

# **A Coincidental Cup of Kenyan Coffee: SNCC and Malcolm X Recast the Struggle in Nairobi**

**By Howard Rudnick**

As John Lewis' and Donald Harris' plane made its way southeast down the African continent, the plane was forced to land in Kenya. The airline paid for the pair of young activists from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to spend three days in Nairobi at the New Stanley Hotel, the most glamorous in the city, while the plane's mechanical issues were resolved. It was mid-October 1964, and as they sat sipping their coffee in the hotel café on their first afternoon in Nairobi, none other than Malcolm X appeared.<sup>1</sup> “‘Hello,’ he offered along with a small smile, ‘what are you doing here?’” Lewis and Harris were stunned. They were well aware that Malcolm was in Africa, but had no idea they were again traveling right on his heels. Only a few days before the SNCC duo arrived in Ghana, he had departed. He was in the midst of his second African tour since breaking with the Nation of Islam in March earlier that year and had made a remarkable impression on the many Africans whom he had met. Malcolm took a seat at their table, and the three men began to talk. He explained that he had just flown in from Tanzania with Jomo Kenyatta, African revolutionary and President of Kenya.<sup>2</sup> They began to describe to one another what had brought them thousands of miles from home to this Kenyan courtyard café. Lewis and Harris explained

---

<sup>1</sup> John Lewis and Michael D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind A Memoir of the Movement* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), p. 287. [Hereafter: *Walking with the Wind*]

<sup>2</sup> John Lewis and Donald Harris, ‘The Trip Report’ on Travels in Africa.” 14 December 1964, reel 1, no. 37. SNCC Papers (microfilm), p. 8. [Hereafter: “The Trip Report”]

to Malcolm that they had been among a group of eleven members of SNCC to travel to Guinea on the organization's first official delegation to Africa that September and had been traveling together for the two weeks since the rest of the group had returned to the States. Malcolm reported that he had recently been in Cairo for the Non-Allied Nations Conference. There he had spoken about his new organization, the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) and how he hoped to bring the persecution of black Americans onto the international stage. Modeled after the pan-African Organization of African Unity, the OAAU, religiously unaffiliated, sought to unite black Americans and bring the United States government to the General Assembly of the U.N. and hold it accountable for violating the Human Rights Charter in its persecution of black Americans. He had returned to Africa for a second time that year to rally political support amongst the continent's leaders for his plan and "raise the levels of awareness and involvement in Africa."<sup>3</sup>

The coincidental meeting, an ocean away from Malcolm's base in Harlem and SNCC's central office in Atlanta, left an indelible imprint on SNCC and helped to fuel the organization's philosophical shift towards internationalism. The encounter marked the beginning of a concerted though short-lived effort between Malcolm and SNCC to collaborate; a moment ripe with possibility. Most importantly, the chance cup of coffee awakened Lewis, Harris, and many of the organization's staffers to the broader context of SNCC's work and elucidated the tremendous inspiration and power that lay in understanding their struggle as part of a global effort to liberate people of color all over the world.

---

<sup>3</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 287.

Historians have largely overlooked the significance of the coincidental encounter between these three men in October 1964. Indeed it occurred at a moment in time in which SNCC was seriously reevaluating its priorities, direction, and philosophy, and Malcolm had been doing much of the same. Malcolm had come to realize that he needed the collaboration and support of the movement, and SNCC aligned most closely to his evolved philosophy. The encounter provided Lewis and Harris an opportunity to look through Malcolm's evolved philosophical lens and reinforced their growing conviction that their struggle stretched far beyond the American South. The encounter prompted SNCC to expand the scope of its struggle and see its work within a broader internationalist context. The trip was not the first experience SNCC would have with internationalism, and it would certainly not be the last, but it was crucial in that it served as a philosophical awakening, nourishing the notion in the minds of many in SNCC's ranks that their organizing work was part of something much bigger, a struggle for the liberation of black people across the globe. When Lewis and Harris returned to Atlanta, SNCC would begin to take substantive steps towards collaborating with Malcolm X and pursuing their contacts in Africa, and in doing so, continue to reinforce the importance of expanding the scope of the struggle.

## **I. From Freedom Summer to Guinea**

As September of 1964 began, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was at a crossroads. For the last six months, many of SNCC's staffers and the greater part of the organization's financial resources had been directed towards the

Mississippi Freedom Summer Project. Throughout the summer months, SNCC staffers and a host of student volunteers primarily from the North had worked to register voters, educate the black electorate, and establish Freedom Schools to provide the black youth of Mississippi a forum to think through and discuss their problems. SNCC sought to dramatize the situation in Mississippi and show the country what was actually going on in the Deep South. The culminating event of Freedom Summer, in fact, occurred far from Mississippi's borders. The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), a party that had been developed to serve as an alternative to the Democratic Party for the state's black population, sought to challenge and unseat the regular Democratic state delegation that had historically disenfranchised blacks in Mississippi at the August Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City. When the party failed to seat its delegates at the convention, refusing to accept an offer that would have allowed them to seat only two delegates, nearly everyone throughout SNCC's ranks was devastated and exhausted.<sup>4</sup> For months

---

<sup>4</sup> In hindsight, a number of people closely involved with the MFDP would claim they doubted the potential success of the challenge from the outset. But, it is clear that there was a feeling among many that the challenge carried potential. Robert Moses, who coordinated the organizing effort in Mississippi that summer, would later explain of the delegates, "What they felt I believe, they believed that actually the Democratic Party would embrace them, because it was the Democratic Party through the government, the Kennedy administration, which had been actively in their minds fighting for the civil rights gains that they had already attained... I think there was a lack of real understanding of the depth to which the local southern politicians were entwined in the Democratic Party and that there would be a real reluctance on the part of the national Democratic Party leadership to take in black people at the expense of the southern politician. But we tried to warn them at that convention that we couldn't necessarily expect that we would actually be seated. What we could expect was that we would get a hearing...and we could expect that we would actually demonstrate that black people were going to now demand to participate in politics at the national level even if we weren't actually seated." See [Interview with Robert Moses, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on May 19, 1986, for \*Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years \(1954-1965\)\*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.](#)

their energy had been poured into what ultimately was a tremendous failure for many in SNCC, and the organization faced myriad questions about what direction it would take moving forward. Throughout SNCC, people began to question the approach, tactics, and leadership of the organization, and many SNCC workers began to doubt the value of their work.<sup>5</sup>

