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Bigger Than a Hamburger: A Transatlantic History of the Sit-ins

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List of Abbreviations

CCRC	Citizens Civil Rights Committee
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CORE	Congress of Racial Equality
FOR	Fellowship of Reconciliation
LSE	London School of Economics
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NCLC	Nashville Christian Leadership Council
NDAC	Nonviolent Direct Action Committee
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SDS	Students for a Democratic Society
SNCC	Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee
UCYM	United Christian Youth Movement
WRL	War Resisters League

Chapter 1. Introduction

On the 30th of May, 2020, John Lewis, an American Civil Rights Movement leader, called for nonviolent protests as tools to demonstrate against police violence after the death of African-American George Floyd, explained American media platform MSNBC.[1] There is still a debate going on about the role of nonviolence. Lewis saw the successes of nonviolent methods of protest in the 1960s, including the sit-in, and preferred nonviolent methods of protest in the Black Lives Matters Movement above violent methods.

A month earlier, on the 20th of April, Janelle Griffith, an NBC News reporter, explained how nurses in Detroit protested against the lack of protective equipment the hospital provided for employees who treated people who were infected with the Covid-19 virus:

> Nurses at DMC Sinai-Grace Hospital in Detroit staged an hourslong sit-in at the hospital this month. Salah Hadwan, a registered nurse in the emergency department at Sinai-Grace, posted a Facebook Live video on April 5 shortly before midnight. (…) "We basically were told to leave because we refuse to accept unsafe patient loads," Hadwan said in the video.[2]

The method of protest the nurses chose to protest against the hospital is the subject of this thesis, the sit-in. Interestingly, as can be seen in this example, the sit-in as a method of protest is still used, and throughout history, this nonviolent method of protest was used by many protesters, for many different aims, in many different countries. Where does this method of protest come from? How and by whom was it popularised and how did a transnational transition of the sit-in take place in history?

This Master thesis is a transatlantic history of the sit-in. This thesis answers how the sit-ins found its way to Europe. Initially, the sit-in was part of an overall nonviolent strategy of protests to obtain human rights in the United States. The aim of these protests was to end racial segregation. African-Americans, supported by some white Americans, sat-in in predominantly coffee and lunch counters and deliberately used no violence while doing this.

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[1] ''Civil Rights Icon Rep. John Lewis Calls For 'Love, Peace and Nonviolence','' YouTube channel MSNBC, accessed June 1, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQlDXo0oEaI.

[2] Janelle Griffith, ''Nurses are protesting working conditions under coronavirus — and say hospitals aren't protecting them,'' *NBC News*, April 20, 2020, accessed May 18, 2020, https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/nurses-are-protesting-working-conditions-under-coronavirus-say-hospitals-aren-n1181321.

The method of protest was simple, all the protesters did was to sit down. In other countries, like the Netherlands and England, this method of protest was used as well. What is the link between sit-ins in the United States and sit-ins in the Netherlands and England?

The transnational context that comes with this shared idea – this method of protesting – is subject in this Master thesis. How did the Civil Rights Movement help to spread the sit-in as a method of protest across national borders? Students across the globe started to sit-in around the same time. The method of protest was popularised during the first years of the 1960s. The question rises how students in different countries heard about the sit-in and how the idea was disseminated. Did students across the globe establish direct contacts with each other, of was the idea of sitting-in disseminated through the media? The research question that this thesis answers is the question of how transnational contacts between the US Civil Rights Movement and English and Dutch protest movements transmitted the sit-in in the 1960s. Each chapter answers a separate sub-question. The first sub-question answers how the sit-in as a method of protest fits within the overall nonviolent strategy. The second sub-question is the question of how the US Civil Rights Movement popularised the sit-in. The third sub-question explains the transnational character of the sit-in in the 1960s.

The first sub-question is answered in the second chapter of this thesis (first analytical chapter). An analytic overview is presented about nonviolent protests, and it also positions protests in general within the nonviolent strategy. Protests within the realm of nonviolence can be problematic, because the line between voluntary suffering – an important element in Gandhian nonviolence – and self-immolation is thin. Furthermore, chapter two answers who were the most influential philosophers or institutes for nonviolent protesters who used the sit-in as a nonviolent method of protest.

The third chapter answers how the US Civil Rights Movement popularised the sit-in. The overview starts with the first sit-in in 1942. This thesis contributes to current historiography about the sit-in in claiming that attention should be given to sit-ins prior to the famous Greensboro sit-in of 1960. The Greensboro sit-in, however, served as the catalyst of the popularisation of the sit-in in the United States. Although traditionally the sit-in is a method of protest that has been used in coffee and lunch counters, sit-ins were held for other purposes as well.

The last chapter answers how the sit-in as a method of protest reached the

Netherlands and England. The fact that several sit-in protests were organised around the same time led to an enquiry to links between protest movements in various countries. African-American protesters were involved in the same transnational network as Bertrand Russell, the English philosopher who introduced the sit-in in England. Russell influenced Dutch activists, so through England, the sit-in was introduced in the Netherlands. Protesters copied the sit-in from each other, and the media played an essential role in this, although there were some direct transnational contacts as well that disseminated the sit-in. Repeatedly, activists were triggered by international political events. The protests against nuclear weapons, the Vietnam War, the demand for democratisation at educational institutes, and even segregation, were important triggers to use the sit-in.

The delineation of time in relation to this subject is from 1960 to 1968. The year 1960 is chosen, because there was a breakthrough in the popularisation of the sit-in after four students protested at a Woolworths' lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. The year 1968 is chosen, because the sit-in was still used throughout the world, but also lost its nonviolent character in Europe. The popularity of the nonviolent sit-in lost its momentum after alternative methods of protest were preferred, and an increasing number of sit-ins no longer carried the nonviolent character and radicalised. This transition took place in an important year of the 1960s, 1968, the year in which many countries encountered an intensification of protests, but also violence.

A choice has been made to enquire a variety of situations and reasons to protest, because this answers whether there were links between protesters between different countries, and also whether there were links between protesters who were involved in different protests. African-Americans, for example, sat-in at places where they were not allowed based on the colour of their skin. Although the sit-in was also used as a method of protest in Europe, the conditions were different. In the Netherlands and England, the sit-in was used to protest against nuclear weapons, the Vietnam War and to demand democratisation at universities. This also explains why there are no records to be found of sit-ins to protest against segregation in the Netherlands and only a few in England.

The historiographical relevance of this thesis is that it contributes to a debate about national and international phenomena which belong to the 1960s. Is the sit-in a typical American method of protest, and is this different than the sit-in protests in Europe? Or do

links between protesters from various countries prove that the sit-in can be regarded as a shared international phenomenon which belonged to a general story of the 1960s?

1.1. Methodology

An interdisciplinary methodology underpins the arguments made in this Master thesis. Through archival research and oral history, a variety of primary sources are used in this thesis, like newspapers, pamphlets, interviews and pictures. The secondary sources consist of predominantly historical articles and books about protests of the 1960s. The reason why an interdisciplinary methodology is used is that arguments can be explained through different views. For example, the argumentation behind the importance of the Greensboro sit-in is backed up by an interview, and a newspaper article, next to other historical books and articles.

