CHAPTER IX

Fanon and Black Power in the USA

Introduction

"Every brother on a rooftop can quote Fanon"
Dan Watts, *Liberation* editor, after the race riots of 1967

This chapter examines Fanon's influence on the Black Panther Party and on the radical black movement in the United States. It also examines the first feminist applications of Fanon's work using his ideas to critique the sexism of the black and radical movements. It starts with a brief look at the transmission of Fanon's ideas through the early documents of the Tricontinental conference.

Fanon, Latin America and the Tricontinental Conference

With international monopoly capital becoming more institutionalised after the Second World War with the formation of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, it was clear to the exploited nations that they too needed to co-ordinate their efforts. In April 1950 the newly independent countries met in Bandung, Indonesia and by 1958 there was a permanent Afro-Asian solidarity organisation set up in Egypt. Influenced by Fanon and the Moroccan nationalist, Ben Barka, the organisation not only decided to include representatives of popular movements in African and Asia but also Latin America. In 1963, they accepted Fidel Castro's offer to host the first conference in Havana and at the Ghana meeting in 1965 it set the date for January the following year. Ben Barka who was elected chairman of the preparatory committee made it clear that 'we must achieve greater coordination in the struggle of all the people, as the problems in Vietnam, the Congo and the Dominican Republic stem from the same source: US imperialism' (Gerassi 1971: 75). Tragically Ben Barka did not live to see the first conference, he was 'arrested' by French security police and murdered. In this he met a similar fate to many anti-imperialist leaders like Patrice Lumumba and Amilcar Cabral.

Nevertheless, in January 1966, the Cubans hosted the first Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America (OSPAAAL), which later became better known by the title of its journal, *Tricontinental*. The conference drew delegations from 82 organisations in as many countries, most of whom were committed to revolutionary social change. It was here that Cabral delivered his 'The Weapon of Theory' speech. The conference produced a detailed analysis of colonialism and neo-colonialism as part of the imperialist global order and for a time seemed as if it might become a new International (Gerassi 1971: 76). It spurred efforts at alliance building in Africa and Asia and led to the Organisation of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS) conferences in Latin America.

The conference also produced a resolution on the effect of colonialism on culture that echoes Fanon's formulations on national culture. It is worth quoting in full:

> One of the gravest consequences of the colonisation of Africa, Asia and Latin America has been the systematic destruction of the cultures and the historic value systems of each people.

The colonial system did not stop at the dismembering of the social structure, the displacement of entire populations, the imposition of artificial territorial and linguistic boundaries, the wiping out of a large number of our peoples due to forced labour in mines and plantations, but has attacked with equal violence the cultural heritage of our countries.

Before colonisation, great civilisations had developed on our three continents. The natural conditions of out tropical and sub-tropical regions were no obstacle to the blossoming of brilliant cultures...

At best those cultures which escaped total destruction were consistently persecuted, denigrated and denied. Each people's cultural dynamism rapidly degenerated into a body of fragmented folkloric traditions, of dress and culinary habits and of local arts and crafts which could not replace the historical continuity of the creative originality and achievement of our peoples.

Ferocious exploitation, misery, famine, racial discrimination, inferiority complexes and the loss of personality and self respect are so many aspects of colonialism which induced a deep inhibition of culture and knowledge. For decades, hundreds of peoples were condemned to an endless repetition of the same legends, stories, popular songs and oral literature, so as not to die spiritually frozen.

Only the national liberation struggles can put an end to this state of cultural stagnation, of general alienation, and restore to our cultures in Africa, Asia and Latin America their rightful place in history, their dynamism, their capacity for rejuvenation and perpetual creation. Only the national liberation struggles can restore our sense of adequacy and competence and the will and purpose to forge our destiny in total freedom. This is why, now, in our three continents, culture is the medium through which our peoples can, within the framework of their own national liberation process, become aware of their capacity to transform the life of the society, write their own history gather the best of their cultural heritage and unify these factors which intervene in the historical formation of the nation, on a democratic and popular basis.