Recognizing that many in SNCC needed a break and a breath of fresh inspiration, Harry Belafonte, a famous pop singer and activist, who had been a regular supporter of SNCC and had provided the grant that had first enabled SNCC to establish a paid working staff in the Summer of 1961,<sup>6</sup> arranged for a delegation from SNCC to visit Guinea as the official guests of President Sékou Touré. John Lewis, chairman of SNCC, had been seeking an opportunity to visit Africa since even before the Mississippi Freedom Summer Project had begun, believing it would be beneficial to himself and to the organization if he and a couple others from SNCC could organize a trip.<sup>7</sup> During that summer, Sékou Touré had mentioned to Belafonte, a friend of his, that he would be interested in hosting a group of American youth who were involved in the Civil Rights

---

<sup>5</sup> Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle SNCC and The Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 133. [Hereafter: *In Struggle*]

<sup>6</sup> Letter From James Forman to Harry Belafonte, December 4, 1963, reel 5, no. 48, SNCC Papers (microfilm). SNCC staffer Ivanhoe Donaldson later explained that the gift, in the range of twenty to twenty five thousand dollars was much larger than any gift SNCC, which was used to “getting a dollar here, a hundred dollars there,” had previously received. He recalled how SNCC was particularly proud of the gift because it had come from a black American and served to validate the work SNCC was doing. See [Interview with Ivanhoe Donaldson, conducted by Blackside, Inc. in 1979, for \*Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years \(1954-1965\)\*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection, Question 19.](#)

<sup>7</sup> Letter From John Lewis to Bayard Rustin, June 2, 1964, reel 1, no. 31, SNCC Papers (microfilm).

Movement to speak and exchange ideas with young Guineans. Belafonte knew just the group.

On 11 September 1964, an eleven-person SNCC delegation, including James Forman, John Lewis, Robert Moses, Dona Richards, Prathia Hall, Julian Bond, Ruby Doris Robinson, William Hansen, Donald Harris, Matthew Jones, and Fannie Lou Hamer, left for Guinea where they would spend the next three weeks. The group spent their time in Guinea as Touré's guests, going to cultural events, galas, meeting a wide range of Guineans, and touring the capital of Conakry. The trip provided the group an opportunity to see a country completely controlled by people who shared the color of their skin, which was inspiring for them all. "I saw black men flying the airplanes, driving buses, sitting behind big desks in the bank and just doing everything that I was used to seeing white people do," Fannie Lou Hamer recalled in her autobiography.<sup>8</sup> The trip impelled the delegates to see that their struggle was part of the same struggle that the people of Guinea, and millions across the African continent, were engaged in. In Guinea the staffers found an emerging nation resting on the shoulders of hard working, liberated, black people, and it inspired them to work to make liberation a reality for black Americans. The trip provided an impetus for the delegates to confront their relationship with the continent of their ancestors and become increasingly aware of the relevance of that continent to their daily lives and organizing work. The delegation to Guinea increased the entire staff's conviction, SNCC staffer Cleveland Sellers later recalled, that

---

<sup>8</sup> Fannie Lou Hamer, *To Praise Our Bridges: An Autobiography* (Jackson, MS: KIPCO, 1967), p. 21.

in the United States “blacks could ascend to these positions of power and authority and responsibility.”<sup>9</sup>

Even for those who had not made the trip, Program Secretary Courtland Cox remembered, it “helped make Africa less of an abstraction.” “Africa wasn’t a foreign place” anymore; it “was seen as welcoming” now and in turn its relevance to SNCC’s work “became a much more personal discussion.” The delegates came back “very enthused about Africa” and the trip helped generate widespread interest in formulating a more coherent internationalist politics—“it became something that [SNCC] people wanted to be a part of.”<sup>10</sup> When they returned, SNCC staffer William Hansen recalled, the delegates spoke with their peers in SNCC “about how much all of us were impressed with Guinea and the concept of national liberation,” and increasingly many of the staffers began to examine their organizing through an international lens.<sup>11</sup> The failed convention challenge had led members throughout SNCC’s ranks to seriously doubt the commitment of the liberal establishment and the federal government to the black civil rights struggle, but for many, the trip provided inspiration that SNCC could generate change despite the forces acting against them. The trip “helped give a sense of validation that...we had allies,” at a moment in time in which many SNCC staffers felt they had been betrayed, Cox offered.<sup>12</sup> The trip had “a fundamental impact on how we saw our struggle,” Sellers

---

<sup>9</sup> [Interview with Cleveland Sellers, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on October 21, 1988, for \*Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads 1965 to 1985\*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.](#)

<sup>10</sup> Courtland Cox Interview with Author, 22 October 2010.

