecessary, unwanted, or unsuitable)' (Gordon, 2021: 23). Gordon's theorising should be understood in the context that black people are a tiny minority in the US. He says in some institutions in the US, even one member of a 'racially degraded group' would be celebrated as an achievement in the struggle for diversity, even though that member has 'limited access' in that institution. Gordon argues that such anti-black societies such as the US 'draw legitimacy from Black non-existence or invisibility. Black appearance, in other words, would be a violation of those systems' (2021: 76). However, I seek to problematise Gordon's theory by arguing that in the context of South Africa black people face a double-play of invisibility and hypervisibility. I argue that black journalists at *City Press* faced this double play of invisibility and hypervisibility in 2013 when they became 'invisible' in the news desk after the appointment of two white news editors at that paper despite their hypervisibility in terms of black journalists being the numerical majority. Gordon's theory of racialised invisibility is useful in understanding how the black journalists at *City Press* challenged forms of knowledge production in the newsroom by protesting against the appointment of white news editors and raising the issue of the lack of 'black perspectives' in that paper. It will also be deployed to analyse how the black journalists' discourses are linked to wider issues power, privilege and the suppression of marginalised voices. These issues are important in revealing to what extent racism, marginality, invisibility and hypervisibility are part of the lived experience of black journalists and women journalists at *City Press* and in other post-apartheid newsrooms.

[227] See Couldry, N. (2009). Rethinking the politics of voice. *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 23(4):579–582.

Epistemic invisibility

According to Gordon, there's a form of black invisibility that is epistemological in nature, which is based in the 'presumed illegitimacy of non-Euromodern knowledge' (2021: 24). I argue that this form of epistemic invisibility takes a different form in the post-apartheid South African newsroom as a 'form of presumed knowing' (Ibid) in which women journalists are identified as a group of people by patriarchs and politicians and treated as people from whom there is 'nothing to know or learn' (Ibid). This particular form of epistemic invisibility in relation to women journalists will be explored in Chapter 7 of this study to reveal ways in which this form of oppressive invisibility, which bars women journalists from embodying political agency, is imposed. This study will show that having been excluded from the production and appearance of and contributing to knowledge, women journalists 'bodies become a site of patriarchal gaze' or what Taylor (2016) has theorised as 'somatic aesthetics.'[228] Using the concept of somatic aesthetics, the study will demonstrate in Chapter 7 how some politicians and male journalists force black women journalists in the field and newsroom respectively to negotiate their embodiment through tropes such as 'stereotypes of steatopygia and macrophalluses to attraction, disgust, and fear' (Gordon, 2018: 30). In such instances, black women journalists are forced to treat their black embodiment as problems as well as cause for celebration. Radicalised, it raises the question of the marshalling black gaze which sexualised women bodies in the post-apartheid South African media. Gordon's theory of epistemic invisibility is also useful in analysis the issue of black perspectives raised by a group of black journalists in *City Press* in 2013 after the paper had appointed two white news editors. I argue that the media is engaged in a 'constant dialectical struggle for meaning' (Gordon, 2015)[229] and that black perspectives bring a universalising and decolonising practice in the production of knowledge in order to counter the 'presumed illegitimacy of non-European knowledge.'

3.5 Some useful concepts

Below are some of the main conceptual tools that will be deployed in this thesis together with the main theories of decolonial thought, Black Consciousness and Black feminist intersectionality to undertake a decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices at *City Press* and in other political spheres.

[228] See Taylor, P.C. (2016). *Black Is Beautiful: A Philosophy of Black Aesthetics.* Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell.
[229] See Gordon, L.R. (2018). "Four Kinds of Invisibility from Euromodernity". A UCONN TEDX talk delivered at Peabody Hall, Room 115, University of Connecticut. 10 December 2018.

3.5.1 Floating signifier

This thesis explores the idea of conceptualisng media transformation using Laclau's notion of a 'floating signifier' without fixed meaning to the journalists at the *City Press* newspaper and an independent and commercial press in South Africa. From a discourse-theoretical perspective, the argument that is developed here is that media transformation, as a floating signifier, is crucial in understanding the 2013 *City Press* fracas between Haffajee and a group of black journalists over the meaning of media transformation after the paper had appointed two white news editor. According to Laclau (2007)[230], a floating signifier is the signifier that moves between different objects and represents itself as a heterogenous field. Because it moves between projects, it is not empty; it is floating. Media transformation conceptualised as a floating signifier means it is 'ambiguous, with no full or fully-fixed meaning' (Daniels, 2012: 80). The study will examine whether media transformation was a 'master signifier' or a 'floating signifier' for journalists at *City Press*. I argue that media transformation as a floating signifier, in which the meaning of it should never be essentialised, is important in understanding the discourses on race and media transformation at *City Press*.

3.5.2 Fluid blackness

The argument put forward in this thesis is that there is an unceasing tension between the concept of 'fluid blackness' and the decolonial framework offered by some African and Latin American decolonial scholars because of its colonial fixity. This is especially true when one considers that the decolonial frameworks and ideas developed by some decolonial scholars do not resonate with the notion and current thinking that black subjectivity is fluid and thus can 'open up spaces in which this [Fanon's] humanity can unfurl' (Webber, 2012: 1).[231] Consequently, the decolonial concepts of the coloniality of being and the coloniality of power, for example, have been developed in a way that often discipline us into thinking through and along the lines that reinscribe our coloniality. Fluid blackness, however, requires that we must we think of blackness that speaks to a range of configuration of black beings and blackness that takes many forms as it engages in a dialectic struggle with the world and as it forms new relations, new norms, new values, and new ethics. Fluid blackness is also not interested in the genealogy and ontology of blackness; it is interested in 'assuming intricately coded subjective positions' Webber (2012: 1)[232] in a social world. This concept of fluid blackness ties well with BC because "Black

[230] See Laclau, E. (2007) *Emancipation(s)*. London: Verso.
[231] See Webber, N. (2012). Subjective Elasticity, the "Zone of Nonbeing" and Fanon's New Humanism in *Black Skin, White Masks. Postcolonial Text* Vol 7 No 4 (2012).
[232] Ibid

Consciousness is thus fluid (as a semiological notion)" (Gordon 2008: 85).[233] In fact, Biko (1978) argued for the permeability of blackness that included East Indians, Coloureds and Asians. This points not only to the inclusive nature of blackness but also to its fluidity and permeability.

3.5.3 Interpellation

This thesis deploys Althusser's (2006) concept of 'interpellation' in order to investigate whether the *City Press* newspaper succeeded in interpellating or hailing a group of black journalists in 2013 to follow the paper's new ideological philosophy of non-racialism and Afropolitanism. We have a similar ideological interpellation or hailing of City Press by a group of journalists as unsupportive of 'black perspectives.' According to Althusser, 'ideas can become active only in and through ideological forms' (2006: 48)[234]. For Althusser, it is the subject that makes ideology works. This study will interrogate how the black journalists responded to this hailing. Interpellation will also be employed here to understand the sexist hailing Haffajee faced at *City Press* which was designed to make her adopt 'maleness' in her editing. The argument here is that male journalists at the paper attempted to make a mockery of her appointment as the editor by interpellating her. The study will investigate how she responded to it. Lastly, using interpellation as a conceptual tool of analysis, this study seeks to understand the performative dimensions of interpellations and ideological subjectivation that took place in 2013 at *City Press* through the different roles played by Haffajee and a group of journalists.

3.5.4 Marshalling black gaze

Following Du Bois, Canham and Williams (2017) argue that black subjects face double subjection. They argue first there is the pressure of experience of being black under the hegemonic white gaze and second of experiencing what they term the 'marshalling black gaze' (Canham and Williams, 2017: 23)[235]. Although the authors developed the concept of marshalling black gaze to double gaze the professional, black middle class in South Africa faces, I deploy the concept here as a tool that polices, disciplines and marshals women bodies in a patriarchal and male-dominated South African post-apartheid media like *City Press*. I argue that black women journalists find themselves in a 'tenuous position of being corralled from the 'outside' and 'inside' (Ibid) by both the white gaze and the marshalling black gaze. I further argue that these black women journalists face 'tensions arising out of navigating these dialectical disciplinary gazes' (Ibid). This study interrogates how the black women journalists are affected by racial discourses of the white gaze whilst at the same time having to deal with the black male gaze that serves

[233] See Gordon, L.R. (2008). "Phenomenology of Biko's Black Consciousness." In *Biko Lives!: Contestations and Conversations*, edited by Amanda Alexander, Nigel Gibson, and Andile Mngxitama. New York: Palgrave, 2008. Pp. 83–93
[234] See Althusser, L. (2006). *Philosophy of Encounter*. London: Verso.
[235] See Canham, H., & Williams, R. (2017). Being black, middle class and the object of two gazes. Ethnicities, 17, 23–46

to set sexist and misogynistic boundaries on women bodies with the newsroom and in the course of doing their journalistic work.

3.5.5 Misguided black rage

This study deploys the concept of affect and rage, in order to critically examine how the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) deploys rage or anger against journalists, especially women journalists, when covering the party's protests against acts of white supremacy, discrimination and racism. According to Canham (2017), 'Black rage is seen as a response to White supremacy and it has the following outcomes: it can have destructive consequences, can enable psychological release of pent-up anger, and can simultaneously be an expression of self-love' (2017: 427).[236] I have theorised EFF's rage as 'misguided black rage' that is having destructive consequences on women journalists who face intimidation, harassment, violence and abuse, including online threats of rape and murder, from party supporters and members. This thesis looks at two instances where EFF deployed rage and seeks to understand whether it can be read as a form of Back rage that is manifested 'as an expression of self-love' (Canham, 2017) or read as decolonial love that 'anti-war and would therefore be also anti-rape, abuse (physical and emotional) and online trolling' (Daniels, 2020: 110).

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that to present its central concerns, decolonial theory relies on coloniality as a category of thought or mode of investigation and has elucidated how this is problematic in terms of bringing the grammar of subordination in analysis. On the other hand, Black Consciousness provides a space through which more questions can be created, questions whose final answers are not predetermined by it, although paradoxically answered by it. It has demonstrated that Biko and Fanon were keen on bringing up concepts that have a positive presence in black radical thought or what is generally regarded as Africana philosophy. It has provided a critique of the decolonial theory and some of its main concepts with the sole intention of making a contribution to the development of decolonial theory itself. It has argued that the substitution of coloniality as a mode of investigation with the potentiality of blackness doesn't result in the impairment of decolonial thought. Instead, what it does it enriches it. Lastly, since our thinking involves a conception of the world, to address the shortcomings of the concepts of the coloniality of being and the coloniality of power, this chapter has highlighted the useful concepts of Biko (envisioned self) and Fanon (envisioning into existence) and Gordon's thoughts on power. The value of bringing the theory of decoloniality and Black Consciousness together lies in W.E.B. du Bois concept of 'double consciousness' which allows us to constitute blackness from the perspective of the dominant other. As Gordon has taught us, there is also another form of '*potentiated*

[236] See Hugo Canham. (2017). Embodied black rage. *Du Bois Review*, 14:2 (2017) 427–445

double consciousness' that begins to be critical to how the dominant other constructs blackness as a problem. This then forces blackness to look beyond blackness itself. In transcending blackness, one has to locate blackness as a particular phenomenon in phenomenological terms and outside some methodological assumptions that construct blackness as a problem instead of constructing it as a phenomenon that is facing problems. This existential analysis is crucial. The presupposition of coloniality in blackness demands a particular outcome before performance and because of the imposition of a decolonial position before analysis, it becomes a *priori*. Perhaps, the method is what is wrong but not potentiated blackness.

Chapter 4

Methodological and Decolonial Meditations

> *No thesis can pass without recognisable methodology. There is a mandatory demand: how did you go about getting to know what you have put together as your thesis? Consequently, methodology has become the straitjacket that every new researcher has to wear if they are to discover knowledge. This blocks all attempts to know differently. It has become a disciplinary tool that makes it difficult for new knowledge to be discovered and generated.'* - Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017

Introduction:

The method of research in this study is not rigid. However, it does employ some traditional research methods, i.e., the theoretical, conceptual, and qualitative humanistic framework in order to throw light on how black voices are essentialised, racialised, gendered, politicised and lived in the post-apartheid South African newsroom and public sphere using *City Press* newspaper as an example. Therefore, methodology is, primarily embedded in the theoretical and conceptual framework. It is based on standard techniques of qualitative research such as the interview method, newspaper data and a bit of autoethnography in gathering information. Discourse analysis and sociogenic analysis have been deployed in order to examine the subjection of black voices at *City Press* and to interrogate the lived experiences of black journalists (and mine) in the post-apartheid South African newsroom, respectively. This multi-pronged theoretical and methodological approach is operationalised here in order to provide a richer, complex, and nuanced analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in post-apartheid South African media.

The empirical findings - through interviews, autoethnography and newspaper data - have been examined through the prism of the politico-philosophical concepts tied to the invisibilities of voices as discussed in Chapter Three. Discourse analysis has been used primarily to understand the ideological workings in the conflict that ensued at *City Press* in 2013 between a group of six black journalists and the then editor Ferial Haffajee (*The Star*, 2013).[237] Fanon's (1967) sociogenic analysis has been deployed specifically to understand the subjugation of the voices of black women journalists under the weight of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny at *City Press* and other media houses. Sociogenic analysis as part of decolonial approaches is therefore used here to understand the lived realities of black voices (and mine) and their subjection in a post-apartheid newsroom and public sphere. Central to these theoretical and

[237] Sapa, Staff Reporter. *City Press* editor takes leave amid racism furore. *The Star*. 20 October 2013.

methodological techniques has been relationality-as-method in order to juxtapose black voices and black perspectives in relation to something and to read the theory of decolonial theory in relation to Black Consciousness, Africana philosophy and intersectional Black feminism. In the first section of this chapter, this thesis will share some of the methodological dilemmas I encountered as a researcher during the initial stages of this research leading up to data collection. Then, it will describe some of the methods employed in this research in relation to how black voices are essentialised, racialised, gendered, politicised and lived at *City Press* and in the post-apartheid South African newsroom and public sphere.

4.1 Shaping methodology: ethical dilemmas

During the preliminary stages of this research, I had planned to interview Haffajee and a group of black journalists who were directly involved in the 2013 *City Press* fracas as participants in the study, including former journalists who had worked at the paper during Haffajee's editorship. Initially, some black journalists agreed to take part in the study, but in the end they did not participate in the interviews or answer the interview questionnaires sent to them. Interestingly, only Haffajee responded to two sets of interview questionnaires sent to her both as a former editor of *City Press* editor and a black woman journalist. The questionnaires were sent through email due to the national shutdown regulations brought by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. I was also interested in interviewing Mondli Makhanya, the current editor of *City Press,* who, through the paper's managing editor, flatly refused to be part of the study although the paper indicated that I could continue with my research without their participation. It must be stated, however, that Makhanya is not connected or linked to the 2013 *City Press* fractious battle. At that stage, however, I did not know how to deal with this matter until the university research ethics committee granted the ethics clearance for this research (see Appendices A). I raise this because, as Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues, 'methodology has become the straitjacket that every researcher has to wear if they are to discover knowledge' (2017).[238] Consequently, this study relied on interview data from Haffajee and Lizeka Mda, former *City Press* sectional editor, newspaper data and personal reflections through autoethnography to make sense of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid newsroom. This thesis has some 'recognisable methodology' (Ibid)[239] which is embedded in the theoretical, conceptual and qualitative humanistic framework discussed below. Chiumbu (2017) urges us to pay attention to requirements of decolonial research which may clash with ethical applications, academic regulations and guidelines of doing research.[240] However, before that, I argue for a decolonial move from applying rigid and conventional Western methods and methodological critique and decolonising methodologies.

[238] See Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2017). Decolonising research methodology must include undoing its dirty history. *The Conversation*. 26 September 2017.
[239] Ibid
[240] See Chiumbu, S. (2017). Why Decolonise Research Methods? Some Initial Thoughts. Presentation: HSRC Seminar, 2 May 2017.

4.2 From conventional methods to methodological critique

The resurgence of debates on decolonisation in South Africa inspired by recent calls by university students in 2015 to 'decolonise' the university provide an opportunity for us in the field of media studies to critique and rethink the way we conduct our research. In South Africa, scholars such as Archie Mafeje (2000), Achille Mbembe (2001, 2015), Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015, 2017), and Relebohile Moletsane (2015)[241] have engaged with the issue of decolonising methodologies from varied disciplinary perspectives. Ironically, decolonisation of western methods is being *talked* about in the South African academy today, however, 'it is being talked in ways saturated with the irony of evasion' (Gordon, 2017: 29).[242] This is despite those conventional methods 'become *extraneous* to those systems' functions in spite of having already been generated by them' (Gordon, 2014: 84).[243] As a result, western methods remain the dominant conventional and proverbial methods through which to emerge when doing research. Gordon (2014) argues that the dominant systems of knowledge of the Global North and their presumed legitimacy continue to organise and inform research and knowledge production in the Global South. W.E.B Du Bois (1903/1995)[244] and Frantz Fanon (1967) observed that method was treated as a closed affair that was simply applied to black people when being studied. Therefore, Fanon enlisted conventional methods in the service of colonisation by declaring that 'there is a point at which methods devour themselves' (1967: 12). For Gordon (2014), Fanon's declaration 'brought into focus the problem of evaluating method itself, of assessing methodology' (2014: 85). This thesis argues that a critique and evaluation of method is useful in countering the problem of the colonial imposition at methodological level, which Gordon argues, 'carries dangers of disciplinary decadence marked by the fetishisation of method' (Ibid, p.81). Following Fanon, Gordon argues that every method of inquiry must be held suspect and be subjected to critique because 'any presumed method, especially from a subject living within a colonised framework, could generate continued colonisation' (Ibid).

Reflecting on method, Manganyi contends that 'although method is not unduly enshrined, it is considered important to the extent that it may lead to a better understanding of a human person' (1973: 38).[245] Manganyi's argument speaks to the need to develop alternative models of methods that will

[241] See Mbembe, A. (2001). *On the Postcolony*. London: University of California Press; see Mbembe, A. (2015). "Decolonizing Knowledge and the Question of the Archive." Public lecture, Johannesburg, Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER); see Mafeje, A. B. M. (2000). 'Africanity: A Combative Ontology', *CODESRIA Bulletin 1*; see Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J (2013a) *Empire, global coloniality, and African subjectivity*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books; see Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J (2013b) Coloniality of power in postcolonial Africa: myths of decolonization. Dakar: *CODESRIA*; and Molestane, R (2015) Whose Knowledge is It? Towards Reordering Knowledge Production and Dissemination in the Global South. *Educational Research for Social Change* (ERSC)Volume: 4 No. 2: pp. 35-4

[242] See Gordon, L.R. (2017). "Thoughts on Two Recent Decades of Studying Race and Racism," *Social Identities* 24, no. 1, 29–38.

[243] see Gordon, L.R. (2014). "Disciplinary Decadence and the Decolonization of Knowledge," *Africa Development* XXXIX, CODESRIA no. 1, 81–92.

[244] See Du Bois, W. E. B. (1995). *The souls of Black folks*. Mineola, NY: Dover Thrift. (Original work published in 1903).

[245] See Manganyi, C.N. (1973). *Being-Black-in-the-World.* Johannesburg: Spro-Cas/Ravan Press.

enrich the cultivation of a better analysis and understanding of human beings. This study posits that it is the responsibility and task of scholars in the field of media studies to challenge the presupposition of the legitimacy of any method. Lastly, Gordon argues that the problem of the fetishisation of method cannot be wished away by simply making decolonial and indigenous methods the 'new' convention and standard. Instead, he argues that what is important is to raise the standards of the humanity of methods and methodologies used in conducting research by 'going through and beyond black, white, brown, yellow, and red to the conditions of standards themselves' (Gordon, 2012: 10).[246] The qualitative humanistic methodological which frames this research has been deployed with that insight in mind.

4.3 Toward a qualitative humanistic approach

The methodological premise of this study is that qualitative research has traditionally functioned as a tool of colonial oppression, producing black people, particularly indigenous people, as objects of inquiry (Nanemeka, 2003). To avoid reproducing this pattern of colonial domination, I deployed a humanistic methodological framework that seeks to 'put a human face to what is called a body of knowledge and in the process unmasks the presumably faceless body' (Kovach, 2009)[247] being studied. A qualitative humanistic methodological framework affirms the humanity of black people in a way that would lead to research questions that places issues such as agency, freedom and reason at the centre of inquiry involving the study of black people. A humanistic methodology, as Anna Jane Gordon (2006) has remarked,

> 'grasps as fully as possible what it means to be a human being. It does not recoil from the immensity of the task or retreat into methods behind which their genuine commitments may be hidden. It refutes bitingly the claim that to introduce substantive commitments [to humanity, agency, freedom and reason] is to open scientific research to fierce battles that promise never to be resolved' (Jane Anna Gordon, 2006: 301)[248] (addition my own)

This humanistic methodological framework follows the ground-breaking methodological work undertaken by W.E.B. Du Bois in 1898 in "The Study of Negro Problems".[249] The embedding of the politico-philosophical concepts into this humanistic methodological approach has made it possible for them to engage in a 'nagging dialectic, urging on the possibility of greater freedom, the possibility of a

[246] See Gordon, L.R. (2012). Forthcoming article titled "Reasoning in Black: Africana Philosophy Under the Weight of Misguided Reason," *The Savannah Review* 1, no. 1 (November 2012): 76–90.
[247] See Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
[248] See Gordon, J.A. (2006). "Some Reflections on Challenges Posed to Social Science Method by the Study of Race." In *A Companion to African-American Studies*, edited with an introduction by Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
[249] See Du Bois, W.E.B. (1898b). The Study of the Negro Problems. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 11(Jan.):1-23.

richer human existence, never resting on one moment" (Kovach, 2009). For Kovach, a humanistic approach takes seriously the transformation potential and human agency of people being studied (Ibid). It aims to centre black epistemologies and worldviews, which are typically delegitimised in the Western methodological frameworks. An example of such negation can be found in conventional methods such as interviews that treat the researcher as the knower and the participant as an object of study. For Mafeje, a humanistic methodology must be combative in order to 'create space for the emergence of new styles of thinking.' (Mafeje 2001b: 55-6).[250] Other examples of humanistic methodological approaches that do not turn away from the reality can be found in the body of work of Smith (1999)[251] and Sandoval (2000).[252]

4.4. Data Collection

The data collection for this study took place in two phases. The first phase constituted the collection and organisation of a corpus of empirical data which related to the 2013 *City Press* conflict across several different post-apartheid media publications. This corpus of texts was mostly comprised of online South African media. This phase of the data collection took place between 2020 and 2021. The second phase of data collection comprised interviews with the former editors at City Press. However, due to the national shutdown regulations of Covid-19, the interviews could not be held face-to-face with participant interviewees. Interview questionnaires were then sent to the participants via email. Two email interviews were conducted with Ferial Haffajee, the then editor of City Press, and Lizeka Mda, a former sectional editor at *City Press*. The interview texts were treated as empirical data and were thus incorporated into the study's corpus of texts and analysed accordingly.

4.4.1 Corpus construction: *City Press* fracas media texts

The corpus of media texts which was constructed for this study consists of editorial content as well as interview data. These texts were analysed using the theoretical and conceptual tools discussed in Chapter Three. While the range of texts chosen for analysis within this study may be diverse, they were each chosen because of their significance in terms of the making and mediation of black voices at *City Press* and in the post-apartheid South African newsroom and public sphere. It must be stated, however, that the texts which were chosen for analysis in this study are by no means exhaustive; they are insightful in that they provide a clear indication of the overarching discourses of media transformation within the post-apartheid South African newsroom. The chosen texts fit within the scope of the research question

[250] See Mafeje, A. (2001b). *Anthropology in post-independence Africa: end of an era or the problem self-redefinition*. Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Foundation.
[251] See Smith, L.T. (1999/2008). *Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples*. London: Zed.
[252] See Sandoval, C. (2000). *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis: Univ. Minn. Press.

insofar as they contributed to the debates about media transformation in the post-apartheid South African media. They provided both historical and contemporary evidence of the ideologies which are so pervasive within the media and racial identity politics, in particular at *City Press*.

4.4.2 Research ethics

I applied for ethics clearance and received it, and my ethics clearance certificate is attached in Appendix A. The interview participants were given sufficient time to agree (with fully informed consent) to the interviews. They were duly informed of all the aspects of the research, and the interview questionnaires (see Appendices B & C) for the study were emailed to the participants before-hand. The ethical considerations as per the suggestions of the Wits University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) were taken into account. There were no conflicts of interest throughout this phase of the data collection. The participants were given the opportunity to remain anonymous should they wished to do so. However, all the participants who were approached for the interviews consented to being named within the contents of this thesis. It is also important to note that the participants are senior journalists, and therefore, public figures because of the role they play in shaping the public discourse in the country. For the ethics clearance, please see Appendices A.

4.5 Data Analysis

This section outlines the analytical tools which were utilised in the analysis of the corpus of media texts and interview data. These analytical tools were deployed together with the theoretical and conceptual tools discussed in Chapter Three. The arguments outlined earlier in the literature review and theoretical framework were taken into account insofar they point to notions of voice exclusivity/inclusivity, visibility/marginalization, agency/passivity, subjecthood/objecthood. These were the key conceptual binaries that were interrogated and problematized throughout the decolonial analysis of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South newsroom and public sphere with specific reference to the *City Press*.

4.5.1 Discourse Analysis

Besides the theoretical conceptual method, discourse analysis has also been deployed throughout the thesis to consider not only what discourses are produced in it, but also how they are produced. To discuss the subjection of black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom and public sphere, via the contradictory nature of media transformation at *City Press* in 2013, it is necessary to outline what discourse analysis is and how meanings are constructed. Since discourses are 'socially constructed

knowledges of (some aspect of) reality' (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001: 4),[253] discourse analysis sets out to show that language enables the reconstruction of the social and cultural reality through the meaning given in the process of enunciation. It is through language that the subjection and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom such as *City Press* takes place. Discourse analysis helps us to see how the conflict at *City Press* in 2013 between Haffajee and a group of black journalists took on substantially different meanings and differently ideological frameworks. Just as that the field of discourse is not homogeneous, the media is also not a homogenous space. Therefore, it is not surprising that conflicting discourses developed between Haffajee and a group of journalists since 'words, expressions and propositions, change their meaning according to the positions held by those who use them' (Macdonell, 1986: 50).[254] In the 2013 *City Press* conflict, the 'statement(s) made, the words used, and the meanings of the words used' by Haffajee and a group of black journalists 'depend on where and against what the statement is made' (Ibid, p.54).[255] This thesis argues that the contestations over the meaning of media transformation at *City Press* in 2013 came from the positions in struggle in relation to the discourses articulated by Haffajee vis-à-vis a group of black journalists.

In her critique of discourse analysis, Janks says we must pay attention to issues of positioning of texts and negation in discourse and the consequences thereof (1997).[256] Similarly, Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000) urges us to notice how discourse analysis interchangeably treats 'discourse-as-text', 'discourse-as-discursive-practice,' and 'discourse-as-social-practice.'[257] Passada argues that although discourse analysis is useful in analysing the ideologies embedded in texts and meaning, it faces several limitations. Passada posits that discourse analysis fails to recognise that language "enters into this discursive logic materialising the coloniality" (Passada, 2019: 9).[258] In sum and constructing the argument on the basis of Passada, this thesis proposes Fanon's (1967) sociogenic analysis to take into account the sociogenic conditions in which racial identities and racialised Black Consciousness were forged by a group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013.

4.5.2 Sociogenic Analysis

Fanon's (1967) sociogenic analysis is deployed in this thesis in order to provide insights into the lived realities of black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom and their subjection to the

[253] See Kress, G. and Van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal Discourse: the modes and media of contemporary communication*. London: Arnold.
[254] See Macdonell, D. (1986). *Theories of Discourse: An Introduction*. New York: Basil Blackwell.
[255] Ibid, p.54.
[256] See Janks, H. (1997). CDA as a Research Tool, *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, Routledge. 329-342.
[257] See Blommaert, J. & Bulcaen, C. (2000). Critical Discourse Analysis. *Annual Review Anthropology*. 447-466.
[258] See Passad, M.N.M. (2019). Discourses Analysis by a Decolonial Perspective. In *Advances in Discourse Analysis*. (Ed.) Lavinia Suciu.

'evidential force of intersubjective or social relations' (Gordon, 2014: 101). Fanon, according to Gordon (2008), argued that sociogenesis is simply that which is created and constructed by the social world.[259] At the heart of Fanon's sociogenic analysis is the realisation that the 'movement from bondage to liberation would make no sense without the subjects of liberation being able to affect the social world in which their identities have been forged' (Gordon, 2008: 86)[260]. Therefore, in studying the subjection of black voices in the post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press*, it is important to take into account 'lived experience of blacks in the face of sociogenic sedimentations of their identity and political possibilities' (Gordon, 2000: 4)[261] because 'blacks are locked in a situation that demands a struggle with social structures' (Ibid)[262]. The appeal to sociogenesis in this study is informed by the 'kinds of critical questions and social and political conditions that come to bear on their meaning and being' (Gordon, 2008: 118). This thesis argues that the relevance of Fanon's sociogenic analysis to decolonial and Black Consciousness thought 'pertains to the understanding of black identity, the internal dynamics of liberation that are the hallmarks of black thought, and the metacritical reflections on how one goes about such discourse' (Gordon: 2000: 3). It is suggested here that 'where the human being is the subject of the discourse' (Gordon, 2004: 170),[263] sociogenesis must undergird discourse analysis.