The national liberation struggle not only sets culture free, wresting it from its century-long stagnation, but gives it new fields for expression and creation. This struggle provides culture with new elements for its own authenticity, vigour, inner rhythm and growth, There exist, then, close and inseparable links between the liberation struggle and the shaping of national culture. The armed struggle is itself a cultural fact which mobilises, through an heroic process, the psychological resources, the emotional strength, the impatience and the aspirations of each people of Africa, Asia and Latin America and gives them wide access to their lost cultural fecundity.

The liberation struggle, which is at present the highest form of self-awareness, unifies those factors which define a nation and elevates to universal dimensions the special vocation of each one of our peoples. National culture, in the present stage, can only receive its legitimacy through the anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist struggle.

In this era, this struggle demands that the revolutionary forces of the three continents oppose the policy of imperialist aggression, directed by the United States, which may be seen equally in the domain of cultural activity of the people of Africa and Asia as well as Latin America (Jenkins 1970: 199-200).

In 1967 the OLAS conference in Havana was addressed by Huey Newton, the Minister of Defence of the Black Panther Party who said that 'our world can only be the Third World; our only struggle, for the Third World; our only vision, of the Third World.' The only difference being 'our people are a colony within the United States; you are colonies outside the United States' (Gerassi 1971: 554).

Fanon and The Black Panthers

Newton's address to the Tricontinental Conference was a testament to a long tradition of black activism in the Americas. In his 1967 essay 'Black Power' C.L.R James outlines the growing breadth and depth of the black movement. He traces the genealogy of the black movement from Booker T. Washington, through W.E.B DuBois who founded the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), Marcus Garvey, the first 'nationalist' seeking a return to Africa for black people. Then came George Padmore, the founder of the Pan African Congresses, each step representing an advance in understanding; the struggle culminating with Fanon's warning that even 'natives' can become oppressors. Fanon as part of a tradition of black radicalism helps lay the basis for Malcolm X and the Black Panther Party (Grimshaw 1992: 365f). Fanon's references to blacks in North America are sparse. He would have emphasised that they have in common is their experience of anti-black racism but it was the differences in the struggles that impressed him (Fanon 1967b: 174). He saw the civil rights struggle and the national liberation struggle as distinct though there is no reason to suppose that he would have opposed armed struggle in the USA.

Malcolm X was born on May 25, 1925, the same year as Frantz Fanon. Having risen from being a hustler in New York and Boston he became the most dynamic leader of the radical black movement. As spokesperson for the 'Nation of Islam', a militant organisation of black Muslims in the United States, he reached large numbers of urban poor blacks untouched by the civil rights movement and carried a message of a revitalised black nationalism that also appealed to more militant black intellectuals. Initially he mounted an attack on 'white world supremacy' and the reformist wing of the civil rights movement describing them as 'house Negroes,' meaning they had shared the master's house and were assimilated to the master's 'white' values. In 1964 he left the Nation of Islam and laid the basis, both theoretical and practical, for a revolutionary black movement: Afro-American Unity (political and cultural), Black Power, Black Pride, and his own orientation to political action - 'freedom by any means necessary' (Wolfenstein 1993: 4).

In what is sometimes seen as his 'last message' Malcolm X argued that 'colonialism or imperialism, as the slave system of the West is called', forms an 'international power structure', that 'is used to suppress the masses of dark-skinned people all over the world and exploit them of their natural resources' (Wolfenstein 1993: 337). People were moving against it, there was a revolution happening in Africa and one brewing 'inside the house', that is, in the United States. Initially the threat posed was expanding ghetto rebellion:

> 1965 will be the longest and hottest and bloodiest year of them all not because you want it to be, or I want it to be, or we want it to be, but because the conditions that created these explosions in 1963 are still here; the conditions that created explosions in 1964 are still here. You can't say that you're not going to have an explosion when you leave the conditions, the ingredients, still here. As long as those explosive ingredients remain, then you're going to have the potential for explosion on your hands (Wolfenstein 1993: 338).

