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RELAYS IN REBELLION: THE POWER IN LILIAN NGOYI AND FANNIE LOU HAMER

by

CATHY L. FREEMAN

Under the Direction of Michelle Brattain

ABSTRACT

This thesis compares how Lilian Ngoyi of South Africa and Fannie Lou Hamer of the United States crafted political identities and assumed powerful leadership, respectively, in struggles against racial oppression via the African National Congress and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. The study asserts that Ngoyi and Hamer used alternative sources of personal power which arose from their location in the intersecting social categories of culture, gender and class. These categories challenge traditional disciplinary boundaries and complicate any analysis of political economy, state power relations and black liberation studies which minimize the contributions of women. Also, by analyzing resistance leadership squarely within both African and North American contexts, this thesis answers the call of scholar Patrick Manning for a "homeland and diaspora" model which positions Africa itself within the historiography of transnational academic debates.

INDEX WORDS: Anti-Apartheid, Civil Rights, Women, Power, Leadership, Lilian Ngoyi, Fannie Lou Hamer, African National Congress, Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, African diaspora

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by

CATHY L. FREEMAN

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2009

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2009

RELAYS IN REBELLION: THE POWER IN LILIAN NGOYI AND FANNIE LOU HAMER

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December 2009

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Christina and John Robert Freeman, who represent my future hopes, and to the extended families of Ruth, Sallie and Elvirah Benham, who represent my foundation.

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My deepest appreciation and gratitude is first extended to the entire History Department of Georgia State University, with special reference to Mohammed Ali, Michelle Brattain, Joe Perry, Mary Rolinson and Jacqueline Rouse. Moreover, I truly thank fellow graduate student Lonnie King for the inspiration of his freedom contribution.

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RELAYS IN REBELLION: THE POWER IN LILIAN NGOYI AND FANNIE LOU HAMER

African and African-American women subvert strong traditions when they impact the pinnacle of leadership in modern nation-states. For this reason, their names rarely attain foundational status in studies of revolutionary leadership for the two countries in this thesis, notably South Africa and the United States. The former might accord space for President Nelson Mandela alongside Prime Minister Jan Smuts as icons of emerging nationhood. The latter might add Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., or to a lesser extent Malcolm X, as a key shapers of the legacy of Presidents Abraham Lincoln. Though Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer remain known as historical leaders, their political legacies often remain segmented and hence marginalized in sub-fields or specialty studies.

Yet this thesis asserts that the politics and experiences of Ngoyi and Hamer, two women who contested the aims of their nation's highest national executives in matters of race, merit a scholarly reassessment on their roles in de-legitimating state power.[1] In 1956, Lilian Ngoyi turbo-charged mass struggles in South Africa by leading the largest protest march to date. In 1964 the televised testimony of Fannie Lou Hamer at the Democratic convention in New Jersey

[1] For the mutual engagements by South Africa and the United states in the area of race relations see Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and The Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2001); William Minter *King's Solomon's Mines Revisited: Western Interests and the Burdened History of Southern Africa* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); Thomas Borstelmann, *Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); David Anthony, *Max Yergan: Race Man, Internationalist, Cold Warrior* (New York University Press, 2006); Robert Vinson, "Sea Kaffirs: 'American Negroes' and the Gospel of Garveyism in Segregationist South Africa," *Journal of African History* 47, 2, (July 2006): 281-303; Robert Vinson, 'Citizenship Over Race? African Americans in American-South African Diplomacy, 1890-1925," *World History Connected*, 2, 1, (2004), URL Accessed 5-12-2009. http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/whc/2.1/vinson.html ; J. E. Davies, *Constructive Engagement*? *Chester Crocker and American Policy in South Africa, Namibia and Angola 1981-8* (Athens, Ohio: University Press, 2007); Peter Vale, "Pivot, Puppet or Periphery: The Cold War and South Africa," NYU: International Center for Advanced Studies, URL 5-12-2009 http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/icas/Vale.pdf; Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anti-colonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

riveted millions and belied United States representations of its global pursuit of democracy. In one irony during the fall of 1962, Hamer faced eviction *from* her Mississippi sharecropping home of eighteen years -- while a continent away Ngoyi received legal banishment *to* her Soweto home for a period that eventually reached eighteen years. Such dual structures of repression require power to overcome and for Ngoyi and Hamer power was more than a tool to utilize. As community spokespersons who projected strong freedom aspirations, authentic forms of symbolic power informed their very beings. These powers meshed with cultural capital and oppositional forms of collective social action, to interject them into policy debates and challenge racial regimes.

In the social movements known as the anti-apartheid struggle and U.S. civil rights campaigns up to 1965, both Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer quickly stepped onto national political stages.[2] These women challenged Prime Minister Johannes Strijdom and President Lyndon Johnson, respectively, at a time when women rarely publicly led or spoke to issues involving national heads-of-state. The two grass-roots leaders lacked sizeable resources, family connections, the ability to vote, the ability to move freely, or to secure a higher education. However their bold assaults on racial restrictions evoked repressive state responses, as their actions surely contested existing power structures. While many scholarly studies focus on the contribution of women to freedom campaigns, this study reviews *foundational* leaders who re-directed political agendas, attained surprising visibility and transformed the role in women in

[2] For anti-apartheid, civil rights and social movements see Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York City: The Free Press, 1984); Frances Meli, *A History of the ANC: South Africa belongs to us* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing, 1988); Mario Diani, "The Concept of a Social Movement," *Sociological Review* 40, (1992):1-25.

their social movements.[3] Ngoyi and Hamer affected the political foundations of their respective nations in such a manner as to impact the future trajectory of power relations.

The resistance efforts of Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer arose from their experiences of racial and economic deprivation, societal legacies of discrimination and exploitation, and their commitment to activism for change and public recognition. This thesis compares how Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer crafted political identities and assumed powerful leadership in struggles against racially oppressive systems which had evolved over centuries.[4] The women invigorated mass campaigns of protest during revolutionary periods with high state tension. Lilian Ngoyi served in official capacities for the African National Congress and the Federation of South African Women. (ANC) and (FSAW) Fannie Lou Hamer worked for the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, (SNCC) and later ran for national office from Mississippi, a state which had no black elected officials in the nearly seventy years since codifying disenfranchisement in its state constitution in the 1890s.[5]

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[3] Along with anti-apartheid and civil rights campaigns, leadership by non-elite women in African independence movements is increasingly studied. See Susan Geiger, "Tanganyikan Nationalism as `Women's Work': Life Histories, Collective Biography and Changing Historiography," *Journal of African History* 37, 3 (1996), 468–469; idem, *TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955–1965* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1997); Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias, eds., *Woman-Nation-State* (London: Macmillan, 1989); Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007); idem, "Top Down or Bottom Up? Nationalist Mobilization Reconsidered, with Special Reference to Guinea (French West Africa)," *The American Historical Review*, 110, 4, (October, 2005): 975-1014; idem, "Emancipate Your Husbands! Women and Nationalism in Guinea: 1953-1958" in *Women in African Colonial Histories*, edited by Susan Geiger and Jean Allman, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002): 282-304.

[4] For a general comparison of racial regimes in the two countries see John Whitson Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South* (New York: Oxford Press, 1982); George M. Fredrickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (New York: Oxford Press, 1995); idem, "Race and Racism in Historical Perspective: Comparing the United States, South Africa, and Brazil," in *Beyond Racism: Race and Inequality in Brazil, South Africa, and the United States*, edited by Charles V. Hamilton, (Boulder, Co.: Lynne Rienner, 2001); Ran Greenstein, *Comparative Perspectives of the U.S. and South Africa* (London: Macmillan, 1988); Anthony Marx, *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[5] Neil McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the age of Jim Crow* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1990); Nan Elizabeth Woodruff, *American Congo: The African American Freedom Struggle in the Delta* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

This analysis asserts that Ngoyi and Hamer used distinct sources of personal power which arose from their location in intersecting social categories of culture, gender and class. These categories cross traditional disciplinary boundaries and complicate any analyses of political economy, state power relations and black liberation studies which minimize the contributions of women. Indeed a report by the Secretariat of the United Nations in 1980, the year Lilian Ngoyi died, suggested that while men assumed anti-apartheid leadership positions in South Africa the women actually crystallized mass mobilization programs.[6] In the United States the long-time President of the National Council of Negro Women, Dorothy Height, highlighted similar discrimination against women leaders during the 1963 March on Washington, an otherwise epic event that still reverberates globally with unfinished business for the twenty-first century.[7] Thus, it remains important to critically study Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer, who represent later generations of constituents that still have much "further to fly."[8]

Finally, by analyzing resistance leadership squarely within both the African and North American contexts, this thesis answers the call of scholar Patrick Manning for a "homeland and disapora model" which positions Africa itself within the historiography of transnational and regional academic debates.[9] Manning suggested that Africanist scholars and their African diaspora counterparts might enrich both historical fields by designing active links in research paradigms and countering an imbalance in the historiography that situates North America as

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[6]"The Role of Women in the Struggle Against Apartheid, 1980," Secretariat, World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, Copenhagen, July 1980. URL Accessed 5-29-2009 http://www.anc.org.za/un/womenrole.html.

[7] Dorothy Height, "We wanted the voice of a woman to be heard": Black women and the 1963 March on Washington," in *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement,* eds., Bettye Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin, (New York: NYU press, 2001), 83-91.

[8] Sheila Radford-Hill, *Further to Fly: Black Women and the Politics of Empowerment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

[9] Patrick Manning, "Africa and the African Diaspora: New Directions of Study," *Journal of African History*, 44, 3, (2003): 487-506.

almost a replacement metropole. This thesis also supports his formulation of "modern diaspora" studies which assess the impact of colonization and industrial capitalism on indigenous and global freedom struggles.

To frame the political activities of Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer, this thesis utilizes the metaphor of generational relay races to analyze social quests for freedom and equality. In a relay race, each runner contributes maximum effort towards the finish line before passing a baton. The last anchor runner in the cycle receives the baton at a point of intense heat and pressure. Thus, each generation's progress rests squarely in the hands of the anchor. This framework envisions Ngoyi and Hamer as anchors of the 1950-60s. Yet their generational experiences never flowed strictly in linear pathways but became complicated by setbacks and circumstances of time, place, tenor and externalities. Thus, anchors face the strong possibility of hard loss alongside occasional periods of success. In this vein, the races run by Ngoyi and Hamer mirror to a considerable degree those of Steve Biko, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, Chris Hani and Malcolm X.

Therefore, this thesis envisions the continuities, disruptions and interruptions in historical processes that Ngoyi and Hamer faced as mid-twentieth century occasions when a crucial baton for freedom veered within varying courses and either passed or dropped. As Antonio Gramsci theorized, subalterns trend towards unification but on a fitful basis.[10] For indigenous South Africans, ongoing racial cycles that included de facto slavery, land dispossession and familial erosion started soon after the Dutchman Jan van Riebeeck landed at Table Bay in 1652. By the 19th century when Ngoyi's dispossessed ancestors in the Pedi clan group settled in Pretoria, government official Marthinus Pretorius himself traded in stolen local children who became

[10] Antonio Gramsci selection quoted in intro Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black Is Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2004).

apprentices known locally as *inboekelinges.*[11] In like manner, cycles of slavery, ethnic ambiguity, and familial separation later enveloped the Africans transplanted to North America, after a 1619 Dutch ship embarked at Jamestown and seeded a system which ensnared America's founding fathers. A Civil War which ended inherited servitude 250 years later only yielded another century of racial subordination. Thus, American democracy stagnated in its transition to equal citizenship after a too-brief era of greater possibility known as Reconstruction.[12]

While African generations in South Africa and the African-descended generations in United States witnessed great oppression, caste systems and segregation, their female members endured special depravities and the restrictive patriarchy which underlay settler, plantation and traditional communities.[13] Yet both countries still produced generations of runners and anchors who linked visions of freedom during four centuries of struggle towards abolition, emancipation, equality, land recovery, resource sufficiency and family integrity. This study compares how Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer fitfully contributed to these freedom relays.

The primary South African materials used in the study of Lilian Ngoyi included digitized charter documents of protest organizations, convention minutes, protest banners, speeches and interviews housed in local universities (Johannesburg, Witswaterand, and Fort Hare), a 1973 interview of Lilian Ngoyi in the official ANC magazine known as *Scheba*, and Herskovits

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[11] See Allister Sparks, *The Mind of South Africa* (New York: Random House, 1990); Leonard Thompson, A *History of South Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); Peter Delius, *The Land Belongs to Us, Pedi Polity, the Boers and the British in Nineteenth-Century Transvaal* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 136-47; Elizabeth Ethelridge and Fred Morton, *Slavery in South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg, Natal: University of Natal, 1994), 203; Fred Morton, 'Female Inboekelinge in the South African Republic, 1850-1880', *Slavery and Abolition* 26, 2, (2005): 199-215.

[12] Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1974); Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Press, 1998); Eric Foner, *Nothing but Freedom: Emancipation and Its Legacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983).

[13] Nomboniso Gasa, ed., *They remove boulders and cross rivers*: *Women in South African History* (Johannesburg: HSRC Press, 2008); Deborah Gray-White, *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999); idem, *Ain't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1985).

Library materials from Northwestern University available electronically under commercial license to the Aluka database. The text of one important Ngoyi speech remains.[14] This study also used brochures, publications and periodicals from the Digital Imaging South Africa (DISA) project co-funded by the Mellon Foundation.[15]

Any historian writing on Lilian Ngoyi must overcome obstacles from the state repression and violence projected onto activists using both legal and covert forms.[16] State officials also served a legal ban on Ngoyi that precluded media, writings or publications. In South Africa, bans operated as orders to stop protests, restrict personal movement and geography, and refrain from public gatherings under threat of legal penalties.[17] Thus, no critical scholarly biography of Ngoyi exists though a book geared towards younger audiences synthesizes key experiences.[18] This thesis also employed direct recollections on Ngoyi found in the *Drum* newspaper, contemporary books smuggled and printed overseas, and memoirs and autobiographies published by expatriates and returned exiles. Among memoirs, the writings of activist Helen Joseph provide important details.[19] The study does not reflect documents resident in South Africa, such as archived

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[14] Lilian Ngoyi, "Presidential Address to the ANCWL, Transvaal 1956" in *Women Writing Africa: The Southern Region*, ed. M. J. Daymond et al., (New York: Feminist Press at CUNY, 2003), 240-44.

[15] " Women's Struggles" http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/women/index.html, URL Accessed 6-20-2009; "Struggles for Freedom in South Africa," URL Accessed 6-20-2009http://www.aluka.org/page/content/struggles.jsp http://www.aluka.org/page/collections/Herskovits ; http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za/ The Digital Imaging South Africa Project.

[16]For example, the detention of an archivist for FSAW led to detention, exile and her eventual receipt of a mortal letter bomb from government agents. "Truth and Reconciliation Amnesty Committee cases 5181 and 5465" URLs Accessed 6-22-09 http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/decisions/2000/ac20082.htm; "Records of the Federation of South African Women," http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~dvp4c/fedsaw.html ; See also Gyanendra Pandey, *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006).

[17] Christopher Merrett, *A Culture of Censorship: Secrecy and Intellectual Repression in South Africa* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer Press, 1995); Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1994), 135.

[18] Chris Van Wyk, *Lilian Nagoya* (Johannesburg: Awareness Publishing, 2006).

[19] Helen Joseph, *If This Be Treason* (London: Deutsch, 1963); idem, *Side by Side: A Personal Account of One South African Woman's Struggle Against Apartheid* (New York: Morrow and Company, 1986).

government exhibits from the 1956 Treason Trial or a short handwritten autobiography housed in Witswatersrand University special collections.

The primary United States materials used to study Fannie Lou Hamer included transcripts of several personal interviews, as well as articles, speeches and a brief autobiographical excerpt written by Hamer. A digitized civil rights collection by the University of Southern Mississippi Library contained position papers, ballots, brochures, legal transcripts, and the SNCC newsletter *Student Voice*. Hamer's public career also produced articles from newspapers, magazines, periodicals and taped recordings housed at the Smithsonian and on-line. Two biographies of Hamer are referenced in this thesis.[20] A large collection of Hamer private papers housed at Tulane University primarily documents the business and financial matters during her fitful last decade of public activism, a time period and subject matter beyond the scope of this analysis.

An extensive secondary literature on anti-apartheid struggles and the civil rights movement exists which provided historical context for mid-century political events. This thesis utilizes this context to explore how the entrance of Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer into these social movements significantly altered political debates. This thesis posits theoretical models which support a new interpretation of the symbolic and cultural powers resident in Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer. Antonio Gramsci's concept of "organic intellectuals" and Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of "symbolic powers" and "cultural capital" -- help to illuminate the experiences of two women with strikingly similar careers.[21] Applying these parameters, this

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[20] Kay Mills, *This Little Light of Mine: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (New York: Dutton, 1993); Chana Kai Lee, *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

[21] Antonio Gramsci, "Hegemony, Intellectuals and the State," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, edited by John Storey (London: Harvester, 2006),215; idem, in "*Selections from the Prison Notebooks*," translated by Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, (New York: International Publishers, 1971); Pierre Bourdieu, "Structures, Habitus, Power: A Basis for a Theory of Symbolic Power," in *Culture, Power, History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, edited by Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Orthner, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 155-199; idem, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Harvard Press,

thesis suggests that a "balancing" principle on the protest outcomes for these women - which recalls both wins *and* losses in contests for political legitimacy - allows a more nuanced recognition of their authentic powers as mass spokespersons without minimizing the baneful effects of state and systemic repression on their lives.

Lilian Ngoyi: Mid-Life Sprint to the National Stage

> As we stepped on that rostrum again and faced them, our hands empty now, those thousands of women rose spontaneously to their feet, lifting their hands in the Congress salute …Thirty minutes, and still the arms were raised. Lilian began to sing.[22]
>
> - Helen Joseph, *Tomorrow's Sun*

Lilian Ngoyi started formal resistance in Pretoria at age 41 as a foot soldier in the 1952 Defiance Campaign developed by the ANC and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), leaders of multi-racial coalition known as the Congress Alliance.[23] The Defiance Campaign launched on April 6, the commemoration date of South Africa's three hundred year anniversary of its initial Dutch settlement.[24] This period saw rising anti-colonialism sparked by the Atlantic Charter of World War II which emphasized self-determination.[25]In South Africa, the war decorated Prime Minister Jan Smuts followed his commission to draft the new United Nations preamble with two restrictive internal policies: a 1946 law termed the "Ghetto Act" which restricted the Indian population, and a brutal crushing of a strike by African miners.[26] The Indians launched a passive resistance campaign and their home country launched discrimination complaints the United Nations. However, after the 1948 elections a victorious National Party,

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1991), 106, 171-2; idem, "The Forms of Capital," in *The Sociology of Economic Life*, translated by Richard Nice, edited by Mark Granovetter and Richard Swedberg, (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1995), 96-111.

[22] Helen Joseph, *Tomorrow's Sun: a journal smuggled from South Africa* (London: Hutchinson, 1966), 93.

[23] Helen Joseph, *If This Be Treason* (London: Deutsch, 1963); Meli, *A History of the ANC*, 123; Leo Kuper, *Passive Resistance in South Africa* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956); Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1994), 97-104.

[24] Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* (New York: Longman, 1983), 40-45.

[25] Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, 94-96; Sparks, *Mind of South Africa*, 236-238: Singh, *Black is A Country*, 102-105. For text of this 1941 Atlantic Charter signed by Winston Church and Franklin Roosevelt see URL Accessed 6-26-2009 http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/atlantic.asp.

[26] Ahmed Kathrada and Marlene Burger, eds., *Ahmed Kathrada memoirs* (Paarl, South Africa: Zebra Press, 2004), 43-47; Sparks, *The Mind of South Africa*, 237-241.

based in the Afrikaner community, replaced Smuts with D.F. Malan and started a new policy of racial separateness, or *apartheid*.[27] The apartheid structure envisioned racial classifications - white, colored or mixed, Indian or Asian, and African -- as separation markers for citizenship, residence, and resources.[28]

Within these complex political factors, an educated but politically powerless ANC elite with no voting rights sought the means and coalition partners to address a desperate African social position. For example, poor conditions like urban crowding, homelessness and joblessness resulted from a 57% increase of Africans in the cities from 1936 to 1946.[29] An aggressive Youth League helped turn the ANC from a forty-year history of legalism and government petitions to direct confrontation.[30] League leaders included Walter Sisulu, Moses Kotane, Anton Lembede and Nelson Mandela. This League also pressured conservative ANC President Alfred Xuma to resign.[31] At this time, Sisulu served as a full-paid ANC staff member. In 1952, Mandela functioned as National Volunteer-in-Chief of the Defiance campaign.

Ngoyi joined a friend in volunteer training that August for the non-violent protest strategies of *satyagraha* conceived by former South African activist Mohandas Gandhi.[32] The passive resistance campaign instructed volunteers how to contest restrictions added to South

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[27] Herman Giliomee, *Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003).
[28] Sparks, *The Mind of South Africa*, 147-182.
[29] Paul Maylam, *South Africa's Racial Past: The history and historiography of racism, segregation, and apartheid* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2001), 186-193; Lodge, *Black Politics*, 23-24.
[30] Mary Benson, *African Patriots: The Story of the African National Congress of South Africa* (Chicago, Ill.: Encyclopedia Britannica Press, 1963); Heidi Holland, *The Struggle: A History of the African National Congress* (New York: George Braziller, 1990); Meli, *South African Belongs to Us*, 34-48, 101-118.
[31] Anne Mater and Gary Minkley, "Reaping the Whirlwind: The East London Riots of 1952," in *Apartheid's Genesis: 1935-1962*, eds. Philip Bonner et al, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 1993), 229-251; Stephen D. Gish, *Alfred Xuma: African, American, South African* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000); Anthony Sampson, *Black and Gold* (New York: Pantheon, 1987), 76-82.
[32] In sankrit terms used by Mohandas Gandhi, *satyagraha* is the notion of a social force from truth and love. It combines with *ahimsa*, or non-violent resistance, to attain a *swaraj* -- a moral reformation in society. See Sharon Dobbins, "The Principles of Equity and the Sermon on the Mount as Influence in Gandhi's Truth Force," *Journal of Law and Religion*, 6, 1, (1988):131-144.

Africa's Urban Areas Act, and expanded pass rules under the Natives Act.[33] Both statutes involved greater controls to limit urban migration. The South African government wanted to use passes to forestall or reverse urban settlement by African women as a means to keep indigenous Africans families domiciled in rural reserves.

In South Africa, the use of written passes to limit the personal movements of indigenous Africans started early with the Dutch in the 1790s, but the British Lord Milner solidified and expanded the practice in the 1870s to control labor for the newly emerging Kimberly diamond mines.[34] Shortly after Afrikaners consolidated a new South African Union in 1910 sharp public protest by African women -- who endured horrid jails in 1913 --shocked officials and stopped plans to extend the hated passes to them.[35] Now, forty years later women again faced incorporation into the same social practices that humiliated and denigrated their men, and destabilized families that faced urban ejection without passes.

The Defiance Campaign which confronted this Afrikaner agenda initially inspired great participation. From June thru October, 1952 public arrests for civil disobedience totaled over 8,000 cases.[36] Thereafter the campaign stalled due to both intensified government repression and organizational difficulties. Stepping up at a lull in the Defiance campaign, Ngoyi's protest arrest occurred that December at a post office in Pretoria. The campaign secured legal services for Ngoyi from Oliver Tambo, an ANC official and Nelson Mandela's legal partner in Johannesburg.

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[33] Leo Kuper, *Passive Resistance in South Africa* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956).
[34] Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 37, 103, 118, 297n12; Maylam, *South Africa's Racial Past*, 135.
[35] Julia C. Wells, *"We Now Demand!" The History of Women's Resistance to Pass Laws in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 1993); Cherryl Walker, *Women and Resistance in South Africa* (London: Onyx, 1991); Gasa, *They Remove Borders and Cross Rivers*, 131-142.
[36] Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, 41-61.

Gifted with a thrilling rhetorical style that galvanized followers, Ngoyi exhibited a rising political ascendancy. In three short years, this formerly unknown unionized factory worker became President of a radicalized ANC Women's League and also of the Federation of South African Women, a newly formed multi-racial protest group. In addition to the Defiance Campaign, she joined ANC leader Robert Resha in protests against government forced removals from such formerly vibrant African communities as Sophiatown, in its strategy to create new white neighborhoods.[37] Ngoyi also helped organize a pass-protest march of 2,000 women to the Pretoria capital in the fall of 1955. That December, she also became the first woman on the ANC's governing National Executive Committee (NEC) in its entire 43 year history.

At its founding in 1912, the ANC offered women an associate membership category that contained no voting rights. Women who joined the ANC served largely in hospitality support roles. African women of more assertive political ideology formed the affiliate Bantu Women's League that independently confronted the Union on women's passes starting in 1913. Led by Charlotte Maxeke, who studied in America at Wilberforce University with W.E.B. DuBois and his future wife, this League largely functioned as a social work agency for the next two decades.[38] The ANC itself waited thirty years before its new constitution, designed to rejuvenate a moribund membership, offered women full voting membership status.[39] Even still, the next decade saw leadership of the ANC Women's League primarily assumed by non-political wives such as the American born Madie Hall Xuma.[40]

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[37] Magdeline Resha, *My Life in the Struggle*: *Mangoana tsoara thipa ka bohaleng (*Johannesburg: Congress of South African Writers, 1991); Joseph, *Side by Side*, 38-39.

[38] Charlotte Maxeke, "Social Conditions Among Bantu Women and Girls," in *Women Writing Africa,* edited by Daymond, 195-200.