<sup>11</sup> William Hansen Interview with Author, 22 December 2010.

remarked. It reinforced the notion that SNCC needed to move far beyond issues like “the acquisition of a Coca-Cola” and needed to raise broader questions about the “empowerment of black people in America.”<sup>13</sup>

Forman, who was serving as SNCC’s Executive Secretary at the time, had been fascinated with the politics of African liberation for years, and always dreamed “of helping to build an organization to achieve popular power in the United States and then relate it with one or more African countries for common revolutionary purposes.” The trip provided for Forman a tangible opportunity to integrate an international outlook into SNCC’s work. As a result of the trip, “all sorts of plans and activities whose purpose had once been abstract in a certain sense were taking on concrete reality. My political and historical convictions about the importance of Africa to black people in the United States had become a living experience,” Forman wrote in his autobiography. “The trip for me was a culmination of my life in several ways.”<sup>14</sup>

The three weeks in Guinea left an enduring mark on the lives of the eleven individuals. More than an opportunity to escape the dangers and pressure of their organizing, the trip placed their struggle within a broader context of international black liberation. SNCC’s “first major move in the international arena,” as Forman would later describe it, the trip served as a catalyst for SNCC’s increasing militancy and helped pave

---

<sup>12</sup> Courtland Cox Interview with Author, 22 October 2010.

<sup>13</sup> [Interview with Cleveland Sellers, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on October 21, 1988, for \*Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads 1965 to 1985\*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.](#)

<sup>14</sup> James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1999), pp. 410-411. [Hereafter: *Black Revolutionaries*]

the way for SNCC's plunge into the international arena in the coming years.<sup>15</sup> While indeed the 1964 delegation to Africa proved monumental in SNCC's trajectory as an organization for a number of reasons, the most unlikely and most salient way in which the trip shaped SNCC was by exposing the organization to Malcolm X.

## II. Swept up in the Spirit of Revolution

On 4 October, most of the delegation returned to the States while Lewis and Harris remained in Africa for more than another month and a half on a tour that would take them to Liberia, Ghana, Zambia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Egypt. They hoped to “cement the relation between the liberation movement of Africa and the Civil Rights struggle” and gain as many contacts as they could in Africa that could be followed up on upon their return.<sup>16</sup> Lewis recalled in his autobiography, “It was once the others left to return to America and Don and I moved on deeper into Africa that the real substance of our journey began. Now, instead of being a large group wined and dined by dignitaries, we were two young black men, Americans, encountering and meeting and conversing with young people like ourselves, young men and women swept up in the spirit of revolution, of change.”<sup>17</sup> Lewis explained that everywhere he and Harris traveled, the Africans they met were “voraciously curious about all that was happening in the United

---

<sup>15</sup> *Black Revolutionaries*, p. 406.

<sup>16</sup> Statement by John Lewis, Chairman, Staff Meeting February 1965, reel 1, no. 37, SNCC Papers (microfilm).

<sup>17</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 286.

States.”<sup>18</sup> What really struck a chord, however, was just how interested they were in Malcolm X.

While Lewis and Harris did not meet Malcolm in person until Nairobi, it was in Ghana where they first became aware of Malcolm X’s pervasive influence on the way Africans understood the American civil rights struggle. Between his two extended African tours in 1964, Malcolm had spent a substantial amount of time in Ghana, and his understanding and articulation of the black rights struggle in the States had resonated with nearly everyone he had met. In many ways, the strong reception Malcolm and his ideas received initially led many on the continent to view Lewis and Harris with “skepticism and distrust.”<sup>19</sup> On one of their first few days in Accra someone approached them and bluntly offered, “Look, you guys might be really doing something—I don’t know, but if you are to the right of Malcolm, you might as well start packing right now ‘cause no one’ll listen to you.”<sup>20</sup> In fact, they found that this fascination with Malcolm was not unique to Ghana, and the “pattern repeated itself in every country” they visited.<sup>21</sup> They were continually confronted with questions about Malcolm and where they and SNCC stood in relation to his positions. They were amazed how well received Malcolm’s ideas were in Africa—his impact had been “just fantastic.”

Lewis later explained that in the United States, SNCC was considered by mainstream society to be a radical organization, and Malcolm X was categorized even

---

<sup>18</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 286.

<sup>19</sup> “The Trip Report,” p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> “The Trip Report,” p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> “The Trip Report,” p. 3.

further along the spectrum as an “extremist, a revolutionary.”<sup>22</sup> But in Africa, he and Harris were “dismissed as mainstream, and it was Malcolm who was embraced.”<sup>23</sup> As Lewis understood it, the Africans they met were “extremely politically astute” and “for the most part, true revolutionaries, far more radical than we in SNCC.” That’s why Malcolm X had “struck such a chord with them.”<sup>24</sup> It quickly was evident to Lewis and Harris that Malcolm was the “main criteria” through which Africans had come to understand black Americans and their politics.<sup>25</sup> In Ghana, they were grilled on a range of international issues, forced to articulate where SNCC stood on Cuba, Vietnam, the Congo, communist China, and the United Nations. Only by detailing SNCC’s involvement in the civil rights struggle and insisting that they had come to bridge the gap between Africa and the States were Lewis and Harris able to gain a reception and garner respect and interest among the many Africans they encountered. By the time they coincidentally met Malcolm in Nairobi, his influence on the way Africans were coming to understand the American Civil Rights Movement was already well established in their minds.

### **III. Shared Ground on Foreign Soil: Lewis and Harris Meet Malcolm X in Nairobi**

---

<sup>22</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 286.

<sup>23</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 286.

<sup>24</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 286.

<sup>25</sup> “The Trip Report,” p. 4.

Lewis and Harris had not intended on stopping in Nairobi, but their plane was grounded, and if they had to wait a few days before joining in the Zambian independence celebrations, the New Stanley Hotel proved a fateful place to do so. The British had built the hotel at the turn of the twentieth century to serve the colonial elite, and it was in the hotel's lavish courtyard café that the pair shared coffee with Malcolm.