Malcolm X saw the need to be organised and fight. The first half of 1965 looked like proving him wrong. However, on August 11, an incident of police brutality sparked the ten day Watts 'riot' in which police and National Guard fought 'rioters' who attacked not white people but white businesses, in an attempt to drive 'exploiters' out of the ghetto. The Watts war cry 'burn, baby, burn' reminds one of Fanon's idea that violence is 'detoxifying' but it is not sufficient, as Fanon said a 'legitimate desire for revenge cannot sustain a war of liberation' (1965b: 111). Such violent mass action pushed the leadership of the stalled civil rights movement into a crisis. From non-violent and conciliatory protests, sections of the urban black masses had shown in action, albeit spontaneous and uncoordinated, that 'we shall overcome' was superseded by the demand for 'Black Power' (Wolfenstein 1993: 340).

The book <u>Black Power</u> became the major programmatic statement from this section of the movement. Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton preface the book with a quotation from the concluding pages of <u>Wretched of the Earth</u> that reads:

> Let us decide not to imitate Europe; let us try to create the whole man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth.
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> Two centuries ago, a former European colony decided to catch up with Europe. It succeeded so well that the United States became a monster, in which the taints, the sickness and the inhumanity of Europe have grown to appalling dimensions...
>
> The Third World faces Europe like a colossal mass whose aim should be to try and resolve the problems to which Europe has not been able to find the answers.

In the preface Carmichael and Hamilton (1967) argue that 'the social, political and economic problems are so acute that even a casual observer cannot fail to see that something is wrong.' It is obvious that existing institutions especially political parties do not serve the masses of alienated black people. Changes must be made and these must come from the black community. 'We must begin to think of the black community as a base for organisation to control institutions in that community.' Further because virtually all the money earned by merchants and exploiters leaves those communities, properly organised black groups should seek to establish a community rebate plan. In the political sphere black communities need to form independent parties to elect their own candidates whenever possible. More than this black people must 'spearhead a drive to revamp completely the present institutions of representation' (Carmichael & Hamilton 1967: 164-76). Finally comes the rallying cry very much in the spirit of Malcolm X:

> Because one thing stands clear: whatever the consequences, there is a growing - a rapidly growing - body of black people determined to 'T.C.B.' - take care of business. They will not be stopped in their drive to achieve dignity, to achieve their share of power, indeed to become their own men and women - in this time and in this land - by whatever means necessary (Carmichael & Hamilton 1967: 185).

Robert Allen (1969) observes that while there was a willingness to continue Malcolm X's work, Carmichael was still caught between reform and revolution. Nevertheless, Carmichael[1] calls Fanon 'one of my patron saints' and emphasises Fanon's break with Western values, the creation of the New Person and Third World solidarity.

The ghetto rebellions, the rising tide of internationalist consciousness with the Vietnam War and the Cuban revolution, the lack of changes despite the non-violent section of the movement drawing big crowds all across the country, saw the focus of the movement shift to a more militant stance. As Allen (1969: 28) said: 'Nonviolent demonstrations, while presenting a *moral challenge* to unjust practices, did not constitute a *threat* to the established distribution of power.' We have seen Malcolm X emerge as a figurehead and revolts broke out in the ghettoes as blacks sought a more militant leadership.

The young men, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, who founded the Black Panther Party (BPP) in 1966, inherited Malcolm X's tradition of militant action. Newton was born in 1942. He went to law school for six months and played concert piano. Seale was born in 1936. He was a carpenter and mechanical draftsman and had spent some time in the airforce. They met at college where they initiated courses on black history and laid the groundwork for hiring more black tutors. Later they joined the North Oakland poverty centre and the Afro-American Association but left within a year dissatisfied with its cultural nationalism and middle class composition. They began working in the black community, surveying the needs of Oakland's ghetto population they produced the BPP ten point plan.

During this time they read Malcolm X and Frantz Fanon. As Seale (1968: 25-6) relates:
> One day I went over to [Newton's] house and asked him if he read Fanon. I'd read Wretched of the Earth six times. I knew Fanon was right...That brother got to reading Fanon, and man, let me tell you, when Huey got ahold of Fanon, and read Fanon (I had always been running down about how we need this organisation, that organisation, but never anything concrete), Huey'd be thinking. Hard. We would sit down with Wretched of the Earth and talk, go over another section or chapter of Fanon, and Huey would explain it in depth.