The reason why archival enquiry is chosen as part of this methodology is that the used archive is not yet digitalised. Through the use of the primary sources from the Roosevelt Institute for American Studies (RIAS), some underexposed and unique elements can be added to the history of the sit-in. For example, letters between European student organisations and US civil rights organisations prove transnational contacts that have been established in the 1960s (see chapter 4).

A shortcoming about this methodology is that there might be more proof of transnational contacts between protesters in various countries, but an enquiry to these sources outside the RIAS has not been conducted. The International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam closed its archives due to the corona crisis measures. It might be possible that protesters in various countries kept contacts with each other. Perhaps this archive in Amsterdam contains some primary sources which prove direct transnational contacts between activists in various countries. Therefore, several sources of correspondences have not been used in this thesis which might exist in other archives.

Another method which is used for this thesis is oral history. One of the reasons why interviews were conducted for this Master thesis was to gain first-hand insights of sit-ins. Bruce Hartford provided first-hand insights in sit-ins, Gandhian workshops in nonviolence, and in general, he explained many elements of the Civil Rights Movement (see 1.2. Nature of Sources for information about him). Through conducting an interview, a series of pointed questions are answered about sit-ins. Hartford was involved in a civil rights organisation in

the United States and provided useful information for this Master thesis.

Another reason to conduct an interview was to obtain more information about primary sources about the Provo Movement. Jan Pen, a collector of Provo material, answered questions on Dutch protesters and the general tendencies of the 1960s (see 1.2. Nature of Sources for information about him). This interview contributes to this thesis, because some exclusive primary sources are discussed that shed new lights about the global sphere of the 1960s. Furthermore, Pen explains how Dutch protests linked up to international tendencies of the 1960s, but also how they differed.

Pen displays his Provo material on his website.[3] This thesis uses some pamphlets from this archive. Some unique transnational elements can be explained through the use of these pamphlets, like the connection between American and Dutch Provos (see 4.3. The Netherlands). Although traditional interpretations tend to lack the transnational influences Dutch protesters had on the rest of the world, a particular pamphlet used in this thesis points in the direction of cross-border contact. Secondary sources complement the prove for this transnational relation. American activists copied a Dutch protest technique and initiated a sit-in spin-off from the Netherlands, the smoke-in.

The strength of this methodology is that a variety of source material has been examined. The sourced found during the internship at the RIAS complemented arguments made by Hartford about sit-ins, and Pen's explanations about the Provo movement enriches the discussion about the 1960s. The weakness of this thesis, as explained, is that the RIAS and Pen's Provo collection are the only archives that have been used for primary sources about this subject due to the corona crisis.

1.2. Nature of Sources

The archival research has been conducted during an internship at the RIAS in Middelburg, the Netherlands. The archive of this institute contains a number of special collections that deal with American history. The special collection 'Civil Rights and Minorities' contains documents that prove some transnational connections between protesters on both sides of the Atlantic.[4]

[3] ''Pamphlets, posters and varia,'' Provo Images, accessed May 25, 2020, https://www.provo-images.info/pamphlets.html.
[4] ''Civil Rights and Minorities,'' Roosevelt Institute for American Studies, accessed March 26, 2020, https://www.roosevelt.nl/civil-rights-and-minorities.

The Provo Movement was an important protest organisation in the Netherlands of the 1960s. Through google research, the archive of Pen was found and used for this Master thesis. This internet archive contains critical primary sources to demonstrate transnational connections between Dutch and foreign protesters. As described in the methodology, this archive contains some pamphlets that prove the connection between Dutch and American Provos, but also magazines of Dutch and American protest organisations. Magazines and newspaper articles serve as proof that the idea of sitting-in was disseminated throughout the world. Some exclusive letters between protest organisations explain the direct transnational contacts between activists. The primary sources displayed at Pen's website have been researched through the internet, but also physically when the interview was conducted.

The Erasmus University Library contains a guide to forward students to digital archives. The archives that have been conducted through this guide are ProQuest historical newspapers, Delpher newspapers and the Times digital archive.[5] Through ProQuest historical newspapers, historical American newspapers like *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times* are used for this thesis. A variety of American sit-in cases are described in these newspapers. *The New York Times* can be regarded as a liberal newspaper. It describes sit-ins and takes a rather neutral stance, without condemnation of the acts of civil disobedience. *The Los Angeles Times* can be seen as a leftist newspaper. It wrote in-depth articles about the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. These newspapers were important, for sit-ins were often neglected in newspapers because mainstream media companies ignored media coverages of the Civil Rights Movement in general (see 3.1. Sit-ins in the 1940s). The criteria for articles about the sit-in written in the 1940s and 1950s were to use as many as possible. The reason for this is because there are few articles to find which are written in these decades. For the 1960s, the criteria were used to use articles about the sit-ins, which were headlines of a newspaper. Newspaper headlines demonstrate that the sit-in became more important in the United States.

Delpher newspapers is an archive which contains a wide variety of Dutch newspapers. Not only Dutch sit-in cases are found in these newspapers, but also coverages of English and American sit-ins. Like in the American cases, news coverages of the sit-ins

[5] ''Press,'' Erasmus University Library, accessed May 25, 2020, https://libguides.eur.nl/history/press.

were scarce. A selection has been made to use headline articles instead of side notes in a newspaper. Newspapers *Trouw, De Volkskrant* and *Het Vrije Volk* tended to write neutrally about the sit-in cases in the Netherlands. Communist newspaper *De Waarheid* embraced the sit-in as a method of protest and wrote positively about the development of protest in the 1960s. The newspaper also covered the sit-ins of the United States. *De Telegraaf* can be regarded as a right-wing newspaper, but interestingly, it was this newspaper that brought the sit-in as an idea to the Netherlands (see 4.3. The Netherlands).

The Times digital archive contains newspapers of English newspaper *The Times* which have been used to find primary sources about English sit-in cases. Unfortunately, this is the only English newspaper that is freely accessible on the internet that covers the 1960s. *The Times* can be seen as a conservative newspaper, although it writes about English sit-in cases rather neutrally. For the early 1960s, only headline articles have been used. Sit-in protests against racial segregation, which took place from the middle of the 1960s onwards, were scarce, and therefore, these articles are just sidebars in *The Times*. It proves, however, that sit-ins were also held against segregation in England. This division between headline articles and sidebars proves that sit-ins against nuclear weapons had a more profound impact than sit-ins against racial segregation.

Bruce Hartford contributed to the bachelor thesis of the author in 2019 by giving an interview.[6] In that interview, he explained how he was attracted to the Civil Rights Movement. After Hartford found out that the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) protested against Nazi's, he wanted to know more about the organisation. Being from Jewish descendent, he stood at the same side as African-American protesters in their struggle against discrimination. The interview from 2019 served as a foundation to send another invitation to conduct an interview. The interview for this thesis, which was held on the 26th of February 2020 through internet application Zoom, serves as a critical contribution to writing a history of the US Civil Rights Movement and the sit-in. Furthermore, for the student protests to demand democratisation at universities only headline articles are used, because many articles have been written about this aim of protest.