[39] Frene Ginwala, "Women and the African National Congress: 1912-1943," *Agenda* 8, (1990): 77-93.

[40] Judy Kimble and Elaine Unterhalter, "We opened the road for you, you must go forward' ANC Women's Struggles, 1912-1982*," Feminist Review* 12, (October, 1982): 11-35; Iris Berger, "An African American Mother of

Along with Charlotte Maxeke, other non-European political women in South Africa before the 1950s included Cissy Gool, Josie Palmer and Ida Mtwana. Gool served in the Cape Town Parliament during the inter-war period and functioned as a model for later Indian political women such as Fatima Meer, Frene Ginwala, and Amina Cachalia. Palmer started with demonstrations of the Bantu Women's League but made her primary legacy working with the local Communist Party and ANC Women's League. Mtwana also served functioned as an important transitional leader of the League, and represented the new urban working women with organization skills derived from union participation.

Lilian Ngoyi also entered political organizing with previous skills as a union steward and officer with the Garment Worker's Union. After the initial Pretoria rally march in 1955, the next August she forcefully returned with 20,000 determined women protesting pass laws, and altered the landscape of South African political debates. Women's participation in the 1956 march surpassed all expectations, formed South Africa's largest demonstration to date, and ushered in higher new levels of overall anti-apartheid mass protest.[41] The women's success altered ANC plans and protest agenda. Scholar Elizabeth Schmidt noted 45 anti-pass demonstrations took place by 1958.[42]

Ngoyi joined co-leaders Helen Joseph, Sophie Williams and Rahima Moosa on a march to the formidable seat of state government -- the Pretoria Union Building -- where she exhibited great panache by bravely rapping on the personal office door of Prime Minister Strijdom. Similar

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the Nation: Madie Hall Xuma in South Africa: 1940-1963,*" Journal of Southern African Studies* 27, 1, (2001): 547-566.

[41] Helen Joseph, *Tomorrow's sun,* 69-94; Pamela Brooks, *Boycotts, Buses and Passes: Black Women's Resistance in the U.S. South and South Africa* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008), 224-228; Walker, *Women and Resistance in South Africa,* 126-133; Gasa , "Feminisms, motherisms, patriarchies and women's voices in the 1950s," in *They remove boulders and cross rivers,* 207-229; Belinda Bozzoli and Mmantho Nkotsoe. *Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy, and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900-1983* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1991), 183-188.

[42] Elizabeth Schmidt, "Now you have touched the Women: African Women's Resistance to the Pass Laws," *Notes and Documents,* 6. URL 6-6-09 http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/misc/schmi123.html\

to his predecessor D. F. Malan, Prime Minister Strijdom had direct ties to the secret Afrikaner Broederbond organization which helped the Nationalist Party take electoral control in 1948. Strijdom exhibited no modesty in formalizing white supremacy. He openly called for outright white domination, or *baaskap*, advocating a strong whip hand.[43] Due to Cold War tensions, the avowed racialist in the National Party still maintained support from Britain and the United States because of South African exports of uranium and other metals, its strategic geography, and its military help during anti-Communism battles such as the Korean War.[44] Indeed, the U.S. government under President Dwight Eisenhower delivered arms to South Africa starting in its fiscal 1955, and the administration of President John Kennedy negotiated the placement of a sensitive missile tracking and intelligence site at Grootfontein, South Africa.[45]

These circumstances provide context for the seemingly impregnable position of Prime Minister Strijdom both internally and externally in the 1950s. Yet Strijdom deliberately distanced himself from the surprising groundswell of the 1956 Women's march. However, his disappearance could not obviate the protestors' quest for recognition. After Ngoyi rapped on his personal office door with impudence and impunity, she also subverted his new law against rally speeches by mandating complete silence from 20,000 women for thirty minutes -- in an awe-inspiring command of her audience.[46] Walter Sisulu, then a mentor to future prison mate Nelson

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[43] Paul Gordon Lauren, *Power and Prejudice, the Politics of Diplomacy of Racial Discrimination* (Westview Press, 1996), 274-275; Ivor Wilkins and Hans Strydom, *The Broderbond* (London: Corgi Books, 1980); Leonard Thompson, *A History of South Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); Phillip Bonner et al, eds., *Apartheid's Genesis: 1935-1962* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2001)

[44] Borstelmann, *Cold War and the Color Line*, 72-73, 297n125, 297n128; Thomas Noer, "Truman, Eisenhower and South Africa: Middle Road and Apartheid," in *Race and U.S. Foreign Policy During the Cold War*, ed. Michael L. Krenn, (London: Taylor & Frances, 1998), 131-160.

[45] Raymond Copson, "Review of Borstelmann, Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War," *African Studies Review*, 38, 1, (April, 1995): 145, 147n3; U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations 1961-1963, URL Accessed 5-6-2009 http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/kennedyjf/50766.htm

[46] Joseph, *Tomorrow's Sun*, 92-3.

Mandela on Robben Island, marveled at the protesting women who assembled at the apartheid government stronghold and queried "How did they dare?"[47]

In later years, Sisulu evoked the revolutionary fervor of this period by recalling its social mantra of *Amadela Kufa*, or defiers of death.[48] Meanwhile, Lilian Ngoyi continued to motivate mass resistance that fall at meetings of the ANC Women's League with repeated verbal assaults on the Prime Minister's policies:

> Strijdom! Your government now preach and practice colour discrimination. It can pass the most cruel and barbaric laws, it can deport leaders and break homes and families, but it will never stop the women of Africa in their forward march to freedom during our lifetime. To you daughters of Africa I say, Praise the name of women; praise them.[49]

The next four years, Ngoyi periodically led ANC rallies on passes and broader protest issues in Pretoria, Port Elizabeth and the rural areas of Zeerust and Wynberg.[50]
Her appearances became clandestine after the Treason Trial set against ANC leaders in Pretoria.[51] Yet the campaigns in Winberg and Zeerust seethed with intensity, and involved contesting both government and traditional chieftainships structures. They also resulted in violence, killings, a virtual civil war, state prosecutions and thousands of refugees into neighboring Bechuanaland.[52] George Bizos, a sympathetic white barrister who defended some of the arrested women, recalled the amazing and unheard of event of protesting women even attending a *khotla*, or tribal leadership meeting.[53] Frances Baard, a fellow activist from Port Elizabeth later banned for over a decade, recounted how Lilian Ngoyi thrilled a crowd exceeding

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[47] Walter Sisulu quoted in Mary Benson, *South Africa, the Struggle For A Birthright* (London: Minerva Press, 1969), 185, as referenced by Elizabeth Schmidt, "Now you have touched the Women," http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za:8080/DC/rep19751100.037.051.001/rep19751100.037.051.001.pdfURL Accessed 4-20-2009. http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/misc/schmi123.html
[48] Walter Sisulu quoted by Gasa, "Feminisms, motherisms," *They remove boulders and cross rivers*, 207.
[49] Lilian Ngoyi, "Presidential Address to the ANCWL," in *Women Writing Africa*, ed. Daymond, 244.
[50] Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, "Black Women Freedom Fighters in South Africa and in the United States: A Comparative Analysis," *Dialectical Anthropology* 15, (1990): 1154-5.
[51] Joseph, *If This Be Treason*, 164.
[52] Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, 274-283.
[53] Beata Lipman, *We Make Freedom: Women in South Africa* (London: Pandora, 1984), 70.

6,000 with no microphone.[54] Oliver Tambo, law partner of Nelson Mandela and later ANC President for over a decade, helped edit a 1959 NEC report that assessed outcomes from the rural pass protests:

> Foiled by the publicity of the 1956 women's march, the government shifted to rural women, seeking to intimidate them far from the public eye. It sought - via the back door, so to speak to create a *fait accompli* of women with passes. The response, with the help of ANC women and Lilian Ngoyi in particular, who was in the NEC as well as president of the Women's League, contributed to a feeling of mutiny in the rural areas, in Sekhukhuneland and Pondoland …[55]

Later, the Pondoland region in particular exhibited greater unrest that potentially presaged the beginning a general peasant uprising in South Africa, though scholars debate its rationales.[56] Now under pressure from militant groups like the Pan-African Congress, the ANC pursued its non-violent strategy until the government killings in the March 1960 Sharpeville Massacre.[57] ANC policies soon changed to armed resistance. In the midst of new dangers and narrowed opportunities for mass protest, Ngoyi continued to politically rally women at the third FSW Conference in 1961 and reminded the women: "Freedom does not come walking towards you - it must be won. As women we must go on playing our part."[58]

After a State Emergency and other government crackdowns, Lilian Ngoyi encountered personal reprisals that included jail imprisonment, solitary confinement, and house banning. [59] An early arrest occurred for a party at her home attended by Walter Sisulu and Alfred Nzo -- the latter one day to become the first foreign minister of a new democratic South Africa. In 1962

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[54] Frances Baard and Barbie Schriener, *My Spirit is Not Banned* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing, 1986). http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/library-resources/online%20books/baard/part2-fight-continues.htm

[55] Luli Callinicos, *Oliver Tambo: Beyond the Engeli Mountains* (New Africa Books, 2004), 241-2, 242n125, 246n134.

[56] Govan Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa: A Short History* (Cape Town: Mayibuye Centre, 1992); Clifton Crais, *The Politics of Evil: Politics, State Power and the Political Imagination in South Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[57] Meli, *A History of the ANC*, 132.

[58] Ngoyi quoted in Walker, *Women and Resistance in South Africa*, 271.

[59] Margaret Daymond, *"There's No Place Like Home": Lilian Ngoyi and the South African State's Abrogation of "Home" in the 1970–1980s. Mail and Guardian Letter Series* URL Accessed 7-16-2008, http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/memorials/gp/LilianNgoyi/archive.aspx?id=568051.

Ngoyi received intensified banning orders from then Minister of Justice John Vorster. Now she effectively could never leave home without permission. Her daughter Edith remarked that banning her mother was "…like clipping the wings of a bird and putting it in a cage."[60] Vorster, a future Prime Minister of South Africa, developed a moniker during the 1960s Special Emergency as the government "Security Man" who devised a police state and the *kragdadigheid* operating principle of "unyielding strength."[61]

Hamer: Mid-life Sprint to the National Stage

I question America. Is this America, the land of the free and the home of the brave? [62]
- Fannie Lou Hamer, 1964

> Trouble became scandal with the sudden intrusion, the unanticipated agency, of a female "object" who inexplicably returns the glance, reverses the gaze, and contests the place and authority of the masculine position.[63]
>
> -Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*

The same year of Lilian Ngoyi's intensified bans, a 44 year old Mississippi sharecropper named Fannie Lou Hamer underwent a similar mid-life radicalization against long-standing racial restrictions.[64] Of the fifty United States, Hamer lived in the one of the poorest and most rigidly segregated. At her birth in 1917 in Mississippi's northeastern Delta region, large cotton plantations operated with a 92% tenant workforce of 95% African Americans who earned

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[60] "Lillian Ngoyi is free!" *Sechaba*, 7, 10, (October, 1973) URL Accessed 5-7-2009 http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_displaytei&id=2700&title=Lillian%20Ngoyi%20is%20free!&creator.

[61] "The Security Man," *Time Magazine*, September 23, 1966; URL Accessed 5-5-2009. http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,842811,00.html; Merrett, *A Culture of Censorship*, 41-78.

[62] Fannie Lou Hamer, "Testimony Before the Credential Committee August 22, 1964," URL Accessed 5-2-2009; http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/sayitplain/flhamer.html.

[63] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), ix.

[64] Lee, *For Freedom's Sake;* Mills, *This Little Light of Mine;* Chris Myers Asch, *The Senator and the Sharecropper: The Freedom Struggles of James O. Eastland and Fannie Lou Hamer* (New York: The New Press, 2008).

average incomes of only $333.[65] The same racial hierarchy continued through 1960, when median black income remained one-third of the low level of Mississippi whites; and one-half of black adults had less than a sixth grade education. Such entrenched oppression largely rested on violence, fear, and ruling structures that permitted only a 3% black voting registration rate.[66] The low registration tally existed despite years of local post-war effort led by Medgar Evers of the NAACP and T.R.M. Howard of Mississippi's Regional Council of Negro Leadership.[67]

After a lifetime of circumscribed prospects, in 1962 Fannie Lou Hamer attended a rally which encouraged local participation with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). SNCC had expanded from its formation two years earlier as an umbrella group for college students protesting racial segregation in public facilities such as lunch counters and interstate bus stations.[68] SNCC set up local organizing and voter registration efforts in the South with seed funding and organizing help that activist Ella Baker secured from Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. (SCLC)[69] Its activists first encountered Mississippi's special racial ferocity when leaders John Lewis and Jim Bevel ended an interstate

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[65] For Mississippi racial structures and generations of oppression, see Woodruff, *American Congo*, 3-40*;* quoted statistics on p. 30; McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians*; John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1995); Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton University Press, 2007),18-22; Yasuhiro Katagiri, *The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission: Civil Rights and States' Rights* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2001).

[66] Vicki Crawford, "African American Women in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party." in *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Right - Black Power Movement,* eds. Bettye Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin, (New York University Press, 2001), 121-138; statistics on page 122.

[67] Myrlie Evers-William and Manning Marable, eds., *The Autobiography of Medgar Evers: A Hero's Life and Legacy Revealed Through His Writings, Letters, and Speeches* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2005); Dittmer, *Local People*, 19-69.

[68] Wesley Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC's Dream for a New America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1995); Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007); J. Todd Moye, *.Let the People Decide: Black Freedom and White Resistance Movements in Sunflower County, Mississippi, 1945-1986* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[69] Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Taylor Branch, *Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years 1963-65* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), 50-63,390; Carson, *In Struggle*, 31-44.

Freedom Ride bus trip with arrest, imprisonment and dehumanizing experiences at the notorious Parchman Farm penitentiary.[70] Soon, Ella Baker assigned activist Robert Moses to Mississippi.

Moses coordinated a loose network of organizers who gained local acceptance by living in local Mississippi communities and sharing in its environment of intimidation. Both vigilante and official violence existed. On one horrid occasion Fannie Lou Hamer and other activists incurred vicious beatings in jail while returning from out-of-state citizenship training in June, 1963.[71] This event occurred a few weeks after the fire hosing of children in Birmingham, Alabama children for seeking greater civil rights. It happened the same weekend as the shot-gun murder of Medgar Evers in the carport of his home. Hamer's beating became life-scarring but also life-changing, as her continued public recounting of the tale forged her personal horror into a powerful indictment of American democracy.

Meanwhile, pursuing the franchise in Mississippi involved risks of violence, economic intimidation, job threats, intransigent local officials, and ambivalent national officials. The state Democratic Party, which held a stranglehold on electoral politics in Mississippi, continually rejected SNCC overtures. Therefore, Robert Moses received permission from SNCC headquarters to join with the Council of Federated Organizations, a state umbrella for civil rights groups, in forming a separate, indigenous party. A new Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party increased interest in local protests, taught citizenship principles and ran its own primary elections. SNCC also sought nationwide assistance from northern white college students for a

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[70] John Lewis, and Michael D'Orso, *Walking in the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 170-174; David M. Oshinsky, *Worse Than Slavery: Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice* (New York: The Free Press, 1996).

[71] Chana Kai Lee, "Anger, Memory, and Personal Power: Fannie Lou Hamer and Civil Rights Leadership," in *Sisters in the Struggle,* eds. Bettye Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin, 139-170.

teaching and registration program called Freedom Summer.[72] The persona, force and songs of Fannie Lou Hamer became critical to the success of both. She worked that summer with students who became martyrs – Andrew Goodman, Mike Schwerner and James Chaney. She also accompanied rights activists who sought seating credentials for the MFDP at 1964 Democratic presidential convention in Atlantic City.[73]

Robert Moses originally conceived of MFDP to allow the empowerment and legitimacy of local voting communities, and emphasize the lack of consistent federal help in overcoming state disenfranchisement. In 1963, MFDP received over 80,000 ballots in its election campaigns.[74] These results rejected arguments about black apathy and also highlighted that intensive local organizing efforts still netted only 5% state registration. In this manner, MFDP efforts mirrored racial contests of the previous generation, when rights activists organized a black independent third party known as the South Carolina Progressive Democratic Party.[75] (PDP) The PDP chose delegates to attend a 1944 Democratic convention in Chicago using a position platform based on eliminating the poll tax, equality in job hiring and anti-lynching. PDP's attempt to unseat white delegates who practiced racial exclusion failed due to technicalities. Yet the already contentious 1944 Chicago convention included a Texas credentials challenge and vocal promulgations by delegates to the gathering of outright white supremacy.[76]

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[72] Doug McAdam, *Freedom Summer* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Elizabeth Sutherland Martinez. ed., *LETTERS FROM MISSISSIPPI: Personal Reports from Civil Right Volunteers of the 1964 Freedom Summer* (Brookline Mass.: Zephyr Press, 2002).

[73] Mamie E. Locke, "Is this America? Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party," in Vicki L. Crawford, Jacqueline Anne Rouse, Barbara Woods, eds., *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers, 1941-1965* (Indiana University Press, 1993), 27-50.

[74] Joseph Sentiment, "The Freedom Vote of 1963: New Strategies of Racial Vote in Mississippi," *Journal of Southern History* 55, 2, (May 1989): 217-44; Branch, *Pillar of Fire*, 295-297.

[75] Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 8, 166, 218.

[76] John Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1995), 228; Richard Wormser, *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow* (New York: MacMillam, 2003), 163; Patricia Sullivan "Southern Reformers and New Deal," in *The Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Jack E. Davis,

In 1964, MFDP also charged regular Mississippi delegates with racially exclusive voting practices, and secured a hearing with the convention‘s credentials committee to present evidence.[77] The regular Mississippi convention delegation was headed by Senator James Eastland, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and owner of 2,000 acres in Hamer’s impoverished Sunflower County. Selected as a credentials witness to discuss her personal experience with voting intimidation and violence, Fannie Lou Hamer sat next to newly widowed Rita Schwerner.[78] Their joint presence before the Committee outlined in sharp relief the violent, even murderous, hatred state activists faced while pursuing access to basic precepts of American democracy.

In her televised testimony, Mrs. Hamer’s voice electrified millions with a story of a personal jail beating and a hollow American democracy.[79] Hamer’s famous question whether America truly served as the “home of the free” ricocheted nationally and internationally, as she appropriated political language from the nation’s founding rhetoric for her own purposes of resistance and dissent.[80] Media commentator Theodore White noted that she “…began to chant with the grief and the sobbing that are the source of all the blues in the world.”[81] Immediately, President Lyndon Johnson became nervous for the threat this might pose to the coronation details planned for his nomination, and hastily called a White House press conference to distract news

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(Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 20. “Southerners will make White Supremacy an Issue in Chicago,” *New York Times*, May 21, 1944,page 36. URLs Accessed 3-20-2009. http://select.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F70E16F83855157B93C3AB178ED85F408485F9 ; “Texas Regulars Get Seats at First” *New York Times*, July 18, 1944, page 10; http://select.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F20A10FC3A55157B93CAA8178CD85F408485F9

[77] Aaron Henry, “MFDP Chairman’s Position Paper 1964,” University of Southern Mississippi Archives.

[78] Shaila Dewan,“Widow Recalls Ghosts at ‘64 Rights Trial.” *New York Times*, June 17, 2005, URL 6-26-2009 http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9402E6DD143BF934A25755C0A9639C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all.; and MFDP photos http://www.takestockphotos.com/imagepages/foliotable.php?FolioID=23

[79] Jere Nash and Andy Taggart, *Mississippi Politics: The Struggle for Power, 1976-2006* (Jackson, MS.: University Press of Mississippi, 2006), 24-25.

[80] Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1998).

[81] Theodore White quoted in Nash and Taggart, *Mississippi Politics, 25.*

attention. In fact, Hamer later recalled hearing in the midst of her testimony assertions that Johnson emphasized his commands with forceful negative racial epitaphs of MFDP delegates.[82]

Nevertheless, members of Congress received voluminous telegrams and letters supporting Hamer and the MFDP delegates.[83] The tense controversy prompted President Johnson to usurp Hamer and MFDP officials by orchestrating a compromise with Roy Wilkins and Martin Luther King Jr., elite male leaders of the NAACP and the SCLC. Neither group had a history of accepting women as equal political agents. In fact, longstanding movement strategic genius Ella Baker often encountered resistance to female leadership during years with the NAACP and SCLC, despite her ongoing record of sizeable contribution. Reportedly, Wilkins also interjected an element of class condescension into the MFDP debate by calling the less educated Mrs. Hamer ignorant to her face.[84]

Despite the personal affronts, Fannie Lou Hamer strengthened MFDP dissent against what she viewed a back-room deal that ignored disenfranchised and poor black voters in Mississippi. She angrily rejected proposals from the emissaries of President Johnson -- most notably Senator Hubert Humphrey and his protégé Walter Mondale -- that the *entire* MFDP delegation settle for only two pre-specified convention credentials. Humphrey's ambitions for the Vice President position led him to sully previous civil rights credentials by claiming the President did not want to allow 'that illiterate woman' a convention presence.[85] Still, Hamer rebutted Willkins, King and Aaron Henry, a MFDP and NAACP associate from Mississippi. In the midst of a veritable pressure cooker of intensity, Hamer boldly asserted "…We didn't come

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[82] Fannie Lou Hamer, Interviews by Dr. Neil McMillen on August 14, 1972 and January 25, 1973. The University of Southern Mississippi Oral History Digital Archives Project. URL Accessed July 23, 2009. http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/oh/hamer.htm .

[83] Lynne Olsen, *Freedom's Daughters: The Unsung Heroines of the Civil Rights Movement from 1830 to 1970* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 318-320.

[84] Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 128.

[85] Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 95.

all this way for no two seats."[86] To a large extent, Hamer's personal courage during this crucible recalls both previous and future runners in generational freedom quests. The notion of speaking truth to power at critical junctures resonates within the U.S. African American community.For example, in 1914 journalist William Trotter castigated the racial prejudice of President Woodrow Wilson to his face, a head-of-state known to advocate international self-determination.[87] Likewise, in the 1940s labor leader A. Phillip Randolph pressured President Franklin Roosevelt to use the lofty Atlantic Charter principles fashioned with English Prime Minister Winston Churchill as a basis to desegregate the military and help oppressed American Negroes.[88] Though Fannie Lou Hamer, Robert Moses and the MFDP ultimately lost their bitter credentials contest in 1964, the national Democratic Party agreed to rule changes for future conventions that precluded racially restricted delegations. Hamer obtained a seat at the next convention in 1968, the year Shirley Chisholm became the first African American female Congressperson in the 192 years since America's Declaration of Independence. Indeed, four years after that Chisholm personally spoke her own truth about female equality to elite black male political leaders who resented her making the first African American Presidential run.[89] Thus, the new convention policy MFDP secured in 1968 unalterably changed U.S national party politics. Blacks levered this policy for access to American presidential politics after centuries of exclusion.

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[86] Olson, *Freedom's Daughters,* 248-263, 313-330; Hubert Humphrey interview with Edwin King interview, Anne Romaine Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, cited in Numan Bartley, *The New South: 1945-1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 1995), 349; Aaron Hess and Elizabeth Wrigley-Field, "Civil Rights Betrayed: How the Democratic Party Shut Out the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party," *International Socialist Review,* 38, (November–December 2004); Bartley, *The New South,* 329n15.

[87] "Negroes Repudiate President's Critic," *New York Times,* September 14, 1914, p.6; Christine A. Lunardini, "Standing Firm: William Monroe Trotter's Meetings with Woodrow Wilson, 1913–1914," *Journal of Negro History* 64, 3 (1979): 244–264; Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-determination and the International Origins of Anti-colonial Nationalism* (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[88] Josh Gottheimer, Bill Clinton and Mary Frances Berry, *Ripples of Hope: Great American Civil Rights Speeches*, (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2004), 179; for text of August 14, 1941 Atlantic Charter see http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/atlantic.asp URL Accessed 6-4-2009.

[89] Shirley Chisholm, *Unbought and Unbossed* (Boston, Mass.: Avon, 1970).

Baton Runners in Fiery Intensity

Their roles in these two momentous events -- Ngoyi in the Pretoria Women's March of 1956 and Hamer's testimony at the 1964 National Democratic convention -- soon cast unprecedented national spotlights that yielded sizeable political capital. Now their symbolic power, and roles as spoke persons of great rhetorical ability, garnered results that belied their status of outsiders with limited means. Symbolic power in this thesis follows Pierre Bourdieu's concept of a "world making" capacity that is accepted as socially legitimate by potential constituents.[90] This symbolic power allowed both Ngoyi and Hamer to secure acceptance of their definitions of existing power relations as either legitimate or illegitimate.

As they became symbols of emerging political consciousness, Ngoyi and Hamer projected potent visions of indigenous leadership that resonated deeply in systems of meanings within their sub-cultures.[91] Furthermore, their received and embodied symbolism soon combined with inherited variants of what Bourdieu might postulate as 'cultural capital' -- meaningful forms of proverbs, songs, bold and authentic taunts, and importantly, the perception of ancestral strength to endure jail, blows, or solitary confinement.[92] While the latter consequences represented unmerited suffering, this factor only elevated their symbolic power among radicalized Africans and African-Americans.

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[90] Bourdieu, "Structures, Habitus, Power" " in *Culture Power, History* ,eds. Dirks, Eley and Orthner, 155-199; L. Wacquant, *Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics,* (New York: Polity Press, 2005); Wolf Hassdorf, "Contested Credibility: The use of symbolic power in British exchange-rate policies," in *Power in World Politics,* eds. Felix Berenskoetter and Michael Williams,(New York Routledge, 2007), 141-161, especially 148.