They were impressed by Fanon's thesis that revolutionary violence was necessary to get the oppressor's boot off the neck of the oppressed. By fighting back the blacks could assert their dignity as people. Later, in 1968, Newton wrote an article for their newspaper that discusses Wretched of the Earth as a handbook for the correct method of carrying out a revolution and in particular of winning mass support (Foner 1970: 44).

The operation of the party was shown in its response to the death of Denzil Dowell, who had been killed by police. The official version of events contradicted that of dozens of black witnesses. Called in by the family to help, the BPP called a street corner rally to expose the facts and argue the importance of self defence. They assumed that the police would try to shut it down so they arrived armed in front of a crowd of hundreds of people, police who arrived were turned away. The party also protested rent evictions, informing people of their welfare rights and taught classes in black

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[1] Carmichael later took the African name, Kwame Ture, and organised the All-African People's Revolutionary Party. He died in November 1998 in his adopted home, Guinea, after a life committed to the struggle for liberation. On May 5, 1999, he was awarded an honorary PhD by Howard University in Washington, D.C.

history. They demanded and won school traffic lights after the deaths of several black children on their way home from school (Foner 1970: xix).

In the Fanonian tradition their immediate aim was ghetto self-defence. They made armed patrols of Oakland (California), following the police on their rounds and advising citizens of their rights if these were violated. Angela Davis noted 'their vigilance produced a marked decrease in police harassment and brutality. Black people were impressed' (Wolfenstein 1993: 34). So were the police, who introduced legislation to make it illegal to carry weapons in such areas. On May 2, 1967, an armed contingent of the BPP led by Seale, exercised its right to bear arms and the right to petition the house by marching into the legislature. Although it was not illegal they were arrested, gaining nationwide recognition.

Seale (1968: 59-69) in his book outlines the drafting of the party program that illustrates how the BPP sought to develop a program in touch with the needs of the people. This became a simple ten-point platform and program. It consisted of a list of demands and an explanation of those demands, or more simply 'what we want' and 'what we believe' the latter being a philosophically concrete expression of the former. Seale describes the attempt by the leadership to express concretely their aims as related to the needs of the mass of black people in the United States as that leadership understood it. Each of the ten points was elaborated by a brief paragraph explaining its rationale and this was printed in the party press each week. For example:

> *1. We want freedom, We want power to determine the destiny of our Black community.*
> We believe that black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny
>
> *2. We want full employment for our people.*
> We believe that the Federal government is responsible and obligated to give every man
> employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if white American businessmen will
> not give full employment, then the means of production should be take from businessmen
> and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organise and employ
> all of its people and give a high standard of living.

In this way the Black Power movement drew its strength from the masses. The summer of 1966 saw major ghetto uprisings in Chicago and Cleveland, spreading to other cities the following year. After the Newark and Chicago riots of 1967 Dan Watts, editor of *Liberation* magazine, is reported to have said to a journalist 'Fanon...You'd better get this book. Every brother on a rooftop can quote Fanon' (Caute 1970: 94). After the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King on April 4, 1968 riots exploded in hundreds of cities. The Panther's actions showed they had the will and perhaps the ability to organise the energies released by these mass actions. While compelled to devote so much time to 'self defence' activities, the BPP launched four initiatives as part of its original 'serve the people' program. These were free breakfast for children, free health clinic, liberation schools and petition campaigns for community control of police. All branches implemented the breakfast program and police petitions (Foner 1970: xxvii).