Jan Pen is the webmaster of a website which predominantly contains Provo material, like posters, pamphlets, newspapers and letters of the organisation. His name and mail

[6] Bruce Hartford, interview conducted by Milan Weber, January 31, 2019.

address are to be found of the same website, so through these details, contact was established to ask more about the Provo material and other 1960s related materials. The interview, which was held on the 6th of February 2020, took place where all his website material was stalled. It became clear that Pen was an expert on 1960s protest movements. The interview was important because exclusive features behind transnational influences were discussed during the interview. The relation between American and Dutch Provos was something that asked for further enquiry, and the interview supplements some features behind the transnational history of both protest movements which are underexposed in secondary literature.

1.3. Historiography

Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua, Professor of History and African-American studies, and Clarence Lang, Professor of African & African-American studies, mention in an article in *The Journal of African American History* that the historiography of the Civil Rights Movement took off in the late 1970s.[7] This first wave of historiography was marked by top-down narratives, so the focus was on the key figures within the Civil Rights movement, like Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Also, attention was given to events that drew national attention during this first wave. Authors like August Meier, an African-American historian and Elliott Rudwick, Professor of Sociology and History at Kent State University, can be regarded as early authors about this subject.[8] For the sit-in as a method of protest, this also means that the Greensboro sit-in of February 1960, despite many earlier sit-ins, was regarded as the most important sit-in.[9]

This first wave of historiography was a continuation of news coverages of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s and 1970s. A *New York Times* article from 1960 about the Greensboro sit-in is exemplary for this, as it only focussed on the role of Martin Luther King and an event that drew national attention.[10] *The Los Angeles Times* published an article in 1966 about the differences between moderate protesters, like King, and more radical

[7] Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, ''The ''Long Movement'' as Vampire: Temporal and Spatial Fallacies in Recent Black Freedom Studies,'' *The Journal of African American History* 92, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 266.
[8] August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942-1968* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, *Along the Color Line: Explorations in the Black Experience* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1976).
[9] Meier and Rudwick, *CORE,* 101.
[10] Claude Sitton, ''Dr. King Favors Buyers' Boycott: National Campaign a Must, Negro Leader Says at Sit-In Strategy Talks,'' *New York Times*, April 16, 1960, 15.

protesters, like Malcolm X.[11] In this article, only the names of the leaders of the civil rights organisations are mentioned, which is exemplary for this time. Bottom-up approaches, which paves the way for attention for the masses who supported the Civil Rights Movement, followed a decade later.

Cha-Jua and Lang explain how the 1980s saw the emergence of bottom-up approaches in the historiography of the Civil Rights Movement and point to Aldon D. Morris as the most important scholar for this historiographical wave.[12] This bottom-up approach changed the conventional starting point of the Civil Rights Movement, which traditionally began with the outcome of the *Brown versus Board of Education* case in 1954. Morris, Professor of Sociology and African-American Studies at Weinberg College for Arts and Sciences, explained why he chose another 1950s event to start his history of the Civil Rights Movement: 'My chosen starting point is June 1953. In that month the first major battle of the modern Civil Rights Movement took place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where blacks successfully carried out a mass boycott against that city's segregated bus system.'[13]

For the historiography in the 1980s, Morris was important, because he, as a sociologist, had a different approach in his enquiry to the Civil Rights Movement than his predecessors. His bottom-up approach meant that he focussed on events in which many protesters participated. J. Craig Jenkins, Academy Professor Emeritus of Sociology at The Ohio State University, recognised the importance of Morris' work: 'Morris demonstrates that the major campaigns of the civil rights movements were indigenously based in a complex network of ''local movement centres'' rather than the handful of charismatic leaders celebrated in standard histories.'[14] Morris' contribution to the civil rights historiography is that he does not regard civil rights leaders, like Martin Luther King, as the most important people, but the mass who supported the movement in general. Therefore, he chose a starting point in which local protesters started their protest. For the popularisation of the sit-in, Morris' approach does not necessarily change the importance of the Greensboro sit-in, although it at least opens the doors for an enquiry to earlier sit-ins which might have served

[11] Jack Nelson, ''Black Power: The ''Color'' Line Closes on King,'' *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1966, 1.
[12] Cha-Jua and Lang, ''The ''Long Movement'' as Vampire,'' 267.
[13] Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), ix-x.
[14] J. Craig Jenkins, "Stirring the Masses: Indigenous Roots of the Civil Rights Movement," *Contemporary Sociology* 15, no. 3 (1986): 354-57, accessed May 14, 2020, http://www.jstor.org.eur.idm.oclc.org/stable/2069996.

as catalysts for the Greensboro sit-in of February 1960.

Why did a bottom-up approach appear in the 1980s? Susan Hegeman, Professor of English at the University of Florida, explained how international power structures influenced historiography until the 1980s: 'culture-and-personality approaches would be heavily employed by the postwar U.S. government as a form of quasi-intelligence, especially on the increasingly inscrutable and threatening "personality" of the Soviet enemy.'[15] Once the threat of communism faded away, it became more acceptable to write personal histories. Hegeman explains that this new historiographical trend was part of Cultural Turn.[16] Historians no longer exclusively focus on politics, but also on underlying processes that influenced politics.

The bottom-up approach of the 1980s aroused a revision of the traditional delineation of the Civil Rights Movement. Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, expanded this critical approach in the 2000s. In her historiographical article, she emphasises to look beyond the 'classical' phase of the Civil Rights Movement – which started in 1954 – and take earlier events into account as well, as Morris did.[17] Hall also argued that the Civil Rights Movement did not end in the 1960s, but by the end of the 1970s: 'The American creed of free-market individualism, in combination with the ideological victories of the movement (which ensured that white supremacy must "hide its face"), made the rhetoric of color blindness central to the ''war of ideas'' initiated by the New Right in the 1970s.'[18] The delineation of the Civil Rights Movement is not as sharp as many historians suggested. Hall advised looking beyond the classical timeframe.

The 1990s saw the emergence of the focus on the international dimension of the civil rights historiography. Thomas Borstelmann, Professor of Modern World History at the University of Nebraska, looked at the relationship between the struggle in the United States and South Africa during the Cold War.[19] This transnational turn assured that events which occurred in the world are no longer seen as separate subjects. The international power structure was no longer bipolar, but the United States, after the collapse of the Soviet Union,

[15] Susan Hegeman, *The Cultural Return* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2012), 61.
[16] Hegeman, 59.
[17] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, ''The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,'' *Journal of American History* Vol. 91, No 1. (2005): 1234, accessed May 14, 2020, https://doi.org/10.2307/3660172.
[18] Hall, 1238.
[19] Thomas Borstelmann, *Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

was the hegemon from the 1990s onwards. Yogita Goyal, Professor of African-American Studies and English at the University of California, explains that '[much] of this work was new historicist in method, and intent on rebutting a national identity rooted in exceptionalist notions and racist, militarist, and imperialist habits.'[20]

The transnational turn, although it enriched the historiography, also criticised the historical roles of countries in some regards. For example, the support of the United States to the South African government, which maintained its Apartheid regime, had its influence on the way the United States looked at its racial problems. Borstelmann explained this problem for the United States: 'Administration members, like many other Americans, recognized their own country's vulnerability on the issue of racial discrimination and worried that South Africa's present course reflected the darker side of their society.'[21] In other words, due to the transnational turn, a historical reflection was presented on the international role the United States played in the Apartheid issue in South Africa. The transnational turn did not only explain the role the United States played for other countries, but also how international pressure had its influence on domestic legislation.