[91] Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward and Interpretive Theory of Culture*," The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 3-30; For a general overview of culture see William H. Sewell, Jr. "The Concept (s) of Culture, in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture,* eds. Victoria E. Bonnell et al, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 35-61.

[92] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," translated by Richard Nice, in *The Sociology of Economic Life,* eds. Mark Granovetter and Richard Swedberg, (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1995), 96-111; idem, "Political Representation: Elements for a Theory of the Political Field," *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 171-202; idem, *Outline of a Theory of Practice,* trans., Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

The recuperative aspects of their symbolic powers became extremely important, and helped to construct new assertive and confident self-images in women. They also tempered the prevailing notions in the general culture that were ambiguous at best, if not highly derogatory. In Ngoyi's case, some of the social images of women in southern Africa included the troubled "Hotentot Venus" or Krotoa-Eva, and the fictional Gagool of the infamous *King Solomon's Mines*.[93] In Hamer's case, American perspectives on black women vacillated between tropes of degradation, suffering heroism, or in the case of Mammy, happy servitude complicated by dominating matriarchy. [94] Therefore, a large part of the social celebration of Ngoyi and Hamer in their respective domains reflected pride in them as uplifting symbols -- as well as their political efficacy.

Moreover, the political evolution both women exhibited *after* their introductions to fame suggest increasing an awareness of their own magnified sources of personal power. For example, Ngoyi moved beyond the issue of passes for women to call for broader attacks against the apartheid system in South Africa. She even attempted to reach global audiences for this message through personal reports, in possible violation of her banning orders, to writers in Britain such as Mary Benson and Nan Elizabeth Berger. Likewise, Fannie Lou Hamer used prominence in the civil rights movement to leverage resource support from emerging feminists in the United States

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[93] Natash Distiller and Meg Samuelson, '"Denying the Coloured Mother": Gender and Race in South Africa', *L'Homme* 16,2, (2005): 28-46; http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2006-03-02-distiller-en.html URL Accessed 9-24-2008; Clifton Crais and Pamela Scully, *Sara Baartman and the Hottentot Venus: A Ghost Story and a Biography* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008); Yvette Abrahams, "Ambiguity is my Middle Name: A Research Diary," in *They remove boulders and cross rivers*, ed. Gasa, 421-452; H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines* (New York: Sparks Educational Publishing, 2004, orig 1885).

[94] Deborah Gray-White, *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves 1894-1994* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999); Micki McElva, *Clinging to Mammy: The Faithful Slave in Twentieth-century America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Nell Irving Painter, *Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996); Linda Gordon, *Pitied But Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare* (New York: The Free Press, 1994).

who formed the National Women's Political Caucus in 1971.[95] However, Hamer did not find common cause with all women. She acknowledged white women's complicity in racial oppression, especially the types who exploited the earlier services of her mother and grandmother. Hamer criticized women who falsely had a "kind of angel feeling that [they] were untouchable," but sought alliances with the woman who "realizes for the first time that she is not free until I am free."[96] Thus for both Ngoyi and Hamer, notions of their own personal powers led to risk taking and plain talking. Furthermore, a relationship existed between their understanding of themselves as part of a protest tradition and their ability to explore wider power agendas. A later portion of this thesis conceptualizes forms of power in comparison with traditional perspectives that focus on male domination and access to national and international bases of state resource and authority.[97]

Second, as agents of change Ngoyi and Hamer proposed new worlds that took the "freedom dreams" of their people seriously.[98] These dreams received concrete expression in citizenship demands to repeal legal and de facto exclusions based on race or gender, access to jobs, housing, education or other tangible resources, and in the U.S. case, the vote. The alternative worlds envisioned in their stories, proverbs and songs became tools that ameliorated

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[95] Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 170-173.

[96] Fannie Lou Hamer, "The Special Plight and the Role of the Black Woman," May 5, 1971 Speech to NAACP Legal Defense Fund, in *Available Means: An Anthology of Women's Rhetoric*, ed. Joy Ritchie, (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001): 263.

[97] For analysis of power see Peter Morriss, *Power: A Philosophical Analysis* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2002); Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, "Power In International Politics," *International Organization*, 59, (2005): 39-75. An alternative bio-power framework is profiled in Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Translated by R. Hurley (New York, 1990), 92, 94. The analysis used herein emphasizes concepts closer to Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics (*Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Pamela Paxton and Melanie Hughes, *Women, Politics, and Power: A Global Perspective* (Pine Forge Press, 2007); and Sabine Jell-Bahlsen, "Female Power: Water Priestesses of the Oru-Igbo" in *Sisterhood, Feminisms & Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*, ed. Obioma Nnsemeka, (Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 1998).

[98] Robin Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002) as noted in Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is A Country*, 228n13.

ongoing setbacks faced by the weak and poor in their countries.[99] In an African society where "…proverbs to a very great extent were regarded as an undefined code of law," Lilian Ngoyi created an instant classic on intergenerational accountability when she famously quipped "My womb is shaken when they speak of Bantu Education."[100] Likewise, Fannie Hamer became nationally famous for her motto "I am Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired."[101]Ngoyi calmed rally crowds by singing the African Anthem "Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika" when police repression broke up ANC events. Likewise, Fannie Hamer helped despairing potential voters to move forward, quelling fears of violence when she stridently sang "This Little Light of Mine." In their hands, such expressive cultural legacies supplied great strength to social protestors.

Next, as Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer negotiated social boundaries between the public and private realms, their compelling personal styles aroused great commitment from groups and individuals.[102] Their leadership profiles sharply reflected the charismatic archetype as outlined by Max Weber.[103] The force of their personalities forged with talks on their life experiences to project issues not traditionally deemed as political.

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[99] James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 309, 240-303, especially 255.

[100] Ellen Kuzwayo, *Call Me Woman* (Johannesburg: Picador, 2004), 16; Iris Berger, *South Africa in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 121; Elinor Sisulu, *Walter & Albertina Sisulu: In Our Lifetime* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 2003), 186.

[101] Jerry Demuth, "Fannie Lou Hamer: Tired of Being Sick and Tired," *The Nation*, June 1, 1964 URL Accessed 7-3-2009 http://www.thenation.com/doc/19640601/demuth; Fannie Lou Hamer, "Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired," *Katallagete*, (Oct. 1968): 19-26.

[102] Charles Marsh, *God's Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights,* (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 5-48; Ezekiel Mphahlele, "Lilian Ngoyi - The most talked-of woman in Politics," *Drum*, (March, 1956); Magdeline Resha, "Call to Women Throughout the World" *Scheba*, (August, 1967).

[103] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* Transl. A. M. Henderson & Talcott Parsons (New York: The Free Press, 1947), 328-349; Wolf Heydebrand, ed., *Max Weber, Sociological Writings* (London: Continuum, 1994) URL Accessed 9-5-2007. http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/weber.htm

Staking their resistance upon the "battlefield of life", Ngoyi and Hamer attacked invisible suffering by emphasizing the centrality of the personal impact of oppression.[104]
Their positions extended the domain for what could be constituted as state issues, or those suitable for the *res publica,* beyond long-standing western domains "of law, taxation, and of administration" which descended from the Romans via Hegel and Habermas.[105] This emphasis on the personal within public protest arenas also suggests the creation of what scholar Nancy Fraser fashioned as overlapping "subaltern counter publics" which focused on needs.[106] For example, in1950s ANC rallies against state policies that removed Africans from Johannesburg to the Orlando slums in Soweto, the widowed Lilian emphasized the squalid conditions and despair at the demolition of her own home, where she cared for parents and children.[107] Fannie Lou Hamer disclosed how a life-time of work could yield nothing, and described family moon-shining, or how a treacherous neighbor's animal "poisoning that knocked us right back down flat", or her own mother's later blindness caused by wood chips from an axe to "deaden" new ground.[108] Such authentic "stories with a political purpose" sealed the connections between Ngoyi and Hamer and their constituent audiences, because the common bond of experience

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[104] Kelley, *Freedom Dreams,* 135-156; Lawrence Guyot and Michael Thelwell. "The Politics of Necessity and Survival in Mississippi," *Freedomways* 5, (1966): 120-132; Helen Bernstein, *For their triumphs and for their tears: conditions and resistance of women in apartheid South Africa* (London: International Defense and Aid Fund, 1978); Democracy and Governance Research Program, *Women Marching into the 21st Century: Wathint' abafazi wathint' imbokodo* (Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council, 2000).
[105] J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, translated by T. Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989) as cited by William Munro, "Power, Peasants and Political Development: Reconsidering State Construction in Africa," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 38, 1 (Jan, 1996.): 112-148, especially 121, 121n28; Jude Howell, "Gender and Civil Society: Time for Cross Border Dialogue," *Social Politics*, (2007).
[106] Nancy Fraser, *Justice Interruptus*: *Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist Condition"* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 81.
[107] Van Wyk, *Lilian Ngoyi*, 6; Magdeline Resha, *My Life in the Struggle*: *Mangoana tsoara thipa ka bohaleng (*Johannesburg: Congress South African Writers, 1991).
[108] Fannie Lou Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges," in *Mississippi Writers: Reflections of Childhood and Youth*, ed. Dorothy Abbott, (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1991), 320-330; Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America (*New York: William Morrow, 1984), 288.

allowed for creation of new political languages for rebellion, and/or the consciousness of further activist demonstrations needed to racially overcome.[109]

Even as their political activities resulted in tensions with men, Ngoyi and Hamer raised societal awareness of the political capacities of women. Thus, their achievements require an analysis of power beyond a traditional focus on the leaders of nation states. As used herein, the term nation follows the framework of international theorist Cynthia Enloe who postulated they are a "…collection of people who have come to believe that they have been shaped by a common past and are destined to share a common future. That belief is usually nurtured by a common language and a sense of otherness from groups around them."[110] When this formulation merges with the cultural fashioning implicit in scholar Benedict Andersen's ideas on the roots of political nationalism, a pathway comes closer to comparing the efficacy of the leadership of Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer.[111] However in the United States, nationalist ideologies have longer roots. For South Africa, whose creation in 1910 nearly mirrored Lilian Ngoyi's birth, national ideologies remained closer to traditional veneers of patriarchy and female domesticity. Indeed, scholar Anne McClintock identifies the South African context as one where the exclusion of women and other races from full political membership allowed gendered concepts of nation, family and motherhood that only empowered white males.[112]

A comparative review of Ngoyi and Hamer permits an analysis of the many pathways that individuals' journey, and the tools they use, to change adverse social paradigms. Lilian

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[109] Catherine Fosl, "Anne Braden, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Rigoberta Menchu: Using Personal Narratives to Build Activist Movements," in *Telling Stories to Change the World, Global Voices on the Power of Narrative to Build Community and Make Social Justice Claims,* eds. Rickie Solinger, Madeline Fox, and Kayhan Irani, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 206-226; Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion,* 292; Joseph Davis, *Stories of Change: Narrative and Social Movements (*Albany: State University of New York, 2002) as cited in Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight,* 30n3.
[110] Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases,* 45.
[111] Benedict Andersen, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso. 1991), 5-7.
[112] Anne McClintock, "No Longer in a Future Heaven: Nationalism, Gender and Race." In *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 352-390.

Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer built upon resources inherent in their cultural legacies, transgressed social boundaries, and appropriated mainstream ideologies in their quest for individual freedom. Serving as organic intellectuals in the manner fashioned by Antonio Gramsci, they influenced organizations and individuals to contest state power and to offer hegemonic alternatives to prevailing force relations:[113]

> Each man, finally…carries on some form of intellectual activity…he participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is to bring into being new modes of thought.[114]

Gramsci also theorized that existing power relations or systems of hegemony require ongoing consent as well as force to continue. Public dissent of the manner fashioned by Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer ruptured the hegemonic agenda and opened spaces to contest the domination that otherwise appeared naturalized and universal. Before emergence of second wave feminism, these two women negotiated violent racial regimes and operated within male-dominated protest traditions.

Ngoyi and Hamer re-cast painful experiences into liberating symbols, thereby crystallizing the stakes and emphasizing their commitment to national freedom struggles. In this manner, their motivations sought to reduce the personal and societal dissonance which resulted from injustice in the face of clearly stated values to the contrary.[115] Ngoyi often spoke of leaving a hospitalized daughter for ANC activities. She also told of awful and stinking jail conditions while in detention for months during the Treason Trial, and questioned any disunity in the

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[113] Antonio Gramsci, "Hegemony, Intellectuals and the State," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture,* ed, Storey, 215.

[114] Antonio Gramsci, "Hegemony, Intellectuals and the State," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture,* ed. Storey, 210-220, especially 218.

[115] Theories of cognitive dissonance are beyond this thesis, but may provide fruitful context for personality motivators. See Leon Festinger et al, eds., *When Prophecy Fails: A Social and Psychological Study of a Modern Group that Predicted the Destruction of the World* (University of Minnesota Press, 1956); and Eddie and Cindy Harmon-Jones, "Cognitive-Dissonance Theory", in *Handbook of Motivation Science*, eds. James Y. Shah and Wendi L. Gardner, (New York: Guilford Press, 2007), 71-83.

struggle when all Africans arrested inevitably faced the same charges and bleak conditions.[116] In the 1970s she agreed her most stark experience occurred in 1963, when the government used a Ninety-Day Law to start horrific torture and solitary confinement of activists as profiled by communist Ruth First in *117 Days*.[117] Though details of Ngoyi's solitary confinement during the Special Emergency could not be quoted or published during her governmental bans, during a brief respite in 1969 Ngoyi warned activists about torture and electric genital shocks.[118]

The oratory of Fannie Lou Hamer also emphasized periodic cases of brutality and pain. She extensively referenced the notorious 1963 jail beating but initially withheld the details on its accompanying sexual abuse, as well as the earlier unknown sterilization which the locals termed a "Mississippi appendectomy."[119] Hamer reconsidered in later years, and depicted full accounts even though such events clearly had lasting psychic and health implications. The women's recollected pain and trauma unfortunately described a symbolic price for rebellion well understood in their respective communities.[120]

Though Ngoyi and Hamer never met, their respective causes in South Africa and America established links as forms of solidarity for their mutual freedom goals.[121] Hamer entered

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[116] Chris Van Wyk, *Lilian Ngoyi (*Johannesburg: Awareness Publishing, 2006).
[117] Ruth First, *117 Days* (London: Stein and Day, 1965).
[118] Sisulu, *Walter & Albertina Sisulu*, 317.
[119] Lee, "Anger, Memory, and Personal Power," in *Sisters in the Struggle,* eds. Collier-Thomas and Franklin, 139-170.
[120] Carolyn Strange, The 'Shock' of Torture: a Historiographical Challenge, *History Workshop Journal* 61, 1, (2006):135-152; URL Accessed 1-28-2009 http://hwj.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/61/1/135 ; Debra Walker King, *African Americans and the Culture of Pain* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008).
[121] Such links mirror those of 60 years prior. In 1896 the South African Ethiopian Church merged with the U.S. AME Church, during an Atlanta meeting hosted by Bishop Henry McNeal Turner. Charlotte Manexe made introductions while attending Wilberforce, where she befriended Mrs. W.E.B. Dubois. By 1912, ANC founders -- Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Solomon T. Plaatje and R. V. Selope Thema -- had either attended college or resided in America. In the 1920s, Tuskegee University supported South African YMCA affiliates led by missionary Max Yergan. Finally, Marcus Garvey's UNIA had eight divisions in South Africa, the largest contingent on the continent. See James Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa (*New York: Oxford Press, 1995); Robert Hill, *Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (Los Angeles: UCLA Press, 1995); For a primary account on 1950s South African work of AFAR - later renamed American Committee on Africa, the organizational predecessor to Trans Africa -- see George Houser's June 25,

ventures with the National Council of Negro Women whose legendary earlier President, Mary McLeod Bethune, first joined anti-apartheid work with the Council of African Affairs in the late 1940s, and continued anti-pass writings in 1954 with *Chicago Defender* columns.[122] As a young bible scholar, Bethune had originally sought entrance into Africa as a missionary in the 1890s. After a half-century of social leadership that resulted in national and international recognition, Bethune developed a friendship with Indian Ambassador Vijaya Pandit, the sister of Jawaharlal Nehru, who obtained the first formal anti-apartheid resolutions from the United Nations in 1952 and became its Secretary General in 1953.[123]

The ANC Women's League also received and acknowledged written encouragement from the Sojourners for Truth and Justice, a short-lived group of African American activists led by Claudia Jones and Charlotta Bass, the latter of whom spoke alongside Paul Robeson at a 1952 Harlem Rally in support of the Defiance Campaign.[124] After the U.S. deported Jones in 1955 for communism, she continued anti-apartheid work in London with Yusuf Dadoo of the ANC and

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1982 United Nations presentation "American Supporters of the Defiance Campaign" URL Accessed 9-2-2008. http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/campaigns/houser.html

[122] Audrey Thomas McCluskey and Elaine M. Smith, eds., *Mary McLeod Bethune, Building a Better World: Essays and Selected Documents* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 42, 274-277, 283; Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, 59; Mary McLeod Bethune, *Chicago Defender*, July 19, 1952, p.10 Mary McLeod Bethune Papers, Library of Congress, Reel 3 Frame 0268. URL Accessed 6-27-2009 *www.lexisnexis.com/documents/*academic/upa_cis/1388_MarMcLBethFoundPt1.pdf

[123] Anthea D. Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ: Making a Sanctified World* (Charlotte: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 109-112; Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, " Speech before the United National 7th Session 393 Plenary Meeting, 11 November, 1952," URL Accessed 7-23-2009 http://www.un.int/india/ind12.htm .

[124] Jacqueline Castledine, "In a Solid Bond of Unity: Anti-Colonial Feminism in the Cold War Era," *Journal of Women's History*, 20, 4, (Winter, 2008): 57-81; Erik S. McDuffie, "A New Freedom Movement of Negro Women: Sojourning for Truth, Justice, and Human Rights during the Early Cold War," *Radical History Review*, 101, (2008): 81-106; Francis Njubj Nesbitt, *Race for Sanctions: African Americans against Apartheid, 1946-1994* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 18-20; Carol Boyce Davis, "Sisters Outside: Tracing the Caribbean/Black Radical Intellectual Tradition," *Small Axe*, 28, 13, 1, (March, 2009): 217-229; "Charlotta Bass and the California Eagle," Southern California Library for Social Science and Research, URLs Accessed 6-27-2009 http://www.socallib.org/bass/story/index.html and http://www.socallib.org/bass/pdfs/sojourners.pdf .

SAIC.[125] Jones edited a newspaper, *The West Indian Gazette*, which selected the banned Elizabeth Mafeking, fellow ANC associate of Ngoyi, as woman of the year in the same issue Sekou Toure of Guinea wrote about the emancipation of women.[126] In 1956 Reverend Trevor Huddleston, an English Bishop recalled from South Africa for a vigorous activism that inspired Lilian Ngoyi and Helen Joseph, visited Montgomery, Alabama and Jackson, Mississippi. In Mississippi, Trevor castigated "the same type of blindness" in the U.S. southern Christians with those in Pretoria. [127]

The movement linkages between continued in the 1960s. A news report from South African Communists in 1962 blasted Negro poverty and discrimination in Mississippi.[128] In 1962 Maida Springer, New York garment worker and AFL-CIO union leader, secured for Aminu Kano, future president of independent Namibia, a forum at the United Nations to discuss worker exploitation by the South African government. [129] In 1963 Madie Hall Xuma, the African American widow of ANC President Alfred Xuma, returned to the U.S. but left behind a lasting institutional legacy called *Zenzele*, an organization of women's self-help groups which served community social needs.[130] In 1964 young students in Meridian, Mississippi attending Freedom Schools financed in part through Hamer's national funding raising activities, passed an early anti-apartheid boycott resolution authored by activists Bayard Rustin and Allan Lowenstein. The

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[125] Charlene Mitchell interview with Charles Cobb, in William Minter, Gail Hovey, and Charles Cobb Jr., eds., *No Easy Victories: African Liberation and American Activists over a Half Century, 1950-2000* (Trenton, NY: Africa World Press, 2000). URL Accessed 6-7-2009 http://www.noeasyvictories.org/interviews/int04_mitchell.php

[126] Bill Schwarz, "Claudia Jones and the West Indian Gazette: Reflections on the emergence of post-colonial Britain," *Twentieth Century British History*, 14, 3, (2003):264-285.Citations p. 271-80.

[127] "Muted Trumpets in Dixie", *Time Magazine*, April 15, 1956, URL Accessed 6-2-2009 http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,808348-3,00.html; Trevor Huddleston, *Naught for Your Comfort* (New York: Doubleday, 1956); Robin Denniston, "*Trevor Huddleston: A Life* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), 53.

[128] "Notes on Facist South Africa," *Umsebenzi*, (July/August 1962), URL Accessed 5-5-2009. http://www.sacp.org.za/main.php?include=pubs/acommunist/1962/issue10.html

[129] Yvette Richards, *Maida Springer: Pan-Africanist and International Labor Leader* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), 278.

[130] Berger, "An African American Mother of the Nation," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 547-566; Ellen Kuzwayo, *Call Me Woman (*Johannesburg: Picador, 2004).

resolution's call for a boycott occurred shortly after Mandela and other ANC leaders received life sentences at the Rivonia Trials.[131] These links between movements which utilized African and African-American women's leaders provide evidence of international links in racial struggle.

Moreover, eye-opening international travel provided both women with the validation and expansion of their inclusive visions for social equality. Using discrete travel agency contacts coordinated by Indian rights activist Ahmed Kathrada, Ngoyi and Cape Town organizer Dora Tamana donned disguises for surreptitious ship transport to Switzerland in 1955 for a World Congress of Mothers held by the Women's International Democratic Federation. (WIDF)[132] While traveling outside South Africa, the two women traveled to Russia and China and marveled at their equitable treatment as human beings. Likewise, this thesis later examines in detail a favorable 1964 trip by Fannie Lou Hamer to Guinea in Africa which proved deeply illuminating on the possibilities of personal freedom.

Yet more than international travels, Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer exhibited similar life experiences and rhetorical abilities which shaped their political leadership in racial struggles. Their dual legacies of activism on two continents suggest generational and cultural duties involved in racial rebellion. Adoptive daughter Memory Ngoyi, brought home shortly after her own mother died giving birth, noted that during nearly two decades of state-enforced home confinement Lilian always remarked "…she was sorting things out for us today so that in the future we would walk freely in Pretoria."[133] Moreover, the strength and rationales proposed by Ngoyi and Hamer flowed from values which operated both within and in spite of Christian

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[131] Lynd Staughton, "The Freedom Schools: Concept and Organization," URL Accessed 5-2-2009 http://www.educationanddemocracy.org/FSCfiles/B_19_MSFSchoolsLynd.htm

[132] Van Wyk, *Lilian Ngoyi*, 21; Kathrada and Burger, *Ahmed Kathrada memoirs*, 95-96.

[133] "Ngoyi's prison is now a monument," *Guateng Sunday Times*, March 20, 2006, URL Accessed 6-29-09http://74.125.45.132/search?q=cache:puXrenA3Pr8J:heritage.thetimes.co.za/memorials/gp/LilianNgoyi/article.aspx%3Fid%3D560905+memory+ngoyi+lilian&cd=14&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us

religious hierarchies. Ngoyi, granddaughter of a Pedi tribal minister who preached in Pretoria, supplemented her prayers to overcome poverty with visions of becoming a modern biblical Esther who saved her people.[134] Hamer, daughter of an itinerant Baptist minister who endured life-scarring violence, once criticized Black Churches for 'selling out' and also famously told author June Jordan "she couldn't hate anybody and expect to see God's face."[135] Indeed, one northern college student working during the 1964 Freedom Summer wrote home to his parents "In the *Student Voice*, look especially at Mrs. Hamer's face…jailers brought in black prisoners to beat her…to watch her limp around here, encouraging the prayer sessions in which we remember Sen. Eastland and Gov. Johnson…is almost too much to take."[136]

U.S. scholar Rosetta Ross includes Hamer among those activists who worked for survival and equality because of their "…female enactment of black religious values".[137] Scholar Deborah Gaitskell has outlined the centrality of motherhood to the personal and cultural identity in African women in South Africa which pre-dated yet was reinforced by Christian missionaries.[138] The religious component to the freedom dreams of Ngoyi and Hamer appears eloquently captured by theologian Gayraud Wilmore:

> The joyous testimony of the men and women whose tortured footsteps we have followed through the history of America has been to "keep on keeping on," as Fannie Lou Hamer usedto say, "down the freedom road"--to continue, in other words, the struggle which refuses to settle for anything less than total liberation for the total creation.[139]

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[134] Joseph, *If This Be Treason*, 227

[135] Alice Walker, "Can't Hate Anybody and See God's Face" *New York Times Book Review*, April 29, 1973, p. 8; Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges." in *Mississippi Writers*, ed. Abbott, 32.

[136] Martinez, ed., *LETTERS FROM MISSISSIPPI*, 18.

[137] Rosetta E. Ross, *Witnessing and Testifying: Black Women, Religion, and Civil Rights* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), xiii.

[138] Deborah Gaitsell, "Devout domesticity? A century of African women's Christianity in South Africa," In Cherryl Walker, ed., *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945* (London: James Currey Limited, 1990), 251-272.

[139] Gayraud S. Wilmore, "Black Religion and Black Radicalism," *Monthly Review*, 36, 3, (July-August 1984): 121-127. http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1132/is_v36/ai_3329911; Ross, *Witnessing and Testifying*, 90-117.