Initially the efforts by the state authorities to destroy the BPP backfired as Fanon had said 'the repressions, far from calling a halt to the forward rush of national consciousness, urge it on' (1965b: 56). The arrest of Huey Newton on trumped up murder charges enabled the Panthers to organise a nationwide 'Free Huey' campaign. Chapters sprang up in many cities and constant attacks by police generated widespread sympathy in the black community. The rising tide of radicalism against the Vietnam War saw the beginnings of ties between the BPP and New Left, which defined itself as anti-imperialist. In September 1970, Newton was convicted of 'voluntary manslaughter' although the court had also accepted that he was unconscious at the time. On the

same day Eldridge Cleaver, who had been the party's minister for information and presidential candidate, had his parole cancelled and he was ordered to return to prison. Since it was likely that he would have been assassinated he fled into exile in Algeria.

Black Panther activist, Linda Harrison, wrote an article for their newspaper in February 1969 about 'cultural nationalism.' She draws heavily on Wretched of the Earth, in particular Fanon's critique of *Negritude*. She argues that Fanon correctly analyses the situation facing black people in the United States. Sections of the movement who wanted to retreat into the past, seeing themselves as heirs to a part of Africa, were avoiding political action in the present. The notion of black pride, drawing on a mythical past as a frame of reference, echoes Fanon's critique that such views served the interest of a particular well-off section of blacks, not the vast majority (Foner 1970: 151f). Though it overlooks Fanon's conviction that it may be a necessary stage.

The role of middle class blacks as intermediaries for the white establishment were seen as a domestic version of Fanon's 'native' bourgeoisie (Allen 1969: 192). The BPP's reliance on the *lumpenproletariat* was also Fanonian and there was a hostility towards the working class - both black and white. Stokely Carmichael misrepresents Fanon in saying that 'the American working class enjoys the fruits of the labours of the Third World workers. The proletariat has become the Third World, and the bourgeoisie is white western society' (Caute 1970: 94-5). The point here is that if white workers benefit from US imperialism then so do black ones. This hostility to the working class, combined with a reliance on the *lumpenproletariat* were common appropriations of Fanon's work. They were introduced into the BPP by Carmichael and would prove disastrous.

By 1972 the New Left was in decline, after the end of the Vietnam War student radicals returned to their everyday lives. In contrast, after more than 1000 arrests and 19 killings by police, the BPP was dismembered and ghettoes were flooded with drugs. The black rights movement ground to a halt, having achieved some gains for the black middle class but a long way from liberation for most black people. Globally the power of capital had been challenged, unable to win in Vietnam, but it did not collapse. What appeared to be the decisive breakthrough proved to be the high point. While the struggle is international in form, its national context is often more important. The war brought some increased economic opportunities at home and increased welfare benefits as part of the War on Poverty by Lyndon Johnson. This was combined with the 'war on the poor' a systematic repression of black-radical activity. These separated the black middle class from the masses, who now improved both absolutely and relative to the white population, and had won the social privileges that belong to the middle class. As Allen (1970: 194) observed white establishment interests were served by 'reorganising the ghetto infrastructure, in creating a ghetto buffer class clearly committed to the dominant American institutions and values on one hand and on the other, in rejuvenating the black working class and integrating it into the American economy'. Black pride triumphed over black power.

Fanon and the US Radical Black Feminists

Apart from a hostility to the working class, the 1960s movements like Black Power were quite negative towards women. In this milieu Fanon, who was the hero of black male radicals, was creatively taken up by black women activists. This next section examines two black activist women, Francis Beale and Linda Jo La Rue, who draw on Fanon's work to critique the sexism of the movements of the 1960s and 1970s.

Linda Jo La Rue in her article 'The Black Movement and Women's Liberation' (1970) begins by examining the role of class within the women's movement. She is critical of the 'common oppression' rhetoric of the emerging middle-class feminist movement and their 'sudden attachment' to the black liberation movement. She argues that middle class white women are not oppressed in the same way as black women. White women are only 'suppressed' by patriarchy which 'oppresses' black women denying not just their rights but their humanity. The difference, she says is like comparing the black woman on welfare struggling to feed her children with the suburban mother protesting about the washing up and dishpan hands (p. 36).

