Non-violence in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States of America

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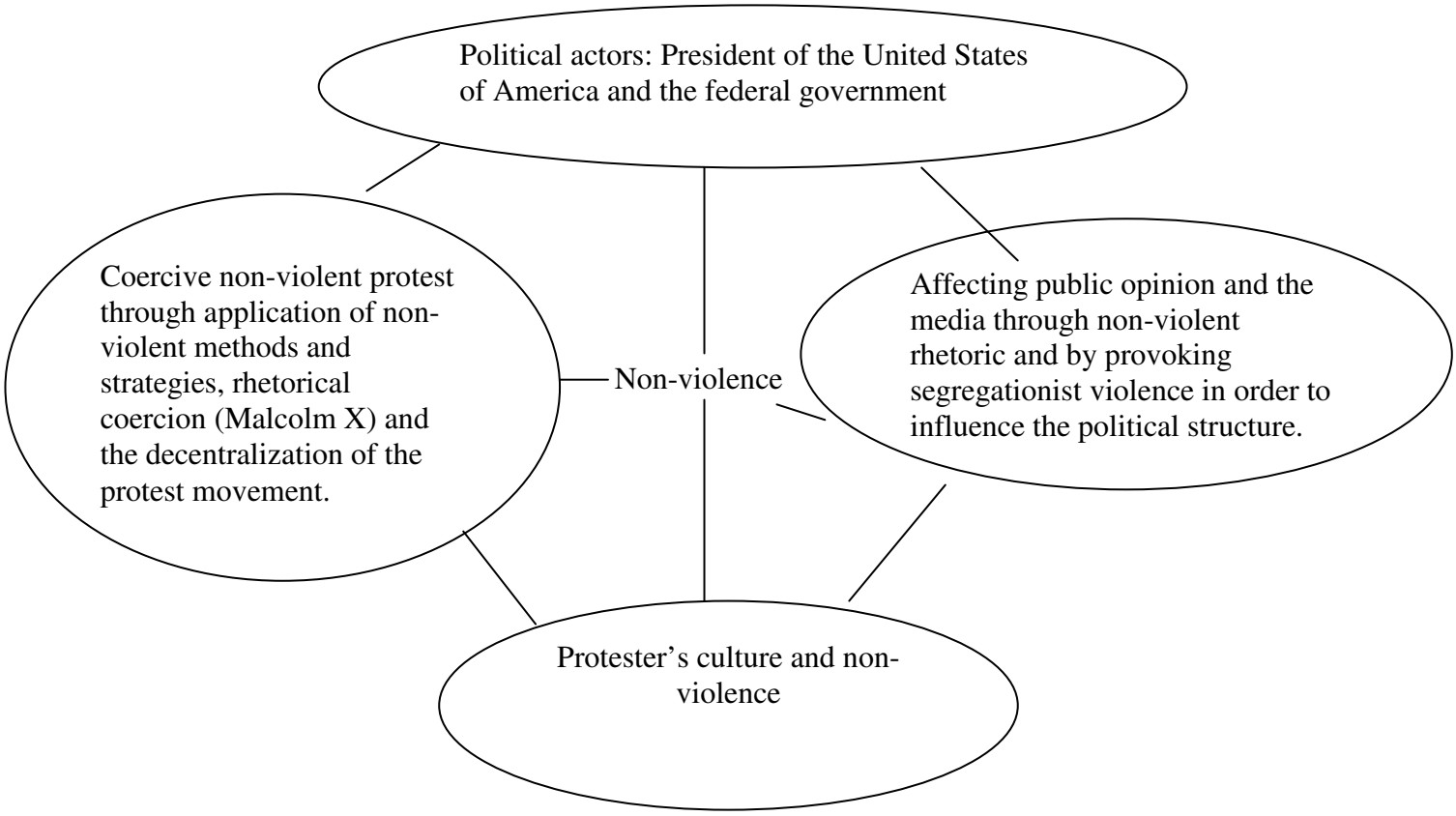
Non-violent dynamics of the civil rights movement



Introduction

What are the cultural, political and strategic factors that enabled non-violent protest during the civil rights movement to achieve political gains, culminating in the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965?

Three hypotheses form the analytical frame of this study: 1.) Non-violent protest provoked political change during the civil rights movement because southern African-American culture facilitated the acceptance of non-violence. 2.) African-American non-violent leaders led a successful public relations campaign that caused American public opinion to support civil rights gains for African Americans. 3.) Non-violent protesters developed coercive mechanisms that enabled them to exert pressure on their opponents, therefore enhancing their ability to negotiate with their opponents and the federal government.

1.) Non-violence and African-American Culture

The dissertation discusses the concept of non-violence as defined by scholars such as Gene Sharp, Harrop A. Freeman and also Martin Luther King, Jr. There is a difference between non-violence, non-cooperation and civil disobedience, which this study illustrates through the example of the civil rights movement. King, for example, eschewed from applying civil disobedience. Civil rights leaders did not also apply non-cooperation as practiced by Gandhi against British occupation.

The study illustrates that non-violence had not been an alien concept to African-American intellectuals. Howard Thurman, Mordecai Johnson, and James Weldon Johnson had considered the application of non-violence and other African-American intellectuals had advocated the tactics of the Indian leader Mohandes Karamchand Gandhi.

The author argues that southern African-American culture facilitated the acceptance of non-violent protest and non-violent philosophy. In his book, *Black Liberation*, George Fredrickson argues that one of the reasons the African National Congress in South Africa could not imitate Gandhi's example of non-violence was that that there was nothing in the cultural traditions of the Zulus, Xhosa, Sotho, or Tswana that could make a virtue out of refraining from violent resistance.[1] This example underlines the necessity of the convergence of non-violent ideology with cultural values and beliefs, particularly in a long-term conflict. Fredrickson writes: "Mass nonviolence

[1] Fredrickson, George M. Black liberation - a comparative history of black ideologies in the United States and South Africa. New York, NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995. 230.

needs to express the culture of a community, and its leaders must be in tune with the basic beliefs and values of the masses."[٢]

The southern African-American church, black theology and the status of preachers in African-American culture played a central role in generating the acceptance of non-violence in southern African-American communities. The African-American church had always been central to the lives of southern African-Americans. Aldon Morris writes: "The church provided black people with a moral outlook, social status, entertainment, and political organization, and it served as the main reservoir of black culture."[3] It does not therefore come as a surprise that African-American ministers and activists used the church as the basis of their campaigns. In Montgomery, Birmingham and Selma the church provided a meeting location for protesters, and a place where protest leaders were able to gather funds, discuss strategic plans, vote on important decisions and provide the protesters with psychological support.

Fredrickson contends that a large number of preachers, possibly a majority, did not lend their support to the movement.[4] Nevertheless their presence provided the movement with a "legitimization", which the study elaborates on in chapter one. African-American preachers had a respectable and influential position in southern culture and had more influence on African-Americans than politicians. William E. B. Du Bois described the African-American preacher as: "one who rudely but picturesquely expressed the longing, disappointment, and resentment of a stolen and oppressed people."[5]

The black church and black theology played a passive role before the beginning of the movement, which the author argues facilitated the acceptance of non-violence. James W. Zanden describes the minority status of southern African-Americans as creating an accommodating behavior on the part of African Americans toward injustice.[6] In an environment more accepting of violence, on the other hand, oppressed groups might become inclined to reject non-violence. After African-American riots occurred in New York, for example, King sent a team led by activists of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to talk with the youth and convince them to adopt non-violence. However the hostility among African-Americans was so immense, particularly towards non-violence, that SCLC staff members considered it wise not to mention the word.[7]

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[2] Ibid. 230.
[3] Morris Aldon D. A Man Prepared for the Times: A Sociological Analysis of the Leadership on Martin Luther King, Jr. *We shall overcome: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the black freedom struggle.* Ed. Peter J. Albert. New York: Pantheon Books, 1990. 49.
[4] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 262.
[5] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002. 33.
[6] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt*. Ed. James A. Geschwender. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971. 136.
[7] Fairclough, Adam. To redeem the soul of America: the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001. 196-197.

As the church was the basis of the movement and as African-American ministers led protest campaigns, the rhetoric of the protest was dominantly religious, which contributed to the identification of many southern African-Americans with the objectives of the movement. Lewis Baldwin contends that religion was at the center of black life and culture and that King was well aware of this fact. "Religion more than anything else, gave meaning and significance to spirituality and community."[8] The author will present statements by protesters who claim that their religious faith influenced them to protest non-violently. The first chapter also shows how King blended Christian symbols into his rhetoric. King developed a liberation theology that was different from the Black Theology previously known to African-Americans, writes Garber.[9] Nevertheless, it was based on the essence of Black Theology. Non-violent principles like Christian love and redemptive suffering were blended into African-American theological beliefs. Although Reverend John Morris, executive director of the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity, criticized King for presenting an un-Christian philosophy, King nevertheless "christianized" non-violence, as this study shows. "Non-violent suffering" during the civil rights movement was considered by many to be "the highest manifestation of Christianity", writes Howard Sitkoff.[10] The author illustrates how African-Americans particularly identified with Jesus and the cross, which non-violent leaders used to relate non-violence to Jesus.

Another example of the blend of theology and non-violence was the portrayal of a non-violent God anchored in African-American religious culture. Cornel West contends that the African-American church tried to hold together the dignity and depravity of persons by portraying a God, Yahweh, who identified with the disinherited and downtrodden.[11] James Cone writes that in a theology of liberation, a "God without wrath does not plan to do much liberating".[12] Yet the belief that African-Americans were accompanied by a God who would help them through their hardships is a black religious tradition found in the Gospel music of slaves. To quote Eric Lincoln "A countertheme in the deep faith which underscores black religion to this day is expressed in the absolute assurance that God will take care of his own."[13] According to Andrew Young, the unwavering belief of demonstrators during the St. Augustine campaign that "God will take care of you" symbolized non-violence at its best.[14]

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[8] Baldwin, Lewis V. There is a balm in Gilead - the cultural roots of Martin Luther King, jr. Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress Pr, 1991. 175.
[9] Garber, Paul. "King Was A Black Theologian, "Journal of Religious Thought 31 (Fall-Winter, 1974-75). 16-32. Rpt. in *The ethics of Martin Luther King, jr.* Ervin Smith. New York: Mellen Press, 1981.187.
[10] Sitkoff, Harvard. The Struggle for black equality, 1954 – 1980. New York: Hill & Wang, 1981. 63.
[11] West, Cornel.The Religious Foundations of the Thought of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We shall overcome - Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 122.
[12] Cone, James H. A black theology of liberation. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970. 120-121.
[13] Lincoln, Charles Eric. Race, religion, and the continuing American dilemma. New York: Hill & Wang, 1984. 54.
[14] Gandhi, Arun. World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? M.K. Gandhi Institute For Nonviolence. Edited by Arun Gandhi. Wiley Eastern Limited. New Age International Publishers, 1994. 84.

As Black Power was becoming increasingly militant in the sixties, non-violent leaders had to find a conciliatory approach in order to not alienate Black Power advocates. James Farmer realized the necessity of propagating Black Power: "Some form of nationalism is necessary and even healthy…Like the nationalists, we must try to conquer the Negro sense of inferiority."[15] The author claims that Black Pride was of central importance to African-Americans in the sixties and, hence, non-violent leaders could not ignore its radicalizing influence on African-Americans. Non-violent leaders, therefore, infused statements of Black Pride in their non-violent rhetoric in order to sound credible. John Herbers confirms that the non-violent movement had a "strong element of black pride".[16]

Critics of non-violence, like Malcolm X, portrayed non-violence as a passive doctrine causing non-violent leaders to radicalize their non-violent rhetoric. A closer analysis of the non-violent rhetoric of the movement shows that protest leaders applied a militant non-violent rhetoric to appeal to African-American youths. Michael Eric Dyson states that the key to King's evolution was his "aggressive non-violence".[17] King also differentiated between non-violence and pacifism in order to emphasize the militancy of the latter.

Tangible proof of success was vital to prove to African-Americans and to American public opinion in general that non-violence could be effective. Visible success has a huge psychological effect on protesters and reinforces their belief that non-violence is effective and important, thus maintaining the perseverance of non-violent protest. Reinhold Niebuhr claims that non-violence would be irresponsible if there was no proof to demonstrate that it could be successful.[18]

Another cultural trait of the non-violent movement was the songs that protesters sang during demonstrations or at church meetings. King regarded African-American songs of the Freedom Rides, ranging from slave spirituals to folk music, as "evidence of both the power and cultural significance of the movement."[19] Young praised the St. Augustine protesters for singing: "I love everybody in my heart", when they greeted the Ku Klux Klan as non-violence at its best.[20] Songs also had a psychological impact on protesters, which will be presented by the author.

2.) Non-violent Rhetoric and Dramatization

[15] Meier, August., and Elliott Rudwick. CORE: a study in the civil rights movement, 1942-1968. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973. 331.
[16] Herbers, John.The Black dilemma. New York: Day, 1973. 51.
[17] Dyson, Michael Eric. I may not get there with you. New York, NY: Free Press, 2000. 105.
[18] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1958. 92.
[19] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 371.
[20] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 84.

Doug McAdam contends that from 1961 to 1965, racial strife reached such proportions that it was identified in public opinion surveys as the most important problem confronting the country.[21] Adam Fairclough contends that the political climate was so transformed that civil rights legislation became feasible.[22]

The second hypothesis of this study is that non-violent leaders led a successful public relations campaign that drove American public opinion to sympathize with African American protest, which pressured the federal government to become politically involved. The author defines third groups during the civil rights movement as public opinion in America and the federal government. American public opinion, which was relevant to influencing the decisions of the federal government, consisted of northern whites, the media, religious groups and institutions, liberals and ordinary American citizens.[23] The term third group could also include international public opinion, though the latter is not relevant to chapter two. In the context of this dissertation, the conversion of public opinion means that African-American non-violent protesters swayed American public opinion to their side, which led the federal government to undertake political action.

Scott Cutlip and Allen Center define public relations as: "Planned effort to influence opinion through good character and responsible performance, based upon mutually satisfactory two-way communication."[24] Non-violent conversion as defined by George Lakey means: "The opponent, as the result of the actions by the nonviolent person or group, comes around to a new point of view which embraces the ends of the nonviolent actor."[25] Civil rights leaders influenced public opinion through non-violent rhetoric and non-violent dramatization. As the author shows, non-violent rhetoric or dramatization did not convert the opponent but in some cases did convert American public opinion. Fredrickson contends:

> The belief that black protest was strictly nonviolent was probably essential to the process of winning northern public sympathy and ultimately government backing ... it seems likely that the northern white majority that came to favour federal action against segregation found black assertiveness worthy of sympathy only because it was framed by an aura of heroic nonviolence.[26]

This chapter analyses the mechanisms of conversion in the movement. James Jasper contends that moral mobilizers must appeal to the common-sense understandings of their audiences.[27] Thus, it is not surprising that African-American leaders based their protest rhetoric on American values.

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[21] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. 159.
[22] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 134.
[23] Public opinion also takes into account the beliefs and opinions of conservatives, southern whites and segregationists. Yet by invoking the term "public opinion" the study will focus on the above mentioned groups, as they played a role in bringing about political change at that time in America.
[24] Simon, Raymond. Public Relations: Concepts And Practices. New York: Wiley, 1984. 9.
[25] Lakey, George. Peace Research Reviews, vol. II, no.6. Dec.1968. 12.
[26] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 260.
[27] Jasper, James M. The art of moral protest: culture, biography, and creativity in social movements. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. 287.

Sharp writes that if the opponent and activists share common beliefs and behavioral norms then they should be able to appeal to one another to achieve understanding and sympathy.[28] The fact that the two conflicting sides both shared the same American values enabled African-American civil rights leaders to apply a rhetoric to which American public opinion could identify. For example, King compared students to abolitionists and drew a connection between African-American protest and the Boston Tea Party. His *I Have A Dream* speech is filled with allusions to American cultural values such as the American Dream.

African-American protesters particularly relied on non-violent rhetoric and dramatization to portray themselves as victims in order to arouse public sympathy. Fairclough describes the dogs and hoses that were used to confront demonstrators in Birmingham as SCLC's best propaganda.[29] The objective of non-violent suffering is to expose this suffering to the public and to the federal government. African-American non-violent leaders did not apply civil disobedience in order not to alienate sympathizers, as civil disobedience is much more radical than non-violence. Although civil rights campaigns depended on economic coercion, for example, yet the sight of suffering protesters affected public opinion which in turn caused the federal government to intervene. Suffering, however, did not always prove effective, particularly if it was unnoticed by the media.

At the beginning of the movement non-violent leaders applied a conciliatory rhetoric of picturing blacks and whites living together in the Beloved Community.[30] They applied a depersonalized conflict rhetoric which means that instead of targeting segregationists in public, non-violent leaders focused on segregation itself as evil. Yet the author also shows that African-American protesters deliberately benefited from exposing "villains" like Sheriff Clark in order to portray non-violent protesters as victims. King himself stated that in Chicago "naïve targets such as Jim Clarks and George Wallaces" would be harder to find and to use as symbols.[31]

The role of King was particularly effective in mobilizing public opinion. In their book, *Public Relations Strategies and Tactics*, Dennis L. Wilcox, Phillip H. Ault and Warren K. Agee write on the influence of informal opinion leaders on public opinion. They are leaders: "who have clout with peers because of some special characteristic. They may be role models who are admired and emulated, or opinion leaders because they can exert peer pressure on others to go along with

[28] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action. Boston: Extending Horizons Books, 2005. 726.
[29] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 126.
[30] King applied the term "Beloved Community" to project a community where African-Americans and white Americans would peacefully live together. For futher explanation, check sub-chapter 2.3.4.
[31] Ralph, James R. Northern protest: Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the civil rights movement. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993. 53.

something."[32] The author argues that King was such a leader and focuses on his portrayal in the media and his impact on African-Americans.

The study also illuminates the rhetoric King used to draw white allies, particularly liberals, to the civil rights movement. At the beginning of the movement civil rights activists welcomed the interaction of white and African-American activists and the influence of liberals. McAdam notes that the liberal's support enhanced the bargaining position of African-Americans by increasing the political consequences of opposing acceptable African-American demands.[33] Nevertheless the involvement of liberals and white activists became increasingly problematic in the sixties due to the increased militancy of the movement, which largely rejected white liberals and white activists. White liberals had particularly supported African-American activists when their protest was dramatized in the south, unleashing brutal response from segregationists. When non-violent protesters shifted their focus to tackle economic problems in the North, on the other hand, their complex objectives were not as dramatized as they had been in the south and they required drastic political change that many liberals were not willing to give.

The second part of chapter two elaborates on how non-violent protesters relied to a great extent on provoking segregationist violence. The violent images of protestors being beaten and attacked in Birmingham and Selma were influential in federal intervention like the passage of the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965. The author shows, however, that segregationist violence only paid off when media cameras were present. Yet it often had the negative effect of radicalizing African-American protesters and negatively impacting the movement. After three civil rights activists in Mississippi were killed, for example, many African-American activists became disillusioned with non-violence.[34]

3.) Non-violent Protest and Coercion

In the final chapter, the author shows that non-violent protesters developed coercive mechanisms that enabled them to exert pressure on their opponents, enhancing their ability to negotiate with their opponents and the federal government. Non-violent protesters applied several forms of coercion like legislative, political, and rhetorical coercion. In order to effectively apply non-violence in times of conflict the presence of certain cultural, political and even economic factors (i.e. boycotts) are of fundamental importance as they could potentially obstruct the effectiveness of

[32] Wilcox, L. Dennis., Phillip H. Ault, and Warren K. Agee. Public relations: strategies and tactics. New York: Longman, 1998. Fifth Edition. 210.
[33] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 160.
[34] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality.176-177.

non-violent mechanisms. Non-violent protesters cannot practice protest in a politically repressive atmosphere, for example. They cannot also stage an effective boycott without financial means.

In chapter three the author shows that civil rights leaders staged non-violent protest that had a coercive effect on segregationists and attracted public opinion so that the United States Presidents Kennedy and Johnson had to intervene. Whereas chapter two analyses the influence of public opinion on the federal government, chapter three specifically illuminates how non-violent protest coerced President Kennedy, President Johnson, public opinion and segregationists themselves. Dyson describes President Johnson as the civil rights movement greatest political ally.[35] Yet President Kennedy and President Johnson were rather reluctant "partners" of the movement and were compelled to intervene due to the crisis created by non-violent protest. "In the field of racial equality, this government simply cannot be depended upon for vigorous initiatives. It will, however, respond to popular indignation and pressure," contends Howard Zinn.[36]

Nevertheless civil rights activists counted on federal assistance a great deal. King's SCLC staff such as James Bevel, Jesse Jackson, Bayard Rustin, Michael Harrington, Hosea Williams and Andrew Young opposed the Poor People Campaign, for example, as they considered the political climate inclement for such a campaign.[37] During the Vietnam era, however, Johnson began to lose interest in the movement and even became an opponent of King after the latter criticized U.S. participation in the Vietnam War. As a result, William D. Watley claims that King did not receive any support from Johnson during the Chicago campaign.[38] Morris also notes that the civil rights movement figured predominantly in the third world.[39] During the Cold War, photographs of American police suppressing African-American protesters affected America's image in Africa. The strategic influence of these negative images where America was trying to win allies and lessen Soviet influence was another reason why the federal government was keen on protecting African-American protesters in the south. Chapter three also shows how legislation strengthened non-violent protest and vice versa.

Many civil rights leaders argued that the militancy of Malcolm X benefited the non-violent movement as, in comparison, King and other moderates were a preferable alternative. "Radicals may thus provide a militant foil against which moderate strategies and demands can be redefined

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[35] Dyson, Michael Eric. I may not get there with you. New York, NY: Free Press, 2000. 49.
[36] Zinn, Howard. Kennedy: The Reluctant Emancipator. *Reporting civil rights*. New York: Library of America: Distributed to the trade in the U.S. by Penguin Putnam, 2003. 703.
[37] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 89.
[38] Watley, William D. Roots of resistance - the nonviolent ethic of Martin Luther King, jr. Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1985. 98.
[39] Morris Aldon D. A Man Prepared for the Times: A Sociological Analysis of the Leadership on Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 55.

and normalized," writes Herbert Raines.[40] The author argues that this contraposition enhanced King's public image. For example, Time and Newsweek Magazines used King in direct opposition to radicals.[41]

Chapter three elaborates on the degree of coercion that acts of violent protest had during the movement as well. Hanes Walton Jr. poses the question of whether non-violence can succeed without the implicit threat of violence.[42] The author demonstrates that although African-American violence occasionally caused federal intervention, acts of violence were generally counterproductive to the movement. Fairclough contends that it was not the non-violence that exposed police brutality and northern racism that marked the frustration of African-Americans with the system, but rather the violent riots that broke out.[43] American politicians exploited these riots by attacking the movement, which had a negative impact on the movement.

The presence and cooperation of various civil rights organizations sustained the movement and made these organizations less vulnerable to attack. The study emphasizes this by highlighting the cooperation between the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The fact that several organizations and grass root movements were involved in the civil rights movement intensified the effect of the protest. Although SCLC played a leading role, nevertheless the civil rights movement was decentralized and therefore harder to repress than a centralized one.[44]

African-American protesters particularly succeeded in affecting the position of their opponent due to two factors. First, their initial political objectives before 1965 were achievable by their protest methods, like desegregating segregated facilities, staging effective boycotts, or filling the jails like in Birmingham. Other examples were the Freedom Rides and the Montgomery Boycott. Second, non-violent leaders skillfully developed non-violent methods to utmost effect. Non-violent protest does not merely consist of launching a boycott or a march. African-American non-violent protesters adopted certain protest strategies that proved successful, like choosing the right location, preparing the protesters before a campaign and attracting a sufficient number of protesters. Protesters concentrated their campaigns on certain strategic locations or, as Fairclough writes, they had to focus on the "most promising local confrontations".[45] Other states, like Mississippi, were extremely hostile so protesters chose to avoid them. Mohammed Abu Nimer contends that there has

[40] Haines, Herbert H. Black radicals and the civil rights mainstream, 1954-1970. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988. 3-4.
[41] Lentz, Richard. Symbols, the news magazines, and Martin Luther King, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Pr. 1990. 144.
[42] Walton, Hanes. The political philosophy of Martin Luther King, jr. Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 1971. 85.
[43] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 164.
[44] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 271.
[45] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 7.

to be sufficient preparation for non-violent protest to become effective.[46] An effective non-violent movement presupposes careful planning and preparations, writes Sharp.[47] It is the intention of the author to clarify the preparation techniques African-American leaders undertook to preserve non-violence. As veteran activist Bruce Hartford relates, demonstrations do not "just happen. They have to have leadership, they have to have discipline."[48] It was particularly important to attract a sufficient number of protesters. Although the presence of a renowned leader, like King, was sufficient to attract media coverage, civil rights leaders also relied on attracting large masses. According to Sharp, protesters will not join a movement unless they are convinced that there is sufficient solidarity and support.[49] A mass movement consolidates the identity of the protester and helps him answer questions like "who am I?", as Zanden writes.[50] It was equally important to gauge the readiness of African-Americans to continue protesting.

It was not always strategically sound to hold boycotts or marches, regardless of how public opinion might be affected. Whereas public opinion and the media were sympathetic to the Montgomery Boycott, the boycott of the state of Alabama in the wake of the Selma campaign was an utter failure. The Alabama boycott threatened to alienate the active middle-class support that Selma had gained.[51] The author provides additional examples of boycotts in chapter three as well, such as those in St. Augustine and Birmingham. For example, boycotts were successful in Birmingham because African-Americans had the buying power to affect the local market and businesses there. Furthermore, picketings of selected stores deterred white buyers from shopping there and harmed southern branches. It was also quite different to stage a march in the South, where a march represented a "social earthquake", as King described it, as opposed to the North, where Americans were more accustomed to protest.[52]

The author argues that the sit-ins were particularly successful because sit-in protesters were able to achieve their goal of desegregating facilities almost immediately. The simplicity of the sit-in technique allowed the sit-in to spread rapidly to other cities. Sit-in protesters were mainly students who were also the most affected by desegregating lunch counters. Several factors account for the large involvement of students. They were young, revolutionary, idealistic and reflected a solidarity that proved successful during their protest. Media photographs of young African-American students

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[46] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and peace building in Islam: theory and practice. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2003. 14.
[47] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 467.
[48] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005 http://www.crmvet.org/disc/selma.htm
[49] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 574.
[50] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt.* Ed. James A. Geschwender. 141.
[51] Garrow, David J. Bearing the cross - Martin Luther King, jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. New York: Morrow, 1986. 418.
[52] King, Martin Luther. The trumpet of conscience. New York: Harper & Row, 1968. 14.

being attacked by segregationists while non-violently occupying a seat had a great deal of influence over public opinion. The author shows that the movement did not achieve much success after 1965 because political demands became more complex and only indirectly achievable through non-violent protest. In the end of chapter three, the study presents the Birmingham campaign in order to demonstrate the coercive mechanisms that made non-violent campaigns successful.

The author wrote the dissertation in English as almost all references quoted, are written in English. The number of works or studies on non-violence in English also exceeds any other language so that the author wished to add a contribution in this field.

1.) Non-violence and African-American Culture

> The choice today is no longer between violence and non-violence. It is either non-violence or non-existence.[53] (King)

> We will continue to use the non-violent approach because we believe non-violence is not the weapon of the weak and the coward; it is the weapon of the strong and the brave. (The chairman of the student movement from Winston-Salem Teachers College.)[54]

1.1.) Introduction of Non-violence

Non-violence has become an internationally widespread means of protest, applied in various conflicts. Two of the most successful and long-term examples of non-violent protest were the Indian independence struggle, led by Gandhi against British occupation, and the African-American civil rights movement. These were non-violent movements that experimented with non-violent protest methods and developed a non-violent philosophy or ideology, unlike non-violent revolutions or protest movements that occurred within a short period of time. The rarity of successful long-term non-violent protest shows that non-violence cannot be simply applied in any conflict. Rather, non-violent protest is influenced by various mechanisms and dynamics, most notably determined and shaped by the nature of the conflict and the culture of the protesters.

The dynamics and success of non-violence have been subject to a number of studies, yet the rarity of successful non-violent protest and the achievements of a non-violent movement, like the civil rights movement in America, show that the reasons for both the success and failure of non-violent movements must be analyzed further. The academic field of non-violence has expanded over the last fifty years and numerous scholars have dedicated themselves to the study of non-violence from philosophical, religious, ethical, moral and pragmatic perspectives. The most distinguished study on non-violence is Sharp's *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. In this voluminous study, Sharp analyzed various dynamics of non-violence from a rather practical perspective and provided historical examples of non-violence to consolidate his theories.

The names of Martin Luther King and Gandhi will always be mentioned in relation to non-violence, as they led major and long-term non-violent movements and achieved considerable successes. The two leaders also had a tremendous influence on their respective people and played a major role in preserving the course of a long-term non-violent struggle. There are other prominent

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[53] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A testament of hope: the essential writings and speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr. edited by James Melvin Washington. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, Edition 1st HarperCollins pbk. ed. 1991. 39.
[54] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 73.

names in the field of non-violent protest, like Doris Day, Cesar Chavez, and Abdel Ghaffar Khan. Yet a Google search on non-violence, for example, will mainly reveal links to internet sites on Gandhi and King. This is due to the fact that these two leaders, unlike other non-violent leaders, wrote numerous books and articles and preached endlessly on non-violence from a strategic and moral point of view.

Gandhi was the first leader to introduce the philosophy of non-violence on a massive scale when he mobilized the Indian population against British occupation. In the case of Gandhi, the main objective of non-violence was to gain independence from Britain and to attack unjust laws in India. Non-violent protest during the civil rights movement targeted desegregation of schools, busses, restaurants and other public facilities. Non-violent protesters also sought to guarantee African-Americans fair housing conditions and to register African-Americans to vote. During both movements, non-violent protest had its successes and failures.

So what is non-violence? Non-violence can be regarded as a form of protest, philosophy, or even a way of life. The term "non-violence" itself may seem self-contradictory, as it implies a negation of violence. There is no other word or term which conveys the meaning of this notion except "non-violence". Peace for example is not the opposite of violence. Non-violence is a means of resistance and therefore related to conflict instead of peace. Yet unlike traditional forms of protest or resistance that are violent, the peculiarity of non-violence is that a protester does not resort to any violence as a means of protest.

James Colaiaco refers to non-violence as an art.[55] Abu Nimer, one of the few Islamic non-violent scholars, defines non-violence as a "set of attitudes, perceptions, and actions intended to persuade people on the other side to change their opinions, perceptions, and actions."[56] To Richard Gregg, non-violence is a form of moral jiu-jitsu which causes the evil-doer to lose his moral balance.[57] James P. Hanigan, on the other hand, claims that there is no precisely defined set of concepts.[58] Fredrickson also regards the term non-violence as difficult to define and he states that non-violence encompasses a: "range of protest or resistance activities that fall between the straightforward use of physical force and the mere expression of dissatisfaction in conventional, legally authorized ways within officially constituted bodies or channels."[59]

Despite these different definitions, there is wide-spread agreement by scholars with regard to the major features of non-violence, listed by Abu Nimer: 1.) non-violence is not physically aggressive but spiritually active, 2.) it does not seek to humiliate the opponent but seeks to persuade him and

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[55] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. - apostle of militant non-violence. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.6.
[56] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam. 14.
[57] Gregg, Richard Bartlett. The power of non-violence. New York: Schocken Books, 1966. Edition 2nd rev. ed. 44.
[58] Hanigan, James P. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the foundations of non-violence. Lanham: Univ. Press of America, 1984. 1.
[59] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 225.

arouse his conscience, 3.) it is not directed against people but against evil, 4.) non-violence does not just avoid external or physical violence but also violence of the spirit, and 5.) non-violent protesters believe that the universe is on the side of justice.[60]

Whereas these features define non-violence from a rather moral perspective, there are also scholars who define non-violence from a perspective of direct action, like James Childress who identifies three features of effective non-violent resistance: 1.) "recognition of sacred boundaries of action, (2) a voluntary assumption of risk, and (3) a sense of equality."[61] Another scholar, Mulford Sibley, contends that the success of past non-violent movements was dependent on four major conditions: 1.) no service or supplies should be furnished to invaders, 2.) no orders except those of constitutional civil authorities should be obeyed, 3.) the invader should not be insulted or injured, and 4.) all public officials must pledge to die rather than to surrender.[62]

The last comprehensive definition of non-violence that the author will present is Harrop A. Freeman's definition. This definition encompasses moral and practical aspects of non-violent protest and Freeman presents historical examples. Freeman distinguishes between seven types of protest: 1.) violence without hate, 2.) non-violence by necessity, 3.) non-violent coercion, 4.) civil disobedience, 5.) satyagraha or non-violent direct action, 6.) non-resistance, and 7.) pacifism-active.

Freeman defines violence without hate as a situation where there is evil and where the only means to remove this evil is the application of war. He offers Abraham Lincoln as an example because Lincoln was "forced" to apply violence during the American Civil War.

Non-violence by necessity is applied when there are no other means available. It could imply hate, in which case the resister might hate the opponent. In this type of protest, if the protester was not weak he would probably opt for violence. As an example, Freeman mentions the non-violent resistance of Denmark, Norway, France and North Africa against the Nazis.

The third means of protest is non-violent coercion. In this case protestors apply non-violence to "modify the conduct of others to promote their own interests or ideals."[63] These protestors apply strikes, boycotts or other aspects of non-cooperation. They compel the power structure to concede to their demands as the survival of that power structure depends on their cooperation. The labor strike as led by Eugene Debbs in the 1930's and the sit-downs used by the civil rights movement are two examples of non-violent coercion.

Gandhi developed satyagraha or non-violent direct action when he conducted boycotts, strikes and other non-cooperative activities against discrimination and discriminatory laws.

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[60] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam. 14.
[61] Ibid. 15.
[62] Ibid. 14-15.
[63] Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. Civil disobedience. [by] Harrop A. Freeman ... [et al.]. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1966. 3.

Civil disobedience relies on the same technique and is similar to Gandhi's satyagraha. Its distinguishing characteristic is that it is aimed against a "specific law, or an act of the State having the effect of the law."[64] Freeman defines civil disobedience as an "intentional act, a chosen course, not occasioned by accident… It is used for an external purpose (to call attention to injustice, to change conditions)."[65]

The sixth type of protest is non-resistance. Freeman offers the Mennonites as an example. This group literally follows the Sermon on the Mount telling them to "resist not evil". Famous non-resistant writers are Leo Tolstoy, Adam Ballou and William Lloyd Garrison. Freeman admits that the "shadings between non-violent direct action, non-resistance, and pacifism are hazy."[66]

The last and seventh form of protest is pacifism. Pacifists oppose war and seek pacifism as a way of life.[67]

The boundaries between these definitions were rather hazy in the civil rights movement. Just as African-American protesters applied non-violence by necessity, they also applied coercion and elements of civil disobedience. There were protesters, like King, who defended non-violence from a moral perspective. Then there were activists like Ella Baker who approved of non-violence but advocated self-defense.

King asserted his own definition of non-violence. Ervin Smith detects six sources King identified as the core of his non-violent philosophy. First, non-violence is not cowardly but spiritually active. Second, it does not seek to humiliate the opponent but to achieve understanding and reconciliation. Third, a protester fights against the sources of evil and not against humans. Fourth, a protester must believe that suffering is redemptive and be willing to suffer for the cause. Fifth, a protester must not only avoid physical violence but also violence of the spirit. A protester breaks the chain of hatred through love. Sixth, a protester believes that the universe is on the side of justice in order to maintain hope for the future.[68] This definition shows a spiritual understanding of non-violent philosophy which was typical of King and will be analyzed further in the second chapter to show how he applied moral rhetoric to win over third groups and public opinion.

Non-violence is based on the assumption that protesters will be confronted with less violence or repression from the opponent if they apply non-violence. Non-violent protest does not mean that the opponent will renounce or reduce his violence. Although non-violent resisters do not pose a physical threat to the opponent, there is no guarantee that the opponent will respond non-violently, although the response to non-violent protest is usually much less repressive than the response to armed groups. Violent resistance, on the other hand, applied by militarily weaker protesters often

[64] Ibid. 3-4
[65] Ibid. 4
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 120.

leads to increased repression. Although non-violent protesters might face violent repression, unlike during violent resistance, the oppressor will not be able to easily justify his repression in the face of non-violent protest. Thus, as Sharp writes, non-violence reduces the pressure of the opponent to be defensively aggressive.[69] Sharp claims that non-violence, though not always, nevertheless limits repression.[٧٠] If the reaction of the opponent is nonetheless repressive, the protester responds in a way which absorbs the violence of the opponent and exposes his brutality. For instance, a repressive government might be embarrassed to imprison resisters who refuse to apply violence. From a moral perspective, non-violence will cause the oppressor to change his heart and make concessions to the oppressed. It might not necessarily be the government that will have this change of heart but the people that are represented by this government who could exert pressure on it to make concessions to protesters.

Non-violence is not necessarily a safer alternative to violence just because protesters renounce violence. Proponents of non-violence claim that non-violence requires courage, discipline and the readiness to expose oneself to the reaction of the opponent. A non-violent protest only becomes successful once protesters maintain a firm discipline of non-violence and do not strike back when attacked, as the slightest outbreak of violence could transform the sight of a non-violent protest into a violent riot, at least in the eyes of third parties or public opinion. Additionally, Dave Dellinger argues that non-violent protest can only be applied to defend human rights and not national rights. He argues that there is a difference between the Indian independence struggle against British occupation and the war of India against China for example.[71] If a war breaks out between two nations that are equally powerful, then non-violence is not a realistic option.

Non-violent activists protest in order to achieve certain objectives because they are subjugated or oppressed, or because they want to attract public attention to a certain issue. Non-violence is usually applied by an oppressed and weaker group against a dominant and more powerful group, like the Indians against the British Empire or African-Americans against segregation during the civil rights movement. The group which relies on non-violence is usually a minority, which means it is outnumbered by its opponent. Reinhold Niebuhr writes that non-violent protest is a "particularly strategic instrument for an oppressed group which is hopelessly in the minority."[72] Yet there is also the example of the Indian movement where protesters outnumbered the British soldiers occupying India.[73] Although Indians constituted the majority with regard to numbers during their protest, they

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[69] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two. The methods of Nonviolent Action. Boston: Extending Horizons Books, 2005. 708.
[70] Sharp, Gene.The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 596.
[71] Dellinger, David T. Revolutionary non-violence. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970. 203.
[72] Niebuhr, Reinhold. Moral Man And Immoral Society. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932 (1960). 252.
[73] Oates, Stephen B. Let the trumpet sound- the life of Martin Luther King, jr. New York: Harper & Row, 1982. 244.

were militarily powerless in the face of the army of the British Empire. Regardless of whether non-violence is used by the minority or the majority of protesters, non-violent protesters are usually militarily weaker than their opponent. It is an asymmetrical conflict situation. In other words: "The use of nonviolent means against a violent opponent, however, creates a condition of disequilibrium within the dynamics of the conflict which operates to the benefit of the nonviolent group."[٧٤] In such a conflict the two sides rely on contrasting resistance techniques, where non-violent protest will frustrate the weapons of the opponent.[75] An army, for example, will apply its weapons, artillery and tanks against another army or against violent and armed rebels. The power of that army lies in its capacity to fight by using these weapons. Once this army is faced with an armless crowd they cannot use these weapons and have to search for other means to control and defeat the protesters.

A non-violent protest group must accept its limitations as the weaker group and act according to its opportunities. Resistance depends on force and power but when non-violent resistance is used this form of "violent" power is absent. Sharp writes that instead of meeting the opponent directly on the level where he is strong, non-violent protesters choose a different kind of strategy. The opponent may then become frustrated, as the utilization of his own forces will not generate the desired effect, as Sharp writes[76] and he will be forced to alter his strategy too. The opponent usually expects non-violent protesters to respond in a violent manner. Sharp quotes Napoleon who wrote: "It is an approved maxim in war, never to do what the enemy wishes you to do."[77] The application of non-violence is an asset to protesters because their protest upsets the tactics of the violent opponent and allows the protester, who is militarily weaker, to set the pace of the conflict. Sharp also quotes Sir Basil Liddell Hart: "To move along the line of natural expectation consolidates the opponent's balance and thus increases his resisting power… In most campaigns the dislocation of the enemy's psychological and physical balance has been the vital prelude to a successful attempt at his overthrow."[78]

Proponents of non-violence claim an ethical superiority which will be analyzed in this chapter. They contend that non-violence is superior to violence. Gandhi claimed that non-violence was the greatest force at the disposal of mankind.[79] Gandhi described the rishis who discovered the laws of

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One of the reasons Malcolm X argued why African-Americans would not succeed with non-violence as a protest method was the fact that unlike India which clearly outnumbered the British, African-Americans were a minority in America. Malcolm X likened Gandhi to a big elephant dealing with a mouse while he compared King to a mouse dealing with an elephant.

[74] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 588.

[75] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two. 110.

[76] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 452.

[77] Napoleon, The Officer's Manual or Napoleon's Maxims of War. New York: James G. Gregory,1861. Maxim XVI. 58-59. Rpt. in *The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three*. Gene Sharp. 452.

[78] Hart, B.H.Lidell. Strategy: the Indirect Approach. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954. Br. Ed,: London: Faber and Faber, 1954. 25. Rpt. in *The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three*. Gene Sharp. 452-453.

[79] All Men Are Brothers - Life And Thoughts Of Mahatma Gandhi As Told In His Own Words. UBESCO Orient Longmans Provate LTD. 1958. 85.

non-violence to be greater geniuses than Newton and greater warriors than Wellington.[80] Proponents of non-violence also argue that non-violence is a means to eliminate social evil and see it as a power of the people. King described non-violence as an alternative to war and destruction. Unlike war, non-violence seeks no destruction and contributes to a positive change in society.[81] To King, non-violence was the "most potent force available to an oppressed people in their struggle for freedom."[82] Gandhi regarded non-violence as the best philosophy concerned with human needs,[83] whereas he believed violence failed to address the issues at stake.[84] The objective of non-violence is not to destroy, defeat or humiliate the enemy. During the civil rights movement non-violent activists asserted that the objectives of their struggle were reconciliation and the creation of the Beloved Community.

Although one could consider King the leader of the non-violent movement, other organizations embraced non-violence as well. Vann Woodward contends that all major civil rights organizations were committed to non-violence.[85] SNCC, for example, officially adopted non-violence until the mid-sixties. CORE was also officially dedicated to non-violence. Not all protesters, however, were morally committed to non-violence. Nevertheless the notion of non-violence permeated the movement. The movement was described as being non-violent, leaders preached non-violence, the media discussed non-violence and demonstrators applied non-violence. "I think there is a contagious quality in a movement like this when everybody talks about non-violence and [is] faithful to it and [is] dignified in [their] resistance. It tends to get over to the larger group because this becomes a part of the vocabulary of the movement," stated King.[86]

Non-violence cannot be effectively applied or preached in any conflict. Fairclough and Fredrickson state that non-violent strategies are not easily transferred from one society to another.[87] An environment where violent rhetoric and violence itself is part of everyday life will make non-violence fall on deaf ears. For example, the atmosphere and the environment of the Middle East conflict, unlike the environment of the US civil rights movement, is too violent to allow a non-violent grassroots movement to attract mass protesters.

The adoption of non-violence by a movement requires "absolute" dedication to non-violence. This means that the execution of a non-violent march, a boycott or a sit-in cannot coexist with an

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[80] Adiseshiah, Malcolm S. it is time to begin - the human role in development: some further reflections for the seventies. UNESCO Paris 1972. 141. http:..unesdoc.unesco.org.images.0000.000021.002156eo.pdf
[81] Hanigan, James, P. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the foundations of nonviolence. 2.
[82] King, Martin Luther. Strength to love 11. impr. Glasgow, Collins, 1978. 151.
[83] Burrowes, Robert J. The strategy of nonviolent defense: a Gandhian approach. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996. 108.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Woodward, C. Vann. The strange career of Jim Crow. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. 170.
[86] Clark, Kenneth B. King, Malcolm, Baldwin: three interviews. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press; Scranton, Pa.: Distributed by Harper & Row, 1985. 28-29.
[87] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 422.

armed attack as a part of the same movement. For example, the second Palestinian intifada witnessed numerous non-violent protest actions, yet the European, American and Arab media made virtually no reference to the intifada as a non-violent movement because it was overshadowed by armed battle. Adoption of non-violence as a protest strategy in a movement therefore requires unanimous approval by the main actors and organizations that lead the movement. Their approval of non-violence will be determined by political and cultural factors. First, do they perceive non-violence as a strategy that will cause them to achieve political gains? Second, does the unusual strategy of protesting non-violently converge with their cultural beliefs? The second question is central to this chapter and might have been overlooked by many scholars of non-violence.

1.2.) Necessity of Success of Non-violence

> Here is organized struggle and group solidarity. It is legal, non-violent and effective. (L.D. Reddick commenting on the Montgomery Bus Boycott at the beginning of the boycott.)

Fredrickson regards the non-violent civil rights movement as one of the most successful reform movements in American history.[88] The dynamics of success are particularly crucial to non-violent protest, as a successful protest action or campaign may cause the protest to spread to other cities. A successful protest will attract the attention of the media and public opinion, which may in turn draw financial donors to the movement. If conflicts do not enable non-violent protesters to realize political gains, then protesters will eventually discard them as a protest method and might turn to violence.

In this sub-chapter, the author points out the importance of political success to non-violent protest. Fairclough contends that the civil rights movement enjoyed greater legitimacy after 1965.[89] This was a consequence of its visible success. The success of a campaign or a protest action was a decisive factor that enabled civil rights protesters to negotiate with the federal government. The survival of a protest movement depends on its ability to demonstrate success. The mechanisms of success may be taken for granted in a non-violent movement; they nevertheless have a huge psychological effect on protesters, public opinion and the longevity of non-violent protest. In order to believe in the value of non-violence, protestors must also believe that it is a possible and realistic option. Niebuhr claimed that non-violence would be irresponsible if there was no belief that it could be successful.[90] Critics of non-violence will always disparage it as a protest method and argue that it

[88] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 263.
[89] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 134.
[90] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 92.

is ineffective as compared to violent resistance. Sharp contends that non-violence must be perceived as just as effective as the "violent alternatives".[91] Non-violent leaders knew that many African-Americans were only committed to non-violence as long as it was effective.[92] The slow pace of progress and the violent and provocative measures the opponent could apply might negatively affect protesters' commitment to non-violence.

Sufficient forms of protection for non-violent protestors have to be present, or laws must guarantee protesters the right to hold demonstrations. It would be absurd to stage a non-violent demonstration under the rule of a brutal dictator who would immediately crush any protest. Furthermore, it is important for non-violent leaders to present a realistic picture of non-violence to the masses. Non-violent leaders must explain to protesters that non-violence will not lead to instant success, particularly in a long-term protest. "To lightly dismiss a success because it does not usher in a complete order of justice is to fail to comprehend the process of achieving full victory. It underestimates the value of confrontation and dissolves the confidence born of a partial victory by which new efforts are powered," stated King.[93] Non-violent leaders argued that the failure of non-violent protest might have a devastating impact on non-violent protest.[94] They believed that the refusal of segregationists to compromise would cause African-Americans to question non-violence and turn to militancy. "I should have known that in an atmosphere where false promises are daily realities, where deferred dreams are mighty facts, where acts of unpunished violence toward Negroes are a way of life, non-violence would eventually be questioned," wrote King.[95] Greg Moses shares the same opinion: "When suffering and disappointment entailed more pain that seemed justified by results, then the rationality of the non-violence method fell under suspicion."[96]

Many non-violent advocates rely on successful examples of non-violence to show that it can be effective. Non-violent leaders constantly refer to the success of non-violent protest. Gregg cites in his book, *The Power of Non-violence*, numerous examples of when non-violence succeeded in causing political and social change.[97] Wink highlights the effectiveness of non-violence by pointing out that in 1989 alone thirteen nations experienced non-violent revolutions and all except China

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[91] Sharp, Gene.The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part One. Power and Struggle. Boston: Extending Horizons Books, 2000. Vi.
[92] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 167.
[93] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? New York: Harper & Row, 1967. 1st ed. 12-13
[94] King wrote that African-Americans seriously questioned non-violence after they lived in: "an atmosphere where false promises are daily realities, where deferred dreams are nightly facts, where acts of unpunished violence toward Negroes are a way of life," Ibid. 26.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Moses, Greg. Revolution of conscience-Martin Luther King, Jr., and the philosophy of non-violence. New York, NY: Guilford Press, 1997. 156.
[97] Gregg, B. Richard. The Power of Nonviolence. 15-42.

were successful.[98] African-American non-violent leaders also had to publicly claim that non-violent methods could eliminate segregation in order to convince African-American protesters and public opinion of its effectiveness. For example, in a television debate with Malcolm X, Farmer referred to the success of sit-ins, pickets and boycotts of African-American students that forced shops, like Woolworth's and theatres in the South, to admit or hire African-Americans. He had to justify non-violence in the face of Malcolm X's claim that it was too passive.[99] In his book *Chaos or Community,* published in 1967, King also vigorously defended non-violence, which was being vehemently criticized by Black Power advocates. King argued that despite some setbacks, non-violence had undermined the "foundations of Southern segregation".[100]

The success of the Montgomery Boycott was necessary to convince those who might have questioned the effectiveness of non-violence, claimed Joseph Lowery of SCLC.[101] This major success was a perfect start for the civil rights movement as it demonstrated the efficiency of non-violent protest.[102] Non-violent leaders built on the success of Montgomery. Various movement scholars and activists invoked the success of Montgomery and its importance to the movement. To Sitkoff, SCLC sprang directly from the Montgomery movement.[103] He even contends that Montgomery ignited a non-violent revolution.[104] Harlan states that the boycott took the fork in the road that led to sit-ins, Freedom Rides and other campaigns.[105] To Colaiaco, the boycott inaugurated the era of mass non-violent protest in the South.[106] The boycott caused considerable damages to the city of Montgomery, the bus company and business stores. Farmer conceded that prior to Montgomery; non-violence had been relatively unknown to African-Americans as a protest technique, even during the early period of CORE, one of the few organizations that carried out non-violent protest.[107] Montgomery proved to be a turning point, "for the Black people learned to defy the conventions, to discount the myths, ignore the taboos and deal with the terrorisms that had dogged them for a hundred years, with a new set of weapons - nonviolence, forgiveness, love and determination," writes Lincoln.[108] All over the South, African-American activists were forming

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[98] Smock, David R. Perspectives on pacifism Christian, Jewish, and Muslim views on nonviolence and international conflict. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995. 13.
[99]Malcolm X v. James Farmer: Seperation v. Integration. *Negro protest thought in the twentieth century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 372-373.
[100] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 17.
[101] Lowery, Joseph. The Persuasive Power of Nonviolence. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. N.Y.: Brandywine Press, 1993. 149.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 64.
[104] ibid. 65.
[105] Harlan, Louis, R. Thought on the Leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome.Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 62.
[106] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 18.
[107] Ibid. 24.
[108] Lincoln, C.Eric. Race, Religion, and the Counting American Dilemma. 97.

organizations that imitated the MIA.[109] The boycott triggered a chain reaction in Atlanta and Savannah. After protesters succeeded in desegregating buses in Atlanta, Reverend William Holmes Borders stated: "Thank you, Montgomery."[110] After Reverend Charles K. Steele visited King in 1956, he returned to Tallahassee, Florida to organize a bus boycott.

Not all campaigns, however, proved equally successful. Although the Montgomery Boycott provoked a chain reaction, many attempts were ineffective. An African-American leader claimed: "Montgomery was not exportable."[111] In Birmingham the oppressive climate, indecisive leadership and absence of quantitative protest actions, due to the failure to engage large numbers of protesters, contributed to the failure of the movement to exert sufficient pressure on White officials. After Montgomery, on the other hand, boycotts caused southern cities to desegregate buses voluntarily.[112]

After the Albany campaign, which represented one of the major failures of the movement, King and SCLC had to launch a successful non-violent protest as quickly as possible to refute claims that non-violence was not a practical protest method.[113] Birmingham, on the other hand, was so successful that a surge of nonviolent protest swept the South in the aftermath of the campaign.[114] The success of the sit-in movement also led to the increase of participants. Young stated with regard to the Chicago campaign that the whole future of the movement depended on the success of SCLC in Chicago.[115] When violence erupted during a demonstration in Memphis and critics declared non-violence dead, King organized a press conference the following day to firmly declare that the campaign would continue non-violently. Any violent outburst constitutes a major setback for a non-violent protest movement.

Successful campaigns during the civil rights movement increased financial contributions from encouraged contributors. In the wake of Birmingham and Selma, for example, SCLC became financially better off than ever before, which enabled SCLC to hire more workers and to widen the scope of its projects.[116] Success will lead a movement to grow in numbers. In the wake of the success of Birmingham, non-violent leaders wanted to exploit the rise of activism and push for more protest before African-Americans withdrew to their private lives again. In the aftermath of Selma, the number of movement supporters rose intensely. Levison commented on Selma and the application of non-violence: "Nonviolent direct action was proven by Selma to have even greater

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[109] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 138.
[110] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 64.
[111] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 43.
[112] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 18.
[113] African-Americans recognized the failure of the campaign when after eighteen months of protest Albany remained segregated, as no African-American policemen or drivers were hired.
[114] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 141.
[115] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest . 91.
[116] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 255- 256.
After the Selma campaign, SCLC had field secretaries in every Southern state except Florida and Tennessee.

power than anyone had ever realized."[117] Success in non-violent protest is essential as it can determine the continuation or the end of non-violent protest as a reliable protest technique.

1.3.) Non-violence in America

The most comprehensive study on non-violence in America is Staughton Lynd's *Nonviolence in America: A Documented History.*[118] Lynd, who is committed to pacifism and non-violence, historically traces the non-violent protest and philosophy of the Quakers, the Abolitionists, the Anarchists, the Progressives, the Conscientious Objectors during World War I and II, Trade Unionists, Post World War II direct action for peace and the African-American non-violent civil rights movement. Lynd's study features essays by Niebuhr and Dellinger on the future of non-violence and the preservation of moral values in politics. The study offers interesting insights as it entails the original writings and reflections of protest leaders, from the above-mentioned groups, who elaborated on non-violent protest. These original essays were influenced by political events, like the abolition of slavery or the objection to war, that led protest leaders to use non-violent protest. The essays also show how much non-violent philosophy was developed preceding the civil rights movement. The study ranges from Thoreau's justification of civil disobedience to the elaboration of Christian non-violence. Lynd also offers insight into the applied non-violent methods, like hunger strikes, refusal to pay taxes and sit-downs. It entails letters of political prisoners and guidelines to behavior during imprisonment.

Yet there seems to be no indication that all of these historical events and movements had a direct influence on the civil rights movement. On the other hand, King had been influenced by Thoreau and Bayard Rustin. The latter had been a conscientious objector and played an important role during the movement. Yet one must take note that the movement started rather spontaneously in the South where the majority of African-Americans were not familiar with the Abolitionists' or the Progressives' non-violent protest legacy. What these examples show, however, is that there had been several examples of non-violent protest in America before the civil rights movement. However, although the above-mentioned political groups may have held successful non-violent protests, they did not provoke major political gains as was the case during the civil rights movement. Nor did their focus on non-violence attract a large number of protesters. Although earlier non-violent advocates elaborated on Christian non-violence too, they never attracted as many church-goers or African-Americans as King and other ministers of the civil rights movement.

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[117] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 419.
[118] Lynd, Staughton. Nonviolence in America: a documentary history. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966.

1.3.1.) African-American Non-violence before the Civil Rights Movement

Non-violence had not been a totally new idea to African-American leaders. Various African-American leaders had envisaged the possibility of protesting non-violently before the start of the movement. Although no concrete measures were taken apart from a few initiatives and the pioneer work of CORE, the consideration of non-violent protest, and whether or not it would be a practical solution might have led resisters to wait for a successful example, which was provided by the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA). The following sub-chapter examines these reflections on non-violent protest and why they did not result in a non-violent movement in certain instances.

1.3.2.) Non-violence and African-American Intellectuals and Leaders

Scholars differ on whether African-American protest can be considered a single civil rights movement or whether there were a series of over-lapping movements.[119] The latter argument is quite acceptable since important protest events preceded the non-violent civil rights movement. Although this study seeks to examine the period during which there was intensive non-violent protest, particularly from the Montgomery Boycott to Selma, this sub-chapter shows that non-violence was not a totally alien concept to African-American intellectuals and activists beforehand.

Although the movement began rather spontaneously, triggered by the arrest of Rosa Parks[120], yet African-American leaders had always envisaged non-violence as a possible strategy. John Hope Franklin claims that non-violent action is the most persistent, oldest and most widespread manifestation of the African-American protest tradition.[121] There were certainly sporadic and spontaneous acts of non-violent resistance that slaves or other African-Americans used in the past. One would not, however, describe them as non-violent movements as they lacked long-term organization and long-term strategies.

One of the earliest considerations of non-violent protest takes us to a 1924 symposium in the NAACP journal, *The Crisis*. There, several African-American leaders analyzed whether the non-violent example of Gandhi could be duplicated in the United States. The view of the majority was

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[119] Haines, Herbert H. Black Radicals and the Civil Rights Mainstream, 1954-1970. 15.
[120] For more information on the arrest of Rosa Parks check sub-chapter 3.5.3.
[121] Franklin, John Hope. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Afro-American Protest Tradition. We Shall Overcome. *Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 97.

that there would be a "blood bath" if an African-American Gandhi appeared.[122] Yet in 1932 Niebuhr wrote that non-violence was the best way for African-Americans to achieve a certain degree of justice. In 1942 Asa Phillip Randolph, also known as the "American Gandhi", wanted to launch a broad-scale massive disobedience campaign. He organized a series of mass meetings but on the eve of the proposed civil disobedience campaign, riots erupted.[123] Randolph was particularly impressed by Gandhi and announced that the struggle of oppressed groups would develop through mass demonstrations.[124] Fredrickson contends that this was the first serious effort to create a non-violent movement.[125] Nevertheless Randolph was not fully committed to non-violence. He had also advocated violent resistance to white mobs. One of the most famous examples of non-violent protest prior to the Montgomery Boycott was the proposed March on Washington, initiated by Randolph in 1941, which was cancelled after President Franklin D. Roosevelt responded to the threat.

Although one could argue that these were rather loose insignificant incidents, African-American scholars like Fredrickson, August Meier and Elliot Rudwick claim that the concept Randolph offered to African-Americans had not been new to them and that there had been a long history of non-violent protest by African-Americans and their allies. African-Americans often organized boycotts, writes Fredrickson, particularly in 1930. During that year African-American protesters applied more militant forms of non-violence.[126]

Baldwin lists William Whipper, Frederick Douglass, the NAACP and the National Urban League as advocates of non-violence and moral persuasion as the most practical method.[127] Adam Clayton Powell, in *Marching African-Americans*, and Howard Thurman, in *Jesus and the Disinherited*, also focused on non-violence to achieve political aims. Thurman and Mordecai Johnson, President of Howard University, were the main spokesmen of the moral power of non-violent action, which they believed could change race relations in America.[128] Yet Walton points to the fact that although these two men were advocates of non-violence, they were mere expounders of the idea and not practitioners.[129] There were also African-American activists, like James Weldon Johnson, the executive secretary of NAACP in the twenties, who condemned physical force but did not regard non-violence as the final tool for emancipation. Nevertheless Johnson stated in 1922, "If

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[122] Bennett, Jr., Lerone. When the Man and the Hour Are Met. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile*. Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. New York: Hill and Wang, 1970. 26 –27.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 234.
[125] Ibid. 232.
[126] Ibid. 231.
[127] Baldwin, Lewis, V. There Is A Balm In Gilead. 186.
[128] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr .29.
[129] Ibid.

noncooperation brings the British to their knees in India, there is no reason why it should not bring the white man to his knees in the South."[130]

A critic of non-violence, on the other hand, was E. Franklin Frazier who stated that non-violence would become a form of self-abasement for African-Americans.[131] There were also African-American leaders who condoned violent resistance, like W.E.B. Du Bois. Inspired by the Irish Rebellion, Du Bois wrote in *The Crisis* in 1916 that African-Americans had to cease spouting platitudes of accommodation. Du Bois reminded African-Americans that no people ever achieved their liberation without an armed struggle.[132]

Aside from the theoretical considerations of non-violence, there were also practical non-violent measures taken by African-American leaders. Powell organized boycotts, sit-ins, marches and protests and called on African-Americans to refuse to pay taxes during the 1930s. African-Americans discussed how far they could apply non-violent direct action against segregation and whether they should also include violence as well as non-violence.[133] The Fellowship for Reconciliation (FOR), a Christian-pacifist group whose members were committed to Gandhi's principles of non-violence, applied non-violent tactics against discrimination and segregation in Chicago. This group, with its chief executive A.J. Muste, set applying non-violence to race relations as their objective. In 1942 FOR regional youth secretary, George Houser began conducting interracial sit-ins[134] at segregated restaurants. The concept of the sit-ins was not new in America. Meier also refers to labor unions of the thirties where particularly the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) applied sit-ins.[135]

The organization which most experimented with non-violent tactics prior to the civil rights movement was undoubtedly CORE. From the activities of a FOR cell in Chicago emerged the first CORE group in 1942, the Chicago Committee of Racial Equality.[136] CORE was mainly shaped by two men, George Hauser and James Farmer. The former, the son of a Methodist Minister, was sentenced to prison for refusing to register for the draft. The latter was a student of Thurman who was influenced by his pacifist thinking and served as a part time field worker for FOR.[137] CORE members at that time consisted of African-American and white activists alike. Thus Houser, who was white and Farmer, who was African-American, were typical CORE members. CORE and FOR conducted the first Freedom Rides in 1946.

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[130] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 232.
[131] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 25.
[132] Meier, August, and Elliot Rudwick. Black Violence In The 20th Century: A Study In Rhetoric And Retaliation. *The Black Revolt*. Ed. James A. Geschwender. 405.
[133] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 24.
[134] For more information on sit-ins, check sub-chapter 3.6.4.
[135] Drimmer, Melvin. Black history: a reappraisal. Published Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968. 440.
[136] Meier, August, and Elliott Rudwick. CORE: a study in the civil rights movement, 1942-1968. 4.
[137] Ibid. 5.

Before the foundation of CORE there were certainly individuals or even groups that had undertaken non-violent direct actions like boycotts and other strategies. Most of these protest actions, however, were carried out rather spontaneously without long-term deliberate or strategic planning. The non-violent initiatives that came to the fore in the thirties did not evoke a non-violent movement because the protests were a spontaneous and localized expression of African-American anger, or the tactic of a group or an organization that was not committed to non-violence, writes Fredrickson.[138]

African-American leaders had considered non-violence prior the Montgomery Boycott but did not exploit it to its fullest form. Only CORE had applied non-violence on a large scale, yet its activists did not mobilize the masses. Fredrickson makes the same point and writes that CORE was neither an African-American dominated movement nor a prospective mass movement: "It had no solid base in the black community and represented little more than the individual consciences of the small number of radical pacifists who were its members."[139] This changed during the civil rights movement. First, King, who had a huge influence on the masses, emerged. Second, African-American masses in Montgomery applied a certain non-violent strategy (boycott) with utmost effectiveness, paving the way for African-Americans to experiment with non-violent strategies. With the involvement of the students at the sit-ins and the expansion of local movements and volunteers in the South, the non-violent movement began to take shape.

1.3.3 Gandhi and the African-American Civil Rights Movement

Although African-American leaders referred to Gandhi during the movement, non-violent leaders "christianized" the non-violent philosophy to attract southern African-Americans. An analysis of non-violence in the civil rights movement reveals a particular interest in Gandhi's non-violence on behalf of African-American leaders. Although the non-violent movement was rhetorically and ideologically influenced by Christian beliefs, African-American leaders accorded a particular role to Gandhi's non-violence. Du Bois, for example, predicted that only under the leadership of another Gandhi would real equality and brotherhood come about in America.[140]

Gandhi had shown sympathy for African-Americans. When Du Bois asked Gandhi to write a message for African-Americans in 1929, Gandhi replied: "Let not the 12 million Negroes be ashamed of the fact that they are the grand children of slaves... Let us realize that the future is with

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[138] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 231.
[139] Ibid. 232.
[140] Jack, Homer A. Mohandas Karamchand Gandi and Martin Luther King Jr. *Mahatma Gandhi 100 Years*. Ed. S.Rashakrishnan. Gandhi Peace Foundation, India, 1968. 133.

those who would be pure, truthful and loving."[141] In 1937 Dr. Channing Tobias, director of the Phelps- Stokes Fund, and Dr. Benjamin Mays, President of Morehouse college, visited Gandhi in India. They conducted an interview with the Indian leader which was published in Gandhi's paper *Harijan*. When asked what he could give to African-Americans, Gandhi replied, "with right which is on their side and the choice of non-violence as their only weapon, if they will make it such, a bright future is assured."[142] Dr. and Mrs. Howard Thurman had visited Gandhi a year earlier and Gandhi told them: "It may be through the Negroes that the unadulterated message of non-violence will be delivered to the world."[143]

One of the most influential leaders of the movement was Rev. James M. Lawson, who had been a Methodist missionary for three years in India and had become a devotee to the Gandhian philosophy.[144] Marion Barry, first President of SNCC had also studied Gandhi and subsequently joined the protests.[145] The student leader of the North Carolina sit-ins, Ezell Blair, Jr., said that the non-violent method had been agreed upon since a year before he had seen a documentary about Gandhi leaving jail.[146] During a protest students carried a statement which read, "Remember the teachings of Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi [and] Martin Luther King. Remember love and nonviolence."[147] Many students during the sit-in movement watched documentaries on Gandhi in schools or churches.[148] During the Montgomery Boycott, films of Gandhi's resistance were regularly shown to African-American congregations and references to Gandhi were constantly made during demonstrations. The first parallels to Gandhi were drawn one week after the Montgomery Boycott had begun when an elderly white woman wrote a letter to the *Montgomery Advertiser* newspaper, pointing out the similarities between Gandhi and the boycott. King wrote: "As the days unfolded, however, the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi began to exert its influence. I had come to see early that the Christian doctrine of love operating through the Gandhian method of non-violence was one of the most potent weapons available to the Negro in his struggle for freedom…"[149] At the end of the year 1957 the name of Gandhi was well known in Montgomery.

The African-American press frequently heralded Gandhi and called for an American Gandhi in their editorials.[150] Many journalists related Gandhi to the movement and compared the African-American community to the Indians at the time of Gandhi. In 1958 for example Chester Bowles

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[141] Ibid. 132-133.
[142] Ibid. 131.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid. 136-137.
[145] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom bound: a history of America's civil rights movement. New York: Norton, 1990. 21.
[146] Jack, Homer A. Mohandas Karamchand Gandi and Martin Luther King Jr. *Mahatma Gandhi 100 Years*. Ed. S.Rashakrishnan. Gandhi Peace Foundation, India, 1968. 136.
[147] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 30.
[148] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 83.
[149] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 78-79.
[150] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 232.

wrote an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* called "What Negroes Can Learn From Gandhi."[151] Many journalists even regarded King as the American Gandhi.[152] Particularly after his death, King was seen as the "Mahatma Gandhi of the West".[153]

Fredrickson contends that before 1940 many conservatives and moderates defended Gandhi because they viewed his philosophy as a quietistic alternative to Marxist inspired radicalism. He cites an African-American writer who equaled Gandhi's non-violence with the accomodationist interracial philosophy of Booker T. Washington.[154] Nevertheless African-American intellectuals and protest groups like CORE held Gandhi as a model for direct action. CORE's main ideology was shaped by Gandhian non-violence and interracial action, which was accompanied by a spirit of goodwill towards the discriminator. Farmer describes CORE as a "movement rooted in Gandhi and Thoreau".[155] Farmer also advocated a "creative" application of Gandhian tactics to the American race problem, avoiding "an uncritical duplication of the Gandhian steps in organization and execution."[156]

It was a lecture on Gandhi by Dr. Mordecai Johnson, President of Howard University, which influenced King and led him to purchase a half-dozen books on the Indian leader.[157] When the Montgomery Boycott started however, King confided to Reverend Glenn E. Smiley, who tutored King in Gandhism, that he knew little of Gandhi.[158] Nevertheless King repeatedly invoked Gandhi's influence on the movement. SCLC issued a pamphlet which explained that the tenets of the Hebraic-Christian tradition and the Gandhian conception of satyagraha were at the heart of its philosophy.[159] Not only King and SCLC referred to Gandhi but also the sit-in students and CORE.

Although King wrote in *Stride Towards Freedom* that he was influenced by Thoreau's essay on civil disobedience, it was Gandhi who brought home to him the effectiveness of non-violence as a strategy and enforced his faith in non-violence as a way of life:

> Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale. Love for Gandhi was a potent instrument for social and collective transformation. It was in this Gandhian emphasis on love and non-violence that I discovered the method for social reform that I had been seeking for so many months….[160]

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[151] Smith, Ervin. The Ethics of Martin Luther King .172.
[152] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 64.
[153] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 178.
[154] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 232.
[155] Farmer, James. Lay bare the heart - an autobiography of the civil rights movement. New York: Arbor House, 1985. 187.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Jack, Homer A. Mohandas Karamchand Gandi and Martin Luther King Jr. *Mahatma Gandhi 100 Years*. Ed. S.Rashakrishnan. Gandhi Peace Foundation, India, 1968. 132.
[158] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 256.
[159] Ibid. 28.
[160] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 91.

King repeatedly stated that while Christ "showed us the way", "Gandhi showed us it could work".[161] It was Gandhi who made King recognize that: "the Christian doctrine of love operating through the Gandhian method of non-violence was one of the most potent weapons available to the Negro in their struggle for freedom," stated King.[162]

To Smith, King primarily depended on Gandhi for his non-violent methodology.[163] When King refused to bail himself out and chose to remain in jail, Coretta King, his wife, commented, "Martin was responding to the influence of Gandhi and his technique of noncooperation. But my husband was becoming firmly convinced that the black leadership must prepare to suffer as Gandhi had."[164] Thomas West and James Mooney write in their commentary on the civil rights movement that it was more Gandhi's example than his teachings that were useful to the movement's campaigns, as Gandhi's teachings did not fit American culture.[165]

Yet there were African-Americans who criticized King for his focus on Gandhi who was "un-Christian". Reverend John Morris for example, who was executive director of the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity, described the "Gandhi Society for Human Rights", which King and other activists had founded, as "a symbol of the departure from orthodox Christian tradition".[166] Yet despite Gandhi's influence, one can say that the civil rights movement was a "Christian" movement which relied more on Christian love and the example of Jesus. African-American leaders always stressed that they were acting in concert with the Hebraic-Christian tradition.[167] Christian principles like "turning the other cheek", "forgive them Father" and the "non-violent" death of Jesus on the cross formed the basis of the movement's rhetoric.

King stressed that even though the non-violent movement was inspired by Gandhi, it was the Sermon on the Mount which inspired African-Americans. Even though King read Gandhi and was influenced by him, he was primarily a Baptist minister. In order for African-Americans to identify with non-violence, King had to "christianize" the concept and rhetoric of non-violence. Ordinary African-Americans had nothing in common with Gandhi but on the other side they could all relate to Jesus. In order to convince protesters of non-violence, leaders must speak in a language protesters understand and blend protest rhetoric with the cultural beliefs of the protesters. If protesters regard non-violence as a foreign philosophy, they will reject it. King introduced the

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[161] Ansbro, John J. Martin Luther King, Jr. – Nonviolent Strategies and tactics for Social Change. Lanham. New York. Oxford: Madison Books, 2000. 2.
[162] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 16.
[163] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 121.
[164] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 28.
[165] West, Thomas, R., and James W Mooney. To Redeem A Nation. 89.
[166]Ansbro, John J. Martin Luther King, Jr. – Nonviolent Strategies and tactics for Social Change. 182.
[167]"Letter to Dr. King". *Let freedom ring: a documentary history of the modern civil rights movemen*t. Ed. Peter B. Levy. New York: Praeger, 1992. 109.
Non-violent leaders also referred to "Christian non-violence" like Lawson who also spoke of radical Christian methods. Lawson Jr. , James M. "We Are Trying to Raise the Moral Issue". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century. Ed.* Francis L.Broderick, and August Meier. 280.

concept of non-violence, which resembled in many ways the philosophy of Gandhi. Although some Americans may have rejected non-violence because they regarded it as an alien Gandhian philosophy which was strange to America's values, many Americans perceived that non-violence was in line with the ethics of Jesus and Christianity.[168]

In an article on King, Donald H. Smith questioned whether the philosophy of non-violence was a Christian ethic. Smith concludes that non-violence was influenced by East and West alike.[169] King himself regarded the teachings of Jesus and Gandhi as compatible. One must also note that Gandhi did not preach an orthodox Hindu faith which could have alienated his non-Hindu sympathizers. Kenneth Smith and Ira Zepp write that Gandhi's faith could be found in the Indian religious tradition.[170] Gandhi, however, contributed his own interpretations to the Hindu concepts of non-violence and violence. Gandhi himself conceded that he presented a new interpretation of the Gita because in his opinion, religion "is ever evolving."[171] William Robert Miller writes that Gandhi's ahimsa was not equated with love in the old Hindu texts.[172] The Hindu origin of ahimsa implied only abstention and not compassion like the Christian agape. Gandhi combined the "gospel of self-less action" of the Gita with the biblical understanding of love. King also based his non-violent philosophy on Christian beliefs. The concept of agape, loving one's neighbor, the importance of Jesus and turning the other cheek were both fundamental to King's non-violent philosophy and principles of the Christian faith, yet King advanced their traditional understanding by relating them to non-violence. King and Gandhi succeeded in wedding non-violence to Hindu or Christian beliefs without compromising their respective faith. The apparent reconciliation of non-violence with the Christian faith refutes the claim of Hanigan who writes that Gandhi's religious background made immediate sense of non-violence unlike the Christian religious tradition out of which King came that had no similar tradition.[173]

Many African-American ministers involved in the movement regarded non-violence as a component of their beliefs. Jesus himself was seen as non-violent. "[Jesus] rebuked Peter for reaching for his sword and using the sword. He practiced passive resistance, if you want to call it that. And he engaged in non-violent resistance to evil. And so it was rather easy for ministers to apply this to the civil rights movement," wrote for example Reverend Joseph Lowery of SCLC.[174] Fred Shuttlesworth, who played an important role in the Birmingham campaign, when asked about

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[168] Ansbro, John J. Martin Luther King, Jr. – Nonviolent Strategies and tactics for Social Change. 82. – Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 110.
[169] Ibid. 177.
[170] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G Zepp, Jr.,. Search For The Beloved Community. 49.
[171] Iyer, Raghavan. The Moral And Political Writings Of Mahatma Gandhi. Volume I. Clearendon Press. Oxford. 514.
[172] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 106.
[173] Hanigan, James P. Martin Luther King, Jr. And the foundations of nonviolence. 17.
[174] Lowery, Joseph. The Persuasive Power of Nonviolence. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 149.

his commitment to non-violence replied that he did not study Gandhi like King but that he was committed to non-violence because of his belief in Jesus.[175] Non-violence, however, is not a fundamental belief of Christianity because one can reject non-violence and still be a Christian. Smith shares the same view and writes that few Christians equated the concept of agape with non-violence. "Instead, Christians, for the most part, have recognized the necessity for the use of force and sometimes of violence in human relations."[176] Smith contends that as citizens of a state have a stake in its existence, they supported violence or the use of force for the preservation of the state. This is how the idea of the "just war" was developed and gained credence among Christians. "The absolute rejection of violence, however, has been a minority view in the development of the Christian idea of agape and its social implications," writes Smith.[177] To Smith, King was one of the few theologians to develop non-violence in the Christian theology since World War II. According to Smith, King relied less on Gandhi's concepts of ahimsa and satyagraha and placed his non-violent philosophy instead on agape and the life of Jesus as a perfect example for non-violence. Yet Smith contends that King also found "the greatest historical expression of nonviolence and civil disobedience in Gandhi's nonviolent campaigns".[178]

There are similarities between the non-violent philosophies of Gandhi and King. Although King used Personalism[179] as a basis for his justification of man's sacredness Gandhi advocated the same principle, applying moral and also religious reasoning. King referred to the cross as the best example for human suffering and sacrifice. Although Gandhi did not focus on the cross, he emphasized the need for sacrifice which occupied a centrality in his writings. To King and Gandhi, God was of pivotal importance and they stressed the necessity to love all humans. They also shared a vision of a Beloved Community or a world house. King succeeded, just like Gandhi, to extend religious beliefs and blend them with non-violent philosophy. To Gandhi, ahimsa and satyagraha were the religious foundations of non-violence. To King, it was agape and the Beloved Community.