LILIAN NGOYI: TRIALS AND POWER

> The nation knows you, lofty she-python…Woman, the winsome song of your voice sets Africa's walls thrumming…we'll hear of the day of your death…like Ntsikana, who prophesied in thorn brakes.
>
> Nontsizi Mgqwetho, *Izibongo*, January 1924[1]

> We women are like hens that lay eggs for somebody to take away.
>
> Lilian Ngoyi, 1956[2]

Born in 1911 Pretoria, Lilian Ngoyi's birth arrived alongside inauspicious political events for its resident Africans. The year prior, Britain acquiesced to the formation of the Union of South Africa without any constitutional franchise rights for Africans. Two years later, the new Union passed a Land Act that racially partitioned the country. The Act allowed only seven percent of the country's land for four million Africans, preserving ninety-three percent for the descendants of white settlers.[3] In 1916 an ANC founder, Sol Plaatje, woefully wrote after the failure of its protest delegation to the London Parliament "…the die was cast, and the mandate went forth that the land laws of the Orange "Free" State, which is commonly known as 'the Only Slave State' shall be the laws of the whole Union of South Africa.[4]

Meanwhile, as the only girl in a family of six children, Lilian Ngoyi's background added the personal experiences and legacies that gave *thrust* to her baton relay for change. Her working-class parents were distant relatives to Ba-Pedi royalty in the Mphahlele clan, but a grandfather relinquished tribal rights by becoming a Christian minister in the Transvaal.[5]

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[1] Nontsizi Mgqwetho, "Izibongo *Umteteli wa Bantu," in Xhosa Poets and Poetry*,edited by Jeff Opland, as cited in Lutge Coullie, *The Closest of Strangers: South African Women's Life Writing (*Johannesburg: Witswatersrand University Press, 2004), 65-66.

[2] Ezekiel Mphahlele, "Lilian Ngoyi - The most talked-of woman in Politics," *Drum*, March 1956, URLs Accessed 8-30-2008, http://www.anc.org.za/people/lngoyi.html ; www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/people/lngoyi.htmlDRUM .

[3] Timothy Keegan, "The Sharecropping Economy, African class formation and the 1913 Natives' Land Act in the sighed maize belt," in *Industrialization and Social Change in South Africa: African Class Formation, Culture, and Consciousness, 1870-1930*, eds. Shula Marks and Richard Rathbone, (New York: Longman, 1982),195-211.

[4] Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa* (Athens, Ohio University Press, 1991. orig. 1916), 76.

[5] Diane Stewart, *Lilian Ngoyi (*Cape Town: Maskew, Miller, Longman, 1996), 1-12; "Beyers Naude, A Plea for Lilian," *Sunday Times*, May 12, 1977. URL Accessed 4-1-09

Numerically, the Pedi group forms the third largest among eleven tribal groupings in South Africa, after the Xhosas and Zulus. The centuries old Ba-Pedi grouping, as Sotho-speakers of the Transvaal, formed a sub-clan of the kingdom of Sekwati who faced migrating Voortreckers in the 1830s. One of Sekwati's sixteen wives came from Ga-Mphahlele near the Limpopo River. Later, Sekwati's son became the revered King Sekhukhune, who strengthened defenses of his people with muskets financed by subjects who worked in the Cape Colony and Natal. To the King's chagrin, some workers returned with the Christian faith, for which he periodically persecuted them.

Sekhukhune and Cetwayso of the Zulus controlled the last independent African kingdoms in the interior of what eventually became South Africa. Initially, Sekhukhune militarily disciplined the Voortrecker's Zuid Afrikaanse Republic, to their surprised indignation. Yet in 1879, when soldiers from Swaziland helped the British finally scale Sekhukhune's fortress in the Leolu Mountains, one military attache captured personally with the King was a Pedi named Mphahlele.[6]

Moreover, after the South-African War, Pedi chiefs provided the main financial support for Native delegations to London. Led by precursor organizations to the ANC, these delegations between 1907-1917 unsuccessfully sought suffrage rights for Africans. One ANC founder, the American educated Richard Vernon Selope-Thema, self-identified as a Pedi even though technically a Mamabola, included Pedi symbols in writings for the *Bantu World*. Yet the

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http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/memorials/GP/LilianNgoyi/Article.aspx?id=562732
http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/memorials/gp/LilianNgoyi/archive.aspx?id=568051.

[6] Philip Bonner, "Kgatla Conspiracies, Pedi Plots: African Nationalist Politics in the Transvaal in the 'Dead' Decade of the 1930s, Paper presented at the University Kwazulu Seminar, March 2002.

overwhelming Ba-Pedi experience of conquest and land dispossession entered Sotho tribal songs.[7] Later, Ngoyi used such songs to great effect.

The cultural, political and economic trauma profoundly impacted her Mphahlele Clansmen, the Christian political leader Sefako Makgatho (ANC President 1917 to1924), Moses Mphahlele, (composer, Garvey-advocate and 1920s ANC General Secretary), and noted writer Ezekiel Mphahlele. [8] The first two men taught for a while at the Kilnerton Institute, a Methodist school originally started for sons of chiefs. Rare for females, Lilian Ngoyi's poor family sacrificed to enable a primary education at Kilnerton. However, Lilian was later forced to leave the Kilnerton School and dreams of a nursing career to support three generations of family. After initial jobs as a nursing aide, domestic worker, and home-based seamstress her economic prospects improved when she obtained a factory job. This rare feat was accomplished by only 0.1% of African women from 1936-1945.[9]

The early stories recalled by Ngoyi suggest a complicated family negotiation of oppression and poverty with acceptance and resistance. In the 1920s, the family differed from a Pedi majority that kept indigenous religion, emphasized youth initiation schools, and used collective land purchasing to combat the penury which even reached its tribal Chief Mphahlele.[10] Lilian's Christian upbringing emphasized prayer to counter poverty, and her devout mother

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[7] Peter Delius, *Lion amongst the cattle : reconstruction and resistance in the Northern Transvaal (*Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1966); idem in *Putting a plough to the ground : accumulation and dispossession in rural South Africa, 1850-1930,* eds. William Beinart, Peter Delius and Stanlely Trapido, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986).

[8] Hill, *Marcus Garvey,* 358-359; Catherine Woeber, "Educating the educator: Es'kia Mphahlele's schooling at St Peter's," *The English Academy Review*, 21**, (**2004): 78.

[9] Iris Berger, *Threads of Solidarity: Women and Class in South Africa: 1900-1980 (*Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 186; Peter Alexander, *Workers, War and the Origins of Apartheid: Labor & Politics in South* Africa: 1930-1948 (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), 21; Nancy Clark, "Gendering Production in Wartime South Africa," *American Historical Review*, 106, 4, (Oct. 2001): 1181–1213**.**

[10] Paul Rich, The Origins of Apartheid Ideology: The Case of Earnest Stubbs and Transvaal Native Administration, c1902-1932," *African Affairs*, 79, 315, (1980): 189.

shared meager resources with church folk.[11] Indeed Methodist *manyano* women raised most of the funds that supported Kilnerton, and this expansion of education to females radically impacted traditional African culture. [12] Lilian often wondered about the passive piety of *manyanos* outside the church and school: "…there was something very wrong, for after weeping nothing would be done. They all waited for some power from God."[13] She remembered how the Biblical Esther saved her nation…I said to myself that we are definitely a nation…certainly something must be done, not prayers alone. [14]

Yet Lilian's mother was a proud washerwoman who also spoke of the 1913 pass protests by domestics - the women ANC-founder Sol Plaatjie memorialized with the press editorial "Let them build more Goals."[15] Moreover, Lilian's father, a worker at Premier platinum mines, told stories with bombast. ANC President S.M. Makgatho lived on their street, so she learned of Makgatho's legal suit case in 1912 to protest train segregation.[16] Makgatho also agitated against land dispossession, on the need for tribal unity, and for a union for Native Teachers. In a 1933 newsletter in *Umtelei wa Bantu*, Makgatho wrote:

> The truth is that land as everybody knows is won by conquest in the battle field…the whites they defeated us with the help of our fellow people…what can we do to bring back the land...let us stop crying. The Congress is a Parliament for Africans. Let all the organizations forget the hatred caused by differences. Let us meet in the Congress and

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[11] Lilian Ngoyi Interview cited by Walker, *Women and Resistance in South Africa*, 132.

[12] Mia Brandel-Syrier, *Black Women in Search of God* (London: Lutterworth , 1962), 71; Thomas Jones, *Education in Africa: A Study of West, South and Equatorial Africa* (New York: Phelps-Stokes Education Fund, 1922), 214-215; John de Gruchy, *The Social History of Christianity in South Africa: 1487 to 1994, Dept of Religious Studies*, 2, 1, 114 (University of Cape Town, 2005); Deborah Gaitskell, "Power in Prayer and Service: Women's Christian Organizations," in *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social & Cultural History*, eds. Richard Elphick and Rodney Davenport, (Cape Town: D. Philip, 1997), 253-67.

[13] Joseph, *If This Be Treason*, 165.

[14] Lilian Ngoyi quoted by Joseph, *If This Be Treason*, 164-167.

[15] Dr. Frene Ginwala, "Lilian Ngoyi: Inaugural Lecture Celebrating the Heroines of the Struggle," August 28, 2006; Department of Arts and Culture, Republic of South Africa, URL http://www.doc.gov.za/speeches/other/Speech28Aug06.htm; Accessed 4-25-2008.

[16] See Timothy Keegan, "A well-publicized case against J. J. Wolmarans for ejecting S. M. Makgatho" in "Gender, Degeneration and Sexual Danger: Imagining Race and Class in South Africa, ca.1912," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27, 3, (2001): 459-477; Joseph, *If This Be Treason*, 164-166; Stewart, *Lilian Ngoyi*, 2.

> separate into groups under one President ... let us unite into one unity ...Unity is strength (Kopano ke maatia).[17]

A score later after the 1956 march, Lilian Ngoyi told the ANC Women's League:

> To ensure the defeat of the nationalist Government we must work for greater unity amongst the African people and the broadest possible alliance embracing the Congress movement, the non-Congressites and all those who oppose apartheid. The Manyano women, the National Council of African Women, the Mothers Welfare organization…In this way our movement will defeat the nationalist government during our lifetime.[18]

Still, as young Lilian approached her working years, another piece of major governmental legislation had contemporary and lasting repercussions for African women. Passed in 1927, the Native Administration Act legally recognized certain African customs that effectively classified women as perpetual minors.[19]As such, the existing racially encoded statues combined with a codification of certain patriarchal traditions to place African women in tenuous family, social and state positions.

By adulthood, experiences lived by Lilian Ngoyi added personal emphasis to the legacies she imbibed from her ancestral, ethnic, religious and educational backgrounds. Now a mature widow after an early three year marriage to van driver John Ngoyi, she supported two children, an adopted niece and her own widowed mother. But South African apartheid society presented a treacherous domain for poor Africans, particularly for single women. For example, state influx control applications often required a male signature. This factor led many single women to marry strangers to secured prized residence permits.[20] Insufficient access to housing and the absence of males who lived in employer hostels, often led to abandoned and impoverished families headed

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[17] Philip Bonner , "Afrocentricism and Eurocentricism in the Politics of South Africa's Elite between the Wars" in Proceedings of International Conference in Celebration of the 70th Anniversary of Professor A. B. Davidson, Moscow 2000, Moscow State, UCLA, Santa Cruz. URL Accessed: 4-25-09 http://africana.ru/biblio/afrocentrism/11_Bonner.htm

[18] Lilian Ngoyi, "Presidential Address," in *Women Writing Africa*, ed. Daymond, 243-4.

[19] Linzi Manicom, "Ruling Relations: Re-thinking State and Gender in South Africa History*," Journal of African History*, 33, (1992): 441-465; Martin Chaock, *The Making of South African Legal Culture, 1902-1936: Fear, Favour, and Prejudice* (Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Chapters 13 & 14 on customary law; idem, "Writing South African Legal History: A Prospectus," *The Journal of African History*, 30, 2, (1989): 265-288.

[20] Deborah Posel, "Marriage at the Drop of a Hat: Housing and Partnership in South Africa Urban Townships, 1920s- 1960s," *History Workshop Journal* 61 (2006): 57-76, especially 67.

by women.[21] The breakdown in marriage customs noticed earlier by 1930s ANC activist Charlotte Maxeke further accelerated by the mid-century.[22] By this time, the South African apartheid state had added repressive laws which impacted marriage, decimated the family, destabilized the residence or any real meaning to home, and set about to control the movement, education, employment and removal of African populations.[23] The regulations combined with labor policies in the mining sector for a repressive structure that led communist organizer and Johannesburg City Council Member Hilda Bernstein to assert that "...to maintain family life, they [Black women] must enter the field as protagonists against migratory labor and pass laws."[24]

Therefore, Lilian Ngoyi navigated a tenuous social terrain. In one decade, she worked alternatively as a nurse, a domestic, a seamstress and a factory worker. Yet state policies of "surplus removal" uprooted the family homestead in Sophiatown for repeated moves that included a one-room shack.[25] Still, family economic conditions solidified when Ngoyi obtained a valuable factory job.[26] The rarity of this accomplishment can be gleaned from statistics on the 36% of skilled workers in South Africa from 1937 to 1945: White Men (16%) White Women (15%) African Men (2%) Asian Men (2%) Coloured Women (0. 3%) African Women (0.1%).[27] Ngoyi had obtained a prized job open only to few.[28]

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[21] Phyllis Ntantala, "The Widows of the Reserves" in *Women Writing Africa*, ed. Daymond, 248-252.
[22] Charlotte Manye Maxeke, "Social Conditions Among Bantu Women and Girls," in *Women Writing Africa,* ed. Daymond, 197.
[23] Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 194-199; Ntantala, "The Widows of the Reserves" in Daymond, ed., *Women Writing Africa,* 248-252; Chanock, "Writing South African Legal History," *The Journal of African History,* 265-288.
[24] Hilda Bernstein, *For their triumphs and for their tears: conditions and resistance of women in apartheid South Africa*. London: International Defense and Aid Fund, 1978. http://www.anc.org.za/books/triumphs.html
[25] Estimates of resident populations moved during the apartheid regime approach three million. For women's strategies on forced removals see Belinda Bozzoli, *Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy, and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900-1983* (London: James Curry, 1991), 165-197.
[26] Berger, *Threads of Solidarity,* 186.
[27] Peter Alexander, *Workers, War and the Origins of Apartheid: Labor & Politics in South* Africa: 1930-1948 (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), 21; Nancy Clark, "Gendering Production in Wartime South Africa,"

To ease acute labor shortages during the war, an enterprising Garment Worker's Union found a legal loophole for non-white women. The Union sponsored a lawsuit by Christina Okolo under the Industrial Conciliation Act.[29] The suit argued that non-pass bearing women were exempted from restrictive labor regulations. In 1944, the Supreme Court agreed, and between 1944-1953 non-white women entered jobs that 'threatened the political framework, a consequence which the government never envisioned. [30] Around 1940, only 101 African women were in the nationwide clothing industry. By 1952, the number rose to 2,500. Coloured and Asian women climbed dramatically from 3,400 to almost 18,000. These factory workers had higher wages than other middle class African occupations such as teachers and nurses.[31] Yet in the broader context, African women formed a small part of South African's industrial workforce; they worked mostly in farming and as domestics.

To throttle any rising union interests, in May 1952 the government banned Solly Sachs, leader of the Garment Workers Union, under a Suppression of Communism Act.[32] The multi-racial garment workers rebelled strenuously at City Hall. The rally crowd included Ngoyi and her daughter, who suffered a blow from a police baton in the melee.[33] The brutal treatment of

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American Historical Review, 106, 4, (Oct. 2001): 1181-1213. URL Accessed 7-6-2009 http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/106.4/ah0401001181.html

[28] J. Yawitch, "The Incorporation of African Women into Wage Labour 1950-1980*," South African Labour Bulletin*, 9, 3, (December, 1983); idem, "Black Women in South Africa: Capitalism, Employment and Reproduction," *Africa Perspective*, 1980.

[29] Sachs, *Rebels Daughters*, 113.

[30] Clark, "Gendering Production," in *American Historical Review*, 1212.

[31] Sachs, *Rebel Daughters*, 105-116; Berger, "Solidarity Fragmented: Garment Workers of the Transvaal," in *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism*, eds. Marks and Trapaido, 124-155; Leo Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie: Race, Class, and Politics in South Africa (*New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

[32] "Solly" and "Justice Takes its Course" *Time Magazine*, June 2 and July 28, 1952. URL Accessed 4-25-2008. http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,857214,00.html "Solly Sachs, Banned Under Act No. 44 of 1950, May 1952"; URL Accessed 4-25-2008; http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/lives-of-courage/pages/wall/banned/banned_s.html; Leslie Wirtz, "Solly Sachs, The Great Trek, and Jan van Riebeeck: settler pasts and racial identities in the Garment Workers Union, 1938-1952," in Annie Coombes, ed., *Rethinking Settler Colonialism: History and Memory in Australia, Canada and South Africa* (Manchester University Press, 2006), 45-62

[33] Joseph, *If This Be Treason*, 164-166.

Sachs and union workers radicalized Ngoyi , arousing a latent consciousness and powerful oratory. Eventually Sachs went into exile, and the Nationalists passed a Labor Act which excluded all Africans from registered unions.[34] From this government repression emerged an activist who joined the Defiance Campaign. Lilian Ngoyi became a committed individual who found a concurrent avenue for societal change. Her invigorated agency found expression in two organized resistance structures.

Ngoyi initially entered volunteer training for the Defiance Campaign the summer of 1952, and endured a tense arrest after violating statues for public segregation at the post office in Pretoria. A police officer interrupted Lilian as she was completing a protest telegram to Prime Minister Strijdom. By this time, Defiance Campaign arrests had slowed even though over 8,000 had been recorded in 1952. That fall, the South African government used a new Criminal Sentences Act No. 33 to threaten convicted protestors with public whippings. In a policy first, the whipping statutes also applied to women.[35] Fortunately, lawyer Oliver Tambo eventually secured Ngoyi's acquittal on the charges.

Ngoyi also served as one of the 1954 founders of the multi-racial Federation of South African Women. (FSAW)[36] FSAW participated in development of the Freedom Charter, which was ratified in 1955 during a nationwide Congress of the People in the city of Kliptown.[37] FEDSAW march slogans such as "Passes mean Broken Homes", "Passes Mean Destitute Children," and "Away with Bantu Education" converted domestic issues from the home domain

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[34] Iris Berger, "Gender, race and political empowerment: South African canning workers, 1940-1960," *Gender & Society*, 4, 3, (1990): 398-420; idem, "Generations of Struggle: Trade Unions and the Roots of Feminism: 1930-1960," in *They remove boulders and cross rivers,*ed. Gasa, 193-196.

[35] "Judicial Corporate Punishment in South Africa" *World Corporate Punishment Research*, URL Accessed 6-2-2009. http://www.corpun.com/jcpza2.htm .

[36] "Constitution of the Federation of South African Women," and "Our Aims", Women's Charter, First National Conference of the Federation of South African Women, April 17, 1954, Reel 19B of the Carter/Karis Collection of South African Political Materials, Centre for Research Libraries, Chicago, Ill.

[37] Federation of South African Women, "What the Women Demand" May, 1955, http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/women/demand.html; URL Accessed: 7-16-2008;

into the political realm.[38] Moreover, Ngoyi served on the Executive Committee for the section of African Women in the Garment Workers Union.[39] Importantly, her added work as a skilled seamstress facilitated the design and creation of uniforms for ANC women with the familiar colors of green, gold and black.

Ngoyi's development and visibility as a rising resistance leader continued. In 1955, she traveled to Europe, Russia and China with ANC Cape Town activist Dora Tamana to attend a World Congress of Mothers, hosted in Switzerland by the communist-front group, Women's International Democratic Federation. (WIDF) The egalitarian treatment received by the women proved illuminating, particularly as delegate Tamana was a descendant of the 1921 religious martyrs in South Africa's infamous Bullhoek Massacre.[40] Relying on these travels upon her return, Ngoyi continued with a now famous ability to mesmerize large crowds and received laurels from *Drum* Magazine: "Cuts and granite are required to lead and inspire the thousands of women who are everywhere resisting…the heat and pressure of the times have provided a Lilian Ngoyi to perform that function." [41] She became president of the ANC Women's League and her speeches marshaled women to answer Nelson Mandela's call in the spring of 1956 to reorganize society with a program to nationalize banks, gold mines and land.[42]

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[38] 1956 FSAW Brochure http://www.workshop.co.za/coop_assets/4Brochures/Fedsaw.gif http://www.capetown.at/heritage/history/images/apartheid_pass.JPG URL Accessed 6-7-2009.
[39] Berger, *Threads of Solidarity*, 186.
[40] Robert Edgar, "The Prophet Motive: Enoch Mgjima, the Israelites and the Background to the Bullhoek Massacre," *International Journal of African Historical Studies,* XV, 3, (1982): 401-22.
[41] Mphahlele, "Lilian Ngoyi," *Drum*, March 1956; "Women's Charter: Founding Conference of the Federation of South African Women" URL http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/women/wcharter.html; Benson, *South Africa: The Struggle for a Birthright,* in Schmidt "Now you have Touched the Women," URL Accessed 7-15-2008. http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/misc/schmi123.html
[42] Nelson Mandela, "Freedom in our Lifetime" *Liberation*, June 1956; The original article also states: "The breaking up and democratisation of these monopolies will open up fresh fields for the development of a prosperous Non-European bourgeois class."

The Women's March that Lilian Ngoyi led re-prioritized the public agendas of the ANC and its allies. [43] The march formalized a strong protest against plans to extend Pass Law regulations to African women. Pass documents gave Africans access to areas outside the impoverished homelands established by the government. Previously, African women received legal exemptions, due in part to their strident defiance against passes between 1913 and 1923.[44] By the mid-1950s, African arrests for pass law violations exceeded 100,000 annually, and most of the convicted parties were either transferred or expelled to tribal reserves where conditions of extreme hardship existed.[45]

Now, proposed law changes spurred the mass public -- men and women -- to engage publicly in South African apartheid struggles.[46] African women opposed the passes and other urban influx policies that viewed women as 'superfluous appendages' of the migrant African labor force.[47] Under Ngoyi's influence, the pass law struggles carved out precious space for women to operate in the public domain and preserve rights of free movement.[48] As preparation, the 1956 organizers sought out women from strident pass protests earlier in the twentieth

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[43] "The Demand of the Women of South Africa for the Withdrawal of Passes for Women and the Repeal of the Pass Laws -- August 9, 1956" URL Accessed 9-9-2007. http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/women/petition_to_the_prime_minister.htm; M. Bahati Kuumba, "You've Struck a Rock" Comparing Gender, Social Movements and Transformation in the United States and South Africa," *Gender & Society*, 16, 4, (2002): 504-523.

[44] Frene Ginwala, "Women and the African National Congress: 1912-1943," *Agenda 8*: (1990): 77-93; Julia Wells, *"We Now Demand!" The History of Women's Resistance to Pass Laws in South Africa* (Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand Press, 1993); Cherryl Walker, *Women and Resistance in South Africa* (London: Onyx, 1991); Helen Bernstein, *For their triumphs and for their tears: conditions and resistance of women in apartheid South Africa* (London, International Defense and Aid Fund, 1978).

[45] Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 193.

[46] Nomboniso Gasa, ed., *They remove boulders and cross rivers*: *Women in South African History (*Johannesburg: HSRC Press, 2008); "Protests and Petitions against the Extension of the Pass Laws to Women and Pass Burning by Women". Reel 7B of the Carter/Karis Collection of South African Political Materials, Centre for Research Libraries, Chicago, Ill.

[47] Parliament member G. Foneman remarked in 1969 that "African labor forces must not be burdened with superfluous appendages such as wives, children and dependants who could not provide service." See Diane Russell, *Lives of Courage: Women for a New South Africa* (London: Virago Press, 1989), 12; "Proceedings of the National Assembly," URL Accessed 7-1-2009. http://beta.parliament.gov.za/live/commonrepository/Processed/20090513/97899_1.doc

[48] Nomboniso Gasa, "Feminisms, Motherisms," in *They remove boulders and cross rivers,* 214.

century. [49] On Ngoyi's orders, activist Maggie Resha scouted tips from earlier participants in a 1913 campaign to protest women's passes. These were the fore-mothers who amazed ANC founder Sol Plaatjie at the time by securing a meeting for themselves with governmental officials, submitting a petition with five thousand signatures to Louis Botha, and eventually serving jail sentences.[50] One elder from this period, Mary Mqhweto, supplied Maggie Resha with a motto: 'Unity begets bravery and strength.'[51] Thus, mid-century march organizers verified their inheritance from older generations.

The public petitions of the march also embraced broader social issues. The text of 100,000 petitions left at the Prime Minister's office proclaimed "We shall not rest until we have won for our children their fundamental rights of freedom, justice and security."[52] The rally surged as Lilian loudly shouted the motto of early ANC President Makgatho *Africa Mayibuye*! (Come Back, Africa) The theme of Ukhuvethe Lwamakhosikazi - Defiant Women -- remains legendary in South Africa. A martial song composed specially for the occasion taunted the leader of South Africa's government: "Now you have touched the women, Strijdom! You have struck a rock."[53]

Foot-Soldier to Political Power

> We live at a time when oppressed people all over the world are rebelling against colonialism and oppression….Strijdom, stop and think for you have aroused the wrath of the women of South Africa, and that wrath might put you and your evil deeds out of action sooner than you expect.