4.6 Some useful methods

The following methods have been used to collect information and data that forms part of the corpus of this research.

4.6.1 Interviews

According to Peräkylä (2005), most qualitative research probably is based on interviews. He suggests that there are good reasons for this. By using interviews, says Peräkylä, the researcher can reach 'areas of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible such as people's subjective experiences and attitudes' (2005: 869).[264] He further posits that interviews are a convenient way of overcoming distances in space and time. In this respect, the interview method has been particularly useful in gathering information through emailed questionnaires during the strict lockdown regulations brought by Covid-

[259] See Gordon, L.R. (2008). *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
[260] Ibid, p.86
[261] See Gordon, L.R. (2000). *Existentia Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought*. New York: Routledge. Also see Young, III, and Josiah Ulysses. *A Pan-African Theology: Providence and the Legacies of the Ancestors*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1992.
[262] Ibid
[263] See Gordon, L.R. (2004). "Philosophical Anthropology, Race, and the Political Economy of Disenfranchisement," *The Columbia Human Rights Law Review* 36, no. 1 (Fall 2004): 145–172.
[264] See Peräkylä, A. (2005). Analyzing talk and text. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.), 869–886). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

19 in 2020 and 2021. The interview method was deployed in this study and comprised of a reflexive commentary because 'interview talk is, by nature, a cultural and collective phenomenon' (Wetherell & Potter, 1988: 169).[265] The interviews were conducted through specific questionnaires (see Appendices B & C) with two former *City Press* black women editors, Ferial Haffajee and Lizeka Mda. In addition to these interviews, the study also draws on the experiences of other black women journalists by making use of accounts of particular events as case studies and newspaper data in order to provide an account and a richer interpretation of the relationship between the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and women journalists. These additional sources of data were examined and analysed with the conceptual philosophical tools in order to reflect on how the EFF deployed what I call 'misguided black rage' to mistreat and harass women journalists by applying patriarchal, sexist and misogynistic tendencies towards them when doing their work.

Although this thesis recognises that the interview method forms part of oppressive and short-sighted systems of knowledge production (Ramos, 2015),[266] I argue that rejecting it as part of the constellation of methods in knowledge production is unprogressive. I also contend that it is unhelpful trying to decolonise western methodologies as a system of knowing because one 'cannot be modified to subvert the very foundational motivations and spirit that inform Euro-modern knowledge" (Hlabanyane, 2018: 658).[267] In their introduction to the book *Not Only the Master's Tools*, Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon (2006)[268] argue that instead of modifying existing methods, we should develop additional ones or build methods of our own. For them, a proper response to western methods is, 'transcending rather than dismantling Western ideas through building our own houses of thought' (Ibid, p. ix).[269] Fanon, according to Gordon, argues that the greatest failure is to do nothing.[270] In Fanon's view, 'failure should not result in an act of numbing oneself' (de la Garza, 2014).[271]

[265] See Wetherell, M. and Potter, J. 1988. 'Discourse Analysis and the Identification of Interpretative Repertoires', in C. Antaki (ed.) *Analysing Everyday Explanation*. London: Sage.
[266] See Ramos, F. (2015). Reflections on methodology: Dilemmas in a research project about the educational experiences of refugee background youth. AARE Conference, Western Australia 2015.

[267] See Hlabanyane, N. (2018). Can a Methodology Subvert the Logics of its Principal? Decolonial Meditations. *Perspectives on Science*. Volume 26. Issue 6. November-December 2018. p.658-693
[268] See Gordon, L.R. and Gordon, J.A. (2006). "Introduction: Not Only the Master's Tools." In *Not Only the Master's Tools: African-American Studies in Theory and Practice*, ed. by Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2006. Pp. ix–xi.
[269] Ibid, p.IX
[270] See Gordon, L.R. (2018). "Lewis R. Gordon: Revisiting Frantz Fanon's *The Damned of the Earth*," interviewed by Cihan Aksan, *State of Nature* (April 22, 2018).
[271] See De la Garza, S. (2014). Mindful heresy, holo-expression, and poesies: An autoethnographic response to the orthodoxies of interpersonal and cultural life. In R. Boylorn & M. Orbe (Eds.), *Critical autoethnography: Intersecting cultural identities in everyday life* (pp. 209–221). Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

4.6.2 Autoethnography

Autoethnography is a useful qualitative method used to analyse people's lives (Méndez, 2013).[272] This thesis seeks to ground autoethnography in examining black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom such as *City Press* as an important feature in personal narratives of our lived experiences. According to Ellis, autoethnography entails, at the core, the telling of personal stories and 'involves a back-and-forth movement between experimenting and examining a vulnerable self and observing and revealing the broader context of that experience' (2007: 14).[273] It is central in doing decolonial work because 'to tell a story is to take arms against the threat of time, to resist time, or to harness time. The telling of a story preserves the teller from oblivion; the story builds the identity of the teller and the legacy which she or he leaves for the future' (Portelli, 1990: 59).[274] Autoethnography is deployed in this thesis as a tool in order to understand the paradox of my lived experience and that of others in a post-apartheid South African newsroom and public sphere. For Pathak, using autoethnography to tell a personal story is tantamount to submitting to 'radical openness' (Pathak, 2010: 8),[275] which is to 'see not only what is in one's social and environmental context, to see not only what one has actually done or said, but also to see that which is on the surface not visible' (González, 2003: 84).[276]

Importantly, autoethnography deployed in this thesis is not intended to treat black people as just *experience*, a formulation from a 'longstanding assumption that Africana and black peoples bring experience to a world whose understanding finds theoretical grounding in European, often read as "white" thought' (Gordon, 2012: 7). It is deployed with an insight that, as a black person, I am capable of 'figuring out' (theorising and interpreting) my own experience by bringing the relationality of my thoughts and ideas closer to those who have had similar experiences as mine. Like Fanon, in telling my story, '*I do not come with timeless truths*'. Yet, 'as an autoethnographer, my story is unique because it is mine; it is a lived experience, and also because I have the academic training to examine it critically' (Pathak, 2010: 2).[277] Performing autoethnography is an epistemic form of disobedience because it is about 'transgressive scholarship of the body with a heart' (Spry, 2010: 277 cited in Mackinlay, 2019: 21).[278] The question of telling our lived experiences in the post-apartheid newsroom and interpreting

[272] See Méndez, M. (2013). Autoethnography as a research method: Advantages, limitations and criticisms. *Colomb. Appl. Linguist. J.* June - December 2013. Vol. 15. Number 2. Bogotá, Colombia. p. 279 – 287.
[273] See Ellis, C. (2007). Telling secrets, revealing lives: Relational ethics in research with intimate others. *Qualitative Inquiry, 13*, 3-29.
[274] See Portelli, A. (1990). *The Death of Luigi Trastulli, and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History.* SUNY Series in Oral and Public History. State University of New York Press.
[275] See Pathak, A. (2010). Opening my voice, claiming my space: Theorizing the possibilities of postcolonial approaches to autoethnography. *Journal of Research Practice*, *6*(1), Article M10.
[276] See González, M. C. (2003). An ethics for postcolonial ethnography. In R. P. Claire (Ed.), *Expressions of ethnography* (pp. 77-86). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
[277] See Pathak, A. A. (2010). Opening my voice, claiming my space: Theorizing the possibilities of postcolonial approaches to autoethnography. *Journal of Research Practice*, *6*(1), Article M10.
[278] See Mackinlay, E. (2019). *Critical Writing for Embodied Approaches: Autoethnography, Feminism and*

them using the thoughts and ideas of others who have undergone similar experiences brings to the fore the importance of relationality as a decolonial approach to doing research.

4.6.3 Relationality-as-method

> 'to identify blackness, one must be in a relation to it. This relational matter requires looking *beyond blackness* ironically in order to understand blackness. This means moving from the conception of meaning as singular, substance-based, and fixed into the grammar of how meaning is produced" (Gordon, 2018: 33; emphasis original)[279].

Relationality as a method is deployed in this thesis in order to cultivate conditions wherein the conceptions and practices of decoloniality, including my own, can enter into conversations with Black Consciousness thought and other ideas in building 'understandings that both cross geopolitical locations and colonial differences, and contest the totalising claims and political epistemic violence of modernity' (Walsh and Mignolo, 2018: 1). This thesis contends that media studies, as a branch of human studies, must deal with 'the question of blacks' relation, both qualitatively and quantitatively, to the rest of the human species' (Gordon, 2006: 23).[280] Part of media studies should not, then, 'be a reactive but active one of presenting a critical anthropology or a new critical human studies' (Ibid) through which the very question of human relations can both be situated and play a vital role. This study must deal with the question of 'black perspectives' at *City Press* in 2013 in relation to how a group of journalists conceived them. As Gordon has pointed out that 'to identify blackness, one must be in a relation to it,' I contend that to identify with 'black perspectives,' one must be in relation with Black Consciousness philosophy. The other critical consideration of using relationality is that we must consider conceptualising human beings as constituted through relationships (Gordon, 2012).[281] He argues that there is a position taken by a 'growing group of theorists' known as Afropessimists who study black people outside the realm of relations (Gordon, 2018).[282] It is the express intention of this study to create,

> the building blocks by which new ideas and lived relations can be formed and latent, and often invisible, ones can appear. In the meeting place of Africa and Europe on one hand and the black with history and ideas on the other, the devotion of such energy is no less than part of what is proverbially to be done (Gordon, 2012: 81).

Decoloniality. Palgrave Macmillan: Australia/Switzerland; See also Spry, T. (2010). Call it swing: A Jazz Blues autoethnography. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies, 10*(4), 271–282.

[279] Ibid

[280] See Gordon, L.R. (2006). "Theorising Race and Racism in an Age of Disciplinary Decadence," *Shibboleths: Journal of Comparative Theory*— 1, no. 1 (September 2006): 20–36.

[281] See Gordon, L.R. (2012). "Reasoning in Black: Africana Philosophy Under the Weight of Misguided Reason," *The Savannah Review* 1, no. 1 (November 2012): 76–90.

[282] See Gordon, L.R. (2018) Thoughts on two recent decades of studying race and racism, *Social Identities*, 24:1, 29-38.

For Gordon (2018), the question of relationality helps to ensure that there is no one (a *priori*) normative outcome in every moment of inquiry. Therefore, relationality-as-method undergirds a rich analysis that views the social world as a manifestation of relationships. According to Walsh and Mignolo (2018), relationality does not imply there is one way to do and conceive decoloniality. It also does not mean simply bringing BC ideas to decoloniality but also engaging in a 'relational critique' of decoloniality. Relationality in this thesis takes place in my interactions with texts and interview transcripts; in my engagement with related literature and theory; with my own experiences and knowledges; and in my interactions with various thoughts and ideas. Moreover, 'as an analytic perspective, socio-political standpoint, and pedagogical-methodological stance' (Walsh and Mignolo, 2018: 50), relationality enables us to transcend the linear conception of thought as a fixed paradigm and position.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an explication of the research design of this study and located it within a qualitative humanistic methodological framework. It has explained which methods and analytical tools will be used by which the empirical data were sourced, located, organised and analysed. The process of data collection was explained in detail. The specific choice of embedding theoretical and conceptual tools with methodology to inform the analysis of the selected media texts have been explained. The incorporation of relevant interview data was also explained. The ethical considerations of this research were then outlined. It is argued here that this multi-dimensional theoretical, conceptual and methodological approach adopted in this thesis provides a richer analysis of the empirical data and other materials for a better understanding of the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid newsroom and public sphere, with specific reference to the *City Press* newspaper.

Chapter 5

The battle for the soul of *City Press*: A case study

> *In black writing is the question of black consciousness, the idea that black people have perspectives on the world … Without a perspective, I will be an anonymous consciousness without a point of reference. I will be a view, literally, from nowhere.* (Gordon, 2000: 42, 120)

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to develop, through an analysis of the conflict in 2013 between the then *City Press* editor-in-chief Ferial Haffajee and a group of six black journalists (*Times Live*, 2013)[283], a new theoretical perspective on how transformational discourses of post-1994 South Africa played out in the newsroom of the second-largest Sunday newspaper in the country. The conflict stemmed from the issue of transformation in newsroom management and the alleged failure of the paper to appoint a senior black news editor in a bid to tell stories from "a black perspective" (*News24*, 2013).[284] The six black journalists alleged that *City Press* took a hard line on stories involving former president Jacob Zuma, but not towards the Democratic Alliance (DA).[285] This chapter methodologically uses the newspaper data and twitter discourses of the criticism of Haffajee's appointment of the two white news editors, and Haffajee's discourses from an interview to make theoretical sense of race and the *City Press*. The theoretical perspective of this chapter is premised on two different kinds of subjects and subjections. The discussion is based on the relationship between Haffajee, the loyal subject of the newspaper group, Media24,[286] and the six black journalists, the questioning subjects who refused to toe the new ideological and editorial line that the paper was pursuing at the time. Although this chapter is a case study of the *City Press*, it also reflects broadly on South African journalism in the context of the larger forces that have affected it, including media transformation, alleged racism in the media and the systemic and systematical invisibility and hypervisibility of black voices in the media. I argue that the afflictions that currently besiege the South African media are a function of the perceived (real or otherwise) lack of transformation in the sector and the manifestation of power inside the newsrooms. I attempt to demonstrate that the relations of power in the media are such that it comes to be consolidated in some individuals or racial groups in ways that render meaningless the strides made towards transforming the

[283] See *Times Live*. Journalists accuse *City Press* editor of racism: report. 18 October 2013.
[284] See *News24. City Press* racism claims to be probed. 18 October 2013.
[285] The Democratic Party is the biggest opposition party in the country, second to the governing party, the African National Congress (ANC).
[286] Media24 is the publisher of *City Press*.

South African media during the post-apartheid period. It is important to briefly paint a contextual picture of the events that led to the 2013 *City Press* incident.

5.1 Ferial Haffajee versus Six Black Journalists: the events

The appointment of Haffajee as editor-in-chief of *City Press* in 2009 signalled a new era for the newspaper, which prided itself as "Distinctly African" and mostly targeted a black readership. I argue that her appointment marked a new era because of two striking facts. Firstly, the paper changed its long-time traditional motto 'distinctly African' to a 'non-racial' and 'Afropolitan' read following her appointment. Teased in one of the interviews why she changed the motto, she responded:

> *So I loved Distinctly African, because I think it was making yourself part of a very exciting continent. But locally it was being read as Distinctly African – black only, only for black people. And my mission, my brief from work was to make it a paper for all South Africans. To make in-roads into it so that everyone felt comfortable reading it. Have I been successful? I'm not so sure. But we try. I think it's important that we don't have black media, white media any longer.*[287]

Second, *City Press* challenged the hegemony of its rival the *Sunday Times*[288] in the battle for the biggest chunk of Sunday readership. She stated the paper's goals in another interview: "To vie to be Sunday's agenda setter, to own a much larger chunk of people who read on a Sunday, to increase their loyalty and make it a more non-racial read and to bump up circulation" (*Bizcommunity*, 2011).[289] According to Jacobs (2018),[290] Haffajee set out to employ a more 'non-racial' group of journalists to achieve the paper's goals. This led Radebe (2011) to observe in his Master's dissertation titled, Presentations and Representations: Images of Newsroom Transformation in the Post-1994 South Africa, that:

> *The [push to 'non-racialism'] represents a paradigm [shift] that defines transformation as accommodation of black people within historically white institutions and privileges. Even when she is surrounded by a sea of Africans, the Editor still wants to 'inject a touch of Afropolitanism' into the 'SA Mail'. With 'injection' being the key word …* (Radebe, 2011 cited in Jacobs, 2018)[291].

Jacobs (2018) explains that any close reader of Radebe's dissertation can easily identify the reference to 'SA Mail' in the above quote as *City Press*. It is clear from Radebe's quotation above that some black journalists at City Press did not simplistically embrace non-racialism. Race for them became a marker

[287] See F*in24*. City Press' Ferial Haffajee: print media will be a philanthropists' game. 12 March 2015.
[288] *Sunday Times* is South Africa's biggest Sunday newspaper published by Arena Holdings.
[289] See *Bizcommunity*. (2011). We aim to be inclusive, not exclusive – City Press's Ferial Haffajee. 27 October 2011.
[290] See Jacobs, S. (2018). Battle of Ideas in the Newsroom. *Mail & Guardian*. 14 December 2018.
[291] See Radebe, S. (2011). Presentations and Representations: Images of Newsroom Transformation in the Post-1994 South Africa. MA Dissertation. University of the Witwatersrand: Johannesburg.

of identity. Norval is instructive in problematising nonracialism:

> …the central question with regard to non-racialism concerns the extent to which it will be able to foster and sustain difference in such a manner as to keep spaces open for identification with a democratic order (1996: 293)[292].

This thesis suggests that the pronoun 'she' that identifies the editor that Radebe refers to as having been 'surrounded by a sea of Africans' and wanting to 'inject a touch is Afropolitanism' could easily be identified as Haffajee. This view is supported by the comments made by Haffajee in a media article announcing her appointment as the new editor of *City Press*. In it, she is quoted as saying, "I hope to inject a touch of Afropolitanism into the paper and to bring with me some of the investigative journalism I have learnt at my alma mater, the *Mail & Guardian*" (2009).[293] Citing Radebe (2011), Jacobs contends that *City Press* was being 'faulted for having reported to the majority and being staffed by black journalists; "non-racial" amounted to writing for the suburbs, that is, white readers' (Jacobs, 2018). It is contended here that the "majority" that Jacobs is alluding to is a clear refence to *City Press* reporting on black people. It can be argued that the appointment two white news editors at *City Press* was meant to support the new positioning of the paper. According to media commentator Pinky Khoabane (2013), the 'exodus' of senior black journalists soon after Haffajee was appointed in 2009 and 'their replacement by a steady stream of white journalists'[294] culminated in the conflict between Haffajee and the group of six black journalists in 2013. The six black journalists were Athandiwe Saba, Khanyiso Tshwaku, Muntu Vilakazi, Denvor de Wee, Percy Mabandu and Mawande Mvumvu. Khoabane mentions "seasoned" black journalists who left the paper during Haffajee's editorship such as Lizeka Mda, Makhudu Sefara, Japhet Ncube, Gail Smith, Lumka Oliphant, Fikile Ntsikelelo Moya, and Lucas Ledwaba. Gleaning from media reports (*Times Live*, 2013) it appears that the conflict between Haffajee and the six black journalists took place at the newspaper's strategic planning meeting held in October 2013.

Lacking 'black perspectives'

According to media reports, the meeting degenerated into accusations of racism between Haffajee and a group of six black journalists as 'emotions ran high. The discussion shifted to the issue of transformation in management' (*Times Lives*, 2013) as one journalist was quoted as saying. It was also reported in the media that the six journalists complained that the paper lacked what they termed 'black perspectives' (*Times Lives*, 2013). This thesis interrogates this issue of black perspectives in the latter part of this chapter. For Khoabane (2018), the battleground for transformation in the media must be

[292] See Norval, A.J. (1996) Deconstructing Apartheid Discourse. London: Verso
[293] See *Sapa*. (2009). Haffajee ready for new challenges. 30 March 2009.
[294] See Khoabane, P. (2013). The battle for the soul of City Press. *The Journalist*. 31 October 2013.

understood within the context of a South African media which is 'bound by both the Constitution and commercial considerations to properly reflect black lives.' It is for this reason that this study now turns to the history of transformation in the South African media post-1994.

5.2 Transformation fights and discourses in the South African media post-1994

The transformation debates[295] in the South African media date back to 1994 when the first democratically elected government came into power. This study sees the transformation of the media in post-apartheid South Africa and analyses it under the umbrella of decolonisation. This thesis argues that media transformation is, therefore, one element in a much larger programme to decolonise all facets of life in the South African society. There have been wide-ranging changes in the South African media landscape since the dawn of democracy. On the level of ownership and editorial changes, as Wasserman (2007)[296] points out, the industry has seen ownership change hands from white owners to black consortia and the appointment of black editors to previously white-dominated media institutions. However, according to the *State of the Newsroom 2019-20* report, commercial newspapers in South Africa are concentrated between four companies: Media24, Arena Holdings, Independent Media and Caxton. Rumney (2013) explains that the word 'transformation' itself, however, 'tends to connote fundamental rather than superficial or one-dimensional alteration' (2013: 154).[297] For Naidu (2020), parity in ownership patterns is a dream 'until control and ownership transitions into the reins of women' (2020: 63).[298]

The appointment of white news editors

It is at the editorial changes in the newsroom that connects the debates of media transformation to this *City Press* case study. The conflict at *City Press* was partly driven by the appointment of two white news editors, Nicki Gules and Natasha Joseph, who were tasked to drive the editorial agenda of that paper. Following their appointment, a group of black journalists alleged that the paper lacked 'black perspectives' and preferred the appointment of black editors (*Daily Dispatch,* 2013). In discussing the racialised discourse of media transformation, media scholar Steenveld (2004) made a poignant observation that what counts as transformation or change is always contested. As a result, the change of

[295] See Berger, G. (2000). Response to Boloka and Krabill. *Transformation, 43,* pp. 90-97; see Taylor, R. (1994). South Africa: From 'race' to non-racialism? In P. Ratcliffe (Ed.), "Race" *ethnicity and nation: International perspectives on social conflict,* pp. 91-107. London: University College London Press; see Tomaselli, K. (1997). Ownership and control in the South African print media: Black empowerment after apartheid, 1990-1997. *Equid Novi, 18.1,* pp. 21-68; see Duncan, J. (2000) Talk left, act right: what constitutes transformation in Southern African media?, *Communicatio*, 26:2, 52-59; and see Tomaselli, K.G. (2004). Transformation of the South African Media, *Critical Arts*, 18:1, 1-6.

[296] See Wasserman, H. (2007). *The Media*. (July 2007), pp. 32-33.

[297] See Rumney, R. (2013). When ownership trumps transformation, *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 34:2, 153-157.

[298] See Naidu, E. (2020). An Unequl Dream. State of the Newsroom 2019-20. Johannesburg: Wits Journalism Project.

the black news editors to white ones was severely contested at *City Press*. Steenveld states that the 'key poles' of the transformation debate in the media are 'whether the 'transformations/changes' are fundamental, or whether they are 'surface changes' ('the more things change, the more they stay the same') (2004: 102).[299] Rodny-Gumede offers a critique of media transformation in the country where she argues that efforts tended to focus on breaking with the 'racial as well as gender injustices of a more recent apartheid past, rather than longer continuous legacies of colonialism' (2018: 01).[300] She notes that given the context of South Africa, racial transformation in the media will continue to be a dominant narrative and argues that it is vital to 'analyse the media and the rationale of transformation from these demographics and how they interact with other variables in the media and politics nexus' (2018: 11). One thing we can say for sure is that what media transformation will look like in South Africa is still undefined, and the path to get there is neither certain nor singular.

5.3 Theoretical Framing: tracing radical democracy at *City Press*

What is the best way to imagine newsroom politics in post-apartheid South Africa? This section presents a theoretical framework that informs this study's reflections on the 2013 *City Press* incident. Following Chantal Mouffe (2006),[301] I put forward a thesis that the South African media must be understood as an agonistic space characterised by the inherently conflictual nature of newsroom politics owing to the country's history of colonialism, apartheid and racism. I argue that any attempt to negate conflict in newsroom politics constitutes a serious threat to democracy, freedom of speech and media freedom. The question is, if journalists are not free to criticise each other inside the newsroom, what is the intersection between freedom of speech and media freedom? In her book, *Fight for Democracy: The ANC and the Media in South Africa* (2012), Daniels explains the importance of Mouffe's concept of 'radical pluralist democracy' to the South African media: 'Her model of democracy not only allows for theorising the increase of pluralism *within* journalism, but also allows for the increase of pluralism *through* journalism' (2012: 3).[302] In essence, Daniels is arguing that the media must be an agonistic space that allows for 'contestations, changing meanings and constant flux' (2012:2).[303] The contestations between Haffajee and the six black journalists over the ideological posture of the paper and the change of meaning of the paper's 'distinctly African' motto attest to the agonistic nature of the media. It is clear from the *City Press* example that the group of six black journalists were both not ideologically in tandem with the paper's vision to employ a more 'nonracial' group of journalists and were also against its efforts to

[299] See Steenveld, L. (2004) Transforming the media: A cultural approach, *Critical Arts*, 18:1, 92-115.
[300] See Rodny-Gumede, Y. (2018). 'Revisiting the role of the news media and journalism in South Africa: Convergence, Fragmentation and Decolonisation'. Inaugural Lecture. UJ Council Chambers, Madibeng Building, Auckland Park Kingsway Campus on Thursday, 12 July 2018.
[301] See Mouffe, C. (2006) *On the Political: Thinking in Action*. London and New York: Routledge
[302] See Daniels, G. (2012). *Fight for Democracy: The ANC and the Media in South Africa*. Wits Press: Johannesburg
[303] Ibid, p.2

'inject a touch of Afropolitanism'. Therefore, this study has adopted the radical democratic perspective blended with Black Consciousness (BC) philosophy to understand the splits and fractures inside the *City Press* newsroom. BC philosophy is specifically deployed here to interrogate the question raised by the six black journalists; the question of 'black perspectives'. BC demands that as black South Africans we see ourselves as people who speak and write from the standpoint of our views and perspectives and as agents of blackness. Looking back at pre-democratic South Africa, it means understanding how black voices and perspectives have been erased and systematically and systemically subjected in the South African media narrative. I also deploy Louis Althusser's (1984) concept of interpellation[304] to understand how journalists at *City Press* responded to the change of the ideological posture of the paper from 'distinctly African' to non-racialism and Afropolitanism. In his seminal essay, 'The Ideological State Apparatuses' (1984), Althusser posits that all ideology interpellates or hails. Here, this thesis interrogates the voice of authority, Haffajee as editor and by extension the owners of the paper, Media24, who attempt to interpellate journalists to follow the new ideological posture of newspaper. This research shows that some black journalists at *City Press* refused this hailing by the voice of authority (Haffajee) that attempted to diffuse their worldview.

5.4 A note of method

This chapter methodologically uses the newspaper data and twitter discourses of the criticism of Haffajee's appointment of white news editors and Haffajee's discourses from an interview to make theoretical sense of race and the *City Press*. It also relies on the interview material with Haffajee. In order to complement the lack of interview data, I also had to rely on the empirical evidence obtained through media articles related to the *City Press* 2013 debacle. The events that occurred at *City Press* in 2013 elucidated the historical context of media transformation in the post-apartheid South Africa. While these 'events' form an integral part of this *City Press* case, the case study itself is not treated in the classical and traditional sense. The method of discourse analysis is used to foreground the ideological underpinnings that help us to understand the positions taken by different actors, that is, Haffajee and the six black journalists. The idea is also to use the empirical data to bring theory or interpretation into practice.

5.5 The discourses of transformation at *City Press*

There were two main discourses that emerged in the fractious fight between Haffajee and the group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013. The first was about the six black journalists accusing the paper

[304] See Althusser, L. (1984). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses: Essays on ideology. In Žižek S (ed.) (1994) *Mapping Ideology*. London and New York: Verso, pp 100-140

of 'taking a hard line on stories involving President Jacob Zuma, but not towards the Democratic Alliance' (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013).[305] The second discourse concerns the accusation levelled against Haffajee for failing to appoint senior black news editors with 'political contacts to help tell stories from 'a black perspective' (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013).[306] This section relies on various media reports which quote some of the journalists and on Haffajee's response to these discourses through her various tweets on the Twitter platform, media reports and the internal letter she wrote to the staff following *City Press's* editorial strategy meeting that discussed the paper's future.

Appointment of a white news editor versus the black news editor

Daniels (2012) argues that race remains a floating signifier in the world of South African journalism. Similarly, this study posits that media transformation remains a floating signifier in the post-apartheid South Africa media. By 'floating signifier' (Laclau, 2005),[307] I mean media transformation has no full meaning and that South Africans, including the journalists, do not hold a single unified view of what media transformation is or what should it look like. In his last book, *On Populism* (2005), Laclau posits that the emergence of the people invariably depends, among other things, on 'displacement of the internal frontiers through the production of floating signifiers' (Laclau, 2005: 151). This study scrutinises how the six black journalists vis-à-vis Haffajee understand transformation at *City Press*, and how in their discourses, it seems, media transformation is a floating signifier, that is, 'unfixed, and untied to one particular meaning' (Daniels, 2012: 183). Former *City Press* journalist Lumka Oliphant offers her perspective on the appointment of Gules and Joseph as news editors and the change of the ideological posture of *City Press* under Haffajee's editorship. In her words:

> *It was the only newspaper where we wrote for us and felt proud to be able to bring an African perspective and an understanding of who we are as a people. This glaring change in editorial policy is at the heart of the battle for a much-loved newspaper which Africans, who, until [Mathatha] Tsedu's stint at City Press, felt alienated from many other titles. There are many black intellectuals out there. Go out and find them instead of using the same old white voices to explain our cultural practices.* (The Journalist, 2013)[308].