1.4.) The Difference between Non-violence, Non-cooperation and Civil Disobedience

Non-violence, non-cooperation and civil disobedience are three forms of protest which might be mistakenly equated with each other. They are, nevertheless, composed of different dynamics and have different objectives. A protest movement must choose the strategies and methods it sees as

[175] Ibid. 68.
[176] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 101.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid. 109-110.
[179] Personalism is a school of thought which was led by the theologian Borden Parker Bowne. It stood in opposition to materialism and asserted that the person was the fundamental category for explaining reality.

most suitable to its protest. Unlike non-violence, civil disobedience may have a devastating effect on a protest movement. The author argues that although African-American non-violent leaders radicalized their rhetoric in the mid-sixties, as shown in chapter one, they did not rely on radical strategies or methods. Non-violent protesters avoided adopting radical non-violent methods like non-cooperation and civil disobedience in order to maintain the sympathy of American public opinion. Although coercive mechanisms are crucial to non-violent protest, they should, nevertheless, not be perceived as radical by public opinion, as long as the latter can benefit protesters and influence key politicians.

Gandhi practiced all three forms of protest: non-violence, non-cooperation and civil disobedience. He practiced non-cooperation by boycotting British exports, schools, courts, jobs and rejecting honorary titles. Non-cooperation rests on the foundation that by refusing to cooperate with a government, the latter will lose its grip over the people, who can then coerce the government into giving in to their demands. A government depends on the cooperation of the people for its proper functioning. Non-cooperation seeks the establishment of parallel institutions[180] to withdraw support from a government, making it possible for protesters to paralyze the function of the government. It therefore made sense to apply non-cooperation in India where Indians wanted to remove British rule.

The civil rights movement, however, did not apply non-cooperation as practiced by Gandhi as its protest was not aimed at affecting the power of the federal government. The civil rights movement did not seek to remove a political system and install its own. Non-violent protesters never advocated the creation of their own courts, for example. Nevertheless King called on African-Americans to refuse to cooperate with the system of segregation. He applied the term non-cooperation with reference to the laws that fostered segregation. “To accept passively an unjust system is to cooperate with that system; thereby the oppressed becomes as evil as the oppressor. Non-cooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good.”[181] Although King applied the term non-cooperation, he did not imply the same non-cooperation that Gandhi did. Non-cooperation to King meant to challenge what he referred to as “unjust laws” and not boycott governmental institutions like the Indians did during British occupation.[182]

The difference between non-violence, non-cooperation and civil disobedience is minimal and occasionally blurred. Nevertheless non-violent scholars have rarely referred to non-violence during

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[180] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 52.
[181] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 61.
[182] To King, an unjust law is a law “that squares with a moral law. It is a law that squares with that which is right, so that any law that uplifts human personality is a just law. Whereas that law which is out of harmony with the moral law which does not square with the moral law of the universe. It does not square with the law of God, so for that reason it is unjust and any law that degrades the human personality is an unjust law.”
King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 49.

the movement as non-cooperation. Although non-cooperation means to refuse to cooperate with a system African-Americans could not totally detach themselves from the American political system. African-Americans were committed to American ideals and values and they reiterated this commitment throughout the movement. Non-cooperation, on the other hand, is more radical than non-violence and protesters often use it in the case of occupation.

Another form of non-violent protest is civil disobedience, which civil rights leaders repeatedly discussed during the movement. Non-violent protest can be legal or illegal. A SCLC leaflet stated: "If a protest is illegal, it is usually referred to as civil disobedience. The concept of civil disobedience also rests on the refusal to cooperate with evil. Civil Disobedience is a natural consequence of non-violence when the resister is confronted by unjust and immoral laws."[183]

Henry David Thoreau was one of the first activists to write an essay on the duty of American citizens to practice civil disobedience if they perceived the actions of their government to be unjust. Thoreau was influenced by abolitionists and maintained that the best government is the one that governs least.[184] When laws are unjust they must be broken, he argued: "If it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law."[185]

Freeman writes that many misconceptions surround the phrase "civil disobedience", which is not anti-law but within the law and the democratic tradition.[186] It is neither anarchic nor totalitarian but a means of justified protest for citizens to express their democratic rights in a democratic society. Civil disobedience is not to be equated with non-violence. Civil disobedience is a form of non-cooperation yet unlike non-cooperation. Civil disobedience means that protesters have to break a law. Civil disobedience requires a firmer commitment and more discipline than non-cooperation, as protesters risk incarceration and repression by breaking a law. Civil disobedience does not seek to destroy the state but intends to paralyse it and coerce a government to give in to the demands of protesters. Furthermore, civil disobedience is more dangerous than non-cooperation and therefore requires more preparation and a willingness to endure the reaction of the state.

Gandhi always sought to apply legal means but when he believed moral laws were extremely broken, he advocated for civil disobedience, writes Smith.[187] During India's struggle for independence, which lasted from 1919 to 1948, there were only two major civil disobedience campaigns.[188] Gandhi knew the dangers involved in mounting civil disobedience and therefore

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[183] The Southern Christian Leadersip Conference: "The Ultimate Aim Is the ´Beloved Community`". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century. Ed.*, Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 271.
[184] Lynd, Staughton. Nonviolence in America. 58.
[185] Ibid. 67-8.
[186] Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. Civil disobedience. [by] Harrop A. Freeman. 2.
[187] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 107.
[188] The first Indian civil disobedience campaign lasted from 1930-1931. The second campaign was the "Quit India" movement which started in 1942.

applied it only as a last resort.[189] Gandhi described civil disobedience as "the use of a knife to be used most sparingly if at all."[190]

King differentiated between what he called civil disobedience and uncivil disobedience. Civil disobedience, where protesters who disobeyed unjust laws accepted the punishment by going to jail, differed from uncivil disobedience. This separated them from anarchists who had no respect for the law. Nevertheless non-violent protesters clearly eschewed campaigns of civil disobedience during the civil rights movement. African-American protesters mainly sought to comply with the law and not to ignore injunctions as protestors relied to a great extent on the courts. African-American protesters also rarely broke laws to provoke publicity, as was the case in India. Smith notes that King practiced non-violence within the law at the beginning of the movement. It was only in the late sixties that he advocated for mass civil disobedience in order to pressure the government.[191]

According to Freeman, about eighty percent of non-violent protest during the civil rights movement and also the anti-war (Vietnam) movement was "obedient", like the distribution of "pamphlets on Vietnam or segregation, programs of voter registration, teach-ins, parades and picketings under permits or where no permits are required, etc."[192] The voter registration campaign of SNCC was obedient, for example. The Freedom Rides also did not violate but rather tested the law. The same applies to the desegregation of schools, as the Supreme Court had declared segregation of schools unconstitutional.

The first important act of civil disobedience in the civil rights movement was Parks's refusal to abandon her bus seat in Montgomery. Another example was when King and other activists chose to march in Birmingham despite a court injunction. Nevertheless it was much less spectacular in scope compared to the civil disobedience campaigns that Gandhi led in India.

A closer analysis of the tactics of the movement shows that civil rights leaders considered using civil disobedience yet decided against it. SCLC staff had suggested more radical forms of non-violence that could be considered civil disobedience. For example, SCLC activists suggested lying down on streets to block traffic or lying down in front of trains to block the shipment of arms.[193] Young suggested lying on highways, blocking doors at government offices and mass school boycotts.[194] Other leaders, like Shuttlesworth, who organized the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR) pushed for more militant non-violent direct actions. Bevel, with his wife Nash, developed a major plan of civil disobedience, which King considered too radical. After the Birmingham church bombings, Nash envisioned completely closing down Alabama's state capital

[189] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 53.
[190] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 228.
[191] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 111.
[192] Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. Civil disobedience. [by] Harrop A. Freeman. 5.
[193] Smith, Ervin, The Ethics of Martin Luther King. 112.
[194] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 91.

in order to remove Governor Wallace from office and register every Alabaman citizen to vote.[195] Nash envisioned other radical strategies, like lying on railroad tracks, runways and bus driveways and organizing a general work strike that would surround the capitol building prohibiting vehicles from to entering or leaving. Yet King did not take these proposals seriously, at least not until the Poor People's campaign, which can be considered the most radical campaign envisaged by SCLC with regard to civil disobedience tactics.[196]

Civil disobedience would not have been politically wise for African-American protesters. Civil rights activists discovered that there was a rise in the political right in the sixties, represented by Senator Barry Goldwater and Governor of Alabama George Wallace. SCLC was advised to renounce direct action protest during the presidential campaign between Johnson and Goldwater, as it was believed direct action would cause more Americans to vote for Goldwater. Clarence Jones, who was an important advisor to King, warned him of misguided tactics, like the "stall-in" at the world's fair, as it would alienate whites.[197] Civil rights leaders feared alienating public opinion by applying more radical tactics that could have caused some Americans to opt for right-wing politicians.

Walton contends that SCLC was not in a position to conduct a coherent nationwide civil disobedience campaign and that throughout his writings King favored individual civil disobedience.[198] Civil rights activist Hartford stated that King was uncomfortable with the concept of disruptive, coercive non-violence as opposed to the moral witness method that had been used until that point.[199] Although King, for example, warned of massive civil disobedience if the Congress filibustered the Civil Rights Bill[200] yet it was probably a bluff considering his reliance on public opinion and the federal government at that time. Disruptive non-violence was not recommended as it could generate dangerous consequences for protesters. The more radical the strategies became, the more protesters were likely to face violent repression. "Everybody knew, — that to do that kind of provocative non-violent direct action in Alabama was going to be hideously dangerous and that people were gonna get killed. And there would be mass arrests for which there might not be any bail, with heavy charges and serious prison terms," stated an activist.[201]

There was, however, a clear escalation of tactics, visible particularly in the mid-sixties. One was able to see the defiance of protesters to increasing court injunctions, particularly after the Albany

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[195] Garrow, David J. Bearing the Cross. 292.
[196] Ibid. 293-294.
When Nash presented her proposals to King, he just looked at her and laughed.
[197] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 196.
[198] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 95-96.
[199] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. Copyright © 2005-2007. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[200] Garrow, David J. Bearing the Cross. 298.
[201] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm

campaign, when protesters did not submit to the court order. At the end of his life, King's tactics became more radical and he started to consider civil disobedience, which marked a clear shift from his previous campaigns. In a speech in 1967 King stated:

> Nonviolence must be adapted to urban conditions and urban moods. Non-violent protest must now mature to a new level, to correspond to heightened black impatience and stiffened white resistance. This high level is mass civil disobedience. There must be more than a statement to the larger society, there must be a force that interrupts its functioning at some key point… To dislocate the functioning of a city without destroying it can be more effective than a riot because it can be longer lasting, costly to the larger society, but not wantonly destructive. It is a device of social action that is more difficult for a government to quell by superior force… It is militant and defiant, not destructive.[202]

Opponents of the movement would have exploited any civil disobedience action to discredit the protesters. King and African-American protesters were already being described as gadflies and agitators. Major civil disobedience could have forfeited the sympathy of public opinion. Another reason why protesters eschewed civil disobedience was that in Birmingham and Selma, protesters achieved their objectives by simply marching on the streets, making police repression seem disproportionately repressive to their protest. During the time of the Poor People's Campaign, however, protesters relied more on coercion as public opinion was already shifting its focus from civil rights to Vietnam. Additionally, relations between the movement and the federal government had become so strained that non-violent protesters risked alienating public opinion and the federal government, unlike at the beginning of the sixties when non-violent leaders were more prudent. Hence, coercive means are not always recommended in non-violent protest, particularly since protesters must keep a balance between coercion and winning over public opinion. Sometimes less coercion might usher in useful results while stronger coercion might provoke the opposite effect.

1.5.) Self-defense and Non-violence in the Civil Rights Movement

This sub-chapter examines the application of self-defense as complimentary to non-violent protest during the civil rights movement. Although non-violent leaders like King advocated for exclusively non-violent protest, non-violent protesters also occasionally relied on self-defense. There were even instances when non-violent protest would not have been possible without organized self-defense. Nevertheless non-violent protesters were keen on being perceived by public opinion as a non-violent group.

Many urban African-American youth announced that self-defense against racist attacks was morally justifiable. Baker, one of the most influential activists of the movement, questioned non-

[202] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 86.

violence without self-defense in the face of white violence.[203] She advocated, for example, self-defense in the face of lynch mobs. Yet self-defense seemed to run counter to the interests of the non-violent movement, as non-violent leaders contended. King maintained that African-Americans needed to be extremely cautious regarding self-defense during a non-violent demonstration:

> It is dangerous to organize a movement around self-defense. The line of demarcation between defensive violence and aggressive violence is thin. The minute a program for violence is enunciated, even for self-defense, the atmosphere is filled with talk of violence, and the words falling on unsophisticated ears may be interpreted as an invitation of aggression.[204]

Thus, self-defense would be disastrous as it would be difficult to maintain the line between aggression and defense.[205] A non-violent movement that emphasizes the importance of self-defense would also sound threatening to public opinion.

Yet Austin contends that African-American protesters did not perceive any unbridgeable gap between self-defense and non-violence. “As far as they were concerned, not striking back while participating in a public protest was quite different from not defending one's home, church, or community center from imminent attack.”[206] Although Austin claims that activists applied the term “non-violent tactics” rather loosely, he confirms that self-defense was indispensable in order to save lives and property considering that lawmen remained ineffective during many demonstrations.[207] According to Gail O`Brien, armed self-defense in the wake of World War II led to the decrease of lynching and mob violence for African-Americans.[٢٠٨] The presence of organized self-defense does not necessarily exclude non-violence. For example when Fred und Ruby Shuttlesworth sought to enroll their daughters in a Birmingham white school, they were ferociously beaten by a white mob. That night the ACMHR stationed armed guards outside its meeting venue. Another example is C.O. Simpkins, civil rights activist in Shreveport, who was shot at in his car while he was driving. When he returned the fire, his attackers took flight.[209] Ransby contends that to carry a gun was a means of survival for African-American Southerners.[210]

Armed African-Americans protected activists in Mississippi who organized “Freedom schools” and helped African-Americans register to vote. African-American advocates of violent resistance claimed that there were whites that attacked African-Americans because they knew they were non-

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[203] Ransby, Barbara. Ella Baker and the Black freedom movement: a radical democratic vision. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003. 212.
[204] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 56.
[205] Fairclough, Adam. Martin Luther King, Jr. Athens, Ga. Univ. of Georgia Press, 1995. 36.
[206] Austin, Curtis J. On Violence and Nonviolence: The Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi. http:..mshistory.k12.ms.us.features.feature24.ms_civil_rights.html
[207] Ibid.
[208] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 420.
[209] Ransby, Barbara. Ella Baker& the Black Freedom Movement. 224.
[210] Ibid. 216.

violent, whereas they would not have dared to attack African-Americans like the Muslims. A Northern CORE activist stated:

> In some sections of the South violence would help. You know, there have been Negroes in the South who have never been mistreated because they were violent and would defend themselves and shoot somebody who bothered them, and the Whites would brand them crazy and tell each other, ´´Don't bother him!``[211]

Charles R. Sims, one of the organizers of an African-American militant group called the Deacons For Defense and Justice (created after two civil rights workers were attacked by a group of whites in Bogalusa, Louisiana), contended that King accepted his protection despite the fact that the Deacons was a self-defense organization equipped with weapons. The Deacons served as body guards for African-American protesters during the Meredith March. According to Sims, King, who preached at the funeral of an African-American protester who died during the march, decided to travel to the Delta only if the Deacons would protect him.[212] The Deacons protected civil rights workers, patrolled African-American neighborhoods and were ready to fire on white attackers.[٢١٣] Fairclough contends that African-Americans in the South applied self-defense in an increasingly organized way, "armed self-defense as an organized activity emerged alongside the nonviolent movement and largely as a consequence of it."[٢١٤] Armed African-Americans posed outside of mass meetings and "freedom houses".[٢١٥] On the other hand, activist Robert Moses commented that activists managed to survive the 1964 Summer Project only because everyone knew that they did not have any guns.[216]

Civil rights leaders, however, conducted most non-violent campaigns without arms or other means of self-defense. Self-defense was accepted in certain instances that did not attract media attention, which could have otherwise negatively affected the image of the non-violent movement. Since campaigns that attracted media attention, like Birmingham and Selma, were conducted in populated cities, racist retaliations were not as feared as in rural areas in the South where there was no imminent police protection.

The line between self-defense and armed resistance is very thin and will probably be exploited by the opponent against the protester to defame him. Self-defense was an exception rather than a rule. Robert Williams also advocated for self-defense though the media attention he received in addition to his militancy caused NAACP to distance itself from him. The American media regarded Williams as an extremist and discredited him. The media seemed eager to report and focus on acts

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[211] Bell, Inge Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. New York: Random House, 1968. 113.
[212] Raines, Howell. My soul is rested: movement days in the Deep South remembered. New York: Putnam, 1977. 422.
[213] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 420.
[214] Ibid. 420-421.
[215] Ibid. 420.
[216] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 596.

of violence.[217] The difference between Williams and non-violent leaders is that the latter only applied self-defense during non-violent protest and not as a general rule.

One can deduce therefore that self-defense was not always the best strategic choice for protesters. Although the presence of guns intimidated the opponent and prevented him from attacking at times, it could also provoke him. Self-defense only makes sense to non-violent protesters if they are in a situation where they are able to maintain their self-defense. During the Summer Project, activists were underrepresented in a "dangerous" territory and it would not have been strategically wise for them to carry guns as they would have provoked racists. On the other hand, the individuals in the above mentioned examples were trained activists and their readiness to defend themselves lasted only for a short time. They were either protecting protesters or holding a meeting and therefore expecting an attack. In other words, they were not in a permanent state of self-defense, which could have triggered a violent exchange with segregationists. Hence non-violent protesters applied self-defense during the movement on a minimal basis.

1.6.) Non-violence: Pragmatic Means or a Way of Life?

> Admittedly, non-violence in the truest sense is not a strategy that one uses simply because it is expedient at the moment; non-violence is ultimately a way of life that men live by because of the sheer morality of its claim. But even granting this, the willingness to use non-violence as a technique is a step forward. For he who goes this far is more likely to adopt non-violence later as a way of life.[218] (King)

Protesters can opt for non-violence because violence is not possible or out of a firm commitment for non-violence.[219] Although King preached a non-violent philosophy to which he was morally committed, many protesters accepted non-violence as it proved practically effective, not because they were morally committed to it. King, however, did not stipulate that protesters had to apply non-violence as a way of life but stated that it was a means of protest, which accounts for the large spectrum of African-American applying non-violent protest. Nevertheless the non-violent philosophy or rhetoric of King provided the movement with a positive image as it enabled African-American leaders to legitimate their demands to the American public.

Walton poses the question whether non-violence could function in all cases as effectively without a doctrine, like the one preached by Gandhi.[220] Hanigan also argues that it is doubtful to

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[217] Fairclough writes: "Too much publicity had been accorded such distortions of nonviolent protest as the proposed "stall-in" at the New York World's Fair by Brooklyn CORE." Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 182.
[218] King, Coretta Scott. My life with Martin Luther King, Jr. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969. 79.
[219] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam. 15.
[220] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 24.

intelligibly discuss non-violence if it is divorced from its ethical foundations. “Any ethical theory that defends non-violence on practical grounds will inevitably also find violence appropriate on certain occasions.”[٢٢١] Fredrickson on the other hand contends that non-violent protest does not necessarily require a non-violent ideology. It is quite common that protesters engage in non-violent protest for pragmatic reasons and not because they believe that it represents a superior form of struggle.[222]

To King, non-violence was not just a pragmatic strategy to bring justice to America but a way of life which he observed as a moral principle. King presented non-violence as “Christianity in action”. He abhorred violence and his non-violent beliefs even led him to criticize the American government for its war against Vietnam at a critical stage of the civil rights movement. Although King was surrounded by African-American activists who also practiced non-violence as a way of life, he knew that most African-Americans had different ideas on this subject: “We may never be strong enough to be entirely non-violent in thought, word, and deed. But we must keep non-violence as our goal and make steady progress towards it,” wrote also Gandhi.[223] The difficulty of causing the masses to accept the ethics of non-violence led Gandhi to admit in the wake of the violence after the partition of India that Indians had not truly practiced satyagraha but passive resistance which was “a weapon of the weak.”[٢٢٤] It is extremely difficult, contends Fredrickson, for non-violent protesters to act consistently on Gandhi’s injunction not to harm the opponent. Fredrickson therefore underlines how coercion is important in non-violent protest. Any non-violent ideology which merely relies on ideology and not on practical gains will fail to appeal to protesters. To Fredrickson, the brilliance of Gandhi laid in the fact that he brought something new to pacifist tradition which was an element of political realism and pragmatism that had been missing.[225]

King was quite aware of the fact that during the Montgomery Boycott many African-Americans only observed non-violence for practical reasons. It would have been impossible and unnecessary to convert all protesters to non-violence, as long as they were protesting non-violently. Many analysts of the movement share the view that most African-American protesters applied non-violence for practical reasons. The sit-in students that started the sit-in protest in Greensboro might have heard of King and non-violence but they did not adopt non-violence as a way of life. Neither did the other young activists and students who emulated them. Non-violence was for them just a strategy. In fact, many of them were not even familiar with non-violence as a strategy. Sit-ins seemed to be a strategy which ordinary students could apply with a direct effect on segregation at lunch counters.

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[221] Hanigan, James, P. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the foundations of nonviolence. 4.
[222] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 225.
[223] Gandhi. M.K. Non-violence in Peace and War. Vol. I. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1948. 58.
[224] Nelson, William Stuart. Gandhian Values And The American Civil Rights Movement. *The Meaning Of Gandhi*. Ed. Paul F. Power. University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu. 1971. 157.
[225] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 227.

According to Sitkoff, most of the sit-in students accepted non-violence not as a way of life but rather as a political weapon.[226] During the movement there were African-American students and protesters who applied non-violence as a strategy but grew frustrated with the political achievements they reached and opted instead for violence. Even members of King's congregation in Montgomery confessed that they did not mind killing off a number of whites.[227] Walton claims that Powell, Randolph and CORE practiced non-violence as a strategy and that other intellectuals searched for "expanded possibilities" to be gained through stressing ethics.[228] On the other hand, other protesters wanted to convert segregationists through "Peace" and "Love".[229]

Militant African-Americans believed that non-violence would weaken the resistance of African-Americans and attacked the non-violent philosophy. "If a Negro attacks one of them, they'll fight that Negro all over Harlem. It's only when the white man attacks them that they believe in non-violence, all of them," stated Malcolm X.[230] Yet when protest leaders preached non-violence, they were not primarily concerned with non-violence between African-Americans but rather between African-American protesters and whites. One has to take into consideration that non-violence primarily erupted in the civil rights movement as a protest strategy and not as a way of life. The primary objective of non-violent leaders was not to transform African-Americans into committed believers of non-violence but to lead non-violent protest against segregation. The acceptance of non-violence as a protest strategy does not necessarily mean that protesters embrace non-violence as a way of life. The question for non-violent leaders was not whether they would embrace non-violence at all costs and at all times. When asked whether Shuttlesworth would retaliate if attacked, he replied he was not sure whether there were certain circumstances where he might retaliate if someone tried to murder his family, for example. But he clearly stated that if he was marching for a cause then he would take the blow "for the cause".[231] According to King, Fortune magazine conducted a poll that revealed that 92 percent of African-Americans felt that there must be a non-violent solution to the racial problem.[232] Yet even if this figure might be exaggerated, it shows that a great number of African-Americans believed in the practical aspect of non-violence without embracing it as a way of life.

Non-violent leaders like Bevel were aware of the fact that non-violence was conditional to African-Americans and that many African-Americans were committed to it as long as it was

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[226] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 93.
[227] Fairclough, Adam. Martin Luther King, Jr. 36.
[228] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 28.
[229] Fairclough, Adam. Martin Luther King, Jr. 38.
[230] Clark, Kenneth B. King, Malcolm, Baldwin. 42.
[231] Shuttlesworth, F.L., and N.H. Smith. The Birmingahm Manifesto. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 68.
[232] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament Of Hope. 663.

effective.[233] Even practicing Christians doubted the convergence of the ethics of Jesus with politics, writes Fairclough.[234] Lerone Bennett, Jr. states that although the non-violent strain in the African-American leadership was: "more practical than theoretical, the graveyard of Negro leadership was by 1956 replete with the bones of men who had attempted to establish an American passive resistance movement based on Gandhian methodology".[235] Inge Powell Bell conducted an analysis based on forty-six interviews with active CORE members to determine whether they observed non-violence for moral or practical reasons. Her study shows other interesting stances on the subject besides the morality and practicability of non-violent commitment.[236]

1. Moral commitment to non-violence 30%
2. Commitment to nonviolence as a technique 24%
3. Questioning of nonviolence 24%
4. Rejection of nonviolence 11%
5. Don't know, no answer 11%

Bell claims, however, that only four respondents indicated that they truly considered non-violence as a personal ethic or way of life, and only two of them seemed to have a clear and true understanding of non-violence.[237] Although CORE specified that membership involved no religious affiliation and that anybody who opposed segregation could join the organization, it also emphasized the role of non-violence and its belief in the principles of non-violence, like winning the friendship, respect, understanding of the opponent and not physical victory.[238] Although CORE did not claim that it accepted non-violence as a way of life, it confirmed its belief in non-violent principles.

Fredrickson believes that most African-Americans were uncomfortable with non-violence and believed that they had a right to defend themselves.[239] Yet Fredrickson also contends that critics of non-violence ignore two facts about the movement. First, King did not stipulate that all protesters thoroughly adhere to a non-violent way of life. Thus, King did not impose his philosophy on protesters. Second, Fredrickson writes that even if there was not a consensus on the need for self-defense, protesters ruled out violence for practical reasons.[240]

Indian non-violent resistance showed that not all protesters who apply non-violent tactics have to fully believe in non-violence as a way of life or as religiously as King and Gandhi did. A. B. Rajput

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[233] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 167.
[234] Ibid. 420.
[235] Bennett, Jr., Lerone. When the Man and the Hour Are Met. *Martin Luther King- a profile.* Ed. Eric Lincoln. 26.
[236] Bell, Inge Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 106.
[237] Ibid.
[238] CORE, "All About CORE". *Let freedom ring: a documentary history of the modern civil rights movement*. Ed. Peter B. Levy. 83.
[239] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 263.
[240] Ibid.

writes that Indians in general took up non-violence more as a political weapon than as a religious formula.[241] If one accepts non-violence as a way of life, however, one is more prone to remain attached to non-violence than others who do not believe in its moral foundations but apply it to achieve certain objectives. George Lakey contends that among participants of the sit-ins were those who were rather hostile and aggressive before the sit-ins but would later "accept the Gandhian values of nonviolent action as a part of their everyday behavior."[242] Fredrickson makes a similar point and contends that a non-violent ideology might increase the morale and motivation of non-violent protesters and "prevent or inhibit their normal tendency to escalate the conflict to the level of violent resistance when nonviolent campaigns do not bring the results that are hoped for."[243] King contended that even if protesters did not observe non-violence as a way of life their non-violent protest may be a "step forward". "Nonviolence is ultimately a way of life that men live by because of the sheer morality of its claim. But even granting this, the willingness to use non-violence as a technique is a step forward. For he who goes this far is more likely to adopt non-violence later as a way of life."[244] A non-violent resister dedicated to non-violent principles will be more disciplined and serve as a guide to his group so that they will remain non-violent. One example is the change that occurred within SNCC, which renounced non-violence and endorsed Black Power, as opposed to many SCLC clergymen that believed in non-violence as a way of life and remained dedicated to its principles. Not all SCLC activists were adamant believers in non-violence as a way of life yet almost all of them stressed the necessity of non-violence and were dedicated to it as a means of protest.

Nevertheless many documents of the movement reveal that many African-American activists believed in non-violence as a way of life. According to activist John Lewis, many students of the Nashville sit-ins believed in non-violence as a philosophy and not just as a technique.

> It became a way of life, a way of doing things, a way of living. When we would go down to sit-in, I think, you had to be prepared not to just go there to sit and be denied service…It was like going to church, I guess. You would put on your church-going clothes, Sunday clothes, and we took books and papers and did our homework at the lunch counter, just quiet and trying to be as dignified as possible.[245]

Bevel, one of the most influential leaders of the movement, was an adamant believer in Gandhian non-violence and expressed a radical conception of non-violence. "I can see the possibility of a worldwide non-violent student movement uniting the students of India and Russia, and China and America. I can even see a non-violent movement on the battlefield," he exclaimed.[246]

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[241] Rajput, A. B. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Lahore: Lion Press, 1957. 66.
[242] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 792.
[243] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 226.
[244] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 83.
[245] Raines, Howell. My soul is rested: movement days in the Deep South remembered. 99.
[246] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 167.

C.T. Vivian also believed in non-violence as a philosophy, whereas Hosea Williams regarded non-violence rather as a strategic means of protest.[247] Other leaders, like Ella Baker and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., supported non-violence for pragmatic reasons.[248] The majority of CORE activists regarded non-violence as a purely pragmatic tool in order to attain their rights.[249] By the 1960s, CORE relied less on moral grounds and more on political expediency.[250] Bruce Hartford contended that many SNCC activists who had committed themselves to non-violence as a tactic shifted their perception of non-violent protest from “"moral witness" tactics to "create-such-disruption-that-they-are-be-forced-to-do-something" tactics. To what I would call "coercive" non-violence.”[251]

It is important to note that principle leaders of the non-violent campaigns of the civil rights movement believed in non-violence as a way of life, like King, Ralph Abernathy, John Lewis, Farmer, Bevel and Shutllesworth. The organizers and leaders of the movement played an indispensable role in causing the protesters to observe non-violence. Non-violent leaders made sure their staff was committed to non-violence even if they did not develop a moral commitment to it.[252] In order to convince African-Americans to adopt non-violence, King argued that non-violence was the only possible option from a strategic point of view. During the Meredith march[253], when King first encountered the outcry of Black Power, he argued with Stokley Carmichael and other activists from CORE and SNCC that it was in the movement’s best interest to remain non-violent for practical reasons. King argued with them that African-Americans did not have the necessary resources or techniques to win a violent confrontation. Non-violence was needed, King maintained, particularly in Mississippi at that time, to expose the injustice of segregation and to stress the moral issues at hand.

One could claim that African-Americans simply opted for non-violence because they did not have any other possibility, as violence would have been suicidal. One of King’s main arguments why African-Americans should opt for non-violence was the relatively low number of casualties of the non-violent campaigns. King asserted that fewer persons were killed in ten years of non-violent action across the South than during three nights of riots in Watt.[254] Sharp also reasons that deaths,

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[247] Ibid. 167-168.
[248] By commenting on her friend Bayard Rustin’s commitment to non-violence, Baker says: “I have no such commitment. Not historically or even now can I claim that because that’s not my way of functioning.” Ransby, Barbara. Ella Baker& the Black Freedom Movement. 193.
[249] CORE: “An Alternative to Bitterness and Mere Sentiment”. *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century. Ed.* Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 296.
[250] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 36.
[251] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[252] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest. 51.
[253] After James Meredith, first African-American student to attend the University of Mississippi in 1962, began a walk from Memphis, Tenn. to Jackson to encourage African Americans to register and vote and was shot by segregationists, various civil rights activists decided to continue his march.
[254] The Watt Riots occurred in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles, California, in August 1965.

suffering and destruction are significantly lower when protesters apply non-violence, compared to violence.[٢٥٥]

During the twentieth century there were short-term non-violent campaigns, carried out for merely strategic reasons. Compared to these campaigns, the civil rights movement spanned over a period of almost thirteen years. The longer a conflict lasts, the more disciplined protesters have to become. If non-violence is used only as a strategy, protesters might lose confidence if it remains ineffective over a long time. Non-violence education is therefore advisable in a long-term conflict.[256]

Bell regards the non-violent doctrine as having also added legitimacy to African-American political demands.[257] Bell suggests that a non-violent doctrine during the civil rights movement was pragmatically useless and unrealistic yet it allowed African-Americans to legitimate their protest in a culture that questioned their rights to equality. A non-violent doctrine provided African-American protesters with a certain legitimacy during their: "drive for power by making [them] the bearer[s] of the great message of nonviolence."[258] Although numerous statements of activists listed in the sub-chapter on religion show that many protesters were morally committed to non-violence, nevertheless Bell emphasizes the influence that non-violent doctrine had on public opinion:

> Why could the movement not have been openly pragmatic in using nonviolence as a necessary tactic? Why did it not continue in the tradition of the American labor movement, which used direct action but never renounced the right of self-defense? The answers lie in the fact that the Negro's claim to equality and his right to use strong methods to attain it were so widely questioned by the prevailing culture that even the members of the movement had to legitimate their activity in their own eyes by denying the extent of the coercion they used and by renouncing the right of self-defense. Thus it was claimed that through the example of voluntary suffering and constant kindness and forbearance the conscience of the enemy would eventually be touched and he would be converted to friendship and reconciled to integration.[259]

Zanden also contends that the non-violent protest of African-Americans gained a considerable degree of legitimacy.[260] Non-violent rhetoric certainly contributed to this legitimacy. If African-Americans had simply stepped in the footsteps of the labor movement as Bell suggests, they would not have achieved the same dramatization. The non-violent doctrine fended off criticism that African-Americans applied non-violence out of weakness.

> However, by making nonviolence an end in itself and by making the Negro's mission not merely the attainment of equality but the introduction of a new moral standard into American life, the doctrine attempted to change what might have been a

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[255] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 454.
[256] Sharp writes that the minimization of hostility and hatred is effective and beneficial for the sake of long-term consequences. Ibid. 635.
[257] Bell, Inge Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 37.
[258] Ibid.
[259] Ibid. 36.
[260] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt.* Ed. James A Geschwender. 136.

> sense of impotence into a sense of superiority. The demonstrator who went to jail wearing a label pin that said, ´´Father forgive them,`` was surely elevated by the inner knowledge that the end of that quotation, applied here to the whites.[261]

Moral non-violent philosophy can have a non-violent effect on protesters, as shown in this sub-chapter. Yet in order for protesters to accept non-violence, non-violent leaders have to convince protesters of its practical effect. In the next sub-chapter this study shows the efforts of non-violent leaders to portray non-violence as a militant form of protest.

1.7.) Non-violence is not a Weak Philosophy

Many cultures relate violent resistance, in the face of repression, to courage and strength. The mechanisms of non-violence contain a different pattern of behavior where a resister does not apply violence. Although a non-violent resister does not flee the battle scene, outsiders might mistake his reluctance to defend himself with violence for weakness or cowardliness. Thus, these non-violent protesters feel compelled to justify their form of protest. African-American non-violent leaders were particularly exposed to the criticism of militant African-American leaders, like Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam. Non-violent leaders therefore went out of their way to prove that non-violence was as courageous as violence and developed a non-violent militant rhetoric in order to attract African-American protesters who would have rejected a passive or weak philosophy of protest.

1.7.1.) The Difference between Non-violence, Pacifism and Militant Non-violence

> People ask me, since I am such a strong anti-pacifist, how can I have this admiration for a pacifist? Well, I have a simple answer… King's doctrine of nonviolent resistance is not pacifism. Pacifism of really the classical kind is where you are concerned about your own purity and not responsibility. And the great ethical divide is between people who want to be pure and those who want to be responsible. And I think King has shown the difference. (Reinhold Niebuhr in a television program, defending non-violence).[262]

> Our present urgent necessity is to cease our internal fighting and turn outward to the enemy-- using every form of mass action yet known—create new forms—and resolve never to let them rest.[263] (King)

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[261] Bell, Inge Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 38.
[262] Branch, Taylor. Parting the waters: America in the King years, 1954-63. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989. Edition 1st Touchstone ed. 896.
[263] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament Of Hope. 34.

Non-violence should not be equated with pacifism as there is a difference between the two philosophies.[264] There are peace researchers who differentiate between "prudential pacifism" and "absolute pacifism". While the former seeks to apply non-violent methods and regards coercion as justified, the latter rejects coercion, on the grounds that it is not pacifist.[265] This means, while some "pacifists" accept the use of non-violent methods, others reject it. Absolute pacifism rejects the use of violence, yet it does not offer an alternative to repression. Absolute pacifism seems passive and self-defeating, as it remains inactive in the face of repression. Walter Wink, for example, criticizes this pacifism and argues that most pacifists misinterpreted Jesus' teaching "Resist not evil" and his admonition to turn the other cheek. "Jesus abhors both passivity and violence as responses to evil. He is a third alternative not even touched by these options."[٢٦٦] It is also irritating that pacifism and passivism sound alike, contends Wink.[267] Abu-Nimer also criticizes pacifism and contends that absolute pacifism constituted a rejection of "mundane political reality. …refusing to engage in the world and fighting injustice are also criticized as politically irresponsible, particularly in regard to neglecting social responsibility toward other people living under justice."[268]

King was influenced by Niebuhr who regarded absolute pacifism as futile and self-defeating, as it failed to challenge injustice. Pacifists believe in an unreal perfectionism which is alien to real politics. Love and self-suffering alone would not suffice to affect change. Niebuhr argued that appeals to goodwill and conscience were of no avail unless individuals realized their sins.[269] If the oppressed chooses to be inactive, he will aid the oppressor in maintaining his unjust rules. Niebuhr therefore regarded pacifism as passive non-resistance to evil. His rejection of absolute pacifism convinced King of the necessity of resistance. Love alone would not suffice to change the evildoer, as Niebuhr condemned such naiveté.[270] Non-violent leaders therefore had to emphasize to African-American protesters that non-violence offered a real alternative as a protest method and that it was a philosophy of direct action. Young notes that non-violence was totally misinterpreted and unpopular in the northern states of America. "Nonviolence had been so misinterpreted in the Negro community of the North that to come as a member of a nonviolent movement… is to put two strikes on you to start with."[271]

Critics of non-violence, like Malcolm X, referred to non-violence as a form of "cowardice". Malcolm X, who was the most vehement critic of non-violence, repeatedly taunted King and other non-violent leaders and criticized their insistence on non-violent action. The refusal to fight in a

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[264] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 68.
[265] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam. 11.
[266] Wink, Walter. Jesus and Nonviolence – A Third Way. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003. 9-14.
[267] Ibid. 3.
[268] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam. 12.
[269] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 95.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 197.

violent manner might be regarded by outsiders that are not familiar with the technique of non-violence as unmanly and weak. The sight of non-violent protesters being beaten by the police may send signals of weakness to outsiders. Their non-violent methods left civil rights movement leaders vulnerable to the criticism of more militant leaders like Malcolm X who said,

> Any Negro who teaches Negroes to turn the other cheek in the face of attack is disarming that Negro of his God-given right, of his moral right, of his natural right, of his intelligent right to defend himself. Everything in nature can defend itself except the American Negro. And men like King- their job is to go among Negroes and teach Negroes 'Don't fight back'.[272]

In another speech Malcolm X condemned all African-American preachers who preached non-violence to African-Americans:

> No one can react to persecution like this but the Negro, and he does it under the counseling of the Negro Preacher…. Were it not for the Negro pastor, our people would be just like the Hungarians, we'd be fighters…. The Negro is a fighting man all right. He fought in Korea; he fought in Germany; he fought in the jungles of Iwo Jima. But that same Negro will come back here, and the white man will hang his mother on a tree, and he will take the Bible and say, ´´Forgive them Lord, for they know not what they do.`` This Negro preacher makes them that way…. Where there is a slave like that, why you have a slave-making religion.[273]

The task of convincing protesters of applying non-violence is a difficult one, since violence is sometimes regarded as necessary and as the lesser evil. Critics of non-violence argue that non-violence is too idealistic or utopian. Yet it is not relevant for non-violent advocates to prove that non-violence can be effective in all conflicts, as Gandhi would want his readers to believe. An advocate of non-violence will only concern himself with the practical aspects of non-violence. During Farmer and Malcolm X's debate on non-violence versus violence for example, Farmer argued by referring to the practical gains realized by the Freedom Rides.[274]

The task of non-violent leaders is to convince doubtful protesters that non-violence is not just a moral but also a powerful force. Non-violent power is measured by its ability to affect change or to coerce the opponent to grant political concessions to protesters. African-American non-violent leaders had to differentiate between non-violence and passivity. Non-violence is more than a state of negation or the absence of violence yet it is only referred to in the context of violence. This means, non-violence is not conceivable without violence, as non-violence is supposed to replace violence. Non-violence does not simply mean to refrain from violent actions but to offer an alternative means of protest. "One who refrains from violence when there is no occasion for its

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[272] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 284.
[273] Ibid. 112-113.
[274] Malcolm X. v. James Farmer: Separation v. Integration. Debate, Dialogue Magazine. *Negro Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 357-383.

exercise is simply un-violent and has no credit for his inaction."[275] Non-violence, to King, constituted active resistance to evil. "I don't think of [love] as a weak force, but I think of love as something strong and that organizes itself into powerful direct action."[٢٧٦] King described non-violence as a middle-way and as a synthesis which combined militancy and moderation. It is neither passive nor radical yet, at the same time, it implies the two concepts.

To proponents of non-violence, it embodies heroism and courage.[277] In order to dispel claims that non-violence was cowardly, Gandhi contended that if one had to choose between violence and cowardice, one should opt for violence. When Gandhi was physically attacked in 1908 and his son asked him what he should have done, Gandhi replied that it was his duty to defend his father even if he had to apply violence.[278] Gandhi even defended violence when he took part in the Boer War. He advocated training in arms for those who believed in the methods of violence. "I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she would, in a cowardly manner, become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour."[279] Gandhi indicated that protesters were non-violent by choice which requires greater bravery: "Non-violence is not a cover for cowardice, but it is regarded the supreme virtue of the brave. Exercise of non-violence requires far greater bravery than that of swordsmanship."[280] Lakey also distinguishes between the suffering of protesters who demonstrate their bravery, openness and goodwill, and protesters who behave like cowards.[281] "The fact that the suffering is voluntarily accepted, and that the actionists repeatedly demonstrate great bravery and heroism, may finally become decisive." contends Sharp.[282] Sharp emphasizes bravery as an important asset in a non-violent protest, "Bravery is so important in the context of nonviolent action that it has much in common with extreme courage demonstrated by violent resisters."[283] This bravery could violate the opponent's stereotype of the non-violent group and he cites the sit-ins as an example of when this occurred.[284] King makes the same distinction by contending that if protesters applied non-violence due to fear or lack of "the instruments of violence", then they did not truly practice non-violence. "As much as I deplore violence, there is one evil that is worse than violence, and that's cowardice."[285]

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[275] Gandhi, M.K. Non-violence in Peace & War. Volume 1. 99-100.
[276] Clark, Kenneth B. King, Malcolm, Baldwin. 43.
[277] Hanigan, James, P. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the foundations of nonviolence. 1.
See also interviews conducted by Bell with CORE activists where respondents proudly depicted their actions of protest. Bell, Ingo Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 116.
[278] Gandhi, M.K. Non-Violence in Peace & War. Volume I. 1.
[279] Ibid.
[280] Ibid. 59.
[281] Peace Research Reviews, vol. II, no. 6 (Dec. 1968). 19-20. Rpt in. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two*. Gene Sharp. 710.
[282] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 715.
[283] Ibid.
[284] Ibid. 716-717.
[285] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 140.

These statements were supposed to convince African-American protesters of the militancy and effectiveness of non-violence. Non-violence would fail to attract protesters if it came across as demoralized or impotent. King and Gandhi claimed that non-violence required spiritual and personal strength. King referred to Gandhi, who called on Indians never to let their enemies rest and to various forms of daily protest, in order to point out the "radicalism" of non-violence.[286] Watley emphasizes how a strong self-image is essential for non-violent protesters so that they would not face feelings of defeat and powerlessness in the presence of violence aggressors.[287] Zepp and Smith even write that a protester should have the strength and the will as well as the ability to kill before he exhibits "the supreme courage of choosing not to kill...One must at least become capable of violence before one can measure up to the stringent demands of nonviolence."[288]

Non-violent leaders had to sell to protesters that they did not resort to non-violence out of weakness but as a deliberate choice. Smith and Zepp write that King and Gandhi emphasized "courage and choice" as "the building rocks of non-violent resistance."[289] Protesters seen as turning to non-violence out of cowardice will not be respected by the opponent and these same protesters will not embrace non-violence out of conviction.

Although King and other non-violent leaders sought to convey the message that African-Americans resorted to non-violence out of choice, it is doubtful whether African-Americans in Montgomery had the capacity to apply violence before they resorted to non-violence. African-American resisters in Montgomery were clearly weaker than their opponents and would not have been able to successfully apply violent resistance; they opted instead for non-violence out of necessity. King's statement that non-violence was a weapon of choice caused some to question the character of non-violence, writes Watley. He quotes the novelist John O. Killens who argues that the "non-violent Negro" was a "myth" and that he only resorted to non-violence as whites were more powerful and had the greater numbers.[290] Watley compares Gandhi's conflict with the civil rights movement and plausibly argues that whereas Gandhi could claim that he was operating from a position of strength since Indians outnumbered the British, African-Americans were a minority and, therefore, in a much more vulnerable position.[291] Vincent Harding also questions whether there was really a non-violent movement at any point. He poses the question of whether non-violence is possible for a people who never had the opportunity to affirm their manhood or to choose violence as an effective response.[292]

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[286] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 34.
[287] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 112.
[288] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 58.
[289] Ibid.
[290] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 113.
[291] Ibid.
[292] Harding, Vincent. The Crisis of Powerless Morality. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric. Lincoln. 182.

Bell argues that pressure to reject non-violence arose from the desire to overcome the image of passivity.[293] Non-violent advocates had to counter critics of non-violence by pointing to the "aggressive" dynamics of non-violence. In his quest to pacify critics, King even claimed that there was no difference between a violent and a non-violent resister except for physical resistance.

> The non-violent resister is just as strongly opposed to the evil against which he protests as is the violent protester. His method is passive or nonaggressive in the sense that he is not physically aggressive toward his opponent but his mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade the opponent that he is mistaken. The method is nonaggressive physically but dynamically aggressive spiritually.[294]

The term "passive resistance" was particularly disadvantageous to non-violent advocates. Critics were mistaken if they regarded "passive resistance" as truly "passive", wrote King. They thought it was "a do-nothing method" in which the resister quietly and passively accepts evil."[295] Gandhi had recognized the negative implications of the term "passive resistance" and changed the name to "civil disobedience" in South Africa and changed it again later to "civil resistance" and then to "nonviolent resistance". In South Africa he decided to give it an Indian name "satyagraha" so that Indians could identify themselves with it.

In order to portray non-violence as a militant and not a quietist philosophy, non-violence leaders used militant expressions to demonstrate this militancy. Young described non-violent demonstrators as "non-violent warriors". Activists used the word "soldier" to portray protesters.[296] Michael Eric Dyson states that the key to King's evolution was his "aggressive non-violence".[297] James Lawson even used the expression "nonviolent army".[298] A favorite Freedom Song of the movement was:

> We are soldiers, in the army.
> We got to fight, although we got to cry
> We got to hold up the freedom banner.
> We got to hold it up until we die.[299]

At the end of the sixties when African-American protesters increasingly started to question non-violence, King's rhetoric became more militant. He applied words like: "massive nonviolence", "aggressive nonviolence", and "nonviolent sabotage" and exclaimed that non-violence would have "disruptive dimensions".[300]

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[293] Bell, Ingo Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 111.
[294] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament Of Hope. 7.
[295] Ibid. 18.
[296] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 80. - Bell, Ingo Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 115.
[297] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 105.
[298] Garrow, David J. Bearing the Cross. 292.
[299] Local Folks & Civil Rights Workers. A Discussion, August, 2003. Copyright © 2003-2004. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.local.htm
[300] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 43.

1.8.) A Rhetoric of Non-violence and Black Pride

The rise of Black Power contributed to the growing militancy of young activists and started to undermine the non-violent movement. Dyson contends that King's disagreements with Stokley Carmichael, Floyd McKissick and other African-American militant leaders forced him to call for measures that would enhance black self-esteem and Black Pride as these virtues had been systematically denied to African-Americans.[301] Although the Black Power slogan appeared after Selma, it was an accumulation of a Black Pride rhetoric which was shaped by Malcolm X. This sub-chapter shows the importance of Black Pride to African-American protesters or militants during the movement. The author argues that non-violent leaders were therefore compelled to respond to Black Power and Black Pride, which led them to radicalize their non-violent rhetoric in order to maintain credibility in the eyes of African-Americans.

1.8.1.) Black Power and Non-violence

First, this study shows the influence of Black Power on the movement and the reaction of King to this growing militancy of African-Americans. Although King contends that many Black Power advocates denied that Black Power implied the use of violence, he criticized the slogan because of its "unconscious and often conscious call for retaliatory violence,"[302] Although the founders of Black Power declared that they were not proponents of aggressive violence, some of their followers openly considered the use of violence.[303] "Sing us no songs of non-violence, sing us no songs of progress, for non-violence and progress belong to middle-class Negroes and whites and we are not interested in you."[304] Non-violent leaders could not afford to ignore nor condemn Black Power without the risk of losing or alienating African-American youth. Non-violent leaders were forced to respond to Black Power or African-American Nationalists who rejected non-violence. Dyson notes that King was forced to grapple with Black Nationalism particularly when he took up residence in Chicago.[305]

The term Black Power was defined and redefined after it was announced by Carmichael. It was originally Adam Clayton Powell who coined the term in an address he delivered at Howard University in 1966. Black Power can be considered a cry of self-assertion. To King, it was a response to racism and segregation, a "psychological reaction to the psychological indoctrination

[301] Ibid. 112.
[302] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 54.
[303] Ibid. 54-55.
[304] Ibid. 55.
[305] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 105.

that led to the creation of the perfect slave."[306] Black Power symbolized a demand for power in a situation where African-Americans did not have considerable political power. One of the effects of Black Power was to exclaim the "glory in blackness and to resurrect joyously the African past."[307] "We are becoming prouder and prouder of our heritage in America and Africa. And we know the profound difference between pride and arrogance," wrote Killens.[308] As such, Black Power was alienating potential white allies and public opinion. King warned Black Power advocates of developing a "sense of black consciousness" that required African-Americans to scorn the white race as a whole.[309] Yet Carmichael and McKissick insisted that the word "black" was important in the Black Power slogan in order to arouse the African-American masses. From their point of view the demand for power for African-Americans was natural, as other ethnic groups in America had power, like Italians, Irish and Jews. Nevertheless King argued that none of these groups used slogans like Jewish or Irish Power. King suggested using a milder slogan, like "black consciousness" or "black equality" yet they were not as persuasive as "Black Power" to Carmichael and McKissick. To King, Black Power was undoubtedly an extreme position which represented a movement of defiance.[310] "Anyone familiar with the Black Power movement recognizes that defiance of white authority and white power is a constant theme; the defiance almost becomes a kind of taunt."[311]

Black Power can be seen as a rejection of "white" American values. "We are not fighting for the right to be like you. We respect ourselves too much for that. When we fight for freedom, we mean freedom for us to be black, or brown, and you to be white and yet live together in a free and equal society," wrote Killens, glorifying "blackness".[312] "My fight is not to be a white man in a black skin, but to inject some black blood, some black intelligence into the pallid main stream of American life, culturally, socially, psychologically, philosophically."[313]

Black Power was becoming increasingly vocal and militant forcing non-violent leaders to find some conciliatory approach. King admitted that Black Power could amass political and economic strength and give a voice to African-Americans that were voiceless and powerless.[314] "Black Power assumes that Negroes will be slaves unless there is a new power to counter the force of the men

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[306] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 40.
[307] Ibid.
[308] Killens, John O. We Refuse to Look at Ourselves Through the Eyes of White America. *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 357.
[309] King, Jr., Martin Luther. Trumpet of Conscience. 9.
[310] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 40.
[311] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 40.
[312] Killens, John O. We Refuse to Look at Ourselves Through the Eyes of White America. *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 353-354.
[313] Ibid. 352.
[314] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 36.

who are still determined to be masters rather than brothers."[315] If Black Power meant the development of strength in the African-American community then it was a "quest for basic, necessary, legitimate power."[316] King conceded that Black Power sprang from a necessary urge of African-Americans to assert themselves. "Underneath [Black Power] it however, there is a legitimate concern that the Negro break away from ´´unconditional submission`` and thereby assert his own selfhood."[317] Paul Garber writes that King only rejected what was abrasive and counterproductive in Black Power but he embraced the economic and political dynamics it embodied.[318] Garber even concludes that King was a Black Power devotee without the slogan, and that the radical Black Theologians were his "strange disciples".[319] Yet King was willing to embrace the positive side of Black Power as long as it asserted Black Pride. If he had wholly rejected it, he would have alienated African-American youths.

> One must not overlook the positive value in calling the Negro to a new sense of manhood, to a deep feeling of racial pride and to an audacious appreciation of his heritage. The Negro must be grasped by a new realization of his dignity and worth. He must stand up amid a system that still oppresses him and develop an unassailable and majestic sense of his own value. He must no longer be ashamed of being black.[320]

Farmer also realized the necessity of propagating Black Power, "some form of nationalism is necessary and even healthy,…Like the nationalists, we must try to conquer the Negro sense of inferiority."[321]

In order to justify his conciliatory approach to the Black Power movement, King blamed "white America" for the emergence of Black Power. He called Black Power "a cry of disappointment…It was born of the wounds of despair and disappointment."[322] In King's book *Chaos or Community*, King wrote how during the Meredith March he perceived the change in mood of young African-Americans when they refused to sing the "hymn" of the movement: "we shall overcome" and someone suggested that they should sing "we shall overrun".[323] King pointed to Mississippi where the slogan first erupted and to its horrifying record of crimes against African-Americans:

> It is no accident that the birth of this slogan in the civil rights movement took place in Mississippi—the state symbolizing the most blatant abuse of white power. In Mississippi the murder of civil rights workers is still a popular pastime. In that state more than forty Negroes and whites have either been lynched or murdered over the last

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[315] Ibid. 40.
[316] Ibid. 38.
[317] Ibid. 40.
[318] Paul Garber, Black Theology: The Latter Day Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center 2 (Spring 1975), 100-13. Rpt in. *The Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith. 186.
[319] Paul Garber, King Was A Black Theologian, Journal of Religious Thought 31 (Fall-Winter, 1974-75), 16-32. Rpt. in *The Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith. 187.
[320] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 41.
[321] Meier, August, and Elliott Rudwick. CORE. 331.
[322] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 33.
[323] Ibid. 26.

> three years, and not a single man has been punished for these crimes. More than fifty Negro churches have been burned or bombed in Mississippi in the last two years, yet the bombers still walk the streets surrounded by the halo of adoration. This is white power in its most brutal, cold-blooded and vicious form.[324]

King not only sought to pacify the Black Power movement but also developed his own rhetoric of Black Pride. In the next cub-chapter, this study shows the importance of Back Pride to African-Americans.

1.8.2.) Black Pride and Non-violence

> The most striking aspect of the revolt, however, is the change in African-Americans themselves under Dr. King's leadership …. African-Americans have begun to think, to form positive opinions of themselves.[325] (Clarence White)

> Armed with self-dignity and personal worth, African-Americans were empowered to seek those goals conducive to social freedom.[326] (Ervin Smith)

As the author contends, one of the obstacles to the non-violent movement was the violent rhetoric of African-American militant leaders, like the Black Muslims or Black Power advocates who favored a more militant approach to the discrimination of African-Americans. These militants considered violence as the only solution; they rejected non-violence and continuously centered their speeches on the humiliation and suffering African-Americans experienced as a race in order to justify their militancy.

Many Black Power proponents were influenced by the black psychiatrist, Frantz Fanon, who had been a proponent of violent resistance and had traveled to Algeria to support the National Liberation Front (FLN) in its struggle against French colonialism. In his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon had come to the conclusion that only violence would allow the oppressed to overcome their "inferiority complex". "At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect."[327]

These militant leaders applied a rhetoric imbued with Black Pride which became such an eminent subject in the sixties so that it could not be ignored by non-violent leaders. As a racially oppressed people that had been collectively discriminated and racially stigmatized, African-

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[324] Ibid. 33.
[325] White, Clarence. Doctor Martin Luther King's Contribution to Education as a Black Leader (1929-1968) Ed.D. dissertation, Loyola University, Chicago, 1974 Rpt. in *Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith. 183.
[326] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 154.
[327] Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth, trans. Constance Farrington. New York: Grove Press, 1968. 94.

Americans endured racial humiliations that had a distressing influence on their "psyche", militants argued. For years racists and segregationists had brand marked African-Americans as inferior to whites in order to justify segregation. Many African-Americans related how racism and segregation caused them to accumulate a kind of destructive self-hatred, "the Negro suffers considerably in terms of self-esteem and has every incentive for self-hatred," writes Zanden.[328] Malcolm X equally accused white Americans of "brainwashing" African-Americans.

> Only the black man in America has been colonized mentally, his mind has been destroyed. And today, even though he goes to college, he comes out and still doesn't even know he is a black man; he is ashamed of what he is, because his culture has been destroyed; he has been made to hate his black skin, he has been made to hate the texture of his hair, he has been made to hate the features that God gave him.[329]

African-American militants argued that they had to transform their "blackness" from a negative to a positive self-perception. Whereas white critics, like Jim Sleeper, called on Americans to form a society beyond race, and white evasionists asked why African-Americans could not be color-blind,[330] African-American militants proudly embraced and emphasized their blackness and began to increasingly bring their identity as "African-Americans" to the fore.

In their quest for a new black image, many African-American militants rejected white values. Zanden contends that in order to compensate for their self-esteem, African-Americans had identified with "white values" in the past. He attributes the success of the African-American cosmetic industry, for example, to the considerable demand for skin bleaches and hair straighteners.[331] Malcolm X was popular in African-American communities for his angry rhetoric and his condemnation of the "white man", whom he held responsible for the African-American man's self-contempt. Self-affirmation by vilifying the opponent, who is deemed responsible for one's misery, worried non-violent leaders as it undermined their advocacy of non-violence.

> Who taught you to hate the color of your skin? Who taught you to hate the texture of your hair? Who taught you to hate the shape of your nose? Who taught you to hate yourself from the top of your heads to the soles of your feet? Who taught you to hate your own kind? Who taught you to hate the race you belong to so much that you don't want to be around each other?… You should ask yourself, who taught you to hate being what God gave you?[332]

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[328] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt.* Ed. James A.Geschwender. 138.
[329] Malcolm X. v. James Farmer: Separation v. Integration. Debate, Dialogue Magazine. *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 361.
[330] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 45.
[331] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt.* Ed. James A. Geschwender. 138.
[332] Strickland, William. Malcolm X, make it plain. text by William Strickland ; oral histories selected and edited by Cheryll Y. Greene ; with the Malcolm X Documentary Production Team; picture research by Michele McKenzie. New York: Viking, 1994. 223.

William Strickland writes that these questions had a liberating effect on African-Americans. "Before Malcolm, we knew we were not free, but we had an inferiority complex. We conked our hair, used bleaching creams on our skin, wore stocking caps to make our hair lie flat."[333]

This negative self-image even caused a split within the ranks of African-Americans themselves. King wrote how some African-Americans, particularly from the middle-class, looked condescendingly on other African-Americans and tried to imitate white people.

> This kind of Negro leader acquires the white man's contempt for the ordinary Negro. He is often more at home with the middle-class white than he is among his own people, and frequently his physical home is moved up and away from the ghetto. His language changes, his location changes, his income changes, and ultimately he changes from the representative of the Negro to the white man into the white man's representative to the Negro. The tragedy is that too often he does not recognize what has happened to him.[334]

King stated that African-Americans who "reject their heritage, are ashamed of their color, ashamed of black art and music who determine what is beautiful and good by the standards of white society…end up frustrated and without cultural roots."[335]

Black Pride was an important subject to African-Americans because segregation and racism caused them considerable psychological damage.

> For years the Negro has been taught that he is nobody, that his color is a sign of his biological depravity, that his being has been stamped with an indelible imprint of inferiority, that his whole history has been soiled with the filth of worthlessness. All too few people realize how slavery and racial segregation have scarred the soul and wounded the spirit of the black man.

contended King.[336] In order to understand this insistence on emphasizing blackness, one has to grasp that supremacists had stereotyped and projected blackness in a negative way. King wrote that Roget's Thesaurus offered 120 synonyms for blackness of which at least 60 were offensive whereas 134 synonyms were equated with whiteness that were all favorable. Whiteness stood for "purity", "cleanliness", "chastity" or "innocence", whereas blackness was associated with words such as "blot", "soot", "grime", "devil" and "foul".[337] Ossie Davis even suggested that the English language should have been "reconstructed" so that teachers would not be forced to teach the Negro child 60 ways to despise himself and thereby perpetuate his false sense of inferiority and the white child 134 ways to adore himself and thereby perpetuate his false sense of superiority.[338]

Killens accused American white culture of stereotyping African-Americans and pointed to various Hollywood films where African-Americans were always portrayed as inferior. He particularly attacked the portrayal of slaves in Hollywood films as a "carefree and contended"

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[333] Ibid. 222-223.
[334] King. Martin Luther, Jr. The Black Power Defined. June 11, 1967. http:..teachingamericanhistory.org.library.index.asp?document=1139
[335] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 53.
[336] Ibid. 38.
[337] Ibid. 41.
[338] Ibid.

people.[339] The *Autobiography of Malcolm X* offers another example of how African-Americans were influenced by this negative image. Malcolm X described how many African-Americans used to conk their hair so it resembled the hair of white people and how others preferred white women because they represented something "forbidden" to them.

The cry for Black Pride became a symbol of psychological resistance during the movement. The civil rights movement brought a generation of African-Americans to the fore who defiantly challenged and questioned the values of America. "But now, in the middle of the 20th century, I, the Negro, am refusing to be your "nigrah" any longer. Even some of us "favored," "talented," "unusual" ones are refusing to be your educated, sophisticated, split-leveled "nigrahs" any longer. We refuse to look at ourselves through the eyes of white America," wrote Killens.[340]

Many civil rights activists themselves spoke of the traumatic experience African-Americans suffered from as a people. "When African-Americans are told that they cannot work here, they cannot live there and are told to go back where they belong or that they will not serve Niggers, it affects one," said Diane Nash. Levy added: "… all this has a real effect on the Negro…. An organism must make some type of adjustment to its environment. The Negro, however, continues to deny consciously to himself, and to his children, that he is inferior. Yet each time he uses a ´´colored`` facility, he testifies to his inferiority."[341] Segregated facilities constantly humiliated African-Americans and reminded them of their "inferior status". Lawson commented that although physical lynchings had disappeared, there was still the "lynching of the soul", where whites stripped African-Americans of their human traits.[342]

This background is vital to understanding the importance and the surge of Black Pride rhetoric during the movement. The question of worth and esteem becomes all the more important when people are forcibly deprived of them. There was simply a "black inferiority complex" which non-violent leaders had to confront. The struggle for Black Pride could in particular affect the non-violent movement. The African-American sociologist E. Franklin Frazier, for example, deemed black self-respect so important that he rejected non-violence in the twenties and considered self-respect more important to African-Americans.[343] In his envisaged March on Washington, Randolph wanted to exclude whites because he feared that Communists would take over. He also felt that African-Americans needed to act independently of whites and show "group *pride*" and solidarity.[344]

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[339] O.Killens, John. "We Refuse to Look at Ourselves Through the Eyes of White America. *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 349.
[340] Ibid. 353.
[341] Diane Nash, "Interview". *Let freedom ring: a documentary history of the modern civil rights movement.* Ed. Peter B. Levy. 68.
[342] Lawson, Jr., James M. "We Are Trying to Raise the ´Moral Issue`". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 279.
[343] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 25-26.
[344] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 233.

Fredrickson asserts that Randolph wanted, like Gandhi, to restore pride and honor to African-Americans.[345]

To Greg Moses, psychological health, particularly to a people that have material misdistributions, is important.[346] King wrote that psychological freedom and a firm sense of self-esteem were the most powerful weapons against the "long night of physical slavery."[347] Cornel West asserts that given the overwhelming oppression and exploitation of African-Americans, self-assertion and somebodyness enacted by participation in forms of spiritual response in the African-American church, signified a sense of "homefullness" for an "exilic people."[348] Watley refers to the church as an institution that granted African-Americans, who functioned in a society in which their work was considered menial, their worth. "When one functions in a society in which one's work is considered menial, in which one's being is hardly recognized, and in which one's name is not even known, then where does one receive recognition,"[349]

It was therefore important for non-violent leaders to combine militancy and power with non-violent rhetoric. Non-violent leaders had to show African-Americans that they could achieve "self-respect" through non-violence and not through physical self-defense or violence. "Nonviolence had tremendous psychological importance to the Negro. He had to win and to vindicate his dignity in order to merit and enjoy self-esteem," wrote King.[350] If one analyses the rhetoric of the non-violent movement, one will find that non-violent leaders stressed the need of black self-respect, even if they voiced much more moderate statements on this subject. John Herbers confirms that the non-violent movement had a "strong element of black pride".[351] King stated, "…the Negro must throw off the manacles of self-abnegation and say to himself and the world: ´´I am somebody. I am a person I am a man with dignity and honor. I have a rich and noble history, however painful and exploited that history has been. I am black and comely.``"[352] "This self-affirmation is the black man's need made compelling by the white man's crimes against him. This is positive and necessary power for black people."[353] King affirmed the need for "somebodyness" in his writings: "This spirit, this drive, this rugged sense of somebodyness is the first and most vital step that the Negro must take in dealing with his dilemma."[354] Psychological freedom and a firm sense of self-esteem were the most

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[345] Ibid.
[346] Moses, Greg. Revolution Of Conscience. 152.
[347] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 43.
[348] West, Cornel. The Religious Foundations of the Thought of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 120.
[349] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 35.
[350] King, Martin Luther. Why we can't wait. 40.
[351] Herbers, John. The Black Dilemma. 51.
[352] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 43.
[353] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 43-44.
[354] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 123.

powerful weapons against the long night of physical slavery.[355] Young confirmed this belief, "Our movement was to change the relationship from one of fear and distrust to a relationship of respect and understanding."[356]

The most vocal advocate of Black Pride rhetoric however was Malcolm X who argued that African-Americans had to experience a psychological liberation that would enhance their position in American society and reclaim their personhood. Malcolm X and King differed on the question of Black Pride and whether it was to be established through violence or non-violence. Malcolm X held the view that African-Americans would gain more self-respect if they applied self-defense and culturally distanced themselves from America. Malcolm X criticized King and claimed that African-Americans could not love whites without loving themselves first. King on the other hand maintained that non-violent protest had ushered in psychological gains and granted self-respect to African-Americans. King sought to balance and reconcile non-violence with Black Pride. To King, Black Pride meant a healthy and positive feeling about oneself. He contended that religion would cause the African-American man to gain his self-respect and attributed the African-American man's new re-evaluation of himself to his religion.[357]

The Nation of Islam, on the other hand, stressed the need of self-respect and rejected America's religious and cultural values. Although the Black Muslim's religious views might not have attracted many African-Americans, their fearless and aggressive rhetoric, which centered on Black Pride, certainly had an impact on many African-Americans. Even King stated his admiration with regard to this aspect. Although King vehemently disagreed with of the philosophy of the Nation of Islam, he nevertheless admired their capacity to bestow African-American ex-criminals with "self-respect": "While I strongly disagree with their separatist black supremacy philosophy, I have nothing but admiration for what our Muslim brothers have done to rehabilitate ex-convicts, dope addicts and men and women who, through despair and self-hatred, have sunk to moral degeneracy."[358]

Some African-American protesters even regarded non-violence as a means to distance themselves from negative black stereotypes. Bell contends that although many activists joined CORE for various reasons one of them was to overcome stereotypes.

> There is a need to overcome the negative self-image that American society forces on every Negro. Reaction to the nonviolent doctrine and technique was strongly influenced by its effect on the Negro self-image. On the one hand, physical violence and verbal abuse are part of the negative stereotype of lower class Negro behavior, and

[355] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 113.
[356] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 77.
[357] King, Martin Luther. Speech at the Great March on Detroit. A Call to Conscience: The Landmark Speeches of Martin Luther King Jr. http:..www.stanford.edu.group.King.about_king.
[358] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 223.

> nonviolence provided an attractive alternative for those trying to overcome this image.[359]

Bell relies on interviews with CORE activists to show that many of them sought to dissociate themselves, through non-violence, from lower class behavior (violence).[360] African-American activists who thought they would not be able to control themselves if they were attacked or abused, surprisingly found themselves able to maintain control, which might be attributed to the fact that they were seeking to transcend their passivity.[361]

Yet the image of being perceived as cowardly while pursuing non-violent protest haunted many African-Americans. "Strength and militancy were terribly important to Negro CORE members, and given the basic assumptions of American culture, it was extremely difficult to cast these characteristics within a nonviolent mold."[362] African-American non-violent leaders had to focus on self-respect and dignity in order to sound more militant and attract followers. In order to compete with African-American nationalists who had quite an effect on African-Americans in the ghetto, King had to radicalize his rhetoric.

Walton contends that King's non-violent theory had a psychological impact on African-Americans as it gave them self-respect and personal worth.[٣٦٣] King argued that non-violence had a liberating effect on the African-American man's psyche. He contended that a new African-American man had emerged in the sixties and called him the "new Negro".

> The most important thing in this whole movement is what has happened to the Negro. For the first time, the Negro is on his own side. This has not always been true. But today the Negro is with himself. He has gained a new respect for himself. He believes in himself. World opinion is on his side. The law is on his side and as one columnist said, all the stars of heaven are on his side. It seems to be historically true that once an oppressed people rise up there is no stopping them short of complete freedom. The Negro is eternally through with segregation; he will never accept it again, in Mississippi, Georgia, or anywhere else.[364]

Non-violent leaders argued that only when African-Americans would recognize their own worth would they rise in protest. As the majority of African-Americans had acquiesced to segregation, they were not aware that if self-dignity and self-respect were generated, they would rise up against

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[359] Bell, Ingo Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 108.

[360] Ibid. 110.
Bell contends that African-American middle-class activists felt less threatened by the image of lower class violence compared to activists whose fathers were in lower class occupations. Therefore, many African-Americans from lower income houses accepted non-violence to dissociate themselves from stereotypes. Ibid. 111.

[361] Ibid. 113.

[362] Ibid. 109.

[363] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 77.

[364] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 325.
There were other factors, as Zanden writes, that changed the image of the black man, like the Supreme Court's antisegregation decisions and the emergence of African nations that created a new image for African-Americans so that accommodation to Jim Crow was no longer acceptable. Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt.* Ed. James A.Geschwender. 137.

segregation and racial discrimination.[365] King realized in Chicago, for example, that African-American slum dwellers were beaten down psychologically.[366] Activists noted that the ghetto was jammed with psychotic African-Americans who were forced into a violent way of life.[367] During the Chicago campaign, Bevel argued that the movement's goal was to "move people that they will not bow, that they will stand up and say to the whole city that they refuse to live in such houses, that they refuse to go to such schools—to say that they have been treated indecently and in inhuman ways—and that they will no longer stand for it."[368]

The African-American man's self-respect would be "at stake" if African-Americans did not stand up for their rights, stated King.[369] Non-violent leaders argued that the political victories the non-violent protest achieved, increased the African-American man's self-respect. Violence, on the other hand, would have been doomed to failure and would have only increased repression. Non-violent leaders even believed that Black Pride would awaken the African-American masses so that they would rise in protest against segregation. Vanden writes that there exists within minority groups the tendency to accept the dominant's group evaluations and conceptions of the minority.[370] African-American leaders had to convince "white Americans" that they were entitled to gain their rights as equal citizens, and therefore they had to convince African-Americans themselves that they were entitled to those rights and that they were entitled to protest in order to gain these rights. Sharp draws the same argument,

> If hierarchical systems exist in part because the subordinates submit as a result of seeing themselves as inferiors, the problem of how to change and end the hierarchical system becomes twofold: first, to get the members of the subordinate group to see themselves as full human beings, not inferiors to anyone, and second, to get them to behave in ways consistent with that enhanced view of themselves, i.e., to resist and defy the patterns of inferiority and subordination.[371]

"Some change of self-perception among at least certain members of the subordinate group must precede action … An improved self-image often must precede action against the stratified system."[372] Protest is preceded by a change of perception that occurs in the protester's psyche. "Not

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[365] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 452.
This is a statement by Bevel regarding the Chicago campaign where he particularly referred to the "people of the ghetto" who had to develop self-dignity and self-respect.
[366] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 112.
[367] Ibid.
[368] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest. 89.
[369] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 14.
[370] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt.* Ed. James A.Geschwender. 138.
[371] Sharp, Gene. The Politics Of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 784.
[372] Ibid.

every value entails rebellion, but every act of rebellion tacitly invokes a value," writes Camus,[373] which means that protest generated black self-respect, which in turn enhanced protest.