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[49] Ginwala, "Women and the African National Congress" in *Agenda,* 77-93; Gasa, "Let them build more goals," in *They remove boulders and cross rivers,* 129-152.
[50] Gasa, "Let Them Build More Goals," in *They remove boulders and cross rivers,* 129-152.
[51] Maggie Resha, *My Life in the Struggle*, 1991. URL Accessed 7-16-2008. http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/library-resources/articles_papers/women-resistance.htm"Auntie Mary told us that it would be a shame if the women of our day, who were enlightened and educated, could not defeat the regime, whereas her generation had been successful, although they had not gone to school. She still hated the pass! "
[52] "The Demand of the Women of South Africa," URL Accessed 4-25-2008 http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/women/petition_presented_to_the_prime_minister.html.
[53] Kuumba, "You've Struck a Rock," *Gender & Society*, 504-523; Mandla Nkosi, "South Africa Women's Day Issue, " *Sechaba,* (August, 1987): 2.

Lilian Ngoyi, ANC Women's Presidential Address, 1956[54]

> When Cicero spoke, people said, "How well he spoke."When Demosthenes spoke, people said, "Let's march."[55]
>
> I am personally indebted and pay tribute to some of South Africa's greatest leaders including …Chief Luthuli, Lilian Ngoyi….Chris Hani and Oliver Tambo. They should have been here to celebrate with us….
>
> Nelson Mandela, Presidential Address, May 1994[56]

In 1994, when a newly victorious President-Elect Nelson Mandela spoke to a listening globe, he ranked Lilian Ngoyi with Nobel Prize winner Chief Albert Lutuli. After tense decades of external pressure and internal agitation during which thousands perished, Afrikaner politicians negotiated power sharing with the ANC and permitted democratic elections based on a one-man, one -vote principle. U.S. administrations since President Harry Truman had vacillated on the apartheid government, based on national interest in its minerals, and hopes to establish both a Grootfontein space tracking site and naval facility at its strategic Cape geographic location.[57] Yet on one occasion, Vice President Walter Mondale of the Carter Administration (1977-1981) reportedly urged then Prime Minister John Vorster to ultimately adopt universal suffrage.[58] Presumably Mondale never forgot his early scolding on one-man, one-vote rules from Fannie Hamer and the MFDP. However, outside South Africa, few remembered the Lilian Ngoyi of whom Mandela spoke. Her political activities began in 1952 but prior to protest organizing, she

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[54] Ngoyi, "Presidential Address," in *Women Writing Africa*, ed. Daymond, 240-244.

[55] Roy Zuck, *The Speakers Quote Book* (New York: Kregel, 1997), 360.

[56] Nelson Mandela, "Election Victory Speech May 2, 1994," *African News & Information*, URL Accessed 10-13-2008 http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Election_Victory_15727.html .

[57] McGeorge Bundy, "National Security Action Memorandum #33 to Secretary of State, March 22, 1961" Department of State, S/S - NSC Files: Lot 72 D 316, NSAM 33. URL Accessed 5-4-2009. http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/kennedyjf/50766.htm; Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, 286n9; Borstelmann, *Apartheid's reluctant uncle*, 276n1 on the Paley Commission.

[58] Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 220. In 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court also codified the one-person, one-vote voting interpretation in *Russell vs. Simms*.

encountered the repressive apartheid regulations from a position of limited resources, interrupted schooling, widowhood and single motherhood.[59]

The formal political activities of Lilian Ngoyi began in the Defiance Campaign which commenced June 26, 1952. That night, Volunteer-in-Chief Nelson Mandela and Yusuf Cachalia of the Indian National Congress were arrested for curfew violations after a meeting in the Garment Workers Union Hall.[60] At a summer ANC meeting for volunteers, Ngoyi decided the campaign was the 'real stuff' needed for change. She took the movement training for volunteers and became known for her gift of oratory. That December, Ngoyi left a hospitalized daughter and led demonstrators to a government post office despite new anti-protest regulations that threatened whippings and detention.[61] At the postal counter, Ngoyi drafted a telegram to South Africa's Prime Minister:

> Dr. Malan will you please withdraw your bills. South Africa has been a peaceful country. If not, remember what happened to Hitler in Germany and Mussolini in Italy![62]

A policeman quickly arrested Ngoyi and took the draft telegram. Though Oliver Tambo gained her full release, the telegram later became evidence in the 1956 Treason Trial. From 1952-1956, Lilian Ngoyi operated in a whirlwind of political activity, from elevation to provincial and national offices in the ANC Women's League and FSAW, to plans for a nationwide People's Congress and input into the iconic Freedom Charter.[63] FSAW selected Ngoyi and Dora Tamana in 1954 to attend a European disarmament conference at the World Congress of Mothers. They departed secretly without passports, visting England where she spoke at Trafalgar Square, a

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[59] Stewart, *Lilian Ngoyi*, 1-20.
[60] Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, 132.
[61] Benson, *The African Patriots*, 190-191.
[62] Stewart, *Lilian Ngoyi*, 13.
[63] Federation of South African Women, "What the Women Demand" May, 1955, http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/women/demand.html URL Accessed: 4-25-2008; "Freedom Charter" http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/charter.html ;4-25-2008; "Congress of the People" URL Accessed 4-25-2008 http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/campaigns/cop/calltocop.html

concentration camp at Buchenald, and Russia and China.[64] After Ngoyi's return in 1955 Nelson Mandela published a statement observing: " The spectre of Belsen and Buchenwald is haunting South Africa."[65]

Lilian Ngoyi performed many functions that reflected her 'multiple identities,' in a manner similar to other female South African activists.[66] Evidence of her leadership was attested by Maggie Resha, a prominent ANC activist and organizer. Lilian Ngoyi also displayed a rhetorical flair that actively ignited her followers towards subversive actions.[67] Achieving phenomenal and fast-rising fame as a brilliant orator, Ngoyi regularly led mass protest rallies in Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Johannesburg as well as rural towns such as Winberg.[68]Even as the police arrested many of her followers, crowds accumulated when Ngoyi spoke. Her speeches and anecdotes spurred actions that strengthened Nelson Mandela's call to reorganize society under a Freedom Charter that promised to nationalize banks, gold mines and land.[69]

After Ngoyi's election as the first woman on the National Executive Council in ANC's 40-year history, the South African police intensified its surveillance and personal repression.[70] Thereafter, Lilian Ngoyi endured repeated arrest and became one of the thirty major principals in the four-year capital case known internationally as the 1956 Treason Trial. After the Sharpeville

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[64] Benson, *The African Patriots*, 217-222
[65] Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, 42.
[66] Ellen Kuzwayo *Call Me Woman (*Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985); Frances Baard and Barbie Schriener, *My Spirit is Not Banned (*Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1986); Emma Mashinini, *Strikes have followed me all my life: A South African autobiography (* New York: Routledge, 1990); Maggie Resha, *My Life in the Struggle (*Johannesburg: Congress of South African Writers, 1991); Margaret McCord, *The Calling of Katie Makanya: A Memoir of South Africa (*New York: Wiley, 1995); Phyllis Ntantala, *A Life's Mosaic* (NetLibrary, 1993); Mamphela Ramphele, *Across Boundaries: The Journey of a South African Woman Leader (*New York: Feminist Press CUNY, 1999).
[67] Sakhela Buhlungu, *Trade Unions and Democracy: Cosatu Workers' Political Attitudes in South Africa* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2006), 106; Diani, "The Concept of a Social Movement," in *Sociological Review,* 1-25.
[68] Mphahlele, "Lilian Ngoyi Most Talked About Woman in Politics", *Drum*, March 1956.
[69] Mandela, "Freedom in our Lifetime" *Liberation*, June 1956.
[70] Merrett, *A Culture of Censorship,* 56.

Massacre and Public Emergency of 1960, she faced detention, solitary confinement and bans for almost two decades before her death.

The Congress Alliance soon indicated that it also needed Ngoyi's efforts to further the mass political movement. A Port Elizabeth rally where Ngoyi spoke to 6,000 from the back of a truck showed her skill and crowd drawing power were unabated. In early 1956, the government strategically tried passes for rural women first. Lilian Ngoyi and Robert Resha led strident rallies in Wynberg of the Orange Free State where passes were burned, protestors arrested, and legal funds eventually needed for defense.[71] The depleted state of ANC accounts led Dr. A.E. Letele, Treasurer, to write a despairing letter to Oliver Tambo when the Ngoyi could not attend a gathering in Kimberley as scheduled. The entire ANC national Treasury contained a total of fourteen English pounds.[72] As dues for 94 members only brought three pounds, the crowds drawn by Lilian were desperately needed to expand membership.

Nygoyi overcame male skepticism with support of Chief Lutuli, ANC President, who urged male activists to acknowledge women's achievements.[73] Also, a later statement on women's leadership came from Oliver Tambo: "…we cannot win liberation or build a strong movement without the participation of women….men in the Congress must fight…outmoded customs which make women inferior."[74] In a patriarchal African society where men assumed authority after paying a bride-price, Ngoyi subverted gender traditions. Indeed, public speaking was even taboo for the Zulu women who authored the famous martial songs. In male-dominated tribal societies, the harsh impact of apartheid upon African manhood only heightened gender

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[71] Stewart, *Lilian Ngoyi*, 32.

[72] Document Ga91 From Dr. A.E.Letele to O.R.Tambo, 28 May 1956. University of Witswatersrand ANC Collection. http://www.historicalpapers.wits.ac.za/inventory.php?iid=8085

[73] See Albert Lutuli, "Presidential Address to Natal Branch, July 1956," *New Age*, August 2, 1956 compiled by E.S Reddy. URL Accessed 4-25-2009. http://www.liberation.org.za/lutuli_new_age_and_drum

[74] Oliver Tambo quoted in Kimble and Unterhalter, "We opened the road for you," *Feminist Review*, 25.

insecurities about power and control.[75] Yet Tambo fully recognized the value of Ngoyi's oratory and ability to increase dues- paying members. A depleted ANC bank balance of only fourteen English pounds led Treasurer Dr. Letele to write a despairing letter to Tambo when Ngoyi could not attend a fund raising gathering.[76]

For the first time since women received the ANC vote in 1943, its leaders publicly affirmed the role of women in Congress leadership. ANC President Albert Lituli reported:

> Our womenfolk, too, have given us a …magnificent and brave stand against the Government's decision to extend the pass laws …they must rally to the cause whatever some of our conservative men might say.[77]There are signs that women are beginning to play an effective part in politics. I cannot visualize a situation in which the movement will be overwhelmingly feminine, but they will play a very important part. More and more African women will not only actively, but also in silent ways contribute to the struggle.[78]

Ahmed Kathrada of the Indian National Congress specifically extolled a jailed Ngoyi:

> We want to send our greetings to that great daughter of Africa, Lilian Ngoyi. We know she was outside the country and she came back to take her place in the struggle, and today she is behind bars. We give out gratitude to Africa for having given birth to such a noble daughter as she. We hope that Africa will continue to give us people who will lead us to freedom.[79]

Govan Mbeki placed Ngoyi first among an active cadre of effective female leaders:

> …women who came to prominence during these years included Lilian Ngoyi, Florence Matomela, Frances Baard …these women transformed the Women's League into *a fighting arm* of the national liberation movement. In the past the Women's League had

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[75] Though beyond this essay, such insecurities continue in the 21st century and may currently contribute to endemic South African domestic violence. See Ramphele, *Across Boundaries* in "The Endless Assault," *Economist*, February 24, 2001: 7; Walker, "The Position of Women before 1930" and "Women and the ANC before 1939" in *Women and Resistance in South Africa*, 9-42.

[76] Letter from Dr. A.E. Letele to O.R.Tambo, May 28, 1956, University of Witswatersrand ANC Collection, Document Ga91, URL 7-16-2009. http://www.historicalpapers.wits.ac.za/inventory.php?iid=8085 .

[77] Albert Lutuli, "Presidential Address to Natal Branch," *New Age*, August 2, 1956. URL Accessed 4-25-2008. http://www.liberation.org.za/lutuli_new_age_and_drum.

[78] Albert Lutuli, *Drum*, June 1958.

[79] Ahmed Kathrada. "Speech at Meeting of People's Defense Committee" URL Accessed 4-25-2009; http:///www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/people/kathrada/kathrada2.htm .

> been led by the wives of the professionals who were leaders of the ANC. There was a marked difference in these urban working-class women....[80]

Thus, male ANC elites recognized these new leaders as emerging political actors, and Lilian Ngoyi as capable of unsurpassed power to motivate followers. Ngoyi's ability for oration and verbal rhetoric won attention, admiration and converts. She attained success by marshaling the limited resources of her social class and culture for distinct organizational effect. Today her leadership is celebrated and the former Strijdom Park in Pretoria has been renamed in her honor. Yet her greatest legacy may be the large percentage of African women in the country's current democratic Parliament who are "claiming the opportunity spaces", and notable careers like that of Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, former Deputy President of South Africa born in 1955.[81] That same year, Lilian Ngoyi completed an European and Asian trip and returned to South Africa for political triumphs and painful defeats. Reflecting on the Treason Trials, Winnie Mandela acknowledged her political influence: "I spent more time with tremendous women …Lilian Nygoyi, whom I greatly admired. She made me in the sense that I idolized her."[82]

After the soaring of Lilian Ngoyi's success came the sacrifice demanded as the South African government moved to crush her oppositional power. The extended duration of the 1956 Treason Trial wrecked havoc on the personal lives and finances of the core of anti-apartheid leadership. Dr. Letele, the former ANC Treasurer from Kimberley, moved his medical practice to Pretoria for the Trial and stayed with Ngoyi but later committed suicide. Ultimately, repeated absences cost Ngoyi the factory job and its income which supported her large extended family. Shortly following the Treason Trial acquittals, the Sharpesville Massacre led to greater ANC

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[80] Govan Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa: A Short History,* (Cape Town: Mayibuye Center, 1992). Decades later, Mbeki's son Thabo became theh Prime Minister of South Africa. URL Accessed 4-25-2008 http://www.anc.org.za/books/liberation.html.

[81] Hannah Britton, *Women in the South African Parliament* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005); Gisela Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics in South Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation* (Copenhagen: Nordic Africa Institute, 2004), 9-13.

[82] Winnie Mandela, *Part of My Soul Went with Him* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1984), 66.

bannings and imprisonment right up to the ultimate Rivonia Trial. During the State of Emergency, Lilian Ngoyi herself endured detention and solitary prison confinement. Though her solitary experiences are unrecorded, the effect of such stark punishment was forcefully illuminated by communist activist Ruth First.[83] Later, Lilian Ngoyi‘s public presence was further silenced by almost twenty years of government banning to her Orlando home.[84]The continued bans led to a severe penury which surely impacted her health, as well as isolation.

Despite the forced anonymity of the bans, both a cautious government and her former activists-in-arms still acknowledged the power of Ngoyi’s oratory and personality. In 1969, a Judge’s order granted Lilian permission to attend the funeral of her uncle, SM Mphahlele, only on the grounds that she make no speeches.[85] From Robben Island, prisoner Nelson Mandela sent a letter apologizing that his own request to attend the funeral had been denied, just as it had ten months earlier when his own mother passed.[86]

Like a student of permanent revolution, Ngoyi sought preparation for what lay ahead.[87] In 1971, despite a decade of banning and poverty Ngoyi continued resistance by seeking from foreign friends and donors a copy of *Their Worlds and Ours* by Leon Trotsky.[88] In one major disappointment, the government reversed approval of a brief period of freedom and re-banned Lilian, partly for her 1975 strident speech at the funeral of lawyer Bram Fischer, a Mandela confidante. This new ban expired a few months after she died in 1980. However, during a earlier brief respite from her banning regulations, Lilian Ngoyi prophesized at a public Sharpesville

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[83] Ruth First, *117 Days* (London: Stein and Day, 1965).
[84] ‘Banned and Confined,’ *Mayibuye*, 11-15-1966; ‘List of Banned Persons” URL Accessed 4-25-2009. http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/lives-of-courage/pages/wall/banned/banned_n.html
[85] “Stitching it Together -- Archive Threads of Ngoyi, ” *Sunday Times*, URL 4-25-2008http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/memorials/gp/LilianNgoyi/archive.aspx?id=568051
[86] ‘Nelson sends condolence letter to Ngoyi.” URL Accessed 4-25-2008 http://www.nelsonmandelamuseum.org.za/docs/timeline.doc.
[87] Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution*, (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1969).
[88] Lilian Ngoyi, “Trying to Find Banned Books,” *Sunday Times*, November 12, 1971. URLhttp://heritage.thetimes.co.za/memorials/GP/LilianNgoyi/Article.aspx?id=560924

memorial to her old activist friends: **"**If I die, I'll die a happy person because I have already seen the rays of our new South Africa rising."[89] Progressives in the South African public remembered Lilian's anchor leadership and reciprocated with great honors when her heart suddenly gave out:

> A thousand people walked behind her, [Ngoyi} five miles to the cemetery. All the way, the people of Soweto came out of their houses to wave their farewell to her as she passed, giving her the *Amandla* salute, the clenched fist of strength and struggle.[90]

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[89] Lilian Ngoyi, *Scheba*, 1980, Vol. 14, cited in URL: http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/people/lngoyi.html Accessed 10-13-2008.
[90] Joseph, *Side By Side*, Chapter 7.

THE BATTLEFIELD EDUCATION OF FANNIE LOU HAMER

> …she had nothing to fall back on; not maleness, not whiteness, not lady hood, not anything. And out of the profound desolation of her reality she may well have invented herself.
>
> Toni Morrison, *Sula* [1]

> Pharaoh is in Sunflower County! Israel's children were building bricks without straw -- at three dollars a day! Her voice broke, and tears stood in her eyes…they're tired of being tired…Reverend Tyler, you must be Moses! ...take them yourself to register…*tomorra* !
>
> Fannie Hamer challenges a Pulpit minister[2]

> "I didn't register for you. I tried to register for myself [Aug. 1962]. …The first vote I cast, I cast my first vote for myself, [June, 1964] because I was running for Congress.
>
> Fannie Lou Hamer[3]

In 1917, Fannie Lou became the last of twenty children born to rural Mississippi cotton workers James and Lou Ella Townsend. The large family lived accorded to the rhythms and demands of agricultural labor. Hamer recalled how "… my parents just chopped cotton, chopped cotton, over and over...They could then pick it, and it would be clean…people used hoes to clean that cotton out."[4] A young Fannie also watched her mother manually axe trees to clear land. Her father performed whatever tasks enabled his family to survive -- farming, seasonal labor, periodic ministry, or even brief spells of creating bootlegged spirits. [5] Her poor relatives performed likewise, even those with marks of miscegenation such as light complexion or varied

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[1] Toni Morrison quoted in Giddings, *When and Where I Enter,* 18.

[2] Fannie Lou Hamer quoted by Tracy Sugarman, *Stranger at the Gates: A Summer in Mississipp,* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1966), 121.

[3] Fannie Lou Hamer, *The Congressional Record*, 6-16-1964, cited in William Loren Katz, *Eyewitness: A Living Documentary of the African American Contribution to American History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995, orig. 1967), 465; Election Ballot Nov 2, 1963, SNCC Freedom Vote, University of Southern Mississippi Archives; Fannie Lou Hamer Interview with McMillen, April 14, 1972.

[4] Fannie Lou Hamer interview with McMillen, April 14, 1972, Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage, University of Southern Mississippi Archives; URL Accessed 10-11-2008 http:///www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/oh/hamertrans.htm .

[5] Fannie Lou Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges," In *Mississippi Writers: Reflections of Childhood and Youth*, Dorothy Abbott, ed., Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1988: 321-330; Fannie Lou Hamer interview with Richard Wright, August 9, 1968, Civil Rights Documentation Project, Howard University, p.3 as cited in Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (New York: Bantam Books, 1985), 288, 382n27.

eye colors.[6] In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Mississippi's agricultural economy and repressive society operated on black labor as it had since Congress formed the territory a century earlier in 1798. Mississippi followed the southern system recorded that same year in the drawings by traveling Englishman Benjamin LaTrobe of slave women hoeing under the watchful eyes of a white overseer. [7]After emancipation, Negroes anxious to avoid overly harsh treatment retreated to impoverished, but independent towns such as Mound Bayou, originally formed in the 1890s. Yet from her birth to the middle twentieth century, Hamer's hometown of Ruleville continued the longstanding planter traditions of Negro oppression and servitude that marked Sunflower County and twelve neighboring Delta counties.[8]

Large plantations in the Mississippi Delta region farmed the richest alluvia soil in the U.S. but held the highest concentrations of utter Black poverty due to their entrenched political powerlessness and limited educational opportunities. A white supremacist culture triumphed when Reconstruction ended after the Civil War, and Mississippi legalized dis-enfranchisement policies and imposed Jim Crow starting in 1890. The 1898 Supreme Court ruling of *Williams v. Mississippi* which acquiesced to the voting exclusions led other southern states to soon copy them.[9] Over the next sixty years, a Delta economy of agriculture and natural resource extraction developed alongside a racially skewed concentration of wealth. The system survived with

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[6] Fannie Lou Hamer, "The Special Plight and the Role of the Black Woman," May 5, 1971 Speech to NAACP Legal Defense Fund, in *Available Means: An Anthology of Women's Rhetoric*, ed. Joy Ritchie, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001: 263; Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 2-9.

[7] Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1988), 3. For Benjamin Latrobe's actual illustration see Jonathan Prude, "On Pictures and History" *Emory News*, August 2004, URL 5-6-2009 http://www.history.emory.edu/newsletter01/newsl04/prude04.htm; Englishman Benjamin LaTrobe helped Thomas Jefferson design the Capitol and White House. His brother Christian served as a Moravian missionary in early America and South Africa. See C.I. Latrobe, *Journal of a Visit to South Africa*, in 1815, and 1816 *with Some Account of the Missionary Settlements of the United Brethren, near the Cape of Good Hope*, London, 1818; facsimile edition, Cape Town, Struik, 1969.

[8] James Cobb, *The Most Southern Place on Earth: Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity (*New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 3-6, 80-81.

[9] C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford Press, 1974), 71; Steve Lawson, *Black Ballots: Voting Rights in the South, 1944-1969* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 355n31.

philosophies of racial caste and violence that included legalized hangings, lynching and "Negro barbeques."[10] Hamer herself often recounted the impact on her community impact of the horrific burning and lynching of Joe Pullam of Drew, Mississippi when she was eight years old.[11]

By mid-century in Sunflower County, its voter rolls contained only 114 registered out of nearly 19,000 Negro adults. This dismal registration rate of 1.2% outflanked even the meager statewide Mississippi percentage of 5.3% Negro registrants.[12] Negro annual income of $400-$600 represented less than half of white annual income. Such poverty outpaced the Mississippi Negro average of $1,444, in a state where 75% of Negro families were below the federal poverty line and 90% of rural homes had no indoor toilet, tub or shower.[13] By 1960, Sunflower whites owned 90% of the land in a county racially outnumbered by blacks 2:1. The lack of voting and income support also combined with a weak system of Negro education that functioned without a publicly owned primary school or high school. In this manner, Sunflower replicated the state pattern where only 2.3% of blacks in Mississippi had a high school diploma by mid-century.[14]

Sunflower County also served as home for the notorious Parchman penitentiary and admitted segregationist U.S. Senator James Eastland. Eastland, a nemesis of many potential civil rights bills, owned a plantation of over 2,000 acres.[15]He continually railed against federal relief

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[10] Terence Finnegan, "Lynching and Political Power in Mississippi and South Carolina," in *Under sentence of death: Lynching in the South*, ed. William Fitzhugh Brundage, *(*Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); David M. Oshinsky, *Worse Than Slavery: Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 100-2; Michael J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society, 1874-1947* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 72-74; Woodruff, *American Congo*, 10-12, 74-90*;* McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians*, 224-255.

[11] Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges," in *Mississippi Writers*,ed. Abbott, 322-3.

[12] Lee, *For Freedom's Sake,* 31, 192n32; Dittmer, *Local People*, 53.

[13] Crawford, "African American Women," in *Sisters in the Struggle*, eds. Collier-Thomas and Franklin, 122-123; Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 201n3; Dittmer, *Local People*, 75.

[14] Bureau of Educational Research, cited in Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 329n15; Dittmer, *Local People*, 20.

[15] Dittmer, *Local People*, 136.

recipients while receiving over $100,000 in annual government agricultural subsidies.[16] Activist Virginia Durr of Alabama reported that in the 1940s Eastland shocked her and a group of Methodist churchwomen challenging the poll tax with the retort "I know what you women want - black men laying on you!"[17] In 1954, Eastland initiated a review of Durr and other members of the Southern Conference Educational Fund, eventually applying the toxic label of communism to its progressive reform campaigns.[18] Even the U.S. executive branch undercut constitutional balances on power. Though President John Kennedy received crucial electoral support from Northern Negroes, his first Southern judicial appointment of Harold Cox certainly appeased the mentor Senator Eastland. Son of the Sunflower County sheriff, Judge Cox called Negroes "baboons" from the federal bench and scuttled the civil rights filings of tenuous Justice Department officials.[19]

Sunflower's county seat of Indianola also provided a birthplace for the White Citizens Council two months after *Brown vs Board of Education.* These councils grew to a region-wide membership of nearly 250,000 members of middle-class standing who achieved both political respectability and accountability from government officials, despite the ever-present spectre of underlying violence by segregation proponents. [20]As Mississippi newspapers forecast the renewed advent of flowing southern blood, Justice Tom Brady of the Mississippi Supreme Court issued inflammatory anti-rights speeches called "Black Monday" and "Red Death" that the

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[16] Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom*, 153-156.
[17] Olson, *Freedom's Daughters,* 104-5
[18] Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), especially 130.
[19] Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-1963* (New York: Simon, 1988), 193n44, 328, 508; Dittmer, *Local People*, 20, 53, 136-137, 254, 341.
[20] Clive Webb, ed., *Massive Resistance: Southern Opposition to the Second Reconstruction,* New York: Oxford University Press, 2005; xi, 4; "Citizens Councils" in *American Experience: The Murder of Emmett Till*, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/peopleevents/e_councils.html URL Accessed 4-11-2009.