Oliphant worked at the paper under the erstwhile editor, Mathatha Tsedu, whose Black Consciousness ideological leanings led to the paper's motto 'distinctly African'. I argue here that the notion of 'black perspective' or 'African perspective' is a very contentious issue because being African does not necessarily translates to being black. In one of her comments, Haffajee had challenged this notion of

[305] See *Mail & Guardian. City Press* to investigate racism claims at paper. 18 October 2013.
[306] Ibid
[307] See Laclau, E. (2005). *The Populist Reason*, London: Verso.
[308] See *The Journalist*. The battle for the soul of City Press. 31 October 2013.

conflating Africanness with blackness. For Haffajee it was no longer the question of pursuing the distinctly African motto. Her stance was clear; she was responding to the ideological hailing by the *City Press* owners as elucidated by her comments that her 'brief from work was to make it a paper for all South Africans'. Writing in his column, another black editor, Makhudu Sefara, then editor of *The Star*, took issue with the stance adopted by the black journalists after the paper had appointed two white news editors. Sefara remarked:

> *During the week, I repeatedly asked myself what my responsibility, as a black editor is to young black and white journalists who join newsrooms with a hazy view of how they operate. This perhaps explains why this debate haunts me.* (The Star, 2013)[309]

Sefara was commenting on the debate on transformation of the media hosted by SAfm in which the discord between Haffajee and the group of black journalists was also the subject of discussion. Sefara and Haffajee agree that the African story can be told by both white and black journalists and that no one holds monopoly over who is an African or which racial group of people can have 'African perspectives'.

'Post affirmative action' and 'Post liberation' in modern South Africa

I now turn to Haffajee's internal letter written to the staff following the *City Press* debacle in 2013. In it, she writes:

> *Then came the kicker, the issue that exposed bare bones of racism in a newspaper that is touted – by its readers and internally – as being post liberation, post affirmative action; in other words, a newspaper that is transformed and which speaks to a modern South Africa…I object loudly to the racist view that only a black editor can get political stories through calls from black African politicians. For one, I am black and African and will not live under your imposed identity on me.*

In dealing with Haffajee's comments, I would like first to point out, following Calvin Warren (2018), that the idea of 'post' something or 'post' anything is rather a misnomer if we think of 'post' as an overcoming [überwunden]. I have used the term 'post' throughout this thesis in reference to 'post-apartheid South Africa' as a marker of time period after 1994. I am real to the fact that the post-1994 conditions will never overcome pre-1994 conditions as there will always be present oppressions, present discriminations and present dehumanisations. As Warren says, a residue will always remain although there is always hope of reducing the colonial residue and to render it inoperative. The reality in South Africa, however, is the opposite. There is, as well, the question of whether Haffajee can genuinely talk

[309] See *The Star*. Media racism alive and well in SA. 17 May 2013

about 'post liberation' or 'post affirmative action' when black journalists are still dealing with present discriminations and present humiliations in the post-apartheid newsroom. I contend that there is relevance of Fanon's thought to post-apartheid South African media transformation, which 'pertains to the understanding of black identity, the internal dynamics of liberation that are hallmarks of black thought, and the meta-critical reflections on how one goes about such discourses' (Gordon, 2006).[310] Reflecting on the affirmative action debates in the South African and US contexts, Gordon (2011) states that the existence of affirmative action is the 'admission of continued racism and sexism.'[311] This thesis posits that the affirmative action debate in South Africa is black-centred and I would argue it is rightly so. It is this concern with affirmative action that inexorably situated the group of black journalists within Black Consciousness philosophy whose leit motif is the concern with racial problematics. For Gordon, the racial problematic for African people has meant 'an exploration of their lived experience of blackness' (2000: 8). At the same time, it is imperative to point out that while 'the black' is a 'white construction' (Gordon, 2015: 24), the term African is not. It signifyingly means that as humanity we come from the womb of Mother Land.

'Hard line on stories involving President Jacob Zuma versus Democratic Alliance'

The black journalists accused *City Press* of taking a 'hard line' on stories involving [Jacob] Zuma, but not on those about the Democratic Alliance (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013)[312]. The first observation one makes is that there seems to be a genuine concern among the group of black journalists in the way *City Press* reported on the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) vis-à-vis the opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA). The black journalists seem to suggest that criticism should go both ways; even-handedly towards the ANC and DA. How the *City Press* adopted a soft approach when it came to reporting on the DA is not clear and there is no evidence to back up this claim. Instead, the ideological fantasy of the black journalists and the role of the media, specifically *City Press*, are evident in their statement. Their discourses presuppose a particular kind of treatment for the ANC by the *City Press*. Because there is an ever-present temptation by the journalists and the expectation by the party for the media to project the ANC in good light, it is pertinent that we reflect on the work of Daniels. She says there has been a trend in the ANC as early as 1994 as it attempted to 'create a subordinate, compliant, uncritical and even unified press' (2012: 85). In theoretical terms, the media (in this case the *City Press*) was seen by the group of black journalists as the enemy of the ANC and not the DA. The interpellation was clear: *City Press* needed to take a 'hard line' on stories involving the DA. I argue that the black journalists' discourse showed a lack of understanding about the role of the media in a democracy – that

[310] See Gordon, L.R. and Gordon, J.A. (2006). African-American philosophy, race, and the geography of reason. *Not only the master's tools: African-American studies in theory and practice*. Boulder, CO Paradigm Publishers. Pp. 3-50
[311] See Gordon, L.R. (2011). The problem with Affirmative Action. *Truthout/Op-Ed*. 15 August 2011.
[312] See *Mail & Guardian*. *City Press* editor takes leave amid racism furore. 20 October 2013.

of being a watchdog and holding power (the ANC) to account. The phrase "hard line" is apposite to the watchdog role of independent press and leads to the question of *'passionate attachment'*[313] in a Butlerian sense and the clash of professional ethics of journalism. Butler's concept of passionate attachment has been deployed here to show its usefulness in understanding the standpoints of black journalists regarding the ANC and DA and to show 'the circularity and reproduction of race-based subjection' (Daniels, 2010: 30)[314].

5.6 Cry for "black perspectives" at *City Press*

The rallying cry for the group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 was that Haffajee had failed to appoint senior black news editors with 'political contacts to help tell stories' from what they termed 'black perspectives' (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013). In her response contained in the internal letter to the staff, Haffajee said she objected 'loudly to the racist view that only a black editor can get political stories through calls from black African politicians' (*Daily Dispatch*, 2013). The context of the discussion that follows in this section is what has become known as 'black perspectives.' There are those who object to such designations. However, the group of black journalists at *City Press* chose to spell out the location of their thought not only in its historical political specificity but also in a sense that makes allusions to black perspectives unavoidable in the South African context. This thesis suggests that the story of black perspectives at *City Press* leads to at least two problematics. The first raises problems of identity and identification. That they are black journalists doing writing and theoretical work; makes ascription to black perspectives unavoidable given the context: black people were not thought of by the Euro modern world as having the intellectual capabilities to reason and write. As Frantz Fanon correctly observed and related through his lived experience of blackness in *Black Skin, White Masks*, in the Euro modern world reason had the tendency of taking flight whenever a black person entered the scene. The second raises problems of transformation in the South African media in the post-apartheid era. Although what is meant by black perspectives is not easily defined and that it could be such that it transcends itself, transformation of the media in South Africa must evaluated by its practical implementation. Such instruments of ensuring that black perspectives are also epistemological in the South African media are crucial. Gordon says any thought 'must be of something, and that relationship is performed in any act of reflection' (2010: 201).[315] It is argued here that the perspectives that the group of black journalists advocated for were in relation to blackness. And what could provide a more fitting end to this reflection than citing Gordon's quotation which opens this chapter:

[313] See Butler, J. (1997). *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

[314] See Daniels, G. (2010). The role of the media in a democracy: Unravelling the politics between the media, the state and the ANC in South Africa. Dissertation: University of the Witwatersrand.

[315] See Gordon, L.R. (2010). Theory in Black. Teleological Suspensions in Philosophy of Culture. *Qui Parle,* Vol. 18, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 193-214

> In black writing is the question of black consciousness, the idea that black people have perspectives on the world … Without a perspective, I will be an anonymous consciousness without a point of reference. I will be a view, literally, from nowhere. (Gordon, 2000: 42, 120)

I argue that the black journalists at *City Press* offered us an understanding of the place from where they think and write, and that place is not anonymous one but a question of black perspectives.

5.7 Haffajee's interview and Twitter discourses

In October 2013, Haffajee, the former *City Press* editor, convened a meeting with staff members to discuss the paper's future. According to media reports, the meeting ended 'unpleasantly, with race at the core of discussions' (*Daily Dispatch*, 2013). Haffajee tweeted publicly about the fall out between her and a group of journalists and the internal letter she had written to the staff after the contents of the meeting had gone public. This section highlights Haffajee's discourses on the *City Press* race battle over transformation in that paper's and the discourses that ensued on Twitter following her tweets.

Is Haffajee a proponent of employment equity?

Haffajee is a strong proponent of affirmative action as evidenced by her writings on the subject matter. In 2018, she wrote:

> *I am a proud affirmative action candidate. If it were not for the constitutional clause addressing redress and the laws that flowed from them, I would not have this great job ... The apartheid system snuffed dreams by deforming destinies*. (*Sunday Times*, 2018)[316]

According to her, if it were not for affirmative action, she would not have been appointed editor of *City Press*, regardless of how high her journalism credentials were, and she would not have had the opportunities to demonstrate her talents over the past three decades since the demise of apartheid in South Africa. Haffajee's admission reflects a fundamental insight about affirmative action; it works. But does her appointment of two white news editors at *City Press* validate the need for transformation in the post-apartheid newsroom? In an interview, Haffajee says she had planned to work with a 'diverse team of highly talented individuals' (Interview, 04 October 2021). However, this did not work out smoothly as the group of black journalists at *City Press* rebelled against the appointment of Gules and Joseph as news editors. Once described on Twitter in 2015 by Dan Roodt, a right-wing Afrikaner activist, as 'an affirmative action princess who lacks anti-white courage,' she faced a barrage of criticism

[316] See *Sunday Times*. (2018). FERIAL HAFFAJEE: I am a proud employment equity candidate. 22 April 2018.

from some Twitter users over her decision to appoint two white news editors. She defended herself by raising the fact that *City Press* had a complement of 68% black staff, which includes 8 black editors. However, @gawal_b argued that 'it's not about the number of black editors, it's about who controls the content.' This thesis argues Haffajee's defence is tantamount to Gordon's (2018) theory of racial invisibility linked to quantity despite that black journalists were in the demographic majority at *City Press*. Interestingly, "@gawal_b's sentiment speaks directly to Gordon's (2018) theory of epistemological invisibility, in this case, linked to the geographical location of whiteness in the post-apartheid *City Press* newsroom. For @gawal_b, what was important was that the content at *City Press* was in the control of white hands, and therefore, enunciated through the white gaze. Another Twitter user, @seni_lavu asked whether out of all the 68% black staff no one was worth promotion as a news editor at *City Press*? Gordon argues that the 'logic of controllability' is almost exclusively used for black people and that 'in truth, real power, which means not what is seen in public, but what is behind closed doors, the power behind power, remains categorically male and white' (2011np).[317] Consequently, I argue that the 'real power' that is not seen in public is represented and personified by Gules and Joseph, the two white news editors at *City Press,* and that 'what is behind closed doors', are the people behind the *City Press* news desk who remain categorically white.

On the editing processes at *City Press*

In an interview, Haffajee explains at length the editing process at City Press during her editorship in order to set the record straight:

> *The way the title worked in my editorship from 2009 to 2016 was that journalists would determine their agenda and bring their stories to meetings with editors. The news section was run by two news editors who reported to the late Dumisane Lubisi, the executive editor. When I started the two news editors were Melanie Ferris (black) and Japhet Ncube. Later, Natasha Joseph and Nicki Gules (both white). The diary was then brought to a news conference (open to all, but in practice attended by the senior editorial team) which was a black gathering. I kept a constant eye on the City Press demographic and at no point did the total complement of black Africans at each level of the title go lower than 86% of the total*. (Interview, 04 October 2021)

Haffajee argues that she finds arguments raised by the black journalists that the white news editors would not be 'smart enough' or 'sensitive' to the black readership of the *City Press* 'instrumentalist' (Ibid). She highlights Nicki Gules, for example, for editing award-winning and impactful packages on the Marikana massacre, on initiation schools and on the high incidence of birth defects due to malpractice in public hospitals.

[317] See Gordon. L.R. (2011). The problem with affirmative action. *TruthOut*. Op-Ed. 15 August 2011

On the re-orientation of 'black politics' at City Press

Haffajee is firm in her belief that not only black journalists can serve a black readership and would not agree that only white journalists can serve a white audience. In her world, such a view would be tantamount to racism. Haffajee says the first agenda in her editorship was to 'broaden the orientation of black politics' (Ibid) at *City Press* since the title, according to her, was aligned to the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) and Pan-Africanism, which was largely organised as the Pan African Congress (PAC), when she took over as the editor. She says her aim was to bring a greater range of coverage, but the paper always gave space to Azapo and PAC despite their decline as political forces as expressed in their polling misfortunes.

On racial identities in journalism

Haffajee, through an interview, says she is a proponent of racial identities in the newsroom and believes that they are important more than ever in post-apartheid South Africa because of the 'era we live' (Interview). She reflects on her racial activism in the media:

> At the *Weekly Mail*, the *Financial Mail* and at the *Mail &Guardian*, I was either a trade union member or a staff representative who fought for and lobbied for equal pay, equal voice and equal representation of us as black staff. At the *Financial Mail*, I was often the lone black voice questioning why we had no columnists who were black or women. These were often lonely and career limiting fights to have. (Interview, 04 October 2021)

On managing the *City Press* fracas

The City Press 2013 internal conflict became public and was published in newspapers and on social media platforms such as Twitter. Haffajee seemed to acknowledge that the race row over transformation in the paper could have been handled differently. She took the blame for it.

> *Your flintstone editor is out on leave. This will enable you to douse the fires I started. For where the flames licked painfully, I apologise, but do feel that we are about to embark on a journey toward far greater clarity of what we are and what we believe in.* (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013)

Another Twitter user, @mabuse01 argued that *City Press* needed to have 'more inner dialogue than wishing the problem away' and advised her to show leadership by handling the paper's 2013 incident differently. The Twitter user said the *City Press* fractious battle between Haffajee and a group of black

journalists over transformation was not an isolated event but 'a revelation that the media is not immune from societal challenges'. Ferial conceded, however, on Twitter and in an interview that she could have handled the situation better. In her reconciliatory words:

> *It pained me enormously to end up in a fight with journalists whom I admired and who saw me as an anti-transformation force. It took enormous introspection and a lot of teamwork and trust to get City Press back on an even keel.* (Interview, 04 October 2021)

This is not to say that Haffajee was retreating from the newspaper's goal of attracting a 'diverse team of highly talented individuals' that would enable it to realise its 'non-racial' and 'Afropolitan' outlook. Instead, as this thesis argues, she was making some headways on these race and transformation matters since they demand 'bringing to the fore the truth about affirmative action and the so-called post-apartheid world in which we now live' (Gordon, 2011). This research posits that transformation in the South African media requires admitting that there will always be fights and contestations between different actors; 'a reality that, unfortunately, never fails to come, but whose battle must be waged, however, weary our souls may be' (Ibid). Haffajee herself is an example of how transformation and affirmative action can make access possible in the post-apartheid South African newsroom.

5.8 Invisibility and hypervisibility of black voices at *City Press*

This study argues that black voices, as subaltern voices (Spivak, 1988)[318] occupy subject positions in the South African media such as in the *City Press* newsroom and pay the price of being talked about in a way that makes them either invisible or hypervisible. Gordon (2018, 2021)[319] speaks of the invisibility linked to the idea of racial quantity that black people are subjected to in the US, which results in the view in American parlance, 'there are always "too many black people."' It should be noted that unlike in South Africa where black people are numerically in the majority, in the US black people make about 14% of the national population according to the latest census figures. Gordon says the demographical discussions would benefit from some more nuance. He argues that population counts are not always as they appear. For instance, black people in the United States of America (USA) are officially 14 percent, but many are defined out of their racial category of other ethnic categories are posed. He says, for example, many Latinx/os/as are also Black people, but if they place 'Hispanic' or 'Latin American' as their ethnicity, they are placed outside of the Black racialized category. He points out that this also happens with Afro-Natives and Afro-Asians. Despite this nuanced contrast in the demographics of black

[318] See Spivak, G.C. (1988). Can the Subaltern Speak? in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture.* London: Macmillan.

[319] See Gordon, L.R. (2018). "Four Kinds of Invisibility from Euromodernity". A UCONN TEDX talk delivered at Peabody Hall, Room 115, University of Connecticut. 10 December 2018.

people in the US and South Africa, Gordon's (2018, 2021) theories of invisibility help us to better understand why black journalists rebelled against the appointment of a white news editors at *City Press* and raised concerns that the paper lacked black perspectives. Gordon, himself, is one of America's racially marked minorities. He argues that there are four kinds of invisibilities inherent to Euro modernity. One is racial and focuses on the quantity of black people. Another is indigenous and designate indigenous as belonging to the past and without a future. A third is engendered, and as Gordon says, it 'goes directly to the heart of politics: speech. Such people are ignored when they speak. Not heard, they, in effect, have no voice' (2021: 23).[320] For the purposes of this study, I would like to focus on two kinds of invisibilities linked to the 2013 *City Press* incident, namely: 1) *racial (about quantity—there are always "too many black people"), and 2) epistemic (about ignorance—whole areas of knowledge are presumed non-existent because they supposedly cannot be).*

Racial invisibility linked to quantity

A group of black journalists at *City Press* had raised concerns, in an internal staff meeting intended to map the paper's future, about the lack of transformation in the newsroom management structure and protested the appointment of a white news editor (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013). The spat between Haffajee and the group of black journalists spilled into the public, including on social media platforms such as Twitter. Responding to the accusation that the paper's newsroom was untransformed, Haffajee tweeted that *City Press* has '8 editors (5 black, 3 white; 4 women, 4 men). We have 68% black staff; about 45% women and a vacancy total of 5'. This thesis argues that her response is governed by racial invisibility linked to quantity as evident in her mentioning that the paper has 68% black staff. It is important to note the historical context behind the establishment of *City Press*. According to Jacobs (2018), the paper, founded in 1982, was designed for black readers '(on the margins of apartheid's all-white public sphere)'. What was of concern to some black journalists was the plan by Media24, which publishes the paper, to rebrand it as 'non-racial'. The *State of the Newsroom 2019-20* research report published by Wits Journalism states that 'transformation is not just about the demographics, but about the new perspectives in editorial agendas, and how different priorities of newsworthiness and reporting shape the news that we get' (p.6).[321] This statement speaks powerfully to the concerns raised by the group of black journalists at *City Press*. For them, transformation was not about the demographics. It was about the 'new perspectives in editorial agendas' – their so-called 'black perspectives'. It was about how their 'black perspectives' were able to 'shape the news that we get'. Despite comprising 68% of the staff complement, they felt invisible while the editor, Haffajee, pointed to their hypervisibility. Mlotshwa has theorised this as "double play of invisibility and hypervisibility" (Mlotshwa, 2018: 87).[322]

[320] See Gordon, L.R. (2021). *Freedom, Justice, and Decolonization*. New York: Routledge, 2021.
[321] See Finlay, A. (2019-2020). *State of the Newsroom Report 2019-20.* A Wits Journalism project Edited by Alan Finlay.
[322] See Mlotshwa, K. (2018) "Invisibility and hypervisibility" of 'Ndebele women' in Zimbabwe's media, *Agenda,* 32:3, 87-

Epistemic invisibility in the news desk

The argumnent I advance here is that the news desk is not just the transfer point of news and information between reporters and editors. It is the pulse of the newsroom. Its a strategic place where news agendas are mapped out and a place where voices (including those of journalists) are subjected and filtered before they reach the reading public. I argue that it mattered to the group of black journalists at *City Press* who occupies the news desk, especially for those who were still passionately attached to the idea of a 'distinctly African' paper. I contend that their protest against the appointment of white news editors was a protest closely linked to Gordon's notion of epistemic invisibility or erasure of one's voice in knowledge production. The black journalists argued that a senior black news editor would help them tell stories from a 'black perspective'. Haffajee has challenged the journalists' point of view. However, the interest of this section is not to argue whether the black journalists' viepoint is correct or not. I am interested in interrogating why it was important for them to object to the appointment of a white news editor. Here I advance two reasons which might explain black journalists' unhappiness with the prevailing status quo at *City Press* at the time.

Black journalists and the 'crisis of voice'

First, I argue that given the neoliberal nature of the South African media (Chiumbu, 2016), black journalists face the twin challenges of the 'crisis of voice' (Couldry, 2010)[323] and 'crisis of representation' (Alcoff, 1991).[324] Through reading Couldry and Alcoff, I come to the conclusion that the South African media (in this case *City Press*) has denied black journalists voice through 'an unequal distribution of narrative resources' which arguably 'represents a deep denial of voice, a deep form of oppression' (Couldry 2010: 9). In this case, the news desk, which is occupied by two white news editors, acts as a symbol of 'an unequal distribution of narrative resources' wherein voices of black journalists are systematically and systemically subjected, silenced or erased. This subjection works both symbolically and discursively. By rejecting this 'unequal distribution of narrative resources' in the news desk, black journalists at *City Press* showed an awareness of how W.E.B. Dubois' double term of 'double consciousness' works because, as Couldry says, this denial of voice gives a 'sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others' (2010: 9). In effect, in their rejection, they articulated Jana Anna Gordon's notion of 'potentiated double consciousness' (see elaboration on this concept on Chapter 3). Chiumbu implores us to pay attention on who is speaking and who is given a voice. In the words of

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[323] See Couldry, N. (2010). *Why Voice Matters: Culture and Politics After Neoliberalism*, London, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Limited.

[324] See Alcoff, L. (1991). 'The problem of speaking for others', in *Cultural Critique*, 20, 5–32.

Gordon:

> …The more present a black is qua a black, the more absent he or she is as a point of epistemic limitation and assertion of agency. One does not ask a black; one concludes about him or her. The consequence is that one black is always superfluous, is always one black too many. (Gordon, 200: 381)[325]

Here, I sought to problematise the location of a white news editor in the news desk and the representation of voices and perspectives of black journalists in that newspaper considering how their subjectivities are "constructed within structures of domination" (Shome and Hedge, 2002:266).[326]

Black perspectives do not emerge from the vacuum

Second, I argue that black perspectives at *City Press* did not emerge from the vacuum; they have always been there since the "social milieu of black folks (slavery, colonialism, racism, apartheid, general oppression, and poverty) is different from that of white folks" (More, 2019).[327] I posit that the respective predicaments of black and white journalists are therefore quite different in a post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press*. Because knowledge is always situated and that the location of the enunciator is geopolitically and historically important (Grosfoguel, 2006),[328] the complaint lodged by black journalists after the appointment of white news editors in that newspaper lays bare the 'invisible threads of power' (Giraldo, 2016: 161)[329] associated with a post-apartheid South African newsroom. This is even though South African media has been 'deracialising boardrooms' (Chiumbu 2016: 422) at the expense of 'overhauling the structural practices that reproduce racialised power relations' (Ibid). Reflecting on black journalism in South Africa since 1994, Sesanti (2007) observed that when *City Press* declared itself 'distinctly African'; 'some of us were curious as to how different the newspaper would be from its western counterparts who have declared themselves "distinctly American"' (2007: 35).[330] According to Sesanti, to their credit, black journalists have recognised the need to 'redefine themselves' (Ibid) in the post-apartheid newsroom and some have brought uniquely black perspectives in the newsrooms. But more importantly, following Steve Biko, for the black journalists the term 'black' was not only a matter of pigmentation but was used in a political context at *City Press* in order to highlight that they 'have started on a road towards emancipation, you have committed yourself to fight

[325] See Gordon, L.R. (2000). On the Borders of Anonymity and Superfluous Invisibility. *Cultural Dynamics* 12(3): 375–383.
[326] See Shome, R. & Hedge R.S. (2002). 'Postcolonial approaches to communication: Charting the terrain, engaging the intersections', in *Communication Theory*, 12, 3, 249–270.
[327] See More, M.P. (2019). *Looking Through Philosophy in Black: Memoirs*. Rowman & Littlefield International Ltd: New York.
[328] See Grosfoguel, R. (2006). World System Analysis in the context of Transmodernity, Border Thinking and Global Colonaility. *Review*. 24(2): 167-187
[329] See Giraldo, I. (2016). Coloniality at work: Decolonial critique and the postfeminist regime. *Feminist Theory*, Vol. 17(2) 157–173.
[330] See Sesanti, S. (2007). Distinctly African or dimly African. *Rhodes Journalism Review*. 27 September 2007, p.35.

against all forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you out as a subservient being.' (Biko, 2004: 48).[331] I further argue that black journalists understood Biko's ideas of epistemological liberation as an essential precondition to 'unashamed assertion of black humanity, pride and selfhood' (Cooper and Ratele, 2018: 246)[332] at *City Press*. I conclude this chapter by asserting that the psyche of black journalists at *City Press*, more than two decades after the demise of apartheid, remained blighted by the subordination of black voices despite being in majority in the newsroom. I further contend that the insidious resurrection of white voices at *City Press* marked a period where whiteness served as an 'aspirational standard connoting excellence, superiority and the epitome of desirability' (Cooper and Ratele, 2018: 245). Finally, this period, in my view, reversed all the gains of media transformation made under the editorship of Mathatha Tsedu.

Conclusion

This chapter has not been an attempt to examine all the issues connected to the 2013 discord between the then *City Press* editor Haffajee and the group of six black journalists. It has attempted to give a taste of the fractures and contestations inside the *City Press* newsroom over the appointment of two white news editors and the accusation by a group of six black journalists that the paper lacked what they termed 'black perspectives.' In this chapter, the South Africa media (in this case *City Press*) has been theoretically framed as an agonistic space, following Mouffe, where there will always be conflicts and contestations on the meaning of media transformation. The argument advanced in this chapter is that, for the black journalists at *City Press*, the understanding of media transformation in South Africa is fixed and overdetermined, while for Haffajee and Sefara it 'floats' - in a Laclauian sense - among different subjects (in this case Haffajee and the group of six black journalists). I have also shown how the black journalists at *City Press* were repelled by the appointment of the two white news editors. On the one hand, race was most certainly an important issue for the black journalists. They also felt it was important who gets to tell the black story. Consequently, they railed against the whiteness of the news desk where the editorial agenda is mapped out and where voices get filtered. On the other hand, Haffajee and Sefara (both black editors) insisted that it was not the question on who tells the black story, pointing out that it was the responsibility of the media to strive for an inclusive and nonracial newsroom. The black journalists had also raised a concern that *City Press* took a 'hard line' in stories involving former ANC president Zuma and not towards the Democratic Alliance. It is contended here that their statement seemed to be sliding towards Butler's concept of 'passionate attachment'. Moreover, the phrase 'hard line' is apposite to the watchdog role independent press play to hold to account those in positions of

[331] See Biko, S. (2004). *I write what I like: Steve Biko: A selection of his writings* (A. Stubbs, Ed.). Johannesburg: Picador Africa.

[332] See Cooper, S., & Ratele, K. (2018). The black consciousness psychology of Steve Biko. In S. Fernando & R. Moodley (Eds.), *Global psychologies: Mental health and the global south* (pp. 245–260). Palgrave MacMillan.

power and authority. Black journalists also operationalised the notion of black perspectives with fixed and essentialised notions of identity and transformation. The *City Press* case study attest to the continued reproduction of racialised discourses within the post-apartheid South African newsroom.

Chapter 6

My lived black experience in a neoliberal newsroom

> *tell your story/let it nourish you/sustain you/and claim you/tell your story/let it twist and remix your shattered heart/tell your story/until your past stops tearing your present apart.* - Poet Lebohang Mashile[333]

Introduction

In this chapter, I bring my own lived black experience as a former journalist who have worked in one of post-apartheid South African newsrooms and critically interrogate it within the framework of black existential theories drawn from South African and U.S. (black-American contexts). I draw on these transnational theoretical frameworks to problematise lived black experience in US contexts by centring the meaning of my South African blackness. I examine what it means to have a black voice and a black perspective in a post-apartheid newsroom that retroactively delegimitises it through white structural systems of editing, silencing and marginalisation. I examine what it means to be made voiceless in the context of the neoliberal newsroom that privileges neoliberal discourses and elite voices and explore the im/possibilities of transcending such subjectivation. By the neoliberal newsroom, I mean the highly commercial and concentrated media in post-apartheid South African that 'routinely provides a platform for business and political elites at the expense of ordinary people' (Chiumbu, 2016: 424).[334] In so doing, I hope to tell my story through autoethnographic reflections, but with critical reflexivity, 'so as to avoid the pitfalls of engaging blackness as a static and essentialised mode of subjectivity' (Stevens et. al., 2017).[335] Every black person, the black existentialist philosopher Gordon tells us, faces history - his or her story or their story. For black people, this way of looking at past experiences is 'rooted in daily life' (More, 2019),[336] a life such as that lived by people who are black like me or who have worked or are working as black journalists in a post-apartheid South African newsroom. However, such a chapter as this one means more than simply looking to a life of an individual black journalist or a former black

[333] See Mashile, L. (2005). *In a Ribbon of Rhythm*. Cape Town, South Africa: OShun Books.
[334] See Chiumbu, S. (2016). Media, Race and Capital: A Decolonial Analysis of Representation of Miners' Strikes in South Africa, *African Studies*, 75:3, 417-435.
[335] See Stevens, G., Bell, D., Sonn, C. C., Canham, H., & Clennon, O. (2017). Transnational perspectives on black subjectivity. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 47, 459–469.
[336] More, P. M. (2019). *Looking through philosophy in Black: Memoirs*. Rowman & Littlefield International Ltd.

journalist. It means fundamentally gazing into the situation of black journalists completely, and indeed black people in general. This is the chapter I struggled to write. 'My words and worlds were forever lost, and yet, here it is' (Mackinlay, 2019).[337] In a way it taught me autoethnographic writing 'is precarious business' (Ibid, p.190)[338].