Sharp, Fredric Solomon and Jacob R. Fishman contend that by demonstrating non-violently and bravely, like the sit-in protesters for example, African-Americans destroyed stereotypes of the contended or violent African-Americans.[374] Black Pride, which African-Americans acquired through their non-violent protest, was presented as a proof of the efficiency of non-violent protest. Many civil rights activists pointed to a change of self-image that occurred during the movement. The success of non-violent protest, particularly that occurred until the mid-sixties, had a vital effect with regard to the maintenance of non-violence. The Black Pride movement grew proportionately to the protest movement. E.T. Hiller notices that self-esteem may arise from success. Lakey contends that even without success a non-violent protest would still help participants to develop self-confidence.[375] Although the Albany movement was considered a failure, Garrow contends that African-Americans benefited from the experience as it developed their self-esteem, their self-confidence and rendered them less afraid of "the white man's jail".[376]

There are many individual stories of protesters that attest to Black Pride gained after non-violent protest. A sit-in student recalls how his protest gave him a sense of manhood: "If it's possible to know what it means to have your soul cleansed-I felt pretty clean at that time. I probably felt better on that day than I've ever felt in my life…., and I felt as though I had gained my manhood, so to speak, and not only gained it, but had developed quite a lot of respect for it."[377] Another activist narrates the pride protesters experienced during the Selma campaign,

> But I know that when a community began to move, in the way that Selma moved, that Grenada moved, that I imagine Birmingham, Jackson, St. Augustine, Albany, etc. moved, then I think that for the people in the community it was very much what Chude was saying. That, it wasn't just that it was exciting and it was the place to be. There was a pride. I know that in Selma and in Grenada, which were the two big movements I was part of, there was enormous self-pride. ´´Look at what we have done. We have stood up. We have defied Jim Clark. We have defied Sugs Ingram ….. we have not only defied those individuals, we have defied this entire system that has held us down for our entire life. And I believe that the non-violent tactics of the Movement really contributed to that feeling, because we had defied and confronted the system,—and defeated it,—in a way that did not destroy our sense of humanity and feeling human, which I think violence would have.[378]

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[373] Camus, Albert. The Rebel. Vintage International Vintage Books A Division of Random House, Inc. New York 1991. 14.
[374] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three.717.
[375] Lakey, George. "The Sociological Mechanisms of Nonviolent Action." Duplicated M.A. thesis in Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, 1962. Published in Peace Research Reviews (Oakville, Ontario: Canadian Peace Research Institute), vol. II, no. 6, whole number, (Dec., 1968). Rpt. in *The Politics Of Nonviolent Action- Part Three*. Gene Sharp. 786.
[376] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 218.
[377] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 78.
[378] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm

African-American leaders narrated examples of African-Americans who protested and gained their self-respect in front of audiences. Farmer told an audience how a student leader desegregated a lunch counter in the South. “I myself desegregated a lunch counter, not somebody else, not some big man, some powerful man, but me, little me. I walked the picket line and I sat-in and the walls of segregation toppled. Now all people can eat there.”[379] Nash commented on the change she experienced after protesting,

> At one time, to have been called ´´nigger`` was a gross insult and hurt keenly. Within the movement, however, we came to a realization of our own worth. We began to see our role and our responsibility to our country and to our fellow men, so that to be called ´´nigger`` in the picket line, or anywhere, was now an unimportant thing that no longer produces in us that flinch…. Through the unity and purposefulness of the experience of the Nashville Negro, there was born a new awareness of himself as an individual. There was also born, on the part of whites, a new understanding and awareness of the Negro as a person to be considered and respected.[380]

After the Montgomery Boycott ended, Reverend Robert Greatez, who was the only white man involved in the leadership of the movement, read from the scripture on the night the Supreme Court declared segregation on buses as unconstitutional: “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood, as a child, I thought as a child.” Before he could finish there was an uproar and many women and men stood and wept. Greatez completed the sentence with difficulty: “… But when I became a man, I put away childish things.”[381] Lerone Bennett comments on that incident: “The Negro people had grown, tremendously;”[382]

During the first Freedom Rides of 1961, John Lewis, who was 21 years old at the time, explained that he volunteered for the Freedom Rides because human dignity was the most important thing in his life.[383] Students who had boycotted segregated stores in 1960 sported badges on their jackets that read, “I am wearing 1959 clothes with 1960 dignity.”[384]

Although Malcolm X decried non-violence and portrayed non-violent protesters as weak, non-violent protesters sought to prove the opposite. Smith writes, “What King and the movement he led have done for the psyche of the black person may be his most enduring legacy to human history.”[385]

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[379] Malcolm X. v. James Farmer: Separation v. Integration. Debate, Dialogue Magazine. *Negro Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 372.
[380] Diane Nash, "Interview". *Let freedom ring: a documentary history of the modern civil rights movement*. Ed. Peter B. Levy. 69-70.
[381] Bennett, Jr., Lerone. When the Man and the Hour Are Met. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* C. Eric.Lincoln. 31-32.
[382] Ibid.
[383] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 100.
[384] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 19.
[385] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 154.

1.9.) Black Mission

> It's up to you to free our teachers, our parents, yourself and our country.
> - A flyer distributed to students during the Birmingham campaign.[386]

Many African-American writers and intellectuals wrote about the Black Mission. During the civil rights movement non-violent leaders propagated the belief that African-Americans would "redeem the soul" of America. Only African-Americans could save America from her "tragic self-destruction in the quagmire of racial hate," stated King.[387] King also believed that African-Americans had a mission to fulfill and that African-Americans would introduce a new moral standard into American life.[388] In a television program with Niebuhr, James Baldwin stated that the suffering of African-Americans represented the only hope America had.[389]

Walton sees the African-American man's "saving" mission in America as the keystone of King's political edifice. Walton traces the belief in the "unique function" of the African-American man to affect American culture to the latter part of the nineteenth century. Du Bois and E. Franklin Frazier had also acknowledged the role of the black messianic redemption.[390] Particularly the messianic role of African-Americans was a recurring theme in Du Bois's works.[391] Jean Toomer, Countée Cullin, Langston Hughes and Nella Larsen had also envisioned this mission.[392] Walton states that many African-Americans even started to regard themselves as Christ-like. To him, this concept was born out of conditions of slavery and an ego defense mechanism.[393] The fact that African-Americans endured their misery testifies to their "mission". Killens stated:

> I am firmly convinced that the ultimate salvation of America is in the Negro…. To live castrated in a great white harem and yet somehow maintain his black manhood and his humanity - this is the essence of the new man created out of the Negro Invention. History may render the verdict that this was the greatest legacy handed to the New World by the West.[394]

In a television program after the Birmingham church bombings Niebuhr indirectly stated that the future of the country depended on African-Americans, "We are in a revolutionary situation …and all through history, it was a despised minority—the proletarians, the peasants, the poor–who

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[386] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 139.
[387] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 340.
[388] Ibid. 7. a. 31.
[389] Branch, Taylor. Parting The Waters. 895.
[390] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 31.
[391] Baldwin, Lewis. There Is a Balm in Gilead. 231.
[392] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 31.
[393] Ibid. 32.
[394] Killens, John O. We Refuse to Look at Ourselves Through the Eyes of White America. *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 356.

recaptured the heights and depth of faith. And the country itself choked in its own fat, as we are inclined to choke in our own fat."[395]

The Black Mission provided African-Americans with a "biblical character". To Lincoln, the African-American church perceived itself as the "an expression of the divine intent".[396] One of King's favorite sermons was about Moses and his people and their struggle against Pharaoh. Many African-Americans identified themselves with the people of Israel who were suffering from the tyranny of Pharaoh and regarded themselves as a God-loving people who practiced the true Christian faith. "Black Christians knew themselves to be God's black chosen—a prerogative to save and to deliver. If God could choose once, God could choose again," writes Lincoln.[397] British historian Arnold Tonybee writes that African Americans had rediscovered certain original meanings and values in Christianity that rendered them capable of injecting "a new spiritual dynamic into Western civilization."[398]

Bertrand Russel notes that all oppressed movements have found it necessary to claim moral superiority to justify that they have the same rights as others.[399] African-American non-violent leaders turned to this belief by relating it to non-violence. Jawaharlal Nehru also notes that non-violence gave Indians "an agreeable sense of moral superiority" over their opponents.[400] According to Bell, the glorification of the role of African-Americans countered "prevailing doubts about the Negro's human equality with claims to his moral superiority."[401] By claiming that whites were dependent on African-Americans and that they cannot save themselves, King granted African-Americans a feeling of superiority. "Since the white man's personality is greatly distorted by segregation, and his soul is greatly scarred, he needs the love of the Negro. The Negro must love the white man, because the white man needs his love to remove his tensions, insecurities and fears."[402] Walton writes that it became possible to look down on whites as being inhuman, morally inferior and as lacking Christian grace.[٤٠٣] King believed that the quality of African-American's scale of values was superior than that of the enslaving white culture.[404] The white man needed the African-American man to love him because racism distorted his soul. Fredrickson sees that the moral superiority which African-Americans exhibited through non-violence caused whites to regard them

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[395] Branch, Taylor. Parting The Waters. 895.
[396] Lincoln, C. Eric. Race, Religion, and the Counting American Dilemma. xxv.
[397] Ibid.70.
[398] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 29-30.
[399] Bell, Inge Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 37.
[400] Nehru, Jawaharlal. An Autobiography. New Edition London.: The Body Head, 1953. 70. Rpt. in *The Politics Of Nonviolent Action. Part Three.* Gene Sharp.786.
[401] Bell, Inge Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 37.
[402] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 6.
[403] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 32.
[404] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 41.

as equal. “Blacks, it seemed, could be regarded as equals only if they showed themselves to be morally superior to whites.”[405] Yet whether this assumption is correct or not, the Black Mission was vital in enhancing Black Pride in order to maintain adherence to non-violent protest. The Black Mission rhetoric was similar to the Black Pride philosophy which aimed at increasing the self-esteem of African-Americans who embraced non-violence.

Bell writes that there were African-American CORE activists who felt that they “outclassed” white segregationists by non-violent behavior.[406] Unlike Malcolm X, who viewed African liberation as a model for African-Americans and revolutions world wide, King preached that African-Americans were charged with the mission of liberating the world through their non-violent example. “The hard cold facts today indicate that the hope of the people of color in the world may well rest on the American Negro and his ability to reform the structure of racist imperialism from within and thereby turn the technology of the West to the task of liberating the world from want.”[407]

As the acceptance of non-violence presupposes the belief that one group of people is militarily weaker than their opponent, non-violent leaders must compensate for this “weakness” and portray non-violence in a way that attracts protesters. Besides glorifying non-violence, African-Americans also glorified themselves as being black. This glorification of African-Americans had begun even before African-Americans turned to non-violence in the civil rights movement. Sharp contends that when African-Americans were attacked during the riots of 1919 and they fought back, it increased their self-esteem. Yet non-violent advocates argued that non-violence would grant them more self-respect as it was placing them in a superior position. “However, there are indications that when the struggle is conducted by non-violent means the group will gain additional self-respect not only because they are struggling instead of submitting but also because they are acting with means which are seen to be ethically superior.”[408]

This glorification of African-American people or blackness reached its peak with the emergence of the Black Power movement and the Black Arts Movement. Whereas non-violent leaders glorified African-Americans because they applied non-violence, Black Power advocates rejected non-violence.

1.10.) Passivity of the South, Church and Religion

[405] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 260.
[406] Bell, Ingo Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 111.
[407] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 346.
[408] Sharp, Gene. The Politics Of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 786.

In this sub-chapter this study focuses on three aspects of southern African-American culture which had a non-violent influence on the movement. The author claims that a passiveness around the application of resistance permeated southern African-American culture, which facilitated the acceptance of non-violence. Further, the church and the convergence of African-American religious beliefs with King's non-violent philosophy enabled non-violent leaders to convince southern African-Americans of the protest method.

1.10.1.) Passivity of the South

In an environment of violence, oppressed groups might become inclined to reject non-violence. After New York riots King sent a team, led by Bevel and Young, to talk with African-American youth and convince them of the benefits of non-violence. Yet the hostility of African-Americans was immense, particularly against non-violence, so that SCLC staff members saw it wise not to mention the word.[409]

At the beginning of the civil rights movement, however, there were certain cultural factors that enabled King to preach Christian love and non-violence without alienating his audience. One can say that non-violence developed in a "passive" southern environment which contributed to the preservation of non-violence at that time. Although riots occasionally erupted, particularly in the North, the African-American masses did not turn to violence as a means of resistance in the South. Despite the tensions that existed between whites and African-Americans, the toll of "casualties" was relatively low compared to other deadlier conflicts.

Southern African-Americans had been passive in the sense that they did not apply violent resistance and that they complied with segregation prior to the start of the movement. The African-American churches were replete with a "passive" or "anesthetic" gospel.[410] Fredrickson confirms that the African-American churches did not have a history of social activism or militancy, at least not since the Reconstruction era.[411] Fredrick Douglass had noticed that many religious African-Americans had been under the delusion that God required them to submit to slavery's restrictions.[412] The perception of a good and loving God, which permeated the rhetoric of the movement, might appear as passive and defeating to an oppressed people, yet God and the African-American church had served as a source of condolences and hope for African-Americans for a long time. Shuttlesworth confirmed this passive atmosphere in southern America, "We have always been

[409] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 196-197.
[410] Baldwin, Lewis, V. There Is A Balm In Gilead. 180.
[411] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 262.
[412] Dyson, Michael Eric I May Not Get There With You. 125.

a peaceful people, bearing our oppression with super-human effort."[413] The anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker, who wrote a study on the effect of the African-American church on African-Americans in the South, once heard an African-American teacher admonish her class to love and told them that they must suffer like Jesus suffered.[414] It is even argued that African-Americans were fitted to experiment with non-violence because they had a long history of suffering without bitterness and because they had a rich religious heritage of which non-violence was a part.[415] Fredrickson writes that southern non-violence heavily drew on African-American folk Christianity and thus possessed "a comparable ethno-cultural authenticity".[416] "Negroes have been socialized generally in a tradition calling for the suppression of hostility and aggression toward whites, and also in a religious tradition stressing Christian love and tabooing hatred," argues Zanden.[417]

Unlike violent conflicts, non-violence erupted during a time when there was no real threat of violent resistance, particularly in the South. Vanden describes the status of southern African-Americans as a minority who were acclimated to segregation.[418] Many African-Americans literally believed in the Christian doctrine that it was sinful to hate.[419] Another example which shows the passivity of the South regarding political activism is that King repeatedly denounced African-American preachers who remained passive and preached a "come to Jesus" gospel. King contended that many African-American preachers were passive and criticized them for neglecting worldly affairs, merely contending themselves with preaching of heaven and hell.

> I'm sick and tired of seeing Negro preachers riding around in big cars and living in big houses and not concerned about the problems of the people who made it possible for them to get these things. It seems that I can hear the Almighty God say 'stop preaching your loud sermons and hoping your irrelevant mess in my face, for your hands are full of tar for the people that I sent you to serve,… and you are doing nothing but being concerned about yourself.'[420]

"Any religion that professes to be concerned with the souls of men and is not concerned with the slums that damn them, the economic conditions that strangle them, and the social conditions that cripple them is a dry-as-dust religion. Such a religion is the kind that Marxists like to see–an opiate of the people."[421] Fannie Lou Hamer also attacked African-American preachers who, in her opinion,

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[413] Fred L. Shuttlesworth and N. H. Smith, "The Birmingham Manifesto". *Let freedom ring: a documentary history of the modern civil rights movement*. Ed. Peter B. Levy. 108.
[414] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 419.
[415] Maybee, Carleton. Evolution of Nonviolence. *Strategies Of Protest.* Black Revolt. Doris Yvonne Wilkinson. 21.
[416] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 260.
[417] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt.* Ed. James A. Geschwender. 138.
[418] Ibid. 136.
[419] Ibid. 138.
[420] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 112.
[421] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 34.

had "sold out" to the white power structure and who had to be "dragged kicking and screaming into supporting the movement."[422]

To Rustin, Montgomery signaled "a revolution in the Negro church", which stopped preaching the "come to Jesus" gospel that had shaped the African-American church since 1910 and started focusing on social action.[423] Reddick confirms the passive atmosphere of what he calls "paternalism", which he claims reigned race relations in Montgomery,

> Race relations in Montgomery have traditionally been ´´good`` in the sense that Negroes have seldom challenged their state of subordination. The structure of the society was more or less set. Opposition seemed futile. Personal difficulties might be adjusted through some prominent Negro, who would speak with an influential white person. This was the established pattern of paternalism; and it did not disturb the status quo.[424]

Prior to 1960, SCLC had little impact as southern African-Americans were reluctant to embrace direct action, claims also Fairclough.[425]

One other fact that attests to a certain passivity in southern African-American communities is that Rev. Joseph H. Jackson, President of the National Baptist Convention, the largest of the African-American denominations, strongly opposed and condemned King's political activism. Personal tensions between the two men may have contributed to their mutual animosity and their different opinions on civil rights. Nevertheless Rev. Jackson imposed his anti-non-violent views on the members of the convention and shunned direct action.

Almost two decades before the start of the civil rights movement, Mays and Joseph Nicholson published a study in 1933 on the African-American church. In this study, they claimed that African-American religion was too other-worldly and should be concerned with actual social conditions.[426] The anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker, who spent twelve months from 1932 to 1934 in Indianola, Mississippi, confirmed this view:

> The Christianity of these Negroes is in essence quite different [from]…most local Whites today. Benevolent mercy rather than stern justice is the chief attribute of the Negro's God…The prevailing spirit of the religion preached is the great emphasis placed upon the Christian virtue of brotherly love. God says: "Love one another," and the Negro repeats the maxim wistfully. Again and again from the pulpit he is admonished to love his neighbors, black or white, to cease from unkind deeds, words, or thoughts. From the sentiments and comments of individuals who are religious it is

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[422] Marsh, Charles. God's long summer: stories of faith and civil rights. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999, 1997. 25.
[423] D'Emilio, John. Lost prophet: the life and times of Bayard Rustin. New York: Free Press, 2003. 226. a. 230.
[424] Reddick. L.D. The Bus Boycott in Montgomery. *Reporting Civil Rights*. 252.
[425] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 53.
[426] Morris Aldon D. A Man Prepared for the Times: A Sociological Analysis of the Leadership on Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the black freedom struggle.* Ed. Peter J. Albert. 52.

> plain that they strive to heed this precept, and to vanquish bitterness within their hearts.[427]

Nevertheless Dyson also calls to attention that the churches had nurtured defiance of white supremacy and that the African-American church had been greatly feared and hated by powerful whites. He refers to slave ministers like Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vessey, and Nat Turner who hatched revolts against slave masters.[428] These examples, however, were exceptions rather than the rule. Benjamin Mays, claims Dyson, was right when he claimed that "the antebellum Negro's idea of God ´´kept them submissive, humble and obedient.``"[429]

Although King instrumentalized black religion in the civil rights movement, black religion had a passive effect on African-Americans in the South prior to the movement. Black religion made African-Americans turn their minds from the suffering of this world to a world that exists after death, where they would be compensated.[430] Another reason that African-Americans in the South were passive was because of the intimidation and retaliation they faced when they resisted segregation. "Before the civil rights movement, few Southern African-Americans could be honest in public about white supremacy or black suffering and expect to live," writes Dyson.[431] Dyson notes that the only way African-Americans could survive long enough to rebel against segregation was "if they remained calm and absorbed the worst that whites could throw at them."[432] From this perspective, it seems that responding with Christian love was a wise choice as there was no other strategic alternative. Nevertheless the brilliancy of King and other non-violent leaders is that they preached Christian love and yet sounded credible and authentic to a large spectrum of Americans.

1.10.2.) Redefinition of the Church and the Social Gospel

Non-violent leaders like King combined religious beliefs with protest rhetoric. The non-violent movement succeeded in mobilizing African-Americans by relying on the centrality of the church in the lives of African-Americans. This sub-chapter elaborates the role of the church during the civil rights movement.

The Montgomery Boycott, which took place at the beginning of the civil rights movement, heralded an influential transformation of the role of the southern African-American church. The church expanded from its traditional function as a premise for worship, solely dealing with spiritual

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[427] Powdermaker, Hortense. After Freedom: A Cultural Study in the Deep South (1939); reprint, New York: Antheneum, 1969), 246-48. Rpt. in *To Redeem the Soul of America.* Adam Fairclough. 419.
[428] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 125.
[429] Ibid. 126.
[430] Ibid.
[431] Ibid. 107.
[432] Ibid. 108-109.

matters, and became socially and politically active within the movement. The church did not play an active role regarding the racial struggle in the movement prior to Montgomery. Most southern African-American preachers had eschewed raising racial questions. King, African-American activists and intellectuals had lamented the inefficacy of the African-American church with regard to social activism and influential African-American thinkers had demanded a more active role of the church into African-American life.

Walter Rauschenbusch was one of the most vocal proponents of instrumentalizing the church against segregation. Rauschenbusch advocated a social gospel and stated that the church represented the "incarnation of Christ" on earth. As "the organized conscience of Christendom", the church had therefore to "awaken to every undeserved suffering, bravest to speak against every wrong, and strongest to rally the moral forces of the community against everything that threatens the better life among men."[433] As the church was the guardian of morals in the community, it could not remain indifferent to the race question and had to engage in civil rights. African-American activists succeeded in mobilizing the masses, as the church had the most far-reaching influence on African-Americans in southern communities. Therefore, African-American preachers played a crucial role. Rauschenbusch and King argued that African-American preachers in particular had a unique responsibility. King's study of Rauschenbusch and his social gospel strengthened King in his belief that a religion which speaks of the "joys of heaven to the exclusion of human needs on earth is irrelevant," as he repeatedly claimed.[434] "A Christian preacher should have the prophetic insight which discerns and champions the right before other see it," stated Rauschenbusch.[435] This statement is echoed in King's writings,

> It's all right to talk about 'silver slippers over yonder,' but men need 'shoes' to wear down here. It's all right to talk about streets flowing with 'milk and honey' over yonder, but let's get some food to eat for people down here in Asia and Africa and South America and in our own nation who go to bed hungry at night. It's all right to talk about 'mansions in the sky', but I'm thinking about these ghettoes and slums right down here.[436]

King warned that if the church did not "capture its prophetic zeal", it would become "an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority."[437] During the civil rights movement, however, non-violent leaders transformed the African-American church from a passive institution into an active basis of protest. This may explain why African-American preachers did not face great difficulties with potential violent African-American protesters in the beginning as the protest

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[433] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 169.
[434] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 111.
[435] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 169.
[436] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 111.
[437] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 96.

originated in an "un-violent" culture. "The heart and soul of the movement–noncooperation with evil, coupled with love and forgiveness-simply exemplified the Southern blacks' faith in their church and their leaders' orthodox gospel of avoiding armed conflict." writes Sitkoff.[438]

Church and religion provided African-American ministers with the opportunity to morally justify their protest, which was made synonymous with carrying out religious duties. A movement needs "spiritual quality" argues Zinn, whether it is religion, yoga or emotionalism.[439] Fredrickson writes, "as prophet.saint [of] the movement, King was instrumental in making a moral and religious crusade, and not merely the self-interested action of a social group."[440]

Religious rhetoric enabled African-Americans to express many goals, writes Dyson.[441]Protesters feel that their demands are just when they combine religion and political demands. The church provided non-violent philosophy with a moral basis. Morris confirms this theory by writing, "The church provided black people with a moral outlook, social status, entertainment, and political organization, and it served as the main reservoir of black culture. The church was a community in itself. This is why Frazier referred to it as a nation within a nation…"[442]

Rauschenbush and King were not the only African-American leaders who envisaged a more active role for the church. According to Findlay, numerous religious activists had reiterated that the church should be at the forefront of the struggle and were encouraged by the emergence of Martin Luther King, who was himself a Baptist preacher.[443] Judge J. Waties Waring, for example, a member of the United States District Court in Charlestown, South Carolina, wrote back in 1950, "For a long time, I have been thinking that one of the most important approaches to the goal for ending racial segregation is through the churches."[444] Figures like Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, Bishop Alexander Walters, and the socialist preacher Reverend C. Ransom had sought to radicalize the church long before King was born.[445] Meier also contends that long before King and Abernathy, Powell had recognized the importance of the church as a force in the movement, using the loyalty African-Americans relied upon in their churches.[446]

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[438] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 59.
[439] Zinn, Howard. Commentary. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 83.
[440] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 271.
[441] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 129.
[442] Morris, Aldon D. A Man Prepared for the Times: A Sociological Analysis of the Leadership on Martin Luther King, Jr. - *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J Albert. 49.
[443] Findlay, James F. Title Church people in the struggle: the National Council of Churches and the Black freedom movement, 1950-1970. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. 20.
[444] Ibid. 16.
[445] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 126.
Dyson notes at the same time that the African-American church had been politically active role before, in the labor movement for example, or providing white unions with a place to meet.
[446] Drimmer, Melvin. Black history: a reappraisal. 440-441.

To Colaiaco, the church provided the "spiritual basis" for the non-violent protest in America.[447] "Through the influence of the Negro church, the way of non-violence became an integral part of our struggle," stated King.[448] The influence of the African-American church permeated the movement.[449] The church had been an influential component of African-American culture since slavery. "The black church is an institution where powerful cultural symbols are manipulated and artistically expressed," writes Morris.[450] Lincoln contends that there is no distinction between the African-American church and the African-American community. The church provided "the spiritual face of the black subculture."[451] King stated that there could be no improvement for African-Americans without the involvement of African-American churches.[452] The church represented a permanent institution within which African-Americans could make collective decisions and govern themselves.[453] Every southern city had relatively prosperous churches, writes Fredrickson, and many of these churches had a higher education facility for African-Americans.[454] Abernathy also emphasized the role of the church in the lives of African-Americans.

> In this church so many mothers and fathers, relatives, and friends of the members had accepted a new life in Christ and had received teachings and instructions which shaped and molded their personalities. In this church countless members had worshipped God, had toiled and labored and had been finally led to rest… It was the church of our forefathers; it was the church of many members and friends' grandparents; it was their parent' church; it was their church; …So many great preachers, freedom fighters, and statesmen had proclaimed the Gospel and declared the truth there;[455]

Leon Sullivan, an influential activist in the movement, contends that the influence exerted by leaders in the church was indispensable to the movement.[456] The fact that the leader of the Montgomery Boycott and the spiritual leader of the movement was a Baptist minister testifies to the influence of the church. The importance of the church to the movement became visible during the Montgomery Boycott and other influential campaigns, like Birmingham and Selma. "I am grateful to God that through the influence of the Negro church, the way of non-violence became an integral part of our struggle," said King.[457] King stated that he and his associates wanted to channel the religious fervor and spiritual energy of the church into militant non-violent action during the

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[447] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 7.
[448] Ibid.
[449] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 418.
[450] Morris Aldon D. A Man Prepared for the Times: A Sociological Analysis of the Leadership on Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 49. and 50.
[451] Lincoln, C. Eric. Race, Religion, and the Counting American Dilemma. 96.
[452] Baldwin, Lewis V. There Is a Balm in Gilead. 174.
[453] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 261.
[454] Ibid. 270.
[455] Abernathy, Ralph David. The Nonviolent Movement. *Black Life and Culture in the United States*, Rhoda L. Blumberg. New York: Crowell, 1971. 195.
[456] Lincoln, C. Eric. Race, Religion, and the Counting American Dilemma. 101.
[457] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 177-178.

Montgomery Boycott.[458] He acknowledged the influence of the church and the spirit of Christ on non-violence. "I am happy to say that the non-violent movement in America has not come from secular forces but from the heart of the Negro church."[459] Fairclough confirms the influence of the African-American church although he states that the African-American church was neither monolithic nor univocal.[460]

On the other hand there are opinions that undermine the importance of the church to the movement. A large number of preachers, possibly a majority, writes Fredrickson, did not lend their support to the movement.[461] Walker estimated that no more than ten percent of the African-American clergy had been active in the civil rights struggle. Only about 20 of the city's 250 ministers participated in the Birmingham protest for example. Walker stated however:

> In both the Negro and white community, the Negro church has often been made a joke, but the fact is that it's the most organized thing in he Negro's life. Whatever you want to do in the Negro community, whether it's selling Easter Seals or organizing a non-violent campaign, you've got to do it through the Negro church, or it doesn't get done.[462]

Joseph R. Washington Jr. also claims that the African-American ministers and churches that were active in the struggle were more of an exception than a rule.[463] Yet the influence of ministers was echoed throughout the movement. Newman writes that although most churches did not participate in the movement, members of their congregations shamed and pressured their pastors to action.[464] McAdam notes that in the period from 1955-1960 of 487 movement-generated actions, 50 percent were organized by church, campus-based groups or local chapters of the NAACP.[465]

Meier, on the other hand, holds the opinion that the role of the church was exaggerated and dismisses Morris's emphasis on the influence of the church on the protest. Another skeptic of the church's role during the movement is Robert Cook. He notes that many direct action campaigns, like the Montgomery bus boycott, the sit-ins, the Freedom Rides and the Mississippi Summer Project and civil rights campaigns had not been launched by the church.[466]

There were certainly many grass-roots protest actions organized outside the realm of the church. Nevertheless the church proved indispensable as a gathering location and as a psychological driving force, particularly in Montgomery and during the Mississippi Summer Project, for example. SCLC

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[458] Ibid. 178.
[459] Ibid.
[460] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 416-417.
[461] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 262.
[462] William Brink and Louis Harris, The Negro revolution in America. New York: Simon and Shuster, 1964. 165. Rpt. in *The politics of God.* Joseph R Washington. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967. 83.
[463] Ibid. 83.
[464] Newman, Mark. The civil rights movement. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2004. 164.
[465] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 125-126.
[466] Newman, Mark. The Civil Rights Movement. 165.
Although the the church did not launch the Montgomery bus boycott yet African-American clergymen played a crucial role in the boycott and the church provided necessary meeting places and provided encouragement for the protesters.

drew on local church networks that provided meeting places.[467] The church also functioned as a recruitment location for protesters, "The invitational periods at the mass meetings, when we asked for volunteers, were much like those invitational periods that occur every Sunday morning in Negro churches, when the pastor projects the call to those present to join the church. By twenties and thirties and forties, people came forward to join the army," wrote King.[468]

Walker pointed to the importance of the church as a meeting location in the South,

> The church today is central to the movement. If a Negro's going to have a meeting, where's he going to have it? Mostly he doesn't have a Masonic lodge, and he's not going to get the public schools. And the church is the primary means of communication, far ahead of the second best, which is the Negro barbershop and beauty parlor. There is no way to tell what would have happened to the Negro if he had not had the church. I will say flatly that if there had been no Negro church, there would have been no civil rights movement today.[469]

African-Americans were recruited and trained in the church. The church served as the organizational structure of the Montgomery Boycott and provided a gathering location for protesters who waited for car-rides. It was a meeting place for the African-American community and civil rights leaders to discuss upcoming plans and strategies. As communication plays a vital role in a protest movement, the church became crucial since African-Americans did not have their own radio station or a widely read black newspaper.[470] The church was also a location where African-Americans could donate money to the movement. During the Montgomery Boycott the church raised most of the funds that enabled the car pool to function as a replacement for buses. The church organized religious, social, economic, political and cultural activities and provided African-Americans with an independence from white domination.[471] Given the facts of black political and social life in the South, black clergy and the black church played a central role in the movement, writes Fredrickson.[472]

SCLC itself was a church-based organization. Charles Morgan, a white lawyer from Alabama who served on the board of directors of SCLC, told a reporter that the organization resembled a church, led by African-American ministers. It clothed its statements and actions in biblical phraseology.[473] The role of the church was so influential that some churches were chosen as targets by white racists, like a church in Birmingham where four girls were killed or in southwest Georgia where four churches were burned to the ground in 1962. In Montgomery four churches were

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[467] Ibid.
[468] King, Martin Luther. Why we can' wait. 62.
SCLC had always sought to recruit African-Americans in the church. It did not recruit African-Americans who shunned the church and frequented bars, pool halls and street corners. Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 197.
[469] William Brink and Louis Harris, The Negro revolution in America. New York: Simon and Shuster, 1964. 101. Rpt in. *The Politics of God.* Joseph R. Washington Jr. 83- 84.
[470] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 179.
[471] Ibid.
[472] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 261.
[473] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 1.

bombed after segregation on buses was declared unconstitutional. One could say that the church became a symbol of the civil rights movement.

The church also proved vital for psychological preparation of protesters. Ansbro contends that the church "prepared African-Americans for a practical commitment to non-violence by its emphasis on the dignity of the self, the value of sacrificial love, the merit of unearned suffering as exemplified in the life of Jesus, and the reality of a personal God Who demands righteousness and seeks justice for His children."[474] Ansbro states further: "During the Montgomery Boycott the Negro Church revealed its effectiveness as an agent for nonviolent protest. … Furthermore, the churches were a source of special inspiration for the black community when black when scores of ministers were arrested for their role in the boycott."[475]

Mass meetings in churches were necessary for group morale. Non-violent leaders had to maintain a difficult balance of arousing their listeners to protest and yet remain non-violent. No other halls would have been at the disposal of African-American activists.[476] The church proved indispensable to psychological preparation regarding the continuation of the struggle and provided protesters with hope and encouragement. During the summer of 1963, there was a massive vote registration campaign in the South where activists visited African-American workers on the fields in order to encourage them to vote. They organized meetings to discuss their strategies. Charles Marsh notes that the "spiritually and psychologically transformative power" of these meetings "left the deepest impression of those gathered in the rural churches throughout the Delta. The language of the Gospel gave the local movement an indefatigable urgency and depth by placing black people's struggle for justice in a familiar and beloved narrative."[477] These meetings were even referred to as powerful social rituals.[478] One African-American activist remarked: "These meetings were Church, and for some who had grown disillusioned with Christian worldliness, they were better than church."[479] During the Montgomery Boycott a white journalist was impressed by the passion of church meetings as thousand of voices joined in singing "Onward, Christian soldier".[480] According to Marsh, the gospel had an energetic effect on the people in Mississippi for example where SNCC meetings on voter registrations resembled church meetings. A SNCC staff member described the impact the gospel had on him: "The religious, the spiritual was like an explosion to me, an emotional explosion…. It just lit up my mind."[481]

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[474] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 178.
[475] Ibid. 179.
[476] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 261.
[477] Marsh, Charles. God's Long Summer. 26.
[478] Ibid.
[479] Ibid. 27.
[480] Azbell, Joe. At Holt Street Baptist Church. *Reporting Civil Rights*. 229.
[481] Marsh, Charles. God's Long Summer. 26.

African-American ministers played a particular role in the movement. Apart from the fact that ministers provided respectability to the movement, African-American preachers had a huge influence on their communities. From the beginning of the movement in Montgomery, African-American preachers and ministers played a crucial role in mobilizing African-Americans and served as spokespersons and representatives of their community. African-American preachers could afford to remain independent of the power of southern whites, unlike other African-American citizens who were financially bound to white employers or institutions. The blend of non-violence with religion granted African-American preachers credibility when they invoked civil rights. Fairclough contends that politicians, like Rufus Lewis, E.D. Nixon and Jo Ann Robinson, gave power to the civil rights movement,[482] yet it was a clergyman like King who managed to attract such a large number of people through his blending of faith with direct action.

Even before King, African-American thinkers like Du Bois and James Weldon Johnson had called on African-American preachers to become politically involved against racism and segregation. Johnson described the African-American preacher as a "master of all modes of eloquence" and Du Bois called him "one who rudely but picturesquely expressed the longing, disappointment, and resentment of a stolen and oppressed people."[483] To Rauschenbush, a preacher had the mission of opening the eyes of the people to social questions.[484] The African-American preacher has played a vital social role throughout African-American history. As a preacher, King was a part of a tradition of African-American religious activists, like Nat Turner, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. or Elijah Muhammad. Born in Atlanta, Georgia, King was the son of a Baptist preacher, Martin Luther King, Sr. and his brother, Reverend Alfred Daniel Williams King, was a preacher. Both his father and brother were also involved in the civil rights movement. King primarily perceived himself as a Baptist preacher.[485] It is from this position that he rose to become the non-violent leader of the movement. The impact King and other preachers had on their congregations, the large gatherings at churches before marches, pray-ins and the gospel King and other African-American ministers preached, indicate how religiously motivated African-Americans had been during the movement. The fact that King was a popular speaker who was invited to speak at universities and gatherings shows that his speeches had great resonance in America.

Morris states that in church the preacher is the main manipulator of symbols that inspire, criticize, and soothe the African-American masses.[486] During the civil rights movement, African-

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[482] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 15.
[483] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 33.
[484] Smith, Ervin. The Ethics of Martin Luther King. 136.
[485] Ibid.135.
[486] Morris Aldon D. A Man Prepared for the Times: A Sociological Analysis of the Leadership on Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 50.

American preachers led marches, prayer vigils, boycotts and other protest activities. Boycotts in Baton Rouge, Montgomery and Tallahassee were led by ministers. From the beginning of the Montgomery movement King and other activists urged African-American preachers to promote values of "freedom and justice" from their pulpit to the people.[487] In Birmingham King addressed more than one hundred preachers and rebuked them for driving big cars and for living in big houses and not engaging in civil rights. "If you can't stand up with your people, you are not fit to be a preacher."[488] Fredrickson contends that pressure arose from within communities that only ministers were in a position to provide.[489] As such, African-American preachers had a far-reaching and mobilizing influence on the African-American masses.

1.10.3.) Religion and Protest

Religion can be a strong unifying factor for protesters who share religious beliefs. This unification can be facilitated by leaders who clothe political demands in religious rhetoric. Unlike other conflicts, resistance leaders in the movement turned to religion to foster non-violence instead of violence. The riots and the violence that broke out in the sixties were not religiously motivated as in other conflicts, for example. Non-violent leaders succeeded in convincing African-American protesters of non-violence as they instrumentalized African-American religious beliefs and identified these beliefs with non-violent protest for mainly two reasons: 1.) southern African-Americans were a religious people, 2.) non-violent philosophy had similarities with African-American religious beliefs.

Many analysts agree that King was particularly influenced by black religion which can be seen in his philosophy. Watley emphasizes the influence of black religion on King.[490] King's beliefs were inherited from the African-American church.[491] Although African-American activists were criticized by segregationists, like Governor Ernest F. Hollings of South Carolina for example, for "exploiting" religion.[492] Religion remained the driving force for many protesters, as shown in this sub-chapter. African-Americans identified themselves with peoples in the Bible and equated protest with religious duties. King claimed that a Christian should always be challenged by an unfair

[487] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 32.
[488] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 119.
[489] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 262.
[490] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 17.
[491] Baldwin, Lewis V. There Is a Balm in Gilead. 168.
[492] Governor Hollings remarked with regard to protesters: "They think they can violate any law, especially if they have a Bible in their hands." Lynd, Staughton. Nonviolence in America. 401.

treatment of the poor, for "Christianity itself is a protest".[493] He defended his blend of non-violence with religion by emphasizing the social aspects of the Christian faith. "I can see no conflict between our devotion to Jesus Christ and our present action. In fact I see a necessary relationship. If one is truly devoted to the religion of Jesus he will seek to rid the earth of social evils. The gospel is social as well as personal."[494]

King's non-violent philosophy was more popular among African-Americans in the South than in the North.[495] Montgomery, for example, was a small southern town with a religious people who regularly visited the church and had respect for their pastors. Many northern African-Americans, on the other hand, identified non-violence with the "docile Negro". Besides, African-Americans in the North did not visit the church as regularly as African-Americans in the South, which means that they were less eager to embrace a Christian philosophy of non-violence, confirms Baldwin.[496] There is a difference between preaching non-violence in Montgomery and Chicago, for example.

Despite of the importance of religion to the movement, there were other organizations, like SNCC and CORE that relied more on non-violent action than on the blend of religion with non-violence. However, it was the church-based SCLC that refused to abandon non-violence at a time when SNCC and CORE rejected non-violence and adopted Black Power. Without the blending of religion with non-violence, non-violence would have been just a pragmatic tool that would have been a means to a specific end. A non-violent movement based on faith and religious rhetoric seems more justified to public opinion than a movement relying on non-violence solely as a strategy. The blend of non-violence with religion and culture, the instrumentalization of the church and the non-violent indoctrination of protesters also played a huge role with regard to the maintenance of non-violence, particularly since the non-violent movement lasted for almost thirteen years.

Non-violent leaders referred to non-violence as "Christian" non-violence.[497] The fact that the movement was imbued with the word "Christian" testifies to the importance of religion. The Montgomery Boycott for instance was described as a Christian movement. The names of various organizations involved in the struggle shows the deep religiosity of southern African-Americans, like the Massachusetts *Christian* Leadership Conference, the Alabama *Christian* Movement for Human Rights, the Southern *Christian* Leadership Conference, the Nashville *Christian* Leadership Council or the United *Christian* Movement Inc. in Shreveport, Louisiana and the Baton Rouge *Christian* Movement. These organizations were mainly led by ministers and churches and were

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[493] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 86.
[494] Garrow, David. Bearing the Cross. 29.
[495] Bell also contends that non-violence was questioned more by CORE members in the north. Bell, Ingo Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 114.
[496] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 149.
[497] Lawson, Jr., James M. "We Are Trying to Raise the ´Moral Issue`". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 280.

inspired by non-violence. This importance of religion to the movement can also be seen in the titles of some studies on the civil rights movement, like Fairclough's *To Redeem the Soul of America* or Garrow's *Bearing the Cross*.

Clayborne Carson, Professor of History at Stanford University and director of the Martin Luther King Papers Project, affirms that most recent studies on King emphasize the extent to which his ideas were rooted in the black religious traditions.[498] Dyson contends that King skillfully molded the moral energy of mainstream black religion into a prophetic stance against oppression.[499] "His brilliant public use of rhetoric inspired by religion allowed him to forge a style of communication that was doubly useful, satisfying the demands of civil rhetoric while meeting the spiritual needs of his black brothers and sisters."[500] Hanigan claims that the basis of King's commitment was found in his religious faith.[501] Harding, who played an active role during the civil rights movement, writes: "I have felt a renewed urgency to emphasize the role of religion and spirituality in our freedom struggle."[502] The extensive array of religious images, prayers, songs and Bible stories was crucial to the emergence of the movement. Jasper writes that these factors virtually created unanimous African-American support for the boycott in Montgomery.[503]

Religion was at the center of African-American life and culture and King was well aware of this fact.[504] Religion is deeply anchored in the African-American psyche: "religion is never far from the threshold of consciousness, for whether it is embraced with fervor or rejected with disdain, it is the focal element of the black experience," writes Lincoln.[505] In a speech in 1963 King claimed, "The great principles of love and justice which stand at the center of the non-violent movement are deeply rooted in our Judeo-Christian heritage."[506] Rustin referred to the people of Montgomery as "basically religious". When King would say to them "as sure as Moses got the children of Israel across the Red Sea, we can stick together and win…he had the ability to communicate victory, and let everybody know he was prepared to pay for victory."[507]

Black religion was important to African-Americans as it grew out of the African-American experience which reflected the "peculiar experience, concerns, and exigencies of the human

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[498] Carson, Clayborne. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the African-American Social Gospel. In African-American Christianity, edited by Paul E. Johnson, 159-177. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. Reprinted African-American Religion: Interpretive Essays in History and Culture, ed. by Timothy E. Fulop and Albert J. Raboteau. New York: Routledge, 1997. http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/additional_resources/articles/gospel.htm
[499] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 124.
[500] Ibid. 128.
[501] Hanigan, James P. Martin Luther King, Jr. And the foundations of nonviolence. 18.
[502] Harding, Vincent. There is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America. New York and London: Harcourt, Brace. Jovanovich, 1981. xxiii.
[503] Jasper, James M. The Art of Moral Protest. 256.
[504] Baldwin, Lewis V. There Is a Balm in Gilead. 175.
[505] Lincoln, C.Eric. Race, Religion, and the Counting American Dilemma. xxiv.
[506] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 12.
[507] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 56.

condition."[508] It is important to note that King succeeded in blending non-violence with religion without transforming the core beliefs of black religion. As Dyson notes, King and his comrades poured "new wine into old wineskins, but they were, even more ingeniously, using new wineskins to transport the old wine."[509] King's vision of the Beloved Community was nurtured in the black church tradition. "The universal themes of forgiveness, reconciliation and hope that characterized King's vision of the beloved community have always been fundamental to the black community in general, and the black church in particular," writes William E. Fluker.[510] Timothy Smith confirms this in his statement, "The touchstones of the personal religious experience of Black Christians in nineteenth-century America …seem to me to have been first, forgiveness, awe and ecstasy, then self-respect, ethical awareness and hope."[511] These touchstones were at the core of King's non-violent philosophy.

The rhetoric of King was filled with biblical themes of justice, deliverance, liberation and a "dissenting tradition", claims D. Luther Ivory.[512] Sitkoff writes that the Montgomery movement had been entirely Christian, "The fervor with which the MIA practiced passive resistance sprang from the religious fundamentalism of the Black Belt."[513] King described African-Americans during the Montgomery Boycott as "walking to work and praising the Lord.[514] He depicted civil rights demonstrators as the "true sons of faith."[515] James M. Washington remarks that the spirituality of the movement "begged for our attention".[516]

McAdam, however, does not regard the adherence to Judeo-Christian values as the main motivation factor for the involvement of so many church goers or religious African-Americans in the protest. McAdam instead emphasizes the role of institutions acting as recruiters of participants.[517] Nevertheless the importance of the church to campaigns like Montgomery or Birmingham is indispensable. Although many youth activists were recruited outside the churches, one should not overlook the fact that the church represented a moral authority which provided the protest with credibility. This is what Fredrickson states, "What King did … was to fuse a black folk Christianity that was his own heritage with the Gandhian conception of nonviolent resistance to define a cause that stirred the soul of its followers and disarmed the opposition of many whites."[518]

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[508] Lincoln, C.Eric. Race, Religion, and the Counting American Dilemma. xxiii.
[509] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 107.
[510] Fluker, Walter E. They looked for a city - a comparative analysis of the ideal of community in the thought of Howard Thurman and Martin Luther King, jr. Lanham, Md.:. Univ. Press of America, 1989. 113.
[511] Ibid.
[512] Ivory, Luther D. Toward A Theology Of Radical Involvement- The Theological Of Martin Luther King Jr. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997. 35.
[513] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 59.
[514] Lomax, Louis E. To Kill A Black Man. Los Angeles, California: Holloway House Publishing Co, 1987. 42.
[515] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 141.
[516] Marsh, Charles. God's Long Summers. 5.
[517] Mc Adam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970. 128-129.
[518] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 272.

Many church-goers took for granted that they would become involved in protest actions. “Many Negroes…were involved in the movement out of a strong moral conviction. Sharecroppers, poor people, would come to the mass meetings, because they were in the church,” stated activist Lewis.[519] King advocated a socio-political interpretation of Christian beliefs that obliged African-Americans to become politically involved and contended that this political commitment represented “true faith”. Religion increased the willingness of protesters to become involved in the movement. Going to church was made synonymous with going to mass meetings in Montgomery. “It was their [the black church members’] religious duty not only to go to church, visit the sick, and to pray, but they must attend the mass meetings. To the Negro of Montgomery, Christianity and boycott went hand in hand, writes Norman Walton.[520] Nash described the sit-ins as “applied religion”.[521] The mass meetings were an extension of Sunday services.[522] Religious activists like Hamer referred to protest as a demonstration of faith,

> People need to be serious about their faith in the Lord; it’s all too easy to say, ´´Sure, ´I’m a Christian,`` and talk a big game. But if you’re not putting that claim to the test, where the rubber meets the road, then it’s high time to stop talking about being a Christian. You can pray until you faint but if you’re not gonna get up and do something, God is not gonna put it in your lap.[523]

This religious fervor was also present in the non-violent movement of South Africa in the fifties. Although religion did not play as big a role during non-violent resistance in South Africa as it did in the US civil rights movement, historian Tom Lodge writes that a religious fervor infused the resistance in Eastern Cape. He states, “Prayer, hymn, singing, and nightly church services helped to give courage and determination to the resisters, and ´´the verbal imagery of the campaign involved ideas of sacrifice, martyrdom, and the triumph of justice and truth.```,[524]

Many demonstrators during the civil rights movement stated that their faith encouraged them to continue to protest non-violently. “I don’t know what motivated us to march on, but it certainly wasn’t cheekiness. It was closer to faith and the determined belief that “the Lord will make a way out of noway”.[525] Lewis narrated how he was influenced by King, who used “emotionalism within religion to make it do something else for people, and that had an impact.”[526] During a march where African-Americans were attacked, Young remembered, “I began to understand what it meant to ´´walk through the valley of the shadow of death … (and) fear no evil.``(Ps.23:4 kjv).”[527]

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[519] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970. 129.
[520] Ibid.
[521] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 2.
[522] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 129-130.
[523] Marsh, Charles. God’s Long Summer. 25.
[524] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 247.
[525] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi’s Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 81.
[526] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 73.
[527] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi’s Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 80.

The rhetoric of the civil rights movement was filled with biblical symbolism. The position of African-Americans as an oppressed group fitted in the image of the oppressed peoples of the Bible. This is an excerpt of a sermon by King to illustrate the identification of African-Americans with the Bible.

> There is nothing wrong with marching in this sense. (*Yes, sir*) The Bible tells us that the mighty men of Joshua merely walked about the walled city of Jericho (*Yes*) and the barriers to freedom came tumbling down. (*Yes, sir*) I like that old Negro spiritual, (*Yes, sir*) "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho." In its simple, yet colorful, depiction (*Yes, sir*) of that great moment in biblical history, it tells us that:
>
> Joshua fit the battle of Jericho, (*Tell it*)
>
> Joshua fit the battle of Jericho, (*Yes, sir*)
>
> And the walls come tumbling down. (*Yes, sir. Tell it*)
>
> Up to the walls of Jericho they marched, spear in hand. (*Yes, sir*)
>
> "Go blow them ramhorns," Joshua cried,
>
> "'Cause the battle am in my hand." (*Yes, sir*)[528]

Many protest leaders quoted the Bible during campaigns and demonstrations. They perceived the conflict from a biblical perspective. Smith writes, "Exodus supplied King with the metaphorical language which allowed him to interpret black experience, just as the black experience allowed him to understand something of what it must have been like in Egypt under Pharaoh."[529] The Exodus-Liberation theme pervaded the entire African-American church.[530] Jasper contends that songs like *Onward Christian Soldier* lent biblical authority to a campaign.[531] King often utilized the image of the evil Pharaoh and the people of Israel and identified African-Americans with the latter. He compared Western civilization to the prodigal son that has "strayed away to the far country of colonialism and imperialism."[٥٣٢] He also compared himself to the Apostle Paul who left his village to spread the message of God and drew on the theme of Joshua and the battle of Jericho to show God's support for "his people".[533] Smith and Zepp Jr. identify the prophetic model in most of his speeches and writings.[534]

Hoyt claims that King interpreted the scriptures to relate to the problems of America in the sixties, "His method was to retell the story which would force the oppressors to again hear the sound of freedom and cause the oppressed to experience hope and motivation for the pursuance of

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[528] King, Martin Luther. Our God Is Marching On. A Call to Conscience: The Landmark Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.25 March 1965.
http:..www.stanford.edu.group.King.publications.speeches.Our_God_is_marching_on.html
[529] Smith, Ervin. The Ethics of Martin Luther King. 181.
[530] Ibid. 187. – See also Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 69.
Joseph E. Lowery emphassized the influence of the "liberating gospel" and the identification with the biblical Israelites.
[531] Jasper, James M. The Art of Moral Protest. 193.
[532] Iller, William Robert. The Broadening Horizon. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* C. Eric Lincoln. 53.
[533] Baldwin, Lewis V. There Is a Balm in Gilead. 169.
[534] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 39.

freedom."[535] Garber regards King's work as having rekindled the faith of the Black Fathers and the Black Church through his struggle for liberation.[536] King developed a liberation theology that was different from Black Theology as it was then known to African-Americans, writes Garber.[537]

Another factor that shows the importance of religion in the movement was the significance accorded to prayers. Prayers in particular were a "great sustainer of hope" during the movement, stated Coretta King.[538] Pray-ins or kneel-ins were protest strategies applied during the movement. Protesters kneeled down and prayed before white churches for example. According to Coretta King, prayers helped African-Americans bear the suffering they experienced,

> As a young child growing up in Marion, Alabama, I remember my pastor at Mt. Tabor Church responding to the racial abuse of one of our congregation by saying, 'God loves us all, and people will reap what they sow… So just keep on praying. Don't worry. God will straighten things out.' I believed he was right then, and I believe it still.[539]

King himself described the impact of praying on his life. His "kitchen experience" and his recurrence to praying before taking strategic decisions offer an example.[540] "Prayer was as much a part of the King-led campaign as were the strategy sessions," writes Watley.[541] Prayer was an integral component of church meetings that aimed to increase the morale of the people. Protesters in particular interacted with prayers. They responded to these prayers by interrupting the speeches of ministers saying "yeas" and "uh-huhs" and "that's right".[542] West contends that the church, prayer and African-American preachers played an influential role given the depressing condition of African-Americans. "People's lives hang on those performances. This is one of the reasons why the black church is so histrionic and performative."[543]

1.10.4.) A Non-violent God

> It can only be done when we allow the energy of God to be let loose in our souls. May we go out today big in faith.

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[535] Thomas Hoyt, Jr. The Biblical Tradition of the Poor and Martin Luther King, Jr., Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center 4 (Spring 1977), 12-32. Rpt. in *The Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith.189.
[536] Paul Garber, Black Theology: The Latter Day Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center 2 (Spring 1975), 100-13, Rpt. in *The Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith. 187.
[537] Ibid.
[538] King, Coretta Scott. How We Open Our Heart to God. Beliefnet. January 2004. http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Christianity/2004/01/How-We-Open-Our-Hearts-To-God.aspx
[539] Ibid.
[540] King often narrated in his speeches how during the Montgomery Boycott he feared for his life and the life of his family. Yet when he prayed in the kitchen of his home in Montgomery, he was reassured in his belief to continue the protest.
[541] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 24.
[542] Azbell. Joe. At Holt Street Baptist Church. *Reporting civil rights*. 229.
[543] West. Cornel.The Religious Foundations of the Thought of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 121.

-King preaches at Ebenezer on how to be delivered from evil.)[544]

As is the God, so is the votary.[545]

-Gujarati proverb

…I think every person who believes in non-violent resistance believes somehow that the universe in some form is on the side of justice. That there is something unfolding in the universe whether one speaks of it as an unconscious process or whether one speaks of it as some unmoved mover, or whether someone speaks of it as a personal God. There is something in the universe that unfolds for justice and so in Montgomery we felt somehow that as we struggled we had cosmic companionship. And this was one of the things that kept the people together, the belief that the universe is on the side of justice.

-A speech by King – The Power of Nonviolence[546]

In this sub-chapter, this study aims to show the degree of convergence between non-violence and African-American Christian beliefs by analyzing the portrayal of God in the rhetoric of non-violent leaders. It is quite common in religious-oriented conflicts to justify violent acts by claiming that they represent the "will of God". In America white supremacists, for example, justified their oppression of African-Americans based on their portrayal of God's will. "God, in white [supremacist] theology, had preordained white supremacy on earth and had likewise intended for black Christians to suffer patiently and wait for the latter's reward in their heaven after death," writes Dwight N. Hopkins.[547]

Malcolm X also promoted the portrayal of a "revenging" God. When an American plane crashed, Malcolm X declared that it was the "will of God" and said that "long before that plane crash I predicted [in Los Angeles] that God was going to strike back at the devil for the way white cops brutalized our brothers in Los Angeles. When the plane fell, I said this was God's way of letting his wrath be known."[548] Unlike Malcolm X's "violent God", proponents of non-violence believed in a merciful God and related their philosophy to this conception. King, Gandhi and Archbishop Desmond Tutu all preached non-violence and portrayed God in a similar fashion. Gandhi described non-violence as "the power of the Godhead within us… We become Godlike to

[544] Branch, Taylor. Parting The Waters. 702.
[545] Gandhi, Rajmohan. The Good Boatman. India: Penguin Books, 2000. 166.
[546] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 13-14.
[547] Hopkins, Dwight N. Shoes that fit our feet - sources for a constructive Black theology. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993. 173.
[548] Lomax, Lewis. A Summing Up: Louis Lomax interviews Malcolm X. 1963. http:..teachingamericanhistory.org.library.index.asp?documentprint=539

the extent we realize non-violence."[549] It is not very different from King's portrayal of God. Religious non-violence hinges on the culture that influences the perception of potential protesters. For example, a violent resister might concentrate on the "wrath of God". A religious community engulfed by violent resistance may rely on a just and powerful God who will take out his vengeance on his enemy. An environment of conflict where God is rarely related to "love" is unlikely to absorb a non-violent rhetoric which focuses on forgiving the enemy. On the other hand, non-violent leaders may project a forgiving and loving God. Still, people may not relate this God to non-violence. The peculiarity of the concept of a loving God in the civil rights movement was that non-violent leaders portrayed a loving God in relation to the enemy. A God who is equated with love can be found in the Muslim Sufi tradition for example, where the love aspect of God is expressed in prayers, dance and religious songs. Yet a loving God in the Sufi tradition is merely understood in a spiritual sense without being related to the enemy.

King's concept of God was based on traditional and religious African-American conceptions.[550] King did not introduce non-violence as a philosophy but as a Christian belief. The scriptures provided King with "non-violent features" of God. King quoted the book of John, which said, "God is love. He who loves is a participant in the being of God. He who hates does not know God."[551] If one takes a closer look at King's portrayal of God, one will realize that he depicted God as a "non-violent protester". God does not hate but loves man. His love includes the sinners. The source of human love is God. To love one's fellow man and one's neighbor is God's will.[552] King described God as an "other-loving God who forever works through history for the establishment of His kingdom."[553] King envisaged God as a personal companion who provided protesters with support and hope. God suffers with man, "God does not take our suffering away, but He bears it with us and strengthens us to bear it," wrote Tutu.[554] Tutu also presented a similar vision of God. "Our God is a God who knows. Our God is a God who sees. Our God is a God who hears. Our God is a God who comes down to deliver."[555] West contends that the African-American church tried to hold together the dignity and depravity of persons by portraying a God like Yahweh who identified with the disinherited and downtrodden.[556]

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[549] Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand. The Selected Works Of Mahatma Gandhi. Volume Six. The Voice Of Truth. General Editor Shriman Narayan. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1968. 153.
[550] Clayborne Carson emphasizes that most recent studies on King affirmed the roots of his ideas in the African-American tradition. Carson, Clayborne. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the African-American Social Gospel. http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/additional_resources/articles/gospel.htm
[551] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 11.
[552] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 65.
[553] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 195.
[554] Tutu, Desmond. God has a dream: a vision of hope for our time. New York: Doubleday, 2004. 17.
[555] Ibid. 16.
[556] West, Cornel.The Religious Foundations of the Thought of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 122.

James Sellers criticizes King for placing emphasis on God's love as the only creative force, and dismissing the notion of God's wrath. Smith, however, argues that King also focused on God's justice, which he equated with love; God expressed His love through justice.[557] King did not only portray God as a loving God but also as a powerful God who intervened in earthly affairs. A God of love may seem weak in protest rhetoric. Cone writes, "A God without wrath does not plan to do much liberating, for the two concepts belong together."[558] Cone points to the necessity of a powerful God for the success of liberation. Malcolm X's portrayal of God was rather militant and reflected a powerful God who would punish America for her sins, "God himself is the judge. God himself is now the administrator of justice, and God himself is to be her divine executor!"[559]

> But if America waits for Almighty God himself to step in and force her into a just settlement, God will take this entire continent away from her; and she will cease to exist as a nation. Her own Christian Scriptures warn her that when God comes He can give the "entire Kingdom to whomsoever He will" ... which only means that the God of Justice on Judgment Day can give this entire continent to whomsoever He wills![560]

The belief in a powerful God who promised justice to the oppressed was supposed to dispel claims that non-violence was a weak philosophy. A weak and non-violent God would not sound very convincing. Faith in an active God, on the other hand, would enable non-violent protesters to accept suffering without retaliation. King, therefore, described God as "a God of power who is able to do exceedingly abundant things in nature and in history…The God whom we worship is not a weak and incompetent God. He is able to beat back gigantic waves of opposition and to bring low prodigious mountains of evil. This ringing testimony of the Christian faith is that God is able."[561]

King argued that God was involved in the world on the side of justice and the oppressed and that the universe had "spiritual control".[562] A non-violent activist can, therefore, enter a conflict with the confident belief that God is on his side. Although King acknowledged that not all persons who believe in non-violence have to believe in God, he claimed that a person who believes in non-violence "believes somehow that the universe in some form is on the side of justice."[563] According to Tutu, the belief in a powerful God who was "in charge" upheld the morale of the South African people during apartheid.[564]

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[557] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 34.
[558] Cone, James. A Black Theology of Liberation. 120-121.
[559] Malcolm X. The End of White World Supremacy. God's Judgement of White America (The Chickens Come Home to Roost), edited by Imam Benjamin Karim. December 4, 1963.
http://www.malcolm-x.org/speeches/spc_120463.htm
[560] Ibid.
[561] King, Martin Luther. Strength to Love. 106.
[562] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 195.
[563] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 13.
[564] Tutu, Desmond. God Has A Dream. 2.

The "intervention" of God in human affairs permeated King's rhetoric. During the Montgomery Boycott, King exclaimed, "God is using Montgomery as His proving ground."[565] "Remember, if I am stopped, this movement will not stop because God is with the movement."[566] African-Americans pledged themselves to non-violence and to "walk with God".[567] At the end of the Montgomery Boycott, King stated, "But amid all of this we kept going with the faith that as we struggle, God struggles with us, and that the arc of the moral universe, although long, is bending toward justice."[568] "Deep in my heart I do believe the Lord will see us through."[569] As God was on the side of justice, King believed that evil was self-destructive and that sin and evil were contrary to the moral principles of the universe that are grounded in God.[570]

The belief that African-Americans were accompanied by a God who would see them through their hardships is an early black religious tradition and can be found in the Gospel music of slaves. To quote Lincoln, Professor of Religion and Culture Emeritus at Duke University, "A countertheme in the deep faith which underscores black religion to this day is expressed in the absolute assurance that God will take care of his own."[571] Such a perspective might sound passive yet Lincoln argues that slaves believed in an ever-present God of the Old Testament who would intervene for their sake.[572] Many African-Americans, particularly in the South, who had never had any means of protest, had developed this consolation which accompanied them even before the start of the civil rights movement. Watley contends that black religion believed in an existence of a moral order. Despite the suffering African-Americans experienced in America, they withheld a belief that their lives were meaningful.

> Because of the many assaults upon the personhood of black people, a moral order which gave ultimate purpose to life was a necessary theological corrective to historical reality. Because so much of life and history did not make sense, black people needed to know about and affirm a moral order beyond the historical setting… It gave hope that there would be justice in the future.[573]

"In spite of their suffering or maybe because of it, African-Americans have maintained a belief in the existence of the goodness of God."[574] The concept of a moral order and the notion that God would take care of African-Americans existed since African antiquity, claims Watley, who presents African-American spirituals that show the triumph of good over evil,

> Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel,

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[565] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 37.
[566] Ibid.
[567] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 54.
[568] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 37.
[569] Ibid.
[570] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 86.
[571] Lincoln, C. Eric. Race, Religion, and the continuing American Dilemma. 54.
[572] Ibid.
[573] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 22.
[574] Ibid. 41.

Deliver Daniel, deliver Daniel,
Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel
An' why not a every man.

He delivered Daniel from de lion's den,
Jonah f'om de belly of de whale,
An' de Hebrew chillun f'om de fiery furnace,
An' why not a every man

Or
O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn,
O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn;
Pharaoh's army got drowned,
O Mary, don't you weep.[575]

A recurrent theme in the black church was God's deliverance of "his people". A favorite subject of African-American preachers was the Israelite God and his triumph over Pharaoh. King stated that the fall of tyrants like Hitler and Mussolini showed that evil may triumph temporarily yet it was eventually defeated. God does not leave man to himself. According to Young, the unwavering belief of demonstrators that "God will take care of you" during the St. Augustine campaign symbolized non-violence at its best.[576] In 1963, William Brink and Louis Harris reported on the non-violent campaigns of African-Americans, "Long dependent on the word of God because he had nothing else, the Negro is today utterly convinced that his cause is just because it is just before God, and that he must ultimately win because that is God's word and will."[577] The belief in God's involvement was shared by other civil rights leaders, like Slater King, the leader of the civil rights movement in Albany, Georgia, who stated that he believed that God worked through people like the workers of SNCC.[578] Tutu also expressed his belief in divine intervention and states that God needs humans as "agents of transfiguration".[579] King related in numerous speeches his kitchen experience, which was when he felt God's presence in his life and it reassured his faith.

> At that moment I experienced the presence of the Divine as I had never experienced Him before. It seemed as though I could hear the quiet assurance of an inner voice saying, ´´stand

[575] Watley, William D.. Roots of Resistance. 22.
[576] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 84.
[577] Berry, Mary Frances, and John W. Blassingame. Long Memory: The Black Experience in America. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982. 106.
[578] King, Slater. The Albany Movement. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 74.
[579] Tutu. Desmond. God Has A Dream. 15.

> up for righteousness, stand up for truth; and God will be at your side forever.`` Almost at once my fears began to go. My uncertainty disappeared. I was ready to face anything.[580]

In his sermon *A knock at midnight*, King dramatically described how African-Americans in Montgomery became depressed and frustrated after a judge argued that they operated a "private enterprise" and it was clear that the judge would rule in favor of the city. Yet then God intervened as the Supreme Court declared segregation on buses as unconstitutional. "My heart throbbed with an inexpressible joy. The darkest hour of our struggle had become the first hour of victory. Someone shouted from the back of the courtroom, ´´God Almighty has spoken from Washington!``"[581]

According to King's beliefs, non-violence loses substance and potency without God.[582] Ethics and morals seem weak and devoid of God, writes Walton: "Conceived of as apart from God, goodness becomes lifeless, existing only when it confers visible benefits. The same is true of morals: if they are to be part of us, morals must be considered and cultivated in relation to God."[583] The dismissal of God from man's common affairs causes a feeling of helplessness and induces people to rely on violence instead.[584] This assumption is echoed in the speech of Archbishop Rowan Williams: "A person without faith, hope and love may say, If I do not use indiscriminate violence and terror, there is no safety for me. The believer says, my safety is with God, whose justice can never be defeated."[585]

By constructing God as a basis for non-violence, non-violence assumes an ideology which transcends a protest philosophy and assumes identification with a higher entity (God), who calls for absolute dedication. A strong belief in God endows already religious protesters with the willingness to sacrifice and suffer which is fundamental to non-violent protest, therefore enabling non-violent leaders to extract the utmost sacrifices from protesters by applying a religious rhetoric. It is important for non-violent leaders to uphold the morale of protesters and instill them with a rhetoric of hope as desperation and disappointments could cause them to reject non-violence. Oppressed people may turn to violence out of despair.[586] King rejected Black Power, which he perceived as a

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[580] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 129.
[581] King, Martin Luther. Strength To Love. 66.
[582] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 49.
[583] Ibid.
[584] Ibid. 50.
[585] Williams, Rowan. To be worthy of the God we worship. Ahram Weekly 23-29.9.2004
http:..weekly.ahram.org.eg.2004.709.focus.htm
It is also conceivable for a non-violent movement to function in an atheistic society or non-violence may become a way of life for humanists or atheists.
[586] Dr. Eyad Sarraj, a Palestinian psychiatrist and founder and director of the Gaza Community Mental Health Program writes on despair: "Desperation is a very powerful force… it is not only negative, but it can propel people to actions or solutions that would have previously been unthinkable. Who would have imagined suicide bombings in Palestine ten years ago? There is no precedent in our society. One can only assume, therefore, that if the conflict continues, there will be new methods of escalation of violence on both sides too horrific to even imagine today."
Sarraj, Eyad. On Nonviolence And Resistance. Nonviolent Change Journal. Vol. XVIII, Number 1 Fall, 2003
http:..www.circlepoint.org.ncarticle0506.html

"nihilistic philosophy born out of the conviction that the Negro can't win."[587] Black Power did not provide African-Americans with any hope and rejected "the one thing that keeps the fire of revolutions burning: the ever-present flame of hope. When hope dies, a revolution degenerates into an undiscriminating catchall for evanescent and futile gestures."[588]

The growing militancy of the movement in the sixties eventually caused many activists to reject King's religious non-violence. Harding contends that King's God often seemed deader than anyone else's.[589] The Black Power movement clearly shifted its emphasis from religion to a separate African-American culture as King's religious views were perceived as weak compared with the radical Black Power rhetoric.

1.11.) Songs

> In a sense the freedom songs are the soul of the movement. They are more than just incantations of clever phrases designed to invigorate a campaign; they are as old as the history of the Negro in America. They are adaptations of the songs the slaves sang-the sorrow songs, the shouts for joy, the battle hymns and the anthems of our movement. I have heard people talk of their beat and rhythm, but we in the movements are as inspired by their words. ´´Woke Up This Morning with My Mind Stayed on Freedom`` is a sentence that needs no music to makes its point. We sing the freedom songs today for the same reason the slaves sang them, because we too are in bondage and the songs add hope to our determination that ´´We shall overcome, Black and white together, we shall overcome someday.``[590] (King)

> Song and music protected, cradled, and inspired all those in the Struggle. Every meeting began and ended with song, and often the music was able to bring the participants and the community through difficult times.[591] (Sue Sojourner)

Songs have repeatedly proven to have a soothing effect on protesters during demonstrations. In his autobiography for example, former chancellor of Germany, Willy Brandt stated that singing calmed angry demonstrators.[592] In this sub-chapter, this study shows that the "non-violent" songs of the movement fostered the belief of protesters in non-violence, as will be further evidenced in the statements of protesters. Non-violent protesters did not only attract media attention with their songs

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http:..fromoccupiedpalestine.org.node.php?id=1451
[587] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 44.
[588] Ibid. 46.
[589] Harding. Vincent. The Crisis of Powerless Morality. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 183.
[590] King, Martin Luther. Why we can't wait. 61.
[591] Sojourner, Sue. Got To Thinking. Praxis International.
http:..www.crmvet.org.info.holmesco.pdf
[592] Brandt, Willy. Erinnerungen. Frankfurt am Main: Propläen; Zürich: Ferenczy, 1989. 32.

but these songs also served as a moral and psychological boost to protesters. King regarded African-American songs that ranged from slave spirituals to folk music of the Freedom Rides as "evidence of both the power and cultural significance of the movement."[593] King frequently stated that African-Americans managed to overcome their misery with the power of songs and with humor.[594] During the civil rights movement protesters sang during marches, in churches or even in jails. They were songs about non-violence imbued with hope and faith in "redemption". These songs became a cultural means of expression that articulated the commitment of protesters to non-violence. Spirituals and songs are strongly embedded in African-American culture. African-American slaves, for example, used codes in their songs to transmit secret messages to each other. When African-Americans sang about heaven they were not singing of going to heaven after death, heaven was a word for Canada, where the slaves wished to travel to using the Underground Railroad.[595]

Movement activists adapted traditional songs and changed the lyrics in order to refer to a certain issue in their protest. They stated in numerous songs that they would defy police men, like Laurie Pritchett or Jim Clark. Protesters sang, for example, during the Albany campaign, "Ain't gonna let Chief Pritchett (Lordy) turn me around". Other famous songs of the movement were "I'm on My Way to Freedom Land", "We Shall Not Be Moved" and "We shall overcome". Old "Negro spirituals" about freedom had a particular influence on sit-in students. Spirituals like "Walking for Freedom" had a new meaning.[596] There were songs about God like "be not dismayed, whate'er be tide, God will take care of you. Beneath his wings of love abide, God will take care of you.", or "God will take care of you, Through every day… all the way; He will take care of you, God will take care of you."[597] Most of the freedom songs were adopted from spirituals that existed during the time of slavery. Historian Bernice Johnson Reagon, who was a former SNCC activist, wrote in her dissertation that these songs were adapted and changed again and again during times of crisis.[598]

In Virginia African-American sit-in protesters composed their own songs that combined qualities of the spiritual and the message of non-violence. "Sit down Chillun-sit down!- In every Jim Crow state and town.- Bear your cross and wear your crown,- Sit down Chillun, sit down!"[599] Prior to demonstrations, the demonstrators drew their courage from gospel songs, "We sang out an affirmation of faith that was about to be tested."[600] Young praised the St. Augustine campaigner's

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[593] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 371.
[594] Ibid. 324.
[595] Ibid. 107.
[596] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 27.
[597] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 80.
[598] King, Mary. Freedom song - a personal story of the 1960s civil rights movement. New York: Morrow, 1987. 92.
[599] Dykeman, Wilma, James Stokley. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 93-94.
[600] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 80.

singing “I love everybody in my heart” while greeting the Ku Klux Klan as non-violence at its best.[601]

Mary King, a former civil rights activist, commented on the songs of the movement,

> The singing of the black people was an integral part of the movement that cannot be forgotten to anyone who participated. … Because of the grandeur of congregational singing in black culture, there has never been a protest movement as rich in song as was the civil rights movement. The outpouring of the freedom songs went to the core of the struggle and expresses, as nothing else was able, the hope, belief, desire, passion, dreams, and anguish of the conflict.[602]

Singing granted activists a feeling of “collectivity”; they were not acting as individuals but as a group. “We sang a song, ´´We were not alone, we were not alone,`` we had that deep feeling of not being alone.”[603] “And we shared that ideology and that solidarity through the songs. As civil rights workers, but also the community was part of it. And I think that had an enormous effect on why the Civil Rights Movement in the South had a quality that I have never seen before,” stated an activist.[604]

King wrote in an article how students, who were on their way to take a bus to Jackson, Mississippi, all joined hands and started to sing. “And something within me said, now how is it that these students can sing this, they are going down to Mississippi, they are going to face hostile and jeering mobs, and yet they could sing, ´´We shall overcome.`` Most of them realized that would be thrown into jail, and yet they could sing, ´´We shall overcome, we are not afraid.```[605] African-American protesters particularly sang together in jails to boost and uphold their morale. “In jail, the songs kept us together,” wrote one activist. “There was a sense of power, in a place where you didn’t feel you had any power.”[606]

Bernice Reagon, an activist during the Albany movement, wrote about the “cultural power” inherent to the music. Songs like “Ain’t gonna let Pritchett turn me around” reflected the inner mood of the protesters.

> The mass meetings had a level of music that we could recognize from other times in our lives. And that level of expression, that level of cultural power present in an everyday situation, gave a more practical or functional meaning to the music when it was sung in church on Sunday. The music was a group statement. If you look at the music and the words that came out of the Movement, you will find the analysis that the masses had about what they were doing.[607]

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[601] Ibid. 84.
[602] King, Mary. Freedom Song. 92.
[603] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[604] Ibid.
[605] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 52.
[606] Bernice Reagon, "Interview". *Let freedom ring: a documentary history of the modern civil rights movement*. Ed. Peter B. Levy. 99.
[607] Ibid. 98.

Activists sang hymns during church meetings before protesters undertook any strategy decisions. They also applied songs as a means of communication. In Selma, when civil rights activists wanted to organize meetings, kids would start marching around the projects and sing freedom songs. People would then know that a special mass meeting was taking place.[608]

Veterans of the movement contended that the songs expressed defiance. Singing that they loved their enemies did not necessarily mean that they really loved them.

> And I want to bring it around to the songs. Because I think what was so unique about the Civil Rights Movement,—particularly in the South—was the role of the songs. People today ask: 'How could you sing 'we love everybody.' How could you sing 'we love state troopers? What, were you crazy?' And they don't realize that even that song, 'I love George Wallace,' was sung at the utmost of defiance, the utmost of anger and rage. And yet at the same time, the songs not only expressed anger and rage and defiance, but they were in a way a pledge of solidarity and unity between us. When Wazir says we would sing ´´we are not alone, hand in hand together, we are not afraid, we'll never turn back, before I be a slave I'll be buried in my grave.`` If you sing your ideology, it is so much more powerful than if you write it in position papers.[609]

The songs of the movement were an integral component of non-violent protest that did not only strengthen the determination of protesters to demonstrate non-violently but also had an effect on public opinion as they emphasized their non-violence.