Also following the transnational trend, Mary L. Dudziak, civil rights historian and international relations expert, explained why the American government ended school segregation in 1954: 'Once the United States took on the role of a world leader and argued that its system of government was a model for the world, the world took an interest in American justice. Struggles over rights in American law had international as well as domestic implications.'[22] The historiographical trend assured that historians looked beyond national boundaries and took the international dimension seriously. Before the 1990s, historical occurrences were regarded as national phenomena, without paying attention to international links.

According to conventional histories, Martin Luther King can be regarded as a nonviolent figure within the Civil Rights Movement and Malcolm X as a violent one. Laura Visser-Maessen, Professor at Radboud University in Nijmegen and specialist in African-American history and civil rights, openly asked to what extent this classic image is accurate.

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[20] Yogita Goyal, ''Introduction: The Transnational Turn,'' in *The Cambridge Companion to Transnational American Literature*, ed. Yogita Goyal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 5.
[21] Borstelmann, *Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle*, 199.
[22] Mary L. Dudziak, ''Brown as a Cold War Case,'' *Journal of American History* Vol. 91, No. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004): 42, accessed May 14, 2020, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3659611.

In an article, she doubted to what extent King should be regarded as a moderate protester.[23] The death of King cleared all his radical assumptions. Before he died, he was not sure anymore whether nonviolence was the key for further development. The sharp delineation between moderation and radicalism is not as simple as has been explained by many historians. Also the other way around, the image of radicals is nuanced in recent historiography. Peniel E. Joseph, Professor of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, explains that despite the use of violence by the Black Power Movement, the positive side of their story has been neglected until recently: 'Black power-era militancy catalysed local welfare rights and antipoverty organizers and activists (…) The maturity of black power scholarship is evident in recent studies that have revisited the movement's cultural side with a previously unimaginable level of sophistication.'[24]

Especially this last historiographical development arouses debate. Katarina Keane, Professor of History and Global Migration Studies at the University of Maryland, observed in 2016 that the new question to this development was to what extent nonviolent and violent protest can be seen as two separate strategies of protest.[25] In her article, she referred to *This Nonviolent Stuff'll Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible* (2014) by Charles Cobb, Jr. He is a journalist, visiting Professor at Brown University and former activist at the CORE. Giving first-hand insights into nonviolent protests, he remembers: 'Guns always accompanied nonviolent struggle in Monroe, and that is well-remembered and has always been a much more awkward subject.'[26] Violence and nonviolence, according to Cobb, are less different than conventional histories claim. This thesis explains that people who believed in nonviolence had nothing to do with violence, so it refutes Cobb's premise.

The sharp division between radicalism and moderation, and violence and nonviolence, is currently part of the debate. At this point, the role of the radical protesters

[23] Laura Visser-Maessen, ''De Vergeten Droom van Martin Luther King,'' *Geschiedenis Magazine,* April, 2018, 8-13.
[24] Peniel E. Joseph, ''The Black Power Movement: A State of the Field,'' *Journal of American History,* Vol. 96, No 3. (2009): 769-770.
[25] Katarina Keane, ''New Directions in Civil Rights Historiography,'' *History: Reviews of New Books* 44, No 1. (2016): 3-4.
[26] Charles E. Cobb Jr., *This Nonviolent Stuff'll Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 107.

has been drawn towards moderate protesters. In 2009, Joseph made clear that the Black Power movement was more than only violent protesters:

> Black power did scandalize America in the 1960s, but its apparent novelty masked a deeper history. (...) Black power grew out of multiple streams of social, political, and economic struggle. Local, national, and international political events – at times independently, often times in ways that intersected – fuelled a broad and eclectic array of social, cultural, and political movements.[27]

Joseph's historiographical contribution of 2009 made clear that the current situation of this debate is that there is no longer a sharp distinction between the two tendencies.

Another historiographical discussion concerning the subject of this Master thesis is the discussion between national and international phenomena. In the fourth chapter, an answer is given of how the history of the sit-in should be told. Either as part of national history or as part of general, international history. Two authors published a history of the 1960s in the 1990s. Each author had another view concerning the 1960s phenomena.

Hans Righart, a Dutch historian who was a professor at the University of Utrecht, is one of these two authors who wrote a history about the 1960s. He claimed that 'generational coherence (…) connects those who are actually marked by common experience.' [28] A common experience for the students who sat-in during the 1960s was the generation gap. An identity crisis was experienced by young people in the United States, but also in the Netherlands and Britain. That was the reason why students from different countries started to protest, according to this theory. The post-World War II situation established two different worldviews and divided the youth from those who suffered during the World War II. Looking from Righard's point of view, the sit-in must be regarded as a phenomenon that came up in the 1960s, which can be seen as a method of protest that belonged to students who protested against established traditions. According to this theory, it is no coincidence that students from different countries revolted against the older generation around the same time, because youngsters from different parts of the world

[27] Joseph, ''The Black Power Movement,'' 776.
[28] Translated quote. 'De generatiesamenhang ten slotte verbindt degenen die daadwerkelijk gestempeld worden door een gemeenschappelijke ervaring. Hans Righart, *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig: Geschiedenis van een Generatieconflict* (Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 1995), 18.

shared the same experience – the identity crisis.

James Kennedy, a Dutch-American Professor of Dutch History at the University of Amsterdam, emphasises, in contrast to Righart, the differences between 1960s countercultures throughout the world. He disagreed on the premise that youngsters throughout the world shared a common social experience, based on the generation conflict. For example, Dutch countercultures were less political orientated than American countercultures in the 1960s.[29] In contrast to the United States, there were no major social, political or economic conflicts in the Netherlands. In the United States, the contrast between the dominant culture and the protesters was clear in the context of the sit-in. This was not always the case in the Netherlands, according to Kennedy. Following his arguments, the sit-in can be regarded as a unique national phenomenon when sit-in manifestations are compared between different countries. A further elaboration on this historiographical discussion can be read in chapter four (see 4.1. The 1960s: An international history and national histories).

This Master Thesis contributes to these various historiographical developments that have occurred throughout the years. This thesis does not only focus on the role of key figures within the Civil Rights Movement to see where the sit-in as a method of protest came from. The story of the sit-in starts in the 1940s, because the first sit-in, conducted by African-Americans, took place in 1942. This thesis contributes to the civil rights historiography in expanding the transnational history of the movement. The sit-in is often presumed to be a single entity, a national phenomenon. This thesis, however, displays a broader context behind this method of protest and shows that the emergence of the sit-in in the 1960s in different countries was no coincidence. In line with these international influences, this thesis also answers how the history of the sit-in should be told, on a national level, or as a general, international history. This thesis examines how the sit-in as a nonviolent technique to protest derived out of nonviolent understandings in the United States and India and was transferred to England and the Netherlands during the 1960s.