Councils distributed widely.[21] Brady and other hard-line officials foiled plans by moderate politicians eager to continue benefiting from rewards the national Democratic Party could offer Mississippi.[22]

Under earlier New Deal reforms, the repressive southern structures found in places like Sunflower County actually strengthened with the help of federal policies and powerful Congressmen. For example, minimum wage guidelines specifically excluded farm labor, a political concession necessary for the votes of southern Senators with great seniority. The entire Delta region contained cotton plantations fortified by federal grants and agricultural price supports. For example, after widespread flooding in 1927 Congress appropriated $325M to install a Delta flood-control system. In 1935, 41% of subsidies made *across the entire nation* by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) went to the Delta.[23] The AAA controller Oscar Johnston also served as president of the 38,000 acre farm of Delta Land and Pine Company in nearby Bolivar County. Delta Land and Pine was controlled by English textile investors who eventually included Queen Elizabeth. By mid-century this beneficiary of millions in cotton price adjustment payments used "…several thousands of black laborers in cotton sharecropping." [24]

New Deal incentives also subsidized farm mechanization for Mississippi and all southern states. For example, the culmination of the shift from mules to tractors between 1955 to 1962 by 1.4 million southern farmers led the U.S. Agriculture Department to stop collecting statistics on

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[21] Webb, *Massive Resistance*, 3, 124-127.
[22] Crespino, *In Search of Another Country*, 20-23.
[23] James Cobb, ""Somebody Done Nailed Us on the Cross": Federal Farm and Welfare Policy and the Civil Rights Movement in the Mississippi," *The Journal of American History*, 77, (Dec., 1990): 914, 915.
[24] Lawrence Nelson, "Oscar Johnston, the New Deal, and the Cotton Subsidy Payments Controversy, 1936-1937," *Journal of Southern History*, 40, 3, (1974) 319-416; idem, *King Cotton's Advocate: Oscar G. Johnston and the New Deal*, Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999.

these farm animals.[25] Depression era downturns allowed political interventions that altered a production economy which existed since colonial days. Moreover, federal prorams compensated farmers for crop reductions, or "set-asides", in order to stabilize agriculture prices. As a result of automation and policies to diversify industry, the percentage of the southern population working on farms in 1940, 1960 and 1980 fell from 42% to 15% and to 3%, respectively. From being a poor and unstable region of America, the South increased regional income from 60% of national levels in 1940 to 76% in 1960. Yet a declining need for manual farm labor upended a Black tenant labor system first imposed on post-Civil war black freedmen. As a result between 1940 to 1980, the Black percentage of southern population fell from 25% to 18%, and its percentage of southern labor fell from 28% to 18%.[26]

In the midst of these economic circumstances, desperate Blacks left Mississippi in droves. In the decade from 1940 to 1950 the departure of 300,000 persons decreased the black population from 54% to 45%.[27] As the Great Migration to the North continued, those African Americans who remained faced a massive white resistance determined to limit the civil rights initiatives that re-awakened after *Brown vs. Board of Education*.[28] For example, in the decade after *Brown* the former confederate legislators passed over 450 segregationist resolutions; one Mississippi citation commended South Africa for its determined segregation defenses.[29]

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[25] Debra A. Reid, "Review of *Mule South to Tractor South: Mules, Machines, and the Transformation of the Cotton South* by George B. Ellenberg," *American Historical Review*, 114, (February, 2009):171–172.
[26] Bartley, *The New South*, 104, 124, 145, 286, 288.
[27] Dittmer, *Local People*, 20.
[28] Eric Arnesen, ed, *The Black Worker: A Reader* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007); Joe William Trotter, *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class, and Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); Clive Webb, ed., *Massive Resistance: Southern Opposition to the Second Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Michael Klarman, "How Brown Changed Race Relations: The Backlash Thesis," *Journal of American History*, 81, 1, (June, 1994): 81-118.
[29] Bartley, *The New South*, 221n75.

Civil rights activists from decades before and after the 1954 *Brown* decision prepared a legacy for Robert Moses, who left New York in the 1960s for the South.[30] Organizers such as A. Phillip Randolph, Ella Baker, Roy Wilkins, Mary McLeod Bethune, Anne Braden, Ruby Hurley, Aaron Henry, Amzie Moore and Dr. T. R.M. Howard worked alternatively with the SCLC, NAACP, NCNW, SCEF and Mississippi's Regional Council of Negro Leadership. In prior generations of freedom runners, these groups coordinated extensive struggles on a local and national basis, in hopes of leveling America's racial playing field. [31]

In 1946 the Supreme Court nullified the whites only primary in *Smith vs. Albright*, and the Mississippi NAACP and local Progressive Voters League contested the election bullying of Senator Theodore Bilbo by holding public Congressional hearings in Jackson. Earlier, Bilbo advocated federal funds be used to assist in African emigration for soldiers exposed to principles of social equality while in Europe.[32] Now, Medgar Evers joined a host of post-war Negro veterans who flocked to this resurgent NAACP. In 1954, its state leader Emmett Stringer undercut Governor's White's pressure to ignore *Brown vs. Board of Education* legal mandates and keep segregated schools. Still, efforts by RCNL leaders such as Amzie Moore and Dr. T. R. M. Howard withered under continued violence and murders such as that of activist Reverend Herbert Lee.[33] By 1955, six years of organizing gains that raised Mississippi Negro registrants from 7,000 to 22,000 *started to reverse*. After three civil rights organizers and Emmett Till died, Negro registrants fell from 22,000 to 12,000 and Dr. Howard was forced to move to Chicago by threats from white supremacists. Even prominent public figures felt social pressure to castigate

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[30] Jacqueline Dowd-Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History*, 91, 4 (March, 2005): 1233-63.
[31] Dittmer, *Local People*, 12-13, 41, 102-107, 131-137, 457n24, 462n45; McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians*, Chapter 9, especially 285-295
[32] Theodore Bilbo, *Take Your Choice: Separation or Mongrelization*, Dream House Publishing, 1947.
[33] Dittmer, *Local People*, 448n36.

racial progress. In 1956 novelist William Faulkner starkly told a London reporter: "…I'd fight for Mississippi…if it meant going into the streets and shooting Negroes."[34]

Activism renewed across the South after the 1957 Little Rock Crisis and the 1960 Greensboro student sit-ins. Debates in the Mississippi state NAACP on the merits of legal suits versus direct action finally helped state President Aaron Henry gain approval by National President Roy Wilkins of "Operation Mississippi" to desegregate public facilities. Meanwhile, in Atlanta the SCLC helped fund a newly formed SNCC, which in turn sent young leaders like Robert Moses, Charles Cobb, Diane Nash and James Bevel to Mississippi. Yet it is sobering to note that in spite of all the organizing and individual efforts through southern states, the electoral system of white political supremacy limited total black southern voting in 1952, 1956 and 1960 by what were in effect "racial diplomats" to only 6%. Due to massive resistance to civil rights campaigns, these voting statistics persisted through the 1954 *Brown* decision, the 1956 Montgomery Bus Boycott, and the turnout in 1960 for President John Kennedy after his phone call about the Atlanta arrest of Martin Luther King Jr.[35] This remained the southern system in 1962, when former New Yorker Robert Moses sent Charles McLaurin and James Bevel to find that local woman in Sunflower County who sang hymns.[36]

The three SNCC activists hoped to spur local black empowerment, during a period of increased federal sensitivity to civil rights due to pressures of the Cold War, rulings from the Supreme Court and Interstate Commerce Commission, and Freedom Bus Rides.[37] The fieldworkers designed direct action strategies to fight segregation, and encouraged Negroes in local voting. Using personal introductions, activists stayed in homes and developed grass-roots

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[34] Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom,* 122-124; Dittmer, *Local People*, 24-25, 39, 68, 71, 78, 87, 452n69.
[35] Bartley, *The New South*, 172
[36] Marsh, *God's Long Summer*, 16-17.
[37] Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton University Press, 2000); Manfred Berg, "Black Civil Rights and Liberal Anticommunism: The NAACP in the Early Cold War," *The Journal of American History*, 94, 1, (June 2007): 75-96.

connections with leading families. One summer night, Fannie Lou Hamer arrived at a mass meeting in Ruleville to hear their civil rights message.

The curious Fannie Lou Hamer heard the fervent sermon by a young James Bevel at Williams Chapel Missionary Baptist Church. Using the gospel of St. Matthew, Bevel commanded listeners in the pews to take hope from the changing times and start to move. Civil rights workers relied heavily on a Negro tradition of prophetic Christianity, and the safe harbor of church facilities supplied by ministers largely skeptical themselves about public activism.[38] Scholars Michael Walzer and Charles Walsh had argued that biblical foundations represented both a critical strength and way to arouse this beleaguered community: "God's promise generates a sense of possibility…the world is not all Egypt. Without that sense of possibility, oppression would be experienced as an inescapable condition, a matter of personal or collective bad luck, a stroke of fate."[39]

Before her first mass meeting experience, Hamer knew little of the issues concerning the constitutional franchise rights of Negro citizens. She reported that she "went to church…they had a mass meeting…I had never heard, until 1962, that black people could register and vote.[40] Yet Hamer answered Bevel's call for volunteers, and the next week led eighteen souls on a tense bus trip to the registrar at the county seat of Indianola. Though pressured and rejected, Hamer repeatedly returned during the next year until successful. Soon, the political voice gained from that initial victory challenged American democracy itself.

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[38] Marsh, *God's Long Summer,* 44-48; Williams Chapel Missionary Baptist Church Landmark, URL Accessed 7-16-2008, http://www.jsums.edu/~hamer.institute/PDFs/Landmarks%20Guide.pdf.

[39] Michael Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 21 as cited in Marsh, *God's Long Summer,* 47, 215n160.

[40] Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges," in *Mississippi Writers,*ed. Abbott, 324; Fannie Lou Hamer interviewed by Neil McMillen, August 14, 1972, University of Southern Mississippi Archives, URL Accessed 7-17-2008, http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/oh/hamertrans.htm ; Kathyrn L. Nasstrom, "Between Memory and History: Autobiographies of the Civil Rights Movement and the Writing of Civil Rights History," *Journal of Southern History,* 74 (May 2008): 325–64.

Hamer's urge to register led to immediate eviction from a family homestead by plantation owner W.D. Marlowe, despite eighteen years of employment as a timekeeper. Moreover, the homes of friends who offered Hamer refuge were subjected to drive-by shootings that resulted in the wounding of a young girl.[41]After weeks on the run outside of Ruleville, Fannie Lou Hamer decided to directly face the public intimidation from her attempts to register. She returned home with a new focus that mirrored the political radicalization and self-invention of Lilian Ngoyi. Hamer worked on SNCC organizing plans and inspired innumerable rallies or community talks with her famous proverb: "I am sick and tired of being sick and tired."[42]

Though Hamer received limited formal schooling, she projected powerful charisma through speeches interspersed with familiar spirituals and religious songs. In a strong cultural phenomena that operated in South and also in places where the Great Migration reached the North, Negro musical forms operated as a balm in many weary throats that were "singing in strange land".[43] Through folk songs, blues and spirituals, Fannie Lou Hamer and her community reported and recorded the reprisals that accompanied the Negro pursuit of *any* freedom, especially in rural Mississippi. Oral traditions also reflected gruesome memories of the Joe Pullam and Holbert lynchings, and the racial murders from the 1919 Elaine Race riots in the nearby Arkansas Delta. These older blood memories merged with recent traumas of the 1950s such as the killing of a preacher Reverend Lee and Emmett Till. Whatever academic shortcomings Hamer evidenced, she acknowledged and reported Mississippi's battlefield educations very well.

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[41] Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges," in *Mississippi Writers*, ed. Abbott, 325.
[42] Jerry Demuth, "Fannie Lou Hamer: Tired of Being Sick and Tired," *The Nation*, June 1, 1964, URL Accessed 7-3-2009, http://www.thenation.com/doc/19640601/demuth; Ballot Nov 2, 1963 SNCC Freedom Vote, University of Southern Mississippi Archives.
[43] Nick Salvatore, *Singing in a Strange Land: C.L. Franklin, the Black Church, and the Transformation of America*, (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2005).

After Hamer took on leadership in community voting, she herself was subjected to violence. In June, 1963 Hamer and activists returning from a SCLC Citizenship training school led by Septima Clark, Dorothy Cotton and Andrew Young in Charleston, South Carolina were arrested and endured a horrific police beating in Winona, Mississippi.[44] She reported that the vicious attack made her flesh turn rock hard. The beating gave Hamer life-long health complications, and it occurred in the same climate of threats to civil rights workers that led to the shot-gun murder of Medgar Evers that same weekend in the carport of his home.[45] Hamer later publicized the beating and made repeated pleas for justice and equality to national audiences the rest of her life. Her stories sought real progress to override such evil.

Though she did not release this information until years later, Hamer also suffered sexual abuse from jailers in the process of the beating. Hamer's appearance of full openness while simultaneously withholding intimate details recalls the concept advanced by Darlene Clark Hines about a culture of "dissemblance" in the lives of black women which "…shielded the truth of their inner lives and selves from their oppressors."[46] The sensitive issue of sexual abuse could have reminded Hamer of the poor treatment of Liza Bramlett, her maternal grandmother, under slavery. The serial abuse of Bramlett led to many children of mixed racial descent, and formed painful memories for her descendants.[47] Regretfully, neither Bramlett nor Hamer nearly a century later received full legal remedies for their experiences. Although the jail officers were charged and tried in court that December, the nation remained otherwise transfixed by the recent

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[44] Hamer, To Praise Our Bridges," in *Mississippi Writers*, ed. Abbott, 325-6; Andrew Young, *A Way Out of No Way: The Spiritual Memoirs of Andrew Young* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1994), 54-58; Hamer interview with McMillen, August 14, 1972; Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 56-66; Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 46-54.

[45] Myrlie Evers-William, and Manning Marable, eds., *The Autobiography of Medgar Evers: A Hero's Life and Legacy Revealed Through His Writings, Letters, and Speeches,* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2005).

[46] Darlene Clark Hines, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West: Preliminary Thoughts on the Culture of Dissemblance," *Signs* 14, 4 (Summer 1989): 383–85.

[47] Hamer, "The Special Plight and the Role of the Black Woman," in *Available Means,* ed. Ritchie, 263; Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 8-9.

assassination of President John Kennedy. So the versions of justice traditionally produced by Mississippi courtrooms continued and an all-white jury found none guilty.

During the next year, Fannie Lou Hamer also served as a key inspiration during SNCC's Freedom Summer Campaign. While her activities included training and introductions to the local community, her more important roles focused on fundraising and providing the authentic movement evidence of the liberating effects of personal development. Hamer simply represented the ultimate expression of an individual's fight for both personal and social transformation. Indeed in *Freedom Summer,* author Doug McAdam postulates that its highest cultural contribution involved the increasing public awareness of the links between personal liberation and social change.[48] Hamer joined local activists recruited by Robert Moses on trips to the northern campuses of white college students, who absolutely thrilled when Hamer's sang modified hymns such as "Go tell it on the Mountain" or "This Little Light of Mine."[49] SNCC used the college volunteers as local rights activists and to secure national media visibility, but also warned them about real possibilities of added personal violence. Senator Eastland, who himself killed over 100 civil rights measures before the Senate Judiciary Committee in the previous decade, warned President Lyndon Johnson that the missing civil rights activists Goodman, Chaney and Schwerner were merely a publicity stunt.[50]

Ruleville Mayor Charles Durrough led economic reprisals on civil rights workers and warned of more possible killings. When two young girls were shot at a Ruleville family home that sheltered activists, the Mayor and Sheriff S.L. Milam had SNCC worker Charlie Cobb arrested for a so-called publicity stunt. Sheriff Milam was the brother of one man accused and earlier acquitted of the murder of Emmett Till. Another irony involved the cut-off of city water

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[48] McAdam, *Freedom Summer*, 138.
[49] Martinez, *Letter from Mississippi*, 18, 59, 239, 239; Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 94-104.
[50] Branch, *Pillar of Fire*, 267, 366.

and fire insurance to Williams Chapel Church for allowing activist meetings.[51] Hamer and her husband Perry needed legal help to counter a $9,000 water bill received for a house with no running water.[52] Other activists endured threats to their livelihoods at a time when economic outlets were already severely limited for Negroes. Even federal postal worker Amzie Moore needed help to counter economic and violent reprisals.[53]

Ongoing seasons of oppression, trauma and violence seared themselves into Hamer's memory, and her radicalized consciousness developed a fierce persona that became nationally known. Her battleground experiences of continual poverty, forced sterilization, painful beating, and humiliating sexual assault in state custody forged a new resistance leader. There exists no way to minimize the contemporary or future pressure that Hamer faced, or the resulting pain. Her resistance to oppression operated through engaged political action that represented a functional response, or "oppositional reading" of the life script previously envisioned for poor African Americans by the Mississippi social system.[54] As a normal human being, Hamer obviously wanted no more pain than others. Still her opposition to the status quo rings loud and clear: "If them crackers in Winona thought they'd discouraged me from fighting, I guess they found out different. I'm going to stay in Mississippi and if they shoot me down, I'll be buried there. I don't want equal rights with the white man, if I did, I'd be a thief and a murderer."[55] In 1963, local police in Winona Mississippi had indeed struck a rock.

The battleground experiences that personally impacted Hamer directly spurred her challenge to other structures. In Atlantic City, she demanded entry of African Americans to

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[51] Branch, *Parting the Waters,* 637-638; Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 40.
[52] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking in the Wind,* 238; Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 40-41.
[53] Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom*, 44-46.
[54] Debra Walker King, *African Americans and the Culture of Pain* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008), 155; Stuart Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other," in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices,* ed. Hall, (London: SAGE Publications, 1997), 223-275, espec. 269-270.
[55] Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges," in *Mississippi Writers,* ed. Abbott, 326.

electoral politics. Her symbolic power compelled a frustrated vice presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey to exclaim: "The President [Johnson] has said that he will not let that illiterate woman [Hamer] speak on the floor of the Democratic convention!"[56] Apparently Humphrey and Johnson never envisioned that other representations of Hamer by the public as an unfairly attacked, yet authentic fighter might empower her beyond the stale norms involved in traditional political horse trading.

However, steadfast MFDP group members followed her refusal of any compromise that would not permit them to select their own delegates to be seated, even knowing everyone would return home unseated. Hamer stated the experience taught her that blacks needed their own power in political office, because "we learned the hard way that even though we had all the law and all the righteousness on our side – that white man is not going to give up his power to us."[57] Moreover, she felt added pain from the condescending treatment received from mainstream civil rights leaders as well as government officials. SNCC leaders such as John Lewis and James Forman later pointed to the 1964 Democratic National Convention as a 'turning point,' and the site of a 'loss of innocence' which disillusioned leaders about continuing the same forms of civil rights protest.[58] After Atlantic City, program director Cleveland Sellers reflected a new rebellious mood when he wrote that SNCC now worked "not for civil rights, but for liberation."[59]

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[56] Hubert Humphrey quoted in Bartley, *The New South,* 349.
[57] Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges." in *Mississippi Writers,* ed, Abbott, 326-7.
[58] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking With the Wind,* 282; James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (New York: MacMillan, 1972), 395-96.
[59] Cleveland Sellers and Robert Terrell, *A River of No Return: The Making of a Black Militant and the Life and Death of SNCC* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1990); Lerone Bennett Jr., "SNCC: Rebels with a Cause," *Ebony,* 20, 9, (July, 1965): 146-153.

The Succor of African Travel

Fannie Lou Hamer and the SNCC leadership sorely needed the rejuvenation offered by a unique 1964 opportunity to travel to Africa. An ongoing tension and exhaustion, or what Julian Bond called the "battle fatigue" among movement veterans raised the possibility of adverse consequences if unabated, including mental instability.[60] Indeed the Atlantic City experience, which John Lewis called a "knockout punch," only exacerbated the wide feeling of burnout from the heated years of civil rights organizing in the South.[61] Moreover, protest defeats after such passionate struggles as the MFDP credentials campaign simply intensified the effects of oppression.

Therefore, SNCC leaders applauded when entertainer Harry Belafonte offered a fund-raising chest the month of Atlantic City which allowed a two week visit by ten activists to Guinea.[62] Belafonte continued a pattern of social activism by his earlier mentor Paul Robeson and provided financial support to Martin Luther King Jr. and others whom he later termed "noble warriors" of freedom movements in America, the Caribbean and Africa.[63] When SNCC activists sojourned in the capitol city of Conakry in September, Hamer received solicitous and affirming personal attention from President Sekou Toure, an African ruler with more knowledge of the political capabilities of indigenous women.[64] This largely self-educated President overcame snobbery himself from colonially educated indigenous elites, and secured state power through loyal, non-educated trade unionists and women's political groups formed by passionate but

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[60] Julian Bond, Interview by Elizabeth Gritter in November, 1999. Interview R-0345, in the Southern Oral History Program Collection #4007, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, URL Accessed 7-15-2009. http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/R-0345/R-0345.html.
[61] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking in the Wind*, 284-5.
[62] Bond Interview by Gritter, Interview R-0345, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, URL Accessed 7-15-2009, http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/R-0345/R-0345.html .
[63] Harry Belafonte, Interview by Amy Goodman for *Democracy Now!* on January 30, 2006, URL Accessed 7-23-2009 http://www.democracynow.org/2006/1/30/harry_belanfonte_on_bush_iraq_hurricane.
[64] Stokley Carmichael and Ekwueme Michael Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)* (New York: Scribner, 2003), 318; Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 293-297.

illiterate domestics.[65] Indeed, prior to Guinean independence the future president benefited personally from a women's brigade of "shock troops" led by seamstress Mafory Bangoura, that nightly protected the Sandervalia neighborhood where Toure lived.[66]

Toure, a descendant of revered 19th century nationalist fighter Samory Toure, incurred his own 20th century challenges as Guinea became the only French colony to reject President De Gaulle's offer of commonwealth affiliation by voting for immediate independence in 1958.[67] Shunned by the French, Toure was forced to seek alternative diplomatic channels and also explored socialism, communism and capitalism. With his earlier personal diplomacy in the U.S. altered by the death of President John Kennedy, Toure studied President Johnson and publicly called passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act "a great victory" at a meeting of the Organization of African Unity in July, 1964.[68] Two months later, Toure solicited SNCC activists through Harry Belafonte, who had helped establish global touring companies of Guinean music and dance groups. During the subsequent visit, Toure illuminated for James Forman and other SNCC leaders the globally linked nature of non-white freedom struggles, noting the similarities between SNCC struggles and what happened concerning African "social, economic, human…and political problems." [69]

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[65] Elizabeth Schmidt, "Top Down or Bottom Up?" in *American Historical Review,* 1000-1008.

[66] Elizabeth Schmidt, "Emancipate Your Husbands! Women and Nationalism in Guinea: 1953-1958" in *Women in African Colonial Histories,* Susan Geiger and Jean Allman, eds., (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 282-304, especially page 291 for seamstress M. Bangoura.

[67] Dorothy Shipley White, *Black Africa and De Gaulle: From the French Empire to Independence* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Press, 1979); Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *The Dictionary of Global Culture* (New York: Random House, 1996), 652.

[68] Philip E. Muehlenbeck, "Kennedy and Toure: A Success in Personal Diplomacy," *Diplomacy & Statecraft,* 1557-301x, 19, 1, (2008): 69 – 95; Mary Dudziak, "Discrimination and Diplomacy: Recovering the Fuller National Stake in 1960s Civil Rights Reforms," in *Handbook of Employment Discrimination Research: Rights and Realities*, eds. Laura Beth Nielson and Robert L. Nelson, (New York: American Bar Association, 2005), 216.

[69] James Forman, "Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Brief Report on Guinea," in Clayborn Carson, ed., *The Eyes on the Prize: A Civil Rights Reader* (New York, Penguin Books, 1991), 190-194.