The conversation that had begun over a cup of coffee stretched through the evening and continued the following day. Lewis and Harris discussed their impressions of Africa with Malcolm and “compared notes,” having been to a few of the same places and met a number of the same people.<sup>26</sup> Malcolm explained to them that he had visited eleven African countries, met with many heads of state and addressed the parliaments of most of the countries. He was worn down, but he intended to visit five more African nations before he returned to the States. Malcolm expressed to Lewis and Harris that he thought what they were doing was critically important and that making ties with Africa was a “crucial aspect of the human rights struggle that the American civil rights groups had too long neglected.”<sup>27</sup> Emphasizing “how happy he was to see SNCC reaching out like this to Africa,” he stressed that “more black people in America needed to travel and see and learn what was happening with blacks outside our country, not just in Africa, but all over the world.”<sup>28</sup> It was clear to them that “Africa was doing for him the same thing it was doing for [them]—providing a frame of reference that was both broadening and

---

<sup>26</sup> Donald Harris Interview with Author, 5 November 2010.

<sup>27</sup> “The Trip Report,” p. 8.

<sup>28</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 287.

refreshing.”<sup>29</sup> Lewis later recalled, “Thinking globally. That was essentially the reason Don and I had made this trip. To see Malcolm X so swept up with such enthusiasm was inspiring.”<sup>30</sup>

Malcolm noted what their experience had already begun to confirm: that the African leaders and people were in strong support of the freedom struggle stateside and were eager to support it, though they would “not tolerate factionalism or support particular groups or organizations within the movement as a whole.”<sup>31</sup> Malcolm had seen just that sort of factionalism emerge among many of the country’s civil rights groups, and thus he had recently formed an organization called the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU). Modeled after the pan-African Organization of African Unity, the OAAU, which had no religious affiliation, sought to unite black Americans and bring the United States government to the General Assembly of the U.N. and hold it accountable for violating the Human Rights Charter in its treatment of black Americans. Malcolm had long been perceived as a divider by many within the mainstream movement, but since his break with *The Nation*, he had been reaching out to the members of the very organizations he had distanced himself from in previous years. It was evident to Lewis and Harris that his time in Africa had changed him. “He seemed very hopeful,” Lewis

---

<sup>29</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 287.

<sup>30</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 288.

<sup>31</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 288.

recalled of Malcolm. “His overwhelming reception in Africa by blacks, whites, Asians and Arabs alike had pushed him toward believing that people *could* come together.”<sup>32</sup>

As Lewis and Harris parted ways with Malcolm they expressed hope that their respective organizations would communicate and collaborate more going forward.<sup>33</sup> Malcolm told the pair that he really supported what SNCC was doing and wanted to ~~come~~ visit SNCC in the South, something Lewis would write he “couldn’t have imagined hearing him say six months earlier” and had convinced him “this was clearly a man in the process of changing.”<sup>34</sup> They agreed they had to “be in better contact, and work more closely together.”<sup>35</sup> Their time with Malcolm in Nairobi proved to be a pivotal moment during their trip even though it was entirely incidental. They described it to their fellow SNCC staffers as a “very important meeting” upon their return.<sup>36</sup> Indeed it was “a very very significant exchange,” Harris would recall animatedly, even after nearly forty-five years had passed.<sup>37</sup>

#### **IV. Sowing the Seeds of Internationalism and Collaboration**

---

<sup>32</sup> Lewis, John. *Walking with the Wind*, 286.

<sup>33</sup> “The Trip Report,” p. 8.

<sup>34</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, 288.

<sup>35</sup> Donald Harris Interview with Author, 5 November 2010.

<sup>36</sup> “The Trip Report,” p. 8.

<sup>37</sup> Donald Harris Interview with Author, 5 November 2010.

Less than a month from the day when Lewis' and Harris' plane touched down in the United States and less than a week after the pair submitted their official report of the trip to SNCC, the seeds of collaboration between Malcolm and SNCC began to take root. In December, a group of representatives from the MFDP traveled to a number of northern cities in an attempt to gain both political and financial support for their newest endeavor; they planned to block the five segregationist representatives from Mississippi from being seated in Congress when it convened again in January on the grounds that they had been elected illegally because the blacks in the state had been systematically disenfranchised.<sup>38</sup>

At a rally held at Williams Institutional CME Church in Harlem on 20 December, which had been organized to support the MFDP effort, Fannie Lou Hamer spoke, followed by a performance from the SNCC Freedom Singers. Among other songs, the group from SNCC sang "Oginga Odinga of Kenya" a tribute to the Kenyan revolutionary. Kenya had gained its independence a year earlier and had transitioned to a republic the previous week. As they concluded, Malcolm X stood up to address the crowd. Hamer had invited Malcolm to share some words at the rally; it was after all in Harlem, the base of his support and the center of the OAAU. Charles Neblett and his fellow Freedom Singers were thrilled that Malcolm had agreed to speak at the rally. "He was so brave and courageous. We all wanted to meet him," Neblett remembered.<sup>39</sup> Malcolm began his address by directly engaging the Freedom Singers. He remarked that it was "quite significant" that they had decided to sing about Odinga. A few years earlier they would

---

<sup>38</sup> Chana Kai Lee, *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), p. 108.

<sup>39</sup> Kay Mills, *This Little Light of Mine: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), p. 141.

not have seen him as a paragon. Their eyes were not cast beyond the Atlantic. “Two or three years ago most of our people would choose to sing about someone who was...passive and meek and humble and forgiving.” Odinga was none of these, but he *was* free, Malcolm asserted.<sup>40</sup>

Black Americans, he assured the audience, could best learn how to liberate themselves by studying how the Kenyan revolutionaries Kenyatta and Odinga had brought freedom to their people. Referencing the Kenyan Mau Mau Rebellion he proclaimed, “In Mississippi we need a Mau Mau. In Alabama we need a Mau Mau. In Georgia we need a Mau Mau. Right here in Harlem, in New York City, we need a Mau Mau.” Malcolm explained that the Africans who had won their independence did not just “sit around and talk about their plight” or sing “We Shall Overcome,” they demanded and took their freedom.<sup>41</sup> He called upon his audience to summon the anger that had pushed the Africans to action and use it to force change.