1.12.) Conclusion

Sharp writes that some conflicts are non-violent rather spontaneously and intuitively whereas in other conflicts effort is required to maintain non-violent behavior.[٦١٠] The probability that a Palestinian Muslim or Christian could suddenly emerge and preach love and non-violence in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and attract as many followers as King did is relatively low. Given the history of violence between Israel and Palestine, it is unlikely that non-violent religious rhetoric would be a successful strategy. Non-violent rhetoric or philosophy cannot be preached in any conflict regardless of the cultural environment which may or may not alienate protesters from accepting its philosophy. The aim of this chapter is to show that southern African-American culture presented a "hospitable" environment for non-violence. Apart from already existing African-American southern cultural factors, like the passivity of the church and the convergence of black religious beliefs with non-violent philosophy, African-American non-violent leaders developed their own "non-violent culture", like promoting a militant non-violent rhetoric or extending black

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[608] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[609] Ibid.
[610] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 647.

religious beliefs by blending them with non-violent philosophy. As this chapter shows, non-violent leaders relied on already existing “cultural beliefs”, like the belief in a Black mission or the belief that God would take care of African-Americans and redefined their meaning during the movement. Whereas African-American non-violent protesters did not necessarily have to be morally committed to non-violence, the sub-chapter on non-violence and religion demonstrates that many protesters were, nevertheless, influenced by King’s religious non-violent rhetoric.

The fact that African-American leaders had considered the application of non-violence, the influence of Gandhi on the movement, the passivity in the South with regard to political activism prior to the movement, the instrumentalization of the church, the blend of black religion and non-violence, the militant non-violent rhetoric and the influence of songs on the movement were crucial to the acceptance of non-violence.

As this study shows, King based his non-violent philosophy on Christian beliefs and combined non-violence with the African-American religious tradition. The fact that King preached non-violence for a period spanning almost thirteen years shows that his philosophy and rhetoric must have found some form of acceptance among African-Americans and also white Americans, at least until the rise of Black Power in the mid-sixties. If King’s non-violent rhetoric and beliefs, which he articulated in most of his speeches and articles, had been rejected by African-Americans, he would not have risen to become one of the most popular speakers in American history. Apart from the influence which King had on the African-American masses, his personal charisma, his status as a minister, which increased after he was awarded the Nobel Prize and the fact that he was a popular and respected speaker who was invited to hold speeches in colleges, churches and demonstrations shows the relevancy of his non-violent rhetoric to a large audience of Americans.

2.) Conversion of Public Opinion through Non-violent Rhetoric and Dramatization

After having analyzed the African-American cultural aspects that favored the acceptance of non-violence by African-Americans, the aim of this chapter is to analyze the effect of non-violent rhetoric and non-violent dramatization on public opinion. Non-violence during the civil rights movement was particularly successful since non-violent protesters converted American public opinion or, in other words, caused American public opinion to sympathize with African-American demands for integration through non-violent rhetoric and non-violent dramatization of protest.

The author asserts that non-violent protest caused third groups to support or accept the movement's demands, which was one of the decisive factors that led to the passing of the Civil Rights Bill and the Voting Rights Act. Non-violent protesters brought public opinion to particularly support their demands in Birmingham and Selma. This means that non-violent protesters succeeded in not only putting civil rights on the agenda of the federal government through their non-violent protest but also coerced it to take action as non-violent protest created a crisis situation that the government had to solve.

The first part of this chapter analyzes King's non-violent rhetoric during the civil rights movement. In order to win over public opinion, African-American leaders, most notably King, applied a "moral" rhetoric of non-violence which asserted that African-Americans would love their enemies despite the "hardships" African-American underwent due to segregation and racism. King used his oratory skills to portray an asymmetrical conflict situation where there were African-Americans representing Christian love and aspiring to bring about the Beloved Community on one side, and segregationists or white racists who represented hate and aggression on the other side. Although King called on African-Americans to love segregationists his rhetoric did not convert supremacists or segregationists. Rather, his rhetoric had an impact on public opinion and enabled him to form alliances with white liberals, politicians and the media.

One could say that non-violent leaders waged a non-violent "propaganda" campaign to affect public opinion, which the author will clarify further. As many segregationists described non-violent protesters as "troublemakers", non-violent leaders had to justify their protest by asserting in their rhetoric their dedication to American values like freedom and the American dream. They particularly portrayed themselves as "suffering" protesters and simultaneously portrayed their opponents as "villains". There are claims that by defining themselves as victims, African-Americans generated a policy of resentment, as Christopher Lasch argues.[611] Hence, it is crucial to look at how protest leaders skillfully and rhetorically portray their case without alienating third

[611] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 44.

groups. This chapter also analyzes the general challenges of winning over public opinion and third groups.

This chapter focuses on King's rhetoric of Christian love and the Beloved Community. The author shows that King and other non-violent leaders or organizations publicly declared or showed their commitment to Christian love. Although many analysts criticized King's demand to love the enemy as utopian and as naïve, its real relevance to the movement was that it had a positive impact on public opinion. The author also shows that there were many cultural similarities that allowed non-violent leaders to preach the rhetoric of a Beloved Community. In addition, non-violent activists issued political objectives of integration and a Beloved Community particularly until the mid-sixties before King and SCLC turned to more complicated objectives like poverty reduction and fair housing conditions. African-Americans, thus, did not pursue revolutionary demands that would have cost them the support of public opinion. Non-violent protesters asserted that they were fighting against an evil system and did not target whites or segregationists specifically so that they would not alienate public opinion.

The second part of this chapter analyzes the successful dramatization of protest or provocation of segregationists through non-violent protest, which unleashed images of the repression of African-Americans to the American public, most notably through the media. Non-violent protesters had to create a crisis situation in order to receive the attention of the media and public opinion. Segregationist violence brought about this objective and stirred the federal government into action.

2.1.) A Change of Perception of African-American Civil Rights

It is first important to note that American public opinion changed in favor of African-Americans during the civil rights movement. This change of perception of civil rights was one of the main factors that led to the passage of the Civil Rights Bill in 1964 and the Voting Rights Acts in 1965.

Numerous incidents had paved the way for the civil rights movement. Long before 1955, the civil rights struggle had started to shape public opinion. The author will list two of the most important events that shaped public opinion regarding civil rights prior to movement. Before the civil rights movement took place, for example, desegregation of the armed forces had an immense impact on the advancement of African-American rights, including federal court decrees that altered transportation patterns, teacher's salaries, use of recreational facilities and other matters. Most notably, the Brown vs. Board of Education decision, which declared that segregation in schools was unconstitutional, paved the way for African-American activists to forcefully demand desegregation of various institutions and facilities. Fredrickson remarks that the Supreme Court decision

represented a new hope for a revolution in race relations in America.[612] Movement veterans contended that it legitimated their activism.[613]

The civil rights movement witnessed a number of political changes, facilitated by non-violent protest, starting with the Montgomery Boycott in 1955. McAdam contends that from 1961 to 1965, the question of African-Americans reached such proportions that it was identified in public opinion surveys as the most important problem confronting the country.[614] Polls and surveys showed that an overwhelming majority of Americans were in favor of granting African-Americans more voting rights, as well as good housing and job opportunities.[615] The dramatization of the Birmingham campaign altered the hearts and minds of millions, writes Sitkoff.[616]

During the 1956 presidential campaign, Adlai Stevenson, for example, had played down the civil rights issue. Stevenson's policy was not to seriously offend the South.[617] Yet the reluctance of politicians to become involved on behalf of African-Americans changed in the sixties. In his book *Chaos or Community*, King contended that without the "weight of the aroused conscience of white America," Congress and the administration would have not acted the way they did.[618] Fairclough confirms this point as he illustrates how non-southern Congressmen were more wary about speaking on civil rights in 1963 as they regarded it as a sure vote loser, and Democrats feared an intraparty dispute on the issue. In 1965, however, Democrats felt less inhibited as the nation had become more accustomed to the idea that the government should play a stronger role in combating segregation.[619] The political climate was so transformed that civil rights legislation became feasible.[620]

One proof of the success African-Americans achieved is the level of federal protection accorded to the March to Montgomery during the Selma campaign. Fairclough writes that this protection gave African-Americans the most convincing evidence that the federal government had become their firm ally. He states that, "no previous civil rights demonstration, not even the March on Washington, had enjoyed what amounted to federal cosponsorship."[621] It was the failure of the movement to mount dramatic campaigns that affected public consciousness after 1965, which McAdam sees as one of the reasons for the decline of the movement in the sixties.[622]

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[612] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 255.
[613] Local Folks & Civil Rights Workers. A Discussion, August, 2003 - http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.local.htm
[614] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 159.
[615] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 152.
[616] Ibid.
The Birmingham campaign took place in 1963. For more details, check sub-chapter 3.7.
[617] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 41.
[618] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 51.
[619] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 134.
[620] Ibid.
[621] Ibid. 250.
[622] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 200.

Fredrickson claims that King was converted to Gandhi's conception of non-violence at a time when the circumstances he faced made this commitment highly advantageous for the African-American liberation struggle.[623] A possible explanation of why civil rights received enormous attention at this time is that there were no major political events between the mid-1950s and the mid-1960s that overshadowed the civil rights movement. McCarthyism was ebbing and America prided herself on representing the free world. The movement Randolph had started at the early forties had lost momentum because of the war. That time had been scarcely an ideal time for civil disobedience or mass demonstrations, writes Fredrickson, as the Cold War and Senator Joseph McCarthy had put a damper on a militant protest movement.[624] International events that overshadowed the movement, on the other hand, shaped the late sixties and the beginning of the seventies, as McAdam writes, like Vietnam, inflation, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the energy crisis and Watergate. By 1971, only 7 percent of people surveyed identified race relations as the country's biggest problem.[625] The upsurge of televisions at that time in American households increased the number of those who watched the images of brutal repression at non-violent demonstrations, which might also be a possible explanation. One must also add that non-violent protest on a mass scale, led by a powerful orator like King, was a novelty to American society at that time so that these factors also captured the attention of public opinion. The aim of this dissertation, however, is not to analyze why the era from the mid-fifties until the mid-sixties was particularly suitable for non-violent protest. The important aspect is that a change of public opinion took place and this chapter shows how non-violent rhetoric and provocation brought it about.

2.2.) Conversion of Public Opinion

McAdam makes an interesting point when he writes that although white support may have been hypocritical sometimes and erosive in the face of more meaningful support, "this growing body of supportive opinion introduced a new set of political considerations into the calculations of other parties to the conflict and, in so doing, helped constrain their responses to the movement."[626] Fredrickson contends that the neutralization of northern whites that occurred during the movement, through non-violence, paved the way for the banning of Jim Crow laws by federal legislation.

> The insistence on nonviolent methods that King first articulated at Montgomery enormously contributed to the success of the civil rights movement. Nonviolence did not shame white supremacists into accepting African-Americans as equals. Court

[623] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 256.
[624] Ibid. 235- 236.
[625] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 197.
[626] Ibid. 159.

> decisions banning segregated facilities, such as the one that ended the Montgomery boycott, did not usually resort in actual integration because segregationists often responded with their own boycott of desegregated institutions. But the ultimate banning of Jim Crow by federal legislation in 1964 would not have been possible if northern white racism had not been neutralized. The belief that African-American protest was strictly nonviolent was probably essential to the process of winning northern public sympathy and ultimately government backing.
>
> …it seems likely that the northern white majority that came to favor federal action against segregation found black assertiveness worthy of sympathy only because it was framed by an aura of heroic nonviolence.[627]

During the civil rights movement, non-violent leaders relied on converting "neutral" whites because their support could garner approval for policy change.[628] Yet how did non-violent protesters convert or affect third groups like northern whites, liberals and the federal government?

The author will first present a general perspective on influencing third groups. Conversion in non-violent protest as defined by Lakey means, "that the opponent, as the result of the actions by the nonviolent person or group, comes around to a new point of view which embraces the ends of the nonviolent actor."[629] Sharp adds that conversion is likely to involve the opponent's emotions, beliefs, attitudes and moral system. He also calls it "emotional pressure".[630] This chapter, however, shows that non-violent protest did not convert segregationists or supremacists but public opinion, which was sympathetic to African-American protesters. Non-violent protesters did not seek to convert the opponent himself but the opponent's camp, or in the case of the civil rights movement, the American people. The opponent might represent his own camp. Segregationists, for example, claimed that they defended the white race. Nevertheless, this does not mean that all white Americans endorsed their statements. By exposing public opinion to unjust practices, non-violent protesters compel the people represented by the opponent, such as the government, to confront these "malpractices" carried out by the opponent so that they identify with the victims of violence.

Violent resistance organizations follow a similar logic. They seek to attract the attention of public opinion in order to highlight their cause. Yet by applying violence they do not succeed in alienating the people from the government, for example, but often bring about the opposite effect and cause the people to support repressive measures of the government. An external threat will cause the people to rally behind their government. A classical non-violent strategy is to cause a split in the opponent's group, which is more likely to occur when the protester is non-violent.[631] Dissent within the ranks of the opponent group might prove more important than support of outside third-

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[627] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 260.
[628] See sub-chapter 3.2.2. "Political coercion on the President of the United States".
[629] Lakey, George. Peace Research Reviews, vol. II, no.6. Dec.1968. 12. Rpt. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three.* Gene Sharp. 707.
[630] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 707.
[631] "This is because the actionists pose no violent threat (which usually unifies the opponent's camp), and also because counteracting a nonviolent campaign is especially difficult, conducive to different opinions on what to do, and latter to recriminations over the failure of those counteractions." Ibid. 676.

parties, leading citizens represented by the opponent to perceive repression in the face of non-violent action as brutal and withdraw their support.[٦٣٢] As a non-violent protester seeks to cause doubts within the ranks of the opponent, the opponent's repression is supposed to affect the supporters of the opponent so that they do not identify themselves any longer with him and withdraw their support. Violence, on the other hand, usually unites the opponent's camp.

The reaction of third groups or public opinion to repression of protesters is important and relies to a great extent on the level of violence a conflict has reached. The more threatened the third group feels as a result of violent or threatening protest actions, the more they will withhold their sympathy. After the rise of the Black Power movement many whites withdrew their sympathy from African-Americans. Sharp refers to the example of the Mau Mau movement where British repression was far less conducive to criticism in Britain because of the violent resistance of the Mau Mau, which enabled the British army to justify its war.[٦٣٣] As an outsider one may be prone to sympathize with protesters that are committed to non-violence, contrary to violent resistance groups. This makes it easier for non-violent protesters to portray the opponent as the "villain". This asymmetrical relation can play a beneficial role with regard to affecting third groups or the international community. Non-violence may cause third groups that had previously supported the opponent to take neutral positions or to withhold their support from the opponent and persons that had been previously neutral may move toward the position of the protester.[634]

Non-violent actionists view their opponents as a heterogeneous group that consists of diverse sub-groups that, unlike their leaders, may be less committed to their policies.[635] "The nonviolent group may deliberately choose to concentrate its efforts to achieve conversion on certain persons or subgroups in the opponent camp."[636] Unlike resisters that turn to violence, these sub-groups do not regard their opponent as a fixed entity to be defeated.[637] Whereas African-American activists like Malcolm X regarded all whites as the enemy, civil rights leaders like King divided them in several camps, such as liberals, politicians, Republicans and Democrats, labor forces, intellectuals, ordinary citizens, white activists and, of course, segregationists. Non-violent leaders considered some of these groups as allies of the movement at some point and adversaries at another. Activists, for example, feared Johnson when Kennedy appointed him as Vice President, only to become a major ally during the Selma campaign and an opponent of King again when he criticized the Vietnam War. African-American activists welcomed Liberals at the beginning of the movement only to condemn them later for their intransigent stance on economic and political issues. There were

[632] Ibid. 663.
[633] Ibid. 666.
[634] Ibid. 696.
[635] Ibid. 718.
[636] Ibid. 708.
[637] Ibid. 676.

classical opponents like George Wallace, Governor of Alabama, and Bull Connor and more canny adversaries like Mayor Daley in Chicago. There were also racist segregationists that attacked Freedom Riders and sit-in activists and there was the white public opinion, which was outraged by this violence. The main opponents of the movement were segregationists; mostly southern American white citizens that wanted to uphold the supremacy of whites and segregationists politicians like Governor Wallace and police officers or sheriffs like Sheriff Clark. Hence, white Americans were not the enemy. There were different groups like white liberals, politicians and northern white Americans that non-violent protesters could win over through their protest.

Gandhi contended that in order to affect the heart, one had to awaken public opinion.[638] Affecting neutral third groups is a battle of public opinion, which can be a crucial ally for non-violent protesters.[639] Conversion of public opinion is a form of "non-violent propaganda". Particularly in a democratic country where citizens have the power to affect the policy of their government, a change of public opinion can be highly effective for non-violent protesters. Influential third parties may intervene on behalf of the protesting group, writes Fredrickson.[640] Unlike the negative meaning that the term "propaganda usually implies", as it is often applied in a context where a group seeks to influence another targeted group through the use of distorted images, a non-violent protester seeks to reveal unjust practices that he tacitly experiences by provoking the opponent to unleash a violent repression so that he can openly and publicly dramatize his problems. Fairclough confirms this tactic by describing the dogs and hoses that were used to confront demonstrators in Birmingham as SCLC's best propaganda.[641] Buke Marshall stated that African-Americans and their problems had been rather invisible to the country until mass demonstrations of the Birmingham type.[642] Abernathy commented that the Poor People's Campaign's greatest victory was to expose poverty and that it was so successful because prior to the campaign the average American knew little about the seriousness of this issue.[٦٤٣] Thus, non-violent protest attempts to focus public opinion on the unjust conditions the protester suffers from.

2.2.1.) Challenges of Affecting Third Groups and Public Opinion

[638] Ibid. 720.
[639] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G.Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 60.
[640] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 226.
[641] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 126.
[642] Ibid. 135.
[643] Abernathy, Ralph David. The Nonviolent Movement. Rpt. in *Black life and Culture in the United States*. Rhoda L. Goldstein. 200.
Most historians did not consider "The Poor People Campaign" as a success. Yet the author quotes Abernathy in this context to underline the movement's non-violent tactics of exposing segregation.

Many factors, however, are crucial to the support of third groups or public opinion. Sharp warns of naive assumptions that public opinion alone will benefit protestors. The proportion of assistance to protesters by third parties is relatively small either because third groups' protest is usually symbolic in character or economic sanctions have not been effectively applied or sustained. Sharp goes on to describe the efforts of third parties: "Overconfidence in the potential of aid from others may distract resistance efforts from their own most important tasks."[644]

Not all third parties will be of equal importance to the protester. A determined opponent will ignore world opinion unless it is accompanied by a shift in power relationships.[٦٤٥] The opponent will only refrain from alienating third groups whom he depends upon.[646] Some opponents are more sensitive to public opinion than others.[647] Some opponents may not react to pressure of third groups or public opinion. In the case of the civil rights movement, non-violent leaders did not solely rely on third group support but also on coercion, which the author will clarify in chapter three. Yet whereas in some conflicts the opponent may not be affected by third groups, American public opinion played an important role during the civil rights movement.

The degree of converting third groups also depends on the confluence of their interests with the demands of protesters. Protesters will fail to win over third groups if the latter's interests are undermined by the former's demands. White Americans in the North may have reacted favorably to desegregation of lunch counters as they were not directly concerned by it, whereas southern whites may have regarded it as a direct disruption of their way of life. Sharp notes the degree of conflict of interests as relevant to the question of conversion. "If the issue at stake in the conflict is highly important to the opponent, the nonviolent actionists can reasonably expect that it will be more difficult to convert him to their point of view than if the issue at stake is of relatively little importance to the opponent."[648] African-American non-violent protesters succeeded in desegregating numerous facilities during the civil rights movement. Yet while they may have convinced many white Americans of their right to share restrooms and swimming pools with whites, they faced obstinate unwillingness when it came to political change, such as the economic and political issues addressed during the Chicago campaign, like eradicating slum conditions and integrating white neighborhoods. These demands would have interfered with the way of life of many white Americans.

Numerous factors can also affect the decision making of the public regarding to whom it shall lend its support. Their own identity and their identification with one of the two groups, protester or opponent, plays a vital role. Sharp states that the closeness or distance between the two groups is

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[644] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 663.
[645] Ibid. 662.
[646] Ibid. 663.
[647] Ibid.
[648] Ibid. 726.

very decisive at this point. "If the opponent group sees the grievance group as members of ´´a common moral order,`` this perception is likely to encourage better treatment and a more sympathetic response to their challenge."[649] If the protester is dehumanized, the opponent group will have difficulties identifying with him.[650] The Christian non-violent rhetoric of the movement, however, caused many Americans to sympathize with African-Americans as this chapter illustrates.

2.2.2.) Conversion of Public Opinion and not of Segregationists

Non-violent protesters affected public opinion through their rhetoric and non-violent dramatization. Many non-violent advocates, however, insist on the possibility of converting the opponent. Conversion of the opponent is a long-term process and, thus, might take place over a long time span, writes Sharp.[651] Believers in religious non-violence are most often the exponents of conversion.[652] Yet as this study will show, the conversion of the opponent was not the primary objective of protesters during the civil rights movement, as one might have deduced from King's non-violent rhetoric.[653] Protesters wanted to influence third party groups that consisted of northern whites and politicians, not racists and segregationists. During major campaigns, like Birmingham, Selma, or protest actions like the Freedom Rides and the sit-ins, non-violent protesters were relying on arousing public opinion in America and not on converting state troopers or segregationists in Birmingham and Selma. The political scientist Elliott M. Zashin writes that experience in the South convinced most African-American activists that non-violence had virtually no influence on white racists and that it only represented a form of pressure.[654] In Albany, for example, Samuel Wells and Vincent Harding believed that one of the reasons that the campaign failed was that the campaign became too involved in questions of money, publicity and activating the Kennedy administration. Harding particularly believed that the movement had neglected converting white hard-liners. Garrow, however, contends that Harding's efforts to convert white segregationists were in vain and that they had little impact.[655] Protesters did not seek to convert hard-liners in Birmingham and Selma either, which were nevertheless much more successful than Albany.

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[649] Ibid. 712.
[650] The use of children as protesters in Birmingham, for example, was successful as many Americans were shocked by their treatment by the police.
[651] Ibid. 718.
[652] Ibid. 719.
[653] One could deduce, for example, from King's statement, "We will soon wear you down by our capacity to suffer…and in winning our freedom we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process", that he was particularly keen on converting segregationists.
[654] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 52.
[655] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 218.

Non-violence is supposed to catch the opponent off balance, weaken his morale and embarrass him. Zepp and Smith contend that Gregg's book, *Power of Nonviolence,* influenced King, which the latter read during his study at Crozer. In the revised edition of Gregg's book, which he issued in 1955 in response to the growing significance of the civil rights movement, King wrote the forward in which he referred to the Montgomery Boycott.[656] This means that King was familiar with Gregg's theory of moral jiu-jitsu. The concept of moral jiu-jitsu, which Zepp and Smith claim influenced King, means the throwing off balance of the opponent. Jiu-jitsu was an ancient sport where one had to keep one's own balance and destroy the balance of the opponent. This model is replicated in non-violence when a protester chooses to suffer rather than retaliate. The objective is to confuse the strategy of the opponent while the non-violent protester maintains firm control of himself and his actions. Zepp and Smith refer to a non-violent demonstration during which demonstrators confronted the hoses of Bull Connor's men in a non-violent way, which led Connor's men to allow African-Americans to pass them without interfering.[657]

To Sharp, the "throwing off the opponent" will cause the repression of the opponent to rebound against his position and weaken his power as it will cause him special problems that will disturb and frustrate the utilization of his "forces".[658] Additionally, non-violent protest might surprise the opponent and cause him to respond without violence. An example was when students in Tallahassee, Florida, held a sit-in. White racists entered and made derogatory remarks yet they refrained from attacking the protesters because the waitress asked them to leave by saying, "you can see they aren't here to start anything."[659] The effect of surprise that protesters generate is supposed to make the assailant reflect on his actions and shake his moral balance. When the assailant chooses a form of violence to respond to the protestor's attack, the non-violent activist responds instead with calmness, fearlessness and self-control. It is necessary that protesters maintain non-violence because as Sharp writes, "without nonviolence the opponent's repression will not rebound to undermine his power through political jiu-jitsu."[660] Acts of violence put the opponent in a bad light in the eyes of observers, writes Sharp. The disapproval of his actions causes him to experience uncertainties.[661] He quotes Gregg who described the audience as a sort of "mirror" that causes the attacker to feel excessive, undignified and brutal. "[The opponent] realizes that the onlookers see that he has misjudged the nature of his adversary, and realizes that he has lost prestige. He somewhat loses his self-respect."[662] By applying violence to non-violent protesters, the opponent

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[656] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 59.
[657] Ibid. 60.
[658] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two. 110.
[659] Ibid. 722.
[660] Ibid. 594.
[661] Ibid. 720.
[662] Gregg, B. Richard. The Power of Nonviolence. 45. - Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 720-721.

may experience lower self-esteem.[663] Gandhi also recommended the achievement of an inner understanding, personal friendship and mutual respect of the opponent.[664] The possibility of such reconciliatory human relations, however, depends on the degree of hostility in a conflict and whether such a recommendation is realistic.

Yet this form of conversion rarely occurred during the movement. There are no narratives that relate the conversion of white state troopers or violent supremacist aggressors. Their violent repression on the other hand, rather, shocked public opinion. African-American protesters did not develop friendships or respect with state troopers or violent white bystanders.

Theoretical moral non-violence assumes that the opponent has moral values and, therefore, once these morals are addressed, he may repent and change his actions. King believed that humans have, "an amazing potential for goodness" and stated that they were "victims of their environment."[665] King went on to say, "we must continue to believe that the most ardent segregationist can be transformed into the most constructive integrationist."[666]

Yet a movement that applies a rhetoric of "love" in the attempt to convert the opponent will eventually change its rhetoric once it realizes that the opponent will not abandon his position on the basis of "good faith". Leaders like Malcolm X expressed their doubts as to whether whites could be converted. Malcolm X, who regarded whites as devils, claimed that they would not be redeemed. Whites did not understand the language of non-violence and morality, he said.[667] Sharp also warns that efforts of conversion may not cause all members of the opponent group to become converted.[668] Many activists of the movement themselves doubted that they would convert segregationists. Zinn claims that many SNCC activists despaired of converting the opponent, particularly after the organization's venture into states like Alabama, Mississippi and Southwest Georgia. Violent segregationists and policemen remained unaffected by non-violent protest. These campaigns did not enable activists to make any tangible gains and their experience there differed from the experience they had in Nashville, Atlanta and other border and upper-South areas.[669]

There are numerous individual stories of civil rights activists who narrated how they managed to influence the opponent through non-violence. The author will list a few examples in order to demonstrate how non-violent protesters themselves propagated the opinion that non-violent protest could convert racists or segregationists. Activists relied on these examples and narrated them in

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[663] Ibid. 722.
[664] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 730.
[665] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 138-139.
[666] Ibid. 138.
[667] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 333.
[668] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 732.
Sharp notes that soldiers might develop second thoughts before top leaders.
[669] Zinn, Howard. SNCC. 222.

front of audiences in order to demonstrate the success of conversion. For example, Young narrated how he caused a white jailer to accept and respect him through his non-violent behavior:

> When Martin went to jail in Albany, Georgia, in 1962, I was a new arrival in the movement. I was given the task of visiting him… On my first visit, I entered the jail and said politely, ´´Excuse me, I'd like to see Dr. King, please.`` Without even looking up, the desk sergeant shouted to the jailer, 'There's a little nigger out here to see those big niggers back there.
>
> I was so taken aback that I didn't know what to do. To express my indignation would only get me thrown in jail or barred from visiting… Violence was no answer…. When I came back the next day, I addressed him by name. 'Good morning, Sergeant Hamilton, how are you doing today?'
>
> Now, he seemed shocked, and grunted, 'Okay'.
>
> From that time on, I never went to jail without addressing Sergeant Hamilton by name and engaging him in some brief small talk before asking to see Dr. King. He never again spoke disrespectfully to me, and we actually became familiar with each other's families and sports interests.[670]

Young continued by saying, "constant confrontation with people with whom you differ requires some solution. Most of the time, black people just avoided the confrontation and accepted the mutual animosity."[671]

Hamer also invoked the power of converting the opponent she met in jail. After she was tortured in jail, she confronted the wife of one of the jailers and one of the jailers himself and addressed them from her cell, which had the effect of causing some of them to feel ashamed.[672] Whether or not the jailer was converted is not important in this context, instead it is the knowledge of non-violent protesters, like Hamer, that they could shame or convert their oppressors. Another example, which activists narrated during the movement, was when white men beat a civil rights activist unconscious. When they were about to beat his wife, she turned to them and prayed, "Father I stretch my hands to Thee, I stretch my hands to Thee, no other help I know.' That struck the hearts of those men. The Lord was there. Because then the man said, ´´Let her alone,`` and he looked kind of sick about it."[673]

Rev. Edwin King describes how an interracial group of activists attempted to integrate a church in Tougaloo, Mississippi, by relying on means of conversion. When the students started conversations with the guards and church members on why African-Americans were not allowed to attend church services there, their strategy started to work. Rev. Edwin King commented, "on the

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[670] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 77.
[671] Ibid.
[672] Marsh, Charles. God's Long Summer. 23.
[673] King, Edwin. Christianity in Mississippi. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 144.

steps of that closed church the closed society began to experience some honest interracial conversation and communication".[674]

According to Sitkoff, King first discovered the effects of non-violence in Montgomery, which reduced the violence of the opponent there to a minimum. It weakened the resolve, unity and readiness of the opponent to retaliate.[675] Non-violent leaders like James Lawson claimed that many whites had a change of heart.[676] A CORE activist explained the philosophy of conversion from his point of view:

> The Whites in the south know how to handle violence- they are used to it. But if we sit there and smile, he doesn't know how to react. And if you sit there and love him—I hope you would love him, or at least be sympathetic—well, he doesn't know how to react, and maybe eventually he will forget he is white and you're a Negro and start smiling with you—just men.[677]

Non-violent protest in the face of repression was to bring the oppressor to shame and damage his self-image or his image according to public opinion. King argued that if a non-violent resister submitted to the punishment of the oppressor, the oppressor would become ashamed and morally defeated. Protesters wanted to raise the moral issue, as Lawson stated.[678] Analysts like Moses similarly refer to establishing an "ethical field of confrontation."[679] This means that the non-violent protester raises moral questions that could affect the opponent. Childress argues that it is more effective to allow opponents to feel more secure by assuring them that they will not be physically harmed, instead of giving them a sense of security through defending themselves with weapons.[680]

Deliberate rejection of violence in favor of non-violence is supposed to have a psychological effect on the opponent and might convert him.[681] Even Jawaharlal Nehru, who had rejected non-violence as a moral principle and merely advocated it for political gains, conceded that it had the power to convert the opponent. "That it has considerable effect on the opponent is undoubted. It exposes his moral defenses, it unnerves him, it appeals to the best in him, it leaves the door open for conciliation. There can be no doubt that the approach of love and self-suffering has powerful psychic reactions on the adversary as well as on the onlookers."[682]

Yet as the study shows, non-violence had almost no effect on segregationists from a moral perspective. Many segregationists compromised during campaigns like Birmingham only due to the

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[674] Ibid. 140-141.
[675] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 61.
[676] Lawson, Jr., James M. "We Are Trying to Raise the ´Moral Issue`". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 279.
[677] Bell, Ingo Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 108.
[678] Lawson, Jr., James M. "We Are Trying to Raise the ´Moral Issue`". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 278.
[679] Moses, Greg. Revolution Of Conscience. 160.
[680] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam. 15.
[681] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 727.
[682] Ibid. 720.

economic boycott of African-Americans and not because they were affected and converted.[683] Despite the insistence of civil rights activists that conversion could prove effective with regards to converting segregationists, these are rather exceptional examples that non-violent advocates promoted and, therefore, do not account for the non-violent gains that protesters achieved. They also do not represent the general mood of non-violent protesters. One could say that the majority of white advocates of segregation were unaffected by moral concerns and were forced to desegregate their lunch-counters and accept desegregation due to the persistence of civil rights protest. Although non-violence addresses moral issues, it would be naïve to solely rely on the awakening of the opponent's conscience. Fairclough contends that King's statements that the non-violent resister would touch the heart of the opponent and convert him should not be exaggerated. King's belief that the opponent would be converted, although genuine, writes Fairclough, nevertheless was marginal and not central to his strategy. "When King spoke of ´´converting`` the oppressor, therefore, he was thinking of a long-term historical process rather than an immediate personal response. King was not as naïve as his religious rhetoric sometimes implied."[684]

2.2.3.) Influence of King's Non-violent Rhetoric on Pubic Opinion

Civil rights rhetoric in America had a strong impact on public opinion. Dyson emphasizes the importance of King's rhetoric to the movement: "His brilliant public use of rhetoric inspired by religion allowed him to forge a style of communication that was doubly useful, satisfying the demands of civil rhetoric while meeting the spiritual needs of his black brothers and sisters."[685] King's rhetoric was crucial in provoking social change, "King ably used two rhetorical strategies gleaned from black religion to stimulate social change; he understood the power of speech to help change human behavior, and he fused speech with civic rhetoric."[686]

The non-violent rhetoric King preached procured him the image of a moderate, enabled him to win over crucial political allies and facilitated his acceptance in wide circles of the national and international community. King had a large audience of African-Americans and white Americans and he frequently toured the country to hold speeches. The author argues that non-violent protesters organized a successful "public relations campaign", which was crucial in shifting public opinion to their favor.

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[683] Zinn, Howard. SNCC. 222.
[684] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 53.
[685] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 128.
[686] Ibid. 129.

Cutlip and Center defined public relations as "planned effort to influence opinion through good character and responsible performance, based upon mutually satisfactory two-way communication."[687] Non-violent protesters used a similar tactic to influence public opinion through non-violent protest. Non-violent leaders applied a rhetoric of "moral" non-violence, which means that non-violent leaders like King publicly invoked terms like Christian love, the Beloved Community, forgiveness and love of the enemy. One could argue about whether King's focus on the "redemption" of whites, which King emphasized in his rhetoric at the beginning of the movement, was too naïve. On the other hand, it was this focus that brought the movement sympathizers and supporters. King knew how to exploit to maximum effectiveness the feeling of guilt, writes Harlan.[688] King claimed that the white man hungered for redemption[689] and demanded "white America" to "assume the guilt for the black man's inferior status."[690]

> But despite this, it is our duty to pray for those who mistreat us. We must pray for a change of attitude in all those who violate human dignity and who rob men, women and little children of human decency. We must pray for ourselves that we shall have the strength to move forward each day, knowing that our every act can emancipate us and can add compassion to the heart of our nation. We must pray for the power that comes from loving our neighbor as we love ourselves.[691]

This is a typical excerpt of King's rhetoric which he articulated in his writings or speeches. Another example is, "We will soon wear you down by our capacity to suffer…and in winning our freedom we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process."[٦٩٢] "All but the most incorrigible white resistance was vulnerable to such a weapon," comments Woodward.[693] One could consider such statements as too idealistic with no consequential effect on the opponent. Nevertheless these statements appealed to many white Americans, particularly white liberals.

Dyson claims that King was a "master of the white psychology of race".[694] Lawson contended that non-violent protest addressed moral issues and that by appealing to the consciences of whites, non-violent protesters caused whites to confess their sins and repent. Although African-American leaders argued that this was not a battle between black and white, it was nevertheless a race conflict where white segregationists castigated African-Americans. Ordinary white Americans would therefore automatically find themselves affiliated with supremacists when defending the "white

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[687] Simon. Raymond. Public Relations: Concepts And Practices. New York: Wiley, 1984. 9.
[688] Harlan, Louis, R. Thought on the Leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. Rpt. in *We Shall Overcome*. *Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 65.
[689] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 34.
[690] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 68.
[691] King. Martin Luther. Address Delivered at the Launching of the SCLC Crusade for Citizenship at Greater Bethel AME Church. Volume IV: Symbol of the Movement, January 1957- December 1958. http:..www.stanford.edu.group.King.publications.papers.vol4.580212-002-Crusade_Launch.htm
[692] Woodward, C. Vann. The Strange Career Of Jim Crow. 170.
[693] Ibid.
[694] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 34.

race". Lawson stated that many whites claimed that they were ashamed of themselves after they realized the evil of segregation.[695] Dyson writes that millions of southerners came to depend on a love they really didn't deserve and that African-American suffering proved irresistible.[696]

These two statements may seem exaggerated to outsiders. Lawson was an activist of the movement and a proponent of non-violence and Dyson's book is sympathetic to King and the civil rights movement. Yet Meier, who has taken a more objective stance on non-violence, also values the effect of non-violence on public opinion. Meier sees that King first castigated whites but then stated his belief in their redemption if they supported protesters. "King first arouses the guilt feelings of whites, and then relieves them… Like a Greek tragedy, King's performance provides an extraordinary catharsis for the white listener."[697]

It was particularly King's skills to dramatize the African-American experience of discrimination not just in protest but also in rhetoric that affected American public opinion. For example, public opinion granted particular attention to King's *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, which is one of the most influential protest documents in the history of protest and was compared to Emile Zola's letter, *J`accuse* and Thomas Mann's public letter to the dean of the Philosophical Faculty of Bonn.[٦٩٨]

"The letter proved to be a potent weapon in the propaganda battle to legitimate the direct-action movement. It quieted numerous critics of civil disobedience; it won significant new support for ´´Freedom Now.``"[699] In the letter, King dramatized the "misery" of the African-American people by narrating his own hardship and that of his children. Fairclough describes the letter as containing "an urgency and intensity of feeling often absent from his other writings…it soon became a classic document of the civil rights movement, and its most cogent and persuasive defense of civil disobedience."[700] The fact that King wrote the letter from jail added a powerful symbolism to it. Watley contends that the shift of opinion in favor of the protesters that occurred during the Birmingham campaign was given impetus by King's letter.[701] King primarily addressed this letter to white clergymen that had criticized the involvement of African-American ministers in protest actions. It contained an emotional rhetoric, where, for instance, King recounted the disappointment of his children when they were denied access to the public amusement park.[702]

King's *I Have a Dream* speech also contained a very influential rhetoric. The speech aimed to convert the American public and remains one of the most influential speeches in American history.

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[695] Lawson, Jr., James M. "We Are Trying to Raise the ´Moral Issue`". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 279.
[696] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 36.
[697] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* C. Eric Lincoln. 149.
[698] Ibid. 128.
[699] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 132.
[700] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 124.
[701] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 75.
[702] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 293.

King's conciliatory vision of white and black children playing together, his dream of judging a person by his character and not by the color of his skin and the invocation of American values like freedom and justice clothed in religious rhetoric struck a chord with the American public.

Non-violent protesters do not only seek to confuse the opponent by displaying "goodness" in the face of his oppression but to positively astonish third groups with their behavior. Gandhi, for example, advised not to attack the opponent when he is facing difficulties.[703] He chose to postpone demonstrations against the British when he learned that they were facing strikes in Britain. From a strategic perspective, it might be a sound decision for protesters to postpone their protest, as the eruption of other conflicts that the opponent faces might distract the attention of the public and third groups from their protest, which might pass by unrecognized. Gandhi's statement, however, that he would not attack his opponent as they were facing problems, displayed morality and nobility to outsiders, which are the qualities that Cutlip and Center defined above.

American non-violent leaders followed a similar tactic. They even made excuses for white segregationists, who made these leaders appear even more "righteous" in public opinion. King claimed that the white community was engulfed by a culture of fear and that African-Americans had to break this cycle through love and non-violence.[704] "The problem with hatred and violence is that they intensify the fears of the white majority, and leave them less ashamed of their prejudices toward Negroes."[705] A hostile rhetoric, on the other hand, would have made it difficult for African-American leaders to establish effective alliances.

Nash stated that the purpose of any non-violent demonstration was to focus the attention of Americans on the evil of segregation and then change their hearts.[706] Bruce Hartford, a SNCC activist, described how non-violent tactics caused a

> "moral witness" kind of non-violence, an appeal-to-the-conscience-of-the-nation type of non-violence. This type of non-violence was designed to make people aware of what was really going on, and [the assumption was] they would say, "we can't have this, this has got to be stopped," and they would put pressure on the politicians, and the politicians would take action.[707]

Non-violent demonstrations would have been ineffective if they had not aroused the conscience of whites, claimed King.[708]

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[703] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 728.
[704] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 59-60.
[705] Ibid. 61.
[706] Nash, Diane. Inside The Sit-Ins And Freedom Rides: Testimony of A Southern Student. Rpt. in "*We Want Our Freedom*": rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement. W. Stuart Towns. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002. 141.
[707] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[708] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 51.

In the end, one could say that non-violent leaders, most notably King, attempted to publicly display "morality" in their non-violent protest rhetoric to embarrass the opponent in order to secure the support of public opinion.

2.2.4.) Justification of Non-violent Protest and Public Opinion

> Woe to the nation that raises no protest when its rights are outraged! The nation that submits to injustice and oppression without protest is doomed. (Ferenc Deak, a Catholic landowner in Hungary who led a non-violent resistance against Franz Josef, the emperor of Austria.) [709]

> Rebellion cannot exist without the feeling that, somewhere and somehow, one is right. (Albert Camus)[710]

This study refers to non-violent protest rhetoric as a form of "propaganda" that aimed at influencing public opinion. The opponent, however, will offset the "non-violent propaganda" with counter-propaganda. Jasper writes that politicians, newspaper reporters or editors, preachers and police officials are often actively involved in conscious competition with claims of protest groups.[711] During the civil rights movement, J. Edgar Hoover, for example, referred to King as America's most notorious liar. Individuals or groups sought to defame King by presenting pictures where they claimed that he attended communist meetings.

African-American non-violent leaders therefore had to justify their protest to American public opinion, which will be shown in this sub-chapter. Bell writes, "the Negro's claim to equality and his right to strong methods to attain it were so widely questioned by the prevailing culture that even the members of the movement had to legitimate their activity in their own eyes by denying the extent of the coercion they used and by renouncing the right of self-defense."[712] Legitimization was important to African-Americans.[713] The justification of protest is crucial to non-violent protesters as the opponent will himself seek to win over public opinion and portray protesters that disrupt the pattern of every-day life as troublemakers. Non-violent leaders felt therefore compelled to justify their protest to the American public so that they would receive public support.

Protesters are placed in a position that obliges them to justify their actions, particularly since they initiate resistance to existing laws or customs. Many critics described King as an agitator.

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[709] Gregg, B. Richard. The Power of Nonviolence. 15.
[710] Camus, Albert. The Rebel. 13.
[711] Jasper, James M. The Art of Moral Protest. 286.
[712] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 260.
[713] Bell, Inge Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 36.

Hoover tagged King as "the most dangerous Negro in America."[714] African-American and white critics accused non-violent protesters of anarchy and irresponsible behavior. One example is the condemnation by white clergymen of King during the Birmingham campaign, to which King responded with the above mentioned *Letter from Birmingham Jail*. Non-violent protesters also had to fend off claims, mainly circulated by the FBI and other adversaries, that sought to discredit the movement by claiming that it was infiltrated by communists.

African-Americans adopted several arguments to justify their preference for direct action. The era of the civil rights movement was characterized by the increased belief of many African-Americans that direct protest action had become indispensable, unlike past times where African-American leaders, like Booker T. Washington, Du Bois or other leaders had suggested solutions other than confrontation. Activists therefore justified their action by explaining that they only opted for direct action after all other methods had failed to produce any meaningful results. They claimed that they were forced to turn to protest as it was their only alternative. In Selma, King listed all the steps protest leaders would take before they would begin the protest, "if they refuse to register us, we will appeal to Governor Wallace. If he doesn't listen, we will appeal to the legislature. If the legislature doesn't listen, we will seek to arouse the Federal government by marching by the thousands to the places of registration."[715] African-Americans justified protest as the only option for equal rights, as segregationists would not respond to any other means, such as negotiations. Protest leaders argued that African-Americans could not passively wait for whites to grant them their rights. Petitions or education alone would not suffice to change race relations in America.

Sharp notes the importance of gaining the trust of the opponent's group. Protesters, therefore, should not exaggerate or falsify facts. Truthfulness and accuracy might help them earn the sympathy of third groups. "Statements to the opponent and to the public should be as correct as possible," writes Sharp.[716] Sharp even recommends that protesters inform the opponent of their plans and intentions and operate in public as openly as possible.[717] During the Montgomery Boycott, for example, protest leaders chose to operate publicly since they recognized that concealing their plans from the opponent would be impossible and unproductive.

African-American protesters integrated into their rhetoric American ideals to justify their protest. They contended that they were protesting in the spirit of American ideals and the American dream. Although activists defied the law, they affirmed their faith in the soundness of American institutions. To whites who denounced their groups as subversive, they demonstrated that they

[714] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 80.
[715] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 229.
[716] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 727.
[717] Ibid. 728.

wanted to preserve the truth of American values.[718] King compared protest students to abolitionists and saw a connection between African-American protest and the Boston Tea Party which was "nothing but a massive act of civil disobedience." The abolitionists and those who stood up against slavery also practiced civil disobedience; "by practicing civil disobedience they are in line with men and women through the ages who have stood up for something that is morally right."[719] When King announced the project of boycotting the state of Alabama in the wake of the Selma campaign, he justified the boycott by referring to the boycott of British merchants before the American Revolution and Jefferson's trade embargo during the Napoleonic Wars.[720]

Jasper contends that moral mobilizers must appeal to the common-sense understandings of their audiences. "They needed to frame their appeals in ways that resonate with the beliefs and experiences of those they hope to persuade and recruit."[721] Sharp writes that if the opponent and activists share common beliefs and norms of behavior they can appeal with the expectation of understanding and sympathy.[722] When these common ideals and standards are absent, "formidable barriers" will be present.[723] If protesters appeal to a common set of values that the opponent believes in, like American freedom or religious icons (e.g. Jesus), they are more likely to find allies.

Non-violent protesters could not afford to alienate American public opinion and went out of their way to demonstrate that they did not have any anarchist objectives despite their disobedience towards the law during demonstrations. African-American protesters therefore evoked the ideals of American democracy in their speeches and used icons of American democracy.[724] In his first speech during the Montgomery Boycott, King said: "The only weapon that we have…is the weapon of protest," and "the great glory of American democracy is the right to protest for right."[725] During the *I Have a Dream* speech, King made several allusions to American ideals. He proclaimed that his dream was rooted in the American dream and referred to the Emancipation Proclamation.[726] He even held a speech entitled *The American Dream*, which he related to the struggle of African-Americans.[727]

2.2.5.) Alliances with White Activists and Liberals

[718] In his famous "I have A Dream" speech, King affirmed his belief in the American dream.
[719] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 50.
[720] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 260.
[721] Jasper, James M. The Art of Moral Protest. 287.
[722] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 726.
[723] Ibid. 726-727.
[724] Dudziak, Mary L. Cold War Civil Rights. 154.
[725] Garrow, David. Bearing the Cross. 24.
[726] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament Of Hope. 219.
[727] Ibid. 208.

King's non-violent rhetoric enabled him to form important alliances with white Americans, like liberals, activists, unions and wealthy donors for example. These alliances were important to the movement as it particularly depended on white donors and white liberals to channel public opinion and to lobby American politicians. If King had not preached a conciliatory rhetoric towards white Americans, white activists would not have joined CORE or SNCC for example and ordinary white citizens would not have taken part in demonstrations, sending a message of black-white unity to the public. Nevertheless some of these alliances posed some difficulties and by the end of the non-violent movement, they ebbed for various reasons that will be analyzed in this sub-chapter.

In particular, the Black Power rhetoric and the slow process of political change upset alliances with liberals. At the beginning of the movement, King's rhetoric attracted many liberals who, nevertheless fell out of favor with African-American activists by the end of the sixties. However, the aim of this sub-chapter is not to study the effect of Black Power rhetoric or the role of liberals to the movement. The important aspect to analyze in this study is that civil rights activists emphasized in their rhetoric the importance of having alliances with white liberals and activists. Although these alliances failed in the mid-sixties, they nevertheless played an important role with regard to influencing public opinion.

King stressed that non-violent protesters had to "master the art of alliance" in order to "channel constructive Negro activity into political life."[728] Since African-Americans were a minority in America they mainly depended on the "white" majority. Wilkins argued that since African-Americans constituted only 18 million in a country of 186 million citizens, allies from the majority had to be won over to avoid frustration and failure.[729] King and other movement leaders sought to include as many whites as possible in their campaigns. He envisaged a more active role for whites in the civil rights movement and called on them to direct demands for reform to their municipal, state and national government. King also emphasized the similarities of poor whites and African-Americans and urged them to take a united stand.[730] He sought to link in his rhetoric the welfare of African-Americans to that of whites, "there is no separate black path to power and fulfillment that does not intersect white paths, and there is no separate white path to power and fulfillment, short of social disaster, that does not share that power with black aspirations for freedom and human dignity."[731] King's moderation and tendency to accept compromises sustained his image as a

[728] Moses, Greg. Revolution Of Conscience. 178. - King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 154.
[729] Wilkins, Roy. "We Must Use Every Tool". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 399.
[730] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 194.
[731] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 52.

"leader of moral stature in the eyes of white men," claims Meier.[732] Many white Americans regarded King as a friend and drew parallels between him and Booker T. Washington.[733]

Other leaders who did not advocate non-violence like King also recognized the need of white alliances. The militant activist H. Rap Brown, who advocated self-defense, recognized the tactical correctness of non-violence in order to receive "sympathy for the movement".[734] Rustin wrote an article entitled *The Negro Needs White Allies*, in which he argued for the need to rely on allies like the white middle-class and white labor.[735] The March on Washington took place because African-Americans needed allies.[736] "What is required now is an alliance between the trade union movement and the civil rights movement and the unemployed to face this problem of jobs directly," said Rustin after the march with regard to solving the problem of African-American unemployment.[737] The march was a first step towards drawing new allies to the movement, writes also Garrow.[738]

The movement's rhetoric had to avoid any suggestion that it was a black versus white conflict, as the opposition could render the cause less compelling to sympathetic whites.[739] King argued that African-Americans were dependent on white assistance. Ethnic groups like the Irish, the Italians and the Jews were successful in America because they joined in alliances with other groups.[740] SCLC, for example, became financially dependent upon whites for financial support.[741] King had to convince African-American militants that alliances with whites would enormously benefit their cause and not diminish their leadership like many of them feared. "Far from losing independence in an alliance, [the black man] is using it for constructive and multiplied gains."[742] King contended that white support was crucial in enabling African-Americans to move Congress and the administration to act.[743]

His non-violent rhetoric particularly allowed African-Americans to develop alliances with the federal government and with President Kennedy and President Johnson. Although civil right activists condemned the reluctant efforts of the two Presidents, the civil rights movement depended on this alliance. Kennedy and Johnson intervened to address Americans on behalf of the movement at times when African-American leaders succeeded in drawing public attention to their protest. African-American non-violent leaders also established ties with other politicians, intellectuals, etc.

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[732] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* C. Eric Lincoln. 150.
[733] Ibid. 148.
[734] Al-Amin, Jamil. Die, nigger, die! / by H. Rap Brown. New York: Dial Press, 1969. 81.
[735] Rustin, Bayard. The Negro Needs White Allies. *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 341.
[736] Ibid.
[737] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 288.
[738] Ibid.
[739] Ibid.
[740] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 50.
[741] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 256.
[742] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 52.
[743] Ibid. 51.

During the Chicago campaign, King envisaged a convergence of religious labor, academic and liberal supporters under a non-violent umbrella.[744] There was considerable support and participation in demonstrations from major religious bodies of various denominations.[745] Labor organizations, liberals and religious organizations lent their support to African-Americans. Activists also turned to universities and colleges for support. During the Chicago campaign, King even hoped that the Hispanic community would rise up against racial injustice.[746] Further allies were Jewish leaders, labor unions, most notably the auto workers, civil liberty groups and occasionally high officials of the Kennedy and Johnson administration.[747]

Reliance on white alliances, on the other hand, caused leaders like Malcolm X to criticize King. In an interview Malcolm X declared: "White people follow King. White people pay King. White people subsidize King. White people support King."[748] Elijah Muhammad also issued a similar criticism during SCLC's Chicago campaign when he stated that whites wanted to buy King. "He loves the white folks and the white people know it."[749] Non-violent leaders may face stern criticism from more militant groups. In order to maintain credibility in the eyes of African-Americans, non-violent leaders had to be careful not to become too closely affiliated with whites to avoid being considered sell-outs by their people. Malcolm X described King as an "Uncle Tom". Critics of King claimed that he would quote white thinkers in order to impress liberal whites, although Fairclough refutes this criticism.[750] SCLC and other protest groups, therefore, had to preserve a form of independence and integrity despite their relations with white groups.

Some African-American activists contended that the involvement of whites in large numbers would send signals of black weakness, demonstrating that African-Americans could not deal with the situation by themselves. Others complained that some whites perpetuated the stereotype of black inferiority and white paternalism.[751] Many African-American activists also doubted the commitment of white supporters who would return to their pleasant suburbs whereas African-Americans would continue to live with the effects of segregation.[752] The bitterness and anger of African-American activists in turn alienated white activists. For example, black and white relations were particularly marred as rumors circulated that SNCC male activists forced white women volunteers to have sex with them so that they prove that they were not prejudiced.[753]

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[744] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest. 65.
[745] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 699-700.
[746] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest. 69.
[747] Harlan, Louis, R. Thought on the Leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 64.
[748] Clark, Kenneth B. King, Malcolm, Baldwin. 42-43.
[749] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest. 77.
[750] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 418.
[751] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 170-171.
[752] Ibid. 178.
[753] ibid.

The emergence of the Black Power rhetoric did not only mar King's non-violent rhetoric but particularly upset black-white alliances and had its toll on public opinion. It is neither the intention nor the purpose of this study to undertake an analysis of the Black Power rhetoric. Yet as this dissertation analyzes the factors that had an influence on public opinion, it must be noted that the Black Power rhetoric ran counter to the interests of non-violent leaders like King. One of the reasons that led King to reject Black Power was the exclusion of whites from the protest. Although King agreed with Black Power proponents that there were many whites who treated the question of racism with indifference, he nevertheless maintained that there were also whites who had sacrificed for the movement.[754] "It (Black Power) denies that there can be reliable white allies, even though some whites have died heroically at the side of Negroes in our struggle and others have risked economic and political peril to support our cause."[755]

The problem with Black Power was that it was a slogan, loaded with words and not a real program, wrote Wilkins in his autobiography. "It crystallized resentments that had been building for years, the frustrations of black folk on one hand – and all the animosity of the white backlash on the other."[756] Massachusetts' African-American senator Edward Brooke complained, "that slogan has struck fear in the heart of black America as well as in the heart of white America….The Negro has to gain allies-not adversaries."[757] Charles R. Sims, who founded the "Deacons for Defense and Justice", the first organized African-American vigilante group in the South, surprisingly referred to the same aspect and criticizes the Black Power movement as it deterred white sympathizers that granted financial support to the movement.[758]

With the emergence of Black Power and the call for African-American self-reliance, Carmichael, Mc Kissick and other militant activists de-emphasized the involvement of white activists in protests and argued that African-American participation should have a dominant role. SNCC became particularly suspicious of white involvement, despite the fact that SNCC stressed from the beginning that African-Americans should allow the white public to join demonstrations.[759]

The militancy of Black Power rhetoric and the rejection of non-violence in the sixties gradually damaged black-white alliances. According to Sitkoff, the split of black-white unity occurred in Mississippi.[760] In Mississippi, the presence of many white activists intimidated local African-Americans. African-American sharecroppers who had been dependent on white landlords their

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[754] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 51.
[755] Ibid.
[756] Wilkins, Roy. Standing Fast. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 80.
[757] Lincoln, C. Eric. Race, Religion, and the Counting American Dilemma. 107.
[758] Raines, Howard. My Soul Is Rested. 422.
[759] Young noticed that SCLC never had the problem SNCC and other groups had of whites taking over. Whites participated in SCLC yet they were always in a "subservient role" as he described it, "and that's the way it has to be." Herbers, John, The Black Dilemma. 51-52.
[760] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 167.

whole lives, for example, treated white activists with suspicion and fear. Weisbrot writes that direct contact of white activists and southern African-Americans was intimidating to the latter. He describes a "white college girl down in Terrell County for SNCC, with long hair, silver earrings, and sandals, bouncing confidently along a Georgia road to a sharecropper's shack, exhorting the awed and worried Negro who opened the door to register, and insisting that he call her by her first name."[761]

King's critic of the Vietnam War also repelled white allies. It was a choice that was not strategically sound as King forfeited many supporters of the movement, among them the media, liberals and the President. King feared that it might damage his credibility as a non-violent leader and a Nobel laureate if he chose to ignore the issue. His condemnation of the war, however, exposed him to attacks from various directions, most notably African-American activists. Although King declared that his opposition sprang from his concerns as an individual and a minister and not as president of SCLC,[762] it nevertheless affected the movement.

King's rhetoric had particularly attracted many white liberals who channeled American public opinion. White liberals provided moral and financial support to the movement. James Q. Wilson states that the fundamental support of the white liberal had been "to supply votes and the political pressure…that make it almost suicidal for an important Northern politician openly to court anti-Negro sentiment."[763] Furthermore, McAdam adds that the liberal's support enhanced the bargaining position of African-Americans by increasing the political consequences of opposing acceptable demands.[764] Meier argues that King's rhetoric of white redemption caused many white liberal trade unions, which were philosophically committed to racial equality, to contribute hundreds of thousands of dollars to SCLC.[765]

However, despite the fact that many African-American activists initially regarded white liberals as important allies, they began to suspiciously perceive them as playing a controversial role during the sixties. Liberals started to fall out of favor with African-American activists after they proved reluctant to fully support their political demands in the sixties. King expressed this change in his book, *Chaos or Community*:

> There is a dire need today for a liberalism which is truly liberal. What we are witnessing today in so many northern communities is a sort of quasi-liberalism which is based on the principle of looking sympathetically at all sides. It is a liberalism so bent on seeing all sides, that it fails to become committed to either side. It is a liberalism that is so objectively analytical that it is not subjectively committed. It is a liberalism which is neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm. We call for a liberalism from the North which

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[761] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 100. a. 110.
[762] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 453.
[763] Wilson, James Q. The Strategy of Protest: Problems of Negro Civil Action. Journal of Conflict Resolution 5 (no. 3) : 291-303. Rpt. in *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970*. Doug. McAdam. 160.
[764] Ibid.
[765] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* C. Eric Lincoln. 149.

> will be thoroughly committed to the ideal of racial justice and will not be deterred by the propaganda and subtle words of those who say, ´´Slow up for a while, you are pushing too fast``.[766]

Clark contends that liberals distanced themselves from African-Americans after their "northern shift". Liberals thought that civil rights laws would discriminate against whites.[767] Many white liberals responded to the increasing demands of African-Americans by admonishing them for pushing too fast. King even held a speech entitled *Negroes Are Not Moving Too Fast*.[768] King even went so far as to describe white moderates as the "Negro's great stumbling-block in his stride toward freedom."[769] Many African-American activists attacked white liberals for their refusal to recognize the urgency of the protest movement and the slow pace of change that liberals endorsed. The gains that liberals referred to as progress frustrated many African-American activists. Carmichael, who was one of the influential activists in the civil rights movement, contended that the tone of voice of the movement had been adapted to an audience of liberal whites and that African-Americans had to change it. "We cannot be expected any longer to march and have our heads broken in order to say to whites: come on, you're nice guys."[770] King even contended that African-Americans were more disappointed with liberals for their ambiguous position than with white racists like the Ku Klux Klan.[771] White liberals claimed that they supported integration by claiming their neighborhood or their university had one African-American family or member, he mocked. "The white liberal must see that the Negro needs not only love but also justice. It is not enough to say; ´´We love Negroes, but we have many Negro friends.`` They must demand justice for Negroes."[772]

Liberals identified more with King's rhetoric of brotherhood and Christian love than with the political objectives of the movement. Although they may have played a controversial role during the movement, their assistance played a role in bringing about the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act, even if many liberals were not prepared to support African-Americans any further. This shows that even if liberals did not agree completely with all of the objectives of non-violent protesters, their alliance nevertheless generated important political gains for the movement. Liberals neutralized many northern whites, lobbied politicians and played a role in changing public opinion in the media.

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[766] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 199.
[767] Clark, Kenneth B. King, Malcolm, Baldwin. 5.
[768] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament Of Hope. 176.
[769] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 235.
[770] Herbers, John. The Black Dilemma. 44.
[771] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 88.
[772] Ibid. 88-89.

2.3.) King's Non-violent Rhetoric

In this sub-chapter the author analyzes the major components of King's non-violent rhetoric: Christian love, the Beloved Community and the depersonalization of the opponent. It is not so much relevant if these concepts were idealistic and therefore unrealistic practically with regard to converting the opponent. What is relevant is that King's rhetoric struck a chord with American public opinion, as the author wrote earlier. Yet how did the Christian love rhetoric, for example, become relevant to public opinion? After presenting this concept, the author analyzes perspectives of militant leaders like Malcolm X and academics like Walton, who criticized King's Christian love rhetoric. Although many protesters criticized the insistence on Christian love and considered it unreasonable and passive, his public commitment to Christian love had its influence on American public opinion.

This sub-chapter shows how activists publicly pledged themselves to Christian love. This chapter also shows that there were political and cultural factors that allowed King to preach the conciliatory rhetoric of the Beloved Community. King and other non-violent leaders went out of their way in order not to offend white Americans and or give the impression that the conflict was black versus white. Whereas the rhetoric of King and other non-violent leaders sought to depersonalize the conflict by portraying the "system" as unjust, non-violent activists deliberately relied on the portrayal of "villains" like Jim Clark to sway public opinion.

2.3.1.) Introduction of Christian Love

> Along the way of life, someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of hate.[773] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

> At the center of non-violence stands the law of love.[774] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

> The Christian doctrine of love, operating through the Gandhian method of nonviolence, is one of the most potent weapons available to an oppressed people in their struggle for freedom.[775] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Christian love constituted the core ethic of King's non-violent rhetoric. Many King and Civil Rights Movement scholars have thoroughly analyzed and presented King's application of Christian

[773] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 19.
[774] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 97-98.
[775] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 7.

love, focusing on its religious and ethical aspects. While there are scholars who claim that Christian love was irrelevant to the protest, others emphasize its importance to the movement. While critics like Ansbro argued for the relevancy of Christian love, Walton declared it as irrelevant. Just as black and white Americans positively responded to non-violence and endorsed non-violent protest, there were critics and militants that opposed it, like Malcolm X and Black Power advocates. This chapter introduces King's concept of Christian love and shows how King, other activists and non-violent organizations constantly declared their commitment to Christian love in public. This sub-chapter shows that it was not so much relevant whether Christian love was an idealistic and unrealizable ethic but rather that the concept of Christian love portrayed a positive image of African-Americans to public opinion. The fact that African-American ministers and non-violent leaders like King called on African-Americans to "love their enemies" particularly caught the attention of the media and allowed the movement to gain liberals, white sympathizers and donors.

King's concept of love was influenced by his study of philosophers and theologians like Plato, Aristotle, Saint Augustine, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Karl Barth, Martin Buber, Reinhold Niebuhr, Anders Nygren, Paul Ramsey, Harold L. De Wolf, Edgar S. Brightman and Walter Rauschenbush. John Rathbun regarded King's concept of love as a "social tool", which was a synthesis of philosophies like Neo-orthodoxy, Social Gospel, Existentialism, Marxism, Hegelianism and Gandhism.[776]

King identified non-violence with love. To King, love was the most powerful weapon in the "non-violent army".[777] He had nearly despaired of the power of love to affect social change until he discovered Gandhi's example.[778] The latter proved to him that love could transcend human relations. Love is the "only cement that can hold this broken community together. When I am commanded to love, I am commanded to restore community, to resist injustice, and to meet the needs of my brothers."[779] Love is the most durable power in the world and the ultimate form of the Christian ethic, the highest good and the "chief quest of ethical philosophy". It is sacrificial and redemptive.[780] Moral philosophy is impoverished when it turns away from love.[781] As all life is interrelated, love should be the basis of all human relations. It is the supreme unifying principle of life[782] and the "most powerful and durable force in the universe."[783] King believed that love held the universe together. To King, God was love and He created the universe in love. Without love there would be no redemption and no meaning of life. King deemed love even more fundamental than

[776] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 176.
[777] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 34.
[778] Smith. Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 104.
[779] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 100.
[780] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 64.
[781] Moses, Greg. Revolution Of Conscience. 187.
[782] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 89.
[783] Ivory, D. Luther. Toward A Theology Of Radical Involvement. 47.

freedom and justice.[784] Justice and laws without love would be hollow.[785] One could establish freedom and justice through violence yet love required non-violence. King argued that love compelled humans to be just and that it was therefore the foundation of justice and freedom. Love is expressed through justice, law and power.[786]

Smith described King's ethic of love as "his greatest singular contribution to Christian ethics and American social philosophy." Jesus' love was the "most decisive theological element in the origin and development of King's non-violent resistance."[787] King based his love ethic on Christian sources, like the Bible. In the First Epistle of St. John, it says: "Let us love one another; for love is of God: and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."[788] "When we allow the spark of revenge in our souls to flame up in hate toward our enemies,' Jesus teaches, ´´Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.``„[789]

In order to demonstrate that Christian love was not just a "sentimental emotion", King referred to the Greek notions: Eros, philia and agape to differentiate between sentimental love and Christian love. Eros, which stems from the Platonic philosophy, means "yearning of the soul for the divine." It is a form of aesthetic or romantic love. Philia means intimate affectionateness between friends. There is a reciprocal love involved in the notion of philia, where one loves and is loved back. Agape, however, is a "religious love"; a redeeming good will for all men. "Agape flows from God into the lives of sinful men, and enables them to realize their sinfulness and to forgive and love their enemies."[790] "The Christian's love for his neighbor must be spontaneous, unmotivated, unconditional, unlimited, and uncalculating."[791] As Jesus said, "if you love them that love you, what thanks have you? For even sinners love those that love them."[792]

King described agape as "the love of God working in the minds of men."[793] One loves humans not because they are likeable or because one is attracted to them but because they are loved by God. Agape is the love practiced by Jesus who said "Love your enemy" and not "like your enemy". Jesus did not just love righteous people but also sinners.[794] King stated in an interview that he did not like

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[784] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 61.
[785] Ibid. 63.
[786] Ibid. 61.
[787] Ibid. 120.
[788] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 86.
[789] King, Martin Luther. Strength to Love. 19.
[790] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 10.
[791] Ibid. 14.
[792] Ibid.
[793] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 13.
[794] Ibid.

people like Connor and that he did not expect African-Americans to like them.[795] "We love men not because we like them, not because their attitudes and ways appeal to us, but because God loves them."[796] "In speaking of love at this point, we are not referring to some sentimental emotion. It would be nonsense to urge men to love their oppressor in an affectionate sense."[797]

King portrayed "loving the enemy" as a Christian ethic and non-violent leaders constantly referred to Jesus in order to demonstrate this understanding of love. Jesus was an important symbol of the non-violent movement and represented an ideal example of non-violence. He occupied a pivotal position in King's non-violent theology. Thurman, a proponent of Christian love, whose thinking influenced King, contended that the religion of Jesus obligated the disinherited to love their enemies.[798] While Gandhi furnished the method, Jesus furnished the spirit and motivation.[799] The image of Jesus was all-present in the movement. Walker claimed, "the basis of Martin Luther King's ministry and mission was the ethics and morality of the Crucified Carpenter from Galilee…[F]irst and foremost he was an unapologetic proclaimer of the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth".[800] Jesus was the "New Being", the "language of eternity translated into time."[801] King based his rhetoric of conversion on the example of Jesus. Just like Jesus had prayed for his tormenters, King called on African-Americans to display forgiveness toward white racists. He identified Jesus' prayer to forgive those that hurt him as "love as its best".[802] It was Jesus who said: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."[803] The pivotal position Jesus held for African-Americans, particularly religious southern African-Americans, enabled King to relate non-violence and religion. Jesus rejected revenge and retaliation. "He could have said "father, get even with them," but this was not his response. Though subjected to inexpressible agony, suffering from excruciating pain, despised and rejected, nevertheless, he cried, ´´Father, forgive them,``" wrote King in his book, *Strength to Love,* to emphasize the "non-violent" example of Jesus.[804]

King relied on Christian ethics as his basis for non-violence but one must not forget the fact that African-Americans and white Americans were both Christians and Americans. The combination of these factors undoubtedly facilitated the acceptance of King's religious non-violent philosophy. King could rely on African-American Christian principles that would also appeal to white Christian

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[795] Ibid. 335
[796] Ibid. 8-9.
[797] Ibid. 8.
[798] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 28.
[799] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 17.
[800] Sunnemark, Fredrik. Ring Out Freedom! the voice of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the making of the civil rights movement. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004. 11.
[801] Fluker, Walter E. They Looked For a City. 125.
[802] King, Martin Luther. Strength to Love. 36.
[803] Ibid. 19.
[804] Ibid. 36.

Americans. It is doubtful whether King would have had the same success in a different context, with religious and nationalistic differences. Even if many African-Americans rejected Christian love, the rhetoric and the non-violent protest conveyed the image of peaceful demonstrators in the face of segregationist aggression.

2.3.2.) Relevance of Christian Love during the Civil Rights Movement

There were numerous critics of non-violence during the movement and also analysts like Walton who argued that Christian love was irrelevant or unrealistic. Not only African-American leaders like Malcolm X but also Niebuhr, for example, criticized Christian love. Niebuhr contended that love was restricted to human relationships, like family relations. It would therefore be unrealistic to realize love with regard to races, classes or nations, since interests and power determined these relations. Love in its fullness was never a historical possibility and only fulfilled beyond history.[805] Disinterested love, as Niebuhr called it, was an "impossible possibility."[806] He placed particular emphasis on laws that serve as a restraining force and regulate human behavior. King agreed on this point. Although laws cannot change attitudes, they can control the behavior. "Judicial decrees may not change the heart, but they can restrain the heartless."[807] Yet while many African-Americans may have ridiculed the idea of "loving the opponent", the concept did not alienate churchgoers and students who admired King. One must take into consideration that many of the protesters that participated in southern campaigns consisted of churchgoers as the church was the ideal recruitment place of protesters.

On the other hand, the absoluteness of King's demand to love the enemy did not appeal to many African-American protesters. "Bomb our homes and threaten our children, and, as difficult as it is, we will still love you. Send our hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities at the midnight hour and drag us out on some wayside road and leave us half-dead as you beat us, and we will still love you."[808] Walton claims that one should not expect oppressed people to respond with love and criticizes such demands by citing the example of those held in concentration camps. These people had no reason to love their oppressor nor could one reasonably ask them to display such sentiment. "When the Ku Klux Klan and the rabid segregationists ignore the black man's creative

[805] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 67.
[806] Ibid. 117.
[807] King, Strength To Love. 34.
[808] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 9.

suffering, and even respond with renewed energies of hate, is universal love an appropriate or an elevating force?"[809]

This critic seems justified if an unwavering commitment to "loving the opponent" causes protesters to reject non-violence. Calling on African-Americans to meet segregationists and racists with love might seem utopian and unrealistic, particularly to critics of non-violence, who argue that it is impossible to love an oppressor. Clark contends that it could lead to the opposite effect if one asked people to love an opponent who has committed cruelties against them. Clark argued with King that to demand from the oppressed to love the oppressor placed an additional burden on the former and required a level of "maturity and sophistication" that most humans did not have.[810]

> This extreme emphasis turned some people away from nonviolent means. When understood as a requirement for nonviolent action (rather than a helpful refinement), the demand for ´´love`` for people who have done cruel things may turn people who are justifiably bitter and unable to love their opponents toward violence, as it is the technique most consistent with bitterness and hatred.

agrees Sharp.[811] Walton poses the question of whether it is realistic to expect persons whose characters do not resemble Gandhi or Jesus to respond to oppression with love.[٨١٢] Perhaps a Gandhi or a Jesus could respond unresistingly to attacks, yet other ordinary humans might not share the same belief.[813] Walton challenges and questions modern man's capacity to attain the transcendent love that is symbolized by Christ on the cross, "How realistic is it to expect of people united for basically political purposes a standard of love normally out of reach of all but the most singular of them?"[814]

Walton also criticizes King's concept of agape by contending that the latter gave no standards or criteria for agape. "We are left simply with a definition drawn, at that, from classical Greek texts, and a moral imperative directed toward all who would practice nonviolence."[815] Yet one must take into consideration the motive of King's call to love segregationists. By demanding from African-Americans to love their "enemy", King wanted the protest to remain non-violent. Fairclough contends that even though most African-Americans misunderstood or rejected his philosophy, they could understand "well enough that violence would be futile."[816] The focal point of King's rhetoric was non-violence. When he preached to protesters, his main objective was to convince them to protest non-violently.

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[809] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 83.
[810] Clark, Kenneth B. King, Malcolm, Baldwin. 10.
[811] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 635.
[812] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 83.
[813] ibid.
[814] Ibid. 79-80.
[815] Ibid. 78.
[816] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 139.

Another issue Walton raises is how truly "selfless and disinterested" agape is when African-Americans sought "something" in return.[817] Walton regards this idealistic ethic of love as unrealistic as it seeks harmony with "divine love" rather than confluence with human interest.[818] Yet Walton seems to have lost the practical and main implications of King's non-violent theology and Christian love. Although King preached Christian love from behind a pulpit, non-violent protesters delivered practical protest strategies in the field, which means that King did not just present a philosophy to the American race question but also protest techniques. Questioning the practicality of "self-less" agape seems counter-productive, particularly since it is irrelevant to non-violent protest as long as the protest is non-violent. Although a non-violent rhetoric should not be totally idealistic, in order not to alienate protesters, it may nevertheless have idealistic traits even if they are unrealizable.

Although King repeatedly explained what he meant by "loving" his opponent, and differentiated between emotional love and agape, Americans usually relate the word "love" to emotions. Smith notes that King preached a "radical" interpretation or understanding of love.[819] One rarely associates the word "radical" with the word love, as love does not imply force or strength, which the term "radical" usually implies. Despite the attempts of sympathetic advocates of the movement to defend King's concept of love, many of his critics condemned it for its weakness. When SCLC moved to Chicago, activists found it increasingly difficult to even speak of love. Some SCLC activists even pandered to anti-white feelings in order to get a hearing in Chicago's ghettoes.[820]

When developing or implementing a protest strategy, it is necessary to apply words or terms in a protest rhetoric that the people who form the lines of protesters will not reject. Whereas many Southern African-Americans may have accepted Christian love in the South, it was extremely difficult to attract African-Americans in the North. Fairclough contends that the Gandhian philosophy even confused African-Americans in Montgomery. Although King based "loving one's enemy" on Christian teachings, many African-American protesters considered self-sacrifice and conversion through love ridiculous. Most of them remained non-violent only out of loyalty and affection to King.[821] King was a popular and respected leader who succeeded in attracting many African-Americans by his charisma and leadership.

Sharp contends that non-violence does not necessitate that protesters love their opponent. Yet he concedes that the effectiveness of non-violent techniques may increase when actionists refrain from hatred and hostility and maximize their goodwill for members of the opponent group.[822] "Repression against people who are not only nonviolent but personally friendly while persisting in

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[817] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 80.
[818] Ibid.
[819] Smith, Ervin. The Ethics of Martin Luther King. 151.
[820] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 284.
[821] Ibid. 26.
[822] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 633-635.

their firm action will often appear less justifiable than repression of hostile persons."[823] Sharp contends that appeals to love the opponent may sometimes be politically naive yet he insists that the absence of hatred is effective for non-violence.[824] Yet even if African-Americans did not love whites, it was more important that they did not physically attack them during protest or display signs of aggression.