Fannie Lou Hamer's experience during the Guinea trip became a balm that soothed exhaustion and psychic wounding from Atlantic City only a few weeks earlier. Hamer became an official favorite; indeed she received a special musical instrument from Diallo Alpha, the Guinean Minister of Information and Tourism.[70]As for Hamer, her personal comments reveal three reasons she called the trip "one of the proudest moments in my life."[71] First, after the personal rejection and mockery from President Johnson and others, Hamer received great succor in Africa and lauded "this President in Guinea who recognized us enough to talk to us." Hamer marveled at the handsome Toure's stature and presence, the government welcoming delegation and abundant hospitality of Villa Sily, mansion of the former French governor general.[72]Second, she now realized a former "brainwashing" against supposedly wild Africans "savages," frightened African Americans and made them ashamed.[73] Now, Hamer realized a new pride and rushed to freely communicate in spite of language barriers, often using fellow leader Robert Moses as a French translator.[74] Dona Richards, the first wife of Robert Moses who also made the the trip to Guinea and would later become the Professor Marima Ani, told of Hamer's joy:

> I think certainly, for Fannie Lou Hamer, it was an astonishing experience … she was wonderful because language was no barrier. She didn't speak a word of French, but she never stopped talking … she would just grab people and talk to them. And, of course, when you do that and you can do that from **some place very central and deep** within you, then you're communicating … it's like a whole window has been opened.[75]

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[70] James Forman, "Brief Report on Guinea," in Carson, ed., *The Eyes on the Prize*, 192

[71] Fannie Lou Hamer interviewed by J.H. O'Dell, "Life in Mississippi," *Freedomways*, 5, 2, (Spring, 1965): 231-24. www.novelguide.com/a/discover/dah_09/dah_09_0438.html URL Accessed 6-20-2009

[72] Fannie Lou Hamer interview with McMillen, January 25, 1973. University of Southern Mississippi Oral Archives http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/oh/hamer.htm URL Accessed 5-29-2009; Also see Guinea details in Julian Bond interview November, 1999 (R-0345) in the Southern Oral History Program Collection #4007, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. URL Accessed 6-20-09. http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/R-0345/R-0345.xml

[73] Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges." in *Mississippi Writers*,ed. Abbott, 329.

[74] Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 135-137.

[75] Che Fanon Wilkins, "The Making of Black Internationalists: SNCC and Africa Before the Launching of Black Power, 1960-1965*," Journal of African American History*, 92, 4, (Sept.2007): 468-90; "Yurugu: Dr. Marima Ani," URL Accessed 7-24-2009 http://africawithin.com/ani/ani_bio.htm .

Hamer later bared her heart about the African trip, remarking that overcoming the "separation from our own people…would bring tears in your eyes" and the inspiration she gained seeing a black government and nation with airline stewardesses, pilots, bank personnel and women who toted head parcels similar to her mother.[76] Hamer's evocation of a 'people' recalls scholar Nikhil Pal Singh's observations about how "social collectivities throughout the world [were] denied the ability to develop their cultural aspirations, political capacities, and economic potentials by racial and colonial violence."[77] For Hamer, the Guinea trip validated her personal vision of "what black people can do if we only get the chance in America."[78]Remembered by activist Julian Bond as a democrat who inspired by saying "I'm like you", Hamer believed everyone capable of some movement contribution, as her own actions showed. [79]

After returning from Africa, Hamer's reinvigorated energies translated into other SNCC and MFDP organizational ventures. She pursued national funding to support Supreme Court civil rights cases, and facilitated training and canvassing during several MFDP election battles.[80] Yet fellow civil rights workers most welcomed her unyielding stance in the midst of intrigues, setbacks, violence and murder. At an admittedly great human cost, Hamer used her anger, anguish and sacrifice for political and cathartic purposes.[81]

Prominent U.S. groups such as the NAACP and SCLC almost never comfortably utilized grass roots female leaders like Fannie Lou Hamer. Her closest female counterpart, strategic genius Ella Baker, helped form SNCC and SCLC but maintained a lower profile due to prior

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[76] Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges." in *Mississippi Writers,* ed. Abbott, 330.
[77] Singh, *Black Is A Country,* 133.
[78] Hamer interview by O'Dell, *Freedomways*, www.novelguide.com/a/discover/dah_09/dah_09_0438.html
[79] Bond interview by Grittmer, 1999 UNC Oral History http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/R-0345/R-0345.xml
[80] Fannie Lou Hamer, "Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party ca December, 1964" cited in University of Southern Mississippi archives http://anna.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/zeman/zz020b.html . Accessed 7-15-2009; "Negroes Run in Mississippi" and "3 Women Challenge House Seating" in *Student Voice*, 5, 13 and 23, McCain Archives, University of Southern Miss. http://anna.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/zeman/zz041b.html. URL Accessed 7-15-2008.
[81] See Lee, "Anger, Memory and Personal Power," in *Sisters in the Struggle,* ed. Collier-Thomas and Franklin, 139-169.

leadership battles within the NAACP and SCLC. Moreover, Hamer's rural farm background, limited schooling and lack of powerful connections confounded the mainstream elite, both black and white. National figures preferred sophisticated rather than rustic styles and claimed it was time for evolution from simple mass protest to pragmatic politics. The elite civil rights leaders preferred compromises rather than the principled MFDP stands that often resulted in political isolation. Yet even Bayard Rustin ultimately conceded that MFDP visibility and Fannie Lou Hamer's charismatic power forced President Johson and the national Democrats to accept the entrancae of blacks into convention politics. Bayard Rustin theorized that a true political revolution had occurred..[82]

After the negative publicity on MFDP voting exclusions and also the "Bloody Sunday" march in Selma Alabama, the re-elected President Johnson introduced Congressional legislation that became the 1965 Voting Rights Act. It overcame a filibuster attempt by Senator James Eastland, and invigorated federal legal oversight of elections in Mississippi and the entire South. The Act also strengthened the black franchise and black empowerment. In two years 235,000 blacks joined Mississippi voting rolls and their registration percentage rose from 7% to 60%.[83]

In Hamer's local community, the enlarged voting served notice against the network of existing power relations. Local Ruleville and Sunflower officials soon faced such societal alterations as Negros representing 42% of registered voters, and Negro candidates running for office. [84] When recalcitrant whites devised new resistance strategies, Hamer spurred continued activism with lawsuits such as *Hamer vs. Campbell*, *Hamer vs. Sunflower County*, and formation

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[82] Bayard Rustin, "From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement," *Commentary*, (February 1965): 25-31; idem, "Black Power and Coalition Politics," *Commentary*, (September 1966): 35-40.
[83] Crawford, "African American Women," in *Sisters in the Struggle*, ed. Collier-Thomas and Franklin, 134.
[84] Susan Weill, *In A Madhouse Din: Civil Rights Coverage by Mississippi's Daily Press* (Greenwood Publishing, 2002), 115.

of a group called the National Committee for Free Elections in Sunflower County.[85] Moreover, these local civil rights campaigns also expanded from voting and public accommodations into larger areas such as economics and education.

Hamer and activists such as James Foreman of CORE also fought class divisions in the Negro community to secure resources and roles for the poor in public policy arenas. The resulting controversies on political power and social class erupted locally in debates about federal funds for surplus food, early child care, and America's first Head Start program and the proceeds of community action grants. [86] Local and state officials exacerbated these controversies by spurring intrusive government audits and making onerous charges to Washington D.C. about the dispersal of federal poverty funds. State Republican official W. T. Wilkins interceded in a Head Start fight and boasted that "Fannie Lou Hamer is out of business."[87] Scholar Taylor Branch has cited the often vitriolic local interchanges:

> clerks at the welfare office declined even to accept her application for emergency surplus food until Diane Nash fired off a letter…reminding the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture that treatment of Hamer violated the laws under which Sunflower County received all of its public funds.[88]

The controversies continued at the state level with pressures from Senator Eastland. More intra-racial and class tensions also surfaced at the 1968 Democratic Convention. [89]

Eventually white resistance, public rancor and other ongoing struggles resulted in Activism falling off among Negroes. The mayors of Ruleville and Indianola co-opted some Negro ministers and teachers with a Sunflower County Progress coalition that defeated Mrs.

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[85] Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 223, 317, 325, 353n4, 364n16.
[86] Tom Levine and Polly Greenburg, "Rise and Demise of the Child Development Group in Mississippi" URL http://www.paheadstart.org/UserFiles/File/HSHistoryGreenburgLevinetc.doc; *New York Times*, September 10, 1995; URL Accessed 04-15-2008 http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990CE5DC1F39F933A2575AC0A963958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all
[87] Crespino, *In Search of Another Country*, 224.
[88] Branch, *Pillar of Fire*, 57.
[89] Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 713; Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 207.

Hamer for office in 1967. Senator Eastland continued to fly the communism banner, and former liberal and union supporters aligned with mainstream civil rights leadership instead of becoming advocates for the poor. Roy Wilkins withdrew the NAACP from COFO.[90] Eventually, COFO disbanded and Fannie Lou Hamer parted from SNCC due in part to issues of money, local autonomy and the debates about the movement role of whites in an increasing age of black power militancy.[91] Robert Moses dropped his surname and moved to Africa after changes to his draft deferment status. He would only return to Mississippi sixteen years later for the 1982 funeral of Amzie Moore. [92]

Still, civil rights and economic activism continued in Ruleville and Sunflower County, in spite of a complicated pattern of federal and local government collusion. With help from the National Council of Negro Women, Fannie Lou Hamer formed a Pig Bank for poor residents, and purchased a 40-acre Freedom Farm Co-op. Perhaps the most subversive activity to the planter power structure involved the short-lived Mississippi Freedom Labor Union. The MFLU started in Shaw, Mississippi - a town that straddled Bolivar and Sunflower counties.[93] By the mid-1960s, government supported mechanization and pesticides had decimated Delta Negro employment:

> A 1959 survey found 17,563 sharecroppers in the Delta. Five years later the figure was 8,788; in three more years it rapidly approached zero…between 1965 and 1966, even jobs for tractor drivers declined 25 percent. [94]

In a South traditionally hostile to *any* union organization, Negro farm and truck operators raised issues that the conservative status quo opposed. Farm automation had reduced Sunflower jobs by 50% between 1950 and 1960, which spurred a 20% increase in population out-migration. Yet its

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[90] Dittmer, *Local People*, 341-348; Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 209.
[91] Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 119, 139.
[92] Branch, *Pillar of Fire*, 613.
[93] Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 122-125.
[94] Cobb, "Somebody Done Nailed Us," in *Journal of American History*, 917.

federal representative who headed the House sub-committee on Agricultural Appropriations, Congressman Jamie Whittten, killed a bill in 1961 that would have funded tractor training for 3,000 Mississippians, of whom two-thirds of the program applicants were Negro.[95] Moreover, the 1965 strike by 1,000 MFLU members included 400 operators from Sunflower County and 15 who walked out on the Eastland plantation.[96] Yet failure came when a meager strike fund ran out, the walk-out fizzled, and planters pressured larger Negro farm operatives who eventually refused to join MFLU.[97] Meanwhile, in 1967 the federal government supplied $10.2M in grants and subsidies to large Sunflower County farmers while dispensing to poor blacks *and whites* less than $500,000 for food relief and $10,000 for manpower development.[98]

In this manner, the experience of the MFLU and the soon defunct Freedom Farm indicate the limits reached as 1960s civil right activism tried to both endure and expand in Sunflower County. The initial heady gains of Negro voter registration, media attention, and support by Northern liberals soon met an entrenched economic system dominated by congressionally supported cotton planters. Public segregation in Sunflower County had represented only the veneer of a white supremacy that totally exploited the poor.

Hamer and other rights activists found the 'totalizing tendency' of racial views in the U.S. often overwhelmed attempts to address underlying class and power relations.[99] When Fannie Lou Hamer visited Africa with John Lewis and James Forman in 1964, she returned with a more global consciousness that linked Mississippi oppression with the experience of formerly

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[95] Lawrence Guyot and Michael Thelwell, "The Politics of Necessity and Survival in Mississippi," in *Freedomways Reader*, edited by Esther Cooper Jackson and Constance Pohl, (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 2000), 103.
[96] Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 128, 215n37.
[97] Vanessa Tait, *Poor People's Unions: Rebuilding Labor from Below* (Boston: South End Press, 2005), 31-32
[98] Cobb, "Somebody Done Nailed Us," in *Journal of American History*, 919.
[99] See Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Meta-language of Race," *Signs*, 17, 21, (1992): 251-274.

alien lands.[100] While overt restrictions to the ballot box would eventually be lifted just years after she heard Jim Bevel's 1962 Ruleville sermon at Williams Chapel Church, Hamer's vision and fight expanded for the recognition and compensation of blacks who "…built this country on our bent back and made it rich…fought and died for what was called "Democracy."[101]

As her political battles intensified, Hamer also faced the personal pains of family deaths, ongoing material privation, and severe health issues. By her death fifteen years later Sunflower County residents still had many miles to go in order to reach full political and economic citizenship. As the 1970-80s evolved, Mississippi witnessed ongoing and vigorous political fights between white supremacists and Negro activists. A freedom relay contest awaited the next running crew. As Fannie Lou Hamer told attendees of a 1971 banquet for the NAACP Defense Fund --"It's in your hands."[102]

Outside of Mississippi a freedom baton pressed forward. An unleashed black vote soon revealed the changed American reality of urban political machines. In 1968, black voting surged and Shirley Chisholm of New York became the first black female Congresswoman in the 192 years since American nation independence. Charlene Mitchell ran for President as candidate on a Communist Party ticket. In 1973 Shirley Chisholm ran for the presidential nomination on a major party ticket, opening the established national field for black aspirants. Next, presidential candidate Jesse Jackson performed the keynote address for the Democratic Convention in 1984,

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[100] William Minter, Gail Hovey, and Charles Cobb Jr., eds., *No Easy Victories: African Liberation and American Activists over a Half Century, 1950-2000* (Trenton, NY: Africa World Press, 2000). URL Accessed 4-22-2009. http://www.noeasyvictories.org/select/03_cobb.php; Book available from http://www.africaworldpressbooks.com

[101] Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges," in *Mississippi Writers,* ed. Abbott, 330.

[102] Hamer, "The Special Plight and the Role of the Black Woman," in *Available Means,* ed. Ritchie, 266. Hamer uses the well known ending line of a Negro folkale on personal responsibility. The same fable was also famously used by Toni Morrison in her 1993 acceptance for the Nobel Prize for Literature. For a folk analysis see Sarah Michaels and Richard Sohmer, "Narratives and Inscriptions: Cultural Tools, Power and powerful Sense-making," in *Multiliteracies: literacy learning and the design of social futures*, eds. Bill Cope and Mary Kalantzis, (New York: Routledge, 2000), 267-288. For the complete Toni Morrison speech "The Bird in Our Hand: Is it Living or Dead" URL Accessed 6-3-2009 http://azer.com/aiweb/categories/magazine/63_folder/63_articles/63_morrison_nobel.html
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and Fannie Lou Hamer was the first name mentioned in his famous Rainbow Nation speech.[103] Following on the podium, the black mayor of Mayersville, Missisippi, Unita Blackwell, tearfully remembered her deceased mentor Hamer and "…all who had died, all who will live, and for all the generations to come." Jackson himself ran for President again in 1988 with a very strong showing.

However nothing flows in a straight line; the tide of freedom dreams traverse back and forth until certain wave prints appear in the sand. Periodically the waters gasp and retreat because the gully of pain is too deep, as when Hamer's daughter died after three separate hospitals refused to a admit Negro. Yet twenty years after Jackson's presidential run and forty-four years after Fannie Lou Hamer traveled to Atlantic City, Barack Obama entered a Democratic Convention hall with a sizeable number of blacks and women among the seated and credentialed delegates committed in his favor.

At Obama's eventual presidential inauguration in 2009, a much older Robert Moses reflected on the MDFP and the power of Fannie Lou Hamer:

> you know, we could have gotten the right to vote without the opening up of the national political party structure. And the party structure wasn't opened up by getting the right to vote; the party structure was opened up by directly challenging in Mississippi, and the right of Mississippi to send an all-white delegation to the 1964 National Democratic Convention. And it was Fannie Lou Hamer and all the people in that delegation that really *forced* the national Democratic Party to open up, you know?[104]

In Washington DC that day, another singing sister who inherited great cultural capital represented the shadow of Sunflower County in the form of Aretha, daughter of Reverend C.L. Franklin whose family had joined the Great Migration to Detroit after the Joe Pullam

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[103] Reverend Jesse Jackson, "Address to the Democratic National Convention, July 17, 1984," in *Eyes on the Prize Reader*, ed. Carson, 704.

[104] Robert Moses, Interview by Amy Goodman for *Democracy Now!* January 21, 2009, URL Accessed 7-23-2009 http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_16566.cfm .

lynching.[105] Surely the battlefield education that Fannie Lou Hamer received, held firm and passed along -- prepared another pole position for the anchors of future freedom contests.

[105] Salvatore, *Singing in a Strange Land*, 10-12.

AMANDLA EYETHU (POWER IS OURS)

> We are living in an era of revolution, and the revolt of the American Negro is part of the rebellion against the oppression and colonialism which has characterized this era…It is incorrect to classify the revolt of the Negro as simply a racial conflict of black against white, or as a purely American problem. Rather we are seeing a global rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, the exploited against the exploiter.
>
> Malcolm X, 1965[1]

> The author witnessed a more direct expression during the performance of a popular soul group in July of 1976 in Soweto, during the height of uprisings. When the world 'power' appeared incidentally in the lyrics of a love ballad, the female vocalist raised her fist in a Black Power salute. Instantaneously fists rose throughout the hall amidst a response chorus of a*mandla eyethu*. ('power is ours')
>
> David Coplan, "African Musician"[2]

This chapter explores sources of personal power in the context of resistance activism. In this study, personal power is defined separately from Robert Dahl's famous "power-over" theory, which focused on influencing or dominating others in ways conducive to one's own perspective.[3] Rather, this thesis follows the overall concepts of "power-as-ability" and "power-as-capacity" as outlined in the works of Peter Morriss and Nancy Hartsock. [4] Furthermore, the form of power herein assumes no vertical or hierarchical orientation, but rather allows for a structural overlapping and a "balancing of multiple powers" as postulated by Patricia Hill Collins.[5] Cynthia Enloe also used a concept of multiplicity to remind international analysts:

> forms of political power are diverse...They relate to each other, sometimes in ways that subvert one another, and sometimes in ways that provide each with their respective resiliency.[6]

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[1] Malcolm X quoted in *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America, 1945-2006,* edited by Manning Marable (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 3rd edition, 2007), 86.

[2] David Coplan, "The African Musician and the Development of the Johannesburg Entertainment Industry, 1900-1960," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 5, 2, (April, 1979): 135-164, especially p150.

[3] Robert Dahl, "Power" in *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, edited by D.A. Sills, (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1968), 12, 405-15.

[4] Peter Morriss, *Power: A Philosophical Analysis* (Manchester University Press, 2002), xxx-xlv; Nancy Hartsock, "Community/Sexuality/Gender: Rethinking Power," in *Revisioning the Political: Feminist Reconstructions of Traditional Concepts in Western Political Theory*, eds. Nancy J. Hirschmann and Christine Di Stefano, (Boulder, Co: Westview Press., 1996), 27-49.

[5] Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*: *Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 224-228.

Conventional power formulations focus on males as definitive actors, due to perceptions of sex privileges, rights and temperaments. Historic links between power and violence also shape such sexual stereotypes as 'dominating males' or 'passive females.' Females supposedly focus mainly on safety and cooperative networks to nurture children, rather than exhibit the supposedly male traits of aggression and competence that are deemed conducive to power accumulation. However any such tendencies are not inherently biological or universal.[7] Rather, societies and cultures interrelate factors such as ideology, modernization, industrialization, or notions of proper behavior to make pervasive projections onto human sexuality.

Power ideologies also affect how behaviors are evaluated, especially when contrary to state law. Herein, the term ideology refers to "… the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination."[8] A good example of linkages between law, power and ideology can be found in South Africa's Black Administration Act No. 38, which codified African customs under which a woman was considered a perpetual minor.[9] The legal status of a minor could complicate both the evaluation and prosecution for defiant behaviors that the government deemed illegal. Further complications resulted from the differing customs of South Africa's eleven major ethnic language groups, many of whom practiced marriage contracts and the payment of a bride price. When Lilian Ngoyi counseled protestors of the ANC Women's league during the height of militant anti-pass protests, to plan beforehand "so that we might

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[6] Cynthia Enloe, "Margins, silences and bottom rungs; how to overcome the estimation of power in the study of international relations," in *International theory: positivism and beyond*, eds. Steve Smith et al, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 186-202. See also John Hoffman, *Gender and Sovereignty: Feminism, the State and International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

[7] Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91, 5 (December 1986): 28-50.

[8] John Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture* (San Francisco: Stanford University Press, 1990), 56.

[9] Thomas Wartenberg, *The Forms of Power, From Domination to Transformation* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1990) ,Chapter 6; Peter Morriss, *Power: A Philosophical Analysis* (Manchester University Press, 2002); Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, (New York: Macmillan, 2005); Amy Allen, *The Power of Feminist Theory: Domination, Resistance, Solidarity* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1999); Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, "Power In International Politics*," International Organization*, 59, (2005): 39-75; Martin Chanock, "Writing South African Legal History: A Prospectus," *The Journal of African History*, 30, 2 (1989): 265-288.

strike fatal blows at the enemy when the times comes," she sharply altered expectations of the power of both women leaders and followers.[10] Thus, the resistance spurred among African women by Lilian Ngoyi and the ANC Women's League unsettled social and legal proscriptions.

Ngoyi presents an intriguing candidate for explorations into the multiple sources of power. She had a poor background of limited formal education, supported an extended family on a worker's salary after early widowhood, never voted due to constitutional exclusions, and was never elected to government office. Yet Ngoyi suggests an ultimate case of "power as ability" due to her capacity to inspire large scale public action and organization. She brilliantly channeled the force of a vibrant personality and the high levels of energy generated by extended speeches without printed notes. Her political slogans used penetrating cultural metaphors that incited insurgent protest, particularly for the women who understood the generational accountability demanded by her admonition that "my womb shakes" from the advent of Bantu Education.[11] Famously, Ngoyi also spurred men with statements such as "We don't want men who wear skirts under their trousers. If they don't want to act, let us women exchange garments with them."[12] Her appointment to the ANC inner management sanctum in only four years highlights the organization's attempt to quickly incorporate such a powerful new political force.

Lilian Ngoyi's leadership, political ascendancy and personal power crafted an enduring political space for women in South Africa. Her activism utilized the overlapping features of her identities as a union organizer, factory worker, coalition officer, mother, family daughter, widow, NEC member of the ANC, and the seamstress who constructed the blouses which became the ANC Women's militant uniform. Along with the symbolic powers referenced earlier, Lilian

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[10] Lilian Ngoyi, "Presidential Address," in *Women Writing Africa*,ed. Daymond, 243.
[11] The ability of cultural metaphors to impact state political debates is a demonstrated phenomenon. For a discussion of Winston Churchhill's famous metaphor on the Iron Curtain, see Patrick Wright, *Iron Curtain: From Stage to Cold War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[12] Ezekiel Mphahlele, 1956 "Lilian Ngoyi - The most talked-of woman in Politics," *Drum*, March, 1956.

Ngoyi employed the great "power of disbelief" on the repressive apartheid constructions placed upon African women.[13] Ngoyi refused to believe that African women had limited futures in the urban areas, as the apartheid government planned. She crystallized this disbelief for the repressed African collective, and thereby helped shape decades of strident protest. The 1976 Soweto singer which initiated the crowd response of two Zulu terms -- *Amandla* (power) and *eyethu* (our own) – recalled the notions of powerful strength and ability from the earlier 1956 song of the Women's March. *Wathinta umfazi, wathinta imbokoko* (You Strike the Women, you strike a Rock) still remains an iconic motto within South Africa.[14] The inherent power concepts within such cultural expressions highlight the awakened forms of female organizing and mass political consciousness that Ngoyi shepherded.

Ngoyi's sudden and unexpected intrusion in the political world in 1952 solidified and strengthened the multi-racial protest movement. The apartheid government moved to suppress her vitality, yet stopped short of the ultimate life penalty as African women turned even more militant by decade's end. It took a massacre at Sharpesville in 1960 before the tide of mass protest turned. Despite being banned and marooned within four walls at home, Lilian Ngoyi managed to maintain belief in the efficacy of social protest for the future of her people. Though silenced from public debate, Ngoyi retained both symbolic power and the apparent ability to unify actors in the protest struggle. During a brief respite in her bans in 1973, she visited Nelson Mandela at Robben Island after a decade away from the spotlight. A secret police report gives Mandela's illuminating comments:

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[13] Elizabeth Janeway, *Powers of the Weak* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980) cited by bell hooks, *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (Boston: MA; South End Press, 2000), 84-95.

[14] An alternative song translation exists: "Touching a woman is like touching a crushing stone" See Nhlanhla Jordan,
"Feminist Methodology and Research Among Rural African Women in the Transkei, a paper presented at the 1996 Proceedings of the International Sociological Conference in Durban, South Africa. URL Accessed 6-6-2009. http://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~intlsa/en/meetings/reports/SouthernAfrica.html.

> You know Lily, people here (Robben Island) do rely too much on you. They have a trust on you, they rely on you too much. You know if we hear that you unite people like this ….. That is very important to us here."[15]

The political legacy which resulted from Ngoyi's personal powers later continued unabated in spite of almost two decades of government repression. In this manner, the enduring force of Ngoyi's profile appears reminiscent of those who emerged from Robben Island and Pollsmoor Prison in 1990, a decade after her death.