6.1 Problematising US blackness theorising in post-apartheid South Africa

Phadi argues that there is a tendency in South African academic circles to invoke U.S. blackness and 'situate present realities of black people in post-apartheid South Africa as racist legacies of apartheid that collide with the paradoxes of the current context' (Phadi, 2021: 52).[339] In this chapter, I seek to stretch my idea of blackness by arguing, following Phadi, that being black in South Africa produces multiple meanings of blackness and multiple consciousness. She describes multiple consciousnesses as 'existing in the thrall of multiple folds which interact to disrupt the collective history of oppression' (Ibid). As there are various and multiple ways that can shape the lived experience of black people in post-apartheid South Africa; race, class and ethnicity emerged as particularly strong forces in the subjectification of my lived reality in the post-apartheid newsroom. I argue here that throughout the history of South Africa, class has always defined the emancipatory politics of black people. As Ally and Ally (2008) argue, 'the analytic of race and class 'morphed yet further in Black Consciousness's engagements with the ongoing theoretical and political conversation about the politics of change, establishing a dialogue that mapped the contours of the intellectual landscape of the period' (p. 186).[340] I highlight this because my social class position in the post-apartheid newsroom impacted on my lived experience. Class limited my strategies of dealing with racism within the neoliberal newsroom. That I am black is a fact and in an anti-black world, race will always have an enduring bearing on black life. I also bring up the issue of my blackness; it was raised not only to me but also to a group of black journalists at City Press (*IOL*, 2013).[341] I argue that while American blackness 'begins to capture some of the manifestations of Blackness in South Africa' (Phadi), however, 'it is not sufficient (Ibid). It is so because US blackness stems from a particular historical context in where black people are a minority and are not inflected by issues such as race, class and ethnicity in the same way despite parallel histories of oppression.

[337] See Mackinlay, E. (2019). *Critical Writing for Embodied Approaches: Autoethnography, Feminism and Decoloniality*. Palgrave Macmillan: Australia.
[338] Ibid, p.190.
[339] See Phadi, M. (2021). The multiple consciousness of blackness: race and class in South Africa. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, Volume 105, 2021, pp. 52-73
[340] See Ally, N. and Ally, S. (2008) Critical intellectualism: The role of black consciousness in reconfiguring the race-class problematic in South Africa. In: A. Mngxitama, A. Alexander and N.G. Gibson (eds.) *Biko Lives! Contesting the Legacies of Steve Biko*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
[341] See Sapa. *City Press* to probe racism claims. *IOL*. 18 October 2013.

6.2 The mediated nature of the neoliberal newsroom

Is there such thing as a neoliberal newsroom? I argue that this question prompts another question posed by Phelan: 'how might we understand neoliberalism as a phenomenon that is ontologically dependent on media logics and processes? (2018: 547)[342] Phelan posits that our answer will partly depend on how we define the define the concept of media. Since this study is about the making and mediation of black voices in the post-apartheid South African newsroom using *City Press* newspaper as a locus of analysis, an engagement about the 'mediated' and 'mediatised' nature and character of the media is necessary. From this point of view, it is important to recall the etymology of the words 'media' and 'mediation' which for Williams (1983) mean 'in-between and relational' (pp. 203-207).[343] One way of answering whether there is such thing as a neoliberal newsroom is to centre my lived experience and other black people like me who have encountered 'mediated neoliberalism' (Phelan, 2018) in the post-apartheid South African newsroom. Therefore, whatever we make of the idea of neoliberal newsroom, it is difficult to talk about black voices and their lived subjection without talking about neoliberalism (Ibid). In this chapter, I looked to a different set of theoretical sources to accord significance to the meaning of my lived experience and that of others in constituting a black voice and a black perspective in the neoliberal media promoting neoliberal discourses and interests of the elite (Chiumbu, 2016; Duncan, 2014). This approach 'inculcated a new alertness to the important political importance of the media and journalism practices' (Phelan, 2018: 542) to our embodied voice and black subjectivities and their 'entanglement in different mediated practices in the production of neoliberal subjectivities' (Gilbert, 2011[344] cited in Phelan, 2018: 542-543). Ultimately, discussions of neoliberal discourse, neoliberal affect and neoliberal subjectivity became pertinent to the analysis of black voices (including mine) and their subjection in the post-apartheid newsroom.

6.3 The 'accidental' journalist

I was born in the same year Steve Biko died in a rural village currently known as Fort Malan[345] in the small town of Willowvale, located on the south eastern side of the Eastern Cape province. Growing up in a rural village, it never dawned on me what my existence in the world would mean. It never occurred to me that one-day I would go to university and later become a journalist for some of the major reputable newspapers published in South Africa. During that time I was just happy to be alive. Frankly, I was like

[342] See Phelan, S. (2018). Neoliberalism and media. In: Cahill D, Cooper M, Konings M and Primrose D (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Neoliberalism*. London: SAGE, 539–552.
[343] See Williams, R. (1983). *Keywords: A vocabulary of culture & society*. New York: Oxford University Press.
[344] See Gilbert, J. (2011). What does democracy feel like? Form, function, affect, and the materiality of the sign. In L. Dahlberg & S. Phelan (eds), *Discourse theory and critical media politics* (pp. 82–105). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
[345] There is a rich and untold history behind the naming of some Eastern Cape villages under colonial names. The roots of this can be traced to early European missionaries who established mission stations and established forts as military frontier posts and strongholds against the Xhosa chiefs.

that Negro in Fanon's joke:

> One day St. Peter saw three men arrive at the gate of heaven: a white man, a mulatto, and a Negro.
> "What do you want most?" he asked the white man.
> "Money."
> "And you?" he asked the mulatto.
> "Fame."
> St. Peter turned then to the Negro, who said with a wide smile: "I'm just carrying these gentlemen's bags."[346]

Although I hated school then, at Grade 12, the tail end of high school grades in South Africa, I had to confront and engage St. Peter's question, 'What do I want most? My mother, who is now late, persuaded me to consider 'what if' the profession of teaching was an ideal career path for me. Reflecting on his early years at school, Chabani Manganyi - in his memoir *Apartheid and the Making of a Black Psychologist* (2016) – states that 'it is not difficult to play down the lifetime significance of isolated events of the '*what if*' variety" (2016: 3)[347] (emphasis my own). As a result, I have absolutely no clue what I wanted to do after I had passed my matriculation examinations. Fortunately, I had done well in the matric examinations despite bunking school for days at any given opportunity during the course of the school year. However, that pass was immediately undermined by the fact that I had not applied for admission to any university in the country. If it was not for my aunt who had connections at the then University of Transkei (renamed Walter Sisulu University), I do not know 'if' I would be in a privileged position to write this thesis. Without a clue on what I wanted to do, and with no choices whatsoever open to me due to my late enrolment at the university, I ended up choosing a degree in education – majoring in history and education. My love for history, and subsequently journalism writing, was instilled by a certain Mr Thobile Mbana who encouraged us to engage in long form of writing (essays). It was certainly the subject of history that made me fall in love with writing. After graduation, the teaching degree proved ineffective in securing a job instantly. Besides, there were too many unemployed teacher graduates who were roaming the streets because their degree certificates proved to be of no use in finding jobs. Fortuitously, an editorial intern position became available at the Mthatha Bureua offices of the *Daily Dispatch* newspaper in 2000.[348] I took my chances and applied. To my surprise and excitement, I nailed the internship. It is with this background in mind that I considered myself, then, an 'accidental journalist.' After the internship had expired, I have had numerous opportunities of working in some of the country's major newsrooms. However, breaking into the industry proved a challenging

[346] See Frantz Fanon. (1952/1967). *Black Skin White Masks*. (trans. C Markmann). New York: Grove Press. p.34
[347] See Manganyi, C.N. (2016). *Apartheid and the Making of a Black Psychologist.* Wits University Press: Johannesburg.
[348] The *Daily Dispatch* is a provincial newspaper in the Eastern Cape published by Arena Holdings. It forms part of the stable of publications which boasts titles such as the *Sunday Times, Business Day* and *Financial Mail*, among others.

task, and as a result, life's circumstances forced me to take up another editorial internship in a Johannesburg major national newspaper. At this stage in my life, I had recognised that black people face limited options in life, and that they do not have the freedom to choose. There is a distinction between choice and option. Gordon's insight on choice is instructive here:

> A condition of one's freedom is that one is able to choose. Yet, choosing and having options are not identical: choices may work in accordance with options, but one may choose what is not a live option. The choice, then, turns back on the chooser and lives in the world of negation. There, the choice at best determines something about the chooser, though it fails to transform the material conditions imposed upon the chooser. (2000: 76).

Being an editorial intern for the second time despite my experience in journalism turned out to be 'not a live option.' However, I did not choose an option that is not live because 'choices may work in accordance with options' as Gordon says. My social class position did not permit me to choose a 'live option.' Furthermore, it was not the choice of deciding to take up the internship again which turned against me, it were the 'material conditions imposed' upon me by the structural racism and structural whiteness in the neoliberal newsroom. This meant putting myself in a tenuous position of following the prescripts of the internship and thereby living 'in the world of negations.' The lived reality told throughout this chapter is based during my editorial internship during this period.

6.4 Neurotic contact with whiteness

In this section, I draw on the works of More (2019), Biko (1996), Fanon (1986) , Yancy (1998), and Manganyi (1973),[349] among others, to reflect on the effects of the white gaze on my black body and my embodied voice in the context of the post-apartheid South African newsroom in which there are continuities of the past and present. That I am black is a given, it is my facticity (More, 2019); but it is entirely the meaning whiteness and its white gaze that gives meaning to my existence that is the focus of this chapter. However, I do not imply that my blackness is insignificant or insufficient to give meaning to my existence. It simply means that the 'sociogenic conditions' (Fanon, 1986) are such that they define my situation and condition me in a particular way that 'shapes and limits me' (More, 2019), but also (as an agential black subject) I can figure out my situation and then decide on the meaning of it.

Before joining this post-apartheid newsroom in Johannesburg, I did not have much contact with white

[349] See Biko, S. (1996). *I write what I like*. Cape Town: Raven; see Fanon, F. (1986). *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press; see Manganyi, N.C. (1973). *Being Black in the World*. Johannesburg: Spro-cas/Ravan; and see also Yancy, G. (2008) Colonial gazing: The production of the body as ''other''. *The Western Journal of Black Studies* 32(1): 1–15.

people or white structures in a work environment. In my previous internship at the Mthatha Bureau of the *Daily Dispatch*, the bureau office was staffed by black journalists only. Thereafter, I had a little contact with white people when I studied for a postgraduate diploma in media management at Rhodes university, Grahamstown; but that contact is irrelevant in the context of this thesis. The sobering observation I made when I first arrived in this neoliberal newsroom was that while black journalists were in the numerical majority, the news desk - 'where the news agenda is mapped out' (*Daily Maverick*, 2013) - was occupied by mainly white news editors, led by an old white male news editor . Here I was, a black lad from the former Transkei homeland, in a sea of blackness in the newsroom and finding myself being unsettled by the whiteness of the news desk. It was a strange feeling that whiteness could be so visible to my eyes and my body. This form of habituation by whiteness, I would learn or experience later, at the level of the news desk, would have ramifications in the future in how my voice would be mediated and mediatised. As Yancy puts it, 'whiteness involves forms of habituation that masquerade as common sense, as intelligibility itself' (2021: 218).[350] I argue that in US context in which white people are in overwhelming majority, it would be understandable why whiteness would 'want to have literally everything'. However, in the context of South Africa, where black people are in the majority, I did not understand why whiteness must be allowed to morph into 'forms of habituation that masquerade as common sense' in a post-apartheid newsroom in which black journalists are a numerical majority. It surprised me that everyone was fine with this arrangement and was 'expected to make peace [this] with mediocrity' (Baldwin, 1995 cited in Yancy, 2021: 218).[351]

Oppressive nature of whiteness

It is September 2006. I am assigned by the newspaper's trainee editor to do a feature article on a golf course development in Alicedale, Eastern Cape. After spending a few days there, I return to Johannesburg and submit the article. A few hours later, I am called into the trainee editor's desk and invited to be seated next to her. As I sit down, her imposing white body maintains its enduring presence in my black body. It subjects my body to scrutiny and control. As a result, I feel a nauseating feeling in my body that puts it in a state of helplessness. My body felt marginalised as her white body became a sharp white background to my existence. According to Sithole, the lived experience of the black subject is 'bodily experience, that is, racial embodiment in the anti-Black world' (Sithole, 2016: 37).[352] Yancy (2021) says black people are not always aware that the question of our humanity as black people 'was ever in question.' By the time I fell in love with journalism, Yancy tells me, 'I had already fallen head over heels for its whiteness, though I had not marked or named it as such' (Ibid, p.217). I argue that

[350] See Yancy, G. (2021). Black disciplinary zones and the exposure of whiteness, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 53:3, 217-226.
[351] Ibid, p.217.
[352] See Sithole, T. (2016). The Concept of the Black Subject in Fanon. *Journal of Black Studies* 2016, Vol. 47(1) 24–40

there's a 'conceptual family resemblance" (Ibid, p.223)[353] between whiteness and the neoliberal media. Whiteness in the media "structurally obfuscates its logics, it conceals its racial and racist epistemic assumptions through claims of "neutrality" (Ibid, p.218)[354] and (I add) through the appointment of black editors in the top hierarchies of the South African post-apartheid and neoliberal newsroom.

Hollowing of voice

She (the trainee editor) looks into my article and begins to tear it down word-by-word. I observe hopelessly as the power dynamic between an editorial intern and trainee editor do not permit me to question her motives behind hollowing and mutilating my voice. I sat there besides her, I felt disempowered, but angry. Angry at her. Angry at myself for putting myself through another editorial internship. Angry at the fact that, as the black person, I faced limited choices and opportunities in life comparative to other racial groups. The Alicedale story became personal (it became my story). It was no longer the story about Alicedale and the impeding golf course development. It was also no longer about the people of Alicedale who stood to benefit or not benefit from this development in their small railway town. It was now about me. It was about my voice. It was also about my point of view or what black journalists at *City Press* described as 'black perspectives' (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013).[355] I soon realised that I have arrived at the gates of the 'cruel and oppressive logics of whiteness' (Yancy, 2021: 218). That cruel and oppressive form of white editing had left me muted and disempowered as I pushed my rage inwards. I felt hollow inside. Empty.

6.5 Psychological burden of whiteness

I arrived in the post-apartheid newsroom 'anxious to make sense of things, my spirit filled with desire' (Fanon cited in Gordon, 2002: 14),[356] to be at the service of the journalism profession that I believed (and still believes) 'makes a contribution to the deepening of democracy in South Africa' (Daniels, 2012: x).[357] However, reaching out to the world of journalism and media, I soon found myself 'abnormal from the slightest contact with the white world' (Fanon cited in Gordon, 2015: 59). On the surface, it would appear that I was coping with this 'cruel and oppressive logic of whiteness' (Yancy, 2021) yet my inner self was experiencing the kind of numbness one seeks from alcohol. It was difficult for me to belong in this neoliberal newsroom, which was contaminated with the scent of whiteness. The psychological burden of this whiteness took its toll on my body to the extent that I pushed myself

[353] Ibid, p.223.
[354] Ibid, p.218.
[355] See *Mail & Guardian*. (2013). *City Press* to investigate racism claims at paper. 18 October 2013.
[356] See Gordon, L.R. "A Questioning Body of Laughter and Tears: Reading *Black Skin, White Masks* through the Cat and Mouse of Reason and a Misguided Theodicy," *Parallax* 8, no. 2 (2002): 10–29.
[357] See Daniels, G. (2012). Preface to *Fight for Democracy: The ANC and the Media in South Africa*. Wits University Press: Johannesburg.

inwardly. In essence, I lived a 'petrified existence', as Gordon (2015) calls it, wherein 'choices, thought, dreams, deeds, all become inward, while for others, freed from this malediction, such concerns direct themselves to the world' (2015: 114).[358] What was lost to me at the time was the realisation that my frustration and anger at whiteness and its invisible structures was a 'sign of health. A healthy response is to fight it. It is to go "out there" and do something' (Gordon, 2018).[359] When the issue Bonga Bangani was discussed in the newspaper's editorial meeting in March 2007, I had to 'do something' and express what was consuming me inside. Bangani had sent a five-page letter to Investec, his former employer, complaining about how he had been treated in the course of his one-year employment contract (*Mail & Guardian*, 2007).[360] His story resonated with my experience of white editing in the neoliberal newsroom.

Raced editorial meeting

I came to the media with no personal experience of the race dynamics in the workplace environment. In one of the newspaper's weekly editorial meetings, the issue of Bangani (Ibid) was discussed. "Overwhelmed" is how the 22-year-old Bangani described how he felt about the white colleagues' racial attitudes towards training black employees in contrast with that of white colleagues (Ibid). This editorial meeting presented me with an opportunity to wade into the racism debate and to expose my white colleagues' racial attitudes towards training editorial interns. As the meeting progressed, I noticed that very few people were eager to participate in the newsroom discussions about racism. I decided to speak and raised the issue of subtle incidents of racism within the newsroom and pointed the fact that the news desk was white and indicative of the slow pace of transformation in that paper. Only one black colleague stood up in support of my argument. Others sought to defend the paper's transformation credentials by pointing to the fact that black journalists were in the numerical majority. Emotions ran high. It became clear to me whiteness has suffused mainstream media culture like a fog. As More (2019) argues, 'as a norm, whiteness is not mentioned; only blackness, which is the absolute "Other" – as a matter of fact, non-Other to whiteness – has to be identified.' Race, therefore, has been an important issue for me and the black journalists at *City Press* and will continue to be in the future.

Ethnic hailing

The editorial meeting had ended unpleasantly, with race at the core of the discussions. The following

[359] See Gordon, L.R. (2018). "Lewis R. Gordon: Revisiting Frantz Fanon's *The Damned of the Earth*," interviewed by Cihan Aksan, *State of Nature* (April 22, 2018).
[360] See *Mail & Guardian*. (2007). Racially tinted glass ceiling. 27 March 2007.

morning, I together with a colleague (who was vocal during the deliberations in the meeting) were summoned into the editor's office. It felt like summons. We were asked to clarify some of the issues we raised at the meeting. We did. What was odd, though, was the question I got asked by the editor which bordered on ethnic grounds. I was asked to explain whether as a 'Xhosa man' I had a problem reporting to trainee editor, who happened to be a women and white. It felt like it was an accusation of 'culturally superiority.' I thought that was backward coming from an editor. Frankly, I did not expect the editor to raise such an ethnic issue because it was not there, maybe, except in the editor's imagination. This issue of cultural or ethnic hailing also emerged in the 2013 *City Press* fight between Haffajee and a group of six black journalists (*Daily Dispatch*, 2013). Within three months of finishing the internship, I quit. Like Bangani, I chose unemployment over the newsroom environment that was suffocating my inner life.

6.6 Theorising black experience

Among the many ironic elements of lived experience is the paradox of black experience raised in an Euromodern world: "Black *experience* should not exist since blacks should not have a point of view" (Gordon, 2015: 48) (emphasis original). Basically, black experience, according to Gordon's formulation, is a paradox and a performative contradiction. The black person, having attained the lived experience in the social world should not attempt to figure out the meaning of such experience. That the black person attempts to make sense or figure out his or her lived experience already announces the failure of such project. Figuring out black experience, then, "begins rather with a lofty goal" (Gordon, 2012).[361] Such interplay of ironic dimensions of black experience and black point of view are critical hallmarks of Fanon's thought. The lived experience of black people, therefore, raises questions of problematic existence and suffering which, as Gordon argues, 'animate the theoretical dimensions of black intellectual existential productions" (Gordon, 2000: 8). This thesis contends, then, that the cultivation of the relationship between black experience and theory becomes central since 'experience is lived and precedes thought, but thought is what brings meaning and understanding to experience' (Gordon, 2006).[362] Lived experience involves a constant process of reflecting upon itself. Gordon observed that it is black experience that is always questioned and that "where one does not emerge as the questioner, one collapses into an isomorphic relationship with experience. The result is a form of dependency, where one group exemplifies experience and the other group the thought through which experience is interrogated" (2008: 157)[363]. It is clear to me that raising the question of the point of view of black people, especially a point of view from the perspective of lived experience, 'challenges their

[361] See Gordon, L.R. (2016). *Disciplining as a Human Science*, Quaderna, mis en ligne le 28 janvier.
[362] See Gordon,, L.R. (2006). "African-American Philosophy, Race, and the Geography of Reason." In *Not Only the Master's Tools" African-American Studies in Theory and Practice*, edited by Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers. Pp. 3–50.
[363] See Gordon, L.R. (2008). "Not Always Enslaved, Yet Not Quite Free: Philosophical Challenges from the Underside of the New World," *Philosophia: Philosophical Quarterly of Israel* 36, no. 2 (2008): 151–166.

exclusion from theoretical reflections on freedom" (Ibid). I argue that telling one's lived experience ought to also simultaneously encompass theorising it since "what is revealed is the dialectics of lived experience *and* theory" (Yancy, 2021: 217) (emphasis original). More (2019) maintains that is the encounter with whiteness in which the experience of racial difference can be theorised.

Conclusion

Using autoethnography, this chapter has weaved together my lived experiences in a post-apartheid newsroom. It has attempted to tell my story, one that would 'enable imagining new possibilities for a future than can be reached from the present – one more humane and just than that promised by the trajectories we find ourselves on. (Grossberg, 2010b: 241)[364]. In this chapter, I have shown that black embodiment in white spaces has always been problematic as it is constructed through the white gaze. As Fanon said, 'Not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man' (Fanon, 2008: pp.82-83). The chapter has shown the burden black bodies carry in white spaces within the post-apartheid South African media wherein race is no longer an insignificant issue. Whiteness came to define my everyday life in the neoliberal newsroom.

[364] See Grossberg, L. (2010b). On the political responsibilities of cultural studies. *Inter-Asia cultural studies*, 11, 241–247.

Chapter 7

Of Illicit Speaking: Black Women Journalists' Voices under the Weight of Patriarchy

> *As a woman, you get used to the challenge of finding your voice where it isn't obvious. I think men have to get used to that too. I think they should. I mean, you go to school and you find yourself in Shakespeare, you've got to find yourself in Othello and Njabulo Ndebele, you have to find yourself in Chinua Achebe, you have to find yourself in Keorapetse Kgotsitsile and you do. Nobody apologises and says, "Oh sorry little black girl, this isn't a voice which speaks to you." I mean, you're happy if they're black, never mind a woman. You kiss the ground the day you read Toni Morrison for the first time*. - Lebohang Mashile (2002).[365]

Introduction

This chapter positions itself in relation to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) adopted by 189 countries in 1995 as a roadmap for gender equality. Women and media are a critical concern for BPfA and 'calls for the commitment to end sexism and sexist stereotypes by and in the media as one of the conditions needed for the achievement of gender equality' (Daniels, 2021: 123).[366] I argue that the diversity of voices in the media, including women's voices, is one of the foundational and fundamental principles undergirding media transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. I further contend that the value of a diverse spectrum of voices, in particular women's voices, is widely recognised as integral, and at times regarded as synonymous, with media transformation in post-apartheid South Africa in which all voices must be heard. It is my view that this principle is particularly important in the post-apartheid newsroom, where the media generally ignores voices from marginalised groups, including women (Chiumbu, 2013).[367] This is regrettable because the media carries the potential

[365] Lebohang Mashile is an award-winning poet, author, presenter, actress, and producer. She is one of the prominent voices Black feminism in South Africa over the past two decades. See Mashile, L. (with Barbara Boswell). (2002). "Interview with Lebogang Mashile", *AGI Newsletter.* Vol 11, December.

[366] See Daniels, G. (2021). Glass Ceilings: cybermisogyny is a sign of unchecked sexism in media and newsrooms, *Agenda*, 35:2, 123-135.

[367] See Chiumbu, S. (2016). Media, Race and Capital: A Decolonial Analysis of Representation of Miners' Strikes in South Africa, *African Studies*, 75:3, 417-435.

to represent the voices and interests of marginalised peoples (Malila, 2014: 22).[368] Therefore, this chapter makes an assessment of the status of black women journalists' voices in the post-apartheid South African media, 27 years after the BPfA) was adopted. It looks at the sexist subjection and stereotyping experience by black and other women journalists at *City Press* and different post-apartheid South African apartheid newsrooms. This study interviewed two black women journalists who have previously occupied senior editorial roles at *City Press* to investigate whether post-apartheid newsrooms and workplaces remain sites of sexist subjection and marginalisation of women voices or sites of transformation conditioned for the achievement of gender equality. They are Ferial Haffajee, the then editor of *City Press*, and Lizeka Mda, respectively former managing editor and deputy editor at *City Press*. They were selected to be part of this study on the basis of their past connections to the *City Press* newspaper and most importantly because of their sustained contribution in the fields of journalism and media. They were also selected because of their Black feminist and womanist perspectives. The interview data, and newspaper data containing accounts of lived experiences of other black women journalists, was analysed using a discourse analysis approach. A discourse analysis approach was useful in revealing the sexist subjection and stereotyping black women journalists experience in a post-apartheid newsroom. Using intersectional Black feminist thought and Gordon's (2021) theory of gendered invisibility linked to voice, especially of women, this thesis unearths the misconception that women are voiceless and that their voices are invisible. It argues that at the heart of gendered invisibility, women are generally ignored when they speak and 'not heard, they, in effect, have no voice' (Gordon, 2021: 23).[369]

7.1 The paradox of voicelessness and the struggle for being heard for women

It is my contention that scholarship on voice and speech is riddled with a presupposition that women are 'voiceless' beings who must 'find a voice' or be 'given a voice.' These presuppositions are presented as universal truths rather than contextualised in sociogenic conditions (Fanon, 1967) and the political exclusion (Gordon, 2022) that enable the marginalisation and silencing of women's voices. Servaes and Malikhao (2005: 91) posit that while certain categories of people are regarded as 'voiceless', in reality they are indeed not so.[370] For Reid, 'it is not that people have nothing to say, only that mainstream dominant narrative framers do not care to listen to them' (Reid, 2020: 15).[371] She argues that the tragic consequence of not listening to women's voices has resulted in the 'routine condition of the voiceless'

[368] See Malila, V. (2014). "The voiceless generation – (non-)representations of young citizens in the coverage of education stories by South African newspapers." *Communicare* 33(1): 21-34.
[369] See Gordon, L.R. (2021). *Freedom, Justice, and Decolonisation*. New York: Routledge.
[370] See Servaes, J, and Malikhao, P. (2005). "Participatory communication: The new paradigm?", in *Media & global change: Rethinking communication for development*, ed. Oscar Hemer and Thomas Tufte, Nordicom and CLAC-CO.
[371] See Reid, J. (2020). "Conceptualising a new understanding of media diversity," in *New Concepts for Media Diversity: A view from South Africa*. University of South Africa Press: Pretoria. Pp. 1-22.

(Ibid), not only in South Africa but globally. She maintains that those whose voices are damned or located in the 'zone of non-being' (Fanon, 1967) often comprised of the poor, women, indigenous and first nation people, the differently abled, youth and migrants. This thesis argues that unravelling the knots and contradictions of the pathologies of voicelessness requires 'cultural [and] historical reflection to clear a space where the voices of the subjugated can be heard' (Kirmayer et. al. 2018: 22).[372] As Dreher argues, the issues of representation and voice are strongly linked to listening. 'Attention to listening shifts the focus and responsibility for change from marginalised voices and on to the conventions, institutions and privileges which shape who and what can be heard in media' (Dreher, 2008: 7 cited in Malila and Garman, 2016: 69).[373] In legitimising black women journalists' voices at *City Press* and in the post-apartheid South African newsroom, this thesis argues that their "real, lively voices" (Daniels, 2012: 20)[374] are visible but are deliberated unheard or not listened to. The black women journalists at *City Press* and elsewhere are relatively elite women, who despite their social, economic and political standing in the South African society, cannot escape the nature of patriarchal and misogynistic violence pushed against their embodied voices. Therefore, this chapter gives a close reading of their interview-based narratives to engage in ways in which they refuse to conform to patriarchal and misogynistic scripts, and as result, fall victim to what Daniels (2020) calls an 'anti-feminist backlash.'[375] This study makes a case for using both discourse-based, affective and decolonial readings of everyday experience of black women journalists in a post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press*.

7.2 Finding women's voices in male voices

Early black women writers such as Anna Julia Cooper, Charlotte Maxeke and Nontsizi Mgqwetho were consciously aware about the problem of finding a voice for many black women and the implications of that for their lived experience in a world struggling with patriarchal, sexist and misogynistic tendencies. Cooper, in her *A Voice from the South* (1892), lucidly captured the social position of black women voices in the United States when she observed that 'the one mute and voiceless note has been sadly expectant Black Woman'.[376] That one of the progenitors of the black voice tradition in the US was a

[372] See Kirmayer, L.J., Adeponle, A. and Dzokoto, V.A.A. (2018). "Varieties of Global Psychology: Cultural Diversity and Constructions of the Self," in *Global Psychologies: Mental Health and the Global South*, ed. Suman Fernando and Roy Moodley. Palgrave MacMillan: UK. Pp. 21-37.