King's rhetoric may not have caused protesters to adopt love towards the opponent but it drove home the message that they should be non-violent. When conflict leaders preach Christian love, which represents the opposite of violence, it might have a calming effect on protesters or on the conflict itself, compared to a conflict driven by a rhetoric of hate and destruction that might lead to violence. Dyson contends that since the non-violent movement forbade retaliation to racial violence, rhetorical resistance became very important. "King also understood that rhetoric had moral uses inside the civil rights camp, as movement devotees encouraged each other through countless speeches and made use of songs to revive their flagging spirits."[825]

Ansbro claims that agape was relevant to non-violence in the movement for several reasons. The author will only present those reasons he judges relevant to this study: 1.) Non-violence was necessary for the transformation of the demonstrator and the preservation of discipline during demonstrations, 2.) agape prevented destructive conflict and was a positive force in the movement, 3.) the history of the movement demonstrates that many activists practiced agape, 4.) agape through individuals can transform collective activities, 5.) agape grasps that persons commit evil due to their moral blindness, 6.) while love cannot be perfectly actualized, it serves as a norm for attitudes and actions, 7.) non-violence without agape would not have had the same effect on the demonstrator and the opponent, and 8.) violence contaminates the cause even if it is applied for a noble cause.[826]

Ansbro's argumentation seems to rely mostly on moral aspects. For example, it is questionable whether agape can transform collective activities or whether it grasps that persons commit evil due to moral blindness. On the other hand, violence can "contaminate" a "noble cause", as Ansbro writes. Public opinion will simply perceive non-violence and Christian love as more legitimate than violent means and are likely to cause outsiders to sympathize with protesters.[827] It is this point that this study emphasizes. Apart from whether African-American protesters adopted Christian love or whether King's rhetoric promoted the maintenance of non-violent protest, the study asserts that Christian love proved ideal to influence public opinion.

Walton contends that love is irrelevant to the effectiveness of non-violence and refers to the success of CORE and other groups that practiced non-violence without putting particular emphasis

[823] Ibid. 634.
[824] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 634.
[825] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 129.
[826] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 277-278.
[827] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 595.

on love.[828] However, CORE relied more on single actions rather than on the masses as CORE did not organize mass meetings like SCLC and did not have the same effect on a vast number of people like church-visitors. Second, CORE did not seek to attract public opinion as King and SCLC did.

Walton further argues that love is dispensable by referring to the march that Randolph planned in the thirties. Randolph managed to coerce President Roosevelt to issue an order outlawing job discrimination in defense industries. According to Walton, there was no need for moral Gandhian persuasion during that incident, as Randolph won strictly on pragmatic grounds.[829] The businessmen of Birmingham may have agreed to compromise due to economic coercion but other factors also played a significant role. The federal government exerted pressure on white businessmen and politicians in Birmingham after Americans watched non-violent protesters on television whose leaders, who preached love and non-violence, were brutally beaten by the police.

The relevance of Christian love was that it had an impact on public opinion. The majority of non-violent protesters, hence, do not have to believe in the concept of "loving the opponent". Meier claims that King's manipulation of Christian symbols and religious terminology appealed to whites. "To talk in terms of Christianity, love, nonviolence is reassuring to the mentality of white America."[830] The movement symbolized a "moral force", as Levison stated.[٨٣١] This "morality" enabled public opinion to identify with the African-American protesters who preached Christian love and faced armed policemen who crushed down their protest. Greg Moses contends, "the ability to raise ethical questions, assert their priority, and sustain their impact is important, especially in the face of structures famous for their ability to suppress ethical consciousness."[832] When President Johnson went on television after Bloody Sunday in Selma and appealed to Congress to pass the civil rights bill, he ended his speech with the dramatic statement of "we shall overcome". The fact that the President of the United States resorted to the rhetoric of the movement without fear of alienating public opinion implies that the latter increasingly identified with this rhetoric.

2.3.3.) Christian Love in the Civil Rights Movement

> Father, forgive them. (When Montgomery ministers were tried, they wore clothes bearing these words.)[833]

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[828] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 78.
[829] Ibid. 26.
[830] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 147.
[831] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 419.
[832] Moses, Greg. Revolution Of Conscience. 160.
[833] Bennett, Jr., Lerone. When the Man and the Hour Are Met. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 29.

The following examples illustrate how King and other non-violent activists publicly referred to or declared their commitment to the rhetoric of Christian love during the civil rights movement. These examples show that activists constantly referred to Christian love or identified with it in public.

During the Montgomery Boycott, activists distributed leaflets in every African-American church that urged protesters to read and study seventeen non-violent rules, some of which are included below:

> Pray for guidance and commit yourself to complete non-violence in word and action as you enter the bus…Be *loving* enough to absorb evil and understanding enough to turn an enemy into a friend…If cursed, do not curse back. If pushed, do not push back. If struck, do not strike back, but evidence love and goodwill at all times…If another person is being molested, do not arise to go to his defense, but pray for the oppressor and use moral and spiritual force to carry on the struggle for justice…Do not be afraid to experiment with new and relative techniques for achieving reconciliation and social change…If you feel you can not take it, walk for another week or two.[834]

Even if protesters did not observe all these rules, they nevertheless clearly showed to the press their non-violent "intentions".

A favorite scripture passage during the Montgomery Boycott at church meetings was, "and now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."[835] King commented on the Montgomery Boycott experience, "Night after night the group was admonished to love rather than hate, and urged to be prepared to suffer violence if necessary but never to inflict it. Every ´´pep`` speaker was asked to make non-violence a central part of his theme."[836] In his book, *Stride Toward Freedom*, in which King narrated his Montgomery Boycott experience, he claimed that in Montgomery Christian love was the phrase most often heard. "It was Jesus of Nazareth that stirred the Negroes to protest with the creative weapon of love."[837] When a speaker used negative words in Montgomery to describe whites, like "dirty crackers", protest leaders would politely admonish him to refrain from using such words.[838]

A practical example of Christian love was the bombing of King's house, a short time after he assumed the presidency of the MIA. This incident had an enormous influence on the relevancy of non-violence in the movement. After supremacists bombed King's house while his wife and his children were inside, a large crowd of angry African-Americans gathered before King's house and called for vengeance although King's family had remained unharmed. King however remained calm and urged the crowd not to get panicky. He reminded them that he who lived by the sword would perish by the sword. "We are not advocating violence. I want you to love your enemies. Be good to

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[834] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 59-60.
[835] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 83.
[836] Ibid. 81.
[837] Ibid. 78.
[838] Ibid. 81.

them. Love them and let them know you love them…I want it to be known the length and breadth of the land that if I am stopped, this movement will not stop…What we are doing is just and God is with us."[839] King provided an example of non-violence at that instance, as he "forgave" his own aggressors, like he preached. Bennett commented that by seeing non-violence in action African-Americans were affected and converted.[840] This incident did not only increase King's popularity but also gave credibility to his non-violent rhetoric. "The parable of the porch went out now over the wires of the news media and King's name became a token to almost all American Negroes."[841]

In Birmingham, volunteers had to sign a Commitment Card which entailed the following commandment: "Walk and talk in the manner of love, for God is love."[842] College students in Nashville listed sit-in codes of conducts. These codes were supposed to minimize "unnecessary provocation."[843] These codes were:

> Don't strike back or curse if abused.
>
> Don't laugh out.
>
> Don't hold conversations with floor-workers.
>
> Don't block entrances to the stores and aisles.
>
> Show yourself courteous and friendly at all times.
>
> Remember love and non-violence.
>
> May God bless each one of you.[844]

Although King was the most expressive proponent of Christian love in the movement, other activists also publicly declared their commitment to love and non-violence. Non-violent leaders, like Whitney Young of the Urban League, advocated Christian love and non-violence. In a statement at Congressional hearings, Young praised the ability of African-Americans to respond to hate and violence with love. He narrated the story of an African-American leader who was murdered and whose widow urged African-Americans, gathered in the church, "not to hate but to love". Thousands of people in the audience responded by standing up and spontaneously sang "My Country 'tis of Thee, sweet land of Liberty." Another example Whitney M. Young, Jr., Executive Director of the National Urban League mentioned was when four African-American children died in Birmingham when their school was bombed. The parents of the murdered children stood and prayed with the rest of community.[845]

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[839] Bennett, Jr., Lerone. When the Man and the Hour Are Met- *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 22-23.
[840] Ibid. - Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 54.
[841] Ibid. 23.
[842] King, Martin Luther. Why we can't wait. 64.
[843] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 28.
[844] Dykeman, Wilma, James Stokley. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 94.
[845] Young, Jr., Whitney M. For a Federal "War on Poverty". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 388.

Even African-American intellectuals, like James Baldwin, issued their conviction of loving the opponent.

> The really terrible thing, old buddy, is that you must accept them. And I mean that very seriously. You must accept them and accept them with love. For these innocent people have no other hope. They are, in effect, still trapped in a history which they do not understand; and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it. They have had to believe for many years, and for innumerable reasons, that black men are inferior to white men. Many of them, indeed, know better, but as you will discover, people find it very difficult to act on what they know. To act is to be committed, and to be committed is to be in danger. In this case, the danger in the minds of most white Americans, is the loss of their identity…But these men are your brothers - your lost, younger brothers. And if the word integration means anything, this is what it means: that we, with love, shall force our brothers to see themselves as they are, to cease fleeing from reality and begin to change it…[846]

Not only King's organization, the SCLC, but also the SNCC advocated Christian love and non-violence. The SNCC, for example, adopted this credo as its foundation:

> We affirm the philosophical or religious ideal of nonviolence as the foundation of our purpose, the presupposition of our faith, and the manner of our action…Love is the central motif of nonviolence…Such love goes to the extreme; it remains loving and forgiving even in the midst of hostility. It matches the capacity of evil to inflict suffering with an even more enduring capacity to absorb evil, all the while persisting in love.[847]

On the second day of sit-ins in Greensboro, Franklin Mc Cain, one of the involved students, affirmed that the sit-in movement started as "a movement of non-violence and as a Christian movement…We knew that probably the most powerful and potent weapon that people have literally no defense for is *love*, kindness."[848]

King constantly invoked "loving the enemy" during mass meetings. Even if not all African-Americans understood the concept, they received the message that violence would be futile.[849] Despite occasional outbursts of militant speeches, many protesters affirmed their adherence to non-violence. At a Knoxville rally, after numerous leaders held militant speeches, the chairman of the meeting spoke in the microphone: "We're making a lot of noise, but that doesn't mean we're angry at anybody. If you have no love in your heart, stay at home."[850]

African-American leaders held symbolic prayers that were visibly non-violent. In the wake of the death of an activist in McComb, Mississippi, SNCC activists went to court, kneeled on the steps of the courthouse and prayed with a Bible in their hands. The police waited for each activist to

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[846] Baldwin, James. Title The fire next time. Austin: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1990. 22-23.
[847] Zinn, Howard. SNCC. 221.
SNCC renounced non-violence in the mid-sixties and adopted Black Power.
[848] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 79.
[849] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 139.
[850] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt.* Ed. James A Geschwender. 139.

reach the steps to arrest him.[851] This symbolic picture of praying African-American protesters arrested by the police and subjected to the brutality of white by-standers dramatized protest actions and clearly portrayed protesters as victims.

2.3.4.) Beloved Community

> He who works against community is working against the whole of creation.[852] (Martin Luther King, Jr. – *Stride Toward Freedom*)

> The purpose of the movement and of the sit-ins and the Freedom Rides and any other such actions, as I see it, is to bring about a climate in which all men are respected as men, in which there is appreciation of the dignity of man and in which each individual is free to grow and produce to his fullest capacity. We of the movement often refer to this goal as the concept of the redeemed or the "beloved" community.[853] (Speech by Diana Nash in Detroit 1961)

> I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. (Martin Luther King, Jr. - I Have a Dream Speech)

Another fundamental component of King's rhetoric was the Beloved Community, which constituted the objective of civil rights protest. Non-violent leaders declared that the objective of the movement was not the annihilation of the opponent but integration. This conflict-rhetoric differs from classical war rhetoric in which two opponents seek their mutual destruction so that the other ceases to pose a threat. This is an important detail that explains why many white Americans supported many of the movement's political demands. Non-violent philosophy or rhetoric declares that neither side of the two conflicting parties will dominate in the end. Non-violent protest aims at enabling conflicting sides to establish peaceful relations in the aftermath of conflict. Whereas the opponent may seek to destroy the non-violent camp, the latter does not seek the destruction of the opponent but the alteration of his system. A demonstration, a sit-in or a boycott, is only indirectly directed against persons and primarily highlights a particular problem. Also, protesters did not pursue any revolutionary goals. Clark comments, "the civil rights organizations were never revolutionary. Their assumptions and strategy and tactics were essentially conservative, in that they

[851] Branch, Taylor. Parting The Waters. 512.
[852] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 100.
[853] Towns, W. Stuart. "We want our freedom": rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement. 136.

did not seek change and certainly made no attempt to overthrow the basic political and economic structure."[854]

The political objectives of the civil rights movement are very important as they dictated the methods of protest such as sit-ins, Freedom Rides and pray-ins. As the name "in" indicates, the objective was to "penetrate" or become part of a whole. The Indian non-violent movement, on the other hand, pursued separation and independence. One can therefore grasp the reason why the Indian movement relied more on civil disobedience than on non-violence and why it was much more radical than the civil rights movement. One will find in a conflict like the Indian independence struggle no similar emphasis given to the concept of a Beloved Community. As African-Americans wanted to be included in the larger community, they did not seek to destroy it.

In its leaflet, SCLC stated that its ultimate objective was the creation of the Beloved Community.[٨٥٥] Non-violent leaders presented the definition of the Beloved Community in a religious and political rhetoric to black and white Americans. Civil rights leaders called for a "color-blind "Promised Land" in which "all God's children" would live together."[856] The term Beloved Community stems from the philosophical writings of Josiah Royce and R.H. Lotze who influenced the philosophy of Personalism. It is a religious term that was typical of the religious contents and speeches of King, who also invoked the term "Kingdom of God".

The dissemination of an idealistic community where African-Americans and whites would live together in harmony may appear too utopian and unrealistic. Walton contends that King's religious idealism made this community sound utopian.[857] Watley writes, however, that utopian beliefs functioned as escapism for African-Americans.[858] The promise of an utopian refuge, for example, had always existed in African-American theology, which caused leaders like Malcolm X to condemn "fatalistic" world views that caused African-Americans to be passive.[859] Garveyism, featuring self-styled preachers who conveyed the ideal of a black heaven to the despairing masses of the thirties, can also be seen as an unrealistic solution to African-American problems.[860]

Jasper contends that moral mobilizers must appeal to the common-sense understandings of their audiences.[861] Even if the promise of the Beloved Community sounded idealistic, it was simply "good public relations". A crucial aspect of securing public opinion is to identify with the targeted

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[854] Clark, Kenneth B. The Civil Rights Movement: Momentum and Organization. 1970. 278. Rpt. in *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970.* Doug McAdam. 164.
[855] The Southern Christian Leadership Conference: "The Ultimate Aim Is the ´Beloved Community`". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 272.
[856] Street, Paul. Still Separate And Unequal. 01.08.2002. ZNET.
http:..www.zmag.org.sustainers.content.2002-08.01street.cfm
[857] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 100.
[858] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 23.
[859] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 112.
[860] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 22-23.
[861] Jasper, James M. The Art of Moral Protest. 287.

group. Politicians, for example, are keen on being portrayed as ordinary citizens in order to appeal to public opinion. They show themselves with their family or intermingle with the crowd so that public opinion identifies with them. They also project a vision of an ideal society, which they promise to realize if they become elected.

King similarly sought to get white Americans to identify with his rhetoric. This idealistic concept of the Beloved Community is best expressed in King's *I Have a Dream* speech, where King pictures a vision that encompasses African-Americans and whites. King simplified the essence of African-American demands by picturing a Beloved Community where African-American and white boys and girls played together.[862] He invoked the image of children in order to arouse the emotions of the audience. King utilized terms the white audience could relate to like God's children, freedom, brotherhood, faith, justice and equality. In his non-violent speeches, King allowed whites to identify with African-Americans. He also invoked the unison of former sons of slave owners and former sons of slaves and the interaction of whites and African-Americans.

The rhetoric of the Beloved Community not only attracted African-Americans but also white liberals and ordinary Americans. Meier claims that King enunciated a superficial and eclectic philosophy by virtue of which he profoundly awakened the moral conscience of America.[863] In order for a public relations rhetoric to attract the masses, it must be simple and not rely on philosophical or complex theories the audience might not grasp. If King was a truly profound religious thinker, like Tillich or Niebuhr, his influence would have been limited to a select audience, argues Meier.[864]

In the face of the past subjugation of African-Americans, King had to project in his rhetoric a vision of a peaceful community of African-Americans and whites. Hence, reconciliation was a recurrent theme in his speeches. Non-violent advocates argue that non-violence offers the best means to establish peace because violence hardens any prospects of reconciliation. King saw in India an example of reconciliation between the Indians and the British. The hatred and the bitterness that usually followed a freedom struggle were missing in India. They had established instead mutual friendship as two equal nations.[٨٦٥] "The American Negro will be living tomorrow with the very people against whom he is struggling today," stated King[٨٦٦] Non-violent leaders sought to prevent retaliation when protesters made crucial political gains by calling on protesters to behave in modesty, as they did not want to unnecessarily provoke public opinion in the aftermath of political gains. After the United States Supreme Court declared segregation on buses as unconstitutional, which represented a major victory for African-Americans in Montgomery, boycott leaders called on

[862] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 219.
[863] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 146.
[864] Ibid. 147.
[865] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 39.
[866] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 164.

African-Americans to return to the buses with "humility and meekness". "I would be terribly disappointed if any of you go back to the buses bragging…We have carefully avoided bitterness," said King.[867]

It is important to note that this conciliatory rhetoric would not have succeeded in any conflict that set two opposed groups against one another. The civil rights conflict was not determined by nationalistic differences. The Nation of Islam's demands were unrealistic regarding the political nature of the conflict. The Garvey movement, which pursued the objective of shipping African-Americans to Africa, also seemed unreal with regard to the solution to the race problem. The fact that African-Americans and whites lived together did not allow guerilla-like activities or other kinds of violent activities to take place as they were not geographically separated form each other. There were no heavy casualties, compared with other violent conflicts, which also enabled King to preach such a conciliatory vision. One must also take the cultural similarities between African-Americans and whites into consideration. Dyson contends that King knew southern whites, "He knew their pains, even their fears, because he ripened in the same soil that fed their moral imagination."[868] Social commentator Michael Tomasky argues that King's success depended on "showing people outside the oppressed group that their interest lay in seeing members of that group lifted from oppression."[869]

2.3.5.) Depersonalization of Conflict

This sub-chapter deals with non-violent protest rhetoric regarding the opponent. Non-violent leaders had to be careful not to offend white Americans despite the segregationist system that favored white citizens and discriminated against African-Americans. Non-violent rhetoric during the movement did not focus on the opponent as an individual, but on political objectives. Civil rights leaders depersonalized the conflict. They did not openly brandish whites as evil-doers but rather identified segregation itself as evil. One factor that allowed non-violent leaders to depersonalize the conflict was that the civil rights movement was the protest of a minority. Many white racists had intimidated African-Americans in the South leading many of them to fear a white retaliation if they openly attacked whites, compared to African-Americans in the northern ghettoes that were bolder in their criticism of white America. There were many African-Americans that were

[867] Bennett, Jr., Lerone. When the Man and the Hour Are Met*Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 30.
[868] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 35.
[869] Ibid. 43.

dependent on whites for economic reasons. The non-violent civil rights movement also depended on financial assistance from wealthy groups and persons, many of whom were white.

The un-confrontational nature of non-violent protest did not target persons but rather segregation. Brandishing white segregationists as the enemy, on the other hand, could have diminished the support African-Americans drew from white groups. Instead, non-violent protesters indirectly discredited segregationists by provoking them to unleash violence as this chapter shows.

One of the most important traits of the movement's non-violent rhetoric was that non-violent leaders convinced public opinion that they did not pose a threat to the latter. Whereas one conflicting side may "dehumanize" the opponent to justify aggression, non-violent leaders "humanized" the opponent. King emphasized the worth of the dignity of man and stressed that humans were created in God's image. Non-violent leaders preached that violence and racism injured the dignity of man, which was rooted in the being of God. King held a universalistic view of man's dignity and preached that personhood was bestowed in African-Americans and whites alike. "Only those who have found a sense of dignity and worth in their own lives can believe enough in the dignity and worth of other human beings to become nonviolent."[870]

Non-violent leaders also sought to convince protesters of non-violence and prevent violence by defusing feelings of animosity towards segregationists. King continuously preached that man must treat man as an "End in Itself", an expression he borrowed from the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. Man should treat other humans in a way that leaves their capacity to act intact "and so in effect, leave them able to act on the maxims we ourselves adopt."[871] Man is sacred in himself. To do otherwise is to depersonalize the potential person and desecrate what he is. If one truly practices non-violence, one must always "recognize and respond to the thrust for dignity of those who strike out."[872]

The Philosophy of Personalism constituted the exact opposite of depersonalization of the opponent. "Personalism is the belief that conscious personality is both the supreme value and the supreme reality in the universe."[٨٧٣] Warren Steinkraus contends that the Personalistic tenet that humans have is their "ultimate intrinsic values" and that this had the strongest influence on the non-violent philosophy of King.[874] King's wedding of non-violence with Personalism was original in the development of American Personalism.[875] Smith also claims that the sacredness of the human

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[870] Dellinger, Dave. Revolutionary Nonviolence. 209.
[871] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 97.
[872] Ibid.
[873] Fluker, William E. They Looked For A City. 114.
[874] Steinkraus, Warren. Martin Luther King's Personalism. Journal of History of Ideas 34 (January-march, 1973). 97-111. Rpt. in *Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith. 178-179.
[875] Steinkraus, Warren. Martin Luther King's Personalism. Journal of History of Ideas 34 (January-march, 1973). 103-4 Rpt. in *Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith. 114.

personality was the foundation of King's non-violent philosophy.[876] To King, there was no higher value than the person and therefore social expressions had to be judged "in light of its effects upon persons."[877] Ansbro writes that Personalism helped King to formulate principles for his attack on segregation.

In their speeches, non-violent leaders like King emphasized that protesters were fighting against a system (segregation) and not against their opponents. "We are out to defeat injustice and not white persons who may be unjust."[878] An inflammatory rhetoric of aggression, which portrays the opponent as evil, is usually characterized by conflicts between the two sides. Dehumanizing the opponent justifies mutual aggression. Yet unlike in traditional war situations, non-violent leaders did not portray the opponent as the "enemy" but focused on "evil" embodied by "evil institutions" or "evil systems", even though the opponent operates these institutions and systems. "It is evil we are seeking to defeat, not the persons victimized by evil. Those of us who struggle against racial injustice must come to see that the basic tension is not between races," said King.[879]

Herbert Richardson writes that the depersonalized perception is rooted in the Christian faith, which "sees neither particular men nor particular groups as evil, but sees them trapped within a structure of ideological separation which makes ritual conflict inevitable."[880] Watley also sees King's focus on the evil of structures rather than that of humans as based on biblical teachings. In Ephesians 6:10-12, Watley sees proof for the depersonalization of evil. "For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."[881] "The essence of Christian warfare is found in resisting the demonic forces or systems or orders of evil that dehumanize, oppress, and prevent persons from achieving that full humanity."[882]

Whether or not Christian teachings affected the perception of African-American protesters towards whites, civil rights leaders went out of their way to emphasize that the struggle was not between whites and African-Americans but between justice and injustice. "The tension in this city is not between white people and Negro people. The tension is at bottom between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness…We are out to defeat injustice and not white persons who may happen to be unjust."[883] One must concentrate on evil and not on the evil-doer because even if one murders the evil-doer, evil will not disappear, King argued.[884] In other

[876] Ibid. 40.
[877] Ibid.
[878] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 94.
[879] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 8.
[880] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 15.
[881] Ibid. 13.
[882] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 13.
[883] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament Of Hope. 87.
[884] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 62.

words, one loves the person but hates what he does. "Hate the sin and not the sinner."[885] Evil resides in structures and not in the people. Nothing is fundamentally evil.[886] Charles L. Kammer III assumes that King sought to humanize whites as well as African-Americans by allowing them to recognize their mutual humanity.[887] Archbishop Desmond Tutu who led non-violent protest in South Africa also refused to identify evil with the enemy. "However diabolical the act, it does not turn the perpetrator into a demon. When we proclaim that someone is subhuman, we not only remove for them the possibility of change and repentance, we also remove from them moral responsibility."[888]

When a white youth attacked King at a SCLC conference, he refused to press charges, like Gandhi, and stated that it was the system that was responsible.[889] King expressed the denouncement of the system in the majority of his speeches and used his skilful rhetoric to portray segregation as a sin. Although King attacked the system, he was careful not to denounce American ideals and differentiated between the two. At the same time he demonstrated his loyalty to "America". King reiterated in the majority of his speeches that whereas he cherished America's ideals he deplored the fact that these ideals were not practiced in America.

Other civil rights leaders also attacked the system in their speeches and blamed it rather than the perpetrators of violence. In a speech Wilkins gave at a funeral service for Medgar Evers, for example, he stated that the assassin of Evers merely pulled the trigger but:

> Men who do the shooting are trained and indoctrinated and keyed to action by men and by forces which prod them to act.
>
> The southern political system put him behind that rifle: the lily-white southern governments, local and state; the senators, governors, state legislators, mayors, judges, sheriffs, chiefs of police, commissioners, etc.[890]

The Nation of Islam represented the counter-movement of depersonalization. Unlike King and other non-violent leaders who sought to depersonalize evil, Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam "personalized" the conflict and described all whites as "blue-eyed devils" that were responsible for the oppression of African-Americans. Malcolm X vilified all whites and Elijiah Muhammad identified the white race as "the human beast—the serpent, the dragon, the devil, and Satan."[891] They did not only accuse racists and supremacists but all whites of being evil. Black Muslims thought that no settlement was possible between African-Americans and whites and therefore advocated a separation of the races. This "personalization" proved shocking to American public

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King spoke of the futility of violence, which even if it murdered the liar, did not murder the lie.

[885] Burrowes, Robert J. The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense. 107.
[886] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 87.
[887] Kammer, Charles L. Ethics and liberation: an introduction. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1988. 138.
[888] Tutu, Desmond. God Has A Dream. 10-11.
[889] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 137.
[890] Towns, W. Stuart. "We want our freedom": rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement. 158.
[891] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 221.

opinion, particularly when they first heard of the "Black Muslims" through the documentary, *The Hate That Hate Produced*.

Non-violent leaders opposed the aggressive rhetoric of the Nation of Islam, which they regarded as counter-productive, as it would only put the opponent in the defensive. Sharp writes:

> When an opponent feels a campaign to be a personal attack on himself psychological[ly] if not physical[ly]-he is more likely to resist changes in his outlook, and policies, and be more impervious to appeals from the actionists and third parties, than when the actionists are able to convince him they bear no personal hostility and are concerned only with policies.[892]

Walton poses the question of how far a person can be separated from his deeds.[893] "Who, if not that person, is to be held responsible for those actions?"[894] Walton contends that King's philosophy is silent on this matter. Nevertheless non-violent activists achieved the exposure of segregationists by staging non-violent protest, which will be further analyzed in the second part of this chapter.

Despite their apparent depersonalized rhetoric, however, non-violent leaders like King relied to a certain extent on vilification to affect public opinion. King himself became increasingly recriminating in his rhetoric against whites in general in the mid-sixties. Yet, to a certain degree, condemnation is inherent in any protest rhetoric. The famous *I Have A Dream* speech is not just a portrayal of harmony between whites and African-Americans but contains a condemnation of the Governor of Alabama, for example. Although civil rights activists claimed that they fought against a "system", they also "personalized" the conflict; an "evil" opponent dramatizes a conflict and draws sympathy and support to protesters. Governor Wallace, for example, was one of the "classical villains" whom King denounced in his speeches. In Birmingham, civil rights activists also had a perfect villain: Eugene "Bull" Connor. Portraying a clear "villain" who embodies "evil" may channel public opinion to concentrate their indignation at a concrete object in order to make the asymmetrical conflict situation more visible by contra posing evil-doer and victim.

The presence of such "villains" had been missing in Albany, where activists faced the "gentle-man-like" Pritchett, who bowed his head when activists prayed and did not apply excessive violence like Connor. Whereas the repression activists faced in Montgomery generated sympathy, Albany showed, writes Watley, that "an opponent who wears the façade of gentleness could halt the efforts of sympathetic outsiders and produce a sense of futility among the resisters."[895] Albany also showed that a shrewd opponent could render non-violent action ineffective. In Selma, Sheriff Clark proved more evil and uncontrollable than Connor. Fairclough writes that Bevel lost no time in personalizing the campaign in Selma.[896] Bevel favored Selma as he correctly anticipated that

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[892] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 727.
[893] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 80.
[894] Ibid.
[895] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 69.
[896] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 230.

Wallace and his cohorts would provide SCLC with "exploitable opponents".[897] Dyson notes that in Chicago King didn't have a "loopy sheriff to outfox after he had beat up defenseless blacks."[898] King himself stated that in Chicago "naïve targets such as Jim Clarks and George Wallaces" would be harder to find and to use as symbols.[899] There was an incident where non-violent activists sought to personalize the "opponent" in the Chicago campaign when they rented a flat in a poor and shabby house with poor housing conditions. Yet they were embarrassed after they discovered that the owner was an old and poor man himself who did not fit the picture of a mean and greedy house owner.

The pictures of hateful white segregationists obstructing the integration of universities or harassing sit-in activists transmitted by television pictures provoked indignation in America. These images were important in order to give Southern racism and segregation a "face", represented by "hateful" angry segregationists, to repel Americans. Calm and gentle opponents, like Mayor Daley and police chief Pritchett, on the other hand, who represented "law and order", were counter-productive to the non-violent movement.

2.3.6.) King and Public Opinion

> I'm committed to non-violence absolutely. I'm not going to kill anybody, whether it's in Vietnam or here.
>
> I'm not going to burn down any buildings. If non-violent protest fails this summer, I will continue to preach it and teach it. I plan to stand by non-violence because I have found it to be a philosophy of life that regulates, not only my dealings in the struggle for racial justice, but also my dealings with my own self. I will still be faithful to non-violence.[900] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

> For a philosophy to come alive in our daily world, it must depend upon the persuasiveness and character of those who speak for it, on the force of leaders who seem to embody that of which they speak. (Hanes Walton, Jr. - *The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr*)[901]

King not only played an influential role with regard to American public opinion but also succeeded in convincing many African-Americans of the necessity to maintain non-violent protest for strategic reasons. Certainly not all non-violent movements had charismatic leaders such as King or Gandhi. Nevertheless the presence of non-violent leaders was crucial to their respective

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[897] Ibid. 193.
[898] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 37.
[899] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest. 53.
[900] Smith, Ervin, The Ethics of Martin Luther King. 112-113.
[901] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 3.

movements, particularly with regard to influencing public opinion. Gandhi's immense popularity, for example, intimidated the British and deterred them from arresting him at the beginning of the salt satyagraha. The British faced a dilemma as they feared a public outcry if they detained Gandhi. On the other hand, his mobility would have further mobilized Indians for massive civil disobedience.[902] The vast masses followed Gandhi not just out of their conviction for his non-violent philosophy, but also out of admiration and reverence. Although Walton regards the assumption that leaders alone can cause people to adopt certain beliefs as an oversimplification of history,[903] Fairclough contends that many African-Americans were non-violent only out of affection for King.[904] Certain events and narrative accounts of movement activists show the important role King played. "King's words energized the black community, dispelling its feelings of helplessness, insignificance, and powerlessness," writes Sitkoff.[905] Pat Watters points to King's influence on the masses, which he generated through his emotional tone during speeches. "Often in mass meetings, they say, people who couldn't understand all the words responded to the tone."[906] King excelled in articulating and dramatizing ideas. He had the ability to unite people with diverse viewpoints.[907] King's oratory skills and charisma also enabled him to calm infuriated crowds, which was important to the maintenance of non-violence.

King was a prominent personality for American public opinion. Smith writes that it was the philosophy of non-violence that catapulted him into the spotlight of American media.[908] King's status as an African-American leader increased after the success of Montgomery and his presidency of SCLC. King was apt for this position as he was an articulate speaker who appealed to wealthy and professional African-Americans in the African-American community.[909] He also appealed to the conservative clergy and African-American churchgoers. As King was relatively young, compared with other leaders, African-Americans of different ages admired him, particularly the youth. Students all over the South read his book, *Stride Toward Freedom*.[910] In addition, King was an educated African-American who had earned a P.H.D. and therefore enjoyed a respectable status. He had a vast network of acquaintances, including ministers and celebrities that he mobilized to usher in necessary funds for the movement. Universities honored him, foreign heads of state indulged him and the President of the United States consulted him.[911] Colleges, trade unions,

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[902] Brown, Judith M. Gandhi and Civil Disobedience. 108.
[903] Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 81.
[904] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 26.
[905] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 61.
[906] Watters, Pat. Down to Now: Reflections on the Southern Civil Rights Movement, New York: Pantheon, 1971. 217.
[907] Bennett, Jr., Lerone. When the Man and the Hour Are Met. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile*. C. Eric Lincoln. 32.
[908] Smith, Ervin, The Ethics of Martin Luther King. 172.
[909] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 20.
[910] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 76.
[911] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 42.

religious organizations and churches invited him to deliver speeches too and he reiterated his non-violent philosophy in almost every speech.

Fredrickson values the presence of a non-violent leader and contends that one of the reasons that the African National Congress in South Africa did not succeed by using non-violence means is that it did not have a charismatic leader of Gandhi's caliber: "It was a common belief that nonviolence required a Gandhi, a charismatic leader who would show the way through his personal suffering, and that no such figure was on the horizon."[٩١٢] The absence of a Gandhi-like figure in the South African movement, argues Fredrickson, did not inspire the masses and convince them of the religious obligation of non-violence.[913] Gandhi himself, Fredrickson asserts, believed that a non-violent movement could not succeed unless it had a virtuous and charismatic leader.[914] Carmichael, who rejected non-violence in the sixties, noted the effect of King on the masses in an interview:

> I've seen people in the South climb over each other just to say, ´´I touched him! I touched him!…I'm even talking about the young. The old people had more love and respect. They even saw him like a God. These were the people we were working with and I had to follow in his footsteps when I went in there.[915]

Fredrickson writes: "It was part of King's charisma among black and white Christians that he projected the image of exceptional and almost superhuman virtue, the kind of holiness and saintliness that is often an attribute of religious and moral authority."[916]

King's leadership repeatedly faced criticism from other activists who accused him, for example, of "showy projects". Youth activists, particularly of SNCC, were very critical of King and sarcastically referred to him as "de lawd". Yet the relevance of King was that he was a "master communicator". Benjamin Quarles characterizes him by stating that, "no man of his training was more effective in reaching the man in the street, the poor and the unschooled. He could quote Martin Buber to one audience and speak in the idiom of the ghetto to another, and be equally at home with both worlds."[917] Cornel West writes, "never before in our past has a figure outside of elected public office linked the life of the mind to social change with such moral persuasiveness and political effectiveness."[918] The importance of King lied in his ability to influence the masses, which far surpassed the influence of any other African-American leader. Before King, Randolph had experimented with non-violence. Unlike King, Randolph opted for non-violence for practical reasons and did not elaborate a rhetoric or philosophy that moved the masses. Although Wilkins and

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[912] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 30.
[913] Ibid. 271.
[914] Ibid. 231.
[915] Harlan, Louis, R. Thought on the Leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 65.
[916] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 263.
[917] Smith, Ervin, The Ethics of Martin Luther King. 180.
[918] West, Cornel. Prophetic Fragments .Grand Rapids: Erdmans, 1988. 3. *Toward A Theology Of Radical Involvement*. Luther D. Ivory. 34.

other African-American leaders like Powell and Randolph were prominent activists in the African-American community, they never affected the masses like King. Paul Garber emphasizes King's ability to intermingle with the masses. "He was, perhaps, the best model for a new style of theologian, working not in leisure on the fringes of significant social movements, but in the midst of a people struggling to be free, struggling along with them, and declaring to them the ultimate significance of what they were doing together."[919]

King conveyed his philosophy by means of speeches, books, public speeches, church gatherings, interpersonal interaction, etc.[920] Farmer notes that it was King who introduced non-violence to the people. "No longer did we have to explain non-violence to people. Thanks to Martin Luther King it was a household word. CORE was a beneficiary of the emergence of King."[921] Meier sees two main reasons for the success of King. He perfectly articulated the aspirations of African-Americans through his religious phraseology and his manner of speaking; he adopted the style of the old-fashioned African-American Baptist preacher, which he transformed into a new art form. Second, he perfectly communicated African-American aspirations to whites. By referring to Jesus, Hegel and Gandhi, he appeared intellectually profound to "the superficially educated middle-class white American."[922]

King was undoubtedly one of the most influential speakers of modern history. Scholars like Dyson and Fluker dedicated entire studies to his rhetoric. Fairclough notes, for example, how his rhetoric, or his narration of the death threats he perceived, and his affirmation of being prepared to die for the cause, could bring the audience to near hysteria.[923] Walton points to the fact that King and Gandhi operated in societies where their pronouncements were given widespread publicity.[٩٢٤]

The media played a huge role in presenting King to public opinion. King was a major media magnet who symbolized the African-American civil rights movement. Taylor Branch claims that King allowed the media to portray him as a "Gandhi" for public relations advantages.[925] Meier rightfully claims that without publicity, it is hard to conceive that any progress would have been made.[926] King's introduction to a nationwide audience started with the Montgomery Boycott when Time magazine featured a story on Montgomery and described King as "one of the nation's

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[919] Garber, Paul. Black Theology: The Latter Day Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center 2 (Spring 1975), 107. Rpt. in *The Ethics of Martin Luther Kin*, Ervin Smith. 200.
[920] Persuasive messages should have an element of repetition. Not all members of the target audience see or hear the message at the same time. "Multiple exposures to a message reminds the audience and reinforces the message." Wilcox, L. Dennis., Phillip H. Ault, and Warren K. Agee. Public relations: strategies and tactics. New York: Longman, 1998. 226.
[921] Farmer, James. Lay Bare The Heart. An Autobiography of The Civil Rights Movement. 188.
[922] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 147.
[923] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 170.
[924] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 84.
[925] Branch, Taylor. Parting The Water. 87.
[926] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 146.

remarkable leaders of men."[927] The boycott seemed to be a new phenomenon worth covering: An African-American Baptist minister preaching love and non-violence and leading a non-violent protest and boycott. In 1963, Newsweek did a leadership rating on King called, "The Big Man is Martin Luther King."[928] To James R. Ralph, King knew the importance of a powerful camera. "His very presence could serve to spotlight an injustice."[929] Movement veterans relate that it was King who turned the Selma campaign into a media event. "And the "Selma" that is a household word is a result of those television cameras that were brought, that came because of Dr. King's presence."[930]

Walker stated that the media provided Americans with a window through which they could see how segregation really looked.[931] Morris confirms this statement by saying that America was forced to take notice and the American public had to come to grips with the way African-Americans were treated.[932] Advances in mass media in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly television, changed African-American "invisibility dramatically." As early as 1958, over 83 percent of American households had a television and over 96 percent had a radio.[933]

> The rapid spread of television in the late 1950s coincided with the rise of the civil rights movement, and television provided a window through which millions could watch the black struggle…Global television provided Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with an instant worldwide audience that would have been unattainable a decade earlier.[934]

Media influence enabled African-Americans not only to nationalize but also to internationalize their protest and was expertly utilized by King and the movement.[935]

One has to take into consideration that this was also the time when papers began to hire African-American journalists. At that time white readers in New York, Chicago and other sections of the North began to read articles in the South written by African-American reporters.[936] "One aspect of the emerging King myth has been the depiction of him in the mass media, not only as the preeminent leader of the civil rights movement, but also as the initiator and sole indispensable element in the southern black struggles of the 1950s and 1960s," writes Carson.[937] To Lomax, television presented King as a hero and the civil rights movement was in desperate need of a hero

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[927] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 19.
[928] Smith, Ervin. The Ethics of Martin Luther King. 173.
[929] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest. 56.
[930] The Movement in Alabama. A Discussion July, 2003. Copyright © 2003-2004. http://www.crmvet.org/disc/alabama.htm
James Lawson made a similar statement: "Any time King went to a community, immediately the focus of the nation was on that community… He had the eyes of the world on where he went." Morris Aldon D. A Man Prepared for the Times: A Sociological Analysis of the Leadership on Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 54.
[931] Ibid. 53.
[932] Ibid. 53-54
[933] Ibid. 46.
[934] Ibid. 47.
[935] Ibid. 47 a. 56.
[936] Lomax, Louis E. to Kill A Black Man. 43.
[937] Clayborne, Carson. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Charismatic Leadership in a Mass Struggle. http:..www.stanford.edu.group.King.additional_resources.articles.charisma.htm

image.[938] His face and his "cause" became common fare in millions of homes across the nation. Without the media, King would have remained "an unsung clergyman."[939] The New York Times and the Washington Post, writes Meier, congratulated America as she had a moderate and respectable leader like King at the head of the movement.[940]

Fairclough makes an interesting remark when he refers to the concept of non-violence as "ideologically neutral". Conservative circles particularly accepted King,

> It gave a patina of respectability to the politically suspect weapon of mass direct action—a crucial consideration in the conservative 1950s. Thus the right-of-center organ of Republican publisher Henry R. Luce, Time Magazine, could put King on its front cover in January 1957 and include a favorable feature inside. Time found reassurance in King's views on clothes: ´´I don't want to look like an undertaker, but I do believe in conservative dress.``[941]

The media was not, however, always forthcoming with King. When King's demands became more radical, he no longer fit the picture of a "moderate" leader. Whereas the media might have supported King at the beginning of the movement when he preached non-violence, many media representatives and white liberals considered his demands radical in the mid-sixties. Many journalists particularly attacked him for his condemnation of the Vietnam War.

Some movement analysts downplay King's relevance to the movement. Carson for example warns about creating a myth around King. Although Carson acknowledges the important role King played during the civil rights movement, he states that the movement would have been created and would have gained legislative victories for African-Americans even without King. Although this critic seems justified, the fact that there are almost as many studies on King as there are studies on the civil rights movement itself, shows King's relevance to the movement. King toured the country to hold speeches and gather support for the movement. Few activists were household names, like King, with the exception of Malcolm X, who represented the exact opposite of King and his belief in non-violence. Without King, SCLC would not have ushered in the large financial contributions that enabled it to expand its activities. One could measure King's influence by the turnout of the audience members at his speeches and the demand for his articles and books. Fredrickson also disagrees with downplaying King's role. He wrote,

> King's prophetic eloquence and personal charisma may have been indispensable to the task of providing a broad audience with a compelling explanation and justification for the movement and putting a sense of urgency behind the call for national action on civil rights. Without his kind of leadership, the local struggle might have remained local – there would have been civil rights movements but no Civil Rights Movement.[942]

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[938] Lomax. Louis E. To Kill A Black Man. 43.
[939] Ibid.
[940] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 155.
[941] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 42.
[942] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 253.

Meier also emphasizes King's influence on the movement and writes that King made the movement and direct action look respectable.[943]

2.3.7.) Conclusion of Non-violent Rhetoric

If one analyses King's speeches and writings, one will recognize a change of rhetoric regarding his unconditional demand to love the "opponent", particularly after the mid-sixties. King's rhetoric became increasingly militant. Fredrickson writes that even during the Birmingham campaign in 1963, King's rhetoric had lost some of its exalted idealism.[944] The political and social conditions of America of the mid-sixties would have rendered an absolute "love rhetoric", like the one King preached at the beginning of the movement, unrealistic considering the low pace of change, the rise of Black Power, the disappointment of African-Americans with political changes and the turbulences of that era (e.g. the Vietnam War).

At the beginning of the movement King's rhetoric had displayed optimism and faith in the goodwill of southern whites. "We are convinced that in our time the South can be a peaceful and integrated society."[945] He regarded the majority of southern whites as law-abiding citizens and considered only a minority responsible for violence and the maintenance of segregation. Yet in the mid-sixties, the civil rights movement, most notably King, seemed to rely less on the conversion of public opinion and more on the effect of non-violent coercion. Many African-American activists grew increasingly frustrated with the lack of support they received from white Americans. After an African-American audience heckled King, he conceded the limits of non-violent conversion as he realized that African-American youth had become frustrated with the resistance of whites. "For twelve years, I and others like me, had held out radiant promises of progress. They were booing because we had urged them to have faith in a people who had too often proved to be unfaithful."[946]

Zinn also points to a change in accepting love and non-violence in the mid-sixties with regard to SNCC activists. Although Zinn acknowledges that activists believed in the credo of love and non-violence, the majority of them would deny that love and conscience would end segregation.[947] Baldwin, who perceives King's initial optimism as naïve and prudent, contends that his position on white southerners became similar to Malcolm X's position at the end of his life.[948] Dyson notes that

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[943] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 150 a. 156.
[944] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 256.
[945] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 337.
[946] King. Chaos or community. 45.
[947] Zinn, Howard. SNCC. 221.
[948] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 337.

whereas King's speeches were replete with the imagery of democracy prior to 1965, he lamented the refusal of Americans to "right their wrong" after 1965.[949] McAdam also contends that decline in optimism regarding race relations rather marked the late sixties. "The claim is that support for integration will be greatest during times when feelings of optimism about future racial prospects are prevalent within the black community."[950]

By the end of his life, King clearly shifted the focal point of his rhetoric to social inequality. Unlike the beginning of the movement, when African-Americans declared war on segregation and addressed particular issues like desegregation of buses and restaurant facilities, protest objectives became more complicated and by the end of the sixties revolved around "structural inequality". At that point King considered white America "unwilling to pay a significant price to eradicate it".[951] Dyson contends that during the last years of his life, King stopped believing in the essential goodness of whites and doubted whether whites would respond to appeals to conscience.[952] Two weeks before his death, King even announced that America was a racist country and in 1967 he described most Americans as unconscious racists.[953] King's doubts about whether non-violence was still an option after the violence that occurred in Memphis[954] shows that even King himself displayed doubts with regard to the power of converting the opponent. King declared that African-Americans had grown frustrated with the reluctance of white Americans to lend their support to the movement.

Gerald McKnight contends that the Vietnam-era particularly caused King to realize that America did not have a moral conscience and that white racism could not be overcome by appealing to its conscience.[955] Many African-American activists who rejected the possibility of converting white Americans after years of white violence increasingly started to criticize King and non-violence.[956] King wrote, "the majority of white Americans consider themselves sincerely committed to injustice for the Negro. They believe that American society is essentially hospitable to fair play and to steady growth toward a middle-class utopia embodying racial harmony. But unfortunately this is a fantasy of self-deception and comfortable vanity."[957] The rhetoric and the campaigns of the movement

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[949] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 38.
[950] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 203.
[951] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 11.
[952] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 31.
[953] Ibid. 39.
[954] The Memphis campaign started in 1968. On the 12th of February sanitation workers organized strikes for better pay and union recognition.
[955] McKnight, Gerald. The last crusade: Martin Luther King, Jr., the FBI, and the Poor People's Campaign. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998. 3.
[956] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 213.
After the Freedom Summer and Atlantic city, SNCC activists grew critical of this philosophy which they considered as impractical.
[957] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 4.

gradually radicalized. The Poor People Campaign represented a clear stirring in degree of militancy from previous campaigns.

However, King's criticism of white Americans should not be understood as his dismissal of affecting American public opinion. Attacking the very group one seeks to win over is not the paradox it may seem. Converting people by provoking them can be a strategic component of a public relations campaign. King condemned African-American preachers in the South who preached a passive doctrine to their congregations with the intention of shaming them to action. Malcolm X relied on the same strategy by provoking his audience and attacking African-Americans for their passivity. King's condemnation of America can still be considered as an attempt to influence public opinion and does not necessarily signal that he chose to solely rely on non-violent coercion instead.

Yet with his militant rhetoric, King began to alienate many white supporters. There is a thin line between alienating third-parties and winning them over. Increased condemnation of the targeted group may produce the opposite effect and repel them. Dyson describes how King's militant speeches deterred white allies.

> As long as King waxed eloquent about how Southern segregation could be overcome with non-violence, he was the darling of (Northern) white liberals. When he preached that African-Americans must sacrifice their blood and bodies to redeem whites, many liberals lauded his nobility. When he insisted that African-Americans love whites, even hateful and violent racists, King was crowned an epic moral figure by many liberals…. But when King began to say that racism was deeply rooted in our society and that only a structural change would remove it, he alienated key segments of the liberal establishment.[958]

Nevertheless King's non-violent rhetoric, particularly until the mid-sixties, caused the civil rights movement to gain many sympathizers and supporters such as liberals, politicians, donors, religious leaders and white Americans.

2.4.) Non-violent Provocation and Dramatization

This sub-chapter analyzes the topic of influencing public opinion through non-violent provocation, or the dramatization of protest and the subsequent brutal repression of the protestor by the opponent. Dramatization of protest means that non-violent protesters provoked segregationists to unleash violence before the media in order to shock and gain the support of American public opinion. The non-violent strategy of provoking segregationist violence was the most successful

[958] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 32.

strategy of the movement. It was segregationist violence in Birmingham and Selma that contributed to the shift in American public opinion, which began to sympathize with the civil rights protestors.

Yet how was this dramatization possible? First, non-violent leaders had to project images of "victimized" or "suffering" African-American protesters, which was elementary to non-violent dramatization. It was therefore crucial that non-violent leaders convince African-American protesters of the necessity to accept suffering or to voluntarily expose themselves to the repression by state troopers, police forces or segregationists in order to benefit the movement. Non-violent leaders glorified "suffering" during protests in order to convince protesters to demonstrate non-violently and focused on the Christian aspects of "redemptive" suffering.

2.4.1.) Suffering and Dramatization

> To suffer in a righteous cause is to grow to our humanity's full stature.[959] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

> Rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom, but it must be our blood. (Gandhi quoted by Martin Luther King, Jr.)[960]

> Before the victory is won some may have to get scarred up, but we shall overcome. Before the victory of brotherhood is achieved, some will maybe face physical death, but we shall overcome. Before this victory is won, some will lose jobs, some will be called communists, and reds, merely because they believe in brotherhood, some will be dismissed as dangerous rabblerousers and agitators merely because they're standing up for what is right, but we shall overcome.[961] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

> Nobody in the history of the world has suffered like the black man.[962] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

It is crucial to present public images of "suffering" non-violent protesters in order to portray an asymmetrical conflict situation, where protesters are clearly victimized, in order to transform public opinion. Non-violent protesters must exploit their "vulnerability". Outsiders may sympathize with protesters who are non-violent and face a mightier opponent. During the movement, non-violent

[959] Towns, W. Stuart. "We want our freedom": rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement. 133.
[960] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 97.
[961] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 52.
[962] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 317.

protesters exploited this asymmetrical position to portray themselves as victims or oppressed.[963] The sight of non-violent suffering protesters had a particular impact on American public opinion in Birmingham and Selma. During the civil rights movement, the objective of non-violent suffering was to expose suffering to the public and to the federal government so that they could no longer ignore the issue of civil rights and respond to the political demands of civil rights leaders.

Yet when is it recommended for protesters to become exposed to the violence or brutality of the opponent in order to arouse public opinion? What are the factors that will cause the sight of a suffering non-violent protester to be particularly effective and when do "suffering" images not benefit protesters?

2.4.2.) Necessity of Suffering in Non-violent Protest

There is widespread consensus among non-violent leaders and scholars that voluntary suffering is an integral component of non-violent protest. Gandhi maintained that suffering was indispensable in the fight against oppression. "No country has ever risen without being purified through the fire of suffering."[964] Gandhi even identified satyagraha and civil resistance as other names for suffering.[965] Non-violent advocates like Sharp and Gregg also agree on the necessity of non-violent suffering. Sharp states that all non-violent activists accept the necessity of suffering.[966] Abu Nimer, one of the Islamic proponents of non-violence, regards suffering as an inescapable component of successful resistance.[967]

Non-violent philosophy stipulates that non-violent protesters accept suffering without retaliation. Suffering may prove indispensable in non-violent protest, particularly if protesters seek to point out to third groups the excessive force of the opponent. If protesters choose to opt for confrontational non-violent protest against a more powerful opponent, represented by the police force for example, they risk not only incarceration but also repression, which they must respond to non-violently. Non-violent protesters see their suffering, and not that of the opponent, as unavoidable. Gandhi stated, it must be the blood of non-violent protesters that flows and not that of the opponent.[968] King argued similarly that there can be no remission of sin without the shedding of blood.[969] Any action leading

[963] Not all non-violent campaigns are staged by victims or the oppressed. Many non-violent demonstrations in Europe, for example, are staged by protestors that cannot be defined as oppressed or victimized in the general sense of the word, like Green-peace protest actions.
[964] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and tactics for Social Change. 6.
[965] Gandhi, M.K. Non-Violence in Peace & War. Volume I. 2.
[966] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 709.
[967] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam. 15.
[968] Gandhi, M. K. Non-Violence in Peace & War. Volume I. 7.
[969] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 228.

to the suffering of the opponent would be contrary to non-violent mechanisms and compromise the whole concept upon which non-violent strategy rests. Any violent backlash by African-Americans against the opponent would harm the image of the movement. An example of this was the condemnation that befell the SCLC in Memphis as a consequence of the violence that broke out during what was supposed to be a non-violent demonstration.

Perceptions of suffering in non-violent protest vary from conflict to conflict, as the nature of conflict often dictates the degree to which protesters must suffer. This means that there are conflicts that demand greater sacrifices than others. There are demonstrators who may be willing to die in conflict and there are others that are only prepared to spend a night in jail. Then there are conflicts wherein protesters are already exposed to a great proportion of suffering and are therefore more willing to accept more sacrifices than other demonstrators who experience lesser restrictions in their daily lives, and are hence not willing to undertake any serious risks. "The suffering which one group may find trivial may be intolerable to another," notes Sharp.[970] Gandhi's principle to voluntarily accept death for his beliefs may have struck some as too radical and possibly alienated them.[971] The degree of suffering that leaders demand from protesters must therefore be gauged in line with the conflict and the readiness of protesters to bear repression. Hiller points out that sacrifice must be bearable for the protesters or else depression will set in.[972] During the movement there were few activists who were prepared to risk their lives by venturing into the South. Lewis, one of the sit-in students and Freedom Riders, decided to "give up all if necessary for the Freedom Ride."[973] A group of Freedom Riders, who had faced tremendous white violence, wrote the names and addresses of their kin on notes before they went to the South. As one of them said, "everyone on the bus was prepared to die."[974] These activists were nevertheless an exception, as non-violent leaders often faced the problem of recruiting volunteers who were merely prepared to spend a night in jail.

The suffering of the protest group can serve as an incentive for both violence and non-violence. Malcolm X, for example, drew on the experience of suffering among African-Americans in his speeches in order to arouse their anger against what he called the "white devil". Violent resisters are indoctrinated through an "anti-opponent" rhetoric, which creates the anti-opponent as the perpetrator responsible for the suffering inflicted on the protester. Yet non-violent protesters contended that they voluntarily opted for non-violent protest and its consequences. Whereas

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[970] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two. 711.
[971] Gandhi, for example, called on Jews in Germany to refuse to be expelled and commented that if he was a Jew, he would rather be shot or cast in a dungeon. Gandhi, M.K. Satyagraha. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1951. 348.
[972] Sharp. Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two. 711.
[973] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 100.
[974] Ibid. 109.

suffering can be seen as a passive condition with no consequential impact on the assailant or the sufferer, in the philosophy of non-violent protest, it is regarded as an indispensable tool, due to its influence on public opinion. Police repression of protesters had a particularly strong impact on public opinion. The media played a crucial role in Birmingham and Selma by conveying images of "suffering" African-American protesters. During the Chicago campaign, on the other hand, non-violent protesters did not succeed in portraying the same images.

2.4.3.) Interpretation and Glorification of Suffering in Non-violent Protest

King and other non-violent preachers relied on a spiritual or metaphysical non-violent interpretation of suffering. King had to convince African-American protesters of the necessity of exposing themselves to violence. He argued that physical suffering during a non-violent demonstration was nothing compared to a life full of suffering. He reminded them that African-Americans already suffered from rats and roaches, were robbed at over-priced food stores, and worked for about two-thirds the pay of a white person doing a similar job.[975] While African-Americans had passively suffered in the past, they opted for voluntary suffering during the movement. "It is better to shed a little blood from a blow on the head or a rock thrown by an angry mob than to have children by the thousands finishing high school who can only read at a sixth-grade level."[976]

King relied on De Wolf's theory of redemptive suffering, claims Ansbro. According to De Wolf's theory, suffering was an unavoidable aspect of life and necessary for evolution.[977] When a person suffers for a righteous cause, his humanity grows to full stature.[978] Fairclough, who chose the title *To Redeem the Soul of America,* for his book on King and the civil rights movement, reflects this belief that African-American suffering would redeem America. The rhetoric of non-violent protest is often imbued with the heroization and glorification of non-violent suffering. Usually, one relates suffering to misery or weakness, as no person would voluntarily expose himself to physical injury, particularly by the opponent. Sharp notes that suffering may be perceived as cowardice.[979] Suffering implies vulnerability and indicates an absence of power. On the other hand, non-violent rhetoric turns suffering into a "virtue".

The heroization of non-violent suffering might be necessary as suffering can cause protesters to despair and therefore lead to violence. "I pray that, recognizing the necessity of suffering, the Negro

[975] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 57.
[976] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 56.
[977] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 52-60.
[978] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 290.
[979] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two. 714.

will make of it a virtue," wrote King.[980] Many advocates and even analysts of the civil rights movement referred to the glorification of suffering. Gregg points to the courage of non-violent protesters in their readiness to suffer and to accept violence without retaliation. He writes that it requires less courage to attack than to withstand violence.[981]

Non-violent readiness to sacrifice without retaliation was a constant theme in King's speeches. During the Montgomery Boycott, King warned his followers that they may have go to jail or even risk their lives for their beliefs. A non-violent protester must be willing to go to jail as "a bridegroom enters the bride's chamber."[982] In his speeches King even glorified death, which could be the price of freedom: "But if such physical death is the price that we must pay to free our children from a life of permanent psychological death, then nothing could be more honorable."[983]

King argued that many African-Americans regarded themselves as a people that have experienced a long history of suffering since they arrived on slave-ships to America. Throughout their history, African-Americans reacted to their hardship in a non-violent way, expressed, for example, in slave songs or through religion. "The central quality of the Negro's life is pain, a pain so old and so deep that it shows in almost every moment of his existence. It emerges in the cheerlessness of his sorrow songs, in the melancholy of his blues, and in the pathos of his sermons."[984] In his sermon *A Knock at Midnight*, King pointed to the capacity of African-Americans to endure suffering and to overcome it with hope.

> Our slave foreparents taught us so much in their beautiful sorrow songs… They looked at the midnight surrounding their days. They knew that there were sorrow and agony and hurt all around. When they thought about midnight they would sing:
> *Nobody knows the trouble I see,*
> *Nobody knows but Jesus.*
> But pretty soon something reminded them that morning would come, and they would sing:
> *I'm so glad,*
> *Trouble don't last always*.[985]

Dyson notes that King and other activists often told stories of African-Americans who overcame obstacles in the past and that they also sought to link memories of the black revolt to the non-violent struggle.[986]

King theologically justified and glorified suffering. Non-violent leaders claimed that personal experiences of suffering had redemptive value. King himself reiterated his personal experiences of redemptive suffering: "The suffering and agonizing moments through which I have passed over the

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[980] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 220.
[981] Gregg, Richard B. The Power Of Nonviolence. 44.
[982] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 18.
[983] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and tactics for Social Change.7.
[984] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 102-103.
[985] Baldwin, Lewis. To Make The Wounded Whole. 64.
[986] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 107.

last few years have also drawn me closer to God."[987] King held that the perception of suffering as redemptive was effective against bitterness and aggression. "My personal trials have also taught me the value of unmerited suffering…. If only to save myself from bitterness, I have attempted to see my personal ordeals as an opportunity to transform myself and heal the people involved in the tragic situation which now obtains."[988]

Sharp, however, does not regard a theological justification of suffering as necessary for the application of non-violence. He contends that some might interpret suffering in a spiritual or metaphysical sense but he also writes, "It is sufficient if the volunteers see something of the contribution which, withstanding repression, makes to achieving the objectives."[989] This implies that if a non-violent protester sees that his suffering caused a positive outcome, he will be encouraged to sacrifice further. Lawson, however, contended that "Christian non-violence" could cause African-Americans to reject fear and passivity and embrace the "hardship (violence and jail) of obedience."[990] To King, "Christian suffering" was an integral part of his non-violent philosophy. His blend of theology and non-violent philosophy aimed at making protesters identify with Jesus, whom he regarded as a model of non-violent suffering in the movement. Protesters were to become co-sufferers with Christ.[991] Just like Jesus sacrificed in order to "redeem humanity", African-Americans were to sacrifice in order to redeem America. The death of Jesus on the cross, which King regarded as the "highest expression of divine agape", represented a perfect example of redemptive suffering as propagated by King. "Every time I look at the cross I am reminded of the greatness of God and the redemptive power of Jesus Christ. I am reminded of the beauty of sacrificial love and the majesty of unswerving devotion to truth."[992] "The Cross of Jesus Christ was for King, the black theologian, a symbol of suffering and salvation, of subjugation and liberation," writes Baldwin.[993] The theme of the suffering of Jesus was deeply anchored in African-American culture. This African-American song, for example, reflects the identification with a "tormented" Jesus who experienced suffering:

> Dey whupped him up de hill…
> Dey crowned his head with thorns…
> Dey pierced him in de side,
> An' de blood came a-twinklin' down;
> But he never said a mumbalin' word;

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[987] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 42.
[988] Ibid. 41.
[989] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part One. 551.
[990] SNCC, "Statement of Purpose". *Let freedom ring: a documentary history of the modern civil rights movement*. Ed. Peter B. Levy. 74.
[991] Fluker, Walter E. They Looked For a City. 131.
[992] King, Martin Luther. Strength To Love. 45.
[993] Baldwin, Lewis. To Make The Wounded Whole. 62.

Not a word; not a word.[994]

Gandhi also perceived suffering from a religious perspective and contended that the readiness for suffering could be developed through praying, discipline and acts of self-purification.[995] King presented suffering as "the highest manifestation of Christianity".[996] King referred to Christian biblical symbols to underline the need to remain non-violent despite oppression. He referred to St. Paul who, in a desolate dungeon, "joyously sang the songs of Zion at midnight", and also referred to the early Christians who suffered for the sake of Christ and the African-American slaves who sang their spirituals.[997] "When we refuse to suffer for righteousness and choose to follow the path of comfort rather than conviction, we hear Jesus say: ´´Blessed are they which are prosecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.``"[998]

2.4.4.) Effect of Non-violent Suffering on the Opponent and on Public Opinion

Just as non-violent leaders claimed that Christian love would convert the opponent, they also asserted that images of "suffering protesters" would achieve the same result. Through non-violent protest the "suffering body is offered up as an extraordinary plea for commission," confirms Moses.[999] The sight of "suffering" non-violent protesters is supposed to arouse the conscience of the opponent and cause him to rethink his "unjust methods". "The sight of a person voluntarily undergoing suffering for a belief or an ideal moves the assailant and beholders alike and tends to change their hearts and make them feel kinship with the sufferer," wrote King.[1000] Suffering, as seen by Gandhi and King, could transform the opponent and convert him.[1001] King quoted Gandhi who said: "Things of fundamental importance to people are not secured by reason alone, but have to be purchased with their suffering…Suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears which are otherwise shut to the voice of reason."[1002]

Sharp concedes that non-violent actionists may reject self-suffering and consider it unnecessary or impossible.[1003] Yet he agrees that self-suffering can affect the morale of the opponent who, instead of seeing himself as courageous and defending loved ones, realizes that he is the one who is

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[994] Ibid.
[995] Smith. Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 105.
[996] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 63.
[997] King, Martin Luther. Strength To Love. 94-95.
[998] Ibid. 19.
[999] Moses, Greg. Revolution Of Conscience. 187.
[1000] Gregg, Richard. The Power of Nonviolence. 53.
[1001] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 97.
[1002] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 18.
[1003] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two. 709.

attacking courageous protesters.[1004] The sight of a non-violent protester is supposed to reach beneath the rational and the conscience.[1005] Gandhi believed that self-suffering could melt "the stoniest hearts" and that it would make victory certain.[1006] Yet it is not sufficient to demand from protesters that they expose themselves to "repression" merely relying on the potential conversion of the opponent. Sharp contends that the opponent may face inner conflicts that may cause him to become receptive to suggestions from protesters. Gregg also shares this opinion by writing that conversion may lead the oppressor to see the situation in a broader and more far-sighted way.[1007] Still Sharp contends that these changes may not take place at all or cause the opponent to become brutalized.[1008]

The mechanisms of non-violent suffering and consequential benefits for protesters depend on the presence of media representatives. The sight of a suffering protester, who is exposed to brutalities in Mississippi, for example, cannot be equated with a scene of protesters being beaten in broad daylight in the middle of the street in front of cameras and the media. Individual testimonies of police repression to the media also proved to be significant with regard to channeling public opinion. Hamer, who was tortured by the police because she engaged in voter registrations, rose to become one of the influential leaders of the movement. Hamer became well known after the media disclosed her "suffering" experience. Her narration of the torture she experienced at the hands of southern police had a strong impact on public opinion and was televised across the nation.[1009]

> The voter registration project went on, and at the Democratic Convention of 1964 Hamer related her story to a nation increasingly repelled by white southern racism. Simply by surviving and speaking, a woman of Mississippi's subjugated race had humiliated the police and the society that hid behind them.[1010]

However, King faced criticism for seeking to portray African-Americans as victims, as it avoids assuming responsibility for one's own condition, as Christopher Lasch points out.[1011] Nevertheless the "spectacle of men suffering for a principle and not hitting back is a moving one. It obliges the power holders to condescend to explain, to justify themselves. The weak get a change of venue from the will of the stronger to the court of public opinion, perhaps world opinion," writes American sociologist Edward Alsworth Ross.[1012]

Numerous non-violent protest actions, however, did not rely on portraying suffering non-violent protesters because protesters achieved the objective through civil disobedience and the size of the

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[1004] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 722.
[1005] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 61.
[1006] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 722.
[1007] Ibid. 724.
[1008] Ibid. 723.
[1009] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 203.
[1010] West, Thomas, R., and James W. Mooney. To Redeem A Nation. Ix.
[1011] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 43.
[1012] Ross. „Introduction", in Case, Non-violent coercion. I – Rpt. in *The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three.* Gene Sharp. 659.

masses involved. Campaigns that merely relied on boycotts did not require the presence of non-violent sufferers. Yet the Montgomery Boycott, which, as the name indicates, was a boycott, nevertheless influenced public opinion as African-Americans portrayed themselves as victims. Non-violent suffering is an important component of non-violent protest which also relies on coercing the opponent. In Miller's view, suffering must be accompanied by tactical and strategic pressure when it occurs during a protest campaign. Economic and political pressure as well as legal recourses would be even more effective, he writes.[1013] Yet this depends on the political objectives of the protesters and their political environment, as political demands play an important role with regard to conversion and generating sympathy. The sight of suffering protesters is not always sufficient to cause influential third groups to react in favor of protesters, especially if protestors' demands are too inconvenient to the groups. Suffering can only lead to reconciliation through "a nexus of shared values which provides a basis for empathy," writes Smith.[1014] Lakey clarifies this point further by stating that the opponent must somehow identify himself with the non-violent actionist.[1015] Suffering without the possibility of generating empathy is ineffective. Protesters should expose themselves to repression only if they can attract attention which will in turn provoke sympathy. Critics of non-violence, like Malcolm X, criticized non-violent leaders who encouraged protesters to expose themselves to police brutality or violent repression from white racists without any form of self-defense, even though non-violent leaders depended on these very incidents of white brutality to expose segregation in its most vicious form to the public. Although King demanded that protesters turn the other cheek while resisting non-violently, nevertheless it sounded passive to militants like Malcolm X and African-American youth who rejected non-violent protest.

Non-violent protesters should plan how to draw maximum attention by choosing the perfect location and the perfect timing for their protest. Segregationist violence inflicted upon protesters during southern campaigns which were not covered by the media did not advance these campaigns and only increased the frustration of many activists with non-violence. In particular, the violent deaths of African-American activists led many activists to reject non-violence.[1016] Despite attempts to glorify suffering, African-American activists who had experienced police brutality or were intimidated by racist violence, started to reject non-violence. Protesters may accept suffering in the hope that they will achieve political gains in return. Particularly SNCC activists rejected non-violence after they ventured into the South in the mid-sixties and were exposed to physical and psychological suffering. King particularly faced the limitations of "redemptive suffering" in

[1013] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 80.
[1014] Ibid. 74.
[1015] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two .710.
[1016] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 176-177.

Chicago when he realized that coercion, and not redemptive suffering, would produce change.[1017] "King began speaking more and more about the need for power, the power to force change, not beg for it…."[1018]

In the mid-sixties many non-violent activists of SNCC, CORE and the Black Power movement rejected redemptive suffering and its effect on the opponent as they were attacked in the South and responded non-violently with no consequential effect. SNCC activists in Mississippi were beaten, some of them intimidated, terrorized and killed. Cleveland Sellers stated that the tension that they experienced had always been there.[1019] The result of the fear activists lived in caused them ulcers, migraine headaches, constipation, nervous twitches and nightmares. According to Sitkoff, this constant state of fear eroded the youth's faith in non-violence.[1020]

Hence, ineffective "non-violent suffering" will prove by time unbearable for protesters and will deter them from non-violent action. If repression is too brutal, protesters will eventually discard non-retaliatory non-violence, as happened with SNCC activists. Suffering in non-violent protest should only be accepted if it strengthens the position of protesters, which is to say if it sways public opinion in their favor so that political change is possible.

2.5.) Dramatization and Segregationist Violence

> More white people learned more about the shame of America, and finally faced some aspects of it, during the years of non-violent protest than during the century before.[1021] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

After having presented the necessity of portraying images of the "suffering protester" in non-violent protest, this sub-chapter of the study elaborates on how non-violent protesters provoked segregationist violence by mounting "dramatic" protest, and analyzes the effect on public opinion. Whereas the objective of civil disobedience and non-violent protest is to coerce the opponent to give in to demands of protesters, several protest campaigns of the movement aimed at converting or winning the favor of public opinion. This type of non-violent protest would not have been possible without segregationist violence. The strength of the movement particularly laid in provoking segregationist violence. One example of excessive violence that marred the image of segregationists was the brutality of the Selma troopers against African-American demonstrators, which triggered

[1017] Otis Turner, Nonviolence and the Politics of Liberation, Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center 4 (Spring 1977), 49-60. Rpt. in *The Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith. 189.
[1018] Ibid.
[1019] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 120.
[1020] Ibid.
[1021] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 139.

the passing of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. Other examples include the police violence against child protesters in Birmingham and the bombing of a Birmingham church that killed four African-American girls.

Segregationist violence had several effects on the protest. It benefited the movement as it mobilized a large number of African-American protesters, as segregationist retaliation to non-violent protest repeatedly provoked and united African-American citizens. It also turned American public opinion against segregationists.

2.5.1.) Segregationist Violence Strengthens African-American Protest

Before elaborating on the non-violent strategy of provoking segregationist violence and its effect on public opinion, the author shows that segregationist violence and the repression of protestors often played into the hands of African-Americans and backfired on segregationists, as it consolidated the defiance of the African-American community and exposed the brutality of segregationists. Violence inflicted on non-violent protesters can either end the protest or promote it. It depends on the degree of this violence. If repression is too brutal, it will intimidate protesters. Acts of segregationist violence, however, were randomly carried out. They were not systematically organized to intimidate protesters so that they would cease their protest activities. Segregationist violence particularly promoted non-violent protest when it was condemned by public opinion. One example is when segregationists responded to the sit-ins in Nashville with an explosion that destroyed an African-American lawyer's house and the windows of a medical school. The explosion had the effect of mobilizing the African-American community and bringing it out to protest on the streets. This violence pressured the Mayor to form a biracial committee which obliged him to desegregate downtown stores.[1022]

Acts of segregationist repression also caused public opinion to sympathize with the movement. The jailing of King in Montgomery revitalized the boycott. When a photograph of King was publicly shown with a numbered plaque hanging from his neck, it captured national and international attention and support poured in from all over the world.[1023] The bombing of King's home and his non-violent response also clearly enhanced his status as a leader and influenced African-Americans and white Americans alike. Another similar incident was when city officials of Montgomery indicted King and nearly one hundred other leaders of the boycott. When these leaders went to the police station and surrendered themselves, hundreds of African-Americans gathered outside the police station and applauded the courage of their leaders. One day after their arrest,

[1022] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 39.
[1023] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 54.

thousands of African-Americans marched with the indicted leaders. At a church meeting hundreds pledged themselves to "passive resistance". When King was convicted in Montgomery, he was hailed outside the courtroom by a large number of demonstrators who shouted: "Long live the King! We ain't gonna ride the buses no more."[1024]

There are also many examples where segregationist violence provoked African-American protesters and caused them to step up their protest. After the Birmingham bombing, Baldwin and militant SNCC activists called for a nationwide civil disobedience campaign. A group of New York artists and writers, like Ossie Davis, Louis Lomax and John O. Killens, urged a total boycott of Christmas. Weisbrot contends that many students "drew strength from such adversity." "For students who had endured vigilante violence and one-sided justice, the originally airy concepts of non-violence and brotherly community became more than mere rhetoric."[1025] Numerous civil rights activists recount how, despite the violence and intimidation they encountered, their spirit remained high.[1026] In the wake of the murder of Medgar Evers, NAACP state secretary of Mississippi, and the acquittal of two suspects after only two mistrials, large numbers of white church groups and college students became involved in the protest. This came after racist atrocities in Birmingham. C. Vann Woodward contends that in the ten weeks following Evers's death and the Birmingham truce there were a total of 758 racial demonstrations in America.[1027]

On the other side, the violence SNCC activists encountered in the South, however, caused many of them to reject non-violence, as the author shows in this chapter. There are also many examples where segregationist violence, incarcerations and a united and tough stand of white spokesmen proved successful and ended protest, like the sit-in campaigns in Montgomery.[1028] Yet the examples above show that particularly excessive segregationist violence like the bombing of a church, the killing of an activist, or the incarceration of ministers that were condemned by public opinion united protesters, unlike other forms of latent repression that could have proven more effective, like causing financial harm to southern African-Americans or using latent intimidation, which was not publicly visible. The more unjustified and shocking the action of the oppressor is to non-violent protest, the more justified protesters will perceive their protest, particularly if the opponent does not terrorize and intimidate them to an extent where they fear to undertake any protest action at all.

[1024] Bennett, Jr., Lerone. When the Man and the Hour Are Met. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile.* Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 29-30

[1025] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 27.

[1026] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm

[1027] Woodward, C. Vann. The Strange Career Of Jim Crow. 179.

[1028] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 26.