Similar to Lilian Ngoyi, Fannie Lou Hamer suggests the applicability of non-traditional sources of personal power. Hamer's ongoing realities in the battleground known as Mississippi required the marshaling of all her indigenous capabilities. Using a cultural repertoire of spirituals, scriptures, narrative stories and authentic legacies of endurance, Hamer developed a forceful personality that effectively challenged the racist proscriptions of her society. In so doing, Hamer projected the foundations of her multiple social identities as parental favorite, trusted wife, leader in a large extended family, and active community spokesperson with the goodwill engendered from her long-standing role as a plantation timekeeper. That such a presumably humble portfolio of gifts could be fashioned by Hamer into weapons of power against entrenched segregation provides a new interpretation of Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and symbolic power.[16]

The ground-shaking which resulted from a simple and timely question "*Is this America?"* provides support for this assertion on Hamer's personal power. The indigenous genius of

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[15] Police Surveillance Files, South African Police Systems Archives, Pretoria entry dated August 25, 1973, as quoted in "The Private Letters: Granted Permission August 11, 1973," *Sunday Times* Heritage Project, URL Accessed 7-28-09 http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/memorials/GP/LilianNgoyi/Article.aspx?id=561657

[16] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *The Sociology of Economic Life*, translated by Richard Nice and edited by Mark Granoveetter and Richard Swedberg, (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1995), 96-111; idem, Pierre Bourdieu,, "Structures, Habitus, Power: A Basis for a Theory of Symbolic Power," In *Culture Power, History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*. edited by Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Orthner (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994). See also Elizabeth Janeway, *Powers of the Weak*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980) and James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 255, 309.

Hamer's rhetoric did not immediately result in conventions seats for MFDP delegates, but surely its long-term impact compares favorably to such foundational mottos of the United States as "*Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death*" by Thomas Paine or "*Ask Not What Your Country Can Do for You*" by President John Kennedy. Notwithstanding Hamer's later poverty and pain, her question propelled America closer to its founding creed after three oppressive centuries. When Hamer's personal nature and cultural vantage point meshed with historical circumstance and collective action, the social force which resulted was recognized by recipients at authority levels of the state as pure power. This explains Mississippi's later need to "put Hamer out of business."

After Atlantic City, the power of Hamer's persona was adroitly recognized by Malcolm X when they jointly addressed rallies in Harlem just two months before his own death. This former separatist Nation of Islam leader moved closer to public work with civil rights activists after returning from Africa in 1964. SNCC leaders who had extended their overseas sojourn after Guinea trip found wherever they went African leaders queried them about Malcolm X. Soon after, SNCC President John Lewis and activist Don Harris unexpectedly met Malcolm X at an air layover in Nairobi, Kenya. [17] Upon his return to America, Malcolm X journeyed briefly to the South for a SNCC meeting in Selma.[18]

That December, Hamer joined Malcolm X at an MFDP rally and a subsequent visit to the Audubon Hotel for his Organization of Afro-American Unity. (OAU) Hamer's address as primary speaker emphasized her volatile experiences in Mississippi, and she sang with the Freedom Singers a song called *Odinga Odinga* -- penned for the new Vice President of Kenya. Malcolm X indicated that civil rights songs usually did not impress him but *Odinga Odinga*

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[17] Lewis and D'Orso , *Walking in the Wind*, 284-289.
[18] Carson, *In Struggle*, 135-6.

energized him for the freedom battles certain to come.[19] He expressed shame at the complicity of black men in Hamer's jail beating, and commended her as "the country's number one freedom-fighting woman" whose struggles in Atlantic City erased American differences in the North and South, and illustrated similarities between Mississippi and the Congo.[20] Using the context of Hamer's fight experiences, Malcolm X then recalled fights by the Kenyan group known in the 1950s as the Mau Mau, and their contributions to the real African political gains in that country. By publicly acknowledging Hamer's power to inspire and educate, and framing this power alongside the new OAU practice of leadership roles to women, Malcolm X affirmed recent changes to his former Nation of Islam ideologies about the secondary role of women in political affairs.[21]

Hamer's own public language after Atlantic City also increasingly revealed her awareness of self-defense principles beyond non-violent protests in voting or citizenship rights. In a manner that recalls Ngoyi's evolution when she prepared women to strike blows at the enemy, Hamer indicated powerful intentions to continue freedom fights. For example, when asked about her survival in the midst of local intimidation, after her Guinea trip and meeting with Malcolm X Hamer revealed:

> I keep a shotgun in every corner of my bedroom and the first cracker even look like he wants to throw some dynamite on my porch won't write his mama again.[22]

Such a statement reflects the need for self-defense, or "power-as-the-ability" to protect one's person and/or potential vision of the world. The statement never advocates power for

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[19] Malcolm X and George Breitman, *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements* (New York: Grove Press, 1990), 105-107.
[20] Malcolm X quoted in Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 143 and Belinda Robnett, *How Long? How Long? African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 175.
[21] William L. Sales, *From Civil Rights to Black Liberation: Malcolm X and the Organization of Afro-American Unity* (Boston: South End Press, 1994), 210.
[22] Hamer, "To Praise Our Bridges," in *Mississippi Writers*, ed. Abbott, 324.

domination. Neither does the statement in itself nullify Hamer's religious principles, though it may indicate that Christians have human limits in turning the other cheek.

Hamer also honored the powerful ability of certain community elders to withstand intimidation, and apparently emulated them as models of generational accountability. In 1972 after a decade of white backlash, Hamer remembered "from the beginning of the movement here…all of them was elderly people…they were the ones that stepped up in the front and stood there…like Brother Joe MacDonald stood there until he died, with all kinds of pressure."[23] The next year, she reported disappointment after blacks made political comprises at the 1972 National Convention with a white delegate group formed by journalist Hodding Carter: "some people really are trying to make the change…some is thoroughbred rats… but they've got sense enough to realize what power means, and they've got sense enough to know that people can move them with the vote."[24] For the analysis in this thesis it remains helpful to note that Carter, a liberal by contemporary standards in Mississippi, testified in Congress in 1966 against the future of one-man-one-vote rule in South Africa. Carter traveled to Cape Town in 1959 on an exchange program, and presumably shared affinities with local cousins and an uncle there who had fought with the Boers in the South Africa War (1899-1902).[25]

In another instance, Hamer supported Stokely Carmichael of SNCC against criticisms for his black power slogans and symbols after 1966. Hamer noted that Stokely "was not responsible for the bitterness and unrest of black people" and "America should wake up and do something

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[23] Hamer interview with McMillen, April 14, 1972 University of Southern Mississippi Oral Archives, URL Accessed 5-29-2009 http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/oh/hamer.htm .
[24] Hamer interview with McMillen, January 25, 1973 University of Southern Mississippi Oral Archives, URL Accessed 5-29-2009 http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/oh/hamer.htm .
[25] Mrs. Betty Carter interviewed by Anne Richie, April 11, 1990, URL Accessed 7-6-2009 http://wpcf.org/oralhistory/cart2.html; Ronald Walters, *Pan Africanism in the African Diaspora: An Analysis of Modern Afrocentric Political Movements* (Detroit Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 207, 414n16.

about the cause."[26] Thus, Hamer asserted that the need for changed social conditions formed the root of black quests for power. In this vein, Hamer expressed a strengthened resolve for both oppositional resistance and for mitigating social unrest by altering the character of illegitimate racial systems. However, her own activism increasingly moved to economic and political systems. She envisioned 1970s power politics as a necessary successor to the mass demonstrations of the prior decade, stating that "even though it's not called civil rights, it still on the move to change."[27]

Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer served as generational anchors who operated within pressurized crucibles, and achieved recognition within social protest movements for their non-deferential oration towards agents of racial domination. Both operated in bold manners uncharacteristic for their time, place and low social status. Both mobilized popular support and sparked revolutionary changes in their respective countries, a fact that resulted in state repression in the form of jail detention, beating, and solitary confinement. Yet despite the isolation, pain and poverty that marked their later years, this essay posed that Ngoyi and Hamer effectively deployed symbolic powers that shaped foundational events. These women served as relay anchors in national movements to eliminate internal colonialism and expand democracy. They achieved these forward baton thrusts at considerable cost, but maintained a generational accountability for protest.

Indeed, the political reach of Ngoyi and Hamer reflected movement continuities with many prior resistance efforts. Both women represented communities with resurgent activism in

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[26] Jack Beck, *CBS Reports: The New Left*. Broadcast September 12, 1967, as reported in Mary Blue, ""Stoke the Joke" and his "Self-Appointed White Critics" A Clash of Values on Network Television News 1966-1970." A paper presented in 2005 at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. URL Accessed 7-6-2009 https://ls2.cmich.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A3=ind0601&L=AEJMC&E=8bit&P=946280&B=--&T=text%2Fplain;%20charset=iso-8859-1

[27] Hamer interview with McMillen, January 25, 1973 University of Southern Mississippi Oral Archives, URL Accessed 5-29-2009 http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/oh/hamer.htm .

the inter-war years and after World War II. In South Africa before the 1950s, an ANC legacy of four decades co-existed with rights activism from the worldwide Garvey Movement, the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union, local indigenous Churches, Pan-African ventures, and the local Communist Party.[28] However, women only became full voting members of the ANC in 1943, though they acted politically prior to then as un-official ANC assistants or members of their own Bantu Women's League which was formed in 1918.[29]In the United States, the new SNCC of the 1960s evolved with founding help from older activists from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the National Council of Negro Women, and independent Black Churches.[30] The freedom projects of both countries grappled fitfully with leadership roles for females and non-elites. Moreover, international Cold War debates also impacted the freedom movements.[31]

Yet while there are movement similarities, a difference existed in the relative influence of communist organizers. Ngoyi joined three others members of the ANC National Executive Committee in participation with communist front organizations.[32] Yet though SNCC received taunts about possible communist influences from segregationists such as Senator James Eastland

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[28] Frances Meli, *A History of the ANC: South Africa belongs to us* (Harare: Zimbawbe Publishing House, 1988); Heidi Holland, *The Struggle: A History of the African National Congress* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1990); William Beinart, "Amafelandawonye: the Die-Hards: Popular Protest and Women's Movements in the Herschel District in the 1920s," in *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa* eds. William Beinart and Colin Bundy, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 222-69; Helen Bradford, *A Taste of Freedom: The I.C.U. in Rural South Africa, 1924-1930* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Dominic Fortescue, "The Communist Party of South Africa and the African Working Class of the 1940s," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies,* 24, 3, (1991): 481-512.

[29] Ginwala, "Women and the African National Congress," *Agenda*: 77-93.

[30] Wesley Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC's Dream for a New America, (*Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Aldon Morris, *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: Free Press, 1984); Jacqueline Dowd-Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History*, 91, 4 (March, 2005): 1233-1263; Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black Is A Country*: *Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy (*Boston: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[31] Mary Duziak, *Cold War, Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and The Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena (*Boston: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[32] Scott Thomas, *The Diplomacy of Liberation: ANC Foreign Relati*ons (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1996), 158.

and Ruleville Mayor Charles Dorrough, Fannie Lou Hamer disclaimed any leadership direction from communists.[33] Another difference in the liberation campaigns, though beyond this essay, lay in the relative external success of each project in effectively using the new United Nations. For South Africa, the impact of newly sovereign India in raising questions for the United Nations became crucial.[34]

Ultimately, this movement background suggests the complex factors involved in reaching the stages where Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer operated. As noted by the former ANC anti-apartheid activist who later became Speaker of Parliament, Dr. Frene Ginwala during an inaugural Ngoyi lecture in South Africa in 2006:

> Without denying individual agency, we need to recognize that those we portray as heroines are the products of material conditions, culture, social and economic forces within society at any given time. These shaped the individuals, while personal character enabled them to seize the moment and overcome the constraints of the existing order.[35]

Battlefield Education & Personal Liberation

During fifteen years of public activism that began in 1962, Fannie Lou Hamer encountered many disappointments. These included loss of home and stable employment, the threat and reality of personal violence, direct and implicit sabotage by government officials, a periodic disregard by mainstream civil rights leaders and class-conscious segments of her

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[33] Mills, *This Little Light of Mine,* 102; Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-1968 (*Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 2004); Chris Myers Asch, *The Senator and the Sharecropper: The Freedom Struggles of James O. Eastland and Fannie Lou Hamer* (New York: The New Press, 20080; Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart,* 245.

[34] "Satyagraha in S. Africa," *The Hindu,* August 27, 1952, URL Accessed 5-6-2009 http://www.thehindu.com/2002/08/27/stories/2002082700980801.htm; Letter dated 12 September 1952, addressed to the United Nations Secretary General, as cited in Francis Njubj, *Race for sanctions: African Americans against apartheid, 1946-1994 (*Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 175n45. Post-war World War 2 attempts to involve the United Nations in the case of the American Negro floundered. See Carol Anderson, "From Hope to disillusion, African Americans, the United Nations, and the Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1947," *Diplomatic History*, 20, 4, (Fall, 1996): 531-563.

[35] "As South Africa's Madam Speaker, Ginwala Still Shaping History," *Advance*, Sept. 11, 2000 URL 5-20-2009 http://advance.uconn.edu/2000/000911/00091115.htm ; Frene Ginwala, "Text of Lilian Ngoyi Inaugual Lecture - August 2006," URL Accessed 5-4-2009, http://www.dac.gov.za/speeches/other/Speech28Aug06.htm .

community, and the systemic poverty which permeated the black experience in Mississippi. The entirety of these struggles in her "battlefield of life" highlight the personal costs to develop the alternate structures of being and living needed to transform society. [36]In this manner, Hamer's painful journey recalls the persistent campaigns waged by activists for racial, economic and democratic change in Mississippi, the South, and the broader nation.[37]

Yet Hamer still articulated and carved out a meaningful role for the leadership of black women in political contests. She argued that this role emanated within a black liberation struggle of three centuries, forcefully telling the NAACP Legal Defense Fund:

> …I work for the liberation of all people, because when I liberate myself, I'm liberating other people…The air you breathe is politics. So you have to be involved…We have a job as black women…to bring justice where we've had so much injustice…whether you have a PhD, D.D., or no D, we're all in this together."[38]

The strategies that Hamer articulated for political involvement involved a changing mix of voting and elections, land development for housing and farming, and armed self-defense. Her strident advocacy and bold stances also contributed to the foundations of American feminism which emerged within the new National Organization of Women.[39] However, Hamer's notions stopped short of seeking liberation *from* black men, as she clearly asked that black women work

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[36] George Lipsitz, 'The Struggle for Hegemony," *The Journal of American History*, 75, 1, (1988): 146-150; Chana Lee, *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

[37] Neil McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the age of Jim Crow* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1990); Nan Elizabeth Woodruff, *American Congo: The African American Freedom Struggle In the Delta (*Boston: Harvard University Press, 2003); George Lipsitz, *A Life in the Struggle: Ivory Perry and the Culture of Opposition* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995); Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Postwar New York City* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2006); Jeanne Theoharis, et al, eds., *Groundwork: Local Black freedom movements in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2005); Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black Is A Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2004); Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America, 1945-2006 (*Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 3rd edition, 2007).

[38] Hamer, "The Special Plight and the Role of the Black Woman," in *Available Means*, ed. Ritchie, 262-266.

[39] Sara M. Evans, *Tidal Wave: How Women Changed America at Century's End* (New York: Free Press Reprint edition, 2004); idem, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Knopf, 1979).

"side by side with this black man" and assume public battles currently too dangerous for men, "to open the doors for our men…and be there to back them up all the way."[40]

For another viewpoint, in *For Freedom's Sake* scholarly biographer Chana Lee documented how the racial battlefields in Mississippi increased the magnitude of Hamer's personal costs for civil rights leadership. Lee theorized that Hamer fitfully learned to accommodate pains that were never truly defeated, that she co-existed with "pain and challenge".[41] Though Lee's assessment refrained from perpetuating simplistic mantras of strong black womanhood, any formulation that overly emphasizes Hamer's pain risks shortchanging her rebellious leadership. Freedom fighters with Hamer's caliber of commitment led in a manner similar to those New York firemen of September 2001 – servant leaders who ran up exploding stairs while others quickly ran down.

While Hamer died impoverished and somewhat betrayed, she realized the same possible consequences of resistance which confronted Malcolm X, Che Guevara and Medgar Evers. In some ways, the negative health outcomes for Fannie Lou Hamer mirrored the earlier burnout endured by Ruby Doris Smith Robinson, a young SNCC Executive Director based in Atlanta.[42] Likewise, Lilian Ngoyi realized the baneful potential of banishment from the experiences of activists Josie Palmer and Elizabeth Mafeking. These women, who remembered their ancestors, became foremothers themselves of future activists. [43] Therefore, while no personal pain should be minimized, perhaps it can be tempered by remembrance that rebellious leaders don't overlook

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[40] Phyl Garland, "Builders of a New South: Negro Heroines of Dixie Play Major Role in Challenging Racist Traditions," *Ebony*, 21, August 1966: 37. URL Accessed 5-29-2009 http://books.google.com/books?id=ys2MeNoI4NIC&pg=PA27&dq=ebony+august+1966&source=gbs_toc_pages_r&cad=0_1; Hamer, "The Special Plight and the Role of the Black Woman," in *Available Means*, ed. Ritchie, 264.
[41] Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, 181.
[42] Cynthia Griggs Fleming. *Soon We Will Not Cry: The Liberation of Ruby Smith Robinson* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).
[43] Diane Russell, *Lives of Courage: Women for a New South Africa* (London: Virago Press, 1989).

personal costs, but still act and move towards their desired communal purpose. This motivation, which requires a harnessing of personal power, provided catalysts for the leadership of Fannie Hamer and Lilian Ngoyi. Both assumed the runner's stance -- and waited for the opening shot -- in the anchor position of their generation's freedom quest to liberate themselves.

CONCLUSIONS ON LILIAN NGOYI AND FANNIE LOU HAMER

Despite banning, poverty and isolation in later years, Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer forcefully contested the power relations in their societies. Though experiences of disappointment followed early triumphs, their influence never totally disappeared. The apartheid of South Africa and segregation in the U.S. South represented mechanisms of domination and white supremacy. To counter these ideologies, Ngoyi and Hamer turned their limited cultural resources into instruments of power that rattled premier executives of state. If systems of hegemony require consent as well as force to continue, then the resistance of Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer "troubled the waters" of existing power equilibriums.

To carry resistance into high places, Ngoyi and Hamer formulated interracial contacts, networks of national and grassroots leaders, and tempered prevailing ideologies with experience on the ground. For example, Ngoyi solicited aid from the Methodist *manyano* women while Hamer cajoled hesitant Baptist ministers.[1] Ngoyi applied teachings on peasant revolutions learned from Govan Mbeki and sought literature on Trotsky during her banishment, at a time when all ANC elite beside Oliver Tambo suffered on Robben Island.[2] Both women operated as masters of political language and showed rhetorical excellence. Both projected life experiences and cultural integrity that aided realization of resistance tactics. Lilian Ngoyi envisioned an attack on the entire apartheid structure, and reminded African women how their situation in South Africa linked with the Egyptians who fought colonial oppression against the British, French, and Israeli forces during the Suez crisis in 1956." [3] In 1964 New York, Fannie Lou Hamer sang the chorus of *Odinga, Odinga* - which cautioned that freedom seekers often end up

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[1] See Mia Brandel-Syrier, *Black Women in Search of God* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1962).
[2] "Trying to Find Banned Books," *Sunday Times* Heritage Project; URL Accessed 7-18-2009 http://heritage.thetimes.co.za/memorials/GP/LilianNgoyi/Article.aspx?id=560924 .
[3] Lilian Ngoyi, "Presidential Address," in *Women Writing Africa,* ed. Daymond, 243.

in a southern swamp - and immediately sent Malcolm X into an inspired talk on Mississippi, the Congo and the Mau Mau. [4] Both women agitated for change decades before it came.

As the woman whose future mobility was less geographically restricted, Fannie Lou Hamer continued social activism and helped launch the women right's movement in the United States with founders of the National Organization of Women. While mainstream civil rights leaders later marginalized Fannie Lou Hamer, political and elected leaders in Mississippi continued their local repression of Hamer's efforts even near her death in 1977. Yet today she recognized as an iconic freedom figure in racially progressive circles. For black Americans, the rebellion relay taken up by Fannie Lou Hamer represented a phenomenon that reflected the world context their struggles for personal freedom.

Though Fannie Lou Hamer escaped the stark personal confinement of Lilian Ngoyi, the stressful battlefield of her last fifteen years is the first in a litany of similarities in the women's personal lives. Their similarities may have forged personalities and experiences that fit the women for the liberation struggle. Both had special family places, Ngoyi as the only girl and Hamer as the last of twenty. Both cited the example of their mother's personal strengths in spite of struggle, and cared for them extensively as they aged. Both saw their fathers weighted down by a lifetime of labor with meager results. Neither finished much beyond a primary education, and hence approached leadership from everyday survival instead of theory or intellectual positions. Neither enjoyed a marriage that contributed financial ease - Ngoyi became a widow and Hamer's sharecropper husband supported her politics but needed her cash contributions.

Their common life cycles continued. Both adopted a daughter in addition to their own children, and assumed added financial responsibilities for extended relatives. Both recalled inherited knowledge of racial resistance against oppression - for example a legal case against

[4] Mills, *This Little Light of Mine*, 141.

railroad discrimination in South Africa and the self-defense against vigilantes and lynching parties in the Delta region.[5] Both assumed work leadership before politics, Hamer as a plantation timekeeper and Ngoyi as a union steward and elected official. Both became activists in their 40s after a friend's invitation to a organizing meeting. Both directly lost that employment status from complications related to social protest.

Both endured state persecution and the health impacts of isolation, poverty and stress. Persecution arose from powerful figures who waived banners of anti-communism - Ngoyi met Minister Vorster's security apparatus and Hamer suffered vendettas from Senator Eastland.[6] Both encountered failures at key critical junctures that later shaped their movements -- Hamer turning down two MFDP seats at the Democratic Convention and Ngoyi loosing great momentum when Nelson Mandela overruled ANC women who sought a "jail-no-bail" policy for 2,000 arrested women in 1958. Among the jailed women were wives of prominent ANC leaders, including a pregnant young Winnie Mandela. Much later after both women had presumably lost national fame, Ngoyi and Hamer surprised crestfallen followers by their relatively early demise -- succumbing to stress related illnesses such as cancer, hypertension, heart disease and diabetes.

However the key assets that Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer shared included a clear, bold voice and the inspiring ability to speak extemporaneously with great effect. Moreover they utilized cultural legacies and Christian religious faith, but maintained a healthy skepticism when local churches operated by passive acceptance or collaboration, in attempts to preserve any

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[5] In 1904 the uncle of future Senator James Eastland of Mississippi was allegedly killed by a black sharecropper named Luther Holbert., in a town six miles south of the Ruleville home of Fannie Lou Hamer. Holbert and his wife were horrifically lynched. See Nick Salvatore, *Singing in a Strange Land,: C.L. Franklin, the Black Church, and the Transformation of America* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2005), 9. Franklin was a preacher whose family moved from Sunflower County to Detroit. Frankin later supported Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, and the SCLC, and led a major 1963 civil rights march in Detroit. Franklin's daughter Aretha became well known as a singer.

[6] Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-1968 (B*aton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 2004).

meager system privileges.[7] Finally, a mutual commitment to the value of their people's liberty led them to expand their vision and leadership from a single political issue -- such as pass documents or voters registration -- to expanded concerns of structural economics, education, jobs and land.

Yet these expanded visions also illuminate a key difference in their political approaches -- Ngoyi maintained ties to communist organizers while Hamer pursued political access to America's system of liberal democracy. [8] While a full analysis of any greater ANC ties to the Communist Party exceeds the scope of this essay, many factors suggest that Ngoyi may have relied on a structure that initially fashioned more racially progressive objectives and access to resources. For example, the ANC received resource support between 1950 to 1965 from organizations connected to Communist states in East Germany and the Soviet Union.[9] The SNCC and MFDP remained dependent on private financing as federal government support for voting registration, food surpluses and head start awaited passage of Great Society Programs and 1965 Voting Rights Act.

The textured lives of Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer complicate narratives of anti-apartheid and civil rights struggles in South Africa and the United States. Their strident activism and leadership reflected sources of personal power that enabled bold assaults on racial ideologies and state authorities that were previously deemed almost invincible. Yet their continued poverty, violent imprisonment, isolation, and poor health suggest the costs of political struggle. Moreover,

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[7] Deborah Gaitskell, "Power in Prayer and Service: Women's Christian Organizations,." in *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social & Cultural History*, eds. Richard Elphick and Rodney Davenport, (Oxford: J. Currey and Cape Town: D. Philip,1997),253-67; idem, "Devout domesticity? A century of African women's Christianity in South Africa," in *Women and Gender in Southern Africa*, ed. Walker, 251-272; Randy Sparks, *Religion in Mississippi* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2001), 26; Charles Marsh, *God's Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights* (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press, 1997); Ross, *Witnessing and Testifying*, 89-117.
[8] Thomas, *The Diplomacy of Liberation*, 158.
[9] Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 215-216.

these consequences only reinforced the limitations both felt as racial constraints combined with cultural limits on women's positions in social movements of resistance.

Yet their resilient voices communicate purpose and intent, dignifying those sacrifices and freedom quests. During a brief and precious respite in thirteen years of banning, in 1974 Ngoyi told crowds at a Sharpeville commemoration : **"** If I die, I'll die a happy person because I have already seen the rays of our new South Africa rising."[10] In 1972 Fannie Lou Hamer supplied the quintessential coda for those everywhere who press for full democracy: "The first vote I cast …I cast for myself." Indeed, in 1994 that triumphant mantra could have been repeated by President Nelson Mandela of South Africa. Fifteen years later, U.S. presidential candidate Barack Obama attended a Democratic Convention in Denver which held a wide diversity of credentialed delegates. Both men eventually attained the highest elected office in their countries' expanded democracies. The leadership struggles of an African woman and an African American woman from the grassroots eventually made foundational contributions in national political arenas. In the cases of Lilian Ngoyi and Fannie Lou Hamer, both the African homeland and its diaspora created two effective runners who assumed anchor positions in their generation's freedom quest.

[10] Lilian Ngoyi, *Scheba, (*1980): 14, URL Accessed 7-15-2008
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/people/lngoyi.html

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