[29] James C. Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in Aanbouw* (Amsterdam: Boom Uitgevers, 2017), 120.

Chapter 2. The sit-in in relation to nonviolent protest

Eddie Dickerson, an eighteen your old boy from Cambridge, Maryland, was asked by his brother Joe to come along to beat up some civil rights protesters who were sitting-in at a restaurant to protest against racial segregation. The restaurant where the CORE members were protesting was the target for protest, because the restaurant recently refused service to African delegates to the United Nations. Joe and his little brother Eddie wanted to teach those CORE protesters a lesson. Looking back on this night, Eddie explained in an interview with some CORE members what struck him the most about his encounter with these protesters on that cold rainy January evening in 1962: ''For some reason I couldn't stop thinking about those men I'd slugged,' Eddie told us. 'Why didn't they hit me back? (…) What was going on? Why the hell didn't they get mad and hit back?''[30] The reason why the protesters did not hit back was that they were trained in the strategy of protest called nonviolent disobedience. What is nonviolent disobedience, and where does it come from? This chapter answers the question of how the sit-in as a method of protest fits within nonviolent protests for human rights.

This chapter answers how the sit-in as a method of protest fits within the nonviolent philosophy of protest. Firstly, this chapter answers what nonviolence means. Who were influential in the dissemination of the idea of nonviolence? Secondly, it answers which philosophers, religions and organisations were influential for African-American protesters in the twentieth century. Thirdly, the concept of nonviolence, the strategy behind this ideology, is explained in relation to nonviolent protest. The techniques of nonviolent protest are explained in this part. Finally, the sit-in is explained, and an answer is given how this particular method relates to nonviolent protest in general.

2.1. Nonviolence

Anna Hamming, Professor of Culture and Media Studies at the University of New Brunswick, defined nonviolence in her chapter in *The Routledge Handbook of World Peace since 1750* (2019).[31] Nonviolence is, as the name suggests, a concept which rejects the use of violence,

[30] CORE pamphlet describing one of the rare instances of nonviolence converting a racist attacker into a supporter. Jhan Robbins and June Robbins, ''Why Didn't They Hit Back?,'' *Redbook*, CORE reprint (July 1963), accessed February 20, 2020, https://www.crmvet.org/info/core_nv_redbook.pdf.

[31] Anna Hamming, ''Three Apostles of Non-Violence,'' in *The Routledge History of World Peace since 1750*, ed. Christian Philip Petersom, William M. Knoblauch, and Michael Loadenthal (London: Routledge Tayler & Francis Group, 2019), 87-89.

but this philosophy also contains some other essential characteristics. Nonviolence is also about the creation of a society in which individual differences are accepted. It is not only the absence of violence, but also the willingness of the majority to accept a minority. According to Hamming, the roots of the theory behind nonviolence can be found in various religions like Taoism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity.[32]

The question why Buddhism and Christianity are part of the roots behind nonviolence are explained in this thesis in the part where the relation between Mohandas Gandhi or Christian protesters like Martin Luther King and nonviolent protest is explained. Taoism and Judaism ask for further explanation. James Kellenberger, a PhD student in Historical Philosophy at the University of Oregon, explains that Judaism favoured nonviolence based on the fact that the Israelites were oppressed and victims of wars.[33] Jewish nonviolent thinkers founded their nonviolent concept based on this oppression. Lao-tzu, a Chinese philosopher who presumably lived in the sixth century B.C., advised trying to avoid violence as much as possible.[34] His written work served as the foundation of Taoism, a religion which is adhered to predominantly in China. Even though Judaism and Taoism are not directly linked to the philosophy of nonviolence that this thesis uses, it is useful to note that Christianity and Buddhism were not the only religions that served as inspiration for nonviolent thinkers.

Andrew Fiala, Professor of Ethics, Religions and Political Philosophy, agrees with Hamming on the definition of nonviolence and elaborates more on the difference between pacifism and nonviolence.[35] Pacifism rejects warfare and focusses on war in general, whereas nonviolence also focusses on violence within societies. This explanation of pacifism is also in line with the definition of the Cambridge Dictionary: 'the belief that war is wrong, and, therefore, that to fight in a war is wrong.'[36] This definition endorsed Fiala's view that pacifism is focussed on warfare. Fiala describes that pacifists never see warfare as a solution to restore peace. Nevertheless, there are exceptions. Scott H. Bennett, Professor of Modern History at the Georgian Court University in New Jersey, explains how the War Resisters

[32] Hamming, 88.
[33] James Kellenberger, *Religion, Pacifism, and Nonviolence* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018), 77-78.
[34] Kellenberger, 78-79.
[35] Andrew Fiala, ''Pacifism in the Twentieth Century and Beyond,'' in *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence,* ed. Andrew Fiala (New York: Routledge, 2018), 35-39.
[36] ''Pacifism,'' Cambridge Dictionary, accessed 25 March, 2020, https://dictionary-cambridge-org.eur.idm.oclc.org/dictionary/english/pacifism.

League (WRL), which considered themselves as pacifists, justified warfare of the Allies during World War II.[37] It is not necessarily the case that nonviolent philosophers reject warfare. They might legitimise the outbreak of war whenever this is the best solution and prevents more casualties. In some cases, the responsibility to prevent further casualties justifies warfare. In that regard, pacifism is more focussed on the rejection of warfare than nonviolent philosophers.

Dustin Ells Howes, who obtained his PhD at the University of North Carolina in political science, wrote an article which explains the differences between pacifism and nonviolence.[38] In contrast to Fiala, Howes described that pacifism is also focussed on violence within society, not only on warfare, although warfare is the central theme for pacifists. Nonviolence is linked to a set of practices in which the belief of nonviolent thinkers in the rejection of violence is displayed. Pacifism derived out of the rejection of warfare and may include multiple forms of violence, but the practices of protest belong to the realm of nonviolence. The nonviolent strategy is inseparable to nonviolent protest, because it both refers to a set of exercises. The differences between nonviolence and pacifism are important to note, argues Howes:

> The ideology of pacifism and the practice of nonviolence are closely related historically. Pacifists have been at the forefront of developing nonviolent practices and participating in nonviolence may lead some people to become pacifists. However, the distinction between pacifism and nonviolence is important because practicing and participating in nonviolence or *satyagraha* does not require one to reject the utility or morality of all violence and warfare.[39]

The fact that some pacifists protested – The WRL is an example – makes Howes' definition problematic. Also, the fact that some pacifists justified warfare in an extreme situation makes it hard to come up with a comprehensive definition of pacifism which clearly

[37] Scott H. Bennett, *Radical Pacifism: The War Resisters League and Gandhian Nonviolence in America, 1915-1963* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 74-75.
[38] Dustin Ells Howes, ''The Failure of Pacifism and the Success of Nonviolence,'' *Perspectives on Politics* 11, issue 2 (June 2013): 427-446, https://www-cambridge-org.eur.idm.oclc.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/7BD4781F4D01C05C0797BD7E00B043AF/S1537592713001059a.pdf/failure_of_pacifism_and_the_success_of_nonviolence.pdf.
[39] Satyagraha was the nonviolence philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. For further explanation, see 2.2. Influences for African-American nonviolence. Howes, 430.

distinguishes itself from nonviolence. Following the theory of Howes, the nonviolent strategy is a set of practices. Therefore, nonviolence inherently means nonviolent protest.