Further she argues that many blacks only want a 'piece of the cake'. However, a black bourgeoisie would be racist because racism is a feature of capitalist societies whatever colour or religion the elite happen to be. She warns that not all those who wear the label 'feminist' are really allies. She questions whether black women's interests are served by an alliance with liberal feminists who seek new gender relations with a racialised social class. While she grants that there are radical elements, it is the liberals who dominate and are likely to co-opt the movement, settling for a share of 'white power' rather than a radical social transformation that would benefit all oppressed people. La Rue does not just draw attention to the issue of class in the white-dominated women's movement but also to the issue of sexism in the black liberation movement. She argues that black men and black women must work together to end their shared oppression. This requires a commitment to black women's active position in the struggle, not merely as 'prone'.[2]

Drawing on history and tradition and seeking to renew it she argues that black women and men have a different, potentially more egalitarian history of gender roles born of slavery. She labels this history of overlapping, as opposed to oppositional, roles as 'role integration' (p. 38). She combines this idea with those of one of the heroes of the Black Power movement, Frantz Fanon, in critiquing the gender politics of the black movement. A Dying Colonialism, she says, describes 'in glorious terms' the role change for Algerian women in the liberation struggle:

> The unveiled Algerian women, who assumed an increasing important place in the revolutionary action, developed her personality, discovered the exalting realm of responsibility...This woman who, in the avenues of Algiers or of Constantine, would carry the grenades or the submachine gun charges, the women who tomorrow would be outraged, violated, tortured, could not put herself back into her former state of mind and relive her behaviour of the past (Fanon 1965a: 107).

Drawing an analogy between struggles she demands rhetorically:

> Can it not be said that in slavery black women assumed an increasingly important place in the survival action and thus developed their personalities and senses of responsibility? And after being outraged, violated and tortured, could she be expected to put herself back into her former state of mind and relive her behaviour of the past? (1970: 39).

La Rue argues that sex roles are not immutable and that black men's resistance to change shows how much they still identify with the dominant culture in relation to sexual politics.

Drawing on Fanon's importance in the Black movement as a theorist of internalised oppression she argues that internalised racism is evident in the identification with conventional gender roles. These conventional roles are a way of fostering division, leaving black men feeling emasculated,

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[2] This is a reference to an infamous remark by Eldridge Cleaver, the BPP's Minister for Information, that the only position for women in the liberation movement was 'prone'. A comment he never repeated.

having to do same work as women and black women feeling envious of their non-working white sisters. She argues that black people need to be liberated from 'white' role models of the family. The aim is to integrate the roles (not to have females usurp males as in white feminism). Instead of finding an alternative model black men side with their oppressors in seeing women as a threat. They should ignore the patriarchal model especially as an alternative has allowed the survival of black people through the appalling history of slavery. She accuses black men of supporting Algerian women as fighters but rejecting their own grandmothers. They may have rejected assimilationist views and internalised racism by not bleaching their hair but they sustain the worst of American values in traditional gender roles. In this way La Rue applies Fanonian thought to a black feminist politics broadening the definition of liberation and using him to critique the movement's retrograde gender politics.

Frances Beale's essay 'Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female' became the most anthologised essay of the early women's liberation movement (Sharply-Whiting 1998: 83). First published in the well-known anthology Sisterhood is Powerful in 1969; it examines the class, race and gender axes of exploitation drawing on Marxist, Fanonian and black feminist thinking. Beale was the New York Coordinator of the SNCC Black Women's Liberation Committee. She lived in Paris from 1960-66 during the campaigns against the Algerian War, arriving the year after A Dying Colonialism was published. She uses the gender politics in it as well as Wretched of the Earth, the acknowledged Bible of the movement, to envision a 'New World' in the United States.

Like La Rue, she locates racism firmly in the context of capitalist exploitation. She notes that black male unemployment especially when the woman was sole breadwinner undermined black solidarity. It made him feel 'unmasculine' and caused her to see him as lazy. Instead the validity of American stereotypes of breadwinner and dependent spouse need to be challenged. Both for their effects and because it is simply not viable for poor black households to emulate 'middle class' whites. Since the emergence of the Black Power movement black men have emerged as leaders in the struggle for justice. While they have great critiques of 'the system' this does not extend to women who are blamed for men's feeling of inferiority when, in reality, black women suffer as much as black men. Black men are oppressed by capitalism as are women and it is not necessary for the power of one to come at the expense of the other. Those men who ask women to take a back seat in the movement are 'counter-revolutionary' (1969: 386). Beale goes on:

> To wage a revolution, we need competent teachers, doctors, nurses, electronics experts, chemists, biologists, physicists, political scientists and so on and so forth. Black women sitting at home reading bedtime stories to their children are just not going to make it (p. 387).