Repeatedly recalling the brutality that Mrs. Hamer had experienced in Mississippi, for which she had garnered attention with a stirring address at the convention in Atlantic City in August, Malcolm challenged black manhood for allowing the violence against black women and children to continue. He urged the audience of the need to address white racist America in their own “language,” even if that language was “a rifle” or “a rope.”<sup>42</sup> He was trying to make his audience see that non-violence as a principle

---

<sup>40</sup> George Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements* (New York: Grove Press, 1965), p. 106.

<sup>41</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 107.

<sup>42</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 108.

was flawed by equating it with speaking a language that racist America could not understand. “Some people wonder,” he remarked, “What has Mississippi got to do with Harlem?” Then he answered, “It isn’t actually Mississippi; it’s America. America is Mississippi...There’s no such thing as the South—it’s America.”<sup>43</sup> He continued, “So, what happens in Mississippi and the South has a direct bearing on what happens to you and me here in Harlem.”<sup>44</sup> Malcolm truly believed that the struggle needed a wider lens, that the movement had been relying on ineffective strategies, and he conveyed this to those in SNCC and the others at the rally as he had to Lewis and Harris in Nairobi. The pair had shared their experiences with the organization, and hearing Malcolm emphasize the same message of internationalism reinforced it for Hamer and the Freedom Singers. Malcolm “had tremendous respect for Mrs. Hamer” and a “tremendous respect for what we were doing,” Neblett recollected.<sup>45</sup> SNCC reached out to Malcolm and he offered his hand to SNCC. As he concluded his speech, Malcolm extended a public invitation to Hamer and the Freedom Singers to a meeting of the OAAU that same evening at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem. They excitedly accepted.

That evening, Malcolm spoke again, reiterating his themes from the afternoon. He explained that blacks in America had tried myriad methods to achieve their freedom, and yet they still had not quite figured it out, because “everywhere you look, people get their freedom faster than we do.”<sup>46</sup> That’s why, he continued, before they could spell out

---

<sup>43</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 108.

<sup>44</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 109.

<sup>45</sup> Mills, *This Little Light of Mine: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*, p. 140.

a program for the new organization they had to first acknowledge and understand that “all existing programs aren’t programs that are going to produce productive results” and before they could take action they needed to “analyze and analyze and analyze” to better understand the problem they faced.<sup>47</sup> Malcolm continued, “When you and I are inside of America and look at America, she looks big and bad and invincible” and “when we approach her in that context, we approach her as beggars with our hat in our hands.” If people would only broaden their perspective and look beyond the country’s shores, they would see “a freedom struggle of people all over the world.”<sup>48</sup> They would see that “you can’t understand what is going on in Mississippi if you don’t understand what is going on in the Congo...They’re both the same. The same interests are at stake. The same sides are drawn up, the same schemes are at work.”<sup>49</sup> Malcolm implored the modest gathering to open their eyes to the worldwide revolution going on around them, “The Africans see it, the Latin Americans see it, the Asians see it. So when you hear them talking about freedom, they’re not talking about a cup of coffee with a cracker. No, they’re talking about getting in a position to feed themselves and clothe themselves and make these other things that, when you have them, make life worth living.”<sup>50</sup>

Pointing to the infighting in the movement, Malcolm asserted that rather than arguing amongst themselves, black Americans needed to come together, to rely on the

---

<sup>46</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 116.

<sup>47</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 118.

<sup>48</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 117.

<sup>49</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 125.

<sup>50</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 128.

support of their revolutionary brothers, to form their power base not in a crooked American political system, but rather “among brothers and sisters...among people who have something in common with [them,]” among the oppressed peoples of the world. Malcolm’s impassioned words had a tremendous impact on Hamer and the SNCC Freedom Singers, but they were not ready to give up on the political establishment.<sup>51</sup> They were convinced that the new MFDP challenge had promise and that progress could be made. But Malcolm had also opened up their eyes to an alternative, and they began to see the international scope of their struggle.

Only weeks later, Hamer returned to Harlem, this time with a group of thirty-seven teenagers from McComb, Mississippi. The trip, sponsored by SNCC, took the students to New York during their Christmas vacation to attend various meetings and discussions in Harlem, to reward them for their commitment to civil rights in McComb and provide them an opportunity to learn more. As part of their trip, Hamer arranged for Malcolm to speak with them on the last day of 1964 in Harlem’s Hotel Theresa. As the youth eagerly listened, Malcolm implored them to think for themselves and realize that they were not alone in Mississippi, but rather that they had “as much power on [their] side as that Ku Klux Klan [had] on its side.”<sup>52</sup> The entire black world was behind them. As the youngsters listened to Malcolm, they came to see the power of an internationalized struggle. Malcolm explained that his generation “sat around like a knot on a wall while the whole world was fighting for its human rights,” but the youngsters had the opportunity to join that fight. He committed his support to the group and their

---

<sup>51</sup> Lee, *For Freedom’s Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*, pp. 103-104.

<sup>52</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 143.

efforts to register blacks in Mississippi, remarking, “If you don’t have enough people down there to do it, we’ll come down there and help you do it.”<sup>53</sup> He added that they shouldn’t need to worry about being the victims of racist violence, and if confronted with violence, they had a right and responsibility to protect themselves. If they needed help doing that too, he concluded, “we’re with you one thousand percent.”<sup>54</sup> Malcolm had a remarkable impact on the young Mississippians; he made “a hell of an impression” Stokely Carmichael remembered.<sup>55</sup> SNCC had provided them exposure to Malcolm X and his distinctively accessible and articulate way of interpreting and describing the struggle. In turn, Malcolm had offered them an international lens that had been largely unutilized amongst the youth. Carmichael recalled, “The youth came back elated, just elated, talking about nothing but Malcolm.”<sup>56</sup>

In early February, James Forman invited Malcolm to speak to a group of students at Tuskegee Institute. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference was at this point in the midst of a voting rights campaign in Selma, Alabama, which would ultimately lead to the famed Selma to Montgomery marches. SNCC’s presence in Selma had been relatively small, but the regular staffers who worked in Selma had gotten involved with

---

<sup>53</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 144.