2.5.2.) Provoking the Opponent

Segregationist violence repeatedly caused the federal government or local politicians to undertake political action. The exposure of segregation that came to the fore through acts of violence considerably benefited the non-violent movement. This violence became particularly visible during non-violent demonstrations. McAdam writes, "as a byproduct of the drama associated with these flagrant displays of public violence, the movement was also able to sustain member commitment, generate broad public sympathy, and mobilize financial support from external groups."[1029] Samuel Lubell contends that King's strategy was to show to America that segregation could only be maintained by police repression so that national leaders would become embarrassed to act and affect the national conscience.[1030] Violence provoked by non-violent protest became a main strategy of SCLC.

Non-violence is considered the best means to expose the brutality and viciousness of an unjust system. "No other method works so well to pinpoint the fact that the system is evil."[1031] Non-violent dramatization is supposed to cause the assailant to lose the support of public opinion. Moses invokes the term "guerilla theater" to describe the organized protest of activists aimed at exposing southern violence.[1032] Movement activists often used the term "dramatic" protest. Keith Sanger writes that the word drama is used widely and loosely. "It's used widely in the media to describe anything that seems to be unusual or to involve conflict of some sort."[1033] "We may be entertained, we may be educated, we may experience the Aristotelian concept of catharsis, whereby our strong emotions are purged away by seeing their representation on stage."[1034] A successful non-violent protest dramatization will stir up emotions of indignation and sympathy. In a non-violent protest drama, there is a villain (the opponent) and a victim (the protester). It is crucial that the audience can identify and sympathize with the protest group involved. The protest must, therefore, make clear why the protesters are taking to the streets. Every good drama also relies on a good "script", in this case protest rhetoric. A drama is only effective if there is an audience. This means, protest had to receive some form of coverage from the media in order to become effective.

Agitation is a prelude to dramatization. As non-violent organizations depended on conflict to dramatize the injustice of segregation, they had to have a crisis to receive public attention. In other words, they had to "pick up a fight". One could argue that by venturing into the South, James Meredith provoked white racists to the point that they chose to gun him down. The result was

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[1029] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 174.
[1030] Lubell, Samuel. White and Black. 103-104.
[1031] Moses, Greg. Revolution Of Conscience. 160.
[1032] Ibid. 187.
[1033] Sanger, Keith, The language of drama. London; New York: Routledge, 2001. 5.
[1034] Ibid. 6.

public indignation and the Meredith March, which united several civil rights organizations. During the Chicago campaign it was the fear of protesters marching into the community of Cicero, a stronghold of segregationists, which caused Mayor Daley and his staff to renegotiate with King, as they feared the outbreak of uncontrollable segregationist violence.

Non-violent protest did not mean to fully expose oneself to the violence of the opponent. Many African-American protesters received training on how to react when attacked and how to protect their bodies in order to avoid maximum injury. It was particularly important to bring about an asymmetrical conflict situation and to portray non-violent protesters as victims. Repression against non-violent groups seems unreasonable, inhuman and distasteful, claims Sharp.[1035] The asymmetrical conflict situation that non-violence makes public leaves room for sympathy. The international community, for example, condemned the Vietnam War for the transparent disproportionate amount of American military power to Vietnamese peasant guerilla combatants, even though the latter were violent resisters. Yet these peasants had also established an asymmetrical conflict situation. This effect is much stronger in the face of non-violent protest. Another asymmetrical example is the non-violent campaign of 1960 in Sharpville, South Africa, where a number of non-violent protesters were killed. One additional example is the 1963 Buddhist struggle against the South Vietnamese government.[1036] These incidents caused international public opinion to side with the protesters given the disproportionate difference of power of the opponent and his repression of a much weaker victim.

Tarnishing the image of the opponent can turn public opinion against him. The philosophy of political jiu-jitsu stipulates that the repression of the opponent will shift public opinion against him and result in the withdrawal of support for the opponent.[1037] "The nonviolent group is able to gain far more support and power than if it had met violence with violence."[1038]

Sharp writes that indignation caused by brutal repression might reach a point where the opponent's group not only questions repression but also the cause itself.[١٠٣٩] One example of the changed political climate was the television speech of President Johnson held during the Selma campaign, after the televised police brutality. Even though Johnson did not represent the opponent group, his statement that the long history of depriving African-Americans of voting was "deadly wrong", was unprecedented in American history.[١٠٤٠] Repression of African-American protesters and their visible "suffering" to the public triggered the speech. Sharp contends that when segregationist violence became too brutal in the face of non-violent protesters, southern white

[1035] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 665.
[1036] Ibid. 660.
[1037] Ibid. 657.
[1038] Ibid. 658.
[1039] Ibid. 665-667.
[1040] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 408.

communities and even pro-segregationist leadership split.[١٠٤١] The police violence of Selma prompted two hundred sympathetic speeches from Congress.[1042] Chicago, on the other hand, lacked dramatic scenes that contrasted hateful white violence with African-American nonviolence and morality, as scenes of African-American violence erupted in Chicago.[1043]

Non-violent action is ineffective if there is no "audience". This means that public opinion must bear witness to the "atrocities" committed against protesters in order for the protest to possibly influence politicians who undertake political action based on the indignation of public opinion. The author points to the fact that this change can only occur in a democratic country where public opinion will affect political leaders. The presence of a sufficient numbers of "onlookers" is therefore indispensable to the success of influencing public opinion through non-violent demonstration. Sometimes the presence of media reporters during demonstrations restrained segregationists from attacking protesters, like in Birmingham. Gregg states that the presence of third groups during protest actions can even prevent the assailant from carrying out repressive acts that would mar his image:

> If there are onlookers, the assailant soon loses still more poise. Instinctively he dramatizes himself before them and becomes more aware of his position. With the audience as a sort of mirror, he realizes the contrast between his own conduct and that of the victim. In relation to onlookers, the attacker, with his violence, perhaps begins to feel a little excessive and undignified – even a little ineffective- and by contrast with the victim, less generous and in fact brutal. He realizes that the onlookers see that he has lost prestige. He somewhat loses his inner self-respect, gets a sense of inferiority.[1044]

As Rustin wrote, "businessmen and chambers of commerce across the south dreaded the cameras."[1045] Shuttlesworth stated, "you see a policeman beating somebody with water hoses… that's news, that's spectacularism."[١٠٤٦] Television cameras particularly acted as a deterrent to segregationists as some of them feared bad publicity. At the same time the movement depended on the media to expose racism. When the police attacked protesters during demonstrations in Selma for example, someone shouted: "They're killing them. They're killing them…There, you photographers, get pictures of them killing them."[١٠٤٧] Curtis J. Austin writes:

> According to Bob Moses and other civil rights activists, they (African-American protesters) hoped and often prayed that television and newspaper reporters would show

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[1041] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 670.
[1042] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 133.
[1043] Howard-Pitney, David. The African American jeremiad: appeals for justice in America. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005. 195.
[1044] Gregg, B. Richard. The Power of Nonviolence. 45.
[1045] Rustin, Bayard. Streategies for Freedom: The Changing Patterns of Black Protest. New York, 1976. 38-39. Rpt. in *To Redeem the Soul of America*. Adam Fairclough. 228.
[1046] Ibid. 138.
[1047] Garrow, David J. Bearing the Cross. 409.

> the world that the primary reason African-Americans remained in such a subordinate position in the South was because of widespread violence directed against them.[1048]

Provoking the opponent, however, has limited utility and contains its own dangers, warns Sharp, as the opponent could try to prevent his repression from being discovered and block all dissemination of information.[1049] Provoking the opponent therefore should be carried out shrewdly, which means that protesters should gauge the potential reaction of the opponent before action is taken, given the punishment he can inflict on protesters. It would be senseless to provoke segregationists in the South where there is no imminent police protection and no television cameras. It was crucial that non-violent protesters benefited from segregationist violence.

Dramatized conflict allowed non-violent protesters to visibly mainstream segregation. A protester often passively bears oppression, which means his oppression rarely takes a physical or violent form that is perceived by the public, unless the protester takes action. For example, the segregation of lunch counters had been taken for granted by American public opinion until African-Americans took the initiative and organized the sit-ins that unleashed segregationist violence. The Montgomery Boycott offers a similar example.

SCLC activists justified their protest by arguing that they merely brought already existing hostilities to the surface. Creating tension was the only means to attract public attention. “If you create enough tension you attract tension to your cause” and “get to the conscience of the white man,” King said.[1050] Tension brings conflicting parties to a point where they confront each other.

> The purpose of …direct action is to create a situation so crisis-packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation…We who engage in non-violent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it to the open where it can be seen and dealt with.[1051]

Confrontation and conflict are necessary components of non-violent dramatization. Farmer regarded the Freedom Rides as productive confrontations, “we put on pressure and create a crisis (for federal leaders) and then they react.”[1052]

After the end of the Albany movement, SCLC realized that they needed to have a conflict. “We’ve got to have a crisis to bargain with,” said Walker.[1053] SCLC realized that unless they mounted serious pressure, whites would not grant them any concessions. “To take a moderate approach hoping to get white help, doesn’t help. They nail you to the cross, and it saps the enthusiasm of the followers. You’ve got to have a crisis.”[1054] Watley contends that King started to

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[1048] Austin, Curtis J. On Violence and Nonviolence: The Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi. http:..mshistory.k12.ms.us.features.feature24.ms_civil_rights.html
[1049] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 677.
[1050] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 236.
[1051] Ibid. 247.
[1052] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 55.
[1053] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 128.
[1054] Ibid. 128-129.

pay more attention to the practical aspects of non-violence after the Albany campaign, as King's strategies became not only coercive but also manipulative.[1055] King knew that unless racial tensions were made visible, the President might retreat from giving any support. "The Negro has learned that, through economic and mass pressures, this elite can be made to submit step by step," wrote Rustin after Birmingham. Before the Chicago campaign started and before SCLC staff construed their plans, Bevel asserted that problems had to be on the front page everyday.[1056] As Fairclough writes, "the press liked a sense of drama, but it easily lost interest if the tension relaxed."[1057]

Gandhi also believed that Indian non-violent provocation should show the inherent violence of the British Empire, to exert moral pressure on the British to change their attitude, to make the nature of what was happening in India clear to the world, to display the determination of Indians to be free and to expose the nature of the British to the Indians themselves.[1058] Gandhi had repeatedly sought to provoke the British and the Raj. He knew that his non-violent raids, for example, on salt works would invite repression from the Raj.[1059] African-American non-violent protesters relied on the same tactic. Rustin recognized the consequences of evoking white repression. Non-violence would drive the Citizens' Council, for example, to extreme measures.[١٠٦٠]

Although Fairclough contends that SCLC depended to a great extent on such "media events", these actions were not cold-blooded sacrifices. He argues that the term "provocation" is inaccurate in describing SCLC's tactics as SCLC wanted vivid images, not bloodshed; it sought to evoke drama rather than bloodshed.[١٠٦١] One could regard Fairclough's statement as minimizing SCLC's tactics of provocation. On the other hand, non-violent leaders relied on creating planned chaos by means of non-violent demonstrations like in Birmingham when children were attacked and during "Bloody Sunday" in Selma. During these protest events, no demonstrators died although many were seriously injured. King eschewed situations that might result in the death of activists.[1062]

When a journalist once asked King whether his movement depended on violence, he responded: "When you give witness to an evil you do not cause that evil but you oppose it so it can be cured."[1063] Young made the same point by referring to the Selma campaign: "The movement did not ´´cause`` problems in Selma…[I]t just brought them to the surface where they could be dealt with.

[1055] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 77.
Garrow also shares the view that King abandoned his view of convincing southern whites of the injustice of segregation after the Albany campaign. Garrow, David J. Protest At Selma. 2-4. a. 220-227.
[1056] Ibid. 449.
[1057] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 143
[1058] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 687.
[1059] Ibid.
[1060] D`Emilio, John. Lost Prophet- The Life And Times Of Bayard Rustin. 243.
[1061] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 138.
[1062] Ibid. 229.
[1063] Ibid. 226.

Sheriff Clark has been beating black heads in the back of the jail for years, and he'll have to do it on Main Street, at noon, in front of CBS, NBC, and ABC television cameras."[1064]

The importance of segregationist violence to protesters can be deduced from the following example: When a march was organized to take place outside of City Hall in Birmingham, Walker prayed that Connor would not let the protesters march peacefully. Walker assumed that Connor wanted publicity and to have his name in the paper.

> I prayed that he'd keep trying to stop us…. Birmingham would have been lost if Bull had let us go down to the City Hall and pray; if he had let us do that and stepped aside, what else would be new? There would be no movement, no publicity. But all he could see was stopping us before we got there. We had calculated for the stupidity of a Bull Connor.[1065]

Walker added, "We knew that the psyche of the white redneck was such that he would inevitably do something to help our cause."[1066] Walker's stance may appear too manipulative yet publicity was a key issue for activists in order to expose the effects of segregation. Protesters succeeded in portraying Birmingham as a city imbued with police brutality. The high-pressure hoses that were directed at African-American demonstrators were so powerful that they tore off their clothes and cut their skin. Fairclough contends that images of snarling dogs, gushing fire-hoses and club-wielding troopers had a great impact on reporters and that having cameras present was more influential for the movement than murders and bombings.[1067]

Dyson writes that racial terror was made an unintended ally.[1068] Life magazine commented on Birmingham beneath a double spread photo showing police dogs attacking protesters: "This extraordinary sequence…is the attention-getting jackpot of the Negroes' provocation."[1069] The dramatization protesters created was so dramatic that segregationist provocation overshadowed their "nuisance". Even though protesters committed "technical legal infraction" by violating a parade ordinance, as a Life journalist wrote, the provocation of these protesters was "far outweighed by the broader right of citizens in a free society to assemble peaceably to seek redress of grievances."[1070]

Sharp contends that political jiu-jitsu[1071] operates with regard to three groups in particular: 1. uncommitted third parties, on the local scene or on the world level, 2. the opponent's usual supporters, and 3. the general grievance group, the persons directly affected by an issue who undertake action to overcome their problem.[1072] The exposure of demonstrators in Birmingham to clubbing, police dogs and fire hoses, all of which was aired on national television, infuriated each

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[1064] Ibid. 228.
[1065] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 251.
[1066] Ibid.
[1067] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 229.
[1068] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 34.
[1069] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 138.
[1070] Ibid.
[1071] Political jiu-jitsu means to throw the opponent off balance politically.
[1072] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 658.

the aforementioned groups: ordinary Americans, African-Americans and even advocates of segregation. Sitkoff comments on that incident: "King suddenly had the support of much of the nation. Kennedy had to act."[1073] "Birmingham aroused the dormant conscience and sense of justice of millions of white Americans, and subsequent protest ended the complacency of still millions more."[1074]

A study by Earl Black on the civil rights movement contends that it was not the success of the movement's campaigns which made the movement's achievements so enduring but the "successful dramatization, before a national audience, of the injustice and inhumanity of the Jim Crow system."[1075] Levison sees the indignation produced by the brutal violence unleashed by the Selma campaign as contributive to the movement. "The degree of violence was shocking and startling, but not excessive…Yet Selma provoked a far greater indignation and resolution to halt injustice."[١٠٧٦] ABC even broadcasted the repression of protesters in Selma and interrupted its program "Judgment at Nuremberg" to present footage of the demonstration.[١٠٧٧]

Violent repression during Selma and Birmingham proved particularly beneficial to the movement as it affected the image of the South and that of America on an international level. In Birmingham and Selma, police forces and state troopers attacked protesters. Activists calculated how to fully exploit the violence of segregationists during these two campaigns. In order to have the utmost possible publicity in Birmingham, Walker delayed marches until late in the afternoon to ensure that a large number of onlookers would be present, as that would make a confrontation between onlookers and the police more likely to erupt. Newsmen would presume that the onlookers were demonstrators, which would make them suppose that there were more demonstrators than there actually were.[1078]

Non-violent protesters invited a violent response not only in Birmingham and Selma but also in St. Augustine. Young wrote that the St. Augustine campaign may have been the "bloodiest struggle".[1079] In St. Augustine, the attacks were not limited to a few individuals but according to Young, every one suffered.[1080] Although some campaigns provoked only little segregationist violence, SCLC managed to publicize segregationist violence to the best possible effect.[١٠٨١] On the other hand, not every conflict proved ideal for dramatization. Voter registration marches in the South in the aftermath of Selma lacked dramatized violence. They did not elicit white violence as

[1073] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 138.
[1074] Ibid. 151.
[1075] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 149.
[1076] Garrow, David J. Bearing the Cross. 419.
[1077] Ibid. 399.
[1078] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 121.
[1079] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 82.
[1080] Ibid.
[1081] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 8.

Fairclough writes. They were "almost uneventful series of strolls."[1082] Non-violent leaders had to choose cities that would provide them with the dramatization they needed. Activists singled out Atlanta, for example, for its record of segregation and its resistance to desegregation. They chose St. Augustine for the same reason. At the beginning of the Selma campaign, SCLC had planned demonstrations in several "black belt" counties so that if protest in Selma did not face any visible opposition, SCLC would shift to another location.[1083]

The disproportionate reaction of the opponent is hence crucial to non-violent dramatization. In Birmingham and Selma, Connor and Clark were important factors that determined the campaign's strategy.[1084] SCLC considerably benefited from the police brutality actions of Connor and Clark. Watley contends that the choice of Selma as a next target for non-violent protest partly grew out of the consideration that Clark would violently respond to protest given his repression of SNCC voter education and registration efforts in Dallas County.[1085] It was one such violent act that got the Selma campaign started. When activists decided to enter the courthouse from the front, Clark arrested them. A well known African-American local leader, named Mrs. Amelia Boynton, did not move fast enough for Clark, he grabbed her by the back of her collar before the reporters and pushed her stumbling to a police car.[1086] "Bloody Sunday" in the Selma campaign also shifted the weight of public opinion to African-Americans. On that day, Williams and Lewis led six hundred marchers who were tear gassed, cattle prodded and brutally beaten by state troopers.

Yet in Chicago, Mayor Daley, like Pritchett, succeeded in aborting King's strategies by absorbing his attacks and announcing reforms at almost the same time when King issued protest initiatives. Watley writes that Daley announced reforms in order to upstage King by initiating proposals of his own.[1087] One of the factors that caused the Albany movement to fail was that Pritchett's methods were so restrained that he did not allow African-Americans to dramatize their actions. Non-violent leaders learned from Albany that "evil" must be exposed. Pritchett's canny strategy was to meet "nonviolence" with "nonviolence".[1088] Pritchett protected protesters and kept their mistreatment to a minimum. He would not allow whites to run amuck. As a consequence the government did not send federal marshals to Albany.

There were numerous examples during the civil rights movement of segregationist violence, which shocked and infuriated whites and African-Americans alike. The deaths of two white and one

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[1082] Ibid. 267.
[1083] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 80.
[1084] Ibid.
[1085] Ibid.
[1086] In response to this incident, Abernathy wryly suggested at a mass meeting that the Dallas County Voters' League accept Jim Clark into honorary membership for his "sterling service in bringing the plight of black people in Selma to the attention of the nation." Ibid. 81.
[1087] Ibid. 96-97.
[1088] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 65.

African-American civil rights activists, in particular, created indignation in America, and the intensive FBI investigation afterwards drew the attention of the media. Segregationist violence also affected the image of America to the world at the time of the Cold War, when America sought to portray herself as defending liberty against the forces of darkness.[1089]

Segregationist violence towards white activists also benefited the civil rights movement. The participation of white activists in campaigns could guarantee the protesters federal protection and a national hearing.[1090] Some leaders even calculated that the death of white activists would "get a message over to the country" in a language that they would understand.[1091] CORE activist Dave Dennis stated: "We made sure that we had the children…of some very powerful people in the country over there…The death of a white college student would bring on more attention to what was going on than for a black college student getting it. That's cold, but that was also in another sense speaking the language of the country."[1092] Moses and Dennis directed invitations to hundreds of predominantly white colleges to join their campaigns in Mississippi. The majority of freedom volunteers in the South in 1964 consisted of whites.[1093]

On the other hand, the dramatization of "white martyrdom" compared with the apparent indifference toward African-American casualties confirmed America's racism to many African-American activists.[1094] "[Black Power advocates'] frustration is further fed by the fact that even when Blacks and Whites die together in the cause of justice, the death of the white person gets more attention and concern than the death of the black person."[1095] Although differentiation between white and African-American victims may have generated greater indignation and condemnation of segregationist violence, it also caused the young Black Power generation to feel validated in their rejection of white support.

There were several cases where uncontrolled segregationist violence caused even segregationists to distance themselves from perpetrators of violence. After the federal court ordered that segregation on buses was unconstitutional, white extremists bombed two homes and four churches. The editor of the Montgomery Advertiser wrote an editorial in which he declared that although he endorsed segregation, he could not stomach the excesses. White clergymen denounced the bombings as uncivil and unchristian. The businessmen organization, the Men of Montgomery, also publicly opposed the bombing.[١٠٩٦] Another example is when the Atlanta Constitution criticized the police for their unwillingness to intervene on behalf of the Freedom Riders when they were beaten

[1089] Foner, Eric. The story of American freedom. New York: W.W. Norton, 1999. 253.
[1090] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 96.
[1091] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 171.
[1092] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 96.
[1093] Ibid.
[1094] Moses, Greg. Revolution Of Conscience. 190.
[1095] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 34.
[1096] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 670.

by white extremists.[١٠٩٧] Sharp notes a withdrawal of the white business community from its support of segregation in the wake of police brutalities committed against demonstrators, particularly children and women.

The Freedom Rides offer a particularly good example of how the crisis activists created and the violence they provoked compelled the federal government to act. The 1962 Freedom Rides were modeled after the 1947 Journey of Reconciliation. This journey received little coverage in the press at that time as it caused few arrests and little violence. Farmer, CORE's national leader, issued a call for testing integrated bus rides in 1961. The objective was not only to test desegregation on buses but also in terminal rest rooms, restaurants and waiting rooms. The real purpose of the Freedom Rides was to "provoke the Justice Department into enforcing the law of the land."[1098] Like SCLC and its confrontational strategy in Birmingham, the Freedom Riders were counting on a crisis level confrontation. "We were counting on the bigots in the South to do our work for us."[1099] The Freedom Riders achieved this objective when southern whites brutally attacked them. Some of them who were badly wounded were not treated by local hospital personnel for some time as a form of punishment. One Freedom Rider was left bleeding for two hours before he received medical attention.

It was this violence which caused the Freedom Rides to succeed. If security forces had guaranteed law and order and protected the riders perhaps no one would have heard of the rides, much like the "Journey of Reconciliation" in 1947. After the Freedom Riders were assaulted and their bus burned in Aniston, Alabama, Farmer reported, "We were deluged with letters and telegrams from people all over the country, volunteering their bodies for the Freedom Rides."[1100]

Segregationist violence enabled the Freedom Riders to make headlines and they received media attention throughout the world, even in the south of America. The Alabama Associated Press condemned the segregationist attacks and described them as "the breakdown of civilized rule."[1101] The President of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce commented that the city had lost much of its prestige as a result of the violence committed against Freedom Riders.[1102] The Communist press particularly exploited these incidents in order to attack America. Attorney General Kennedy considered the international prestige of the administration to be threatened.[1103] The Freedom Rides also pressured Kennedy, who wanted to preserve a united image of Americans prior to his meeting with the Russian leader Khrushchev. Robert Kennedy, for example, sought to pressure African-

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[1097] Ibid. 671.
[1098] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 98.
[1099] Ibid.
[1100] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 689.
[1101] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 105.
[1102] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 671.
[1103] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 105-106.

American leaders by stating that the rides would embarrass the President in front of his Soviet counterpart.[1104]

By the end of the summer after the rides had started, over three hundred activists were jailed in Jackson, Mississippi, along with fifty others in Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana and Texas. The actions of the riders caused the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to issue rules prohibiting racial discrimination in interstate facilities and to announce that interstate carriers must display signs stating that seating is "without regard to race, color, creed or national origin."[1105] Farmer commented, "I am absolutely certain that the ICC order wouldn't have been issued were it not for the Freedom Rides."[1106] In 1963 the Freedom Rides desegregated 120 interstate bus terminals and generated civil rights activities that spread throughout the South. CORE proclaimed at the end of 1962 that the battle had been won. Sitkoff comments, "they revealed the ugly face of brutal mobs and the official connivance with violence."[1107] The Freedom Rides were so successful that they generated the Albany movement, for example, during which local college students had sought to integrate the bus terminal facilities in Albany.[1108] CORE also grew in membership, income, staff personnel and stature after the Freedom Rides.[1109]

2.5.3.) Disadvantages of Segregationist Violence to the Civil Rights Movement

A vital question that this study must also elaborate on is: when was it not strategically sound to mount "dramatic" or "provocative" protest? Despite the success of the dramatization of the opponent's violence, it could, however, also provoke violent acts from the protesters. An analysis of the impacts of segregationist violence on the civil rights movement must take into account the disadvantages of this violence, as it had two opposite effects on the civil rights protest. On the one hand, it benefited protesters when they dramatized it. On the other hand, it brought African-American violence to the fore. Even though activism in hostile areas, like Mississippi, was important to African-Americans, the inherent danger of these campaigns was too expansive as segregationists intimidated and repressed youth activists. Sitkoff claims that the Mississippi Summer Project riveted the attention of the nation to white racism and proved successful in many ways as it established nearly fifty freedoms schools and boosted black morale.[1110] Yet the form of

[1104] Ibid. 109.
[1105] Ibid. 110.
[1106] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 38.
[1107] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 112.
[1108] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 65.
[1109] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 111.
[1110] Ibid. 179.

segregationist violence activists encountered there was latent and did not reveal any "dramatized" protest like in Birmingham or Selma. There is a difference between policemen assaulting a large number of demonstrators in front of television cameras and white supremacists attacking two activists in Mississippi in the absence of influential "witnesses", like the media.

Segregationist violence generated African-American violence, particularly in Mississippi. The death of African-American activists and the brutal repression of SNCC activists caused most activists to carry a gun there. After the killing of the three civil rights activists in Mississippi many activists of the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) became disillusioned with non-violence.[1111] During the Freedom Summer project, numerous churches and homes of African-Americans were bombed. White supremacists also assaulted 80 COFO partisans and shot at least at thirty civil rights workers. African-American activists felt particularly betrayed by the absence of federal protection in the face of segregationist "terror". In 1964, supremacists bombed at least thirty houses, burned thirty five churches, beat eights people and were responsible for more than thirty shooting incidents and six known murders. The more activists ventured into the South the more violent supremacist resistance became. The year 1965 was particularly turbulent for civil rights. Twenty people were killed that year. Fourteen had been killed in 1964 and thirteen in 1963. Eleven activists died in Alabama; there were no convictions.[1112] Between 1964 and 1965, 122 acts of intimidation, reprisals and violence took place.[1113]

The political objectives were also relevant to the successful dramatization of civil rights. In the mid-sixties, SNCC decided to shift the focus from public accommodation to food and jobs. Whereas non-violent techniques enabled immediate desegregation of public accommodation in many cities, issues such as food and jobs proved much more complicated. Successful protest actions became a rarity and militants grew more militant. A growing trend towards aggressive non-violence started to set in. SNCC activist Lewis remarked, "you no longer walk quietly to paddywagons and happily and willingly go to jail. There's another type of willingness, and personally, I don't see anything violent about it… I think it is good-very creative."[1114]

Segregationist violence caused many African-American activists to become extremely aggressive. The remark of a young activist captures this mood change: "I am sick and tired of going to the funerals of black men who have been murdered by white men."[1115] At the funeral of an

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[1111] Ibid. 176-177.
COFO sought to build an integrated Freedom Democratic party to challenge the seating of the white delegation at the Democratic National Convention in 1964. Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 194.
[1112] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 266.
[1113] Bailey, Jr., Harry A. Negro Interest Group Strategy. *The Black Revolt*. Ed. James A Geschwender. 129-130.
[1114] Lewis, John. "A Trend Toward Aggressive Nonviolent Action". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 317.
[1115] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 177.

activist, another activist delivered a eulogy stating: "I got vengeance in my heart tonight."[1116] SNCC and CORE activists bore the lion's share of white violence. According to Sitkoff, most COFO workers stopped believing in non-violence at that time.[1117] Many African-American activists began to distrust all whites, even those that joined them in protest actions. An African-American psychiatrist who worked with SNCC activists contended that the non-violent restraint was too much for activists to handle and made them direct their hostility at each other.

> While they were talking about being nonviolent and ´´loving`` the sheriff that just hit them over the head, they rampaged around the project houses beating each other up. I frequently had to calm Negro civil-rights workers with large doses of tranquilizers for what I can describe clinically as acute attacks of rage.[1118]

Watley writes that although the Birmingham photos of police dogs benefited the movement, they also caused African-American people to observe the inhumane treatment of their racial kin. He describes the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church and the police brutality as the "last straw" for a number of African-Americans with regard to their commitment to non-violence.[1119]

The growing involvement of activists after Birmingham and the acceleration of direct action also led to growing police brutality. African-Americans organized eight hundred boycotts in two hundred cities in the wake of Birmingham. This means that the movement greatly expanded, but there was no clear supervision by non-violent leaders in many cases, which also radicalized the movement. The collaboration of "law and order" with violent or criminal groups of white supremacists also increased the militancy of African-American activists. Young claims that there were white mobs that had the support of the local law enforcement.[1120] Many African-American leaders held riot squads responsible for violence that erupted during marches and demonstrations.

2.6.) Conclusion of Non-violent Dramatization

Segregationist violence affected the image of America and the South. Sharp contends that the images of repression caused decision-makers to give in to protesters even if they favored segregation, as the costs of white terrorization and brutality on the protestors became too great to bear.[1121] Civil rights activists also discovered this aspect. King confided to a New York Times journalist that despite the intransigent attitude of some cities, other cities said, "We don't want to be

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[1116] Iid.
[1117] Iid. 178.
[1118] Wolfenstein, E. Victor. The victims of democracy: Malcolm X and the Black revolution. Published Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981. 244.
[1119] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 78.
[1120] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 80.
[1121] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 734-735.

another Albany or another Birmingham."[1122] Scenes of violent outbursts in Chicago, Selma and Birmingham shocked Americans and embarrassed mayors and white key political figures. In Birmingham, segregationist violence caused increased white support for the movement. Dyson writes that the "non-violent drama" forced America to confront questions she could no longer dismiss about the future of the country.[1123]

2.7.) Conclusion of Chapter Two

This chapter elaborates on the factors that had an influence on public opinion, which contributed to legislative change. King's rhetoric, the exploitation of the media and the dramatizing protest actions spurred this process. During the civil rights movement the media was crucial in conveying victim-images of African-American protesters. Without the Birmingham and Selma footage, civil rights would have never become a priority issue for the President of the United States, who was forced to confront civil rights.

This chapter also shows that non-violent leaders were keener on converting American public opinion than on affecting southern segregationists. Alliances with white groups that were drawn to the movement by King's rhetoric and the dramatization of conflict played a role in channeling public opinion. African-Americans conveyed the image of victimized protesters in the face of southern police brutality. It was therefore vital that they convince other African-American protesters of the necessity of exposing themselves to segregationist violence. The exploitation of this violence and the portrayal of images of "suffering" non-violent protesters were crucial to achieve public indignation towards segregationists.

Non-violent rhetoric and non-violent dramatization were the two most successful strategies to win over American public opinion during the civil rights movement. In order to understand the reasons that caused the passage of the Civil Rights Bill and the Voting Rights Act, the study must, however, also elaborate on the mechanisms of non-violent economic and political coercion. Chapter three shows that these forms of coercion by means of non-violent protest proved just as important as rhetoric and dramatization.

[1122] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 191.
[1123] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 34.

3.) Coercive Mechanisms of Non-violence

> Not only are we using the tools of persuasion, but we've got to use tools of coercion. (Martin Luther King, Jr.)[1124]

This chapter deals with the non-violent coercion applied during the civil rights movement. Non-violent protest enabled civil rights leaders to bring about political changes, as protest had a coercive effect on the segregationist system in America. The author claims that the necessity of coercive non-violent protest was just as crucial as influencing public opinion. African-American protesters would not have been able to attract the attention of the federal government and alter American public opinion to endorse the Civil Rights Bill and the Voting Rights Act if non-violent protest had not proven politically or economically coercive. If non-violent methods had proven strategically unsuitable to the political demands of protesters, non-violent protest would have failed to bring about political results. The crucial aspect of non-violent protest during the civil rights movement was that protesters were able to strategically mount coercive protest that politically or economically affected the segregationist system. It is important to note that non-violent protesters achieved many objectives of the movement by non-violent methods, like boycotts for example, contrary to conflicts wherein protesters did not have the financial or political capacity to apply such a weapon. Desegregation of lunch counters through sit-ins was also a realizable and a relatively uncomplicated objective. On the other hand, complicated objectives like open-housing legislation that were not immediately brought about by the protest, proved difficult to realize.

Coercion is an elementary aspect of non-violent protest that creates political and economic pressure on the opponent or key politicians. This study relies on the definition of non-violent coercion developed by Sharp and King and traces the most influential coercive aspects of the non-violent protest during the civil rights movement. There were different forms of coercion during the movement. There was the possibility of legislative coercion, for example, which allowed the NAACP to realize crucial legislative gains and thus proved complimentary to non-violent protest. Yet why was legislation more likely during the movement and not before that? The author will show that non-violent protest strengthened and promoted legislation which had been applied by NAACP. Civil rights protesters also succeeded in mounting political pressure on President Kennedy and President Johnson. Although civil rights leaders conferred with these Presidents of the United States and lobbied key politicians, it was the dramatization of non-violent protest that compelled the Presidents to intervene. Whereas this study analyzed the impact of this dramatization on public

[1124] Garrow, David. Bearing The Cross. 24.

opinion in chapter two, the author examines its impact on the Presidents and presents statements by Kennedy and Johnson that show that non-violent dramatization triggered their involvement.

The study elaborates on the impact of violent protest during the civil rights movement and whether it politically benefited the movement. There was also “rhetorical coercion” or the strategic threat of violence that non-violent leaders exploited to intimidate public opinion and the federal government in order to convince them that non-violent protest was the better alternative to the Black Muslims, the Black Power movement and advocates of other forms of resistance. Malcolm X played an important role in the movement in this regard. His contraposition to King particularly enhanced the latter’s image in public opinion. The study also shows how the media, the government and Malcolm X and King themselves deliberately promoted the image of a threatening Malcolm X and a moderate King.

Another factor which caused non-violent protest to become strategically coercive was the fact that the movement was decentralized. Different civil rights organizations led protests that attracted protesters from all spheres of society. Several protest organizations and grass-root movements competed with each other to launch effective protest. This competition and the diversification of protests increased the effectiveness of the protests.

As this study explores the reasons that enabled non-violent protest to realize its political objectives, particularly between 1955 and 1965, the author must raise the question of how non-violent protest itself had been effective. Many civil rights scholars like Fairclough or Garrow only analyzed the historic and the political aspects that contributed to the success of non-violent protest, without placing particular emphasis on the methods and strategies. Sharp, on the other hand, elaborated on the importance of non-violent strategies and methods in general and presented practical examples of non-violent strategies applied in international conflicts. This study applies Sharp’s theories and applies them to the civil rights movement. The author singles out the most important strategies and methods of the movement and elaborates on their coercive influence on segregation.

There were indispensable non-violent strategies that activists applied during the major campaigns of the movement, like Montgomery, Birmingham and Selma. These strategies were, for example, the recruitment of a sufficient number of protesters, the requirement of non-violent discipline and preparation, the escalation of protest, the selection of the best location to hold a protest, the formation of reasonable objectives and the ability of non-violent leaders to convince protesters of the success of non-violence as a protest strategy. These strategies enhanced the effectiveness of applied non-violent methods during the civil rights campaigns. Non-violent protest would not have had the same impact without these strategies. For example, the strategies related to

the recruitment of protesters and the maintenance of discipline were essential elements for waging a coercive non-violent protest.

Then there were non-violent protest *methods* that succeeded in coercing the opponent, like sit-ins that desegregated lunch-counters, jails-ins that attracted public opinion, boycotts in cities where protesters had the financial capacity to coerce segregationist store-owners, and marches that provoked state troopers in the South, or demonstrations that attracted public opinion in the North, such as the March on Washington. Again, the question asked is: why were these methods particularly effective during the civil rights movement? The author presents the strategic, political and economic factors that caused these protest methods to realize their political objectives. The political objective of a sit-in, for example, is to simply desegregate a lunch counter through the occupation of a chair or a seat. The simplicity of this demand and the success of this technique proved widely effective and gave the movement a vital boost. A march in the South ensured that protesters generated the desired effect, dramatization, compared to marches in the North where Americans were more used to marches that did not bring about the same result. Protest leaders in Birmingham, on the other hand, relied on the economic power of African-Americans in order to boycott segregated stores. There were other factors that ensured the maximum coercive effect of these methods, which either shocked public opinion or enabled protesters to bring about direct political and economic results.

At the end of chapter three, the focus of this study is on the Birmingham campaign as it was one of the most successful protest campaigns of the movement. This campaign encompassed a variety of non-violent methods and strategies, which the author will present in order to show how these strategies and methods proved coercively effective.

3.1. Definition of Non-violent Coercion

> At the same time it appeared evident that both moral injunctions against violence and exhortations in favor of love and nonviolence have made little or no contribution to ending war and major political violence. It seemed to me that only the adoption of a substitute type of sanction and struggle as a functional alternative to violence in acute conflicts- … could possibly lead to a major reduction of political violence in a manner compatible with freedom, justice and human dignity.[1125] (Gene Sharp)

> The Negro has not gained a single right in America without persistent pressure and agitation.[1126] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

[1125] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part One. v- vi.
[1126] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 90.

> Nonviolent action can achieve social and political objectives by means other than conversion.[1127] (Gene Sharp)

Non-violence does not only address the conscience of the opponent but, through non-violent means like boycotts or strikes, gives protesters a means of coercing the opponent to compromise to meet protestors' demands. Conversion and coercion are not necessarily in opposition. Sharp contends that the success of many campaigns depended on the use of several factors, like coercion, conversion or accommodation.[1128] Yet coercion can be a powerful, even unavoidable, mechanism in non-violent protest.

Non-violent coercion involves compelling the opponent to submit to the demands of protesters. The non-violent protester has to find a means to force the unwilling opponent to comply. The non-violent protester must apply "pressure" so that it is no longer in the opponent's interest to continue to refuse to give in to the demands of the protester. The protester therefore has to disrupt his pattern of life so that he will eventually change his policies. Some segregationists, for example, chose to be accommodating in the face of non-violent protest because they wanted demonstrations to end, as they were more devoted to orderly community life.[1129]

Hence, if a non-violent movement cannot find a means to coerce the opponent or key politicians to bring about political changes, the movement's efforts will be doomed to failure. There seems to be agreement among African-American protest leaders on the necessity of coercion. African-American leader Frederick Douglass discovered the necessity of coercion long before the start of the movement: "Without agitation there can be no progress."[1130] Wilkins stated that meaningful change in human relations, particularly if it involved the revision of laws and uprooting of tradition, could not come about without "confrontation, tension and occasional strife."[1131] Privileged groups rarely give up their privileges without strong resistance and resist change, as Niebuhr claimed.[1132] Non-violence is primarily a weapon of protest and every means of protest seeks to change the course of certain policies. As the opponent usually wields a position of power, he will not simply be persuaded to loosen or renounce his privileged position. Protesters therefore must find a means in order to make the opponent vulnerable to their protest.

Non-violent and violent resistance may have the same objectives, as violence often aims to change political rights. The two means will utilize political coercion if they fail to achieve their

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[1127] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 733.
[1128] Iid. 697.
[1129] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 736.
[1130] Lewis, John. "A Trend Toward Aggressive Nonviolent Action". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 317.
[1131] Wilkins, Roy. "We Must Use Every Tool". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 397.
[1132] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 82.

objectives by other means. “Violence and nonviolence are both forms of coercion and the differences between them are relative and not intrinsic. These differences exist in degree, not in the use of coercion to achieve certain goals,” writes Abu-Nimer.[1133] Fredrickson refers to General Carl von Clausewitz’s statement that diplomacy is just war carried on by other means and reverses it by writing that non-violence may be simply a use of force that avoids doing bodily harm to the opponent.[1134] Hence, non-violence searches for means other than violence that nevertheless have a coercive impact.

Non-violent coercion can be viewed as negative, even criminal, as it may be interpreted in relation to blackmail and violence. As public opinion plays a vital role with regard to non-violent protest, as shown in chapter three, non-violent protesters must not allow the opponent to relate their protest to immoral or criminal acts. Gandhi sought to undermine the meaning of the term “coercion” and compared the process to a form of coercion that a father would use to cause his child to act in a certain way.[١١٣٥] Fairclough also notes that “coercion” was a strong word, which King ceased to mention upon the recommendation of Rustin.[1136] During the Montgomery Boycott, King himself questioned whether the coercive tactic of the boycott was ethical or not. He concluded that the word “boycott” was a misnomer, as African-Americans did not seek to ruin the bus company but to coerce it to respect African-Americans as equal and to “put justice in business.”[1137] King defended his coercive protest as African-Americans despaired of other methods. “However lamentable it may seem, the Negro is now convinced that white America will never admit him to equal rights unless it is coerced into doing it.”[1138]

In 1932, Niebuhr reached the same conclusion: “The White race in America will not admit the Negro to equal rights if it is not forced to do so.”[1139] King was particularly influenced by Niebuhr’s theory on coercion. Niebuhr contended that it was harder to transform a group or a society rather than an individual. “In every human group there is less reason to guide and to check impulse, less capacity for self-transcendence, less ability to comprehend the needs of others and therefore more unrestrained egoism than the individuals, who compose the group, reveal in their personal relationships.”[1140] Niebuhr claimed that agape is useless in the face of a group that was consolidated in its egoism.[1141] Group consensus consolidates the position of the individual or his beliefs,

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[1133] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam. 11.
[1134] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 226.
[1135] Gandhi, M.K. Satyagraha. 316.
[1136] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 419.
Fairclough also notes that King substituted the word “boycott” for “nonviolent protest”.
[1137] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 137.
[1138] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 90.
[1139] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 94.
[1140] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 152.
[1141] Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. Search For The Beloved Community. 83.

particularly if he belongs to the stronger side in a conflict, as a group is less compassionate and benevolent than the individual.[1142]

It would also be naïve to completely confide in the power converting of public opinion and the goodwill of the opponent. A non-violent protester will therefore apply the greatest possible level of political or economic coercion to achieve his goals. Violent coercion may seem to be more effective in the beginning but, from a non-violent perspective, violence often leads to the opposite effect. Violence intends to bring about political change by causing physical harm or material damage to the opponent in order to force him to concede to the protester's demands. To non-violent proponents, however, non-violent coercion remains "moral" as non-violent protesters refuse to physically harm the opponent. Yet one cannot overlook the fact that non-violence does seek to inflict financial damage to the opponent. For example, boycotts, used to coerce segregationists to desegregate their stores by causing them financial losses, were an effective tool of the civil rights movement. As Niebuhr contended, once a person entered into the world of social, political and economic conflict one inevitably became involved in psychological or physical coercion.[1143]

Despite the coercive element of non-violence, King always retained that it was a "just weapon".[1144] Even though King stressed that non-violence addressed the conscience of the White man, he discovered that the opponent may remain untouched by the moral appeals of protesters alone. Otis Turner contends that King's success with the weapon of non-violence was not due to the value of redemptive suffering but that non-violence was a subtle power play that relied on coercion as a factor for social change.[1145] Zinn also claims that it was economic pressure that caused proprietors to desegregate and not the power of love.[1146] Civil rights activist Young confirmed the need for coercion at a rally in Savannah: "The White folks don't pay any attention to us unless we're on the streets."[1147] Bell discusses King's willingness to meet segregationist violence with non-violent suffering, which she regards as unrealistic and states that only economic pressure on politicians and businessmen provoked social change.[1148] Bell seems to suggest that while African-Americans were disguised by their talk of love, which was unrealistic, they carried out direct action; although the rhetoric of love granted African-Americans legitimacy.[1149]

In the mid-sixties, King seemed to rely more on political coercion than on converting public opinion. In one of his later speeches, King stated that the purpose of "sabptaging non-violence"

[1142] Iid. 77.
[1143] Smith, Ervin, The Ethics of Martin Luther King. 119.
[1144] King, Martin Luther. Why we can't wait. 14.
[1145] Otis Turner, Nonviolence and the Politics of Liberation, Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center 4 (Spring 1977), 49-60. Rpt. in *The Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith. 189.
[1146] Zinn, Howard. SNCC. 222.
[1147] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 141.
[1148] Bell, Inge Powell. CORE and the strategy of nonviolence. 36-37.
[1149] Iid. 37.

was: “powerful enough, dramatic enough, yet morally appealing…so that people of goodwill, the churches, labor, liberals, intellectuals, students, poor people themselves begin to put pressure on congressmen to the point that they can no longer elude our demands.”[1150]

Even though King pleaded with African-Americans to love their oppressor, he believed that Christian love would not suffice to bring about any political change. Ethical appeals and persuasion consolidated by “some form of constructive coercive power”, as King put it, were the only means to provoke change.[1151]

3.2.) Political Coercion and Non-violence

In this sub-chapter, the study examines the coercive elements of litigation and the political pressure non-violent protesters applied to the federal government during the civil rights movement. It is not the intention of the study to analyze the relationship between legislation and the movement in its entirety but rather to emphasize how non-violent protest increased the effectiveness of litigation and how litigation in turn caused the protest to become politically relevant to civil rights. Non-violent protest also enabled protesters to exert political pressure on the federal government and the President of the United States, particularly after protesters created a crisis situation. The author also shows how civil rights protesters sought to internationalize the issue of civil rights in order to increase the pressure on the President.

3.2.1.) Coercive Legislation

A decisive factor that enabled the movement to realize political progress was litigation, or the legal battles that the NAACP fought in the courts. The movement benefited from the existence of institutions that provided a basis for political change, like courts and political commissions. The courts, for example, had been a crucial ally throughout the movement, relying on legislation as a tool to effect change. The federal court had also been one of the strongest and most powerful supporters of the movement.[1152] Watley contends that federal courts particularly spurred compliance with desegregation. However, King had to appease them by not violating injunctions.

Successful litigation was a consequence of non-violent protest in the movement. Colaiaco considers non-violent protest and litigation to have been complimentary to one another. At the

[1150] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 86.
[1151] King, Martin Luther. Chaos or Community. 128-129.
[1152] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 84-85.

beginning of the Montgomery Boycott, King stated that the outcome would not be the end of segregation, as only legislation and the courts could do that.[1153] On the other hand without non-violence, litigation would not have achieved the same results. Likewise, non-violence had nothing to sustain without the courts, as Colaiaco writes.[1154] The civil rights movement could not have overturned segregation without non-violent protest, which acted as a compliment to litigation.[1155] Thurgood Marshall claimed that the outcome of the Montgomery Boycott was won due to legislation alone and that "all that walking" was "for nothing". Colaiaco, however, contends that the boycott allowed NAACP attorneys to argue the federal suit that mobilized national sympathy, which could not be ignored by the courts.[1156] Although the Supreme Court victory was initiated by a NAACP suit, Louis Harlan contends that no one could doubt that the "paramount reason" for victory was the firm stance of the African-American community in Montgomery.[1157]

To Harlan, Montgomery signaled a change of tactics as it shifted the confrontation of civil rights from the courts to the streets.[1158] The possibility, however, that legislation would exert additional pressure sped up the process of desegregation further and strengthened the movement. NAACP insisted on the necessity of litigation. Wilkins contended that only legislation would create sustainable change: "We believe the way to test a law is to set up a test case, carry it through the courts and get a determination. We do not believe you can test a law and get it thrown out by staying in jail. After one spends thirty or ninety days in jail, the law is still on the statute books and still constitutes a support for segregation."[1159] Non-violent leaders like King also recognized the importance of the effectiveness of laws. "The law cannot make an employer love me", said King "but it can keep him from refusing to hire me because of the color of my skin."[1160] According to Sitkoff, the Albany movement, the voter registrations and the Freedom Rides made the Black movement realize that southern whites would not be persuaded nor would their protest suffice to reach their objective. Instead, "sweeping coercive civil-rights legislation was indispensable."[1161]

Yet litigation did not suffice to end discrimination, as segregationists always had means to circumvent laws. In an address to SNCC, Lawson said: "Law is always nullified by practice and

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[1153] Garrow, David. Bearing The Cross. 24.
[1154] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 19.
Walton also observes that to King the combination of the forces of non-violence and legal pressure could bring about what neither of the forces could if used alone. Walton, Hanes Jr. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 8.
[1155] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 18.
[1156] Ibid.
[1157] Harlan, Louis, R. Thought on the Leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 63.
[1158] Ibid. 62.
[1159] Wilkins, Roy. For "Schock Troops" and "Solid Legal Moves". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 286.
[1160] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 188.
[1161] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 126.

disdain unless the minds and hearts of a people sustain law."[1162] For instance, the NAACP was impotent in the face of the White Citizen's Council's resistance. Additionally, the federal government did not show any willingness to seriously apply anti-segregationist laws before the non-violent movement erupted. The Supreme Court, for example, was not impelled to effect the Brown decision.[1163] McAdam describes the shift of goals of some of the movement's leaders due to the lack of support of the federal establishment, which did not advocate for African-American rights in the face of White resistance in the early sixties.[1164]

The success activists achieved by means of supportive legislation, however, caused the federal government to demand the end of non-violent protests. Fredrickson argues that direct action might have been unwelcome in America because the NAACP had started to win legal battles. Therefore it was argued that direct actions could endanger the gains already made.[1165] After Birmingham, Kennedy wanted to provide African-Americas with the legal redress in order to stop them from undertaking demonstrations that could lead to chaos and riots.[1166] Yet it was non-violent protest that enabled legislation to achieve objectives, without which legislation became less compelling. One could say that the movement relied more on coercive non-violent protest that would facilitate the enforcement of legislation. If the movement had ceased protest activities, the NAACP's progress would have lacked the strategic coercive leverage granted by the movement. Only massive non-violent protest that would arouse a national consensus for federal intervention would achieve legislative outcomes, writes Sitkoff.[1167]

3.2.2.) Political Coercion on the President of the United States

The SCLC relied on non-violent campaigns that largely succeeded, as federal intervention started to undermine segregation. Fredrickson contends that a key element to the success of the movement stemmed from the ability of African-Americans to gain the support of the federal government and to utilize the constitution to fight segregation.[1168] King and other civil rights leaders repeatedly called on the government to intervene and play an effective role by enforcing civil rights laws. African-American leaders directed their demands to the municipal, state, and national government because they believed that the government had the power to execute their

[1162] Lawson, Jr., James M. "We Are Trying to Raise the ´Moral Issue`". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 277.
[1163] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 21.
[1164] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 207.
[1165] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 237.
[1166] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 135.
[1167] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 127.
[1168] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 272.

demands. However, African-Americans knew that whites were in control of the economic and political system. Their only chance, writes Fairclough, was to bypass the white controlled political and judicial institutions and make direct appeals to the centers of federal power.[١١٦٩]

It is essential for non-violent protesters to have politicians as allies who can exert pressure on the opponent. Thus, a non-violent protest movement must find a means through which it can exert pressure, not only on the opponent but also on key politicians. It was non-violent protest that allowed Randolph to persuade President Eisenhower to discuss school integration with African-American leaders after Randolph declared that he would undertake a pilgrimage to Washington. When the President failed to undertake any action, SCLC promised a "Prayer Pilgrimage to Washington" to exert pressure on him.[1170] The planned demonstration garnered support for President Eisenhower's proposed for civil rights legislation. The March on Washington was also a means of putting pressure on Congress. Norman Hill, CORE's program director in 1963 and 1964, stated that the reason Kennedy introduced the Civil Rights Bill was not because it belonged to his political agenda but that he was forced to do so as the movement brought the issue of civil rights into the public eye in such a way that the problem "could no longer be swept under the rug."[1171]

The proof of non-violent protest's effective coercion with regard to the involvement of the Congress or the President is that unlike the rather reluctant Eisenhower, Kennedy started to become an important ally of civil rights leaders. This shows that African-Americans had forced civil rights onto the President's political agenda by that time. African-American political activism caused the presidential nominees of the two major parties in 1960 to declare their "newfound" fervor for civil rights, writes Weisbrot.[1172] By 1965, the nation was in favor of the government playing a central role in combating racial discrimination.[1173]

The African-American vote was not a politically coercive weapon at that time. Nevertheless, when King and students were arrested during a sit-in, and King risked a harsh sentence of four month of hard labor as he was on probation at that time, John F. Kennedy, then presidential candidate, intervened on his behalf. Movement activist Lonnie King claims that the intervention of Kennedy, which saved King from jail, was seen by historians as the reason for Kennedy's election as President, as the African-American communities of Philadelphia, Cleveland and other cities with large African-American populations gave their vote to the democrats and not to Nixon.[1174]

[1169] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 7.
[1170] Ibid. 39.
[1171] Hill, Norman. "We Must Be Concerned with the Kind of Society for All Workers". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 394.
[1172] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 45.
[1173] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 134.
[1174] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 90.

Having the support of the President was an asset for non-violent protesters. Hence, when King was jailed during the Birmingham campaign and the President called King's wife, King wanted to make this call known to the press in order to show to the public that the President of the United States was on his side. In Birmingham the support of the President and the federal government proved successful as they exerted pressure on Birmingham's most influential businessmen to accept a compromise with civil rights demands. Although many activists regarded Kennedy's role in the movement as controversial, Kennedy showed an unprecedented willingness by an American President to intervene on behalf of African-Americans. In 1963, in the wake of the Birmingham demonstrations, Kennedy delivered the "most sweeping bill for civil rights" to date to Congres.[1175] Kennedy and Johnson played an important role in passing the Civil Rights Bill and the Voting Rights Act. In their book *Kennedy, Johnson, And The Quest For Justice*, Rosenberg and Karabell portrayed Kennedy as a pragmatist politician who became mainly involved in civil rights due to two events. The first was when segregationist violence erupted at Ole Miss in 1962, after the African-American student, James Meredith, won a court order allowing him to enroll at the university. The second crisis occurred when violence took place in Birmingham in 1963.[1176] Although many civil rights leaders criticized Kennedy for not showing sufficient and genuine effort, he did respond to non-violent protest when a crisis erupted, like in the case of the violence generated by the Freedom Rides. Zinn describes Kennedy as the "the Reluctant Emancipator" and claimed that the national government had an undeserved reputation as a vigorous combatant for African-American rights.[1177] Zinn sums up the government's position by writing: "In the field of racial equality, this government simply cannot be depended upon for vigorous initiatives. It will, however, respond to popular indignation and pressure."[1178] He gives an example of the Justice Department's "tacit support" for the Albany chief of police, who maintained law and order when 1000 protesters were jailed in Albany for peaceful demonstrations. The government only acted after ten months of pressure and complaint.[1179]

It was non-violent protest that coerced the government to become involved. Burke Marshall notes that mass demonstrations of the Birmingham type made African-American problems become visible to the country.[1180] Kennedy was compelled to become involved because protest actions in Birmingham and elsewhere increased cries for equality, as he himself stated, so that they could no

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[1175] Woodward, C. Vann. The Strange Career Of Jim Crow. 181.
[1176] Rosenberg, Jonathan. Kennedy, Johnson, and the quest for justice the civil rights tapes / Jonathan Rosenberg and Zachary Karabell. New York: W.W. Norton, 2003.
Edition 1st ed. 7. a. 115.
[1177] Zinn, Howard. Kennedy: The Reluctant Emancipator. Rpt. in *Reporting Civil Rights*. 702.
[1178] Ibid. 703.
[1179] Ibid.
[1180] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 135.

longer be ignored.[1181] The demonstrations exerted pressure on Kennedy and led him to propose the Civil Rights Bill; because he wanted to get "blacks off the streets".[1182] Kennedy also faced considerable pressure from northern Liberals and civil rights leaders to pass legislative remedies.[1183] Fairclough asserts that civil rights activists' protests-crises succeeded in convincing Kennedy that he had to become involved. "For two years John Kennedy had attempted to deal with each racial crisis on an ad hoc basis. Birmingham finally convinced him that crises would recur with such frequency and magnitude that the federal government, unless it adopted a more radical policy, would be overwhelmed."[1184]

Nevertheless many activists perceived the support of Kennedy as minimal. Although Kennedy sought to win African-American votes, he did not want to upset the South. McAdam contends that the national political elite sought to refrain from antagonizing activists in the South and tried to curb the excesses of both.[1185] Rosenberg and Karabell claim that Kennedy's reservations on a more effective involvement in the struggle were more political than moral.[1186] Yet the support of Kennedy and the Attorney General was beneficial to the movement as the two persuaded hotels, store chains and businesses to desegregate.

It was Lyndon Johnson, however, who became the most committed American President to promote and adopt civil rights up to that time. Johnson repeatedly sided with the civil rights movement. Dyson described Johnson as the civil rights movement's greatest political ally.[1187] For example, Johnson warned Senate member Richard Russell of Georgia that if the he got in his way with regard to the civil rights bill, he would "run him down".[1188] The Johnson Administration was nevertheless cautious in its enforcement of the new civil rights laws.[1189] Yet Rosenberg and Karabaell write that Johnson made civil rights the centerpiece of his new administration.[1190] Johnson issued stronger support for civil rights than any President before him. "Nothing less than the full assimilation of more than twenty million Negroes into American life", as Johnson stated, would make him content.[1191]

He compared African-Americans during the Selma campaign with the patriotic revolutionaries of Lexington and Concord.[1192] These public statements clearly enhanced the image of the civil rights movement in public opinion. It was definitely the change in public opinion with regard to

[1181] Ibid. 134.
[1182] Ibid. 135.
[1183] Rosenberg, Jonathan. Kennedy, Johnson, And The Quest For Justice. 115.
[1184] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 134.
[1185] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 170.
[1186] Rosenberg, Jonathan, and Zachary Karabell. Kennedy, Johnson, And The Quest For Justice. 12.
[1187] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 49.
[1188] Branch, Taylor. Pillar of Fire. first picture. 208-209.
[1189] Herbers, John. Black Dilemma. 43.
[1190] Rosenberg, Jonathan, and Zachary Karabell. Kennedy, Johnson, And The Quest For Justice. 7.
[1191] Woodward, C. Vann. The Strange Career Of Jim Crow. 182.
[1192] Howard-Pitney, David. The African American Jeremaid. 159.

civil rights that caused the political elite to alter their support for civil rights. The fact that Johnson ended a television speech with the movement's slogan, "we shall overcome", hence directly identifying with the movement without risking political alienation from the American public, testified to the shifting perception of civil rights in America.

It was the tumult protesters created and the demonstrations in favor of African-American rights that ensued after the Selma campaign that caused Johnson to undertake political action. Johnson was being cornered by the indirect criticism of civil rights leaders like King and the attacks of segregationist leaders like Governor Wallace. In the mid-sixties, however, Johnson began to lose interest in the movement due to the Vietnam War. He even became an opponent of King due to the latter's criticism of the government's Vietnam policy. Watley notes that King did not receive any support from Johnson during the Chicago campaign.[1193] When SCLC entered Chicago, King stated that their work would be aimed at Washington, as he hoped Congress would pass open-housing legislation.[1194] King's SCLC staff, Bevel, Jesse Jackson, Rustin, Michael Harrington, Williams and Young, opposed the Poor People Campaign as they considered the political weather inclement for such a campaign.[1195] They believed that the President's anger and the resistance of Congress would make the march a failure.

There were further political factors that politically pressured the President of the United States. The increasing number of African states that gained political independence had two favorable effects on the civil rights movement. First, the independence of African nations increased African-American demands for racial equality, as many African-American activists increasingly identified themselves with Africans. Second, media pictures of White police forces suppressing African-American civil rights activists internationally affected the world's image of America. This was particularly inconvenient for the American government and the President due to cold war concerns related to expanding America's influence in the Third World.

Morris notes that the civil rights movement predominantly figured in the Third World. King was aware of Kennedy's strategy of gaining power in the Third World. Hence, leaders like King and Malcolm X deliberately sought to place the struggle of African-Americans in the U.S. within a more global context by comparing it to the freedom struggles of African and Asian states. By 1963, thirty-four African states had become independent.[1196] African-American leaders started to identify with "oppressed people all over the world".[1197] During the early period of the movement, in 1956, King declared during a speech in Montgomery: "The people of the Third World are now rising up, … and at many points I feel that this movement in Montgomery is part of this overall movement in

[1193] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 98.
[1194] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 286.
[1195] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 89.
[1196] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 128.
[1197] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 7.

the world in which oppressed people are revolting against the imperialism and colonialism that have too long existed."[1198] King embarked on journeys to newly independent nations, like India and Ghana. Blackness became a symbol of resistance for African-American activists. "We were looked upon as brothers with the color of our skins as something of an asset."[1199] Rustin invoked that there was a world wide movement:

> What is happening in race relations in the United States is the same thing which is happening all over the world. The dominant factor of our time is the struggle for freedom of groups of people, a movement which is essentially anti-colonial… In our country there is something going on which is quite as profound as what is happening in Egypt, and that is a part of … the worldwide revolutionary movement.[1200]

In an address to the students of SNCC, Lawson referred to Africa's struggle for freedom saying: "All of Africa will be free before the American Negro attains first-class citizenship."[1201]

America's image therefore would be seriously damaged on an international level if it claimed to champion freedom in foreign lands while African-Americans were oppressed at home.[1202] This fact must have put some pressure on Kennedy and his administration, as demonstrated in his speech on national television after the violence in Birmingham: "We preach freedom around the world, and we mean it…. But are we to say to the world – and much more importantly to each other – that this is the land of the free except for Negroes: that we have no second-class citizens, except Negroes; …We face therefore, a moral crisis, as a country and a people."[1203] Morris even claims that Birmingham forced Kennedy to introduce and support civil rights legislation to control the domestic situation and to pursue his Third World policy. McAdam refers to the support of Attorney General Robert Kennedy with regard to integration at the University of Georgia in 1961 and says that Kennedy defended his position on the basis of international political considerations.[1204] Another coercive factor faced by the administration was the fact that segregationist treatment of African diplomats also affected America's image. When African diplomats were refused service, it presented a profound embarrassment to the American President.[1205]

During the civil rights movement, legalized segregation became a serious international liability for the Kennedy and Johnson administration, asserts Fredrickson, particularly as the Soviet Union

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[1198] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 341.
[1199] Baldwin, Lewis. To Make The Wounded Whole. 249.
[1200] D`Emilio, John. Lost Prophet- The Life And Times Of Bayard Rustin. 241.
[1201] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 28.
[1202] Morris Aldon D. A Man Prepared for the Times: A Sociological Analysis of the Leadership on Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J Albert. 55.
[1203] Ibid.
[1204] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 159.
[1205] Dudziak. Mary L. Cold War Civil Rights. Princeton University Press Princeton And Oxford. 2000. 152.
The first ambassador of Chad to the United States, for example, was refused service in Maryland. According to Dudziak, there were many such cases. Ibid.

was competing for the hearts and minds of Africans and Asians.[1206] However, even though the image of America troubled the government in the Third World, Third World pressure did not constitute a major coercive factor on the government. Dudziak notes that the Vietnam War pushed domestic civil rights off the table insofar as worrying about American prestige abroad.[1207] One can nevertheless assume that the international dissemination of photographs showing the repression of African-Americans, particularly in Birmingham and Selma, pressured the American government to take political action.

3.3.) Violent Coercion and Non-violence

> Violence as a way of achieving racial justice is both impractical and immoral. It is impractical because it is a descending spiral ending in destruction for all. The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind. It is immoral because it seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win his understanding; it seeks to annihilate rather than convert. Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible. It leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue. Violence ends by defeating itself. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers.[1208] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

> Revolution is bloody, revolution is hostile, revolution knows no compromise, revolution overturns and destroys everything that gets in its way.[1209] (Malcolm X in *Message to the Grass Roots*)

If strategies and tactics include include the development of an advantageous situation, as Sharp writes,[1210] then the influence of African-American violence on the civil rights movement must be revaluated. During the movement, violent protest provoked some political changes, as the study shows in this sub-chapter. The study must therefore analyze whether African-American violent acts constituted a strategic coercive factor that caused the local politicians or the federal government to respond to the movement's demands. Yet how beneficial can violence be in a non-violent movement and do the advantages of violent protest outweigh the disadvantages? In this sub-chapter the study analyzes the pros and cons of applying violent resistance during the civil rights movement.

African-Americans did not resort to violence as a resistance strategy as it would have been strategically futile and resulted in further repression. The level of reciprocal violence was also not

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[1206] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 273.
[1207] Dudziak. Mary L. Cold War Civil Rights. 208.
[1208] King, Coretta Scott. The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr. 73.
[1209] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 222.
[1210] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 493.

as threatening in the civil rights movement as it was in many of the concurrent conflicts. African-Americans were not seeking independence, for example, but integration. Although not all African-Americans were convinced of King's non-violent philosophy, the majority of protest action remained non-violent; particularly before the rise of Black Power in the mid-sixties, even though there were occasional outbursts of African-American protest violence. This absence of violence may be due to the fact that only a minority of African-American leaders advocated a violent approach to the race question. Additionally, violent resistance to segregation was a foreign concept to the majority of African-Americans in the South.[1211]

Surprisingly, African-American violence increased after the passing of the Civil Rights Bill, a time which was considered the peak of optimism during the civil rights movement, writes Woodward.[1212] Woodward contends that one of the possible reasons for the outburst of violence at that time was that the southern civil rights struggle had sensitized northern African-Americans to injustice and reduced their tolerance.[1213] The poor economic conditions of African-Americans in the North also contributed to this outburst.[1214] Woodward contends that non-violent tactics alienated northern African-Americans as their problems were not Freedom Rides and lunch-counter integration.[1215]

One of the principal adversaries of the non-violent movement was Malcolm X, who advocated self-defense and violent resistance. Malcolm X argued that violence would cause terror in the heart of the opponent, which would compel him to give in to the demands of African-Americans. Malcolm X admired Nat Turner, a slave preacher in the nineteenth century, who had led a rebellion against White slaveholders. In a speech, Malcolm X stated:

> Nat Turner wasn't going around preaching pie-in-the-sky and ´´nonviolent`` freedom for the black man. There in Virginia one night in 1831, Nat and seven other slaves started out at his master's home and through the night they went from one plantation ´big house` to the next killing, until by the next morning 57 white people were dead and Nat had about 70 slaves following him. White people, terrified for their lives, fled from their homes, locked themselves up in public buildings… Somewhere I have read where Nat Turner's example is said to have inspired John Brown to invade Virginia and attack Hapers Ferry nearly thirty years later, with thirteen white men and five Negroes.[1216]

King, on the other hand, contended that violent resistance was not an option for African-Americans. Violence could lead to casualties by the thousands, he claimed.[1217] King referred to insurrectionists, like Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner who had resorted to violence to gain freedom

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[1211] See sub-chapter 1.10.1.
[1212] Woodward, C. Vann. The Strange Career Of Jim Crow. 191.
[1213] Ibid.
[1214] Ibid. 192-193.
Woodward lists economic and psychological reasons for violence in the north.
[1215] Ibid. 193
[1216] Breitman, George. By Any Means Necessary: Speeches, Interviews, and a Letter by Malcolm X. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970. 80.
[1217] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 56.

but failed to accomplish any gains. He admired Turner's "courageous efforts" yet used Turner's and Denmark Vesey's stories to show that violent rebellion had failed and referred to the futility of their actions. "The courageous efforts of our own insurrectionist brothers, such as Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner, should be eternal reminders to us that violent rebellion is doomed from its start."[1218] Turner and his cohorts killed sixty whites, yet other whites retaliated and more than a hundred slaves and other African-Americans, including Turner, were executed.

King sought to reason with African-American militants that riots would provoke African-American casualties. He admonished rioting among African-Americans because it could provoke a right-wing take over and a Fascist development in cities.[1219] Farmer also argued that resorting to violence would be suicidal for a minority group.[1220] Non-violent leaders contended that violence would not solve the racial problem but only create bitterness and a "reign of chaos" that would cause the coming generations to bear the consequences.

King argued that violence thrived on destruction and hatred, which would deter White sympathizers. Non-violent advocates like King went out of their way to convince African-American protesters that violence was impractical. Violence seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win his understanding and it is opposed to community and brotherhood. "The American Negro will be living tomorrow with the very people against who he is struggling today."[1221] "The Negro must show that the White man has nothing to fear, for the Negro is willing to forgive."[1222] Fear would cause the opponent to insist that he is right even if he knows that this position has moral defects. To King, fear and violence would only deepen "the brutality of the oppressor" and increase "the bitterness of the oppressed. Violence is the antithesis of creativity and wholeness. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible."[1223]

King knew that he had to argue from a practical perspective, as many African-Americans would not accept non-violence for moral reasons. King's main opponents were the Black Muslims and, later, Black Power advocates who regarded violence as the only possible means to achieve equality. Civil rights leaders argued that their main objective, integration, could not be realized by violent means. The use of guns would not integrate schools as African-Americans could not destroy the very things they wanted to integrate. The burning of a factory was barely the best method to secure a job at that factory.[1224] Furthermore, King argued that violence could only lead to success if the majority of the population endorsed it, which was not the case in America. He argued that

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[1218] Ibid.
[1219] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 233.
[1220] Meier, August, and Elliott Rudwick. CORE. 10.
[1221] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 62.
[1222] Ibid. 61.
[1223] Ibid.
[1224] Ibid. 130.

successful violent revolutions depended on the support and the approval of the respective people, like the Cuban revolution which would have been doomed to failure if the majority of Cubans had not supported Castro and his comrades.[1225]

3.3.1) Effective and Ineffective Violence

African-American protesters occasionally perpetrated riots or sporadic acts of violence during non-violent campaigns, like in Birmingham and Memphis. These acts of violence resulted from the growing frustration of African-Americans with the slow pace of political change. One of the worst violent uprisings was a riot that occurred in Watts in 1965 and left more than thirty people dead. The police arrested almost four thousand people and the damage ran into the millions of dollars.[1226] Coombs writes that whites were confused because they felt they had given African-Americans "so much".[1227] Yet Sitkoff writes that many whites began to support African-Americans after riots occurred because they feared additional riots. The violent rhetoric of African-American militants surprised those whites who heard it for the first time and they became worried about the outbreak of future violence. The press accentuated this fear by dwelling on the subject and by focusing on the statements of African-Americans who called for violence. The press gave particular attention to the book *Negroes with Guns* by Robert F. Williams and Malcolm X's speeches.[1228] Black separatism showed how disillusioned African-Americans had grown with non-violence.[1229]

Numerous political factors contributed to the radicalization of the movement. The Vietnam War, for instance, cast its shadow on whether non-violence was still an effective option while the country was conducting a violent war. A turn toward militant and aggressive rhetoric, like "burn baby burn!" or "we shall overrun" accompanied the outburst of violence during the sixties. Woodward notes that the religious tone of the non-violent movement gave way to a secular one. Intellectuals became more prominent than preachers.[1230] "Less was heard about civil rights and more about economic demands, less about integration and assimilation and more about liberation and separatism."[1231] African-American revolutionaries also admired the Vietnamese resistance. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder, in 1968, maintained that a climate had developed that encouraged and approved of violence. The report noticed a general erosion of respect for

[1225] Ibid. 59.
[1226] Coombs, Norman. The Black experience in America. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972. 203.
[1227] Ibid.
[1228] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 152.
[1229] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 164.
[1230] Woodward, C. Vann. The Strange Career Of Jim Crow. 194.
[1231] Ibid.

authority in America,[1232] which might have been increased by the criticism of the Vietnam War. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder also stated that the rising expectations of African-Americans and the fact that judicial and legislative victories were not fulfilled could have been one of the reasons for increasing African-American violence.[1233]

King and others non-violent leaders always warned of the "ever-present threat of violence".[1234] Yet even though non-violent leaders sought to prevent violence they also exploited its shocking effect. King described the Watts riots as the "language of the unheard" and pointed out that the Watts looting was "a form of social protest very common through the ages."[1235] Although King deplored riots, he argued that the injustice of White America must be removed in order to solve the race problem.[1236] Non-violent leaders realized that militant activists had recognized that violent riots constituted a weapon of protest. One could claim that King and other African-American leaders exploited the shocking effect of violence to increase pressure on public opinion and on the government. "There is no reason that Black men should be expected to be more patient, more forbearing, more farseeing than Whites; indeed, quite the contrary," wrote Baldwin as a warning.[1237]

There were a few incidents during the civil rights movement when African-Americans achieved results more quickly through violence than by means of non-violence. According to Weisbrot, the violent demonstrations that followed Medgar Evers's death in Jackson, Mississippi, exerted pressure on President Kennedy to act. Fairclough contends that it was not non-violence, which managed to expose police brutality and northern racism but the riots that marked the African-American man's frustration with the system.[1238]

The study presents other examples of "effective" violence as well. For example, Randolph headed a committee in New York with the purpose of upgrading the police force in Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant. This five year effort achieved virtually no results. Only after a riot erupted in Harlem did the city select an African-American to become police captain. Rustin compared the example of King and his fruitless efforts in Chicago with the Watt riots where African-Americans had demanded a bus line for years, but only achieved this outcome after pursuing violent means. The establishment considered building a hospital and a decent transportation system only after the riot occurred.[1239] "Society has systematically taught ghetto people that the methods used by Roy

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[1232] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 237.
[1233] Ibid.
[1234] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 85.
[1235] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 85.
[1236] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 112 – 113.
[1237] Baldwin, James. The Price of the Ticket: Collected Nonfiction 1948-1985. New York: St. Martin's, 1985. 358.
[1238] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 164.
[1239] Rustin, Bayard. Time on two crosses: the collected writings of Bayard Rustin/ edited by Devon W. Carbado and Donald Weise. San Francisco: Cleis Press, 2003. Edition 1st ed. 143.

Wilkins and Martin Luther King, Jr., are useless," wrote Rustin.[1240] Garber contends that only after the cry for Black Power did King began "to look so good to so many White Americans."[1241] According to Sitkoff, it was the fear of African-American insurrection that caused the business elite of Birmingham to compromise. These threats pressured local governments to negotiate with movement leaders and supported the movement financially to prevent radicalism.[1242] Fairclough claims that although the Birmingham riot was relatively milder than in Watts and Detroit, it might have eventually helped the non-violent movement, considering the fear of the use of violence at the time.[1243]

Surprisingly, non-violence may depend on violence for its effectiveness. When the opponent does not respond to the demands of non-violent groups, violent outbursts can convince him that non-violent protest would be more acceptable and move him closer to the position of the non-violent group. Despite the chaos violence creates, and the withdrawal of sympathy from third groups, it is a coercive mechanism that can influence the representatives of law and order to favor non-violent protest. If the opponent is not accustomed to or comfortable with violence, he will seek to prevent it from occurring again after the initial confrontation. The civil rights movement, particularly before 1965, was mainly non-violent, hence the violent episodes mentioned here were an exception.