Author Leo Tolstoy was the most important source of inspiration for nonviolent protesters in the twentieth century, argued Fiala. Tolstoy's source of inspiration was the Bible. Hamming also described Tolstoy as an essential modern thinker for nonviolence. In her article, she explained the link between his belief in nonviolence and Christianity: 'Tolstoy's religious belief in non-violence in his post-conversion period (after 1870) was the key to his religious pacifism.'[40] Both Fiala and Hamming also pay attention to the works he wrote, which were not only on peace. He was a prominent figure, because he disseminated his ideas and inspired important nonviolent philosophers like Gandhi, King and James Farmer. Although Tolstoy should not be seen as a writer who only used nonviolence as a subject. His nonviolent belief was passed on to several nonviolent protesters.

It is important to note that many scholars regard pacifists as those who rejected warfare and that warfare is the most important subject to focus on for pacifists. Hamming pointed out that Buddhism is an essential source of inspiration for nonviolent philosophers. Kellenberger explains the religious foundations of nonviolence and pacifism behind Buddhism and observes that the philosophy of Buddha can be seen as nonviolent, but not particularly as pacifistic: '(…) Gautama Buddha taught nonviolence at the personal level but did not teach pacifism with its rejection of war.'[41] Kellenberger also looked at the rejection of war as a critical element of pacifists.

In the same chapter, Kellenberger explained that also Islamic, Christian and Hinduist traditions reject violence, but they do not necessarily preach pacifism.[42] It must be noted, however, that although the holy books contain peaceful messages, the religions also contain violent aspects. Justifications to use violence can also be found in the sacred books. Kellenberger focussed on the religious elements which served as inspiration for nonviolence. The discussion about the differences between pacifism and nonviolence is also part of Kellenberger's chapter. Some influential individuals within these religions, like Jesus Christ, might be regarded as pacifists.[43] In the case of Jesus Christ, he turned the other cheek to his enemy and did not resist during his arrest. One might also argue that his campaign to gain

[40] Hamming, ''Three Apostles of Non-Violence,'' 89.
[41] Kellenberger, *Religion, Pacifism, and Nonviolence*, 83.
[42] Kellenberger, 91-93.
[43] Kellenberger, 85-86.

followers was a practical tool and that he should be considered as a nonviolent protester. This shows us, again, that the differences between pacifism and nonviolence are marginal. All holy books contain, to a limited extent, the message of peace, as Kellenberger argues, but they do not necessarily preach pacifism. These religious narratives are used by philosophers as inspiration for their nonviolent philosophies, although this variety of religions does not exclude the use of force to restore a peaceful situation.

In sum, the nonviolent strategy entails the rejection of violence and focusses – in contrast to pacifism - on more themes than wars only. Wars might be justified within the idea of nonviolence, although nonviolent thinkers prefer to avoid warfare whenever possible. A variety of religions served as inspiration for nonviolence. Nonviolence, as a concept, rejects the use of violence, but it does use a type of force to obtain their aims. As is analysed in the next section, the differences between the use of force and violence are marginal when it comes to the use of nonviolence as a strategy of protest.

2.2. Influences for African-American nonviolence

The nonviolent concept was very attractive for African-American protesters in the United States, but where did this idea come from? The WRL was influential for the Civil Rights Movement in regards to the strategy of nonviolence. Farmer, one of the founders of the CORE, referred to Gandhi and the works of Krishnalal Shridharani as inspiration for its nonviolent belief. The latter was an Indian poet and journalist who was involved in the Indian independence movement. Bennet described how the CORE shared their ideas with the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and the WRL.[44]

Jay Holmes Smith is one of the figures who bridged the transnational gap between Indian and American activism and the belief in nonviolence as a philosophy. Smith was expelled from India because he supported the Indian struggle for independence.[45] In cooperation with the FOR, he established the Nonviolent Direct Action Committee (NDAC) and organised nonviolent protests in front of the British embassy to protest against Gandhi's imprisonment. Smith taught civil rights protesters, including Farmer, about Gandhian nonviolence.[46] Smith is one of the many people who provided first-hand insights of Gandhian nonviolence to the Civil Rights Movement because he told about his experiences

[44] Bennett, *Radical Pacifism,* 95-97.
[45] Bennett, 94.
[46] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 149-150.

in India. Already before the first sit-in was organised, people were influenced by the philosophy of Gandhi. Gandhi turned out to be the most influential philosopher for nonviolent disobedience in the United States in the twentieth century.

The philosophical framework that Smith brought to the United States is just one of the many examples of how the nonviolent methods of protest, conducted by Gandhi, and the nonviolent strategy were disseminated outside India. Gandhi created his nonviolent philosophy, called *Satyagraha*. Emily S. Rosenberg, a historian who focusses on transnational histories, and obtained her PhD degree at the State University of New York, described how this message crossed the oceans.[47] Gandhi and his followers believed in the concept called *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, which means that they saw the world as one. Their strategy was to draw attention to their protest.

Especially the Salt March campaigns of 1930-1931 drew worldwide attention. Many newspapers in several countries picked up the news of this nonviolent march. Rosenberg also described how the FOR and the WRL disseminated Gandhi's message after they heard of these famous Salt Marches. Bipin Chandra, an Indian Marxist historian, wrote about the struggle for independence and explained how Gandhi organised the Salt Marches:

> Gandhiji, along with a band of seventy-eight members of the Sabarmati Ashram, among whom were men belonging to almost every region and religion of India, was to march from his headquarters in Ahmedabad through the villages of Gujarat for 240 miles. On reaching the coast at Dandi, he would break the salt laws by collecting salt from the beach. The deceptively innocuous move was to prove devastatingly effective. [48]

Gandhi protested against the taxation of salt, a commodity he regarded to be free to use for all people. By collecting some salt from the beach, Gandhi officially broke the law of the British rulers. It was not the collection of salt that made the government decide to arrest him, but the fact that his nonviolent movement grew massively.[49] After the dissemination of the story behind this protest, many people throughout the world referred to *Satyagraha*, Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence. What is *Satyagraha,* and where did Gandhi create this

[47] Emily Rosenberg, *Transnational Currents in a Shrinking World: 1870-1945* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), 56-59.
[48] Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence: 1857-1947* (Gurgaon, India: Penguin India, 2017), 263.
[49] Chandra, 266.

philosophy?

Satyagraha is a philosophical understanding developed during Gandhi's years in South Africa. Ramachandra Guha, an Indian historian and economist, wrote a biography of Gandhi and devoted one chapter on the personal memoirs of Gandhi, which gives insights in the years before Gandhi became prominent in India as an anti-colonial protester.[50] In South Africa, Gandhi received from his followers the name *Mahatma*, which means 'great soul'. The act of voluntarily suffering was meant to shame the oppressors.[51] *Satyagraha* means truth-force, and for Gandhi, nonviolent disobedience was his way to enforce others to be introduced to his conception of truth. In 1916, Gandhi published a book in India in which he described his techniques which he developed in the Transvaal, the province in South-Africa where he lived before his return to India in 1916. As can be read in chapter three, multiple references to Gandhi and his books are made by civil rights protesters in the United States. Apart from the transnational influences, there were also national influences who lay the foundation for nonviolent disobedience and the nonviolent strategy in the United States.