<sup>54</sup> Breitman, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 146.

<sup>55</sup> Stokely Carmichael and Ekwueme Michael Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)*(New York: Scribner, 2003), p. 440.

<sup>56</sup> Carmichael and Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)*, p. 440.

the campaign as had Chairman Lewis.<sup>57</sup> Knowing Malcolm was nearby, newly elected Selma project director, Silas Norman, and SNCC Secretary Faye Bellamy, drove to Tuskegee and invited Malcolm to join them in Selma. They were sure he would be able to frame the voting rights campaign in a new light and wanted to provide an opportunity for the group to engage Malcolm's militant perspective. Recalling the trip to Tuskegee, Bellamy later remarked, "When he talked to us, little doors in my mind would literally just pop open; I could feel the impulses in my brain pulsating with energy. It was visceral and astonishing." She knew it would be "a good idea to expose the young people to Malcolm's thinking and teachings." Malcolm readily accepted the invitation and arrived in Selma on 4 February.<sup>58</sup>

Martin Luther King Jr. had been arrested a short time earlier, and Malcolm's arrival in Selma put SCLC staffers on high alert. They worried he might say something to jeopardize their efforts in Selma, and before he spoke at a rally at Brown's Chapel they urged him not to incite anything.<sup>59</sup> Bellamy later recalled that Malcolm used the opportunity to share his views on nonviolence; he sought "to give people an alternative to think about."<sup>60</sup> He refused to march with the organizers, claiming he could not support a nonviolent demonstration, but reaffirmed to the SNCC staffers his commitment to SNCC. "He told us if we ever needed his help in Selma—or anywhere else—to call him," and

---

<sup>57</sup> *Walking with the Wind*, p. 312.

<sup>58</sup> Fay Bellamy recounts bringing Malcolm to Selma in the newly published compilation of women's oral histories. See Faith S. Holsaert et. al., eds., *Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 2010), pp. 373-475.

<sup>59</sup> Alvin Adams, "Malcolm X 'Seemed Sincere,'" *Jet*, March 11, 1965, 30.

<sup>60</sup> Adams, "Malcolm X 'Seemed Sincere,'" 28.

“he sounded sincere.”<sup>61</sup> He explained to the SNCC staffers that he had plans to start recruiting for the OAAU in the South “in about two weeks.” Later in the church, he whispered to Coretta Scott King, who had come in place of her husband that he “was trying to help.” He hoped his involvement might make it easier for whites to come around to King’s proposals. “He seemed rather anxious to let Martin know he was not causing trouble or making it difficult, but that he was trying to make it easier.” Like Bellamy, she remembered, “He seemed sincere.”<sup>62</sup> Program Director at the time, Cleveland Sellers, later elucidated why they had decided to bring Malcolm to Selma. “Our idea was to expand on Malcolm’s identification with our struggle and young people in the South but at the same time to get young people to begin to appreciate the leadership and the efforts on the part of other leaders who were not as popular in the press.”<sup>63</sup>

Since his break with the Nation in March, Malcolm had been seeking to develop ties with mainstream civil rights leaders and organizations. He believed that only if he united the movement could his new organization flourish. And yet, Malcolm had found few people within the movement receptive to his invitation. Earlier in the year, even SNCC, the most radically left of the prominent organizations in the movement, kept its distance from Malcolm’s embrace. Stokely Carmichael, who soon adopted many of Malcolm’s ideas and became famous two years later for articulating many of them in the Black Power Movement, questioned what Malcolm could offer to the movement.

---

<sup>61</sup> Adams, “Malcolm X ‘Seemed Sincere,’” 28.

<sup>62</sup> Adams, “Malcolm X ‘Seemed Sincere,’” 30.

<sup>63</sup> [Interview with Cleveland Sellers, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on October 21, 1988, for \*Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads 1965 to 1985\*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection, p. 5.](#)

Forman, who later attested to Malcolm's profound influence on SNCC, responded negatively when asked by Joseph B Cumming, Jr. of Newsweek whether SNCC and Malcolm might come together. "Come on, man. I don't know anything about Malcolm X." When asked if SNCC would work with him, "Look, man, come on." He insisted, "I don't feel threatened [by Malcolm X]. We're pretty secure psychologically... Look, man, nobody's worried about Malcolm X."<sup>64</sup>

Despite hesitation less than a year earlier by many in SNCC's ranks, the trip introduced SNCC to a new Malcolm, one who seemed to articulate a fresh direction for the struggle, one who helped confirm the militancy to which some in SNCC were already leaning. "There was no question that our time in Nairobi brought him closer to SNCC and to the work we were doing," Harris remembered. Malcolm's evolving relationship with SNCC subsequent to his and Lewis' meeting in Africa "was based in good measure on

---

<sup>64</sup> Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, p. 142. During his years with *The Nation*, Malcolm had developed a reputation as a pariah among many of the leaders in the mainstream organizations of the movement. His separatist ideology had been fundamentally at odds with the integrationist stance of the mainstream movement, and Malcolm had repeatedly criticized many of the movement's leaders as 'toms' who were simply pandering to the white establishment. After years of this legacy, Malcolm found it exceedingly hard to penetrate any of the organizations from which he sought support and collaboration. As Goldman explains, "Their mutual history of no faith and ill will stood between them; so did their irreconcilable ideologies and strategies for change; so did Malcolm's wretched media reputation as an anti-white, anti-Semitic demagogue and now as an advocate of taking up guns as well." Certainly there was a wide range of opinions about Malcolm in SNCC in the early months of 1964, and different members of the organization had varying levels of exposure to him and his ideas. What is clear, is that the mainstream media regularly presented him as a fanatic and many in SNCC did not have much exposure to him personally because his sphere of influence emanated from Harlem, far from the organizing efforts of the SNCC staffers. Harris explained to me in an interview, that being from New York, he had more exposure to Malcolm than many others within the organization. He had seen him speak on a number of occasions in New York out of "personal curiosity" and Malcolm had even spoken to a group of students at Rutgers while Harris was enrolled as an undergraduate there.