Capitalism enslaves women and seeks to have the victims blame each other. For 'poor whites' it's blacks, for black men, it's black women, each acting as an escape valve for the whole system. The black community especially women, needs to raise the question of what kind of society needs to be built. Capitalism must be eliminated along with all forms of oppression. In this regard the white women's movement needs an anti-racist and anti-imperialist ideology, rather than seeing their oppression as based on male chauvinism. Men are not the main enemy.

In the final section of her paper entitled 'The New World' she calls for a radical transformation in laws and institutions, eliminating racist and capitalist exploitation. The 'New World' must represent the most 'wretched of the earth' poor and working-class black women. As Fanon argued decolonisation must change the world from the bottom up Beale argues that 'the values of this new system will be determined by the status of the low man on the totem pole.' She argues that politics

must play out at the personal level that, 'to die for the revolution is a one-shot deal; to live for the revolution means taking on the more difficult commitment of changing our day-to-day life patterns' (p. 395)

While Fanon envisioned a reversal of the dialectical relationship between coloniser and the colonised Beale annexes to this a gendered New World radicalised by a total revolution. Central to this project of total revolution are progressive and active black women who struggle like their Algerian counterparts. Appropriating Fanon on the importance of changing traditions through struggle Beale argues:

> Unless women in any enslaved nation are completely liberated, the change cannot really be called a revolution. If the Black woman has to retreat to the position she occupied before the armed struggle, the whole movement and the whole population will have retreated in terms of truly freeing the colonised population. A people's revolution that engages the participation of every member of the community, including man, woman, and child, brings about a certain transformation in the participants as a result of that participation. Once you have caught a glimpse of freedom or experienced a bit of self determination, you can't go back to the old routines that were established under a racist, capitalist regime (p. 395).

This echoes Fanon's analysis of the veil rearticulated to meet the needs of a different liberation struggle. The links between national or black liberation and women's liberation were a key issue as Fanon put it 'a revolutionary war is not a war of men' (1965a: 66). Beale echoes 'so far as I know revolutionaries are not determined by sex...men and women must take part in the struggle' (1969: 100).

Summary

In <u>Black Awakening in Capitalist America</u> Allen's central argument, that the processes by which the Third World is oppressed and the mechanisms of black oppression in the USA are much the same, draws heavily on Fanon. Allen (1969: 61) notes that <u>Wretched of the Earth</u> had become 'required reading for black revolutionaries.'

While it can be difficult to separate what is strategically necessary, what is original and what is inspired by Fanon there are several aspects of the Black Power struggles that reflect on Fanon's work. The BPP tried to design an organisation and a program that they felt represented the needs of the masses. They rejected cultural nationalism as 'petty bourgeois' and turned to armed struggle. It is their reliance on bearing arms and on *lumpenproletarian* recruiting (and a hostility to the working class) that seems most Fanonist. The use of Fanon by women in the black movement is innovative. He is closely linked to the beginnings of a radical black feminism that is sensitive to both class and racial oppression. They argue that the support of tradition gender roles by otherwise radical blacks is an example of how the men are still bound to the dominant (white) culture.

Fanon's argument that the colonial world is Manichean and this division is maintained by force, with the dehumanised native on one side and the settlers trying to impose their values on the other, applies with equal force to the United States ghettoes. Instead of learning one's place and directing one's anger inward or onto friends and family one must take up a violent struggle and not be drawn in by 'native' intellectuals who preach non-violence. As Bulhan said the Black Power movement was 'the most effective mass therapy for Black Americans yet' (1985: 152).