A variety of philosophers throughout the world inspired Martin Luther King, and he occasionally referred to Gandhi in his explanation where his belief in nonviolence came from. He was also inspired by an American philosopher, Henry David Thoreau. Kevin E. Grimm, Assistant Professor of History and Criminal Justice at Regent University, explains who inspired King and devoted a large part of this explanation to Thoreau.[52] Thoreau was also inspired by a variety of religions, but also by mythology. Grimm described Thoreau as a transcendentalist. Christianity played an important part in this philosophy. Transcendentalists believe that society should be changed and that the government is not an accepted given. Thoreau asked himself to what extent people should obey the laws of the government in his essay ''Civil Disobedience'' (1849): 'Unjust laws exist; shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavour to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once?'[53] Thoreau claimed that non-cooperation

[50] Ramachandra Guha, *Gandhi: The Years that Changes the World, 1914-1948* (London: Penguin Books, 2018), 301-317.
[51] Ramachandra Guha, *Gandhi Before India* (London: Penguin Books, 2013), 8-11.
[52] Kevin E. Grimm, ''One Man's Peace,'' in *The Routledge History of World Peace since 1750*, ed. Christian Philip Petersom, William M. Knoblauch, and Michael Loadenthal (London: Routledge Tayler & Francis Group, 2019), 114-115.
[53] Henry David Thoreau, *Walden or Life in the Woods and ''Civil Disobedience''* (New York: Signet Classics, 2012), 283.

was the best strategy to protest without the use of violence.

All those influences combined created a transnational grassroots movement. A transnational grassroots movement is a term that refers to bottom-up activities that strive to change legislation towards more democracy and social reform and looks beyond national boundaries.[54] Srilatha Batliwala, a social activist, and author of several books regarding civil rights, explains that the term entails protests to change legislation and the protests are conducted without official political support. The WRL is an excellent example of an organisation that contributed to this movement. It protested, for example, in the United States against the imprisonment of Gandhi at the British Embassy.[55] The anti-colonial struggle was also part of this transnational grassroots movement and manifested itself in the copying of protest methods. James Farmer, a co-founder of the CORE, explained in his autobiography how the CORE was inspired by occurrences in India: 'On December 30, 1942, [Philip] Randolph had announced in a press release that the May conference of his March on Washington movement would consider launching a broad program based on nonviolent civil disobedience and non-cooperation, patterned after the campaigns of Mohandas K. Gandhi in India.'[56]

The foundations for nonviolence are too many to point out, from individual beliefs to change society, to mythology. The sources that stand out as foundations for the nonviolent strategy for African-American protesters are Christianity and Gandhi's *Satyagraha*. The Civil Rights Movement in the United States was influenced through the transnational grassroots movement which, on its turn, was a gathering of national and international organisations to obtain human rights. Racial equality, anti-colonialism and the anti-war movement, despite their different aims, were all part of this same global movement.

2.3. Nonviolent protest

Now that nonviolence is discussed and how this concept was used to protest, it is useful to explain how nonviolent protesters protested. What does it mean to remain nonviolent while

[54] Srilatha Batliwala, ''Grassroots Movements as Transnational Actors: Implications for Global Civil Society,'' *International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 13, no. 4 (December 2002): 393-409, https://search-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/docview/235926455/57E8B799A8D34050PQ/6?accountid=13598.

[55] Bennett, *Radical Pacifism*, 95.

[56] James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Arbor House, 1985), 155.

protesting? Hamming pointed to Gene Sharp, an American political scientist, and uses his theory from the 1970s to explain what nonviolent protest entails:

> [A] technique of conducting protest, resistance, and intervention without physical violence by: (a) acts of omission (that is, the participants refuse to perform acts which they usually perform, or are required by law or regulation to perform); or (b) acts of commission (that is, the participants perform acts which they usually do not perform, are not expected by custom to perform, or are forbidden by law or regulation from performing); or (c) a combination of both.[57]

The interesting aspect behind this definition is the rejection of physical violence while protesting. Nonviolence is of vital importance in this strategy.

David Cortright, a peace activist and board member of the Fourth Freedom Forum, wrote in his *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* (2008) how Reinhold Niebuhr, an American theologist, looked at nonviolent protesters and Gandhi in particular.[58] Niebuhr explained that only through nonviolent protest, coercion could be appropriately used to change existing power structures. Niebuhr observed that a nonviolent protest carries a superior moral character while doing something illegal. He admired Gandhi for the way he shamed the oppressors. Not only sit-ins, but also other forms of civil disobedience were prohibited in societies throughout the world, but through the strategy of nonviolence, fewer people considered protests problematic and the people who watched what happened often chose the side of the protesters. These techniques, as explained by Sharp, include many forms of protest. Sharp's theory delineates what nonviolent protest is within the realm of nonviolence. There are, however, multiple methods of protest with all different aims. Although a march and a sit-in are both nonviolent, there are differences between the targets.

José-Antonio Orosco, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Oregon, goes further into nonviolent protest and distinguished several methods within the overall strategy of nonviolent protest in his chapter in *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence*

[57] Gene Sharp, *Exploring Non-violent Action* (Boston, MA: Porter Argent Publishers, 1973), 20-21.
[58] David Cortright, *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 208-210.

(2018).[59] Within the realm of nonviolent resistance, three different strategies can be distinguished: *Protest or persuasion*; *non-cooperation*; and *nonviolent intervention.* The first strategy, *protest or persuasion*, aims to draw the attention of bystanders and the group who oppresses. Popular methods or protest within this strategy are rallies, marches and public speeches. *Non-cooperation* focusses on the removal of sources of the oppressing group or institutions. Some examples of methods of protest are boycotts, labour strikes or the refusal to pay tax. Through these methods, the oppressing group is forced to give in and listen to the protesters. The last strategy is the *nonviolent intervention.* This strategy includes obstructions, nonviolent sabotage, the paralysation of means of transport and sit-ins. Although this chapter further discusses whether all methods of protest within this strategy are nonviolent or not, this is how Orosco categorises them. It aims to make people uncomfortable about legal policies and traditions. According to this theory, the sit-in is part of *nonviolent intervention*, but this theory fails to take the financial losses of coffee and lunch counter into account. Therefore, the sit-in can also be regarded as a *non-cooperation* strategy.