[373] See Malila, V. & Garman, A. (2016). Listening to the 'Born Frees': Politics and disillusionment in South Africa, *African Journalism Studies*, 37:1, 64-80; see also Dreher, T. (2008). "Media, multiculturalism and the politics of listening." *In Power and place: Refereed proceedings of the Australian and New Zealand Communication Association Conference 2008*, ed. E. Tilley, 1–14. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Massey University.

[374] See Daniels, G. (2012). *Fight for Democracy: The ANC and the Media in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

[375] See Daniels, G. (2020). *Power and Loss in South African Journalism*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

[376] Anna Julia Cooper (1858-1964) was a writer, teacher, and activist who championed education for African Americans and women. See Cooper, A.J. (1988). *A Voice from the South*. New York: Oxford University Press.

black woman, therefore, means that the scholarship on voice has 'evolved in a matrilinear line of descent' (Gates Jr, 1988: xvii).[377] In the context of South Africa, Maxeke[378] and Mgqwetho[379] emerged in the 1920s black press, *Umteteli waBantu* newspaper, to challenge 'the notion of black women as silent figures, who were not involved in the politics of the early twentieth century' (Masola, 2018: 59).[380] As the epigraph that opens this chapter reveals, Lebohang Mashile's journey to finding her voice has been the most arduous one. Mashile's statement contains important insights, one of which, is the paradox faced by black women in finding their voices. First, she raises the difficulty of finding her voice where "it isn't obvious" to do so. It is not obvious for black women to find their voices because, historically, in many African contexts, speaking has been a heavily gendered exercise. Echoing Mashile, Mda describes this phenomenon of gendered speaking at *City Press*:

> *Men talk and we listen. Men, as a result, feel confident spouting off on any subject regardless of lack of expertise, while women will doubt themselves and often need cajoling to come onto panels or to write about subjects in which they are experts.* (Interview, 14 September 2021).

According to Morna, there is no other country in the world that understands the pain of being silenced as intrinsically as South Africa (2007: 369).[381] For Mda, the reluctance of women to speak in a patriarchal post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press* speaks to the pain of being silenced as intrinsically as a black women. Speaking is not just about whether women have perspectives on 'subjects in they are experts' but whether the post-apartheid South African newsroom creates opportunities for women's voices to be heard so that there is no need for black women journalists 'cajoling to come onto panels.'

7.3 Women voices under the hegemonic white gaze and marshalling black gaze

In her literacy and literary circles, Mashile observed that she had to find her voice in Shakespeare, Othello, Njabulo Ndebele and Keorapetse Kgotsitsile (all male voices). Her story is part of a larger problem, or even a tragedy, on how damned are black women voices in post-apartheid South Africa. As Mashile has stated, black women, do find their voices in black and white male voices. I suggest that this conundrum placed Mashile in a DuBoisian state of 'double consciousness' and in an untenable position

[377] See Gates, Jr, L.H. *(1988).* Preface (In Her Own Write). In Anna Julia Cooper. (1988). *A Voice from the South*. New York: Oxford University Press.
[378] Charlotte Maxeke was a South African political activist and the first black woman to graduate with a university degree in South Africa with a B.sc from Wilberforce University Ohio in 1903, as well as the first black African woman to graduate from an American university.
[379] Nontsizi Mgqwetho was one of the first and prolific major black female poets in South Africa and political commentators to write poetry in IsiXhosa in the 1920s.
[380] See Masola, A. (2018). The Politics of the 1920s Black Press: Charlotte Maxeke and Nontsizi Mgqwetho's Critique of Congress, *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies - Multi-, Inter- and Transdisciplinarity*, 13:2, 59-76.
[381] See Morna, C.L. (2007). Making every voice count: a southern Africa case study, *Gender & Development*, 15:3, 369-385.

of not only choosing which male voices to subordinate herself and her voice to, but also which white or black male ones. As one can see, both choices pose tremendous obstacles to Mashile finding her own voice. Canham and Williams (2017) explored the complexities of occupying two positions of being black and middle class among the group of black middle-class professionals living in Johannesburg. What they discovered is instructive: 'The first pressure is the experience of being black under the hegemonic *white* gaze and the second is the experience of the marshalling black gaze' (2017: 23; emphasis original).[382] The marshalling black gaze on black women journalists at *City Press* and other black women in other post-apartheid newsrooms will be explicated in this study to reveal the sexist subjection of black women bodies and their embodied voices. Faced with this double reality, Mashile is then forced to establish a dialectic relationship with what Jane Anna Gordon (2006)[383] calls 'potentiated double consciousness'. According to her, potentiated double consciousness is a dialectical stage that emerges from W.E.B. Du Bois notion of double consciousness after one has faced the situation of looking 'at oneself through antagonistic eyes' and measuring 'oneself according to standards and values articulated through one's negation' (Ibid, p.2).[384] Mashile's anecdote describes the longings of the South African black woman yearning for her own voice and not looking to subordinate her voice to either a black male or white male voice. Having understood the contributing motif of double consciousness to the situation she faced, Mashile finds little solace in black male voices: 'I mean, you're happy if they're black, never mind a woman'. I contend here that her potentiated double consciousness guides her not only to the identity dimensions of her black female voice but also to the existential dimensions of black voices as lived experience. Her consciousness is that of the black subject refusing to exist for another consciousness. I also suggest that hers is a black feminist consciousness or what Gqola (2018) calls a 'black feminist imagination.' According to Mashile, this black feminist imagination is manifested when 'you kiss the ground the day you read Toni Morrison for the first time'. For Carole Boyce Davies, black feminist imagination 'demand[s] a more expansive set of interactions at the level of the critical voice' (Davies, 1995: 1 cited in Gqola, 2018).[385] Mashile's black feminist consciousness and her 'potentiated double consciousness' speak to a realisation that 'neither should the dark man be wholly expected fully and adequately to reproduce the exact Voice of the Black Woman' (Cooper, 1988: viii). In her work on Black Consciousness (BC), Gqola raises the fallacy of the male-dominated BC discourse that 'claimed the right to speak to black women and 'about them and to know their experiences' (2001: 139). Like Cooper, Maxeke and Mgqwetho, black women journalists at *City Press* and elsewhere are 'forced to

[382] See Canham, H. and Williams, R. (2017). Being black, middle class and the object of two gazes. *Ethnicities* 2017, Vol. 17(1) 23–46

[383] The Euro-modern academic convention has been to use surnames of writers when referring to them. In order to reclaim Jane Anna Gordon's identity, which could be erased or subsumed into Lewis Gordon's identity, I will use her full names when referencing her in this thesis.

[384] Ibid, p.2.

[385] See Gqola, P. D. (2009). 'Pushing out from the centre': (Black) feminist imagination, redefined politics and emergent trends in South African poetry. *XCP: cross cultural poetics* 21–22: 214–38; see also Boyce-Davies, C. (2008). *Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones.* Durham: Duke University Press.

reflect upon circumstances that would lead one to cope through the isolation of silence' (Jane Anna Gordon, 2007: 171). [386] They have realised that 'to speak is to involve oneself in the human world, to share its grammar of reciprocity. Not to speak, as political theorists have noted for centuries, is to *die* as a human being" (Ibid; emphasis added).[387]

7.4 Be a Woman with Balls: Sexist stereotyping of women journalists

This thesis seeks to highlight the way in which newsroom culture is embodied at *City Press* through the 'marshalling of black gaze' (Canham and Williams, 2017) and how the numerical dominance of men in journalism, particularly in decision-making roles such as newspaper editing, affects culture in the post-apartheid South African newsroom. It engages with this question via the analysis of interviews with former black women journalists at *City Press* and through newspaper data containing accounts of black women journalists' lived experiences of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny in the workplace and during the course of doing their journalistic duties. The women's increased presence in the post-apartheid South African media has been one of the most significant changes over the past two decades. According to Wits Journalism's *State of the Newsroom 2021* report, 64 per cent of the in-house journalists were made up of women or self-identify as female as of mid-2022. However, men still occupy the majority of senior editorial decision-making roles with 64 per cent of a total of 39 national and regional commercial newspapers being male editors compared to 36 per cent made up of female editors. This thesis argues that little scholarly attention has focused on exploring how female journalists experience this numerical and hierarchical dominance of men in the post-apartheid newsroom. It is contended here that this numerical majority of male editors in the post-apartheid South African media may explain the hegemonic masculinity that continues to shape newsroom culture. In her foreword to the *Glass Ceilings: Women in South African Media Houses* (2018), Mahlatse Mahlatse, former group editor-in-chief of Eye Witness News (EWN) and former chairperson of the South African National Editors' Forum (Sanef), reflected at length on her real-life experiences that the hegemonic masculinity world of journalism has to offer:

> *Should it be the sexism, not only in the workplace but also from newsmakers, especially as a political reporter? The politicians who hit on me first before I even requested an interview or when I arrived for the interview and who felt it was okay to say something about the size of my bum or comment on my legs... Recently one man told me to come wearing a dress, and despite the current freezing temperature in Joburg, he said, "Don't wear stockings". South African journalists will recall that during the president's first term, certain staff in his office actually asked management of the public broadcaster to "please not have any women in the presidential press corps", and I recall they argued that they wanted to avoid "potential" scandals. But the*

[386] See Gordon, J.A. (2007). Failures of Language and Laughter: Anna Julia Cooper and Contemporary Problems of Humanistic Pedagogy. *Philosophical Studies in Education*. Volume 38. 163-177.
[387] Ibid

broadcaster complied.[388]

Mahlatse's statement brings forth the question of epistemological invisibility raised by Gordon (2021) in which there is the presumed illegitimacy of women's knowledge, especially on political matters. Mahlatse mentions 'politicians who hit on her' before she 'even requested an interview' with them as if there is nothing more to know or learn from her. According to Lewis Gordon, the imposition of these forms of oppressive invisibility entails identifying a group of people, such as black women journalists, and rendering them voiceless by blocking them from 'embodying political agency' (2021: 24) by virtue of their gender and excluding them from 'the production and appearance of and contributing to knowledge' (Ibid).

Bums and stockings

Mahlatse's story reveals a sexist culture which has become pervasive in the post-apartheid South African political discourse, and many black women journalists are not immune to it. Here, some politicians attempt to hail or interpellate Mahlatse toward a more passive and stereotypically female journalist who should not engage in socially transgressive behaviour by wearing stockings on duty. According to her, politicians expected her to be tolerant of their sexist judgements and comments about the 'size' of her bum and appearance of her legs. This provides valuable lessons on how black women journalists' relationships to embodied selves continue to play roles in how they 'negotiate place and power and inform how we traverse the terrain of sexualisation' (Gqola, 2005: 63).[389] However, Mahlatse rejected this sexist interpellation by politicians and this was surely an optimistic moment for the struggle against forms of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny. Another optimistic moment is captured in the Glass Ceilings 2018 which reported 'an increased anger and assertiveness by women in the media against sexism, which may be the result of the general *zeitgeist* of the times globally and nationally' (p.10).

7.5 Balls, cigars, and bracelets: performative male editing at *City Press*

I argue that the very idea of newspaper editing is premised on particular kinds of editing, which are often based on privileging the male body. I further contend that because of the patriarchal, sexist and misogynistic nature of the post-apartheid newsroom, the job of editing and writing is not seen as the 'kind of work that a woman does' (Masola, 2018: 63). In the context of *City Press*, Haffajee was the first black female editor in the history of that paper. However, there were some male journalists who desired the realm of editing to remain the sphere of men. For them, editing was not the kind of work

[388] See Mahlatse, M. (2018). *Foreword*. Glass Ceilings: Women in South African Media Houses. Gender Links: Johannesburg. pp. 5-6.
[389] See Gqola, P.D. (2005). Yindaba kaban' u'ba ndilahl' umlenze? Sexuality and Body Image, *Agenda*, 19:63, 3-9

that a woman like Haffajee could do. Haffajee shares a curious anecdote:

> *At City Press, one of the general managers wanted me to be more 'male' in my editing. He once said to me that his image of a successful editor was someone smoking a cigar, wearing bracelets and barking. Someone with balls, he said. I told him that I didn't have balls (obviously), didn't like braces and only smoked cigars very occasionally.* (Interview, 04 October 2021).

The most shocking and revealing aspect of the above anecdote is how sexist male journalists working in the post-apartheid South African newsroom can be towards women. For the general manager, it was not enough for Haffajee to be "male" in her editing. It was insufficient for her to be "only smoking cigars very occasionally". What on earth does being an editor has to do with smoking a cigar? She also had to grow "balls". Literally, she had to become a man. That she didn't like braces did not matter. She had to put on an animalistic and masculine language and start to "bark" orders. Here we see Haffajee being compelled to perform her identity in relation to the established dictates of what it means to be a male editor. To capture this double dimension of expectation, the gaze offered to her is both problematic and oppressive since it largely contains those elements of patriarchy and sexism. I argue here that the general manager's "gendered language is not simply incidentally sexist" (Lewis, 1994: 168-9 in Gqola, 2001: 147); at the centre of patriarchal and misogynistic thinking is an emphasis on the emasculation of black men and their need to see themselves in black women's bodies. The general manager's depiction of an ideal male editor and the injunction for Haffajee to be "male" in her editing, I argue, is intended to masculinise her and accord her an "honorary male status" (Gqola, 2001: 147).

According to North, the newsroom culture elsewhere is generally exclusionary and treats women journalists as 'outsiders. ' North writes:

> Many male journalists, particularly those in positions of authority in newsrooms, often don't experience a "newsroom culture" as such. Rather, they are the "culture", the newsroom is "theirs" and they guard the parameters from "outsiders", allowing some in, but rarely to the core, where power is experienced, wielded, and often homosocially shared. (North 2009b, 13)[390]

All that Haffajee wanted was to be an editor among other editors, not, as she was expected, to be 'someone smoking a cigar, wearing bracelets and barking' or at least 'someone with balls.' However, Haffajee is not the kind of editor who would allow herself to be treated as an outsider in the newsroom 'where power is experienced, wielded, and often homosocially shared'. She commented:

> *I was staking a claim to my own style and narrative. It was a hard battle to always stay in my own truth, but I believe I succeeded.* (Interview, 04 October 2021).

[390] See North, Louise. (2009b). "'Blokey' Newsroom Culture." *Media International Australia* 132: 5–15.

Yet another optimistic moment in the fight against patriarchy, sexism and misogyny in the post-apartheid South African newsroom. Haffajee refused the hailing to do some of the performative maleness in her editing and stuck to her style. However, she concedes that dealing with patriarchy is always a hard battle to fight. Intersectional Black feminism allows us to make sense of the 'marshalling black gaze' in ways in which black women journalists experience their media worlds as policed in sexist and multiple ways. The experiences of black women in the post-apartheid newsroom allows to the rstrictive binaries of gender that still exist in the media space despite the malleable characetristics that constitute it in the 21st century.

7.6 Thinking through women voices as sites of praxis

Voice and agency are some of the meanings women attach to gender equality (Rustin and Florence, 2021: 146).[391] The BPfA addresses issues of women participation and freedom of expression in the media, including women's choices in decision-making. It also promotes non-stereotypical portrayal of women in the media. I argue that the issue of the subjection of women's voices and bodies in a patriarchal post-apartheid newsroom deserves scholarly attention. According to Daniels et. al., 'patriarchy, as reflected in society at large, is mirrored in the media with the practices of gender stereotyping which reproduce discrimination and gender bias' (2018: 55).[392] Whilst the black women journalists featured in this study cannot be said to be the most poorest and most marginalised in the world. However, I argue that the issue of class must be first confronted since 'oppression by virtue of patriarchy can only be confronted if the issue of class is acknowledged' (Biana, 2020: 19).[393] Daniels (2020) argues that there is an "overlap" between the struggles faced by black women in the media against patriarchy and sexism despite their social, economic and political standing in society. It is argued here that no one form of oppression deserves more attention than the other. Consequently, all forms of oppression are interrelated and inseparably connected to each other and affect black women across the class milieu.

Ultimately, in the logic of coloniality, 'the black woman is seen as a highly erotic being whose primary function is fulfilling sexual desire and reproduction' (Maldonado-Torres, 2007: 255) of men. Gqola says it is not a coincidence that South African women, 'who, on paper are so empowered and have won so many freedoms, are living with the constant fear of violence when we cross the street, at work,

[391] See Rustin, C. and Florence, M. (2021). Gender equality and women's happiness in post-apartheid South Africa. *Agenda* 35.2 2021. Pp.146-156.
[392] See Daniels, G., Nyamweda, T. and Nxumalo, C. (2018). *Glass Ceilings: women in South African media houses*, 2018, Gender Links and Media and Development Diversity Agency (MDDA), Johannesburg, ISBN 978-0-620-81704-2
[393] See Biana, H.T. (2020). Extending bell hooks' Feminist Theory. *Journal of International Women's Studies* Vol. 21, No. 1 February 2020.

everywhere' (2015: 13).[394] It is only through a comprehensive exploration of voices across class that a meaningful understanding of the interpellation of black women journalists' voices under the weight of patriarchy and misogyny in a post-apartheid South African newsroom is possible. At this point, it is important to tease out the important themes that emerged out of the interviews with these two black feminists and womanists in the media.

7.6.1 Women voices deepen democracy

The section is not just about the silencing of the voices of black women journalists at *City Press* and other newsrooms but also a celebration of their agency to speak up in the face of many injustices. These women were courageous and stood up against all forms of oppression and domination in the post-apartheid South African newsroom. They also wrote and spoke truth to power and refused to be buried in the newsroom culture that privileged males in senior editorial positions. I posit that embodying voice invokes agency. It is through this agential role that the activism of black women journalists for more voices and perspectives in the media, other than those of men, or those in positions of power and formal authority, is securely grounded. Daniels argues that failure to include women voices in the media for the deepening of democracy and the strengthening of the media itself will result in 'the same old elites talking the same language to each other, with male and white liberal narratives domination' (2020: 108). I argue here that it is the voices of black women that are damned or condemned in our society. However, for Gqola (2015), the invitation for black women to come to voice is not exclusively limited in the South African media terrain. From her intersectional black feminist perspective, coming to voice has long been part of a 'feminist consciousness raising' where 'personal narratives of patriarchal wounding are shared' (2015). This work is part of 'peeling away the layers of patriarchal violence' (Ibid) by allowing women to speak of the everyday experiences of their embodied voices as 'we cannot allow silences to stand for absence' (Ibid). Haffajee reflects on the importance of hearing the diversity of voices:

> *It's a fundament of freedom to hear all voices…If you don't hear all voices, you cannot consider yourself free or democratic…but I guess my own grounding and upbringing among strong women means I was never going to allow anything to stand in the way of liberating my own voice.* (Interview, 04 October 2021)

Haffajee acknowledges that it is not easy to speak out in the context where women journalists are silenced in South Africa through violent means. Although some of the incidents of cybermisogyny against women journalists in South Africa are not discussed in this study as case studies, it is important

[394] See Gqola, P. (2020). *Rape: A South African Nightmare*. Johannesburg: MFBooks.

to point out that Haffajee herself has been a victim of cyber abuse.[395] She credits her 'upbringing among strong women' to be able to withstand the post-apartheid South African newsroom and public sphere where the impunity of threats of rape and murder online run rampant. Her resolute commitment to 'never going to allow anything to stand in the way of liberating my own voice' affirms the importance of the inclusivity and plurality of diverse voices in the media for the strengthening and deepening of our democracy, including institutions that promote freedom of speech and free press. Haffajee decried the fact that the voices of males remain the 'most dominant voices in evaluating commerce, trade, the economy, transformation, the political-economy and public administration' (Interview, 04 October 2021) in the media because the business sector in South Africa was a 'slow-starter' in including women.

7.6.2 Challenging the Lion in Its Den: Anti-feminist backlash against women journalists

I argue that black women journalists work out to bring change and transformation in the post-apartheid South African media, but their gains are often limited due to 'anti-feminist backlash'. Drawing on intersectional Black feminism and the concept of anti-feminist backlash, I seek to show the specific experiences of anti-feminist backlash and silencing of black women journalists at *City Press* and other post-apartheid South African newsrooms. Gqola argues that an anti-feminist backlash of a patriarchal nature does more than just limit the gains made by women in the fight against patriarchy, sexism and misogyny. For her, anti-feminist backlash is a 'direct attempt to undo feminist work and gains' (2015: 13). She explains:

> An effective backlash always does much more than neutralise gains, though; it reverses the gains we see everywhere and it reminds those who might benefit from such gains that they are not quite free. (Ibid)

Daniels (2020) states that women in the media are experiencing a 'harsh anti-feminist backlash'. She posits that this backlash happens mostly via social media and reveals how women in the media 'veer between power and loss' (p.108). According to her, this power is manifested when women make serious inroads towards achieving equality. The loss, she argues, takes the form of the anti-feminist backlash women experience in the workplace and the world at large.

Mda looks back at how this anti-feminist backlash worked against her when she was a deputy editor at *City Press*:

> *At City Press, I wrote a political column/blog called WhatEver! While people who responded through the paper and website maintained a modicum of respectability in their engagement, the*

[395] See Haffajee, F & Davies, M. (2017). 'The Gupta Fake News Factory and Me', *HuffPost SA*, 6 June 2017; See also Daniels, G. (2019). 'What happened on world news day: key aggressors didn't pitch', *Daily Maverick*, 30 September 2019.

> *same cannot be said for those who engaged via the blog. I was subjected to verbal abuse, rape and death threats and pornography by African men who hid behind the anonymity social media afforded them. It's difficult to "deal" with such, other than to continue with your own agenda and brush off labels such as "angry black women" recognising them as efforts to stifle your voice.* (Interview, 14 September 2021)

Mda's experiences of being hailed or labelled as an 'angry black women' by mostly 'African men' brings to the fore the issue of the 'marshalling black gaze'. Canham and Williams (2017) argue that there is a history to the figure of the angry black woman into which Mda consciously unplugs. They contend that this 'trope of craziness needs to be understood with reference to the context which creates it. Failure to do so pressurises the black woman to take responsibility for generating unhappy feelings' (p.33).[396] For Mda, the context of this interpellation is meant to 'stifle' her voice. Anger as affect is also of interest here in as far as it assists in explicating the black women's position in relation to patriarchy and sexism. I argue here that anger remains a 'potent tool to understand non-conformity and the refusal to behave' (Canham, 2014: 152)[397] by black women journalists in response to patriarchal norms and sexist attitudes. Canham further gives context on why black women's rage against oppressive systems such as patriarchy, sexism and misogyny remains relevant in post-apartheid South Africa:

> Anger remains relevant and productive in the face of prevailing hegemonic organisational forces. Moreover, because women are not permitted to express anger, it remains important to directly engage these emotions in scholarly work. It is important to trace how in denying women the right to be angry, women's emotions are seen as hysterical reactions, which suggests a lack of control and inability to cope with organisational life. (2014: 152)[398]

As Ahmed has noted that, 'feelings can get stuck to certain bodies in the very way we describe spaces, situations, dramas. And bodies can get stuck depending on what feelings they get associated with' (2010: 68).[399] A story that is often not told is how senior editorial positions in the post-apartheid South African newsroom are predicated primarily on positioning 'men, and male power, at the apex of authority' (Smith, 2018).[400] Haffajee has challenged the entire political economy of the post-apartheid South African media built on the notion of black women as 'surplus appendages' (Ibid) and women who are

[396] See Canham, H. and Williams, R. (2017). Being black, middle class and the object of two gazes. *Ethnicities* 2017, Vol. 17(1) 23–46.
[397] See Canham, H. (2014). Outsiders within: non-conformity among four contemporary black female managers in South Africa. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*. Vol. 29 No. 3. Pp. 148-170.
[398] Ibid, p.152
[399] See Ahmed, S. (2010). *The Promise of Happiness*, Duke University Press: London.
[400] See Smith, G. (2018). Damaged Goods: Patriarchy, Power and Disposable Women. *Eye Witness News (EWN)*. 13 April 2018.

content in their own subjugation. I argue that the post-apartheid South African newsroom is not only raced; it is gendered. Haffajee explains the circumstances that led to her appointment as editor at *City Press* in 2009:

> *When I was short-listed as editor-in-chief of City Press, my colleagues in the investigations team went to the board to say I should not become editor as they did not think I had the courage to be the editor of a title like the City Press. They did not know my history or my story but assumed because I was a woman and black, I could not exercise voice for media freedom. Of course, I proved them wrong and we became good friends, but it was a battle. I think this remains a battle which is why silencing requires mechanisms and measures by good societies to undercut the very real patriarchies and systems that continue to oppress.* (Interview, 04 October 2021)

Haffajee challenged the founding ethos of the media in apartheid and post-apartheid South African media: male power, authority and entitlement. Her defiance in the context of the anti-feminist backlash she faced from her colleagues in the investigations team who went to the board and suggested she should not be appointed editor of a title like the *City Press* marked her differently to other black women whose agency are still controlled by patriarchy's myriad and interlocking tendencies.

7.6.3 Power and Loss: Breaking the Glass Ceiling

Given the patriarchal push back that black women journalists face in trying to break the glass ceiling in the post-apartheid South African newsroom, the result, as Daniels (2020) states, is the experience of power and loss. She describes the glass ceiling as 'an invisible but real barrier to the advancement of women in the workplace' (p.109). This 'invisible but real barrier' takes many forms such as in patriarchal practices and sexist views and prejudices. It demands 'thick skin' and years of empowerment for black women to break through it. As Haffajee narrates:

> *It may be trite to say this: I am from Bosmont, an area where women brook no nonsense from patriarchs or anybody. This vein of strength runs in me so I have always fought patriarchy, racism and disempowerment where I have found it. It was often painful to do so in newsrooms but never as difficult as fighting apartheid's oppression.* (Interview, 04 October 2021)

Even for black women journalists like Haffajee, who became the first black women editor of two of the country's major newspapers, the *Mail & Guardian* and *City Press*, cracking the glass ceiling does not come naturally. It requires one to be empowered in the sociogenic conditions (Fanon, 1967) that give birth to patriarchy, racism and disempowerment. Having been brought up in Bosmont, 'where women brook no nonsense from patriarchs or anybody,' sociogenesis became an analytical sensibility Haffajee was able draw from during her time at *City Press*. She exemplifies the kind of women journalist whose

presence and voices in a patriarchal newsroom are 'are not invisible needing to be made visible' (Daniels, 2020: 108). Here, she comes across as being empowered to deal with the distressing psychological and embodied consequences of facing patriarchy, racism and disempowerment. I argue that it is because of the visibility of black women like Haffajee in strategic centres of power at *City Press* that the hegemonic structures of power used the anti-feminist backlash against her and many other women journalists through threats of rape and murder via trolling and cybermisogyny, including intimidation, harassment and abuse. Paradoxically, breaking the glass ceilings means empowerment, agency and power and the inevitable inviting of anti-feminist backlash, which is a source of loss for many black women journalists. Reflecting on her experiences of cyber trolling and stalking, Haffajee conceded that she felt paralysed looking at the made-up images of her which labelled her as a 'presstitute (media prostitute) and a lapdog of the Richemont chairman and South African billionaire Johann Rupert.' In her words:

> *For months, I've looked at them when I'm alone. Quickly, like a dirty secret. The images make me wince with their distortions and insults. I snap my phone shut and move to another screen. Or make a cup of tea. Images are powerful and the designers have very specific messages. That I am a whore, a harridan, an animal and a quisling. I feel shame, and fear that my family will see them and not understand their genesis.* (Haffajee quoted in *Glass Ceiling*, 2018: 66).

This sense of loss of power is not peculiar to lived black experience in the context of post-apartheid South Africa which is dealing with continued forms of present oppression, discrimination and domination. In *Being-black-in-the-world*, Black psychologist Chabani Manganyi reflected on the psychological impact of oppression, observing that it left black people (including himself) in what he called a 'malignant sense of hopelessness' (1973: 53).

Mda's experience of loss

Mda described her sense of the 'loss of power', to invoke Daniels (2020), after experiencing the harsh feminist backlash directed against her via her blog at *City Press*. She reflects:

> *I do not know whether I have liberated my voice at all. Women have been told to "man up" and have been pitted against each other to isolate those women dismissed as "shrill" and "witches" on one side, and those that preface any statement with "I'm not a feminist", on the other. And yet, the bottom line is that there are financial outcomes of the subordination of women's voices, as it is what keeps women in a cycle of poverty. Men have neither interest nor incentive to stop subordinating women's voices. The status quo serves them very well.* (Interview, 14 September 2021)

Mda has taken issue with the subordination of women voices in order to keep the prevailing status quo. She feels disempowered. The consequent loss of power and a sense of hopelessness is captured when she says, 'I do not know whether I have liberated my voice at all.' Anti-feminist backlash pushes Mda and other black women journalists into an 'uncertain and disempowering terrain' (Canham and Williams, 2017: 34). In the quote that follows, Mda describes the experiences of insubordination that resulted in her not being heard by her own peers despite her seniority at *City Press*.

> *Many women, especially African women, are in constant fear of repercussions should they speak frankly about the conditions confronting them at workplaces – whether newsroom, where male journalists on one hand are reluctant to take orders from a woman, but on the other hand are not shy to sexually harass women, regardless of seniority, or a matter of safety when working out in the field/conducting interviews – and in society*. (Interview, 14 September 2021)

It is an insubordination, I argue, designed to weaken her agency against abuse and patriarchal norms. Her comment that male journalists are 'reluctant to take orders from a woman' editor lays bare that patriarchal nature of the post-apartheid newsroom such as *City Press*. Its power and resonance could not be more significance to the current climate in South African journalism in which women journalists are routinely facing harassment, abuse and intimidation in the course of doing their journalistic duties.

