

Sustaining the principles of Equality; Freedom and Human Dignity in the struggle for liberation in South Africa

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Abstract

Writing about the struggle for liberation in Algeria in the 1960s, Franz Fanon has concluded that liberation struggles cannot be intelligible to themselves. He continued to state that it is in the exact measure that we can discern the movements that gave them historical content that their meanings are derived. This is so true in the South African context. The struggle for liberation in South Africa cannot yield meaning unless researchers concerned with histories of liberation movements do not only acknowledge the auxiliary status of the Women's Section of the African National Congress, but begins to examine the extent to which this formation gave historical content and meaning to the nationalist struggle for liberation in South Africa.

The paper traces the development of gender sensitive programmes within the Women's Section of the African National Congress. Using the contacts it established with the regional *structures, continental and international women's structures, the Women's Section of the African National Congress* took gender as a key organising concept through which *ideas about equality, freedom and human dignity* were injected and expressed in the struggle against apartheid. The paper examines the role of the Nordic countries in enhancing the abilities of women in articulating these principles during the struggle for liberation in South Africa. The paper also takes a bird's eye view on how the principles of equality, freedom and human dignity continue to haunt post apartheid state.