the fact that we were certainly hoping for it, encouraging it, and saw that as the way to go.” It was “heart and soul what we were talking about.”<sup>65</sup>

As Lewis and Harris explained perceptions of Malcolm in Africa, members of the organization, including those who didn’t even know who Malcolm was “began to sit up and take notice.”<sup>66</sup> “People began to look closer,” Carmichael recalled, “of course the closer they looked at Malcolm X, the quicker they got hooked on Malcolm X.” Lewis and Harris’s impression of Malcolm in Africa spread throughout SNCC’s ranks, and when Malcolm was invited into Selma to speak, Carmichael recalled, “no one in SNCC could oppose it. As a matter of fact everyone was happy.”<sup>67</sup> Malcolm had a “profound impact” on SNCC.<sup>68</sup>

The trip had opened SNCC’s eyes to Malcolm’s evolving philosophy and the importance of an internationalist awareness in the struggle, and in SNCC Malcolm had found an organization willing and ready to collaborate. Carmichael later recollected in his autobiography, “Since his return from Africa, Malcolm, now free of the political and ideological constraints of The Nation, had been reaching out to movement leaders...some

---

<sup>65</sup> Donald Harris Interview with Author, 5 November 2010.

<sup>66</sup> Interview with Stokely Carmichael, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on November 7, 1988, for *Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads 1965 to 1985*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection, p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with Stokely Carmichael, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on November 7, 1988, for *Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads 1965 to 1985*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection, p. 2.

<sup>68</sup> Interview with Stokely Carmichael, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on November 7, 1988, for *Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads 1965 to 1985*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection, p. 2.

of us had been talking about a role for him with SNCC. The voting rights bill was coming. I knew we in SNCC would have to begin looking seriously to the ghettos in the North for the kind of grassroots organizing we'd been doing in the South. Malcolm would be key. We weren't sure how it could work, or if such a thing was even possible, but it wasn't as strange as people seemed to think." Indeed, Carmichael would assert, "Of all the civil rights groups, I knew he felt closest to us, to the SNCC spirit."<sup>69</sup>

On 15 February, during the question and answer period following a speech at the Audubon Ballroom, Malcolm discussed his recent experience in Selma. "Those people down there aren't afraid, they're just waiting for somebody to tell them what to do. That's all....And I promised the brothers and sisters in Alabama when I was there that we'd be back. I'll be back."<sup>70</sup>

He never came back. Malcolm and SNCC were poised to take strides together. Only a week later, on 21 February 1965, Malcolm was assassinated and the growing relationship was forever severed. People in SNCC were "devastated."<sup>71</sup>

"Before his assassination most of us were convinced that his awesome charisma and brilliant insights would have resulted in his becoming one of the first men in history to lead a multi-continental revolutionary movement," Sellers commented in his autobiography. Perhaps the expectations were a product of SNCC's idealism. Perhaps they were more than that.

---

<sup>69</sup> Carmichael and Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)*, p. 440.

<sup>70</sup> Bruce Perry, ed., *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches* (New York: Pathfinder, 1989), p. 146.

<sup>71</sup> Donald Harris Interview with Author, 5 November 2010.

Lewis, who himself knew the struggles of leadership and mobilization, lamented the loss of the singular leader. “More than any other single personality, he was able to articulate the aspiration, bitterness and frustration of the Negro people. Not only in the Northern ghettos, but also in the black-belt Delta area of the Deep South. Malcolm was a living link between Africa and the civil rights movement in this country.”

The coincidental encounter between Lewis, Harris, and Malcolm X, though discussed only in passing in most scholarly writing about SNCC and Malcolm, came at a time when Malcolm’s evolved philosophy and increasingly open attitude toward the movement coalesced with SNCC’s increased interest in internationalism and deep respect for Malcolm’s influence. Malcolm found in SNCC an organization that was receptive to his message of international black unity and collaboration, and SNCC found in Malcolm a man who could articulate the interconnectedness of the international black struggle in a way no one had before. Though short lived, the collaboration with Malcolm that grew out of the encounter in Kenya marks perhaps one of the greatest “what if” moments in the history of the American black rights struggle. One can only imagine what might have happened had Malcolm not lost his life and had the relationship been granted an opportunity to develop. An enduring collaboration between Malcolm, one of the most articulate and most efficient organizers of the twentieth century, with SNCC, an organization of national prominence with the rare ability to harness the idealism and commitment of America’s youth, may have entirely redirected the trajectory of the American Civil Rights Movement.

Malcolm’s assassination in February of 1965 ended any hope of a blossoming relationship between SNCC and Malcolm. And yet, the message that Malcolm conveyed

to Lewis and Harris in Nairobi had begun to take root as a crucial philosophical tenet in SNCC and would outlive Malcolm and his collaboration with the organization. The encounter with Malcolm and the entire extended trip on the continent dramatically increased interest and sustained action on the international front for years to come. SNCC henceforth always understood itself within a context much bigger than the American South, within an immense struggle for the empowerment of people of color the world over. The subsequent evolution of SNCC's orientation and priorities, which had enormous implications for SNCC and the entirety of the American Civil Rights Movement, must be in part attributed to Malcolm X and that coincidental cup of coffee.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources:

Adams, Alvin. "Malcolm X 'Seemed Sincere'" *Jet*, March 11, 1965, 28-30.