7.6.4 No greater Love than Decolonial love

Can decolonial love be a tangible tool for dismantling patriarchal violence caused to black women journalists in a post-apartheid South African newsroom like the *City Press*? In attempting to answer this question, this chapter weaves together connections between notions of decoloniality and love and considers ways in which decolonial love is constructed and engaged by black women journalists as they navigate experiences of patriarchy and other intersecting forms of marginalisation inherent in black women sexualised bodies and their embodied voices. Drawing on the work of decolonial feminist Chela Sandoval (2000),[401] Daniels argues that ideally decolonial love must be 'anti-war and would therefore be also anti-rape, abuse (physical and emotional) and online trolling' (2020: 110). However, as this chapter has demonstrated, the 'marshalling black gaze' black women journalists experience in the post-apartheid newsroom from their black male colleagues not only silences and marginalises women voices and sexualises their bodies, but also pose a serious threat to their lives. In this study, we encounter the voices of black women journalists who are confronting patriarchal and sexist attitudes and prejudices, including online death and rape threats. At the same time, we also encounter voices of black women

[401]See Sandoval, C. (2000). *Methodology of the Oppressed.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; see Maldonado-Torres, N. (2008). *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity.* Durham: Duke University Press; and see also Moya, P.M.L. (2012). The Search for Decolonial Love: An Interview with Junot Díaz. *Boston Review*, June 26, 2012.

journalist who are insisting on decolonial love. Haffajee spoke about "bearing witness" (Junot Díaz, 2012) to the notion of decolonial love when she worked at both the *Mail & Guardian* and *City Press* newspapers. Bearing witness to this decolonial love has been instrumental to Haffajee's story of being among the very few women who have cracked the glass ceiling. She highlights the value of decolonial love:

> *It would be remiss to say that I have also been promoted, progressed, supported and mentored to achieve my dreams by progressive men and women leaders. At the Mail&Guardian and City Press, I worked with Mondli Makhanya*[402] *who has been my biggest supporter and friend and non-patriarchal editor I ever worked with. Also, Trevor Ncube*[403] *and Hoosain Karjieker*[404] *at the Mail&Guardian were very supportive and mentored me to become the leader I did*. (Interview, 04 October 2021)

Mda also speaks highly of Mathatha Tsedu, the former editor-in-chief of *City Press* newspaper, as "a most honourable man, and the best boss I have ever had" (Interview, 14 September 2021). The recognition of this decolonial love is necessary for forging relationships based on love and affinity and for ensuring that black women break the glass ceiling in the post-apartheid South African media. As shown by the actions of Tsedu, Makhanya, Ncube and Karjieker and their love and affinity for black women progress, decolonial love has the potential to "advance the unfinished project of decolonisation" (Maldonado-Torres, 2008: 244). Daniels (2020) argues that decolonial love twinned with Black Consciousness (BC) can generate what Sandoval (2000) calls the "hermeneutics of love" and place black women, understood as d*amné*, at the centre of the 'unfinished democratic project' in South Africa. I argue that the liberation of black women from all forms of patriarchy and sexism requires the kind of bearing witness to our roles as men to puncture through everyday narratives about women with love. This decolonial perspective on love enables the black women, as the condemned political subjects, to struggle with the patriarchal and sexist norms within the post-apartheid South African media while continuing to imagine other kinds of media worlds and futures. Maldonado-Torres posits that this love for black women 'goes together here with non-indifference and responsibility, both of which presuppose listening to the cry of the condemned' (2008: 244). It also needs the agency of black men and their willingness to take action against patriarchal and misogynistic forms directed at black women in the media. It requires the kind of love, not romantic love, that is 'no longer defined by the hand-that-takes but rather by receptive generosity' (Ibid, p.187). It is a radical form of love akin to Fanon's conception of love that recognises 'alliance[s] and affection across lines of difference' (Ibid). It is my contention that decolonial love for women journalists ought to be what fuels the theory of decoloniality instead of coloniality. It ought to be what decolonial scholars consider to be 'the humanising task of building a

[402] Mondli Makhanya is the editor-in-chief of the *City Press* newspaper and formerly an editor of the *Mail & Guardian*.
[403] Trevor Ncube is the former publisher and owner of Mail & Guardian Media (Pty) Ltd.
[404] Hoosain Karjieker is the former chief executive officer of Mail & Guardian Media (Pty) Ltd.

world in which genuine ethical relations become the norm and not the exception' (Ibid, p.244).

Haffajee's decolonial praxis of love

Haffajee argues that at the heart of the strategies to fight patriarchy and sexism, praxis becomes an important tool. She says she has always hired 'smart women columnists' whenever and wherever she was given an opportunity to be a newspaper editor. As a reporter and later as an assistant editor at *Financial Mail*, Haffajee says she lobbied to ensure that black people and women's voices were not left out of the titles she worked at. She says that at the *Financial Mail,* under the editorship of Peter Bruce and Caroline Southey, they only had white voices and one or two women columnists. Haffajee comments: 'It was a hard battle to get it to change but Itumeleng Mahabane and William Gumede and I worked hard at it'. It was at the *Financial Mail* where she founded the "Little Black Book" featuring black business leaders in order to change 'the power balance and to bring more black leadership to voice in a recalcitrant community'. Similarly, at the *Mail & Guardian*, she founded the "Book of Women" in order to establish a network of influential women leaders whose voices would feature prominently in the media and at the same time 'help businesses democratise their boards.' It was also at the *Mail & Guardian*, where she pioneered the "200 Young South Africans" to identify young and future leaders who were making an impact in different aspects of their lives. I argue that Haffajee's decolonial praxis of love evokes feminist theorist bell hooks who argued that love is both personal and political, and as such, we must 'begin by always thinking of love as an action rather than a feeling' (hooks, 2000: 13).

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the ways in which the marginalisation and silencing of the voices of black women journalists at *City Press* and other post-apartheid newsrooms happens because of the patriarchal and 'marshalling black gaze' (Canham and Williams, 2017) in the post-apartheid South African newsroom. It shows that the media still refuses to make space for women bodies and their embodied voices in senior editorial roles such as newspaper editing. It also shows the ways in which the black women journalists have used their agency and power to resist their erasure from the historiography of South African journalism. Using intersectional Black feminism and Gordon's theory of gendered invisibility linked to voice, especially of women, this chapter has painted a complex picture of how black women journalists navigate the patriarchal post-apartheid newsroom in challenging their precarious position of being ignored even when they speak. The voices of black women journalists are not invisible or inaudible. The problem is that their speaking is rendered by the patriarchal and marshalling black gaze as a form 'illicit speaking' and their voices are treated as 'noise' that should not be listened to through 'illicit hearing'. I argue that without the 'feminist ethic of taking Black women's

lives, voices and creative labour more seriously, women's writing is always in danger of being ignored and silenced' (Masola, 2020: 174).[405]

It was important for this study to also paint the sociogenic conditions that enable patriarchy to define black women's experiences in the post-apartheid newsroom because the media reflects the larger and complex problems of post-colonial societies. This is a thread which continues in the next chapter as black women journalists lend themselves to Economic Freedom Fighters' (EFF's) misguided Black rage, in which it would unravel and come apart at the seams.

[405] See Masola, A. (2020). Journeying Home, Exile and Transnationalism in Noni Jabavu and Sisonke's Msimang's Memoirs. Thesis. Rhodes University: Grahamstown.

Chapter 8

A Decolonial Reading of EFF as (Mis)guided Black rage

> *The biggest mistake the black world ever made was to assume that whoever opposed apartheid was an ally. For a long time, the black world has been looking only at the governing party and not so much at the whole power structure as the object of their rage.* – Steve Biko (1971e: 63)

Introduction and Theoretical Framing

In the context of South Africa, embodied black voices have been the site of rage for centuries from within the regimes of colonialism, racism and apartheid. Among other things, 2015 will be remembered in the country's political landscape as the year of significant rage. The year witnessed two of the biggest protests in post-apartheid South Africa: #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall.[406] Although it might be debatable to what extent students aligned to the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)[407] influenced the protests in some South African public universities in 2015, clearly the party itself played a significant role (Godsell and Chikane, 2016).[408] Political theorist Sithembile Mbete argues that the EFF has since used protests by poor communities, students, and workers to 'establish itself as a revolutionary party' (2020: 249).[409] In this chapter, I explore the EFF and its relationship to Black rage. Black rage, a concept used by Steve Biko in the 1970s, often revolves around the association between left politics and the

[406] In addition to the demand for free higher and decolonised education, the #FeesMustFall student protests between 2015 and 2016 in some South African universities focused on 'political, structural and epistemic issues: in addition to addressing the need for institutional changes, they foregrounded attention to the politics of knowledge-production, the status of canonized academic knowledge, the marginalization of certain knowledge-making, and the form and content of what "radical" knowledge in post-apartheid South Africa could and should entail' (Lewis and Hendricks, 2017: 1); For an elaboration, see Lewis, D. and Hendricks, C.M. (2016). "Epistemic Ruptures in South African Standpoint Knowledge-Making: Academic Feminism and the #FeesMustFall Movement." *Gender Questions* 4(1).

[407] The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) is a political party in South Africa formed in 2013 by Julius Malema, the former president of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), after he and some of the youth league leaders, were expelled by the ANC in 2012. It is a left-leaning political party which, according to its founding manifesto, subscribes to an ideology described as Marxist-Leninist-Fanonian in outlook (EFF Founding Manifesto, 2013).

[408] See Godsell, G. & Chikane, R. (2016). The roots of the revolution. In S. Booysen, (Ed.) *Fees must fall. Student revolt, decolonisation and governance in South Africa* (54-73). Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

[409] See Mbete, S. (2020). "Out With the Old, In With the New?: The ANC and EFF's Battle to Represent the South African 'People". In *Populism in Global Perspective*, pp. 240-254. Routledge.

agency of rage. Writing on the subject of Black rage, Biko contends that for a long-time black people had been 'looking at the governing party and not so much at the whole power structure as the object of their rage' (1987: 63).[410] It can be argued that since its formation in 2013, the EFF has been looking at racism and white-owned South African media as the object of their rage. Although Black rage is useful in understanding politics in post-apartheid South Africa or what African existential philosopher Mabogo Percy More (2017) refers as 'post-apartheid, apartheid South Africa,'[411] there is an unintended absence of a focus on the ways that Black rage can be performed by the EFF. Consequently, I theorise the EFF through Black rage, the lens of affect. Here I am deliberate in avoiding the many of the essentialist characterisations of the party, for example, as "a black neofascist party" (Satgar, 2019;[412] "a case of hype over substance" (Friedman, 2014);[413] or "an empty rhetoric captured in the politics of spectacle" (Fakir, 2014).[414]

According to Mpofu (2021),[415] to be black in South Africa is to be thought of as a problem and existing in a state of rage. I propose that this rage can be creatively scrutinised through W.E.B. Du Bois's (1903) notion of double consciousness to reveal the double dimension of Black rage, which is both negative and positive. The strength of such a view, to move beyond what I call 'misguided black rage' to 'potentiated Black rage', enables us to understand how the EFF deploys rage both in a destructive and liberatory manner respectively. For the purposes of this study, I will first scrutinize how the EFF worked with 'misguided black rage' to harass and violently attack journalists when doing their work (*Mail & Guardian,* 2018;[416] Boswell, 2020;[417] News24, 2021).[418] Second, I will look at how the EFF deployed 'potentiated Black rage' to show radical love when thousands of its members took to Clicks stores countrywide in 2020 in protests spurred on by the beauty chain outlet's racist advert against black women hair (News24, 2020).[419] This chapter will be delimited to these case studies.

Ultimately, I argue that the concept of Black rage has the potential of advancing a richer critical understanding of the EFF and how it has treated some journalists with intimidation, violence and

[410] See Biko, S. (1987). *I Write What I Like: A Selection of His Writings.* Rev. ed. Edited by Aelred Stubbs. London: Bowerdean.
[411] See More, P.M. (2017). Locating Frantz Fanon in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 52(2) 127–141.
[412] See Sagtar, V. (2019). Black Neofascism? The Economic Freedom Fighters in South Africa. *Canadian Sociological Association/La Soci´et´e canadienne de sociologie. CRS/RCS*, 56.4. pp. 580-605
[413] See Friedman, S. 2014. "EFF Frenzy a Case of Media Hype over Substance." *Business Day*, 5 March 2014.
[414] See Fakir, E. 2014. "Fragmentation and Fracture—The Loss of Trust and Confidence in Political Parties." *EISA Election Update Four, SA Elections 2014: Political Opposition-Cohesion, Fracture or Fragmentation?*
[415] See Mpofu, S. (2021). Social Media Memes as Commentary in Health Disasters in South Africa and Zimbabwe in Eds. Mpofu, S. (2021*). Digital Humour in the Covid-19 Pandemic: Perspectives from the Global South*. Palgrave MacMillan: Switzerland. pp. 19-45.
[416] See *Mail & Guardian*. Shivambu apologises for scuffle with journalist. 20 March 2018.
[417] See Boswell, B. (2020). EFF on a collision course with black women. Mail & Guardian Online. 10 September 2020.
[418] See New24. Sanef condemns alleged harassment of eNCA reporters at EFF protests. 10 June 2021.
[419] See News24. Clicks bows to EFF's demands after racist advert. 10 September 2020.

harassment. In addition, I contend that by centring black hair struggles, the party offers black people "emancipatory potential" (McCann, 2013)[420] that allows black women to define themselves outside the vectors of Euro-modernity in terms of what beauty is. I put forward a thesis that Black rage takes two directions in the EFF. On the one hand, it can be retrogressive and advance misogyny, violence and hatred towards some journalists, especially women journalists, and some media houses. On the other hand, it could be progressive and upset or challenge the racist ways in which black women's hair is portrayed like in the case of the Clicks stores racist advertisement. Black South African psychologist Hugo Canham (2017) explains that rage was a tool that was used by anti-apartheid activists to channel their anger against an oppressive racial system of apartheid.[421] I propose that rage is used by the EFF as a political tool to fight against present and current forms of oppression and dehumanisation and also as a weapon against those the party perceives as its opponents or enemies. In doing so, I seek to re-centre the concept of Black rage as an analytical lens to understand the post-apartheid South Africa democratic settlement as an 'unfinished project of decolonisation' (Maldonado-Torres, 2008: 244).[422]

8.1 EFF in post-apartheid South Africa

Political discourse and politics in post-apartheid South Africa have dramatically changed since the arrival of the EFF onto the political scene in 2013 (Nieftagodien, 2015).[423] I maintain that the EFF has brought with it an unsettling, radical black political voice into the South African body polity. I also contend that while neither the EFF nor its leader Julius Malema may ever be able to shake off the "populist" label, the third biggest political party in the country 'has challenged the post-apartheid democratic settlement and increasingly sets the agenda of national politics' (Mbete, 2020: 240). I call for a decolonial reading of the party as Black rage. I argue that some of the negative characterisations offered by different political scholars and commentators to describe party, while sometimes justified, fail to see the "generative potential of [EFF's] embodied Black rage" (Canham, 2014: 442, addition my own) whenever the party engages with conditions of racism, oppression and socioeconomic inequality that prevail in the context of post-apartheid South Africa. Despite being dismissed as inconsequential, Mbete argues that the EFF has redefined what is defined as 'acceptable political conduct in South Africa' (2020: 241) by making use of Black rage as a disruptive tool to gain political agency and political legitimacy. Through her research on the EFF, Batsane-Ncube (2021: 199)[424] found evidence of the influence of the party's "direct casual contribution" on ANC policy shift on land reform and "indirect

[420] See McCann, B.J. (2013). Affect, Black Rage, and False Alternatives in the Hip-Hop Nation. *Cultural Studies & Critical Methodologies.* Sage Publications. 13(5) 408–418.
[421] See Canham, H. (2017). Embodied Black Rage. *Du Bois Review*, 14:2 (2017) 427–445.
[422] See Maldonado-Torres, N. (2008). *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity.* Durham: Duke University Press.
[423] See Nieftagodien, N. (2015). The Economic Freedom Fighters and the Politics of Memory and Forgetting. *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 114:2.
[424] See Batsani-Ncube, I. (2021). Governing from the opposition?': tracing the impact of EFF's 'niche populist politics' on ANC policy shifts. *AFRICA REVIEW*, VOL. 13, NO. 2, 199–216.

influence" to the ANC's policy of higher education funding.

8.2 Double Consciousness and Black rage

Here I analyse Black rage through Du Boisian notion of double consciousness and Bikoian Black Consciousness in order to provide us with the lens with which to understand the double dimension of rage, including its potentiated element. Before turning to explore each gaze of Black rage, it is important to make a note on the concept of double consciousness. Du Bois defines double consciousness as, 'this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others' (1989: 7).[425] In a society like South Africa, I argue that it would be Black political subjects who could articulate Du Bois' double consciousness and Anna Jane Gordon's rearticulated notion of "potentiated double consciousness"[426] (for a detailed discussion of both concepts see Chapter 3). It is argued here that double consciousness moves us closer to an understanding that Black rage has both a negative and a positive (or potentiated) dimension within it: the doubling of an affect in ways that bring the image of the Black subjects into better focus. Both an understanding of negative dimension of Black rage and its more redemptive other half, which I call "potentiated Black rage," are useful in this study in order to elucidate how the EFF has deployed rage to "chart possible avenues of liberation from the yoke of dehumanisation" (Melonas, 2016: 5).[427] As in double consciousness, I suggest that Black rage can be read in two ways. It can function as a negative moment. However, Black rage can also function as a response to the first, negative formulation of rage that is yoked to destruction. This kind of potentiated Black rage is dialectical and transformational. The theoretical contribution advanced by this study is that there is a dialectical relationship between Black rage, Biko's BC and Du Boisian double consciousness, which when properly harnessed, results in potentiated Black rage. I also seek to foreground that it would be dangerous to romanticise or fetishize Black rage, hence, the thesis makes a clear distinction between negative and positive aspects of Black rage. McCann provides cogent insights into the double dimension of Black rage and posits that an affective politics of Black rage "should include both a healthy scepticism of the norms of democratic culture, as well as a sober recognition that the deployment of rage is fraught with danger" (2013: 415). McCann argues that theorising Black rage this way by seeking to highlight both its negative and positive effects 'avoids many of the essentialist entanglements associated with earlier

[425] See DuBois, W.E.B. (1989). *The souls of black folk*. New York: Random House.
[426] See Henry, P. (2016). "Africana Phenomenology: Its Philosophical Implications" in *Journeys in Caribbean Thought*, eds. Jane Anna Gordon, Lewis R. Gordon, Aaron Kamugisha, and Neil Roberts. London: Rowman and Littlefield International. Pp. 27–58.
[427] See Melonas, D. (2016). Book Review: *A Caribbean Potentiated Second Sight? Journeys in Caribbean Thought: The Paget Henry Reader.* London: Rowman and Littlefield International. Academia.

scholarship on the concept' (2013: 408). In addition to advancing a richer critical understanding of Black rage through the lens of BC and DuBoisian double consciousness, this study also centres EFF's misogynistic and racial tendencies towards some journalists and certain media houses, as the negative side of rage, that is, what is disguised as legitimate rage can be articulated in misogynistic and racial unimaginable ways. Also through BC and potentiated double consciousness, the restoration of rage as a form of radical love, in this conceptual frame, is deployed to understand EFF's rage as a form of political action and responsibility towards continued forms of discrimination, injustice and dehumanisation that still continue to define black life in post-apartheid South Africa.

8.3 Constructing Black rage from the 'underside'

By developing rage from what Enrique Dussel calls the "underside,"[428] I argue that it could make it possible for Black political subjects, that bear rage, to theorise it from their perspective of lived experience and their own context. What this study seeks to achieve is to 'topple the hierarchy of discourse' (Hartman, 2008: 12)[429] that sees rage, 'a term that is coded as dangerous due to its relation to Blackness' (Washington, 2017: 15),[430] and flood it with different interpretations of Black rage, particularly rage from the voices of the unheard or what Frantz Fanon would call the 'damned'. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon (1967) realised that it was rage that made it impossible for the Black subject to breathe.[431] Conversely, in *I Write What I Like*, Biko (1987) bemoans a Black rage that is turned inwardly as it typifies the negative dimension of rage. Biko's anecdote below is telling:

> In the privacy of his toilet his face twists in silent condemnation of white society but brightens up in sheepish obedience as he comes out hurrying in response to his master's impatient call. In the home-bound bus or train he joins the chorus that roundly condemns the white man but is first to praise the government in the presence of the police or his employers. (1987: 28)[432]

In the quotation above, Biko illustrates the sort of rage that is vented in the wrong direction and sometimes towards other Black subjects instead of being directed towards the white power structure. This is the point Biko emphasises in the opening epigraph of this chapter that, in his words, 'for a long time, the black world has been looking only at the governing party and not so much at the whole power structure of the object of their rage.' For Biko, this kind of negative rage is useless and defeatist as it makes Black subjects 'drown in misery' and bear the yoke of oppression with 'sheepish timidity.' Again

[428] See Dussel, E. (1996). *The Underside of Modernity: Apel, Ricoeur; Rorty, Taylor; and the Philosophy of Liberation*, trans. Eduardo Mendieta. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press.
[429] See Hartman, S. (2008). Venus in Two Acts. *Small Axe*, pp 1-14.
[430] See Washington, C.C. (2017). The Future is Feminist: An Analysis of Black Women's Rage in American Society Through Beyoncé's *Lemonade.* Research Report. Whitman College. December 8, 2017.
[431] See Fanon, F. (1967). *Black skins, white masks*. New York, NY: Grove.
[432] See Biko, S. (1978). *I Write What I Like: Steve Biko*. A selection of his writings. Edited by Aelred Stubbs C.R. Oxford Heinemann.

for Biko, in order for the Black subject to arrive at 'potentiated Black rage,' she/he/they ought to face 'the first truth, bitter as it may seem' (Biko, 1987: 29).[433] I argue that Black rage becomes the necessary *first* truth needed if black people are to realise their true humanity and freedom. So negative is the image of Black rage that has been presented to the Black subject that they find solace in what Biko has termed 'sheepish timidity.' Black rage seen through the lived experience of being black in a 'post-apartheid, apartheid' or 'post-colonial, colonial South Africa,' can be studied through the underside of blackness. A crucial theoretical point to make is that while Black rage emerges from the underside of blackness, 'potentiated Black rage' brings to the fore the philosophical anthropological question of what it means to live as a human being with dignity and freedom. In the context of South Africa in which racism and inequality still persists, philosophical anthropology must prove inevitable among those who are obstinately dehumanised. I argue that a critical philosophical anthropology raises concerns of critique; it places Black rage, in any form, under critical scrutiny. At this point, this study turns to interrogating EFF's rage through Fanon.

8.4 Tracing rage in the EFF through Fanon

Canham (2018) laments that Black rage is under-theorised in South Africa. I argue here that the lack of theorising lack rage is more pronounced in media and political scholarship. If this is correct, it has broad implications for media and political theory. Among those is the advancement of Black rage as a form of media and political theory, or one which is thought of as better attuned to addressing salient political problems in post-apartheid South Africa thrown open by the complexity of human institutions of power. Canham rightly observed that this is a 'remarkable oversight since we have gained infamy as the world's epicentre of protest action' (2018: 319).[434] In its founding manifesto, the EFF states that it 'draws inspiration from the broad Marxist-Leninist tradition and Fanonian schools of thought in their analyses of the state, imperialism, culture and class contradictions in every society' (EFF Founding Manifesto, 2013: 7). It is this connection drawn with Fanon by the EFF which is the concern of this section. Fanon opens *Black Skin, White Masks* with a confession that there was "fire" or rage in him. His brother Jobi, in Isaac Julien's *Frantz Fanon: "Black Skin, White Masks"* (1997), mentions how a faculty member at Lyon described Fanon as 'Fireworks on the outside, fireworks on the inside!'[435] This motif of fiery self can be found in EFF leader Julius Malema, including his self-proclaimed mentors Peter Mokaba[436] and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela.[437] Throughout his speeches, Malema struggles to hold the "fire" at bay,

[433] Ibid, p.29

[434] See Canham, H. (2018). Theorising community rage for decolonial action. *South African Journal of Psychology* 2018, Vol. 48(3) 319–330.

[435] See Gordon, L.R. (2002). A Questioning Body of Laughter and Tears: Reading *Black Skin, White Masks* through the Cat and Mouse of Reason and a Misguided Theodicy. *parallax*, 2002, vol. 8, no. 2, 10–29.

[436] The late Peter Mokaba is the former president of the ANC Youth League who is infamous for his controversial slogan "Kill the Boer, kill the farmer" in which its use has been subsequently banned by the courts in post-apartheid South Africa.

[437] The late Winnie Nomzamo Madikizela-Mandela is the former president of the ANC Women's League.

the result of which are ongoing court battles that Malema and his party have had to face on allegations of hate speech. The student protest actions which took place in 2015 and onwards remind us that there are certain unsettled matters in the post-apartheid South Africa. African existential philosopher Mabogo More (2018) rightly observed the relevance of Fanon in post-apartheid South Africa. It is compelling to quote him at length:

> There is a noticeable re-emergence and an upsurge of interest in Frantz Fanon in post-apartheid, apartheid South Africa, and this for good reasons. The resurgence is not accidental at all but a consequence of the events and the shape and form which the country has assumed and followed since the installation of Nelson Mandela as the first black president in 1994. No philosopher, political theorist, or radical and revolutionary thinker could have approximated Fanon's insightful and prophetic vision of South Africa as a post-colonial state. Indeed, most observers of post-apartheid, apartheid South Africa are agreed on the prescience, preciseness and relevance of Fanon's work in the country. (2018: 127)[438]

In *The Wretched of the Earth* (2004), Fanon used expressions such as 'rage in the mouth' to describe life in the colonial world. For Fanon, living in the colonial world meant a situation that 'keeps the colonized in a state of rage' (2004: 17).[439] Today the affinity between the EFF and rage is generally called into question, however, Fanon's 'fire' seems to have found a home in the party. More (2018) maintains that Fanon impacted the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and through it the 1976 Soweto High School students' revolution, marking a turning point in history of political events in the 70s. Gibson (2011) attests to Fanon's influence: "The aim here is…to recreate Fanon's philosophy of liberation in a new situation [post-apartheid South Africa]. This is exactly what Steve Biko did in the early 1970's when he found in Fanon's philosophy the ground for Black Consciousness" (2011: x–xi)[440]. Fanon, therefore, has not only been a major player in the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid formations in South Africa but has also influenced the formation of the EFF in 2013 and inspired the 2015 student protests in South African universities. Hence it is not surprising that in contemporary South African politics, the EFF uses rage to bring and locate Fanon right inside the post-apartheid South Africa. For the EFF, as it was for Fanon and Biko, Black rage is a necessary political tool for embodied and dehumanised voices all fighting to be heard.

8.5 Political speech as EFF's existential articulation of Black rage

In this section, I critically examine why speech or voice is essential to doing politics. I do so by revisiting

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[438] See More, P.M. (2017). Locating Frantz Fanon in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 52(2) 127–141.

[439] See Frantz Fanon. (2004). *The Wretched of the Earth.* Translated by Richard Philcox. New York: Grove.

[440] See Gibson, N. (2011). *Fanonian Practices in South Africa: From Biko to Abahlali baseMjondolo*. Scottsville: UKZN Press.

contemporary discussions of political speech in the writings of Biko (1978), Fanon (1952/1967) and Gordon (2008, 2021), among others, to illuminate what it means for the EFF to speak politically and how the party uses rage in its speech or voice as the strategy for it to be heard. This is in light of the many hate speech court cases brought against the EFF by individuals and various groups of civil society organisations since its formation in 2013 (de Vos, 2022).[441] It is my contention that a legalistic definition of hate speech does not help us to fully grasp the importance of political speech or voice in doing politics. Therefore, I argue that the intersection between political speech and hate speech deserves further research and interrogation through the lens of political theory. However, for the purposes of this work, the focus is on how the EFF creatively uses speech to challenge existing hegemonic and colonised forms of politics and how it creates a space for the articulation of its own ways of speaking in the South African political world. This should be hardly surprising as Gordon (2021) informs us that the "Left" (I add, the EFF) tends to focus on protest and other activities of speech.

I posit that the focus is on the importance of political speech and how the EFF uses it "for a Black existential articulation of a liberatory social world" (Chevannes, 2018: 5).[442] Specifically, I suggest that the party uses political speech to articulate 'a humanistic voice that occasions an agential philosophical anthropology, one that is attuned to hearing the existential cries of those whom Frantz Fanon dubs *Les Damnés de la Terre (The Damned of the Earth)'* (Ibid). My central aim in this chapter is to build my own theoretical exposition upon Biko, Fanon and Gordon's work: that is, to map political speech on the episteme of Black rage. It is also to further theorise EFF speech as 'coerced speech' because 'we know we have to speak to make the world anew for the benefit of all who live in it' (Seti, 2019: xiv).[443] By using the so-called 'hate speech,' the EFF is engaged in a political form of epistemic disobedience, doing politics from the position of what Fanon would call the 'damned'. I contend that EFF's speech can be characterised as disruptive speech whose locus of enunciation is thinking from, within, and beyond blackness. In the writings of Biko, there is a thoroughgoing message that grounds political speech as a key feature of what it means to be political or what Fanon calls being *actional*. Anti-apartheid revolutionary Biko creatively deployed political speeches through his *nom de plume*, Frank Talk, and used his writings, according to Chevannes, as 'a signature of his ontological orientation and epistemic anchor' (2019: 12).[444]

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[441] See de Vos, P. (2002). AfriForum should consider introspection after losing 'Kill the Boer' hate speech case against EFF. *Daily Maverick*. 30 August 2022.