Walton poses the question of whether non-violence can succeed without the implicit threat of violence.[1244] Although riots sent alarming signals to the federal government, not all riots had a coercing effect on segregationists. Watley states that the riots of Chicago did not influence politicians because these riots occurred in African-American neighborhoods, meaning that as "terrifying" as these riots were, African-Americans burned their own buildings and looted shops in their own neighborhood.[1245]

By responding to violence with violence, the victim ceases to be a victim in the eyes of the public. Even if proponents of violent resistance justify their use of violence on the grounds of self-defense, they forfeit their image as "victims" and the sympathy of public opinion. King argued that the riots that occurred in the sixties were counterproductive to the movement: "There is something painfully sad about a riot. One sees screaming youngsters and angry adults fighting hopelessly and aimlessly against impossible odds. Deep down within them you perceive a desire for self-destruction, a suicidal longing."[1246]

[1240] Ibid.
[1241] Garber, Paul, King Was A Black Theologian. Journal of Religious Thought 31 (Fall-Winter, 1974-75), 16-32. Rpt. in *The Ethics of Martin Luther King*. Ervin Smith. 185.
[1242] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 155.
[1243] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 136.
[1244] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 85.
[1245] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 97.
[1246] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 57.

Fredrickson argues that the race riots in Detroit in 1943 unleashed fear that mass demonstrations would provoke more violence, which was one of the reasons why Randolph's movement came to a standstill.[1247] The violent outbursts during the Chicago campaign hardened the stance of whites towards civil rights and activists lost considerable numbers of White supporters. As Howard-Pitney writes, in 1966 public opinion revealed that large white majorities

> opposed further concessions to blacks and favored tough ´´law and order`` measures to repress social disturbances instigated by African-Americans. Televised scenes of black rioters and looters incensed many whites, helping to harden their growing sentiment that blacks had gotten enough and should be content with recent gains.[1248]

Furthermore, McAdam notes that officials and political candidates discredited the "shifting patterns of black insurgency characteristic of the period," which was responsible for the decline in public concern for racial issues. "Despite a mass of contradictory findings, 'responsible' public officials persisted in interpreting ghetto disorders as either insurrections instigated by subversive elements or exercises in rampant criminality."[1249] This is one of the reasons that public concern for racial issues declined, writes McAdam. According to him, such statements shaped public perceptions of riots to a great extent.[1250]

Riots and other acts of violence have a negative impact on non-violent movements. Sharp contends that in a non-violent movement the opponent will always seek to provoke protesters so that he can proceed in a more aggressive and justified manner in order to crush their protest.[١٢٥١] The opponent will try to portray the non-violent protester in a negative light by referring to outbursts of violence. "Nothing would have suited the British better than to have been confronted with a series of weak, armed rebellions…," writes Indian historian Sarvepalli Gopal with regard to the Indian non-violent campaigns against the British.[١٢٥٢] In South Africa riots that broke out of non-violent resistance gave the government a pretext for justified repression so that protesters faced increasing difficulties in sustaining the movement, until it eventually lost momentum, contends Fredrickson.[1253] Sharp points to the fact that during the civil rights movement the police used little breaks in discipline and limited violence on the part of the protesters to apply maximum repression. In Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963 protesters taunted the police and were met with high pressure water hosing, which caused African-Americans to hurl stone paving-blocks at the police. A state

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[1247] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 235.
[1248] Howard-Pitney, David. The African American Jeremiad. 196.
[1249] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 200.
[1250] Ibid. 138.
[1251] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 587.
[1252] Gopal, Sarvepalli. The Vicereoyalty of Lord Irwin, 1926-1931. London: Oxford University Press, 1957. 5. Rpt. in *The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three.* Gene Sharp. 587.
[1253] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 247.

police investigator, for example, swerved his car into the crowd to provoke African-Americans. The violence that ensued lasted for an hour and a half.[1254]

Although King admitted that riots caused some change, he claimed that riots would not bring about long-term transformation like the changes non-violent protest provoked. He spoke out against the effectiveness of riots and the victories they may have accomplished:

> At best the riots have produced a little additional anti-poverty money being allotted by frightened government officials, and a few water-sprinklers to cool the children of the ghettoes. It is something like improving the food in a prison while the people remain securely incarcerated behind the bars. Nowhere have the riots won any concrete improvement such as have the organized protest demonstrations.[1255]

African-American riots were often spontaneous and usually occurred as a reaction to police provocation, as in the Watts riots. On the other hand, non-violent campaigns like sit-ins for example targeted specific discriminatory practices against African-Americans. Haines argues that Black Power and racial violence led to a decrease in White sympathy for civil rights yet he also contends that the turmoil of African-American militants was indispensable to African-American progress.[1256] There is, however, a difference between White supremacists committing acts of violence and African-American rioters. There is a difference between the federal government protecting African-American protesters from supremacist violence and compromising to African-American demands in fear of violence or riots. Before 1965, violent resistance did not play a crucial role. This includes activism that took place during the campaigns of Montgomery, Birmingham, Selma and the sit-ins. On the contrary, President Johnson introduced the Voting Rights Act only after "Bloody Sunday", a non-violent protest, which brought public opinion to the side of African-Americans, who had been clearly portrayed as victims on television.

3.3.2) King and Malcolm X – Rhetorical Coercion

> Perhaps the late, lamented nonviolent movement can really come only after the Malcolms, Stokleys, and Raps have offered another real choice to millions of black folk. (Vincent Harding)[1257]

It has been argued that the militant rhetoric of Malcolm X benefited the movement, as he deliberately or unintentionally poised himself as a threat, hence causing King and moderates to appear as a favorable alternative. Radicals make the demands of moderate leaders seem comparably mild. "Radicals may thus provide a militant foil against which moderate strategies and demands can

[1254] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 587-588.
[1255] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 233.
[1256] Haines, Herbert H. Black Radicals and the Civil Rights Mainstream, 1954-1970. 2.
[1257] Harding, Vincent. The Crisis of Powerless Morality. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile*. Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 182.

be redefined and normalized," writes Herbert Haines.[1258] From this perspective, the role of Malcolm X must be revaluated regarding its relevancy to the non-violent movement. Compared to Malcolm X's rhetoric, King's was much more moderate, as he depended on White liberals and politicians for support, unlike Malcolm X who could afford to be regarded as an extremist. Although many White segregationists described King as an "extremist", his non-violent speeches and television performances, with an emphasis on integration, had a positive impact on the public perception of civil rights gains for African-Americans. Malcolm X, on the other hand, posed a "threat" as public opinion perceived his "militancy" as an undesirable alternative to non-violence.

Malcolm X viewed the conflict from a militant racial perspective. This was due in part to the fact that he was exposed to racism during his childhood and adolescence. Malcolm X believed that White racists killed his father and held White institutions responsible for the separation from his family and the ailing condition of his mother, who became mentally ill. He claimed that America's racist system caused many African-Americans, particularly talented African-Americans, to live as criminals in order to survive. He called the American system a hypocrisy, referred to non-violent leaders as Uncle Toms and advocated for retaliation. Many whites and even African-Americans regarded Malcolm X as a racist and an extremist. They perceived him as a radical leader who advocated for violence. At the same time, a vast number of African-Americans hailed him as a hero.

Many African-American scholars, however, have revaluated Malcolm X's role during the movement. The African-American scholar James Cone describes King and Malcolm X as having played complimentary roles: "…they [Malcolm and King] were like two soldiers fighting their enemies from different angles of vision, each pointing out the other's blind spots and correcting the other's errors. They needed each other, for they represented – and continue to represent – the ´yin and yang` in the soul of black America."[1259] In his book *Between Cross and Crescent*, Baldwin also sees many similar view points between King and Malcolm. He argues that while the two leaders disagreed on a number of issues, they also shared many opinions on other subjects.[1260]

The American media effectively polarized the two leaders however. Time and Newsweek, for example, used King as a symbol of moderation in opposition to radicals.[1261] Time referred to Malcolm X as an "extremist Northern Negro" by comparing him to the much more moderate King. The media particularly focused on the violent rhetoric of Malcolm X's organization, the Nation of

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[1258] Haines, Herbert H. Black Radicals and the Civil Rights Mainstream, 1954-1970. 3-4.
[1259] Cone, James H. Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1992. 270-271.
[1260] Baldwin, Lewis V., and Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid. Between cross and crescent: Christian and Muslim perspectives on Malcolm and Martin. 337.
One must note that Baldwin is an advocate of King and the civil rights movement. His project with Amiri Yasin Al-Hadid was to bridge the gap between these two leaders. It does not also come as a surprise that Cone sympathizes with Malcolm X. Cone sought to theoretically reconcile Black theology and Black Power.
[1261] Lentz, Richard. Symbols, The News Magazines, And Martin Luther King. 144.

Islam. In 1963, Malcolm X appeared on television more than any other African-American spokesman. The media portrayed him as a frightening alternative to King. Malcolm X was conscious of this image and exploited his influence. According to Clark, Malcolm X saw himself as the commando who would prepare the ground for other African-American leaders, like King, Wilkins and Young. Clark contends that Malcolm X compelled Americans to become more sensitive to racial justice.[1262] Although many African-American scholars have sought to portray Malcolm X in a less radical light, he deliberately manipulated his image to coerce American public opinion. During the Selma campaign, for example, Malcolm X delivered a speech at a church meeting in which he stated that whites should be thankful for King since there were many African-Americans who did not believe in non-violent methods.[1263] When SNCC invited Malcolm X to hold a speech during the Selma campaign, he confided to Mrs. King that he did not come to make King's job more difficult but that, rather, he wanted to show America that he was the alternative to King. Robert Kennedy also conveyed the belief that King was better than the alternative, the Black Muslims. This rhetoric had been commonplace among liberal reformers, writes Fairclough.[1264] King exploited this contraposition too. He warned in his *Letter From Birmingham Jail* that millions of African-Americans could turn to African-American nationalists if whites remained obdurate to the reasonable demands of non-violent leaders.[1265] "[King] could say, in effect, if you do not bargain with me, you must deal next with SNCC, or Malcolm X, or the fire next time," contends Louis R. Harlan.[1266]

Sitkoff also recognizes Malcolm X's contribution to the civil rights movement when he writes that Malcolm X kept the pressure on civil rights leaders to become bolder and more militant in their tactics.[1267] In his essay, *The Crisis of Powerless Morality*, Harding indirectly suggests that the threat of violence by Black Power and non-violence went hand in hand.

> In some strange ways Black Power may be headed in that way, but it probably needs some new and stripped-down coming of Martin King's most fervent hopes to accompany its path. On the other hand, if the night is already too dark for the way to be found, or if society should make it impossible for these two Black tendencies to live and find each other, then there seems little to expect that is not apocalyptic.[1268]

Meier contends that SNCC had a similar effect, as their militancy made whites feel uncomfortable and less beneficent, as they contributed thousands of dollars to King's SCLC

[1262] Clark, Kenneth B. King, Malcolm, Baldwin. 11.
[1263] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 83.
[1264] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 136.
[1265] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 297.
[1266] Harlan, Louis, R. Thought on the Leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 65.
[1267] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 154-155.
[1268] Harding. Vincent. The Crisis of Powerless Morality. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile*. C. Eric Lincoln. 186.

instead.[1269] Meier emphasizes the role of all militant activists in the movement and claims that King would not have been perceived as respectable if it was not for these activists. “Without CORE and, especially, SNCC, King would appear ´´radical`` and ´´irresponsible`` rather than ´´moderate`` and ´´respectable.``”[1270]

Despite Malcolm X’s benefit to the movement, he nevertheless remained a threat to the non-violent movement. Malcolm X’s rejection of non-violence caused many African-Americans to reject his philosophy. According to Sitkoff, many other African-Americans felt that only Malcolm X seemed to understand the “depth of the racial conflict”. “To virtually all African-Americans, moreover, Malcolm X stood as an implacable symbol of resistance and a champion of liberation.”[1271] On the other hand, Herbers contends that not all African-Americans who admired him condoned his teachings. He quotes Turner Brown, Jr., who wrote that African-Americans were “getting kicks from Rap and Stokley but hoping Martin Luther King was right.”[1272]

The presence of various groups, organizations or principal actors with different tactical approaches in a protest movement can be useful as they distract the opponent from solely focusing his attacks on the non-violent group. Even though many Americans perceived Malcolm X or the Black Muslims as a threat and as an organization affiliated with violence, they nevertheless committed no violent acts on the ground. Malcolm X and the Black Muslims did not lead a significant violent affront against whites. One could say that their “bluff” of violence enhanced the position of King and non-violence though.

3.4.) Coercion through the Involvement of Various Organizations

Numerous non-violent protest organizations were involved in the civil rights movement, including SCLC, SNCC and CORE. Although the NAACP did not officially adopt non-violence, it did play a crucial role with regard to the non-violent movement. The fact that various organizations were involved in the movement increased protest actions and the pressure on segregationists and the federal government. The author argues that one of the reasons that the non-violent protest became strategically coercive to segregationists and the federal government was the fact that the civil rights movement was decentralized with regard to protest. Although SCLC played a dominant role in major non-violent campaigns like Birmingham and Selma, for example, the fact that the movement was non-violent enabled the creation of various local organizations that undertook crucial grass-root

[1269] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile*. C. Eric Lincoln. 149.
[1270] Ibid. 151.
[1271] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 154.
[1272] Herbers, John, The Black Dilemma. 53.

activism. Besides the formation of SNCC, the radicalization of the NAACP and the reawakening of CORE activism enabled the movement to attract more protesters from different parts of the community.

The author will first present a brief introduction of the non-violent organizations in the movement other than SCLC,[1273] including CORE, SNCC and also the NAACP. The latter was not officially a non-violent organization, yet played an important role in the non-violent movement.

3.4.1.) CORE

The *Congress of Racial Equality* (CORE) was founded in 1941 and began to stage sit-ins in Chicago retail stores. Its objective at that time was to test racial discrimination in employment practices.[1274] CORE was a pioneer of non-violent direct action in the 1940s. In the forties, protest action produced excitement among CORE members and generated the creation of an interracial group committed to non-violence. CORE leaders embraced a form of new "Christian radicalism" or "social idealism". They admired the CIO industrial unions and their use of sit-ins, which was one of CORE'S most applied tactics. As one of their first defiant actions, CORE members, influenced by Gandhi's cooperative communities (ashrams), had White members rent an apartment. Afterwards a dozen men, including three or four African-Americans, moved in. This successful action was an early step towards residential desegregation.[1275] At that time CORE consisted of more whites than African-Americans. It was CORE that brought to America the concepts and tactics of satyagraha, writes Harlan.[1276] According to Houser, integrated interracial actions were important in order to undermine the racist belief that the two races were not able to mix. This caused Randolph's refusal to work with CORE as he believed African-Americans should assume exclusive leadership in their struggle.[1277]

At that time CORE activities received only scant attention from the press and virtually no television coverage. Farmer believed that not many African-Americans were ready for such action at that time. "We found more Whites who were cued in to the idealism of the technique and thus

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[1273] The author will not introduce SCLC, King's organization, in this chapter as this study already focused on its church-based structure in chapter one.
[1274] Oates, Stephen B. Let The Trumpet Sound - The Life Of Martin Luther King. 13-14.
[1275] Meier, August, and Elliott. Rudwick. CORE. 6.
[1276] Harlan, Louis, R. Thought on the Leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 61.
[1277] Meier, August- Rudwick, Elliott. CORE. 21.
In the mid-sixties SNCC activists also adopted the principle that the organization should exclusively consist of African-Americans.

willing to do it."[1278] Farmer and Rustin, Fredrickson writes, were known for a principled but unpopular pacifism.[1279] Meier and Rudwick explain that at that time only restaurants felt the need to change their policies. Additionally, the African-American community did not perceive the need to become actively involved as it would in the sixties. At that time, CORE was also not as militant as it later became.

During the civil rights movement, CORE was particularly active in the North, where it had more experience than SCLC and SNCC, as it had been operating there since its foundation. In addition to its efforts in the North, CORE organized voter registrations in the South. Its strategies revolved around rent strikes and school boycotts, and it later started focusing its attention on police brutality.

3.4.2.) SNCC

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was a non-violent organization, as is implied in its name. In a published statement on the final day of the conference that led to the formation of the organization, SNCC students stated: "We affirm the philosophical or religious ideal of nonviolence as the foundation of our purpose, the presupposition of our faith, and the manner of our actions."[1280] Activists declared: non-violence is "a social order of justice permeated by love" and integration the "crucial first step toward such a society."[1281]

As an organization, SNCC did not have a center-based leadership like SCLC. SNCC members were proud of the fact that they shared in the existence of a democratic organization and that they relied on individual action. Whereas SCLC mainly consisted of ministers, SNCC was a youth based student organization. Zinn describes SNCC protesters as "young radicals" who wanted to affect social change.[1282] Three quarters of SNCC activists were between the ages of 15 to 22. They were mostly from the South and poor. Those SNCC members from the North were mostly African-Americans from middle-class homes. Zinn contends that these students had no ideology, no creed and no blueprint for a future society.[1283] Their thinking was undisciplined. "It is fresh, and it is new," writes Zinn.[1284]

Like most civil rights organizations, SNCC was dependent on contributions from individuals and organizations, like churches, colleges and foundations, for its survival.[1285] Meier contends that

[1278] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 33.
[1279] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 232.
[1280] Colaiaco, James A. Martin Luther King, Jr. 31.
[1281] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 33.
[1282] Zinn, Howard. SNCC. 13-14.
[1283] Ibid 13.
[1284] Ibid. 7.
[1285] Ibid. 10.

SNCC did the lion's share of work in local communities.[1286] According to Dan McElwee, SNCC was the organization which most influenced the grassroots portion of the movement.[1287] They were reluctant to rely completely on negotiation and conciliation, and distrustful of those who held political and economic power. SNCC can be considered the most militant organization of the movement. "They are prepared to use revolutionary means against the old order. They believe in civil disobedience. They have a tremendous respect for the potency of the demonstration," states Zinn.[1288]

3.4.3.) NAACP

Another influential organization during the civil rights movement was NAACP, which was founded by militant African-Americans, including Du Bois, and white liberals, in 1910. During the movement, NAACP consisted of a predominantly middle-class professional staff who shunned direct action and thus fought their battles mainly in court chambers and congressional anterooms. Other protest organizations therefore criticized it for neither opposing nor supporting direct action. Nevertheless many segregationists in the South abhorred the organization; so much so that some cities outlawed it. Fairclough writes that one of the reasons African-Americans chose not to work through NAACP, and instead to create a separate organization during the Montgomery Boycott, was that the "tumult" that NAACP had created before the civil rights movement made it hated by segregationists. Leading African-Americans avoided the organization as it was perceived as too radical at that time.[1289]

In the sixties, the NAACP began to endorse the student sit-ins and created youth councils and college chapters, particularly in the South. It was a radicalization typical of the era of the civil rights movement. These NAACP youth councils and college chapters carried out many of the demonstrations of 1960 and 1961.[1290] In a speech by Wilkins, President of the NAACP, at a mass meeting in Jackson, Mississippi, he claimed that the non-violent tactics employed by the movement were the "natural outcome" of the successful battles that the NAACP had been engaged in for years. Its legal victories in the courts had established the legal status and rights of African-Americans.[1291]

[1286] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile*. Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 186. 149.
[1287] McElwee, Dan. Students Defining the Civil Rights Era. - Dan McElwee, Fall 2003. http:..www.tcnj.edu.~mcelwee2.Essay.htm
[1288] Zinn, Howard. SNCC. 13.
[1289] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 22.
[1290] Wilkins, Roy. For "Schock Troops" and "Solid Legal Moves". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 281.
[1291] Ibid. 282.

During the civil rights movement the NAACP became increasingly active in protest actions. It asked African-Americans to prepare petitions for school boards and demanded plans to desegregate schools. The NAACP also became involved in the sit-ins. The organization's activists even participated in protest actions aimed at integrating public libraries and buses. Following the beginning of the sit-ins, Wilkins's aide John Morsel wrote that the sit-ins had uncovered "alarming weaknesses in the areas of alertness, initiative and imagination and….disclosed many of our members and units to be ridden by inertia and the struggle for community prestige."[1292] NAACP's legal counsel saw the sit-ins as effective but warned that the organization should not tie itself to "something that some other organization has taken and run away with."[1293] Despite its protest activities, the NAACP always emphasized the importance of the courts. Although the NAACP never fully embraced the student sit-ins, it provided aid for protesters. Disagreements remained, however, between the organization and non-violent protesters. Marshall, for example, regarded the fill-the-jails technique as unproductive. "If someone offers to get you out, man, get out," he said.[1294]

Although the NAACP national office "held aloof" from direct action in the early 1960s, the organization provided legal representation and bail money to activists who were arrested during protest. NAACP members even led direct actions during the 1960s. Although Wilkins did not praise protest during the fifties, the Association's annual convention endorsed mass protest at the beginning of the sixties.[1295] Wilkins, who had criticized direct action in 1962, was himself arrested a year later when he led a picket line. Wilkins himself demanded from the Association to accelerate their civil rights attack.[1296] The President of NAACP in Mississippi even led an action campaign in Clarksdale. The South Carolina NAACP organized direct action protest and Youth Councils of NAACP participated in protest despite the unwillingness of some branches. The head of the Philadelphia NAACP endorsed self-defense and Black Nationalism.[1297] In 1963 the NAACP annual convention passed a resolution calling for more direct action. This decision marked a clear change in the policy of NAACP.

The work of NAACP proved indispensable at times for the success of campaigns. The Danville campaign, for example, was fruitless because African-Americans did not have a strong organizational base and because the NAACP there was weak and ineffectual.[1298] This shows the importance SCLC and other organizations attributed to NAACP.

[1292] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 38.
[1293] Ibid.
[1294] Ibid.
[1295] Newman, Mark& The Civil Rights Movement. 164.
[1296] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 146.
[1297] Newman, Mark& The Civil Rights Movement. 164.
[1298] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 145.

3.4.4.) Competitiveness and Cooperation between Various Civil Rights Organizations

The presence of several protest and grass-root organizations during the civil rights movement increased the coercive power of the protest, as the author shows in this sub-chapter. It is first important to point out that the most successful campaigns of the movement relied on the work of the existing local organizations in their respective cities. In his book, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle*, Glenn T. Eskew elaborates on the importance of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights in the years prior to SCLC's intervention.[1299] Without the support of the local leaders, civil rights leaders deemed any protest action as unproductive. E.D. Nixon, a longtime activist and former president of the Montgomery NAACP, when asked about King's emphasis that African-Americans had been active long before the involvement of King, remarked: "We was doing things before Rev. King had ever finished school, come out of school. We's doing things in this town here. The Movement didn't spring up overnight."[1300] E.D. Nixon implies that the civil rights movement was the result of decades of activism marked by a concentrated and combined protest of various groups and organizations. The civil rights movement relied on the activism of various actors who had been engaged in civil rights activism before 1955. Fredrickson contends that the movement grew out of a number of local organizations that were sustained by strong organizations and institutions at the community level.[1301] McAdam emphasizes that integration into existent organizational spheres of a minority community enabled the recruitment of protesters. "Only rarely and with great difficulty do previously isolated individuals emerge, band together and form movement groups. Rather, it is along the established lines of interaction that movement recruitment usually occurs."[1302] Stephen B. Oates contends that besides SCLC, 120 other organizations were lobbying for civil rights legislation on Capitol Hill by 1964.[1303]

A decentralized movement is harder to repress than a centralized one, states Fredrickson.[1304] A decentralized movement is also better disciplined in non-violence, claims Burrowes, who refers to Gandhi's campaigns in 1920-22 and 1930-31. Whereas the former campaign started to disintegrate due to a lack of organization and discipline, the latter had a more equipped network and organization and drew its strength from local organizations.[1305] A decentralized movement can also

[1299] Eskew, Glenn T. But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
[1300] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 50.
[1301] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 270.
[1302] Mc Adam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970. 128-129.
[1303] Oates, Stephen B. Let The Trumpet Sound- The Life Of Martin Luther King. 316.
[1304] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 271.
[1305] Burrowes, Robert J. The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense. 192-193.

have a stronger echo in the media, as CORE and SNCC repeatedly attracted media attention on a national level. On the other hand, numerous grass-root organizations did not receive any publicity for most of their grass-root activism because the activists were not as prominent as King. SCLC was entirely built around the personality of King who raised half of SCLC's income himself through speeches before trade unions, colleges and so on.[1306] This centrality caused other activists, notably civil rights activist Baker, to criticize the organization for its autocratic structure. Two years after the foundation of SCLC, Baker thought that the organization had accomplished few of its objectives as it had failed to stimulate "coordinated action by local groups" or develop "potential leaders" capable of organizing a "vital movement of non-violent direct mass action."[1307] She held the opinion that local activists would remain long after SCLC or other non-violent leaders were gone, and promoted the autonomy of local leaders and the need to develop more skilled and confident social leaders that remain after organizations leave a city.[1308]

Thus, despite the fact that King's SCLC led major campaigns like Birmingham and Selma, the SCLC was not the focal point of the movement. The presence of various principal organizations in the movement enabled them to operate on various fronts, confusing the opponent and provoking larger concessions from him. McAdam notes:

> In addition to the positive effect these organizations had on one another, their collective presence also posed problems for movement opponents. Movement opponents were confronted with no less than four sources of pressure, rather than with a single insurgent group, increasing tremendously the difficulties and cost of defeating or containing the movement.[1309]

The involvement of CORE, SNCC, the creation of local groups, the Freedom Rides, the sit-ins and the voter registration projects gave the movement a larger base, which made it less vulnerable to attacks. For example, White supremacists who had sought to suppress organizations like NAACP only caused other organizations and protest groups to come to the fore. Moreover, the outlawing of the NAACP in Alabama created a gap which was filled by churches and grassroots organizations. The creation of other civil rights organizations also took the heat off of organizations like the NAACP. The NAACP had become "too vulnerable to segregationist witch-hunts" writes Fairclough.[1310] Morris also shares the opinion that in Montgomery and Tallahassee leaders chose to operate independently in order to minimize persecution and repression as NAACP was vehemently

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[1306] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 256.
[1307] Clayborne, Carson, Between Contending Forces: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the African American Freedom Struggle. Magazine Of History. Martin Luther King, Jr. Volume 19, no 1 • January 2005. 17.
[1308] Ransby, Barbara. Ella Baker& the Black Freedom Movement. 228.
[1309] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 155.
[1310] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 22.

under attack.[1311] African-Americans reasoned that whites would not reject dealing with another organization out of hand as they would with the NAACP, writes Fairclough.[1312]

Some crucial campaigns depended on the level of cooperation between various organizations. Sometimes SCLC cooperated with SNCC, or SNCC with CORE. SNCC frequently turned to NAACP for legal and financial assistance. Mark Newman points to the importance of NAACP, which formed the basis for alternative groups in the movement. Bob Moses claimed that he could not have developed the work of SNCC in Mississippi without the activism that NAACP had started there.[1313] During the Freedom Rides, CORE secured assistance from other organizations like SCLC and NAACP that pledged housing and food for activists. NAACP provided lawyers for the MIA's crucial court cases and paid the main fees of the boycott's legal expenses.[1314] In order to strengthen the Freedom Riders, CORE, SCLC, SNCC and the Nashville Christian Leadership Council established a Freedom Ride Coordinating Committee. It should also be noted that these organizations consisted of diverse representatives of the American community, which enriched the movement: lawyers and legal counselors, ministers and rabbis, students, liberals and youth activists.

The presence of several leading organizations caused some competition, with regard to staging coercive protest actions. This competition among civil rights organizations had a positive effect on the movement as it led to a radicalization of the organizations' respective strategies so that they sought to exceed each other with regard to protest. Organizations like the NAACP and the Urban League, which previously shunned direct action, started to apply non-violent protest, although non-violent protest organizations overshadowed their work. Sitkoff notes that competition among various civil rights organizations caused them to redouble their efforts to achieve greater gains.[1315] The status of CORE increased as a consequence of the Freedom Rides and challenged King and the NAACP. "Rivalries between personalities and organizations remain an essential ingredient of the dynamics of the movement and a precondition for its success as each current tries to outdo the others in effectiveness and in maintaining a good public image. Without this competitive stimulus, the civil rights revolution would slow down," agrees Meier.[1316] McAdam points to the fact that there were various joint protest activities. Although there were constant rivalries between the organizations, they nevertheless put aside their differences in pursuit of common goals.[1317]

Yet despite the positive aspects of the competition between the various organizations, the growing participation of youth activists had the effect of weakening the control of non-violent

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[1311] Morris, Aldon D. The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement. 75. Rpt. in *To Redeem the Soul of America.* Adam Fairclough. 22. "Loosely structured groups were more difficult to prosecute." Ibid
[1312] Ibid.
[1313] Newman, Mark. The Civil Rights Movement. 163-164.
[1314] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 45.
[1315] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 111.
[1316] Meier, August. The Conservative Militant. *Martin Luther King, Jr. - a profile*. Ed. C. Eric Lincoln. 155.
[1317] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 156.

leaders over the movement. One thing that led to the radicalization of the movement, according to Sitkoff, was the involvement of other civil rights organizations that responded to Birmingham with a growing militancy.[1318] There were also numerous conflicts that started to erupt between the organizations. In particular, SCLC became the center of criticism. The NAACP regarded SCLC as "an unwelcome competitor" in the South, as King was drawing funds away from them.[1319] Some of these tensions had abortive consequences on protest campaigns. In the case of Natchez Mississippi, for example, tensions developed between SCLC and the NAACP that made Natchez an unsuitable site for non-violent protest by SCLC standards.[1320] Tensions also erupted between SCLC and SNCC in Albany and in Selma. One of the main reasons that the Albany campaign failed was the irreconcilable disputes that emerged between SCLC and other organizations. Albany leaders had not been unanimous in their decision to invite King to the campaign.[1321] Many Albany leaders were infuriated because of the way SCLC leaders like Abernathy and Walker disregarded or directed them.[1322] In Birmingham, SCLC and the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, including Shuttlesworth and King's staff in particular, agreed to consult each other first regarding every strategic detail of the campaign to preserve the unity of the leadership. There was also internal tension within SCLC and external disputes with SNCC. SNCC accused SCLC of preempting the former and claiming the glory for itself.[1323] However, it was the dispute over non-violence as a protest strategy that eventually weakened the movement in the late sixties, specifically when CORE and SNCC started to reject non-violence.

Nevertheless a decentralized movement creates competition, strengthens cooperation and renders non-violent protest more effective. As long as protest organizations are dedicated to non-violence or, like the NAACP or the Urban League, are not officially non-violent yet do not opt for violence, their cooperation enriches the movement by opening several fronts to take on the opponent. The civil rights movement was particularly effective since it saw the rise of three major independent organizations that operated in different states and were led by different representatives of the African-American community. These organizations, SCLC, CORE and SNCC, were officially dedicated to non-violence. In addition, the NAACP provided legal assistance.

3.5.) Non-violent Strategies and Methods

[1318] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 145.
[1319] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 44.
[1320] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 446-447.
[1321] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 66.
[1322] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 64.
[1323] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 69.

> …the art of nonviolence amounts to much more than the ability to organize street demonstrations.[١٣٢٤] (Moses Greg)

Sharp identifies strategies narrowly, defining them as "the broad plan of action for the overall struggle, including the development of an advantageous situation, the decision of when to fight, and the broad plan for utilizing various specific actions in the general conflict."[1325] Most studies on the civil rights movement focused on the rhetoric or the political aspects of the civil rights movement, although non-violent strategies and methods applied during the civil rights movement played a crucial role in staging effective protest. These strategies and methods compelled segregationists to compromise to the protester's demands or at least negotiate with civil rights leaders, which in turn focused public opinion on civil rights. A conflict where protesters do not have the slightest chance of bringing about political change through non-violent protest will eventually lead to the demise of non-violence. It would have been absurd, for example, to have staged a demonstration demanding civil rights in a politically oppressed atmosphere such as Iraq during the reign of Saddam Hussein. On the other hand, if protesters apply protest methods that are considered too radical for their environment, they may consequently face harsh repression, which will be justified by public opinion and hence compromise their non-violent protest.

The success of non-violent protest depends on applying strategies and methods that are suitable for the political context so that they enable protesters to achieve political objectives. A protest consists of applying effective methods to coerce the opponent and to win over crucial allies (public opinion). In a non-violent protest, the effectiveness of non-violent methods depends on the protest strategies, which, therefore, precede a protest campaign. This sub-chapter elaborates on the tactical and strategic aspects that caused civil rights protesters to make crucial political gains either by directly realizing victories by non-violent protest or by causing public opinion to mount pressure on the federal government.

Non-violent protesters mainly succeeded in mounting successful non-violent protest, creating crisis situations and provoking segregationist violence, due to two factors. First, they were able to have their demands met by means of non-violent methods; they desegregated segregated facilities, staged effective boycotts, or filled the jails, as in Birmingham. Other examples were the sit-ins, the Freedom Rides and the Montgomery Boycott. These methods either had an economic effect on segregationists (e.g. boycotts) or enabled the protesters to impose their demands on segregationists (e.g. sit-ins). Most importantly, protesters succeeded in attracting public opinion through these methods. Non-violent protest for example does not merely consist of organizing a boycott or a march. A march, for example, can be productive or extremely unproductive during a campaign. Yet

[1324] Moses, Greg. Revolution Of Conscience. 149.
[1325] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 493.

a march can also have a direct influence on public opinion, the media and the federal government. The same goes for a boycott.

Second, non-violent protest methods would not have had an effective influence without the application of non-violent strategies. Any study on non-violence cannot circumvent the importance of non-violent strategies, which allow for effective non-violent protest to take place. In order to launch a successful boycott or a march for example, there has to be a sufficient number of protesters. Non-violent leaders must first attract protesters and maintain their numbers during a campaign. Furthermore, this sufficient number of protesters had to attract the attention of public opinion to have a coercing impact. What prompted non-violent leaders to start a protest in a certain town? Would non-violent protest have been possible anywhere in America? Did non-violent leaders apply random protest or was there a gradual campaign built-up? The effectiveness of non-violent protest also depends on the maintenance of discipline. Any outburst of violence would have discredited the movement. So then how did African-American leaders instill discipline during the protests? Non-violent protesters also applied strategies, which included orchestrating the escalation of protest, choosing a geographical location in which to organize a campaign, involving persons capable of igniting a dramatized protest and choosing specific, realizable, objectives. The next sub-chapters analyze the non-violent strategies African-American leaders applied to ensure the maximum impact of their protest. These strategies aimed at coercing segregationists or, in other words, making protests effective to the degree that they coerce the opponent and simultaneously convert public opinion.

3.5.1.) Sufficient Number of Protesters

> The biggest job in getting any movement off the ground is to keep together the people who form it.[1326] (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

In this sub-chapter the study analyzes how non-violent protest leaders succeeded in attracting a substantial number of African-Americans protesters. A protest movement cannot operate without the presence of protesters. If non-violent leaders had not succeeded in attracting a sufficient number of protesters to participate in marches or to boycott segregated stores, there would have simply been no movement. Mass protest is an integral component of non-violent strategy as non-violence is primarily a weapon of the masses. King and other protest leaders knew that the quantity of protesters was one of the most crucial assets of the movement. The March on Washington, for

[1326] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story. 78.

example, was one of the most impressive demonstrations of the movement with regard to the number of protesters it attracted; approximately 250,000 in total. The Birmingham campaign was successful as it was characterized by an unprecedented level of involvement. Rustin points to the fact that unlike other cities where tremendous organization preceded campaigns, in order to stimulate direct action, protesters responded to the Birmingham campaign spontaneously. To him, it was "the unmatched symbol of grass-roots protest involving all strata of the Black community."[1327] Birmingham combined African-Americans from all classes. Even the reluctant African-American bourgeoisie participated in the protest as they were pressured into action by the growing militancy of their customers. In St. Augustine, on the other hand, many African-Americans were reluctant to protest as arrests during demonstrations resulted in economic disaster and the loss of the protester's jobs, as Fairclough writes.[1328] The low number of protesters in St. Augustine posed a considerable threat to the campaign. The city's African-American population was too small to sustain a protest. The fear of the Klu Klux Klan, which had a stronghold in St. Augustine, further deterred many protesters.[1329] SCLC had to bring northern clergymen to St. Augustine to save the campaign.

Many factors contributed to the participation of a sufficient number of protesters during the civil rights movement: interaction networks like churches attracted recruiters; non-violent protesters invited celebrities or focused on children, for example, to attract public opinion; student protest leaders fostered a group identity; King sought to broaden the movement by focusing on issues such as poverty in order to attract Hispanics and White Americans; and King chose cities where there was a willingness among African-Americans to become engaged in protest actions.

Non-violent protest consists of single, group, or mass protest. The effectiveness of the quantity of protestors in a non-violent protest depends on the context, the importance of the action and the political weight of protestors. In order for non-violent protest to become effective, it should not go unnoticed by the media or public opinion. A person may choose to disobey a law by committing an act of non-violence and go to jail. Yet if he is not a famous person in his community, his protest might pass by unnoticed. On the other hand, a single person's action might receive enormous attention if that person enjoys a celebrity status in his community or society. There was a tremendous difference between when King went to jail and when an unknown student went. James Forman, Stokley Carmichael, Ivanhoe Donaldson, and Bob James were accustomed to being beaten without attracting publicity while King and other leaders appeared on national television.[1330]

The involvement of celebrities was particularly beneficial to the movement as their presence did not only attract public opinion but also encouraged the involvement of protesters. Sharp contends

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[1327] Rustin, Bayard "From Protest to Politics," 1965. *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 406.
[1328] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 54.
[1329] Ibid. 186.
[1330] Herbers, John. The Black Dilemma. 40.

that participation by persons with high prestige and status may penetrate the barrier of social distance.[1331] During the March on Washington for example there were performances by several artists and celebrities that granted a certain festivity to the event. Celebrities included Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mahalia Jackson and Odetta, Ossie Davis, Marlon Brando, Sammy Davis, Jr., Sidney Poitier, Lena Horne, Diahann Carroll, Paul Newman and Harry Belafonte. King relied on entertainers to attract a larger crowd and to uphold the morale of the audience. Entertainers like Harry Belafonte, Mahalia Jackson and Dick Gregory often performed before King addressed large crowds. These occasions also served as opportunities to collect donations for the movement.

Sharp notes that groups specifically excluded from active combat, like the old, women, the young, the handicapped, etc., are the ones most likely to provoke reactions when they are attacked.[١٣٣٢] The protest of children during the Birmingham campaign offers an example of this. SCLC discovered that a method of pressuring African-American adults to take part in demonstrations was to involve their children.[1333] Groups that a majority of people can identify with are crucial in non-violent protest. The protest of children and the harsh response of southern police officers repelled many African-Americans and American public opinion alike. Children represent "innocence" and "vulnerability". Attacks on children, religious persons, like priests, or elderly people may provoke a stronger reaction from Public opinion. For example, the arrest of Rosa Parks in Montgomery triggered the Montgomery Boycott.[1334]

Group action is more effective in non-violent protest because groups attract more attention than individuals. A group is also bound together by a belief in a common cause, which will increase group morale and strengthen their negotiating status. CORE and SNCC, for example, conducted non-violent group protest when they organized sit-ins and Freedom Rides.

Then there is mass direct action which constitutes a magnet for public attention. Although non-violent protest usually relies on the masses, during the movement non-violence was confined to a protesting minority when compared with the number of African-Americans who did not become involved. Nevertheless the number of this minority reached the thousands, which was sufficient to stage a successful protest. The Montgomery Boycott was an exception as it involved the majority of

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[1331] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 714.
[1332] Ibid. 597.
[1333] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 55.
[1334] The Montgomery bus system had stipulated that the first four seats were exclusively reserved for Whites. This means that even if they were unoccupied and an African-American passenger was standing, he was not allowed to occupy them. The last three seats were reserved for African-Americans. Yet if all white seats were occupied, than African-Americans who sat directly behind white seats could have been asked to abandon their seats for white passengers.

African-American bus riders in that city. In its leaflet, SCLC stated that through the actions of thousands of people, the American race conflict would be most quickly solved.[1335]

A protest becomes more effective the larger the number of protesters who are involved. Unlike violence, non-violence does not require military experience. It is possible to mobilize ordinary people and instill the essential principles of non-violent protest in them. Even without extensive non-violent instructions, non-violent leaders can rely on people just marching or adhering to the rules of boycotts or sit-ins. At the same time, massive non-violent protest entails the threat of violence, which makes sufficient preparation and organization therefore indispensable. Gandhi depended on the masses for the success of campaigns like the Salt March and the boycott of British products. CORE had applied non-violent strategies in the forties yet it did not have the same effect as King and SCLC. Unlike King and SCLC, CORE did not attract the masses, although co-founder Houser had envisaged a mass movement during the forties. CORE operated in small groups. The same goes for organizations such as NAACP who had struggled for years against segregation in the courts but did not depend on the masses. The more protesters were involved in strikes, demonstrations, boycotts, etc, the more powerful they seemed to the opponent. The same goes for King's campaigns in Montgomery, Albany and Birmingham. Few activists or individuals initiated the Montgomery Boycott and the sit-in movement yet the success of the campaign depended on the continuation of the protest by the masses. The sit-ins began with only a few students who were able to desegregate White shops and restaurants. They then spread across the South and were carried out by a large number of students.

Interaction networks facilitated the recruitment of participants. Non-violent leaders relied on already existing institutions as a recruitment base. The church, for example, served as a magnet for new recruits.[1336] Preachers played a crucial role in attracting a sufficient number of protesters. In order to have a boycott in Montgomery, Nixon knew that the African-American ministers of Montgomery had to become involved. The Women's Political Council (WPC) and the few activists already involved were not sufficient to ignite a mass movement.[1337] A mass protest only succeeded because of the enthusiastic support of Montgomery's African-American ministers.[1338] Before Parks, Jo Ann Robinson, the President of the Women's Political Council, had also been mistreated by a bus driver because she refused to abandon her seat. Although Robinson held meetings afterwards and discovered that dozens of African-Americans had suffered similar abuses, a boycott did not take place as the idea did not find full support from the African-American community. This shows the importance of the approval of a large number of people for any protest action before it can take

[1335] The Southern Christian Leadership Conference: "The Ultimate Aim Is the ´Beloved Community`". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 270.
[1336] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 128-129.
[1337] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 17.
[1338] Ibid.

place and the importance of mobilizing African-Americans, which the ministers achieved in Montgomery.

African-American protesters turned to non-violent protest as it was the only means that would enable a large number of African-Americans to effectively desegregate facilities and attract the attention of the federal government. One of the reasons that African-Americans protesters were able to hold effective non-violent protest was the fact that non-violent methods were accessible to the masses, particularly African-American students and youths. Non-violent leaders were sometimes compelled to rely on student protesters when they ran out of adult protesters. In Birmingham, for example, leaflets were distributed near schools to students encouraging them to protest first and go to school later.[1339] African-American leaders sought to involve in the protest as many representatives of society as possible: churchgoers, students, artists, educators, ministers, liberals, politicians, ordinary African-American and White citizens, etc. Non-violence was not confined to a certain group of African-Americans. In St. Augustine, almost the entire African-American community applied non-violent protest.[1340] In the sixties, King sought to expand the objectives of the movement by focusing on economic and political conditions that rendered many Americans destitute. The Chicago campaign and the riots in the ghettos convinced him that the movement had to target the political and economic system. The weight of poor Americans, regardless of whether they were whites, African-Americans or Hispanics would have provided the movement with a solid base of protesters at a time when King and other non-violent leaders were running out of volunteers. This is surely not the only reason that motivated King to choose to expand the movement at that time or to focus on poverty. Yet as a non-violent movement relies on the masses to spread the message of the movement, King aimed to include a broader number of protesters, particularly at a time when African-American protesters increasingly doubted the effectiveness of non-violence. “At this level Negro programs go beyond race and deal with economic inequality wherever it exists. In the pursuit of these goals, the White poor become involved, and the potentiality emerges for a powerful new alliance.”[١٣٤١]

In order to attract masses of African-Americans to the protest, non-violent leaders fostered a group identity. A mass movement consolidates the identity of the protester and helps him answer questions like “who am I?”, writes Zanden. “A social movement offers certain rewards to a people weighed down by a sense of inferiority, powerlessness, and insignificance. In fusing oneself with a social movement external to the self, one can acquire the strength which the individual self lacks by

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[1339] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 139.
Attendance to school dropped nearly to ninety percent.
[1340] Herbers, John. The Black Dilemma. 52.
[1341] King, Martin Luther, Jr. Where do we go from here: Chaos or community? 17.

becoming part of a bigger and more powerful whole."[1342] Mass protest action has the effect of strengthening solidarity between protesters. During the Indian campaign of 1930-31, activists organized a significant number of parades, picketing and hoisting. They burned foreign cloths and organized mass meetings in order to increase the morale of protesters.[1343] Veteran activists of the civil rights movement relate how feeling that they belonged to "The Movement" was vital to their psychological condition. "So everything was us, and so it was the largest, — it was long before the other movements took off. So that incredible euphoria of knowing that everything was what we were part of. Every accomplishment was something we did, every tragedy was something that we felt. Very strong feeling."[1344] Blending non-violence with religion and African-American aspirations therefore increased group identity, as can be seen in this statement: "The biggest job in getting any movement off the ground is to keep together the people who form it. The task requires more than a common aim: it demands a philosophy that wins and holds the people's allegiance; and it depends upon open channels of communication between the people and their leaders," wrote King.[1345] In Birmingham, activists held mass meetings on a regular basis so that political and strategic discussions could take place. "Meetings are the glue that holds a community together, and throughout the South white segregationists did their utmost to sabotage meetings among Blacks organizing," contended Sue Sojourner, a Northern white civil rights organizer who worked with the Holmes County Movement in the sixties.[1346]

It is much more difficult to intimidate a community or a large group of protesters than to intimidate a few individuals. The more individuals who are involved in an economic boycott the more effective it becomes. Fairclough contends that during the boycotts of Montgomery and Tallahassee economic reprisals had been relatively uncommon as it was difficult to impose sanctions on an entire community.[1347] According to Sharp, protesters will not join a movement unless they are convinced that there is sufficient solidarity and support.[1348] Mass protest posed difficulties to segregationists in the South who wanted to punish the participants but could not imprison all of the many protesters.[1349]

> The ability of the participants to feel repression will be very significantly increased if they constantly feel that they are part of a much larger movement which gives them,

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[1342] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt* . Ed. James A. Geschwender. 141.
[1343] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 576.
[1344] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[1345] King, Martin Luther. Stride toward freedom - the Montgomery story.78.
[1346] Sojourner, Sue Lorenzi. Got To Thinking. (Praxis International) http:..www.crmvet.org.info.holmesco.pdf
[1347] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 54.
[1348] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 574.
[1349] Zanden, James W. Vander. The Non-violent Resistance Movement Against Segregation. *The Black Revolt* . Ed. James A. Geschwender. 136.

> personally, support and strength to carry on… Regular contacts and demonstrations of ´´togetherness`` are therefore important ways of maintaining group morale.[1350]

Nevertheless, in order to counter the intimidation of protesters by segregationists, various efforts to energize the masses preceded campaigns like Birmingham and Selma. It was not always easy to attract a sufficient number of protesters during protest campaigns. The intimidation of potential protesters can have a devastating effect on a campaign. Many African-Americans were intimidated by the potential consequences of protest activities and did not join on-going campaigns. During the Chicago campaign, for example, SCLC discovered that it was much easier to mobilize residents to attend a mass rally than to recruit members for the unions to end slums.[1351]

As non-violent leaders relied on the masses, they had to gauge the willingness of these masses to become involved in protest. In Montgomery, for example, African-American ministers succeeded in attracting three or four thousand church goers after Parks' arrest. Reddick noticed enthusiasm at the beginning of the bus boycott.[1352] First, protest leaflets informed protesters that the boycott would only last for a day. Boycott leaders then decided to wait and see whether African-American citizens would show their willingness to extend the boycott beyond a day. Hence, a mass meeting was planned to see whether community sentiment would support extending the boycott.[1353] African-American leaders decided that if the crowd proved enthusiastic, they would continue the protest. Yet if the crowd turned out to be apathetic, then the leaders would stop protest activities and review their plans. The outcome was very positive as thousands of African-Americans attended the mass meeting. "My doubts concerning the continued success of our venture were dispelled by the mass turnout," commented King.[1354] Also, the apparent readiness of the African-American community in the Chicago campaign was one of the reasons that SCLC became involved in the protest for school integration. African-American students had already begun a mass boycott there.[1355]

3.5.2.) The Right Location

A successful protest campaign depends on choosing the right location for protest. During the civil rights movement, activists confined the practice of non-violent protest to certain cities as they could not have successfully applied non-violent protest across the board anywhere in the South or even the North. There were cities in the South where non-violence would have been futile and too dangerous. Mississippi, for example, was so hostile that SCLC warned SNCC of entering there.

[1350] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 575.
[1351] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest. 62.
[1352] Reddick, L.D. The Bus Boycott in Montgomery. *Reporting Civil Rights*. 253.
[1353] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 18.
[1354] Ibid. 23.
[1355] Ibid. 450.

CORE refused at certain times to undertake protest action in the South because such actions were likely to have caused the deaths of protesters. It is practically sounder for a non-violent campaign to focus on one geographical area. Gandhi, for example, confined his activities to Gujarat although salt satyagraha was practiced in almost all provinces. Civil rights leaders had to concentrate on the "most promising local confrontations" due to the political situation and the poverty of the civil rights movement, writes Fairclough.[١٣٥٦] If a campaign turned out to be ineffective, the best method was to cut one's losses and move on. Fairclough describes it as a hit and run strategy.[١٣٥٧] Critics of King accused him and SCLC of organizing a "few showy projects" and of leaving the arduous job of organizing the African-American community to others.[1358] The most successful strategy of the movement was to venture into a city and create a dramatized conflict in order to bring about a federal intervention, like in Birmingham and Selma. King's strategy was not to focus on a single city for too long.

One of the advantages of Montgomery was that it was a relatively small area where leaders could easily communicate with the protesters. Reddick states that Montgomery was ideally suited for a bus boycott as it had a relatively small area and an African-American population of 40 percent. "Most residents could walk to most places in the city."[1359] When a newspaper falsely published that the boycott leaders had concluded a settlement with the commissioners, for example, King and his colleagues drove around the small city by night in order to notify African-Americans that the protest would continue. The number of church-goers was very high in that city as well, making it possible for boycott leaders to inform and instruct African-Americans on the current situation at church. The selection of Birmingham and Selma was based on similar criteria, like the presence of an influential church that would attract the masses, the presence of other local activism and the presence of segregationists like Connor and Clark that would attract the attention of the media.

3.5.3.) The Right Person to Spark a Campaign

Sometimes repressive acts occur without any consequential effect, while at other times one single instant may spark a protest campaign. Some movements may build their protest around a symbolic person that unites diverse protest groups and wins the sympathy of public opinion. Commenting on the importance of the role played by Parks, Nixon stated: "I certainly think the history books ought to, if you're gonna talk about the boycott, they ought start from the day Rosa L.

[1356] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 7.
[1357] Ibid. 7.
[1358] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 142.
[1359] Reddick. L.D. The Bus Boycott in Montgomery. *Reporting Civil Rights*. 253.

Parks was arrested and not just December the fifth when Rev. King was elected president…"[1360] "If Mrs. Parks had got up and given that White man her seat, you'd never aheard of Rev. King."[1361]

African-American citizens unified after Park's arrest, which catalyzed the Montgomery Boycott. Park's refusal to abandon her seat to a White person was portrayed as a symbolic act of defiance and was similar to Gandhi's refusal to quit his first-class seat in a train in South Africa. It was not the first time an African-American person had refused to abandon his seat for White passengers. Prior to Parks there had been three incidents. Yet, according to Nixon, those arrested were not the "right persons". "Now you are on the outside here. You think that anybody that got arrested would be good."[1362] The first person was a minister's daughter, whom Nixon did not consider a good litigant. The second was a school girl, whom Nixon also rejected, and the third was a young girl who would not have made a good case, as she had personal problems that a clever lawyer could have exploited in court. Any African-American who challenged segregation had to be above reproach.[1363] Parks had been an active member and occasional officer of the Montgomery's NAACP. Nixon says that she had been inaccurately described as a "simple drudge" because of her much-quoted remark when she refused to stand because her "feet hurt" yet in reality she had been actively involved against racism. Besides, she had shown a "strengthened self-confidence" during a two-week interracial conference.[1364] All this made Parks eligible to be used as a "test case". Parks was an elderly woman with a clean history and an "impeccable character".[1365] Reddick describes her as ideally fitting for her role: "She is attractive and quiet, a churchgoer who looks like the symbol of Mother's Day."[1366] When Parks had to appear in court and her trial was underway, several hundred African-Americans gathered at the court. It was an unprecedented event.[1367] Parks was found guilty and charged with a $10 fine. The large gathering outside the court indicated to the leaders that they had a large amount of support from the African-American community.

Protest leaders like Nixon and Robinson exploited the arrest of Parks. The fact that Robinson and the WPC had been waiting for a chance to start the boycott and that they previously considered the African-American community unprepared to support a boycott[1368] shows the impact that the mistreatment of an elderly African-American woman can have on the masses. The mistreatment of Birmingham's protesting children, the death of four girls at a church in Birmingham, the murder of

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[1360] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 50.
[1361] Ibid. 51.
[1362] Ibid. 38.
[1363] Ibid. 39.
[1364] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 13.
[1365] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[1366] Reddick, L.D. The Bus Boycott in Montgomery. *Reporting Civil Rights.* 253.
[1367] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 21.
[1368] Ibid. 15.

a White minister in Selma[1369] and the intimidation of African-American students at Rock Hill further provoked public opinion.

3.5.4.) Targeting Specific Objectives

Defining goals and objectives, choosing a strategy and tactics, making contingency plans, providing training, etc is crucial in non-violent protest.[1370] Simplifying objectives so that every citizen can identify with them was also crucial in protest campaigns like in Birmingham.[1371] The success of the movement partially stems from the fact that non-violent leaders selected targets that were realizable through protest. During the Montgomery Boycott, for example, King and his fellow ministers did not demand racial justice or the end of segregation, as Dyson notes, but merely the right to sit.[1372] The end of segregation would not have garnered the same support from public opinion as the right to sit did. Unreasonable demands can cause protesters to lose the support of public opinion and cause the opponent to renounce negotiations. The leaders of the movement did not confront segregation as a whole because it would have been impossible to end segregation in America at that time. The initial demand of the MIA was to alter the seating system and not desegregation. Although the boycott occurred in Montgomery, it was sufficient to attract the attention of the media to the injustice of bus segregation in the South as a whole. Thus one successful campaign emphasizing a certain subject can affect other locations as well. For example, the success of the boycott caused other leaders in other states to imitate what took place in Montgomery.

Smith claims that unlike Gandhi, who applied non-violent resistance to address specific issues, King applied civil disobedience to bring about change in a more general and indirect way.[1373] Yet the major non-violent campaigns of the movement targeted specific practices of segregation. The sit-ins directly targeted segregation and discrimination in restaurants, bars, stores and other segregated facilities. The same goes for the Freedom Rides, which targeted segregation in interstate travels, or the Montgomery Boycott, which brought about the end of segregation on buses in Montgomery.

[1369] Reverend James J. Reeb was assaulted after he left a soul food restaurant together with three other white Unitarian ministers.
[1370] Irwin, Bob, and Gordon Faison. Why Nonviolence? - Introduction to Nonviolence Theory and Strategy. edited by David H. Albert. New Society Publishers, 1984. 6.
http:..www.vernalproject.org.papers.understanding.WhyNonviolence.pdf
[1371] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 456.
[1372] Dyson, Michael Eric. I May Not Get There With You. 107.
[1373] Smith, Ervin. Ethics of Martin Luther King. 111-112

Watley contends that the demands of the Albany campaign were not specific enough and that they "aimed at everything in general and nothing in particular."[1374] The Albany campaign taught SCLC that a political objective was best conveyed when articulated in specific terms.[1375] In Chicago, SCLC concentrated on the slums. The final draft of SCLC's evaluation of the Chicago problem stated that there was economic exploitation, which was crystallized in the slums.[1376] Bevel stated that whereas in the South concentration on one issue proved feasible for specific reasons, in Chicago, it was better to concentrate around any and all issues.[1377] Yet eradicating slum conditions was a complex and general issue that lacked specific and achievable objectives. The March on Washington was primarily designed to draw attention to the poor economic state of African-Americans, yet the objective was defined more clearly and the emphasis shifted to lobbying for the Civil Rights Bill.[1378] Watley contends that the Chicago campaign posed problems for King as the issues were much more complex than involving the abrogation of constitutional rights.[1379] Whereas desegregation of restaurants or other facilities was a clear objective that was apparent to public opinion, attacking poverty on a national scale made African-Americans deal more with state politicians than businessmen, the former of whom were not so vulnerable to boycotts.

On the other hand, non-violent protesters may publicly set unrealizable objectives in order to realize other objectives. Gandhi and his followers, for example, knew that the salt satyagraha would not result in any salt-law change. According to Judith Brown, Gandhi's objective was to "shatter the psychological roots of collaboration on which the raj stood."[1380] Gandhi's salt satyagraha was mainly construed in order to unite Indians and signal to the British that India would continue the protest. When SCLC entered Chicago, it also set unrealistic objectives in order to emphasize racial problems and to justify its campaign. Yet when protest actions were underway, protest leaders had to present clear political and reasonable demands to the opponent and to the public.

Fairclough and Garrow claim that SCLC lacked a single and clear goal in Birmingham and that King did not think far enough ahead about an intervention by federal troops or the passing of legislation. Instead, as the administration responded to pressure rather than to proposals, it was more important to King to generate a reaction from the administration that dramatized broader issues, contends Fairclough.[1381] Nevertheless SCLC issued specific targets in Birmingham. Right after the arrival of SCLC, African-American leaders issued a manifesto that contained their

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[1374] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 69.
[1375] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 456.
[1376] Ibid. 456.
[1377] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 456-457.
[1378] Kasher, Stevens. The Civil Rights Movement: A Photographic History, 1954-68. New York: Abbeville Press, 1996. http:..www.abbeville.com.civilrights.washington.asp
[1379] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 99.
[1380] Brown, Judith M. Gandhi and Civil Disobedience. 109.
[1381] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 136-137.

demands. Walker selected three downtown stores for direct action. Shuttlesworth wanted to widen the scope of direct action from only attacking lunch counters to Parks implementation (golf, Kiddie-Land) and roving squads to ride taxis and buses, and also suggested staging prayer meetings. Yet SCLC had learned from the Albany campaign to keep its focus narrow.[١٣٨٢] One of the reasons that the Albany campaign failed was that protesters "took on all segregation", as Walker said. "We bit off more than we could chew."[1383] Therefore SCLC singled out only lunch counters at the beginning of the campaign in order to keep the focus of public opinion on one issue. There were other specific objectives that SCLC wanted to realize, like arousing the African-American community, involving President Kennedy and attracting the attention of the press. These objectives had to be achieved before protesters could accelerate the intensity of demonstrations. Additional objectives of the campaign were desegregation of store facilities, adoption of fair hiring practices by those stores, equal employment opportunities for African-Americans, the reopening of a desegregated recreation facility, and the establishment of a biracial committee to enact further desegregation measures.

3.5.5.) Non-violent Preparation

> Whether a campaign is to be massive, including many millions of participants, or small, with only a handful of volunteers or even a single person, careful planning and preparations are essential.[1384] (Gene Sharp)

Although violent riots or actions occasionally broke out among a few African-American protesters during civil rights demonstrations, many crucial civil rights demonstrations were non-violent, including the Birmingham and Selma campaigns. The maintenance of non-violence mainly depended on the precautionary measures taken by non-violent leaders. Non-violent discipline and preparation are indispensable in a non-violent protest. There has to be sufficient preparation in order for non-violent protest to become efficient, writes Abu-Nimer.[1385] Sharp cites the importance of discipline on many pages of his study, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*.[1386] Non-violent persistence in the face of repression relies on discipline, or at least an adherence to a certain minimum standards of behaviour.[1387] Some campaigns failed for the lack of a strong base. Sharp quotes Lindberg who writes: "Every form of nonviolent campaign of a merely spontaneous character is threatened either by death in indifference in the course of a short time, or is threatened

[1382] Garrow, David. Bearing The Cross. 234-235.
[1383] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 116.
[1384] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 467.
[1385] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam. 14.
[1386] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 615-620.
[1387] Ibid. 615.

by a much too rapid growth and blooming in a transition to violence."[1388] Fairclough writes that it took months to plan a dramatic confrontation and that it required the "right combination of circumstances."[1389] Movement veterans contend that much of the success of the Selma campaign depended on the organized discipline of the protesters. "It was all organized and tightly disciplined. The reason I wanted to tell this story is that there's this kind of assumption nowadays that demonstrations can "just happen." They don't "just happen." They have to have leadership, they have to have discipline, they have to have planning, they have to have organization," stated Hartford about a demonstration in Montgomery.[1390]

The maintenance of non-violent discipline can play a large role in the formation and influence over public opinion. Tracing the factors that enabled non-violent leaders to maintain discipline during the movement is therefore vital to this study. Non-violent preparation was an elementary strategy that proved capable of coercing public opinion through condemnation for segregationists who responded to disciplined non-violent protest with repression.

Leadership played an important role in keeping protesters calm and preserving non-violence. Mass meetings provided an emotional release for protesters during campaigns. When matters threatened to get out of control during demonstrations, King stopped the protest. When violence erupted in Birmingham, for example, King went to pool halls and to the homes of African-American citizens to calm them, collect knives and convince them to remain non-violent. In order to prevent African-American violence in Birmingham, demonstrators had to surrender their weapons before they engaged in any protest activity.[1391] When non-violent leaders noticed, for example, that demonstrations had the potential of becoming violent, demonstrators had to undergo a two hour lecture on non-violence.[1392] When African-Americans started to throw stones during one demonstration, Rustin persuaded King to suspend the demonstration in order to quell the violence. In order to induce non-violent protesters to remain non-violent, protesters were given specific strategic instructions. CORE activists, for example, were instructed to avoid feelings of malice towards any group or individual. They were not to use verbal abuses, malicious slogans or labels.[1393] A member was to engage in a protest action only if he was authorized by the group. He had to obey the orders of authorized leaders and spokesmen even if he did not agree with them. If he did not approve of these orders, he could present his objection to the committee. Once a member

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[1388] Lindberg, „Konklusionen: Theorien om Ikke-vold," in Lindberg, Jacobsen and Ehrlich, Kamp Uden Vaaben,. 208 Rpt. in *The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three.* Gene Sharp. 468.
[1389] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 143.
[1390] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005 http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[1391] Gandhi similarly called off the non-cooperation movement in 1922 as he considered Indians inapt and the atmosphere in certain villages inappropriate to allow non-violent direct action to take place after the Chauri Chaura incident when an angry mob burned armed policemen alive.
[1392] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 138.
[1393] Meier and Rudwick. CORE. 111.

accepted the rules of participation, he was not to not withdraw unless he felt that he could no longer continue to protest in a non-violent manner. Only members of CORE were allowed to engage in group action, as CORE did not assume responsibility for persons that were not committed to non-violence. Each member was free to dissent from any group decision and all decisions were to be reached by democratic means.[1394]

The more the numbers of protesters in the movement increased, the more non-violent leaders faced difficulties with non-violent discipline. Furthermore, as additional protesters became involved in the movement, it became more difficult to control the masses, increasing the threat of uncontrolled violence. Masses have the undesired effect of attracting untrained and undisciplined protesters who are violent. "As the Black struggle became more massive and encompassing, impatience multiplied, disobedience became barely civil, and non-violence often a mere stratagem," writes Sitkoff.[1395] Non-violent leaders, therefore, had to place particular emphasis on non-violent discipline and the preservation of non-violent protest. Some non-violent demonstrations, for example, turned violent due to police provocation. In order to remove unnecessary emotional stress from protesters, non-violent leaders set a rule that family members of demonstrators were not to participate in demonstrations. "It put too much strain on one's commitment to non-violence. It is much easier to suffer yourself than it is to stand by and watch your wife or children attacked.", wrote Young.[1396]

Nash's plan for the preparation for the Alabama project shows how much importance non-violent leaders accorded to non-violent preparation:

a. Nonviolent workshops-general & specific

b. Marching and drills in command and coordination of battle groups

c. Instruction in jail know-how, cooperation or noncooperation with jail procedures and trial

d. Group morale while imprisoned

e. Dill in dealing with fire hoses, dogs, tear gas, cattle prods, police brutality, etc.

f. Practice in blocking runways, train, tracks, etc.

g. Elementary politics including an analysis of this program.[1397]

The psychological preparation of non-violent protesters particularly in the face of anticipated repression is vital. Non-violent leaders have to psychologically prepare protesters and warn them of the sacrifices they will have to make. Non-violent leaders also have to warn protesters that non-

[1394] Congress Of Racial Equality. CORE Rules For Action - The CORE procedures for Direct Action campaigns that applied until CORE moved away from integration and non-violence in the mid to late-1960s. http:..www.crmvet.org.docs.corerules.pdf
[1395] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 145.
[1396] World without Gandhi – can Gandhi's Vision Become Reailty? Edited by Arun Gandhi. 82.
[1397] Garrow, David J. Bearing the Cross. 293.

violence is not a safe means of protest.[١٣٩٨] In order to train non-violent protesters, leaders organized workshops and non-violent trainings at the beginning of major campaigns. During mass meetings, movement speakers constantly stressed how violence would play into the hands of the opponent.[1399] In Montgomery, for example, a week-long institute on non-violence brought White and African-American political and religious leaders together to reflect on non-violence. Before the Chicago campaign started, SCLC staff held workshops on non-violence to educate and prepare local residents.[1400] During the Chicago campaign, activist James Orange even addressed gang members in order to persuade them to apply non-violence.[1401]

Non-violent educators were often present during major protest campaigns to introduce protesters to the concept of non-violence and to instruct them on how to behave and what to do to ensure that protest remained non-violent. Although African-American students initiated the sit-in movement, non-violent instructors, particularly of CORE and SNCC, started to supervise the students in order to organize these groups. African-Americans protesters held workshops where they discussed subjects like redemptive power and unmerited suffering. At mass meetings, volunteers attended workshops and activists worked with youth-gang members. King would send SCLC activists to cities to instill non-violent discipline in protesters before the start of campaigns.[1402] He recognized the importance of grass-roots organizing and the need for it to precede any demonstration.[1403]

Socio-dramas where demonstrators were "roughed up" proved helpful in preparing protestors for demonstrations.[1404] These socio-dramas instructed protesters on how to respond to beatings and biting dogs as many protesters were not familiar with these tactics. These simulations also led to greater discipline during demonstrations, which is decisive in non-violent protest. Within these workshops African-Americans simulated White racists and intended to provoke protesters in order to develop their self-discipline. "They budge, and shove, humiliate and intimidate each other, testing the strength of their endurance for future ordeals. They call each other ´´coon`` and ´´nigger`` with a harshness and frequency that belies how deeply such terms have wounded them in the past. They spit in each other's face," recalled activists Wilma Dykeman and James Stokley.[1405] The objective of these trainings was to "unlearn all the manners customary in civilized society."[1406] African-American students were trained in how to contain their anger and not to see the acceptance

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[1398] Sharp writes that "there is no such thing". People are liable to hurt and suffer in various ways, he claims. Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Three. 454.
[1399] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 138.
[1400] Ralph, James R. Northern Protest. 51.
[1401] Ibid. 52.
[1402] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 144.
[1403] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 452. and 459.
[1404] Clark, Kenneth B. King, Malcolm, Baldwin. 27.
[1405] Dykeman, Wilma, James Stokley. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 94.
[1406] Ibid.

of blows and insults as weakness. During these classes students learned how to protect their bodies when they were attacked. Instructors showed them, for example, how to lie down in a specific position to protect their faces and other sensitive body parts. CORE activists instructed protesters on how to protect their skulls by folding their hands over their head: "To prevent disfigurement of the face, bring the elbows together in front of the eyes. For girls, to prevent internal injury from kicks, lie on the side and bring the knees upward to the chin; for boys, keel down and arch over; with skull and face protected."[1407]

The degree of non-violent preparation and discipline determined the location of a campaign. Before SCLC chose to become involved in St. Augustine, Bevel had planed that the organization was to stage an eight-month campaign in Alabama. However, SCLC renounced the protest because it did not have a reliable base in Alabama to prepare for a campaign. One reason that SCLC did not embark on the Alabama project was that the MIA had become conservative and Alabama lacked effective leadership to enable protesters to enact the thoroughly planned campaign, concludes Fairclough.[١٤٠٨] When protesters demonstrated against the city council in Danville, however, there was no unity within the ranks of the main organization, the Danville Christian Progressive Association, who did not acquire mass support. The local organization lacked the necessary preparation and discipline to launch a protest movement there and the campaign eventually failed.[1409]

Non-violent leaders had to take precautionary disciplinary measures, especially during larger protest actions. The outbreak of any violent action could have undermined the effectiveness of the March on Washington for example. The sale of alcohol was banned on that day and the attorney general forbade the presence of police dogs. There were preparations for army troop deployment and potential emergency scenarios were studied. Fifteen thousand paratroopers were put on alert.[1410] A New York Times journalist commented on the event: "No one could remember an invading army quite as gentle as the two hundred thousand civil-rights marchers who occupied Washington today...The sweetness and patience of the crowd may have set some sort of national high-water mark in mass decency."[1411] This carefully organized spectacle of thousands of protesters peacefully demonstrating had a positive impact on public opinion. A violent outburst, on the other hand, could have destroyed all efforts to influence the local government and public opinion. In Montgomery,

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[1407] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 76.
[1408] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 180.
[1409] Ibid. 145.
[1410] Kasher, Stevens. The Civil Rights Movement: A Photographic History, 1954-68. New York: Abbeville Press, 1996. http:..www.abbeville.com.civilrights.washington.asp
[1411] Ibid.

journalist Joe Azbel described the discipline he encountered during one of the church meetings as "military discipline combined with emotion".[1412]

CORE leaders particularly emphasized the importance of winning public support. Activists therefore were to be neatly and well dressed and if they chanted slogans, they were not to be abusive.[1413] Walker also emphasized the need for maintaining discipline in public as publicity focuses on violent outbursts during non-violent protest. "THIS IS [AN] ABSOLUTE MUST!". Walker stressed that demonstrators had to be clean, neat and thoroughly trained.[1414] There were instances when students lost control in the face of segregationist abuse and abandoned the rules of non-violence. A few protesters even attacked whites and committed vandalism. The majority of protesters, however, observed non-violence, particularly CORE field-workers. Students who could not control their anger were advised not to become involved.[1415]

On the other hand, preserving non-violent protest discipline at all times is an impossible task. The protest in Birmingham, for example, was not always non-violent. Acts of violence repeatedly occurred, many African-Americans were injured and property was damaged. The presence of non-violent activists defused these acts of violence by calming protesters through megaphones or through personal interaction, which contributed to non-violent discipline. Sitkoff writes that the presence of these activists prevented the violence from becoming a "flood".[1416]

Walton writes that the limited influence of CORE was due to the fact that attacks on segregation were unsystematic and relatively uncoordinated, directed mainly at the upper South rather than the deep South.[1417] The absence of non-violent preparation during a demonstration could cause violence to break out. During the Memphis campaign, a group called the Invaders was responsible for the outbreak of violence during a planned non-violent demonstration. King, who granted his support to the protest, admitted that he had come to Memphis without preparation.[1418]

3.5.6.) Action and Inaction & Non-violent Escalation of Protest

> The art of nonviolent protest lay not merely in promoting direct action, but also in ending it at the appropriate time. (Adam Fairclough)[1419]

[1412] Azbell, Joe. At Holt Street Baptist Church. Rpt. in Reporting Civil Rights. 231.
[1413] Meier and Rudwick. CORE. 111.
[1414] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 182.
[1415] Dykeman, Wilma, James Stokley. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 94.
[1416] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 143.
[1417] Walton Jr., Hanes. The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. 28.
[1418] Oates, Stephen B. Let The Trumpet Sound- The Life Of Martin Luther King. 461.
[1419] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 144.

In this sub-chapter, the author shows that African-American non-violent leaders occasionally chose not to undertake any protest action during a campaign to pursue longer-term objectives. Sometimes protest action is necessary, at other times it can have a negative effect on the movement as it could turn public opinion against the protesters. There were many instances where Gandhi or King chose not to undertake any action at all during a campaign. King took decisions throughout his campaigns for which he was criticized by other movement activists, like in Selma when he chose not to cross the bridge during a march. While some African-American activists attributed this decision to a lack of courage, proponents of King defended his decision as strategically sound.

Regardless of the context and timing of the campaign, protest action is not always recommended. For example, Fairclough regards the St. Augustine campaign as unnecessary, as he deems the effects of the campaign as largely negative. The campaign aimed to desegregate public accommodations in St. Augustine, an action already guaranteed by the Civil Rights Act and reinforced by NAACP's legal action.[1420] Many civil rights activists also considered the Alabama Boycott as unnecessary and feared it would cause the movement to lose sympathizers.

In order to influence public opinion and pressure segregationists, it was also important to escalate the tactics of planned campaigns. The innovation of protest methods or strategies is essential in non-violent protest in order to surprise the opponent and to attract the attention of the media. McAdam notes that the pace of insurgency in the early sixties was largely a function of a series of tactical innovations pioneered by activists. Peaks of the movement coincided with new protest techniques. The sit-ins, for example, took America by surprise.[1421] The effect of surprise escalates the impact of protest or increases the pressure on the opponent in order to provoke him to unleash a violent reaction as he is not prepared to confront protesters. Non-violent protesters may make initial gains at the beginning of a campaign, particularly if protesters surprise the opponent with innovative non-violent protest. Yet the opponent will eventually evolve his strategies too and adapt to the protester's methods. Therefore constant innovation of tactics or elements of surprise are an asset. In Birmingham, for example, protesters would start their protest at an earlier time in order to confuse police forces.[1422]

It is also strategically sound to modify non-violent tactics. One of the reasons that SCLC failed in Albany was that protesters applied the same tactics they had used in Montgomery. David Lewis claims that Albany failed because King applied the same strategies as he had in Montgomery

[1420] Ibid. 189.
[1421] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 164-165.
[1422] Holt, Len. Eyewitness: The Police Terror at Birmingham. *Reporting Civil Rights*. 798.

without revising the strategy to Albany.[1423] Watley refers to important factors like timing and the methods of the opposition that were neglected during Albany.[1424]

Escalation of protest was a strategy that proved successful during protest campaigns as it gradually increased pressure on the opponent, therefore enhancing the protester's negotiation status. During the Birmingham campaign protesters gradually intensified their protest. Usually protesters started with limited protest before they escalated their protest. Once protest was underway, non-violent leaders had to maintain the flow of protest activities. If a protest is halted for whatever reason, protesters might lose their enthusiasm and the entire protest may be doomed to failure. As protest leaders had to negotiate with their opponents during their respective campaigns, they occasionally decided to renounce protest activities as a sign of good faith, which was not always advisable as the continuation of protest constituted a necessary coercive factor and preserved the attention of the public even during negotiations. The cessation of protest activities in Albany due to an injunction damaged King's credibility in the Albany's community.[1425] As Watley writes, a mass movement has to build a climax; a loss of momentum could therefore be fatal.[1426] A lesson King drew from Albany was to defy court orders banning demonstrations in order to maintain pressure.