"An Oral History with Fannie Lou Hamer," Interviewed by Neil McMillen on 14 April 1972 and 25 January 1973, University of Southern Mississippi Digital Collections <<http://digilib.usm.edu/u/?coh,2927>>.

Breitman, George, ed., *Malcolm X Speaks; Selected Speeches and Statements*. New York: Grove Press, 1965.

Bureau of African Affairs Files: National Archives of Ghana (PRAAD).

Carmichael, Stokely, and Ekwueme Michael Thelwell. *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)*. New York: Scribner, 2003.

Carson, Clayborne, David J. Garrow, Gerald Gill, Vincent Harding, and Darlene Clark Hine, eds. *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader: Documents, Speeches, and Firsthand Accounts from the Black Freedom Struggle, 1954-1990*. New York: Penguin, 1991.

- Evans, Rowland, and Robert Novak, "Inside Report: Civil Rights--Danger Ahead," *The Washington Post*, December 2, 1964, A21 sec. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Web. 7 Feb. 2011.
- Forman, James. *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1999.
- Haley, Alex and Malcolm X. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1999.
- Hamer, Fannie Lou. *To Praise Our Bridges: An Autobiography*. Jackson, Mississippi: KIPCO, 1967.
- Hampton, Henry, ed., *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s Through the 1980s*. New York: Bantam Books, 1990.
- Holsaert, Faith S., Martha Prescod Norman Noonan, Judy Richardson, Betty Garman Robinson, Jean Smith Young, and Dorothy M. Zellner, eds. *Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC*. Urbana: University of Illinois, 2010.
- [Interview with Cleveland Sellers, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on October 21, 1988, for Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads 1965 to 1985. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.](#)
- [Interview with Ivanhoe Donaldson, conducted by Blackside, Inc. in 1979, for Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years \(1954-1965\). Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.](#)
- [Interview with Joseph Rauh, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on October 31, 1985, for Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years \(1954-1965\). Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.](#)
- [Interview with Lawrence Guyot, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on May 15, 1979, for Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years \(1954-1965\). Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.](#)
- [Interview with Robert Moses, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on May 19, 1986, for Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years \(1954-1965\). Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.](#)
- [Interview with Stokely Carmichael, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on November 7, 1988, for Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads 1965 to 1985. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.](#)

Lewis, John, and Michael D'Orso. *Walking with the Wind A Memoir of the Movement*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.

Perry, Bruce, ed., *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*. New York: Pathfinder, 1989.

Sellers, Cleveland and Robert Terrell. *The River of No Return: The Autobiography of a Black Militant and the Life and Death of SNCC*. Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 1990.

Shirley Graham Du Bois Papers: Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Papers (Microfilm), Accessed at Lamont Library, Harvard University.

X, Malcolm and Archie C. Epps, ed. *The Speeches of Malcolm X at Harvard*. New York: William Morrow, 1968.

### **Secondary Scholarship:**

Abbott, Dorothy, ed. *Mississippi Writers: Reflections of Childhood and Youth*. Vol. 4. Jackson: University of Mississippi, 1991.

Branch, Taylor. *Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years, 1963-65*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.

Breitman, George. *The Last Year of Malcolm X: The Evolution of a Revolutionary*. New York: Schocken Books, 1968.

Brooks, Viola M. *Freedom Schools*. Los Angeles: California State Association of Colored Women's Clubs, 1965.

Burner, Eric R. *And Gently He Shall Lead Them: Robert Parris Moses and Civil Rights in Mississippi*. New York: New York University Press, 1994.

Carmichael, Stokely. *Stokely Speaks: Black Power Back to Pan-Africanism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1971.

Carmichael, Stokely, and Charles V. Hamilton. *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*. New York: Random House, 1967.

- Carson, Clayborne. *In Struggle: SNCC and The Black Awakening of the 1960s*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Clarke, John Henrik, A. Peter Bailey, and Earl Grant, eds. *Malcolm X The Man and His Times*. New Jersey: Africa World, 1990.
- Eagles, Charles W. "Toward New Histories of the Civil Rights Era." *The Journal of Southern History* 66.4 (2000): 815-848.
- Fleming, Cynthia Griggs. *Soon We Will Not Cry: The Liberation of Ruby Doris Smith Robinson*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.
- Gaines, Kevin K. *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.
- Goldman, Peter. *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*. Urbana: University of Illinois, 1979.
- Greenberg, Cheryl Lynn, ed. *A Circle of Trust: Remembering SNCC*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998.
- Hogan, Wesley C. *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC's Dream for a New America*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Joseph, Peniel E. *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights Black Power Era*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Joseph, Peniel E. *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2006.
- Lawson, Steven F. "Freedom Then, Freedom Now: The Historiography of the Civil Rights Movement." *The American Historical Review* 96.2 (1991): 456-471.
- Lee, Chana Kai. *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*. Urbana, IL, University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Lewis, Andrew B. *The Shadows of Youth: The Remarkable Journey of the Civil Rights Generation*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2009.
- Mills, Kay. *This Little Light of Mine: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2007.
- Neary, John. *Julian Bond Black Rebel*. New York: William Morrow, 1971.
- Plummer, Brenda Gayle. *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

- Plummer, Brenda Gayle, ed. *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Schmidt, Elizabeth. *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007.
- Singh, Nikhil Pal. *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Stoper, Emily. *The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee: The Growth of Radicalism in a Civil Rights Organization*. Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1989.
- Von Eschen, Penny M. *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997.
- Wilkins, Fanon Che. "The Making of Black Internationalists: SNCC and Africa Before the Launching of Black Power, 1960-1965." *Journal of African American History* 92.4 (2007): 468-490.
- Zinn, Howard, *SNCC The New Abolitionists*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1965.