[442] See Chevannes, D.K. (2018). Creolizing political speech: Toward Black existential articulations. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 40:1, 5-15.

[443] See Seti, V. (2019). Blackness: The Role and Positionality of Black Public Intellectuals in Post-94 South Africa. Thesis. University of South Africa.

[444] See Chevannes, D.K. (2019). Euromodernity's Undertone: On Reconceptualizing Political Speech. Thesis: University of Connecticut.

For Marcus Garvey (1922), political speech is what facilitates political voice and for Gordon (2021), political appearance enables rage without war. Accordingly, Biko understood that apartheid was fundamentally against political speech, hence, the banning of all liberation political parties and movements in the early 60s in South Africa. For the EFF, 'the power of speech [is] in the production of power through which human beings are able to govern their existence" (Gordon, 2021: 21).[445] I argue that attempts to mute the EFF through court actions will result in a situation in which the party 'is muted and what would be required to make it audible' (Chevannes, 2019: 18)? In the affirmative, the answer lies in Black rage to facilitate the conditions to make EFF speech audible. For Fanon, 'to speak means … above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization' (Fanon 2008, 1).[446] But what ensues when speech itself becomes characterised within registers of hate speech? Here, I argue that the EFF's fight against hate speech court cases mounted against it signifies a refusal by the party to let others hold its political speech hostage. My line of inquiry asks whether a case can be made that losses accrue in political life when political speech is reduced to hate speech. Biko, and in extension the EFF, understood that 'to speak politically is to turn away from voicelessness and in so doing, to challenge prevailing discursive boundaries which are also political boundaries' (Chevannes, 2019: 12). As Gordon elaborates:

> It is not possible for people within the city [the polis] to live without disagreement, however, which means that opposition, short of war (between states), is needed. The shift to the discursive, recognized in ancient times through to the present as "speech," initiated or produced new forms of relations, identities, and ways of life that became known as politics. The question asked by…Biko…is the role of politics in the context of political formation. In other words, what should one do when the place of discursive opposition has been barred to some people? (2008: 87).[447]

Gordon continues and asks: 'Why was the response to [Biko], as the embodiment of speech, the brutal assertion of the state?' (Gordon, 2002: 88)[448] Gordon believes that Biko's assassination was part of the efforts to silence him, 'to muzzle Black speech' (Chevannes, 2019) so to speak. I argue that it is not possible to agree on what constitutes hate speech. The question, as posed by Biko, is the role of political speech in doing politics. In other words, what should one do when political speech is policed by our courts? I have argued here that the EFF exemplifies the radical rejection of the post-apartheid political

[445] See Gordon, L.R. (2021). F*reedom, Justice and Decolonization*. New York: Routledge.
[446] See Fanon, F. (20080. *Black Skin White Masks,* translated by Richard Philcox. London, UK: Pluto Press.
[447] See Gordon, L.R. (2008). "Phenomenology of Biko's Black Consciousness," in Amanda Alexander, Nigel Gibson, and Andile Mngxitama (eds.), *Biko Lives!: Contestations and Conversations.* New York: Palgrave, 83–93.
[448] See Gordon, L.R. 2002. Foreword. Steve Bantu Biko, *I Write What I Like: Selected Writings*, ed. Aelred Stubbs. Chicago: University of Chicago, 83–93.

settlement in South Africa and uses its political voice or speech, if necessary, in a violent confrontation with the prevailing status quo. To sum, a legalistic definition of speech does not fully grapple with political questions when speech silencing through court actions becomes 'a war on politics' (Gordon, 2002: 88).[449]

8.6 A note on methodology

The methodological approach adopted in this chapter is a combination of the empirical evidence obtained through the discourse analysis of Twitter feeds of EFF leaders, members and supporters over the Clicks debacle and a conceptual one through the concept of Black rage. It also uses media articles from various media outlets on how the EFF has treated some journalists since its formation in 2013. This multi-methodological approach worked well to flesh out the different dimensions of the research question pertaining to the notion of how black voices have been politicised in the post-apartheid South Africa. The tweets were purposively selected on the basis of their engagement with the question of Black rage as radical love in post-apartheid South Africa dehumanising and discriminatory struggles against black women hair. The tweets were extracted and analysed based on whether they articulated Black rage as a form of radical love. Seven twitter accounts of Twitter users and activists were selected and chosen to analyse. While this research cannot make a claim to be completely representative of the views opinions and comments that emanated from the EFF vis-à-vis Clicks debacle on Black Twitter, it provides indications and pointers on how discrimination against black women's hair still forms an important political struggle for many black women in post-apartheid South Africa. The following twitter handles were chosen and their tweets analysed:

@Sebenzi47745801
@PhumezaMdabe
@lolacele
@SneKhumaloSA
@Tshepiso_Says
@SixolileGcilishe
@MbuyiseniNdlozi

At this point, this chapter turns to how the EFF treated some journalists with violence and misogynistic tendencies during the course of their work.

8.7 Black Rage and Patriarchy: EFF's misguided rage towards women journalists

The treatment of journalists with intimidation and harassment[450] by the EFF leaders and party supporters has a long history dating back to the days when its leader, Julius Malema, was still the president of the

[449] Ibid

[450] See *Mail & Guardian*. (2010). Malema's tirade from 'revolutionary house'. 08 April 2010. See also The Guardian. (2010). ANC's Julius Malema lashes out at 'misbehaving' BBC journalist. 08 April 2010.

ANC Youth League (ANCYL)[451]. The connection between the *City Press* newspaper and Malema can be traced back to an incident in 2011 when former Sowetan columnist Eric Miyeni published a column titled "Haffajee does it for white masters"[452], which was written in the wake of a number of stories published in the *City Press* newspaper questioning Malema's lifestyle and finances. Since then, the relationship between the EFF and the media has been fraught with conflict (News24, 2018)[453]. Haffajee was then the editor-in-chief at *City Press*. Miyeni had described Haffajee as a "black snake in the grass," a comment that led to his column being discontinued. However, the point of this chapter is not to focus on that incident, but on how the EFF has generally treated the media in the context of several allegations of intimidation, harassment and physical violence committed by party leaders and supporters against some journalists. This study, therefore, seeks to theorise some of EFF's actions against some journalists as narcissistic rage or what I call "misguided Black rage." It will do this by highlighting three incidents in which EFF leaders and supporters were allegedly involved in mistreating some journalists. In 2020, eNCA journalist Nobesuthu Hejana was covering EFF protests outside Clicks stores when a group of party supporters, mostly men, manhandled her and "put their hands on her" (Boswell, 2020). Tellingly, women journalists have overwhelmingly become the targets EFF's intimidation and harassment as they are among the most affected. A tweet by former party spokesperson Mbuyiseni Ndlozi reacting to Hejana's alleged intimidation and harassment drew outrage from the South African National Editors Forum (Sanef) and certain sections of the South Africa society (EWN, 2020)[454]. Ndlozi had tweeted the following:

> *@MbuyiseniNdlozi*
> *"I really do not see harassment here. Merely touching her is not harassment. The touch has to be violent, invasive, or harmful to become harassment."*

Reflecting on Ndlozi's misogynistic statement, Boswell (2020) observed that the "EFF has been one of the main harassers of women journalists and public figures with voices who dare to speak out against them." Sanef and other commentators have cogent reasons to challenge EFF's misguided rage against some journalists and certain media houses, including its (and Ndlozi's) troubling framing of the problems confronting women in South Africa through gender-based violence. The second incident that exemplifies the party's misguided rage occurred in 2018 when EFF deputy president and Member of Parliament Floyd Shivambu manhandled Netwerk24's journalist Adrian de Kock outside parliament (*Times Live,* 2018).[455] Adopting an antagonistic orientation towards the media in a democratic South

[451] The ANC Youth League is a youth wing of the African National Congress.
[452] See *Mail & Guardian*. (2011). Haffajee to sue Eric Miyeni over 'white masters' column. 01 August 2011.

[453] See News24. (2018). Bastards and bloody agents: Tracking the relationship between the media and the EFF. 30 November 2018.

[454] See EWN. (2020). Sanef condemns EFF's Ndlozi on harassment of eNCA journalist Hejana. 09 September 2020.
[455] See *Times Live*. (2018). Shivambu apologises for 'scuffle' with journalist: 'It was not supposed to happen.' 20 March 2018.

Africa may be a strategy adopted by the EFF, however, violence against journalists when doing their work is an aberration that must be condemned as misguided and narcissistic rage. Perhaps most importantly, the party must be exposed in order to explode the fiction that journalists working in white-owned media houses are agents of the so-called white monopoly capital. Lastly, in 2021 a group of party supporters harassed and threatened two eNCA journalists Ayesha Ismail and Mario Pedro during the party's anti-racism protest in Cape Town (*Daily Maverick*, 2021).[456] According to media reports, one party supporter, brandishing a stick, told the journalists: "We are going to teach you a lesson; come forward here, I am going to teach you a good lesson." I contend that the South African media has become the object of EFF's violence or a mixture of hatred and fear, and violence is unacceptable in a country that guarantees freedom of speech, including media freedom. There is a romantic representation by the EFF and its supporters on how it treats some journalists and media houses with misguided rage. A nuanced reading of EFF's misguided rage at this stage reveals a party with a story not only of ongoing violence against the media as these three examples attest. Fighting these kinds of EFF's abuse against journalists requires a society committed to building institutions of the media and press attuned to the urgent task to safeguard media freedom. Let us now focus on how the EFF deployed rage as a symbol of radical love or what Chela Sandoval calls "decolonial love"[457] against racial and discriminatory practices with regard to the portrayal of black women hair in South Africa.

8.8 Rage as Decolonial Love: Problematising EFF's involvement in black hair struggles

In 2016, young black women at Pretoria Girls High School stoked outrage when they protested against their school for its racist practices towards against black girls' hair (*Mail & Guardian*, 2016).[458] Black girls in that school were not allowed to wear their natural hair and were, in effect, forced to straighten their hair. The EFF immediately issued a statement condemning the incident for "suppressing blackness" (EFF statement, 2016). The Pretoria Girl High School protest is a salutary example of how the struggle against black hair can transform to collective rage. In 2020, thousands of EFF members and supporters took to Click stores nationwide after the health and beauty chain outlet had posted a racist advertisement on its website. The Clicks advert contained images of African hair labelled as "dry, dull and damaged," while white hair was portrayed as "fine and flat" (BBC, 2020).[459] According to Canham (2017), Biko understood that black people under the system of apartheid had no option but to rage against the system if they truly loved themselves. The EFF protests against the racist Clicks advert, in a Bikonian sense, was a demonstration that being alive had to be accomplished with love. In his own

[456] See *Daily Maverick*. South African EFF party supporters block journalists from covering protest. 29 June 2021.
[457] See Sandoval, C. (2000). *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
[458] See *Mail & Guardian*. Pretoria Girls High School pupil: I was instructed to fix myself. 29 August 2016.
[459] See BBC News. South Africa's Clicks beauty stores raided after 'racist' hair advert. 7 September 2020.

words, Biko stated that as a black person, "You are either alive or proud" (2004: 173).[460] The party's rage against the discrimination towards black women's hair raised a pertinent question: Can we see the feverish protests against the discrimination towards black hair in some South African schools as "produced in the cocktail of dread and rage in the context of pervasive antiblackness?" (Canham, 2021: 300)[461] It also raises the question whether we might see the EFF protests against the discrimination of black hair as a humanising pathway. The protests were accompanied by acts of violence and vandalism in some of the Clicks stores. However, Canham (2017) points out that when critics condemn violence, they do so to portray those who commit violent acts as "unthinking instruments." For these critics and proponents of peaceful protests and appropriate forms of protesting, rage is not a legitimate and necessary response to ongoing racism and discrimination. Feminist scholar Rachel Flowers (2015) observed that decolonial rage, or what I call "potentiated Black rage," must not be viewed as irrational or as all-encompassing but through the vectors that brought that rage into being in the first place. Flowers is instructive here:

> "to disregard anger and resentment as destructive emotions is an uncritical move to absolve the unforgiven, whereby blame is placed on the injured party, who is seen as an irrational 'blockage' blinded by their rage compared to the 'reasonable' apologist" (2015: 42)[462]

'Black hair is political'

The Clicks racial advert shows that black women's hair continue to face unfair discrimination in post-apartheid South Africa. Black women are awakened to the truth that their position in society has remained unchanged due to systematic exclusion, racism and disenfranchisement. This awakening is closely tied to their being attuned to Black Consciousness philosophy and a renewed desire to express decolonial love and rage.

> @SneKhumaloSA
> *'Racism make people believe we have "hard, strong unruly" hair when we actually have delicate, fragile, sensitive Afro hair that needs to be babied. So sensitive we have to wrap it in silk at night, and leave it untouched for it to grow. Black hair is political.*

Signalling some fragility at play, @SneKhumaloSA's tweet points out the amount of care needed to nurture natural black hair. Then, she hones-in on a Black Consciousness explication when she says, 'Black hair is political'. There is some truth to this, but there is something more. The topic of black hair lends itself to so much to the core of Black Consciousness thought. Biko's Black Consciousness project

[460] See Biko, S. (2004). *I Write What I like*. Johannesburg, SA: Picador Africa.
[461] See Canham, H. (2021). Black Death and Mourning as Pandemic. *Journal of Black Studies* 2021, Vol. 52(3) 296–309.
[462] See Flowers, R. (2015). "Refusal to forgive: Indigenous women's love and rage." Decolonization: Indigeneity, *Education & Society*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 32-49.

was always political. Realising the contradictions produced by a racist society that make black women hair into a problem, @SineKhumaloSA's critical reflection challenges the presupposition of black hair as "hard, strong unruly" and the result is the subversion of false universality of black women hair. She does this by unmasking its actual particularity by painting a descriptive picture of black women hair as "delicate, fragile, sensitive." Her statement challenges the epistemic claims, but also the normative claims of whiteness.

Fear of Black hair rising

> @lolacele
> *'I can't believe that big companies like Clicks (a beauty store) do not think Black is beautiful, let alone black hair! I wear my crown with pride. Black hair must rise!*

In his recent book, *Fear of Black Consciousness*, Gordon points out there is a fear people have of blackness rising[463]. In fact, the fear of black hair rising as pointed out by @lolacele in the tweet above is a very real concern in white communities. Gordon asks, "so what happened to Black people under the weight of Black bodies?" (2022: 36). We must equally ask, so what happened to black women under the weight of black hair? Gordon's question points us to the historical fact that black women and their embodies hair have been in conflict because they have been constructed by the first stage of double consciousness, that is, as an obstacle to the possibility of full personhood. @lolacele's assertion, "I wear my crown with pride," points to a liberatory moment of understanding that black people can creatively affirm their beauty. It's a critical consciousness but also a love and life affirming one.

Conclusion

By theorising the EFF through the lens of Black rage and analysing instances where the party has deployed rage, this chapter has illustrated that Black rage has a DuBoisian double consciousness dimension, which is both negative and positive. The negative dimension of Black rage has thus been conceptualised herein as "misguided Black rage" whilst the positive dimension has been theorised as "potentiated Black rage." It has been found that the EFF simultaneously deploys rage both in a destructive and liberatory manner. Here, Black rage is seen as misguided or narcissistic rage whenever EFF leaders and supporters harass and intimidate, and sometimes use violence, against journalists when doing their work. It is also seen as potentiated Black rage whenever the EFF appears wherever conditions of racism and discrimination prevail as exemplified in the black women hair struggles. By theorising Black rage as love, this chapter adopts a drive towards Black Consciousness in order to surface the productive potential of rage.

[463] See Gordon, L.R. (2022). *Fear of Black Consciousness*. US: Penguin Books.

Chapter 9

Concluding Chapter: Counter-interpellation was a success

This research theorised black voices within the context of the post-apartheid South African media landscape, that is, within the context of a neoliberal media world, with specific reference to the *City Press* newspaper. It has been said that the neoliberal media constitutes a unique case of the 'crisis of voice' (Couldry, 2010) and that in South Africa, black voices in the media are subjected through what Quijano (2000) has termed the 'colonial matrix of power'[464]. We understand from Chiumbu's (2016)[465] analysis of subaltern voices in the South African neoliberal media that this colonial matrix of power even extends to *City Press*, a traditionally black-oriented newspaper. One of the main findings of this research is that black voices in the post-apartheid South African media are continually subjected to the weight of coloniality through various means, including invisibility, silencing and marginalisation. The experience of such subjection or trauma has had profound implications on how in 2013 a collective of black journalists at *City Press* were compelled to understand the meaning of media transformation through the lens of racialised Black Consciousness.

To summarise the arguments thus far, an initial literature review considered five themes. First, a critique of modernism and neoliberalism that located the politics of *City Press*. Second, the case for the decolonisation of media studies foregrounding current debates in South Africa. Third, locating black solidarity within the Black Consciousness philosophical tradition and elucidating how a group of black journalists in *City Press* in 2013 mobilised it to fight against the appointment of two white news editors in that newspaper. Fourth, deploying Gordon's (2018, 2021) theories of invisibility linked to voice, specifically that of women, to discuss how the voices of black women journalists are presently subjected through silencing, patriarchy and misogyny. Fifth, showing that speech or voice is indispensable to doing politics.

A second set of arguments is situated in decoloniality and Black Consciousness (BC) philosophy. A critique of decoloniality and its main three main tenets, the coloniality of being, power and knowledge, has been proffered with an emphasis on Gordon's theories of invisibility, Steve Biko's (1978) concept of 'envisioned self' and Catherine Walsh (2018) notion of 'decolonial for'. Third, there is an

[464] See Quijano, A. (2000). 'Coloniality of power, ethnocentrism and Latin America'. Nepantla 1(3): 533–80.
[465] See Chiumbu, S. (2016). Media, Race and Capital: A Decolonial Analysis of Representation of Miners' Strikes in South Africa, *African Studies*, 75:3, 417-435.

examination of the 2013 *City Press* conflict between Ferial Haffajee and a group of black journalists over discourses of media transformation and subsequent allegations of racism. Fourth, through autoethnography, I explored my own lived experience as a former journalist who worked in one of the neoliberal newsrooms. Fifth, there is an examination of whether black women journalists at *City Press* and elsewhere were able to articulate their black feminist voices and an explication of some of the challenges they faced in a male-dominated and patriarchal post-apartheid South African newsroom. Finally, there is the theorisation of the radical and populist voice of the EFF as (mis)guided Black rage that reveals how the party has treated women journalists using patriarchy, misogyny and abuse.

9.1 Media transformation as a 'floating signifier'

This study shows how the term 'media transformation' is used by different journalists at *City Press* as a means of attacking and deligitimising opponents within the newsroom. It argues that the term 'media transformation' has increasingly become a "floating signifier": a signifier caught in a tussle in-between then editor Haffajee and a group of black journalists, both seeking to provide a view on how *City Press* ought to be transformed and structured from 2013 onwards. By approaching transformation of the media from the viewpoint of discourse theory, the research contributes new insights into the inner workings of newsroom politics at *City Press*. For Haffajee, media transformation meant transforming *City Press* from a newspaper oriented towards a black readership to a more inclusive newspaper that catered to a 'nonracial' and 'Afropolitan' audience. On the other hand, for the black journalists it meant desiring change at the middle management level to address past imbalances by appointing black, rather than white, news editors. In effect, the black journalists objected to the two white news editors whom they had to report to. The transformation debate in South Africa media has been strongly contested since the first democratically held elections in 1994 (Wasserman, 2020: 451)[466]. This study has provided an overview of the major issues involved through the debates pertaining to media transformation at *City Press*. It also assesses the extent to which the newspaper emerged as a space where the newspaper itself came to be contested. In order to consider the current state of media transformation at *City Press*, it is useful to locate it within Laclau and Mouffe's (1985)[467] radical democracy model, which states that society, like the media, constitutes the whole field of difference where there are conflicts, fights and contestations because it cannot be self-defined as a totalised whole. It is also valuable to locate the media within the historical developments within the sector that go back at least 29 years since 1994, when the ownership and control of the South African media transitioned from media conglomerates to a few black owners. Although the media has transformed slowly since the advent of democracy, there has been a lack of consensus at *City Press* about what exactly media transformation would entail and how the

[466] See Wasserman, H. (2020). The state of South African media: a space to contest democracy. *Publizistik* 65:451–465.
[467] See Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1985) 2014.*Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. 2nd ed. paperback. London: Verso.

changes at that newspaper should be enforced. For Laclau, 'the floating dimension becomes most visible in periods of organic crisis, when the symbolic systems need to be radically recast' (Laclau, 2005: 132).[468] This study suggests that the conflict[469] that took place at *City Press* in 2013 between Haffajee and a group of black journalists qualifies as such as an organic crisis in the Laclauian sense. As the radical democracy model sweeps over neoliberal newsrooms, an organic crisis does indeed seem to be present at *City Press* and is 'deployed as part of the political struggle' (Farkas and Schou, 2018: 307)[470] by black journalists to fight the appointment of two white editors in that newspaper. Within this line of reasoning, the media as a floating signifier in the South African space might not signify anything radical but simply remind us that race and racialised Black Consciousness is as relevant in post-apartheid South Africa media as it was during the apartheid era. Finally, it also signifies that media transformation mean different things in different contexts as it was the case in the *City Press* 2013 epoch. This thesis contends that these different and contradicting understandings is what constitute media transformation as a 'floating signifier' in the post-apartheid South African media. The *City Press* example provides a good illustration on how the media is at the centre of contestations over transforming the South African society, 'both as a reflection of wider societal dynamics and as a stakeholder in the new democracy' (Wasserman, 2020: 464). Alternatively, does it testify to the deep-seated 'crisis of voice' (Couldry, 2010) facing our neoliberal media?

9.2 In defence of black solidarity at *City Press*

This study defends the Black solidarity mounted by a group of black journalists in 2013 at *City Press* against the appointment of two white editors. It argues that part of the problem with the neoliberal media such as *City Press* is their intolerance towards group identity, and in this case, black identity. Insisting that we are black has been a first principle of Black Power politics and Black Consciousness philosophy throughout the struggle for racial justice and liberation in South Africa. Some people may well question any project that appropriates black identity to defend group solidarity given the fluid nature of our identities. However, the group of black journalists felt marginalised not only in the way *City Press* was reporting on South African politics but also, and more importantly, from the way the production of knowledge within the newsroom was designed. Gordon's (2018) concept of 'epistemological invisibility' is useful here to understand the position adopted by black journalists against the appointment of white editors. Since white editors have dominated terrains such as the news desk often in the past, the way to correct this intellectual imbalance required the organisation of black journalists

[468] See Laclau, E. (2005). *On Populist Reason*. London: Verso.
[469] The conflict at *City Press* was partly driven by the appointment of two white news editors, Nicki Gules and Natasha Joseph, who were tasked to drive the editorial agenda of that paper. Following their appointment, a group of black journalists protested reporting to them and alleged that the paper lacked 'black perspectives.' They argued that black editors were better positioned to tell political stories from and preferred the appointment of black editors (*Daily Dispatch,* 2013).
[470] See Farkas, J. and Schou, J. (2018). Fake News as a floating signifier: Hegemony, Antagonism and the Politics of Falsehood. *Javnost: The Public*, 2018. Vol. 25, No. 3, 298–314

into a group collective. The emergence of the group of black journalists to promote the empowerment of blacks in the neoliberal media and challenge existing institutional practices became a source of discomfort to some people at *City Press*. They questioned why black journalists did not just reject black solidarity and embrace the newspaper's new 'nonracial' and 'Afropolitan' motto. On the other hand, the black journalists were challenging the discourse of liberal individualism. The essential condition for their collective black solidarity was borne out of the need to unite with one another against the objectifying look of the white gaze, which characterised the news desk. Thus, the black journalists at *City Press* understood 'nonracialism' and 'Afropolitanism' differently from Haffajee's and the publishers of the newspaper, Media24.

These concepts carried a different context for both parties, and it simply suggest that they speak from a 'different *abschattungen*[471], that is, black South Africans speak from the positionality of lived experience' (More, 2017: 129)[472]. It is unfortunate that in the so-called South African 'rainbow nation,' nonracialism is relentlessly imposed on people's identities, requiring them to reconcile their identities outside their conception of self. This study has found that part of the problem with the neoliberal media such as *City Press* is its intolerance of group identity, and 'therefore its disregard of the fact that racist consciousness always operates at the level of collectives' (More, 2009)[473]. More (2009) has pointed out that black political thought has always defended a collective black identity that is tied to liberatory black solidarity. The emergence of a group of black journalists at *City Press* to promote the creation of safe spaces within the newsroom where black journalists could write from their perspectives became a source of surprise for some people in that newspaper. I argue in this study that it is this indifference to black identity and collective solidarity that make 'nonracial' and 'Afropolitan' proponents at *City Press* blind to the epistemological concerns of black journalists who demanded to write from the position of their lived experience.

The State of the Newsroom 2018 report made the following observation about the lack of unionisation in the South Africa mainstream media:

> … mainstream, then profit-making media companies discouraged unionisation. Journalists said off the record that unions were intimidated from premises by management, and that they were told they were not allowed to belong to unions because it was "against company policy". Journalists ought to know this is anti-constitutional, yet they did not write about it – it was not the "done thing" to write about your company (2018: 21).[474]

[471] The German word *abschattungen* means shadowing.
[472] See More, P.M. (2017). Locating Frantz Fanon in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Studies,* Vol. 52(2) 127–141.
[473] See More, P.M. (2009). Black Solidary: A Philosophical Defense. *Theoria*, September 2009.
[474] See Finlay, A. (2018). *2018 State of the Newsroom*: *Structured Unstructured*. A Wits Journalism Project.

The report is amplified by the findings of the online Job Losses Survey 2018 conducted by Daniels, which found that in the process of retrenchments in the sector, 'there was no union involvement for support' (2020: 7).[475] She reflects that unionisation in the media sector has since died and that even though there are robust civil society organisations associated with the media, 'the activism, has not appeared to reach out to or deal with job losses' (Ibid, p. 47-48).[476] The survey also found that out the 158 respondents, 72 per cent said they had no union or journalist association. It is for this reason that this study highlights the value of black solidarity and collective action in un-unionised South African mainstream media. Indeed, what else can racial solidarity be based upon at *City Press* except through the very same condition that excludes the unionisation of journalists?

9.3 On living under the weight of whiteness in the SA newsroom

What exactly, one may ask, about the neoliberal newsroom is so alienating to black journalists at *City Press* that could explain their concerns about the lack of 'black perspectives'? Writing on academic philosophy, the black philosopher Charles Mills correctly pointed out the complexity of whiteness in neoliberal settings, arguing that it is 'conceptual, theoretical, contextual, and professional whiteness' (Mills, 1998)[477]. It is argued in this study that the neoliberal newsroom provides a hostile atmosphere for black journalists. The whiteness of neoliberal newsrooms alienates black bodies and their embodied voices, and as result, black journalists at *City Press* could hardly recognise themselves in that newspaper. Paulo Freire's (2000) insights on human existence are worthy of a lengthy quote:

> Human existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men and women transform the world. To exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming. Human beings are not built-in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection (2000: 88).[478]

The above quotation by Freire speaks to the black journalists' ethical stance at *City Press* and their political sensibilities around the importance of their voices and perspectives when doing their work. It also speaks to their commitment to name whiteness as inflecting their lived experience in the neoliberal newsroom. Moreover, it talks to their Black Consciousness awareness to challenge oppressive spaces. Indeed, Freire's insights also speaks to the lived contexts of black journalists at *City Press* in challenging

[475] See Daniels, G. (2020). *Power and Loss in South African Journalism: News in the age of social media*. Johannesburg: Wits Press.
[476] Ibid, p.47-48.
[477] See Mills, C. (1998). *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race*. Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell Univ. Press.
[478] See Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th Anniversary Edition. New York: Continuum. p. 88

silences and invisibilities and in naming their lived experiences as an act of empowerment. Yet, for the black journalists, by speaking out against the appointment of two white news editors in a traditionally black-oriented newspaper, the moment became 'a mode of achieving a perspective on what might otherwise remain unnamed and unspoken' (Davidson and Yancy, 2009: 1).[479] The black journalists could not stand the deafening silence around the change of the newspaper's long-time philosophy captured in its motto 'Distinctly African'. Indeed, human beings 'are not built-in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection'. Their standing up against the appointment of two white news editors at that newspaper was a way of asserting themselves and their blackness, and a way of being agential, 'a way in which we are able to make ourselves known, recognised, and valued'[480] (Ibid).

9.4 Racial invisibility of blackness at *City Press*

Concerning the 'whiteness' of the neoliberal media, the peculiar features of black experiences at *City Press* revealed allegations of racism between Haffajee and the group of journalists. What was peculiar about these allegations is that here was a black editor and the group of black journalists accusing each other of racism. Haffajee was quoted as saying she saw 'real black racism at play and cultural chauvinism that I can't stomach' and that she refused to be part of a "new oppression" (News24, 2013)[481]. Is it possible for a *black* person to be *racist against black* people? According to Hill Lewis, the question is less whether blacks can be racist towards other blacks, but 'what kinds of racial projects appear and disappear across specific racial formations and why' (Hill Lewis, 2015: 4).[482] It is argued here that within Steve Biko's inclusive definition of term 'black,' which include black Africans, black people of Coloured, Indian, Asian and Chinese descent, 'racial formations have distinctive configurations of racial projects for which interest groups advance various interpretations of racial inequality' (Ibid). For example, in South Africa, racism relied on a deep-seated logic of segregation within the black racial group and was differently organised yet equally powerful. Here, we see a source of great tension between Haffajee and a group of black journalists because racism and other forms of dehumanisation and exploitation are 'forms of disempowering of others through the concentration of powers in special groups' (Gordon, 2021: 22), in this case, the two white editors at *City Press*.