An example from the Poor People's campaign shows the gradual built-up plans of a campaign. Protest leaders had planned that the protesters would first stage massive demonstrations in the capital. A non-violent army of three thousand members was to be involved. These demonstrations were supposed to secure from Congress an "Economic Bill of Rights for the Disadvantaged", to guarantee jobs for poor people. Demonstrations were also supposed to increase the construction of housing for the poor and provide aid to schools in the ghetto.[1427] Demonstrators were to protest lawfully during the first and second week. If these demonstrations proved to be fruitless, then sit-ins would take place in offices, Congress and on the streets. Demonstrators who needed medical care would fill hospitals. Students would stage massive protests at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; indigent farmers would stage massive protests at the Department of Agriculture; and unemployed workers would stage massive protests at the Department of Labor. As a last resort, King warned, they would use human barricades to block bridges and highways and bring the Government machinery to a halt.[1428]

[1423] Lewis, David Levering. King - a biography. Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1978. 156.
[1424] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 68.
[1425] Ibid. 72 .
King later regretted his decision to obey the injunction. Ibid. 73.
[1426] Ibid. 74.
[1427] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 144 – 145.
[1428] Ibid. 145.
King also maintained that demonstrators would not destroy any property and if it did occur then demonstrations would be cancelled. Ibid

3.6.) Non-violent Methods

> Nonviolent action ´´works`` in very special ways which must be grasped if the technique itself is to be understood, evaluated intelligently, and applied most effectively. (Gene Sharp)

Hanigan identifies these forms of non-violent protest: civil disobedience; primary and secondary boycotts; strikes; sit-ins; marches and rallies; political acts like voting; conscientious objection to war and the refusal to fulfill specific obligations as a citizen, like paying taxes, or giving information to the police, burning draft cards; and the renunciation of political and social participations and responsibility.[1429] Sharp accords about three hundred pages in his voluminous study on non-violence, *The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action*, to non-violent methods. He lists public speeches, banners, boycotts, strikes, withdrawal from social institutions, rent withholding, marches, mock funerals, vigils, etc.[1430] Gandhi envisaged even more non-violent methods that he applied in South Africa and India. These methods were designed to operate in a certain environment at that time, which means that these methods might prove inappropriate in a different culture or conflict. Gandhi's methods entailed publishing pamphlets to defy restrictions of the press in order to mobilize public opinion; conducting prohibited meetings to mobilize the people and organizing one's plans and educating the people; staging marches to defy the government and to create massive unrest; organizing strikes and closing shops; boycotting foreign goods, institutions, and honors in order to exert political and economic pressure; picketing peacefully to heighten political awareness; and occupying buildings of opponents, like Gandhi had done with the salt depots during the salt satyagraha campaign. He also advocated for voluntary renunciation of property to prevent the government from seizing it to force individuals to cooperate against their will; resignation from the Assembly or Council as a means of protest; refusing to obey unjust laws, such as refusing to conform to compulsory registration, refusing to give finger-prints or thumb impressions, hawking without license, entering provinces without registration certificates, and seeking imprisonment through violation of unjust laws; fasting to purify oneself, to challenge the government and as a protest to violence; establishing functions that parallel government functions; refusing to pay taxes; distilling salt from water; and cutting down palm trees that provided the government with revenue.[1431]

The author lists these examples in order to show the diversity and creativity of non-violent methods that protesters might apply to in order to coerce the ruling authorities. Non-violent

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[1429] Hanigan, James, P. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the foundations of nonviolence. 1-2.
[1430] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part Two. 117- 435.
[1431] Ansbro, John J. Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change. 133-134.

methods also vary in their extremity, which means that a certain movement might apply protest methods that other protest groups might consider too radical, for example. Non-violent methods applied in one conflict cannot simply be exported to another. During the salt satyagraha campaign, for example, Gandhi announced that he would lead a raid on salt works. A raid may be considered as an extreme measure in a non-violent struggle. Although King was deeply influenced by Gandhi, he did not copy all his methods as he operated in a different political and cultural environment. King did not encourage the voluntary closure of shops, raids on property, renunciation of property, resignation from political groups, fasting, the establishment of functions that parallel Government functions or the non-payment of taxes. Ansbro points to the fact that unlike Gandhi, King was not seeking independence from a foreign occupying force but only the transformation of the political system.[1432] As mentioned above, King did not favor applying radical measures such as those applied by Gandhi, as he did not want to lose the support of White Americans by staging protest action that would be considered as radical. There are some protest methods that African-Americans did not apply like one–day work stoppages or fasts, although these strategies had been taken into consideration by non-violent leaders.[1433] Another example is when King considered fasting to put pressure on Congress in the event that Southern senators blocked the Civil Rights Bill.[١٤٣٤] Fasting could have alienated White Americans, whereas the cultural environment of India provoked a different reaction, which was more favorable to fasting.

Marches, boycotts, sit-ins and jail-ins were the major protest methods upon which non-violent protesters relied during their campaigns. This sub-chapter seeks to analyze the political, economic and strategic reasons that caused non-violent methods applied during the civil rights movement to bring about political changes. Marches and boycotts are protest methods, organized daily around the world, which were particularly effective during the civil rights movement. The success of non-violent methods during the civil rights movement depended on the fact that these protest methods were politically and economically coercive. Boycotts, for example, succeeded as African-Americans had the financial leverage in certain cities to succeed in producing a coercive boycott, like in Birmingham. Some political objectives of the movement were immediately realizable, like desegregation by means of sit-ins. It is also important to note that some methods attracted the media and public attention.

The effect of dramatization, presented in chapter three, was crucial in causing these methods to succeed. For example, marches were one of the most successful protest methods of the movement, but only if they caught the attention of the media. Marches in some cities in the South were a rarity

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[1432] Ibid. 134.
[1433] King, however, seized with SCLC activists a building in Chicago after learning that there lived a sick baby in an apartment lacking heat. The take-over aimed at attracting the attention of the media to the plight of ghetto conditions.
[1434] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 179.

that attracted the attention of the media and provoked a violent reaction from segregationists, in contrast to the North. The jail-in method also relied on arousing public opinion, as the author shows in this chapter. Jail-ins and marches produced a sympathetic response from public opinion, which had a coercive political effect on segregationists. The study also shows that it was not always strategically sound to organize a march or a boycott, particularly if protesters did not provoke a sympathetic reaction from public opinion. The sit-ins particularly appealed to public opinion and key politicians. One other reason that the sit-ins were successful was the fact that they were a student led movement. It was, therefore, more difficult to intimidate these students since they were not financially vulnerable like grown-ups; they were idealistic and shared a close network that enabled them to support each other and organize protest actions if, for example, the university expelled students for their sit-ins.

It is not the intention of this study to analyze all marches or all boycotts during the civil rights movement but rather to emphasize the coercive aspects of these methods, which brought about immediate results as in the sit-ins, or economically coerced segregationists as in the boycotts and caused public opinion to sympathize with the protesters as in marches and jail-ins.

3.6.1.) Marches

Why and when were marches during the civil rights movement particularly effective? The study already presented the impact of non-violent marches and the effect of dramatization in chapter two. In this sub-chapter, the author shows other coercive aspects of a non-violent march. Marches were particularly coercive when they were planned within a campaign and had a symbolic character so that they attract public opinion. The study also shows that staging a march was not always recommended.

Marches laid the groundwork for non-violent protest during campaigns like Birmingham or Selma. They also acted as provocative means that challenged segregationists. Birmingham and Selma were turning points triggered by marches, characterized by police forces attacking children in Birmingham and state troopers attacking protesters in Selma (now known as Bloody Sunday). It was, for example, the fear of a march in Cicero that caused the mayor of Chicago to reconsider negotiating with SCLC.

It is important to point to the American political system, which enabled African-Americans to organize demonstrations. The right to free assembly was granted by the First Amendment, even though this right was repeatedly infringed upon by local police forces. Even if some demonstrations were restricted due to court injunctions and although protesters faced hostilities by segregationists,

protesters were nevertheless able to protest. During some campaigns, American judges refused requests from attorneys to ban demonstrations, like in St. Augustine, for example.

African-American non-violent protesters organized marches to draw the attention of public opinion to political demands. Marches were only effective if they succeeded in attracting the media. Basically, as shown in chapter two, marches were a necessary dramatization tool of protest. Marches had to: "dramatize an evil, to mobilize the forces of good will, and to generate pressure and power for change," wrote King.[1435]

The March on Washington constituted the most successful march of the civil rights movement. Rustin claimed that the peaceful march was just as effective as the campaign in Birmingham. "What Birmingham accomplished with respect to goals, the March achieved with respect to method."[١٤٣٦] Even the President endorsed the march and called it "a peaceful assembly calling for the redress of grievances... in the great tradition."[1437] The march broadened the base of the movement, which began to focus on political and economic issues. It was particularly successful as it drew a crowd that ranged from 200,000 to 500,000 demonstrators and was the largest demonstration in the history of the United States at that time. The march was a major magnet for public opinion due to the major turn-out of demonstrators, the display of peaceful whites and African-Americans and the elaborate speeches made, particularly King's *I Have A Dream* speech.

In order to attract the attention of the media and public opinion, protesters organized marches as a part of long-term campaigns. The marches themselves rarely had an immediate effect on the opponent. According to King, marches had to be staged over a long period so that they could become effective. This period was from thirty to forty-five days. "They must also be of sufficient size to produce some inconvenience to the forces in power or they go unnoticed. In other words they must demand the attention of the press, for it is the press which interprets the issue to the community at large and thereby sets in motion the machinery for change," wrote King.[1438] There were few instances, however, where marches had an immediate effect and protesters compelled their opponents to give in to their demands. In Monroe, North Carolina, for example, when an African-American doctor was unjustly incarcerated, people marched to the police, crowded into halls and corridors and refused to leave. As the police could not arrest all these people, they released the doctor.[1439] Yet this example is rather an exception as marches were usually part of a long-term campaign.

[1435] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 60.
[1436] Rustin, Bayard. "The Negro Needs White Allies". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 343.
[1437] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 83.
[1438] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 60.
[1439] Ibid. 33.

As one principal objective of a march is to draw public attention to a certain issue, protesters often turned to symbolic protests. Gandhi mastered this technique when he staged the month-long march on a 240-mile route for his "salt satyagraha". Judith M. Brown refers to this march by writing: "The march was not strictly part of civil disobedience, but a dramatic prelude."[1440] The March from Montgomery to Selma was one of the most successful marches in the movement and also had a symbolic character. It was a march that lasted several days, and was joined by more than three thousand marchers who sang "freedom songs". Almost 25,000 sympathizers received them in Montgomery. The march attracted public attention due to the large number of protesters, the long duration of the march from Montgomery to Selma and the jovial mood of the protesters. Activists not only planned the march but also organized entertainment shows for marchers. "If you look at the pictures of the people who are watching the march, there was such joy on their faces, such an emotional feeling, and that was true for the whole march all the way through, Selma – Lowndes – Montgomery," stated an activist.[1441] The march came in the wake of "Bloody Sunday", when African-American protesters already had media attention due to the brutal repression of protesters by state troopers. The sight of demonstrators marching to the former "Old Slave Market" in St. Augustine, where they were going to pray, was also symbolic, dramatic and attracted media attention.

It was not, however, always strategically sound to organize marches. If the reaction of segregationists was unproductively violent or the march had no effect on the public, then non-violent leaders cancelled the demonstrations. Bob Moses, for example, wrote in a letter that he addressed to the parents of volunteers who were engaged in the South that protesters were "specifically avoiding any demonstrations for integrated facilities, as we do not feel the state is ready to permit such activity at the time."[1442] Marches in northern cities, like Chicago, did not have the same effect as in the South. King discovered this geopolitical change when he wrote, following Chicago, that the "normal turbulence of city life" absorbs demonstrations as "mere transitory drama quite common in the ordinary movement of the masses. To the contrary, a march in the South was a social earthquake; in the North, it is a faint, brief exclamation of protest."[1443] Non-violent protest constituted an irregularity in the daily lives of southern Americans, which attracted public opinion. The South was not a community accustomed to protests and demonstrations, which benefited African-American protesters as state troopers or police forces that were not trained to react to civil rights demonstrations violently reacted to the protest, attracting public attention.

[1440] Brown, Judith M. Gandhi and Civil Disobedience. 99.
[1441] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[1442] Mills, Nicolaus. Like a holy crusade - Mississippi 1964 - the turning of the civil rights. Chicago: Dee, 1992. 106.
[1443] King, Martin Luther. Trumpet of Conscience. 14.

3.6.2.) Boycotts

The boycott was SCLC's most effective weapon and their ability to cause disorder affected White businessmen.[1444] A boycott was only effective when African-Americans had buying power in a city and were able to continue the boycott for the necessary amount of time. Boycotts also became more efficient, for example, when protesters not only boycotted a store but also picketed in order to attract public opinion. Unlike demonstrations or picket lines, boycott leaders did not face major problems with non-violent discipline. However, not all boycotts were effective as the study shows in this sub-chapter.

Walker emphasized that the movement's ability to affect the "flow of dollars" was one of its powerful weapons.[1445] Sometimes an economic boycott causes a split within the ranks of the opponent, wherein particular persons, like businessmen, unlike other participants who want to preserve segregation at any cost, are affected and choose to grant some concessions to protesters. Southern campaigns were successful because White businessmen, alarmed by demonstrations, were ready to discuss integration, as in Savannah.[1446]

It was the Montgomery Boycott that initiated the non-violent civil rights movement. The boycott started rather spontaneously when Rosa L. Parks practiced civil disobedience on the 1st of December, 1955, by refusing to abandon her seat to a White passenger. During the Montgomery Boycott, the number of African-Americans participating had been sufficient to sustain the boycott. In cities like Miami, on the other hand, the number of African-Americans was insufficient to allow for the success of the boycott. Civil rights leaders also had to ensure the approval of African-Americans to launch a boycott. In Montgomery, Nixon knew that he could count on the support of other African-American organizations to support the boycott as all African-Americans had been familiar with the humiliation of abandoning one's seat for a White passenger. Almost all of them could relate a personal story of abuse.[1447] African-Americans succeeded in dramatizing the boycott and attracted considerable media attention. The bombing of King's home and his call on African-Americans to love whites, the arrest of preachers, the sight of African-Americans walking instead of riding buses served as a publicity magnet.

The selection of targets was also important to the success of a boycott. Protest leaders selected cities where African-Americans had buying-power. The boycott of Montgomery succeeded as African-Americans made up 40 percent of Montgomery. Consumer boycotts played a lesser role in

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[1444] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 132.
[1445] Garrow, David J. Bearing the Cross. 297.
[1446] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 144.
[1447] Reddick. L.D. The Bus Boycott in Montgomery. *Reporting Civil Rights*. 254.

the South African non-violent movement, argues Fredrickson, because most South Africans were poor, so the boycott weapon was less available to them than to more affluent African-Americans.[1448] Fairclough notes that in some cities, a repressive climate combined with erratic leadership could cause boycotts to fail. A bus boycott failed in Birmingham because of police intimidation, poor planning, the problem of African-American disunity and the failure to find alternative transportation.[1449]

Economic coercion played an important role during protest campaigns. The St. Augustine campaign, for example, was chosen for various reasons. Besides having an ultrasegregationist city government[١٤٥٠] and a strong African-American resistance movement, the city was particularly vulnerable as its economy depended on tourism, which would be affected by demonstrations. The city was also vulnerable as it demanded federal grants to restore its old buildings for its quadracentennial at that time. St. Augustine was preparing its four-hundredth anniversary and, therefore, offered a "tempting target".[١٤٥١] The non-violent movement succeeded in affecting the economy of many southern states by creating a crisis and therefore intimidating economic partners. Industries were reluctant, for example, to move to Little Rock when African-Americans attempted to integrate a school. Capitalists feared investing in Mississippi and Alabama because of demonstrations.

A boycott must last for a certain period in order to become economically coercive. The Montgomery Boycott was not the only successful boycott initiated by African-Americans. In 1953 Baton Rouge experienced a successful boycott in which African-Americans demanded to reform segregated buses. The difference between them was that Baton Rouge lasted for a few days while Montgomery lasted for a year. The Montgomery Boycott stretched out to 382 days and united 50,000 African-Americans. Fredrickson writes that this long duration was able to attract the attention of the country.[1452] King writes that a boycott must be sustained over a period of several weeks and months to produce any effective results. This requires non-violent leaders to inform protesters of the gains and objectives they are "sacrificing" for.[1453]

Boycotts, however, were not always recommended during the civil rights movement. Whereas boycotts proved successful in major campaigns like Montgomery and Birmingham, SCLC undertook a boycott campaign in Alabama in the wake of Selma that utterly failed. The objectives of the boycott were to coerce the Governor of Alabama to remove the poll tax, organize evening

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[1448] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 270.
[1449] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 43.
[1450] Mayor Joseph Shelly proclaimed that God segregated the races when he made the skins a different colour. Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 181.
[1451] Ibid. 180.
[1452] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 254.
[1453] King, Martin Luther, Jr. A Testament of Hope. 60.

and weekend voter registration hours and increase employment and upgrade African-Americans by state agencies.[1454] Protesters had agreed to start the boycott for ten days and then accelerate the campaign if their demands were not met. In stage two of the boycott, protesters would call on churches, trade unions, corporations and other private institutions to remove their investments from Alabama. In stage three protesters would boycott companies that had plants located in Alabama. Although the boycott seemed justified to King, the press, the President and even civil rights veterans, like Rustin and Levison criticized it.[1455] Rustin warned that the boycott could cost the movement the "active middle-class support" that Selma had produced.[1456] The boycott was regarded as unnecessary and Garrow contends that King presented no clear rationale for the boycott.[1457] Whereas in Montgomery, a provocation of White authorities triggered the boycott, and in Birmingham and Selma, dramatized protest accompanied boycotts, a boycott in Alabama could not be sustained on its own.

One of the reasons that the sit-ins were successful was the selection of targets, including nationwide corporations that sympathizers could boycott in other cities, therefore augmenting the economic leverage.[1458] Boycotts increased the effectiveness of sit-ins in the North against Woolworth and other chain stores whose southern branches excluded African-Americans from their counters. The slogan of the sit-in movement was: "Don't buy where you can't eat." Bailey writes that by the end of 1960, sit-inners had been "dizzy" with success. One hundred and twenty six cities had desegregated and by 1962 the number was about 200.[1459] The combination of protest techniques such as boycotts and picketing contributed to the success of the sit-ins. Students in an Atlanta protest organized a "shuttle system" for picketing. Students were transported by cars from one location to the next so that the picketing action would not come to rest. At one time the number of picketers reached fifteen hundred on a single picket line. "We had people coming to spend an hour on their breaks, to spend an hour picketing," recalled an activist.[1460]

A boycott or picketing depended on good timing during a campaign. During the Selma campaign activists chose Saturday, the "big shopping day", to picket White merchants who would not hire African-American employees. "If there was picketing and demonstrating there would be arrests and turmoil and no one would come to shop," stated Hartford.[1461] These activists caused a disruption for

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[1454] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 259.
[1455] Ibid. 418.
Rustin called the boycott "stupid". The New York Times which had supported the movement in Selma perceived it as "wrong in principle and ... unworkable in practice."
[1456] Garrow, David J. Bearing the Cross. 418.
[1457] Ibid.
[1458] Bailey, Jr., Harry A. Negro Interest Group Strategy. *The Black Revolt.* Ed. James A.Geschwender. 126.
[1459] Ibid. 126-127.
[1460] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 87.
[1461] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005.
http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm

approximately 45 minutes. They then sent another team to create new turmoil and the presence of the police kept customers away.[1462]

While students lacked the buying power to pressure department stores, they called on the African-American community to boycott segregated stores. This occurred in Atlanta, for example, where students raised the awareness of African-Americans by delivering pamphlets in churches and by persuading African-Americans on the streets to force Rich's department store to desegregate.[1463] Protesters selected important targets to have a greater impact. Rich's had a charge plate that was popular in the African-American community. Rich's was chosen in Atlanta because it was the "kingpin…if we can topple Rich's, all we have to do is just kind of whisper to the others," affirmed Lonnie King.[1464]

3.6.3.) Jail-ins

> Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also prison.[1465] (Henry David Thoreau)

A veteran of the movement stated that newspapermen coined the term "jail-in" in 1961 to refer to an increasing number of non-violent protesters in the South who sought to "emphasize the injustice of being arrested for protesting racial discrimination and chose to remain in jail rather than pay fines or go out on bail."[1466] Sharp notes that imprisonment may become a primary objective of a non-violent activist.[1467] Civil rights protesters repeatedly chose to undertake a protest action and become imprisoned in order to receive the attention of the media and public opinion. The fill-the-jail-method in Birmingham proved particularly effective. When jail-ins had a symbolic character the method had a coercive effect on segregationists, by attracting the attention of public opinion and the media, sustaining a number of African-Americans willing to go to jail or arresting a prominent person by police forces. During the St. Augustine protest, for example, the arrest of the seventy-two-year old mother of the governor of Massachusetts provoked national indignation. Fairclough writes that if it had not been for this arrest, the arrest of 287 other arrests would not have constituted a major news story.[1468]

[1462] Ibid.
[1463] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 37.
[1464] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 87.
[1465] Thoreau, Henry David. On the Duty of Civil Disobedience. Walden (New York: New American Library, 1962 , A Signet Classic). 230. Rpt. in *Search For The Beloved Community.* Smith, Kenneth L., and Ira G. Zepp, Jr. 53.
[1466] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Two. 419.
[1467] Ibid. 418.
[1468] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 181.

Symbolism played an important role with regard to jail-ins. The jailing of King and Abernathy always had a symbolic effect, given the fact that King was an internationally known leader who regularly conferred with the President of the United States and who had received the Nobel Peace Prize. His arrest only two months after receiving the Nobel Prize provoked international indignation. In Birmingham, King and Abernathy chose to go to jail on "Good Friday" in order to attract media attention. Like Gandhi, King's incarcerations attracted international publicity. King's arrest in defiance of a court injunction in Birmingham was an important turning point in the campaign.[1469] During the St. Augustine campaign, King decided to go to jail when the number of protesters had ebbed in order to strengthen local support and to put pressure on the federal government.[1470] The languishing of King in jail exerted pressure on authorities leading them to repeatedly bail him out. Watley writes that in Albany each time it seemed the city would yield to the demands of the movement under the force of the national publicity, something would bring King out of jail.[1471] When the Birmingham movement reached a low point because money was needed to bail protesters out and the willingness of African-Americans to protest had ebbed, King knew that his personal jailing could give the movement a boost.[1472]

Robert Williams, a local leader of the NAACP in North Carolina reprimanded King for his unwillingness to join the Freedom Riders. "No sincere leader asks his followers to make sacrifices that he himself will not endure. You are a phony. Gandhi was always in the forefront, suffering with his people. If you are a leader of the movement, lead the way by example."[1473] Nevertheless King's incarcerations repeatedly benefited the movement. The symbolism of his *Letter From Birmingham Jail*, for example, had a strong impact on public opinion. The jailing of African-American ministers during the Montgomery Boycott particularly strengthened the campaign. Unlike criminals who were forced to go to jail as a punishment, protest leaders glorified incarceration. Rustin advised African-American ministers in Montgomery that rather than to wait for the sheriff to arrest them like criminals, they were to wear their finest clothes and present themselves in a cheerful manner to the authorities. "In the Black community, going to jail had been a badge of dishonor. Martin made going to jail like receiving a Ph.D."[1474] The effect was that these ministers startled White politicians and the White community and set an example to ordinary African-Americans, writes Rustin.[1475] The civil rights literature is replete with "jail experiences" of activists. Students who staged sit-ins in Atlanta and were jailed, for example, showed expansive pride after their arrest. Jail became a

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The New York Times carried the picture of that lady three days in succession.
[1469] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 75.
[1470] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 185.
[1471] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 66.
[1472] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 241.
[1473] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 57.
[1474] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 56.
[1475] D`Emilio, John. Lost Prophet - The Life And Times Of Bayard Rustin. 229.

"badge of honor" for activists.[1476] "The greatest progress of the American Negro in the future will not be made in Congress or in the Supreme Court; it will come in the jails," declared a student at a rally.[1477] A sit-in activist wrote to his mother "we are going [to jail] for the betterment of all Negroes."[1478]

Yet southern jails were a frightening experience for activists. Many of the incarcerated protesters had to endure difficult conditions. The food was inedible, mattresses and sheets were unclean and protesters were occasionally beaten.[1479] In some cells there were rats, roaches and bedbugs. According to one civil rights activist, demonstrators were sometimes treated worse than criminals.[1480] Jail cells that normally held no more than ten persons were jammed with seventy-five.[1481] Opting for jail was a difficult choice as protesters sacrificed their freedom, comfort and were separated from their parents and friends. Besides, they were exposed to the brutality and harassment of the jailers. Southern police mistreated many African-American protesters. "Making a decision to go to jail for the first time was not easy," wrote CORE leader Thomas Gaither. "In some cases, it meant leaving a girlfriend; in others, antagonizing parents who had little understanding of non-violent action and much fear for their children's safety."[١٤٨٢] Sitkoff writes that the physical and psychological effect of jail enhanced but also corroded the protest. Activists encountered endless rounds of questioning and beatings, battery-operated cattle prods, wrist breakers, friends groaning and crying, work in the fields from sun-up to sun-down, execrable food, sleeping on cots in bug-infested cells, the denial of basic needs, the sweatbox and solitary confinement.[1483] The brutality and the stubbornness that activists encountered caused many of them to abandon non-violence. "The themes of reconciliation and the beloved community preached by Martin Luther King, Jr. had little relevance to many protesters who suffered in the jails of Mississippi," writes Sitkoff.[1484] White authorities also sought to intimidate activists by giving heavy sentences to protesters.

Jail-ins particularly depended on the willingness of protesters to become incarcerated. Yet it proved difficult for non-violent leaders to convince protesters to go to jail. Non-violent leaders had to gauge the commitment and the willingness of protesters to languish in jail for a long period. Bevel planed a major protest action in Birmingham where he expected protesters to languish in jails for months yet SCLC leaders considered the plan impractical as it would have been unrealistic to demand that protesters remain in jail for such a long period.

[1476] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 24.
[1477] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 93.
[1478] Lynd, Staughton. Nonviolence in America. 405.
[1479] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 26.
[1480] Van Clark, Benjamin. Nonviolence in savannah, Georgia. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 146.
[1481] Ibid. 148.
[1482] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 28.
[1483] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 112.
[1484] Ibid. 113.

Non-violent leaders used the church to recruit and encourage African-Americans to go to jail. In order to ensure that volunteers fulfill on their commitment to go to jail, protest leaders occasionally took down their names in front of a large crowd. The emotional enthusiasm accentuated by freedom songs and the presence of leaders such as King stimulated the crowd during those meetings.[1485] Nevertheless, in Birmingham only 70 of 250 people who had volunteered appeared on the agreed upon day. The difficulty of finding a sustained number of volunteers willing to go to jail in Birmingham caused SCLC to make the seemingly desperate decision to involve children in protest.

A sustained number of protesters was crucial to the success of the "filling the jails" strategy as it contributed to the success of the Birmingham campaign and caused public opinion to sympathize with protesters. This strategy requires a large number of protesters to be incarcerated in order to jam city jails to the degree that police forces cannot make any further incarcerations. Incarcerations on such a scale damaged the image of the respective cities. SCLC knew how to exploit the "jail strategy" in Birmingham in order to provoke national indignation and therefore have additional leverage during negotiations. Sharp contends that one of the objectives of "filling the jails" was to make segregationist practices so expensive and inconvenient that conditions became unfeasible for the opponent. He refers to a flood of prisoners in Jackson, Mississippi that cost the city millions of dollars.[1486] This strategy failed in Albany as Pritchett transported jailed activists to jails outside the city so that protesters did not succeed in filling the jails. Yet protesters did succeed in filling the jails in Birmingham when about 1,300 demonstrators were crammed in the city jail, which was designed for only 900. After one day of protest, the number of jailed protesters reached more than one thousand.[1487] As the jails were filled, White authorities were coerced into negotiating with African-American representatives. In Birmingham, protesters succeeded in filling the jails and Connor chose during a demonstration to disperse protesters instead of arresting them.[1488] Thus, the jail strategy proved effective when protesters managed to attract the attention of public opinion by creating public indignation, either by symbolic jail-ins, incarceration of prominent individuals or a sustained number of protesters.

3.6.4.) Sit-ins

> I had the feeling that we were involved in something like a crusade… It was a sense of duty, you had an obligation to do it, to redeem the city- as Dr. King said too many

[1485] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 119-120.
[1486] Sharp, Gene. The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three. 419.
[1487] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 252.
[1488] Ibid. 250.

> times, to redeem the soul of America… You felt that you were doing something that *had* to be done.[1489] (John Lewis on the sit-in movement.)

The sit-in was one of the most effective and most applied methods of the civil rights movement. Sitkoff compared the sit-ins with Gandhi's salt march and Thoreau's Walden Pond.[1490] The nation-wide success of the sit-ins attracted hundreds, perhaps thousands, of youth protesters, mainly those students who initiated and carried the sit-ins so that the movement considerably increased in numbers. The sit-ins also led to the creation of SNCC. A SNCC chairman articulated that the sit-ins inspired African-Americans to create a new image of themselves.[1491]

African-American activists started to take part in the sit-ins in 1941, the year CORE was founded. CORE had staged sit-ins in Chicago retail stores. At that time CORE's objective was to test racial discrimination in employment practices.[1492] It was during the civil rights movement, however, that African-Americans practiced sit-ins with more efficiency. The sit-in movement during the civil rights movement started when three students sat down at a segregated lunch counter in the Greensboro, North Carolina Woolworth's store and refused to abandon their seats. The technique was so simple and successful that the students were emulated by hundreds in the following days. In the wake of the first day of sit-ins, the number of participants increased and they kept their seats occupied all day. On the fourth day, the first White students joined the protest and by the second week the sit-ins had spread to a half-dozen North Carolina towns. Sometimes the students occupied all the seats in a restaurant, forcing the manager to serve them in order to avoid financial losses. After the sit-in of Greensboro, students staged sit-ins in Nashville. Although students had organized sit-ins in Nashville in 1959, they had failed to provoke any change of management policy or attract more activists.[1493]

Successful sit-ins caused the protest method to spread. The success of the Greensboro sit-ins provided the Nashville students with a new thrust. Immediate success caused sit-ins to spread like bush-fire. About seventy-thousand African-American and White supporters participated in sit-ins, marches, pickets and rallies.[1494] Within a year, Greensboro students achieved the desegregation of theatres and lunch counters. By the summer of 1960, over thirty southern cities sought to conciliate African-Americans. By the end of the year, sit-ins had been carried out in every southern and border state, plus Nevada, Illinois and Ohio. Before two and a half months had passed since Greensboro,

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[1489] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 86.
[1490] Ibid. 72.
[1491] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 94.
[1492] Oates, Stephen B. Let The Trumpet Sound- The Life Of Martin Luther King. 13-14.
[1493] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 21.
[1494] Ibid. 42.

passive resistance to segregation had spread to every Southern state.[1495] The effect of the sit-ins was so powerful that by the end of 1961 two hundred cities began to desegregate. Sit-ins did not, however, always prove successful. In Montgomery, for example, continual segregationist violence, the arrest of several hundreds of protesters and the united opposition of whites to desegregation ended the sit-in protest. Other cities, like Dallas, desegregated with rapidity.

The sit-in was a simple protest method. Sit-ins did not require any military training or other particular qualifications, only that protesters remained non-violent in the face of the violence from segregationists. Sit-ins proved particularly successful due to the simplicity of the method and uncomplicated nature of the objective. Whereas many international non-violent movements failed because protesters could not achieve political change through their non-violent methods, the desegregation of lunch counters was immediately feasible. Desegregation by means of sit-ins was a relatively uncomplicated protest method as it did not directly affect the political system, unlike demands for new housing conditions, for example. A sit-in promised immediate success and could be practiced by students in any southern city. The sit-in became a symbolic protest strategy as sit-in protesters defiantly occupied seats that had been previously denied to them. The success of the sit-ins stems from the fact that they simply enabled protesters to realize their objective of desegregating restaurants or other facilities by their simple physical presence and by venturing into areas restricted for whites, like restaurants and stores. Unlike other campaigns of the movement in which objectives were more complex, such as better housing conditions in the ghettoes, the sit-ins had a much simpler objective. Whereas some protest methods only enabled protesters to make certain demands that the opponent would or would not fulfill, sit-in protesters imposed their will on the opponent by their presence in these locations alone. Some White owners who were forced to desegregate their shops and restaurants, resegregated their shops again later, as they hoped that the protesters would not return. Yet sit-in protesters made sure that these facilities remained integrated by repeatedly sending African-American activists to test the desegregation of these facilities. This shows that the means and the ends of the sit-in protest were almost one. By means of sitting in a segregated location, African-Americans desegregated a restaurant even if the waiters refused to serve them.

The sit-in movement did not confine its demands to the desegregation of restaurant facilities or stores. The concept of the sit-ins developed to kneel-ins in churches, sleep-ins in motel lobbies, swim-ins in pools, wade-ins on restricted beaches, read-ins at public libraries, play-ins at parks and watch-ins at movie theatres.[1496] In Atlanta, students issued demands for desegregation of all sectors, including public services. Sit-in students not only challenged segregation but also demanded an end to employment discrimination and embarked on voter registration projects. Sit-in protesters urged

[1495] Dykeman, Wilma, James Stokley. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 92.
[1496] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 81.

African-Americans to boycott White businesses until they ended segregation. They even ventured into government offices to protest for better housing conditions, education and employment.

In order to understand the success of the sit-in movement, it is necessary to take into consideration that it was a student led movement. Although King issued his support for sit-in protesters, SCLC played no influential role during the sit-ins. One possible reason for the lack of involvement of SCLC may have been that the sit-in was simply a student movement. According to McCain, most of these students had barely heard of King.[1497] Lunch counters, or beaches, for example were mainly student locations.[1498] Students were one of the most influential actors in the movement. Segregation at lunch counters particularly affected the dignity of African-Americans, writes Sitkoff.[1499] Lunch counters, however, particularly affected African-American students or youth. Beside the fact that most students organized themselves and were therefore independent from organizations such as SCLC, these students discovered a strategy that directly enabled them to apply protest to target segregation. The fact that students led this movement meant that they had idealism, financial independence and group solidarity, unlike adults. Zinn points to the revolutionary character of these sit-in students.[1500]

Many analysts attribute the large involvement of African-American students to the transmission of liberal values through increased education, the group psychology of late adolescence, dissatisfaction with inequality and the White middle class as a reference group, a growing awareness and proximity to the dominant White culture.[1501] McAdam writes that to some students participation in protest activity was defined by one's role as a student.[1502] Thirty-nine percent of all African-American students are said to have participated in the movement.[1503] Sit-in students mainly stemmed from the middle class. Many activists of 1960 came from the most privileged stratum of African-American society. Not all sit-in students merely embraced non-violent action as a pragmatic strategy. For example, most Nashville sit-in students embraced non-violence as a way of life, influenced by their mentor Lawson.[1504] Protest students were influenced by their teachers, parents and by previous sit-in campaigns like that of the NAACP youth or CORE. Many were influenced by the Montgomery Boycott and by King. Other students were stirred to action by the liberation of African states from colonialism. As violence was not an option for college students, non-violent action was their only alternative.

[1497] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 79.
[1498] King, nevertheless, became involved in a sit-in in Rich's when students asked him to join them in order to attract media attention.
[1499] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 69.
[1500] Zinn, Howard. SNCC. 13.
[1501] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970. 127.
[1502] Ibid. 130.
[1503] Ibid. 128.
[1504] Ransby, Barbara. Ella Baker& the Black Freedom Movement. 241. a. 322.

The involvement of students has been attributed to certain generational experiences peculiar to their age group.[1505] Weisbrot refers to the fact that most of the young protesters had attained brighter job-prospects than their parents. The students who came from wealthy families and had visited prestigious private colleges were more likely to protest against segregation.[1506] Students or youth were idealistic and had less to risk than adults who had to provide for their families. Veterans of the movement note a certain zeal and idealism of youth protesters who were independent and willing to die.[1507] A divinity student described the sit-ins as a "manifestation of the unrest among this generation of students."[1508] A student stated that the sit-ins expressed something "that has been on our hearts for a long time."[1509]

McAdam traces the dissemination of student-initiated protest and contends that interpersonal links between proximate campuses played a crucial role.[1510] Martin Oppenheimer writes that many colleges picked up the protest as a matter of competition.[1511] One of the Rock Hill sit-inners commented: "City officials pointed out that we had staged nineteen demonstrations during January … and suddenly we felt ashamed of ourselves that we hadn't staged thirty-one."[1512] The success of most civil rights campaigns crucially depended on manpower which, was provided by students. Bevel realized the power of students and sought to create a "Freedom Army" of students from all over the country.[١٥١٣]

Group solidarity also characterized student sit-ins, and was consolidated by the fact that they belonged to one group (students) and were of the same age. McCain states that the courage the students instilled in each other was very vital.[1514] As many students were acquainted with each other, they could easily form sit-in groups. There was coordination between them as they could meet on their campuses or in their private homes. In McComb, where African-Americans had been particularly repressed, two youth protesters held sit-ins for the first time in the history of the county. When the two youth were sentenced to prison, two hundred students held protests. Another example of solidarity between students was when Governor John Patterson ordered the president of one

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[1505] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970. 127.
[1506] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 36.
[1507] Selma & the March to Montgomery A Discussion November — June, 2004-2005. http:..www.crmvet.org.disc.selma.htm
[1508] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 73.
[1509] Ibid.
[1510] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 138.
[1511] Oppenheimer, Martin. The Genesis of the Southern Negro Student Movement. Rpt. in *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970*. Doug McAdam. 139.
[1512] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 91.
[1513] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 179.
[1514] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 75.
There are many civil right movement's stories that reflect this solidarity. For example, when once students were asked who their leader was, twelve hundred student shouted: "I am the leader."
Dykeman, Wilma, James Stokley. *To Redeem A Nation: a history and anthology of the civil rights movement.* Ed. Thomas R. West, and James W. Mooney. 92.

college to expel Alabama students who had staged sit-ins. In the aftermath, more than one thousand students threatened to quit the college en masse if the students were expelled. They held a mass rally where King delivered the address. During many instances, the more students were harassed, the more their protest grew. When hundreds of students were arrested in Atlanta, fifteen hundred picketers encircled the downtown area.[1515] Upon hearing that students were arrested in Portsmouth, Virginia, for example, adult African-Americans who had not been involved in the sit-ins decided to support the students.

3.6.4.1.) Reactions of the Sit-ins

How did sit-in protesters win over American public opinion without mainly relying on provoking segregationists as the objective of the sit-in was not to cause the federal government to become involved but to desegregate a lunch counter, for example?

Segregationist reactions to the sit-ins ranged from admiration to violent resentment. By provoking segregationist violence, which was restricted to restaurants or coffee shops, sit-in protesters did not create major disorder in cities or seriously disrupt the lives of local citizens. They therefore faced fewer critics than protesters who marched through cities, like in Birmingham or Selma for example.

As this study showed in chapter two, segregationist violence benefited non-violent protest. This was also true of the sit-in movement. Many sit-in protesters faced violent attacks by White racists. In Orangeburg, segregationists spat on African-Americans, hit them and stuffed cigarette butts down the backs of their shirt collars. During one sit-in, segregationists beat students, stabbed a sit-in student and threw acid in the face of a sit-in leader in Atlanta. During another sit-in, protesters were surrounded by segregationists who threw fried potatoes, gum and cigarette butts or spit at them.[1516] The following excerpt shows the violence sit-in protesters risked facing by protesting:

> The station operator told the Negroes seated at the counter to get out. A [white man] grabbed a cup of coffee and struck one of us, George Raymond, sharply at the base of the skull with the cup, spilling coffee over him…. A White tough jumped at me and beat me with his fists, yelling over and over, 'I'll kill him, I'll kill him!' About a dozen Whites pummeled our group. They pushed us around and over counters and tables and kicked us through the door.[1517]

Segregationists repeatedly tossed the author of this excerpt in the air, and kicked him each time he landed on the pavement.[1518] Yet unlike the Birmingham and Selma campaigns, sit-in protesters did not mainly rely on provoking segregationists. A workshop on the techniques of non-violence,

[1515] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 28.
[1516] Ibid. 27.
[1517] Ibid. 29.
[1518] Ibid.

for example, issued a statement that students should only fill every other seat at a lunch counter to "allow the White public to demonstrate their willingness to eat or demonstrate with Negroes."[1519] The objective was not to induce the intervention of the federal government, as it was during the Selma campaign. Nevertheless segregationist violence caused public opinion and even segregationists themselves to sympathize with the students.

Many segregationists were baffled when they faced well-dressed African-American youth, looking calm and decent, patiently waiting to be served while addressing whites in a respectful manner. The sit-ins particularly surprised White policemen who knew how to deal with violent protesters but were confused in the face of non-violent protest. Franklin Mc Cain, one of the first sit-in students at Greensboro, stated,

> At that point there was a policeman who had walked in off the street… with his club in his hand, just sort of knocking it in his hand, and just looking mean and red and a little upset and a little bit disgusted. And you had the feeling that he didn't know what the hell to do. You had the feeling that this is the first time that this big bad man with the gun and the club has been pushed in a corner, and he's got absolutely no defense, and the thing that's killing him more than anything else- he doesn't know what he can or what he cannot do. [1520]

Although McCain may have overemphasized the effect of a sit-in on the opponent, the repression of sit-in protesters might provoke public opinion more than the repression of street demonstrators as a sit-in protest does not involve any physical action.

Sit-in protesters faced criticism, such as Governor Earl Long of Louisiana description of the protest as "some radical outfit".[1521] On the other hand, there were segregationists who conceded their admiration for protesters. Miller contends that a protester must present the opponent with an image that will command respect in order to win his empathy.[1522] The discipline of protesters in the face of disproportionate segregationist violence achieved that. A segregationist editor of the *Richmond News Leader* wrote:

> Here were the colored students, in coats, white shirts, ties, and one of them was reading Goethe and one was taking notes from a biology text. And here, on the sidewalk outside, was a gang of White boys come to heckle, a ragtail rabble, slack-jawed, black-jacketed, grinning fit to kill, and some of them, God save the mark, were waving the proud and honored flag of the Southern States in the last war fought by gentlemen. Eheu! It gives one a pause.[1523]

One of the reasons that caused public opinion or key politicians to sympathize with sit-in protesters was that their political objectives were simple, as stated above. The Governor of Florida commented on the sit-ins: "I don't mind saying that if a man has a department store and he invites

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[1519] Ibid. 35.
[1520] Raines, Howell. My Soul Is Rested. 77.
[1521] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 25.
[1522] Miller, William Robert. Nonviolence: A Christian Interpretation. New York: Association Press. Rpt. in. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action Part Three.* Gene Sharp. 173.
[1523] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 29.

the public generally to come in his department store and trade then I think it is unfair and morally wrong for him to single out one department though, and say he does not want or will not allow Negroes to patronize that one department."[1524] A former senator described the sit-ins students as renewing the "springs of American democracy" and as "standing up for the American dream."[1525] Even President Eisenhower, who had been reluctant to support any civil rights protest activity, expressed his sympathy for any group that protested for its rights.[1526] "Now, let me make one thing clear. I am deeply sympathetic with the efforts of any group to enjoy the rights of equality that they are guaranteed by the constitution."[1527] Eleanor Roosevelt described the sit-ins as "wonderful". President Kennedy commented: "It is in the American tradition to stand up for one's rights- even if the new way is to sit down."[1528] Although students faced angry crowds, they were encouraged by White Americans to continue their protest. Students received support particularly from many northern whites, who staged sympathy sit-ins and demonstration pickets at lunch counters in northern towns. Sit-in protesters even started to win the sympathy of conservative African-Americans who had criticized protest. They hurried to announce their support lest they should be stigmatized as Uncle Toms.

3.7.) The Birmingham Campaign

Instead of presenting a conclusion like in chapter one and two, the author will present the Birmingham campaign as it sums up the most important coercive strategies and methods analyzed in chapter three. In this sub-chapter the author examines the strategies and methods used, including the provocation of drama, vilifying the opponent, the launching of a successful economic boycott, the escalation of protest and the effect of the media applied within the context of a campaign.

To many civil rights activists, Birmingham constituted a major breakthrough in the civil rights movement. Sitkoff describes Birmingham as a "Negro Revolution" and as a campaign that initiated the passage of the "most comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation in American history."[1529] The success of Birmingham exerted considerable pressure on the federal government to act. Walker claimed that Birmingham brought about the 1964 Civil Rights Act.[1530] Fairclough contends that although Birmingham might not have created the bill, it prompted it.[1531] After Birmingham, a wave

[1524] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 88.
[1525] Ibid. 89.
[1526] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 43.
[1527] Sitkoff, Howard. Struggle for Black Equality. 90.
[1528] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 45.
[1529] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 127.
[1530] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 133.
[1531] Ibid.

of one thousand demonstrations swept the South, including more than twenty thousand arrests.[1532] The fact that Birmingham was such a "bastion of segregation" and that the Birmingham campaign succeeded in extracting concessions from the White power structure there transformed Birmingham into a model for other campaigns and for SNCC, CORE and other local movements, writes Fairclough.[1533] The campaign had a strong influence on other states where acts of protests were taking place as well. Sitkoff writes:

> The audacity of taking on ´´Bull`` Connor's ´´Johannesburg`` and vanquishing it, the unprecedented children's crusade and savage White response, the determination of all strata of Black Birmingham to fight racial oppression by whatever means they chose, all combined to affect more Afro-Americans, more deeply, than previous civil- rights protest. The Black struggle had reached a new plateau.[1534]

After the failure of the Albany campaign, King had to demonstrate that non-violence could provoke political change in order to sustain African-Americans' faith in non-violence. He needed a successful campaign that would result in clear political gains. King feared that the overall movement could turn to violence if non-violence continued to be ineffective. Until Birmingham, civil rights gains had not satisfied the rising expectations of African-Americans, contends Sitkoff.[1535] Birmingham therefore gave the movement a vital boost. The Birmingham campaign led to the end of desegregation of lunch counters, restrooms, fitting rooms, drinking fountains and the upgrading and hiring of African-Americans in a non-discriminatory way in industrial business. In addition to reaching these objectives, SCLC had won its demands for the formation of a biracial committee.[1536] To Sitkoff, the Birmingham campaign signified the end of tokenism and ushered in an era of immediacy.[1537] The campaign caused the numbers of activists and financial support to significantly grow. African-Americans organized nearly eight hundred boycotts, marches and sit-ins in two hundred towns across the South in the three months following Birmingham.

On the other hand, Sitkoff contends that the success of Birmingham had a heavy toll on the continuation of the movement. Birmingham induced the participation of many different groups of African-Americans, which radicalized civil-rights strategies and goals. In the face of a large number of unemployed, these African-Americans had more radical demands than middle-class African-Americans. They also had no understanding for non-violence. "King's talk of love left them cold. His request that they nobly accept suffering and jailing made them snicker. As the Black struggle became more massive and encompassing, impatience multiplied, disobedience became barely civil, and non-violence often a mere stratagem."[1538]

[1532] Ibid. 135.
[1533] Ibid. 135.
[1534] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 144.
[1535] Ibid. 128.
[1536] Ibid. 141.
[1537] Ibid. 145.
[1538] Ibid.

Civil rights activists did not accomplish all of their objectives in Birmingham, however. Although the gradual hiring of African-American clerks was promised and stores agreed to desegregate in ninety days, yet the dropping of all charges against demonstrators could not be realized, nor could the hiring of African-American policemen or the desegregation of schools, parks, theatres and hotels. Although Fairclough shows that not all the agreements were honored, he contends that Birmingham prompted the Civil Rights Bill of 1964.[1539] Garrow, on the other hand, claims that Birmingham was far less effective than Selma, which provoked the Voting Rights Act. Birmingham failed to provoke a national outcry; the press did not convey a single clear message and African-American riots confused White sympathizers.[1540] Yet Fairclough notes that the political context of Selma and Birmingham was different.

> Non-Southern congressmen were far more wary about speaking out on civil rights in 1963… By 1965, moreover, the nation had become more accustomed to the idea that the government ought to play a central role in combating racial discrimination… Finally, by 1965 the civil rights movement had reached a higher stage of development; it enjoyed greater legitimacy.[1541]

Wilkins claimed that apart from Birmingham, an accumulation of previous events and campaigns like the Freedom Rides, the integration crisis at the University of Mississippi, the legal battles over voter registration and school desegregation had paved the way for the Civil Rights Act.[1542] It was a transformation of the political climate, agrees Fairclough. Birmingham prompted the Kennedy administration to introduce legislation. In a televised speech, Kennedy stated: "The events in Birmingham and elsewhere have so increased the cries for equality that no city or state or legislative body can prudently choose to ignore them."[1543]

3.7.1.) Escalation of Protest

The strategy of the escalation of protest proved particularly effective during the Birmingham campaign. Protest actions started off slowly in Birmingham, with small groups of sit-in protesters at segregated downtown lunch stores. At the beginning of the campaign only a handful of protesters were arrested at downtown stores, leading King to assert at a press conference that the small amount of activity had been deliberately planned and that it was not due to the unwillingness of African-Americans to protest. The next step consisted of organizing marches on City Hall, which were halted by Connor, who arrested the marchers. One of the tactical objectives was the every day

[1539] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 132-133.
[1540] Ibid. 133.
[1541] Ibid. 133-134.
[1542] Ibid. 134-135.
[1543] Ibid. 134.

continuance of protest in order to maintain pressure on Connor and demonstrate the unity of the African-American community. Anticipating an injunction, King and other activists demonstrated and were subsequently arrested, which put Birmingham in the national spotlight.

The Birmingham campaign consisted of several phases. After a few weeks, SCLC aides announced that the movement would enter a second phase with more effort being directed towards voter registration, aimed at getting the Justice Department involved. Even though there was no visible change of strategy as the protest continued, this announcement had the effect of publicizing the protester's tactics in the media and in the face of the opponent. This announcement was intended to increase the attention of the media to the protest and energize the movement. King's announcement that the movement would go forward "aggressively"[1544] sounded threatening and had the effect of boosting the spirits of worn-down protesters. When a movement reaches a low point and the media loses interest in the protest, non-violent leaders must surprise the opponent and the media by making an unprecedented move or by bringing new elements to the protest. Project C, which was planned with a degree of secrecy, had a surprising and strengthening effect on the campaign.

In the beginning, African-American leaders had refused to enlist teenagers for demonstrations, however the movement reached a point where SCLC and King found that news coverage had diminished to such a degree that national newsmen started to leave town. Therefore activists circulated leaflets in Birmingham's African-American high schools. As a result, several thousand teenagers marched at what Bevel called D-Day, which resulted in the incarceration of six hundred protesters. Fairclough contends that the involvement of teenagers saved the movement from collapse.[1545] The effect of Project C had a tremendous effect on the overall protest movement. It provoked about 758 demonstrations in 186 cities across the South in the ten weeks following the campaign.[1546]

The protest of children dramatized the events. Protest leaders did not send youth protesters to protest on the streets all at once but rather group by group. First one group would march and after the police would arrest them, another group would begin to march. Photographs of police dogs biting African-American children circulated the globe revolting millions and changing public sentiment overnight.[1547] SCLC's confrontations brought King the support of much of the nation, contends Sitkoff, forcing Kennedy to act and key administration officials to pressure Birmingham's most influential businessmen to accept a compromise agreement.[1548]

[1544] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 237.
[1545] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 125.
[1546] Fred L. Shuttlesworth, "Birmingham Shall Be Free Some Day". *Let freedom ring: a documentary history of the modern civil rights movement*. Ed. Peter B. Levy. 116.
[1547] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 76.
[1548] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 138.

3.7.2.) The Right Location, Drama and Personalization of Evil

After the failure of the Albany protest, SCLC had to find the right location for a new campaign. One of the main criteria for selecting a city was that it had to be ideal for dramatization. Birmingham was one of the most segregated big cities in America. SCLC could also depend on Shuttlesworth's ACMHR, which offered a base for activism. Segregationist violence caused many African-Americans to refer to Birmingham as "Dynamite Hill" or "Bombingham".[1549] Over 40 percent of the population in Birmingham consisted of African-Americans but fewer than ten thousand of the eighty thousand registered to vote were African-Americans.[1550] African-Americans called it the "Johannesburg of America".[1551] Fairclough refers to Birmingham as the "best-known symbol of the intransigent south".[1552] In a New York Times article, Harrison Salisbury described Birmingham as follows: "Every channel of communication, every medium of mutual interest, every reasoned approach, every inch of middle ground has been fragmented by the emotional dynamite of racism, reinforced by the hip, the razor, the gun, the bomb, the torch, the club, the knife, the mob, the police and many branches of the state's apparatus."[1553] The cracking of Birmingham would therefore be a mighty achievement for the movement.[1554]

The volatile temper of Bull Connor guaranteed the exposure of segregationist violence. Rustin commented:

> Children as young as six paraded calmly when dogs, fire hoses and police clubs were used against them. Women were knocked down to the ground and beaten mercilessly. Thousands of teen-agers stood by at churches throughout the whole county, waiting their turn to face the clubs of Bull Connor's police, who were known to be among the most brutal in the nation. Property was bombed. Day after day the brutality and arrests went on. And always, in the churches, hundreds of well-disciplined children eagerly awaited their turns.[1555]

These images received wide media publicity. A Congressman described the use of dogs and fire hoses to subdue children as a "national disgrace", while other northern congressmen spoke of "police brutality" and "barbarism".[1556] The sight of children facing dogs and hoses particularly turned public opinion in favor of the protesters. Although the hoses caused no serious injuries, they provided dramatic images for the front pages of newspapers.

[1549] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 232.
[1550] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 129.
[1551] Woodward, C. Vann. The Strange Career Of Jim Crow. 176.
[1552] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 111.
[1553] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 129.
[1554] Ibid.
[1555] Rustin, Bayard. "The Great Lessons of Birmingham". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 307.
[1556] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 137.

Connor represented a necessary "Mr. Evil", a factor that was missing in Albany and Chicago. From 1956, after he reemerged from retirement, he exercised "unbridled power", arrested citizens, harassed activists and accused critics of being communists, writes Fairclough.[1557] Before Connor's attack, King confided to his aide Walker: "Wyatt, you've got to find some way to make Bull Connor tip his hand."[1558] Senator Wayne Morse compared Connor's methods to the assaults of Nazi troopers.

3.7.3.) Boycott

The withdrawal of economic support allowed African-Americans to make necessary gains in Birmingham. African-Americans relied on their buying power to force Birmingham to desegregate shops and businesses. This was a weapon that African-Americans did not have in Albany. Whereas protesters attacked segregation on all fronts in Albany, they specifically relied on their buying power in Birmingham. Some White businessmen had already suffered losses from a prior boycott. Downtown stores were all located in a small business district so that demonstrations attracted attention. King envisioned the boycott of products made in Birmingham, which affected the city as it was eschewed by businesses. The withdrawal of African-American money, in the form of purchases, in Birmingham had a huge influence on White businessmen, as almost half of Birmingham's population was African-American.

Non-violent leaders could count on the involvement of many African-Americans in the boycott. The boycott of White stores alarmed businessmen, whose sales and profits dropped. Chain stores, movie pictures, hotels and restaurants wanted to negotiate with the African-American representatives of the community.[1559] The turmoil in the down-town area caused by the demonstrations and the response of the police also deterred White customers. SCLC planned the campaign to occur around Christmas to disrupt the central business district, where stores were particularly vulnerable, in order to have a stronger effect. King urged African-Americans not to buy new Easter clothes. "Buy nothing but food," he said to African-Americans. "Any Negro walking downtown with a package in his hand, isn't fit to be free."[1560] In addition, African-American students initiated a boycott of downtown stores. African-Americans specifically targeted stores with

[1557] Ibid. 112.
[1558] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 239.
[1559] Rustin, Bayard. "The Great Lessons of Birmingham". *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 311.
[1560] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 120.

lunch counters where they had been denied service. To Watley, the lunch counter was a symbol of an "area of abuse" that all African-Americans could identify with.[1561]

The boycott strategy proved so effective that many White merchants signaled that they were willing to desegregate if the city authorities allowed them.[1562] The effect of the boycott was so successful that many Birmingham businessmen criticized Connor's efforts against the desegregation of their businesses and questioned his behavior.[1563] Pressuring businessmen was a vital strategy for non-violent protesters. As King saw it, they needed to pressure the merchants and then politicians would follow.[1564] Some of the stores, like Woolworth, W.L. Green and Newsberry, had nationwide companies, meaning that African-Americans could exert pressure on their stores in the North as well.

3.7.4.) Media

Major campaigns like Birmingham and Selma were effective because they caused the American media to focus on a particular city where the movement dramatized segregation. Public opinion must be repeatedly informed of the reasons for protest. Thus, King reiterated his objectives throughout the movement, at press conferences or in his speeches, so that outsiders would understand why African-Americans were demonstrating.

The resonance of the civil rights movement was in part the result of sympathetic press coverage, writes Fredrickson.[1565] As shown throughout this study, the media coverage that the movement received proved crucial to influencing public opinion as well as the federal government. What contributed, for example, to the success of the March on Washington was the fact that it was one of the first protest actions of the movement to be broadcasted around the world via satellite. In addition, the three major television networks all broadcasted the protest. Furthermore, "the national spotlight illuminated Birmingham's racial crisis as never before," claims Sitkoff.[1566] The television coverage of five Birmingham policemen pinning a woman to the ground with one officer placing his knee on her throat caused nation-wide indignation. A photograph of a police dog lunging at an African-American woman was on the front pages of newspapers around the world. Weisbrot notes that this was the first time the media "brought a graphic knowledge of racist violence into every

[1561] Watley, William D. Roots of Resistance. 71.
[1562] Ibid.
[1563] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 115.
[1564] Ibid. 132.
[1565] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 272.
[1566] Sitkoff, Howard. The Struggle for Black Equality. 131.

American home."[1567] There is a famous picture of a policeman holding an African-American citizen in one hand and a police dog's leash in the other hand as the dog is biting the man in his stomach. President Kennedy stated to a group that the photos made him sick.[1568]

In an insightful article on the effect of the press and the media, Steven Kasher writes: "The civil rights movement cannot be understood without contemplating the photographs and the newsreel footage that presented it to an enormous audience. The persuasive and protective power of those pictures was recognized immediately."[1569] King confirmed this statement:

> The brutality with which officials would have quelled the Black individual became impotent when it could not be pursued with stealth and remain unobserved. It was caught—as a fugitive from a penitentiary is often caught—in gigantic circling spotlights. It was imprisoned in a luminous glare revealing the naked truth to the whole world.[1570]

[1567] Weisbrot, Robert. Freedom Bound. 72.
[1568] Garrow, David J. Bearing The Cross. 250.
[1569] Kasher, Stevens. The Civil Rights Movement: A Photographic History, 1954-68 (New York: Abbeville Press, 1996) http:..www.abbeville.com.civilrights.introduction.asp
[1570] King, Martin Luther. Why we can't wait. 39.

4.) Conclusion

This dissertation analyzed the reasons for the success of non-violent protest in the civil rights movement, which were mainly responsible for the Civil Rights Bill and the Voting Rights Act. It focused on three major aspects, which the author claims were most crucial in causing non-violent protest to succeed until the mid-nineteen-sixties: African-American Christian southern culture, public opinion and non-violent strategies and methods.

Non-violence had not been a totally new concept to African-American leaders. At the beginning of the century, African-American intellectuals had considered non-violence as an option to bring about political changes. The author also traced direct contacts between African-Americans and Gandhi. African-American leaders had met the Indian leader and saw his example as a model for African-Americans. Yet whereas Gandhi had applied non-cooperation and civil disobedience, African-American protesters practiced non-violent protest. Civil disobedience and non-cooperation would not have been suitable for the civil rights movement as African-Americans demanded integration, unlike Indian non-violent protesters who pursued national independence.

Non-violent advocates had to portray non-violence as a successful protest method in order to convince African-American protesters of its practicality. The success of Montgomery, for example, served as a model for other protest actions. In order to attract a large number of African-American protesters, non-violent advocates had to fend off criticism that non-violence was too passive. African-American non-violent leaders had to differentiate between non-violence and pacifism and glorify non-violence in their rhetoric. The Black Pride rhetoric, analyzed in chapter one, shows that pride was very important to African-Americans at that time. The study also analyzed how non-violent leaders sought to reconcile Black Pride rhetoric with non-violence. African-American intellectuals even promoted the belief of a Black messianic mission, which non-violent leaders referred to in their quest to convince African-Americans of the value of non-violence.

The majority of protesters practiced non-violence for practical reasons, although there were also activists who were ideologically committed to the non-violent philosophy. The African-American church proved particularly indispensable in the South as a recruitment place for non-violent protesters. African-Americans had been politically passive with regard to civil rights resistance, keeping the potential of a violent outbreak relatively low.

In chapter two, the author analyzed how non-violent rhetoric and non-violent dramatization caused American public opinion to sympathize with African-American demands. The author relied on the studies of civil rights historians, on the excerpts of the relevant media sources of the time and on political statements by various Presidents of the United States to demonstrate that the favor of public opinion had shifted towards African-American non-violent protesters. This transformation of

public opinion had a direct influence on the federal government and led to the passage of the Civil Rights Bill and the Voting Rights Act, as shown in this dissertation.

The study presents King's rhetoric regarding Christian love and the Beloved Community. Sharp's analysis of conversion, the effect of non-violence and the sight of a suffering non-violent protester on third groups, or public opinion, proved especially practical to the analysis of the effect of non-violence on American public opinion. The dissertation also featured the reflections of African-American scholars, like Walton, Ansbro and Dyson on Christian love and on its relevancy to the protest. African-American protesters deliberately dramatized the protest by provoking police forces and state troopers in order to produce media images that would have an effect on public opinion and on the federal government. This was one of the most successful strategies in the civil rights movement. Additionally, the author analyzed the importance of White allies and the ambivalent role of White liberals. The rhetoric of King depended on the depersonalization of conflict, nevertheless SCLC relied on exposing villains like Connor and Clark to unleash violence against non-violent African-American protesters. King's leadership played a crucial role in convincing African-Americans to pursue non-violent methods and of drawing sympathizers and donors to the movement, as he was perceived as a respectable leader in the public eye.

The third chapter elaborated on the coercive methods and strategies of non-violent protest in the civil rights movement. Coercion is an elementary component of non-violent protest. African-American protesters applied legislative coercion, political coercion on the federal government and the President of the United States, rhetorical coercion using leaders such as Malcolm X, strategic coercion through various civil rights organizations, economic coercion through boycotts and public opinion coercion through marches and jail-ins.

After having presented a definition of non-violent coercion, the author showed how civil rights leaders applied legislation as a means of pressure alongside non-violent protest and how African-American protesters exerted pressure on the President of the United States to provoke political changes. Legislative coercion proved particularly complimentary to non-violent protest. The presence of several non-violent organizations in the movement exerted considerable pressure on segregationists and on the federal government as it increased and diversified the protest. One can also describe Malcolm X's threatening image as having played a beneficial role tothe movement, as he caused the federal government and American public opinion to sympathize more with King and non-violence.

The presence of non-violent strategies is a necessary prelude to enable non-violent protesters to effectively apply non-violent protest methods. The presence of politically and economically coercive factors is vital to persuade the opponent to compromise to the protester's demands. The author identified several strategies, like non-violent preparation, escalation of protest, action and

inaction, and the attraction of a sufficient number of protesters, all of which paved the way for effective non-violent protest. This study also discussed the most important non-violent methods: sit-ins, jail-ins, boycotts and marches. Protest methods must have the potential of realizing political objectives or else non-violence is not an option. The Birmingham campaign offers an example of successful protest as it encompassed crucial non-violent strategies and methods.

It is not the objective of this study to thoroughly analyze the short-comings or limitations of non-violent protest in the civil rights movement. Nevertheless the author will present the main reasons that prevented non-violent protesters from bringing about additional political gains apart from the Civil Rights Bill and the Voting Rights Act.

Fredrickson regards the non-violent movement as one of the most successful reform movements in American history. He holds the opinion that the movement achieved virtually all of its objectives. The Birmingham campaign and the March on Washington provided impetus for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed segregation of facilities open to the public. The Selma campaign and the March to Montgomery led to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which employed federal power to guarantee that African-Americans had access to the ballot. These campaigns led to a course of events that created an America based on equal citizenship.[1571]

Yet Fredrickson also admits that the de facto segregation of housing, schools and economic opportunities that characterized northern cities was beyond the reach of civil rights laws.[1572] The sit-ins mostly benefited students that had faced humiliating experiences at lunch counters. The Montgomery, Birmingham and Selma boycotts benefited African-Americans living in these areas with regard to certain aspects of their everyday lives. However, non-violent protest did not benefit African-Americans in general, as northern African-Americans remained virtually unaffected by sit-ins. Farmer stated: "The old way [of direct action] won us the right to eat hamburgers at lunch counters and is winning us the right to vote, but has not basically affected the lot of average Negro."[1573] Fairclough contends that to African-Americans in the North, the gains of the movement until the Voting Rights Act meant little.[1574] Harlan also contends that northern African-Americans were untouched.[1575] "They could already vote, eat in restaurants, and attend "integrated" schools, yet segregation still circumscribed their lives," contends Fairclough.[1576] Northern African-Americans were suffering from racial slums,[1577] like in Chicago or New York. The problem of the

[1571] Fredrickson, George M. Black Liberation. 263.
[1572] Ibid. 264.
[1573] Meier, August, and Elliott Rudwick, CORE. 330.
[1574] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 254.
[1575] Harlan, Louis, R. Thought on the Leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. *We Shall Overcome. Martin Luther King, jr., and the black freedom struggle*. Ed. Peter J. Albert. 66.
[1576] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 254.
[1577] Ibid.

civil rights movement was that it could not create change in the North. Poor African-Americans in the slums had been scarcely touched by the movement.[1578]

Non-violent protesters were able to achieve their objectives through non-violent protest, particularly at the beginning of the movement, like the Montgomery Boycott, the sit-ins and Freedom Rides. Yet the movement stopped short of realizing political objectives like better housing conditions and economic improvement. Non-violent protest ceased to have the same coercing effect that it had earlier in the movement, which was due to the movement's shift to more complex objectives. The shift towards economic issues, for example, singled out the federal power structure as the opponent. As McAdam writes, activists began to blame the political and economic elite of the country instead of local sheriffs or restaurant owners. This shift of focus posed a greater threat to the federal government than the objectives of the movement in the earlier phase.[1579] The Poor People Campaign was directly aimed at the federal government, which did not bend to coercion like southern politicians or businessmen.

To Fairclough, the period after 1965 was decisive in the history of SCLC, which lost much of its effectiveness.[1580] The movement faced serious obstacles to non-violence after the Voting Rights Act such as Black Power, riots, and the Vietnam War. The escalation of the Vietnam War made it particularly difficult for Americans to endorse non-violent protest in America. The war, particularly anti-war demonstrations, overshadowed African-American protest. It was for these and other reasons that the movement could not maintain the level of influence over public opinion that it had achieved up until the Voting Rights Act.

The radicalization of militants had its toll on public opinion as well. When non-violence declined in the movement, White support also started to dwindle. It is possible that non-violent direct action had simply exhausted its possibilities. Rustin wrote in 1965 that the movement should turn political and seek to achieve political change through lobbying politicians and allies.[1581] The movement already achieved the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act, which provided the basic framework for political change. At that point, many liberals and the federal government believed that civil rights activists had already achieved all of their objectives through non-violence.

The success of non-violent protest particularly depends on the political and cultural environment of a conflict. Political repression may obstruct the effectiveness of non-violent protest or non-violent protesters may simply not have the possibility to apply effective non-violent protest. The main actors of a resistance movement might also discard non-violence as an option. If non-violent

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[1578] Herbers, John. The Black Dilemma. 32. a. 44.
[1579] McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. 207.
[1580] Fairclough, Adam. To Redeem the Soul of America. 8.
[1581] Rustin, Bayard. "From Protest to Politics," 1965. *Negro Protest in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Francis L. Broderick, and August Meier. 405.

principles do not coincide with the cultural or religious beliefs of the protesters; if there are no political channels to influence public opinion or the federal government, which enable non-violent protesters to realize crucial concessions; or if protesters do not have the economic power to launch effective boycotts or stage non-violent protest, non-violence will fail.

Although the aforementioned factors contributed to the success of non-violent protest during the civil rights movement from 1955-1968, the absence of one of these factors does not necessarily mean that non-violent protest will fail. Gandhi's non-violent movement, for example, achieved political gains without relying mainly on arousing British public opinion to sympathize with his movement. The presence of all of these factors in a particular conflict is a rarity. In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, for example, these factors are missing. The Palestinian resistance organizations have not yet seriously embraced non-violent as a protest strategy and have adopted a militant resistance, like HAMAS. Palestinian violent resistance leaves no room for sympathy on behalf of the international community, let alone Israelis. Palestinian non-violent actions have not also brought about substantial political changes, like staging an effective boycott or causing Israeli or international public opinion to force the Israeli government to stop settlement activities or concede occupied territorties, for example.

The author sought to present general features of successful non-violent protest by using the civil rights movement as an example. Blending non-violent principles with the protester's culture as well as affecting public opinion and exploiting political and strategic channels to optimize non-violent protest led to successful non-violent protest during the civil rights movement. The necessary strategic requirements of a successful non-violent campaign, as discussed in chapter three, could serve as guidelines to non-violent protesters or organizations. This work also showed the importance of public relations to non-violent protest. The focus on the media and the elaboration of new non-violent methods is of crucial importance to any non-violent protest. The art of non-violent protest minimizes the loss of human lives, compared to wars or armed conflicts, and is apt to bring about real political change. It is therefore important that scholars continue to analyze how it functions and analyze the historic, cultural, economic and political factors that determine its effectiveness, which vary from one conflict to another.

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Synopse

In der Dissertation hat der Autor drei Hauptgründe ermittelt, die für den Erfolg der Bürgerrechtsbewegung bedeutsam waren und in der Civil Rights Bill and Voting Rights Act ihren Höhepunkt fanden,: 1.) Die Kultur der Afroamerikaner im Süden von Amerika, wo die Bürgerrechtsbewegung ihren Anfang fand, ging mit der Philosophie der Gewaltlosigkeit einher, wie sie Martin Luther King Jr. propagierte, 2.) gewaltfreie Demonstranten vermochten es, die öffentliche Meinung mittels gewaltfreier Rhetorik und Dramatisierung auf ihre Seite zu bringen und 3.) afroamerikanische Demonstranten wendeten gewaltfreie Strategien und Methoden auf effektive Weise an.

Der Autor unterscheidet zwischen Gewaltfreiheit, zivilem Ungehorsam und Nichtkooperation, und zeigt, dass afroamerikanische Bürgerrechtler sich für den gewaltfreien Protest entschieden. Der zivile Ungehorsam, zum Beispiel, hätte die öffentliche Meinung und den Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten nicht auf die Seite der Bürgerrechtsbewegung gebracht. Viele Afroamerikaner im Süden nahmen den gewaltfreien Protest an, weil King die gewaltfreie Philosophie „christianisiert“ hat, so dass sich eine große Anzahl von Afroamerikanern im Süden Amerikas mit ihr identifizieren konnte. Der Autor argumentiert, dass die Bewegung einen großen Andrang von Afroamerikanern fand, weil die afroamerikanische Kirche als Basis des Protests fungierte. Vor allem afroamerikanische Pfarrer spielten, als angesehene Führer der afroamerikanischen Gemeinde im Süden, eine unentbehrliche Rolle bei der Organisation von Kundgebungen und Protestaktionen. Eine weitere These der Dissertation ist, dass Gewaltfreiheit im Süden Amerikas, in der politische Passivität seitens der Afroamerikaner herrschte, auf fruchtbaren Boden stieß, im Vergleich zum Norden, wo die Mehrzahl der Afroamerikaner Gewaltfreiheit als passive Protestweise ablehnten. Um jedoch nicht passiv zu wirken, eigneten sich afroamerikanische Burgerrechtsführer eine Black Pride-Rhetorik an, die wie die Dissertation zeigt, viele afroamerikanische Anhänger fand, vor allem dank der militanten Rhetorik von Malcolm X und später der Black Power Bewegung.

In Kapitel Zwei beschreibt der Autor die gewaltfreie Rhetorik der Bürgerrechtsbewegung und die dramatisierten Protestaktionen, die die öffentliche Meinung auf die Seite der Afroamerikaner stellten. Der Autor zeigt, dass eine Wandlung seitens der amerikanischen öffentlichen Meinung und des Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten stattgefunden hat. Der Autor präsentiert Kings Rhetorik von „agape“, der „Beloved Community“ und der „Entpersönlichung“ des Bösen. Kings Rhetorik fand zahlreiche Anhänger, wie amerikanische Liberale, Politiker und Journalisten, die die öffentliche Meinung prägten. King plädierte für „amerikanische“ Werte, die er in seiner christlichen Rhetorik der Gewaltfreiheit zum Ausdruck brachte.

Dramatisierte Protestaktionen waren die erfolgreichste Strategie der Bürgerrechtsbewegung und bestanden darin, lokale Sicherheitskräfte und Sheriffs vor Journalisten und Fernsehkameras zu provozieren, um die Brutalität des Systems der Rassentrennung zu enthüllen. Dies hatte zur Folge, wie die Dissertation zeigt, dass der Präsident der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika gezwungen wurde zu intervenieren.

In Kapitel Drei untersucht die Dissertation die „zwingenden" Aspekte des gewaltfreien Protests. „Coercion" ist ein fester Bestandteil des gewaltfreien Widerstands, wie es schon Gene Sharp in seiner Arbeit über Gewaltlosigkeit ermittelte. Während der Bürgerrechtsbewegung übten Bürgerrechtsführer- und Organisationen legislativen, politischen und rhetorischen Druck aus, der ihnen politischen Gewinn einbrachte. Kapitel Drei zeigt auch, wie gewaltfreier Protest die legislativen Aktionen der National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) verstärkte. Der Erfolg der Protestaktionen hatte zur Folge, dass der Präsident der Vereinigten Staaten intervenierte, weil die Protestaktionen Krisensituationen schafften. Hätte der Protest der Bürgerrechtsbewegung diese Krise nicht geschaffen, wäre es nicht zu einer politischen Intervention gekommen. Die Gegenüberstellung von Malcolm X und King in den Medien, die von Malcolm X bewusst manipuliert wurde, führte dazu, dass sich Journalisten und Politiker für King und die gewaltfreie Bewegung aussprachen.

Die Gegenwart mehrerer Bürgerrechtsorganisationen führte dazu, dass die verschiedenen Organisationen teils kooperierten, was die Protestaktionen effektiver machte, teils aber auch miteinander im Wettbewerb standen, was eine begünstigende Auswirkung auf die Bürgerrechtsbewegung hatte, da sich die Organisationen mit Protestaktionen zu überbieten versuchten.

Die Dissertation geht auf die gewaltfreien Strategien und Methoden ein. Es war vor allem wichtig, dass Afroamerikaner die finanziellen Mittel hatten einen Boykott zu starten und auch die Möglichkeit Protestmärsche zu organisieren. Die Vorbereitungen für einen disziplinierten Protest, die Steigerung einer Protestkampagne, das Gleichgewicht zwischen Protestaktionen und das Unterlassen von Protesten, die Maßnahmen, um eine große Anzahl von Demonstranten sicherzustellen; all diese Strategien bewirkten den Erfolg der Protestaktionen. Der Autor untersucht gewaltfreie Methoden wie Märsche, Boykotte, sit-ins und jail-ins und warum sie Erfolg hatten. Am Ende des Kapitels präsentiert der Autor die Birmingham Kampagne als ein erfolgreiches Beispiel einer Kampagne, die gewaltfreie Strategien und Methoden kombinierte.