This thesis posits that racism has become an ineluctable feature and part of the social fabric of journalism in post-apartheid South Africa. It argues, however, that the problem that persists in South African media is that racism is often treated as an abstraction and not as reality. In effect, the black journalists at *City Press* were criticising the whiteness of the management section of the newspaper in a publication mostly

[479] See del Guadalupe, D.M and Yancy, G. (eds.). (2009). *Critical perspectives on bell hooks*. Routledge.
[480] Ibid, p.1
[481] See *News24*. (2013). *City Press* racism claims to be probed. 18 Oct 2013.
[482] See Hill-Lewis, P. (2015). Intersectionality's Definitional Dilemmas. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 41:1–20.

written by black journalists. It argues that their blackness was so invisible in the newsroom despite their being in the majority in the newsroom. Gordon's (2018) theory of invisibility of quantity linked to race is instructive here although the contexts in South Africa and the US are different. In South Africa, black people constitute an overwhelming majority whilst in the US black people are in the minority. According to the State of the Newsroom 2021 report, the demographics of editors of 39 national and regional commercial newspapers surveyed as of mid-2022 reveal that black editors are sitting at 51% compared to the 26% of white editors. This study contends that the black journalists at *City Press* were pointing at this disparity given that in the context of South Africa white people account for less than 10% of the population.

Bringing theory to lived experience

Using Black Consciousness as a case in point, the black journalists at *City Press* understood that their voices were important in the context of media transformation in post-apartheid South Africa and that race posed a profound challenge to realising it. I argue that by raising the issue of the lack of 'black perspectives' at *City Press*, the black journalists were bringing theory as a form of intervention to their lived experience in the neoliberal newsroom and challenging the status quo at the same time. They felt that they had been forced to see themselves through the eyes of the two white news editors. Within this context, I have theorised such a theme as an example of W.E.B. du Bois's notion of double consciousness. I have examined the ways in which black voices in the neoliberal media, including my own voice as a former journalist, have been subjected to powerful white discursive regimes through the whiteness of the news desk that has historically rendered them (and me) invisible and as voices which must not be heard. Embodied black voices are historically lived in the neoliberal media, as it were, in terms of the 'power of whiteness, manifested through the white gaze, which is a structured way of "seeing" that is always already mediated by certain reactionary value-creating forces' (Yancy, 2005: 429)[483]. By rejecting the 'power of whiteness, manifested through the white gaze,' the black journalists have demonstrated a sense of what Jane Anna Gordon (2005) has theorised as 'potentiated double consciousness.'[484] Gordon defines potentiated double consciousness as a dialectical move away from the first, negative stage of double consciousness that is yoked to the self-image of black people as constructed by others (read white news editors). This study argues that the black journalists, in their actions, have successfully demonstrated an understanding of what I have theorised as 'power *for*' following decolonial scholar Catherine Walsh (2018) in her articulation of decoloniality as 'decoloniality *for*'.[485] Pow*er for* is a transformational form of power designed 'to make things happen'

[483] See Yancy, G. (2005). Whiteness and the Return of the "Black Body". Doctoral dissertation: Duquesne University.
[484] See Gordon, J. A. (2005). *The general will as political legitimacy: Disenchantment and double consciousness in modern democratic life*. Dissertation: University of Pennsylvania.
[485] See Walsh, C.E. "Decoloniality For: Resurgences, Shifts, and Movements," in Walter Mignolo and Catherine Walsh, *On Decoloniality*. pp.15-32

in Gordon's parlance. This study argues that those black journalists at *City Press* understood that the people who preceded them (and us) and acted against colonialism, racism and apartheid in the context of South Africa could not have waged those actions 'without a slight modicum of power' (Gordon, 2018)[486]. It is power that is intimately linked to political agency. It is contended here that the black journalists at *City Press* acted with this kind of power in mind, which, as Gordon says, 'is the ability to make things happen, to make the possible actual' (2021: 41).[487] Whether the black journalists succeeded in their struggles at *City Press* is a moot point. What is important is that they acted and took responsibility by being what Fanon would call 'actional'.

9.5 Ideological interpellation of black journalists at *City Press* failed

The study theorises the South African media through Althusser's (1969) work on Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA). As an ISA, the media for Althusser 'produces a subject as an effect of ideological interpellation' (Lewis, 2017: 305).[488] The *City Press*, in this view, turns black journalists toward a particular form of ideology by repeatedly hailing them to the point where they embrace 'nonracialism' and 'Afropolitanism' and recognise themselves in and through such hailing. In effect, the newspaper hails black journalists to incite them to abandon their racialised Black Consciousness and embrace nonracialism and Afropolitanism. This study argues that it is important to read the *City Press* 2013 incident symptomatically for its internal contradictions and possibilities. Yet Haffajee's project of turning a 'Distinctly African' black newspaper into a 'nonracial' and 'Afropolitan' one has failed, as of 2013, to interpellate black journalists at *City Press*. This thesis argues that it failed because Haffajee desired nonracialism and Afropolitanism and expected it of black journalists. However, the black journalists adhered to a 'Distinctly African' ideology arguing that it would allow them to tell stories from their 'black perspectives.' An exodus of senior black journalists at City Press (*The Media Online*, 2013)[489] is testament to this failure of interpellation.

In short, whereas Haffajee and Media24, owners of *City Press*, interpellates individual journalists to buy into the newspaper's vision of 'nonracialism' and 'Afropolitanism,' the collective of black journalists offered counterinterpellation. This counterinterpellation, on the other hand, took the form of refusal to accept the appointment of two white news editors and the revolt against the lack of the so-called 'black perspectives' in that newspaper. The breakdown of the relationship between Haffajee and a group of six black journalists at *City Press* symbolised an 'inverse form of interpellation-

[486] See Gordon, L. (2018). WiCDS '(Re)Imagining Liberations' Conference. The 5th annual international conference hosted by WiCDS from 6,7 and 8 August 2018, Wits University, Johannesburg.
[487] See Gordon, L. R. (2021). *Freedom, justice, and decolonization*. New York: Routledge
[488] See Lewis, T.A. (2017). A Marxist Education of the Encounter: Althusser, Interpellation, and the Seminar. *Rethinking Marxism*, 29:2, 303-317.
[489] See *The Media Online*. (2013). The battle for the soul of *City Press*. 31 October 2013.

identification-subjection' (Lewis, 2017: 304). Through identification and racialised Black Consciousness, black journalists identified themselves as black and raised up the problematic of the invisibility of black voices in the *City Press* neoliberal newsroom to tell political stories from a 'black perspective'. Counterinterpellation by black journalists at *City Press*, then, served as the moment of ideological rupture, which led to an exodus of senior black journalists (*The Media Online*, 2013)[490] and accusations of racism by Haffajee towards the collective of six black journalists *(News24*, 2013).[491]

Antagonistic interpellation and fluid blackness

This research has revealed that Haffajee, in the internal letter written to the staff (*Daily Dispatch,* 2013), used antagonistic interpellations against the black journalists. Haffajee's antagonistic interpellations included: '*I found the outcome of the day dated and small-minded*'; '*if you want skop on a Saturday, tell Johannes and I'll pay*'; and '*So, leave if you like, but that is my line in the sand*' (Ibid). The comments were made after Haffajee convened a meeting with some of her staff members to discuss the paper's future. According to media reports, the meeting 'ended unpleasantly, with race at the core of the discussions' (Ibid). Was this antagonistic? In this example, I argue yes. This thesis argues that Haffajee's comments were ethnic and condescending as exemplified by her comment that 'if you skop on Saturday, tell Johannes and I'll pay.' 'Skop' is a slang derived from the Afrikaans words, 'skaap kop,' the head of a sheep or cow or goat. It is one of the loved delicacies in some South African townships. By labelling the outcome of the meeting with a group of black journalists 'dated and small-minded,' I argue that Haffajee created an antagonistic frontier between her and a group of black journalists and attempted at foreclosing the media transformation debate at *City Press*. This thesis further argues that her comments exemplified an unprogressive and narrow hegemony. The group of black journalists did not accept the antagonistic labelling by Haffajee, but instead they took her to court on defamation charges and allegations of racism (*eNCA,* 2016)[492]. The matter was later withdrawn and settled out of court (Ibid). It was a testament to black journalists at *City Press* that the ideological interpellation had failed to convince them to kowtow to the newspaper's 'nonracial' and 'Afropolitan' ideological posture. For them, their political identities were located in blackness and 'black perspectives' and formed an integral part of their work. This is in contradiction to the concept of fluid blackness as explained in Chapter 3. Haffajee believed in the notion of fluid blackness and objected to what she termed is a 'racist view that only a black editor can get political stories through calls from black African politicians' (*Daily Dispatch,* 2013). The notion of fluid blackness was useful in understanding the fluidity and multiple identities of

[490] See *The Media Online*. (2013). The battle for the soul of *City Press*. 31 October 2013.
[491] See *News24.* (2013). Journalists accuse Haffajee of racism. 18 October 2013.

[492] See eNCA. (2016). CORRECTED: Defamation case against former *City Press* editor withdrawn. 18 August 2016.

black voices in the post-apartheid South African media landscape through the example of *City Press*.

9.6 Black feminism and intersectionality

One of the findings of this study is that black women journalists are discriminated against in the post-apartheid South African like *City Press* in ways that do not fit to the neat category of oppression as either "racism' or 'sexism' - but a combination of both racism and sexism' (Smith, 2013-2014).[493] Black feminist intersectional thought has been deployed in this thesis to account for the 'simultaneity of oppression' (Smith, 1983)[494] that black women journalists face from the white gaze in a neoliberal newsroom and from the 'marshalling black gaze' (Canham and Williams, 2017) in a patriarchal and male-dominated newsroom. According to Gqola (2016), the intersections of post-apartheid class, gender, and race aspirations by a range of possibilities deserve scholarly attention. Gqola reflects on the intersectional triple oppression black women face in a post-apartheid South Africa:

> there is recognition that apartheid's of women's lives worked through violent intersectionalities of white supremacy, patriarchy, and class oppression, the latter often used interchangeably with economic alienation rather than capitalism, per se. This intersectional triple violence very clearly limited women's life choices and movement and undervalued them through institutional silencing, policing, and legal minorisation (Gqola, 2016: 120).[495]

Black women journalists were interviewed in this study in order to share light of these interlocking oppressions of 'supremacy, patriarchy, and class oppression' and to reflect on their experiences. Haffajee and other senior black women journalists whose voices are featured in this study are among the most visible in the country. In the case of Haffajee, she is one of the most consistent and influential critics of South African politics and the South African government. This research argues that Gordon's view that women tend to centre voice in their writings is because women have faced political exclusion. The agential capacity of black women journalists to speak is based on this historic fact. However, it is contended here that what is at stake is the over-attention given to the idea of 'voice' at the expense of the need to listen to women's voices when they speak. Couldry argues for a rethinking of the politics of voice and reflects at length below on the importance of listening:

> '[l]istening here is, first and foremost, the act of recognizing what others have to say, recognizing that they have something to say or, better, that they, like all human beings, have the capacity to

[493] See Smith, S. (2013, 2014) Black feminism and intersectionality. *International Socialist Review.*
[494] See Barbara Smith, ed., (2000). *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. p. xxxiv.
[495] See Gqola, PD. (2016). A peculiar place for a feminist? The New South African woman, *TrueLove* magazine and Lebo(gang) Mashile, *Safundi*, 17:2, 119-136

> give an account of their lives that is reflexive and continuous, an ongoing, embodied process of reflection… The reason we need to listen – and the reason why, arguably, depending on how we want to frame things, we have an 'obligation' to listen – is that all human beings have the capacity for voice, to give an account of their lives' (Couldry, 2009, 579-580).[496]

Lacey argues that the act of listening should be conceptualised in the same way the expression of speech or voice was 'conceived as a product to be circulated in the free marketplace of ideas' (Lacey, 2013: 169)[497]. Garman posits that listening to women's voices seldom takes place in the post-apartheid South African newsroom 'with sensitivity and thoughtfulness in many of the fraught, fractious, aggressive and complicated interchanges that now characterise public and mediated spaces in South Africa' (Garman, 2018: 6)[498]

The voices of black women journalists presented in this study draw the eye to the violent, patriarchal and sexual nature of black masculinity in South African society, including in the media. This study interviewed two black women journalists from *City Press* and quoted other women journalists in other sources about their lived experiences in the typical male-dominated South African newsroom. What emerged from the research are harrowing stories on how women journalists have to face threats from the police, state security, political groups or parties, institutions or businesses and the public when doing their work, including online defamation or harassment, physical violence and condonation (Bird and Singh, 2021[499]; Glass Ceiling, 2018). In her foreword to the *Glass Ceilings Women in South African media houses 2018* report, former chairperson of the South African National Editors' Forum (Sanef) and former editor of Eyewitness News, Mahlatse Mahlatse, vividly captures the difficult and frightening on-the-job situations that women journalists must contend:

> When I was asked about the defining moments in my career as a woman journalist, the many crises that have been my journey in journalism came flooding in. How does one pick one or a few from the many defining moments the rich world of journalism has to offer? Should it be the sexism, not only in the workplace but also from newsmakers, especially as a political reporter? The politicians who hit on me first before I even requested an interview or when I arrived for the interview and who felt it was okay to say something about the size of my bum or comment on my legs (2018: 5).[500]

Mahlatse provides a poignant example of testimonial authority as a form of epistemic resistance to

[496] See Couldry, N. (2009). Rethinking the politics of voice. *Continuum* 23, no. 4: 579–82.
[497] See See Lacey, K. (2013). *Listening Publics*, Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
[498] See Garman, A. (2018). Anger, pain, the body and power: a rethink of logos-based rationality and voice in the South African public sphere. ICA Conference, Prague.
[499] See Bird, W. and Singh, A. (2021). Protecting women journalists essential for democracy, media freedom. *News24*. 10 August 2021.
[500] See *Glass Ceilings Women in South African media houses 2018*. (2018). Gender Links: Johannesburg.

politicians who 'hit on' her first before she even requested an interview. Using epistemologies like Black Feminist Thought, Mahlatse critiques men who think it is fine to make comments about the size of her bum and remarks about her legs. On the conceptual tools we bring to bear on the study of African sexualities, Black feminist Pumla Dineo Gqola implores black women to pay attention to 'expressions and contestations of femininities and masculinities – what counts as acceptable, sexy, amusing and/or frightening' (Gqola, 2005: 4)[501]. From Mahlatse's point of view, the comments and actions of the politicians were unacceptable and frightening and amounted to sexism. Gqola argues that when we theorise Black feminism, specifically here black women in the media, we must understand theorisation as emanating 'in sites which are not traditionally, under white supremacist capitalist patriarchal logic, assumed to be outside the terrain of knowledge-making… through creative media' (2001:11).[502] This study reveals that while the voices of black women journalists could be heard, they are not listened to. This was particularly true for black women journalists who undertook their work with a profound sense of ethics to their profession.

Race and gender-politics of newspaper editing

The *State of the Newsroom 2021* report (the latest which captures some of the findings from this study), a Wits Centre for Journalism Project, found that there is an increase in the number of white women editors appointed to newspapers, and a drop in the percentage of Indian editors. However, the report does not explain the decline in the number of Indian editors except to state that gender parity is not reflected in the survey. It is argued here Haffajee's departure as the editor of *City Press* might have slightly contributed to the decline of Indian editors. Out of 39 national and regional newspapers surveyed in the report as of mid-2022, there were 8 Indian editors compared to 10 in 2021 and 2020 respectively. The report further stated that this 'gender parity is still not reflected in the count and the number of white editors at work does not reflect the demographics of the country' (*State of the Newsroom 2021*: 2021: 67); about 10% of the population is white. According to the report, male editors comprised 64% of the gender composition of South African newspapers while women editors were at 36%. The increase in the appointment of white editors is directly connected to the case of *City Press* in which two white women editors were appointed as news editors in 2013.

Be a woman with balls

Through interviews, two former *City Press* black women editors, Haffajee and Lizeka Mda, share their stories on the challenges they faced in dealing with male reporters who had to report to them in their

[501] See Gqola, P.D. (2005). Yindaba kaban' u'ba ndilahl' umlenze? Sexuality and Body Image. *Agenda*, 19:63, 3-9.
[502] See Gqola, P.D. (2001). Ufanele uqavile: Blackwomen, feminisms and postcoloniality in Africa, *Agenda*, 16:50, 11-22

line of duty. Mda reported that some male journalists were reluctant to take orders from a woman editor, especially an African women editor, while they were 'not shy to sexually harass women, regardless of seniority' (Interview, 14 September 2021). In Mda's case, the traditional boundary between the editor and journalist was undermined by some male journalists through the mobilisation of insubordination informed by patriarchal sexist and misogynistic attitudes and behaviours. In the context where the undermining activity stems from the male journalists, Mda positioned herself in a manner that challenges the status quo that only male journalists could be editors. She refused to give away her power by being complicit in her own undermining and silencing. Echoing Mda, Haffajee said there was one male general manager who wanted her to be 'male' in her editing and that his image of a successful editor was 'someone smoking a cigar, wearing braces and barking' (Interview, 04 October 2021) orders. However, Haffajee challenged the general manager's sexism 'staking' to her 'own style and narrative' (Ibid) although she admits that it was a hard battle 'to always stay' in her own truth (Ibid). Haffajee believes that she succeeded in challenging the gender stereotypes prevalent within a post-apartheid South African newsroom. She did not succumb to some of the performative maleness in her editing but stuck to her style. The study also found that patriarchal tendencies are not brought by males alone in the newsroom. Mahlatse says there are women who openly say, 'male bosses are just better – never mind that one before hardly bothered to pitch for work and if he did his office smelled like a cheap bar' (*Glass Ceiling 2018*, 2018: 5). The *Glass Ceiling 2018* report explains that 'so much of sexism relates to cultural practices, institutional culture, sexual harassment that no one else witnessed, jokes, innuendo, the old boys' network where decisions are made, being passed over for promotion, among other intangibles' (2018: 53).

9.7 EFF's misguided black rage against women journalists

Since its formation in 2013, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) has had an antagonistic relationship with certain sections of the South African mainstream media (*News24*, 2019; *Mail & Guardian*, 2019).[503] It is argued here that the EFF deploys 'an agonistic and metapolitical approach' (Rueda, 2020: 50-51)[504] in doing politics in post-apartheid South Africa and employs it towards those what it considers its enemies, including the media, 'inasmuch as it seeks to question and transform the political landscape, both in terms of who is the hegemon and how the political map looks like' (Ibid).[505] This thesis has argued that speech is indispensable to doing political work. Firstly, it considered the discourses of EFF's political speech and interrogated how they manifested themselves in the doing of politics. The study has illuminated how the party deploys what I have conceptualised here as 'misguided black rage' against

[503] See *News24*. (2019). Daily Maverick to report on EFF Assembly despite ban, while eNCA cancels coverage. 14 December 2019

[504] See Rueda, D. (2020). National populism, Right and Left: The Social-National Synthesis Today. Em Imlay, A. e Wentz, M., *Volume 29: Populism*, 48-63, A Journal of Social Theory.

[505] Ibid.

journalists, especially women journalists. According to Canham (2017), 'Black rage is seen as a response to White supremacy and it has the following outcomes: it can have destructive consequences, can enable psychological release of pent-up anger, and can simultaneously be an expression of self-love' (2017:).[506] The study engaged in a critical examination of EFF protests in response to white supremacy racism and the discrimination of black women natural hair. Although Black rage as a concept reveals Du Bois's (1903) notion of double dimension as argued by Canham and Williams, I am the EFF did engage in the black women hair struggle because as an expression of self-love but out of hate for white monopoly capital. Imagine the plight of black women. When black women are discriminated against their black natural hair by Clicks stores, the perpetrators in this case, the EFF deploys rage against the so-called white monopoly capital supposedly 'as an expression of self-love'. When the same black women report on EFF protests as journalists they face intimidation, harassment, violence and threats of online rape and murder (*The Citizen*, 2021) from EFF supporters and members; the response of the EFF has often been to protect and defend its members and supporters. Whether supposedly self-loved or abused, black women seek a "place' or set of relationships of belonging is where people could live and at times flourish (Gordon, 2021).[507] In fact, I argue here that EFF's protests against the discrimination of black hair cannot be read as Canham and Williams' (2017) form of Black rage that is manifested 'as an expression of self-love' other than being seen as the manifestation of the party's hate for white monopoly capital. Furthermore, they cannot be analysed through the prism of what decolonial feminist scholar Chela Sandoval (2000) has termed 'decolonial love.' According to Daniels (2020), decolonial love is 'anti-war and would therefore be also anti-rape, abuse (physical and emotional) and online trolling' (2020: 110). In other words, why was the EFF's response to the racist portrayal of black women hair, as embodied in the Clicks advert, also the brutal assertion of harassment, abuse and intimidation against black women journalists who covered the same party's protests against incidents of racism? The fruits of these engagements with affect are fully ventilated in Chapter 8 of this study. It is my contention that the EFF's oppressive and 'misguided black rage' is seen to operate in ways that simultaneously obscures and deflects attention from the real black women hair struggles by focusing its energies on the white monopoly capital. I argue that this is done through more overt operations such as hypervisibilising black women hair struggles through protests to fight (directly or indirectly) white monopoly capital. Is also done through covert operations such as invisibilising women struggles against patriarchy, sexism and misogyny when its leaders and members are the perpetrators of such forms of oppression. This was chillingly illustrated by the comments made by the former EFF national spokesperson Mbuyiseni Ndlozi to defend members of the party who allegedly harassed an eNCA journalists covering the party's protest against racism in Cape town (*The Citizen*, 2020).[508] Ndlozi

[506] See Hugo Canham. (2017). Embodied black rage. *Du Bois Review*, 14:2 (2017) 427–445

[507] See Lewis. R. Gordon. (2021). *Freedom, Justice, and Decolonization*. New York: Routledge.

[508] See *The Citizen*. (2020). Ndlozi says EFF members' mere 'touching' of eNCA journalist 'is not harassment'. 9 September 2020.

tweeted: ‘Merely touching her is not harassment. The touch has to be violent, invasive, or harmful to become harassment!’ (Ibid). To sum, black women journalists have to negotiate the EFF’s ‘misguided black rage’ and deal with the complexity of its dual overt and covert operation of the ‘black marshalling gaze’ (Cahnam and Williams, 2017) which seeks to marshal certain forms of harassment against women journalists in South Africa.

9.8 The unpredictable and undecided future of media transformation

The important contribution of Afro-Caribbean philosopher Gordon to this thesis was mainly his theories of human invisibility (2018) through the exploration on how modernity renders black voices in the South African neoliberal media invisible. What was shown in this thesis through empirical research was that black voices in the media are under subjection in different forms. Gordon helps us to demonstrate how different forms of subjection function through racial, engendered, and epistemic invisibility or erasure of black voices in the South African neoliberal media. The focus of this thesis was on the ideological subjection and interpellation of the voices of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 from Haffajee and its discourses on media transformation. A further subjection took place at *City Press* and in the media in general, through empirical data, in the form of the subjection of the voices of black women journalists through different forms, including patriarchy, sexism and misogyny. The third arena engaged with the lived experiences of black journalists, including myself as a former journalist, in the neoliberal newsroom. A fourth arena scrutinised the radical ‘populist’ voices of the EFF and how the party deployed the concept of Black rage simultaneously to mistreat and abuse women journalists when doing their work and to shower them with what Sandoval (2000) has termed ‘decolonial love’ when discriminated against their natural hair. And finally, a critique of the theory of decoloniality and its main tenets has been discussed through the lens of Steve Biko’s Black Consciousness philosophy in order to enrich the humanity of black people who are germane to this study.

Open Reflections and Floating signifiers

The theoretical synthesis in these reflections indicates that media transformation in South Africa is in a fluid state and its meaning is open to different interpretations by the journalists themselves. The term ‘media transformation’ has been shown to be floating signifier. As in Mouffe’s radical democracy model, the media, as a public space, is characterised by conflicts exemplified by the splits and contestations at *City Press* between Haffajee and the group of black journalists over the future of that newspaper in terms of the shape and form of media transformation. The meaning of media transformation between Haffajee and black journalists at *City Press* took on totally different meaning depending on the context. Although there are attempts to suppress dissent inside the newsroom, these splits and contestations eventually lend themselves in the public sphere like the *City Press* 2013 incident.

It leads one to conclude that contestations over media transformation in South Africa are likely to continue given that the *2021 State of the Newsroom* report findings noted an increase in the number of white women editors and a decline in the number of Indian (black) women editors. In Gordon's (2018) discussion of the concept of invisibility of quantity linked to race, at first it would seem that the concept is irrelevant to the South African context given that black people are in the minority in the United States while they are overwhelmingly in the majority in South Africa. However, the pressing matter for the black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 was not only the appointment of two white news editors, which could be seen as the reversal of strides made in media transformation in the country, but also the discursive production of the black voices through a white news desk. This thesis argues that given the context of transformation in South Africa, including in the media, the black journalists were within their rights and freedom of expressions to raise their concerns about the appointment of two white news editors in a newspaper that is produced mostly by black journalists. This reflection leads us to Gordon's (2018) concept of epistemic invisibility. This thesis has argued that black journalists at *City Press* could not see themselves in the white news desk and therefore it was inevitable that their voices would be enunciated through whiteness. It can be argued that what they termed 'black perspectives' was gradually being eroded in a newspaper that traditionally fashioned itself as 'Distinctly African.' The group of black journalists at *City Press* in 2013 decided that they will engage the newspaper management on the future direction of the paper. As has been discussed in Chapter 5, the engagement resulted in allegations of racism and a lawsuit that was later withdrawn and settled out of court (citation). This study argues that Black solidarity and the absence of unionisation at *City Press* is what fuelled and in the South African mainstream media in general is what fuelled the debate of media transformation in that newspaper as political and social project. Black solidarity became an internal part of imagining media transformation futurities in which appointments in the news desk beyond whiteness are built despite the impositions of racial difference. That only a group of six black journalists were suspended showed that there was no unity in thinking on the topic of media transformation. It seems there were those who turned to Haffajee, the voice of authority and power, and those who turned against the voice of power, as in the case of the six black journalists. The thesis argues that these were optimistic moments for the deepening of democracy and freedom of speech within the media. The failure of Haffajee to interpellate black journalists to embrace the newspaper's 'nonracial' and 'Afripolitan' ideological posture was also another optimistic moment. It further argues that as the so-called Fourth Estate, the media must not mask dissent within its ranks, including its own fractures and dislocations pertaining to the media transformation debate. As the *City Press* intersected with media transformation as a floating signifier, it became more than just a newspaper, but a public space for fights and contestations, intrinsic to the deepening of radical democracy within the media. It also points to the unpredictable and undecided future of transformation in the South African media.

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Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Mgibisa

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H19/09/29**
PROJECT TITLE	Media voices and power: A decolonial analysis of black voices and black writings in the post-1994 South African mainstream media with a specific reference to the neoliberal newsroom like City Press
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Mr M Mgibisa
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Literature, Language and Media/
DATE CONSIDERED	13 September 2019
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved
EXPIRY DATE	12 December 2022

DATE 13 December 2019 **CHAIRPERSON** _____ (Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Professor G Daniels

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

_____ **Signature**

_____/_____/_____ **Date**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix B

Questions on City Press:

1. In your opinion, have conditions of work and newsroom culture changed from old apartheid and colonial structures of the media where black voices were regulated through invisibility and censorship?

2. Do you think black voices are finding an expression in the post-1994 South African mainstream media and how is this expression manifested?

3. What do you think are the implications to black voices of having a white news editor in a newspaper like *City Press*, which has historically and traditionally largely served a black readership?

4. A group of black journalists at City Press alleged that the paper lacked 'black perspectives' when it came to reporting political matters. Do you think black journalists frame issues of blackness in their writings and how are these reflected in the media?

5. How important and relevant are the issues of racial identities in the newsroom in the post-1994 South African media era?

6. Do editorial practices and decisions in the newsroom reflect a transformed South African media post-1994? Have conditions of work and newsroom culture changed from old apartheid structures of the media where black voices were regulated through censorship?

7. What are the implications of having a white news editor in a newspaper like *City Press*, which has historically and traditionally largely served a black readership?

Appendix C

Questions for Black Women Journalists

1. Do you think black women's voices are equally respected and valued in their own right in South Africa rather than adopting a dominant “male” discourse?

2. A lot of women's literature often refer to “silence in voice”, “having a voice” or “gaining a voice”. In your view and your own experience, does this silencing of women's voices continue in public and political contexts? If so, how do dominant silencing practices manifest themselves in public and political contexts?

3. When you speak in public platforms (including social media), have you ever been subjected to patriarchal (male) taunts and questioning or experienced men’s strategic dirty play to keep you out of political decision-making processes in institutions of power (including the media)? If so, how have you dealt with those patriarchal tendencies of silencing women's voices?

4. What is the existential significance of hearing/listening to women voices as creative agents and as producers of knowledge in a modern world that stills refuses to listen to women voices even when they speak?

5. If any, what tools of emancipation or strategies have you used to liberate your voice under the weight of patriarchy and sexism? When figuring out the subjection of black women voices through patriarchy and sexism, what could be the possible solution to the problem of subordinating women voices?