As is analysed in the discussion on pacifism and nonviolence, the differences between those two concepts are marginal. Howe argued that the main difference is that pacifism is an ideology and nonviolence a set of practices.[60] It seems debatable that all mentioned practises, as described by Orosco, can be regarded as nonviolent methods of protest. Following the explanation of Niebuhr in which he explains that nonviolent protest carries a morally superior character, it must be argued that the paralysation of means of transport might lead to dangerous situations. For example, whenever a train derails as a means to protest, innocent bystanders might be hurt. Is this nonviolent? The consequences of the protest determine whether scholars should speak of nonviolent protests or whether it crossed the line of nonviolence. Some nonviolent methods described by Orosco, like the sit-in, carry the moral superiority as Niebuhr referred to. Other methods of protest, like sabotages and the paralysation of means of transport, might lead to dangerous situations in which the consequences might be that bystanders are hurt. According to Gandhi's theory, only the protesters may suffer voluntarily, not bystanders or oppressors. Although this thesis

[59] José-Antonio Orosco, ''Pacifism as Pathology,'' in *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence,* ed. Andrew Fiala (New York: Routledge, 2018), 207.
[60] Howes, ''The Failure of Pacifism and the Success of Nonviolence,'' 430.

follows the theory of Orosco, it acknowledges that *nonviolent intervention* should be seen in the light of strictly nonviolent methods of protest.

The moral superiority, as explained by Nieburg and practised by Gandhi, could only count when the degree of nonviolence is as high as possible. This means that bystanders will not suffer in any way from the protesters. It is pointed out that actual physical dangers are problematic in some methods of protest described by Orosco. Still, the psychological damage nonviolent protests could cause should also be taken into account. Voluntary suffering mirrors the behaviour of the oppressors, and the aim is to let people think of established traditions, like segregation. The line between voluntary suffering and self-immolation, however, is thin. Take, for example, the protest of Buddhist Monk Thích Quảng Đức. To protest against the Vietnam War, and the South Vietnamese government, he burned himself to death (see image one). The *New York Times* reports that thousands of South Vietnamese were watching how this happened.[61] Did this harm people who viewed this protest? The strength of voluntary suffering is, for example, when people see how violently the police reacts to a nonviolent protest. Although this also contains a degree of self-immolation, because protesters let it happen to them, it matters who acts in the case of a protest. In the case of the monk, he hurts himself. He does not directly shame the oppressors, for it is not the South Vietnamese government who burns him. For the maintenance of nonviolence and the aspect of voluntary suffering, it is vital to let the oppressors be the aggressors.

Image 1. *The protest of Thích Quảng Đức.* Source: Malcolm W. Browne, ''1963 Photo Contest, World Press Photo of the Year,'' June 11, 1963, The Associated Press. Photo copied from World Press Photo, accessed April 22, 2020, https://www.worldpressphoto.org/collection/photo/1963/36275/1/1963-malcolm-w-browne-wy.

Nonviolent protest is now defined out of the overall idea of nonviolence. Within nonviolent protests, the sit-in can be seen as *nonviolent intervention* or *non-cooperation*. There are, however, also examples of violent sit-ins. The sit-in as a method of protest that

[61] ''Monk Suicide by Fire In Anti-Diem Protest,'' *New York Times*, June 11, 1963, 6.

this thesis follows was conducted and executed by people who were aware of nonviolent principles and acted as such. This means that the protesters avoided violence at all cost and never reacted violently, even when they were attacked. What is the importance of nonviolence in contrast to violent protest? The degree of justification is higher once the protesters remain strictly nonviolent. Maria J. Stephan, Director of the Program on Nonviolent Action at the U.S. Institute of Peace and Erica Chenoweth, Professor in Human Rights and International Affairs at Harvard Kennedy School compared 323 nonviolent and violent campaigns from 1900 to 2006.[62] Of the major nonviolent campaigns, 53% successfully obtained their goals; major violent campaigns were successful in 26% of the cases.[63] The difference between violent and nonviolent is vital in this thesis. In the search to find the first sit-in conducted in the United States, it could be argued that the strategy of sitting down was used before the Civil Rights Movement, but this method of protest carried a degree of violence.

2.4. The nonviolent sit-in

On the 8th of January, 1937, the United States Office of the Commanding General reported about a new 'danger' that emerged among workers in several factories in the United States:

> 'The labor situation, particularly as it affects the automobile and related industries, gradually has become more and more serious, and is now rapidly approaching a critical stage (…) the present tactics of the C.I.O. are very effective in that sit-down strikes occur unexpectedly on many widely scattered fronts and are extremely difficult for any management to cope with.'[64]

A month later, on the 4th of February, the same Office reported about the violence that erupted between the police and the strikers.[65] In terms of method of protest, the sit-down strike of 1936-1937 is a good example of a sit-in, but the critical element of nonviolence is

[62] Maria J. Stephan and Erica Chenoweth, ''Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict,'' *International Security* 33, no. 1 (2008): 42.
[63] Stephan and Chenoweth, 8.
[64] Office of the Commanding General memo to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department, Washington D.C., January 8, 1937, U.S. Military Intelligence Reports: Surveillance of Radicals in the United States, 1917-1941 reel 30.
[65] Office of the Commanding General memo to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department, Washington D.C., February 4, 1937, U.S. Military Intelligence Reports: Surveillance of Radicals in the United States, 1917-1941 reel 30.

missing. Important in this case is the violent reaction of the protesters. It turned out that not long after this strike at General Motors, the first sit-in was organised that met philosophical nonviolent standards.

This thesis claims that transnational influences were important for the initiation of the nonviolent sit-in, but also national phenomena. Although the protest against General Motors ended in violence, the idea of sitting down to protest was not new in the United States. Dan J. Wang, Professor of Business and Sociology at Columbia Business School, and Sarah A. Soule, Professor of Organisational Behaviour at Stanford Graduate School of Business, claim that the sit-in used by the Civil Rights Movement evolved out of these protests in industries.[66] Wang and Soule call this development a tactical innovation.

James Farmer explained in his autobiography how the CORE was founded in 1942 and how the first sit-in directly followed.[67] During the process of the founding of this organisation, Farmer protested against Jack Spratt, the manager of a coffee house who refused service to African-Americans. In contrast to the strike at General Motors in 1936-1937, this protest was followed by some steps in which no direct action was involved. Before protesting, Farmer tried to negotiate with Spratt. It ought to be strictly nonviolent. Farmer was influenced by Gandhi, as can be read in his book: 'According to Gandhi's steps, I pointed out, we should now attempt to negotiate before using direct action at Jack Spratt. Although we were not slaves to Gandhi's steps, and Shridharani had not written the Bible, I urged that we make a serious and honest effort at negotiation before we clobbered our opponent - nonviolently, of course.'[68] After several attempts to negotiate with Spratt, Farmer believed it was time to conduct the first sit-in that was organised by a civil rights organisation. Farmer and the co-founders of CORE were the first Americans who combined the method of protest, the sit-in, with nonviolence and that distinguishes this sit-in from the sit-down strikes of the 1930s. Why did Farmer choose to sit-in instead of a different method of nonviolent protest?

During a CORE meeting in May 1942, the committee members decided that negotiating with Spratt should be followed by nonviolent protest. Inspired by Gandhi who preached *non-cooperation* and *nonviolent intervention*, the CORE chose not to organise a picket-line, but to send a racially mixed group of twenty-eight people inside the restaurant

[66] Dan J. Wang and Sarah A. Soule, ''Tactical Innovation in Social Movements: The Effects of Peripheral and Multi-Issue Protest,'' *American Sociological Review* 81, no. 3 (June 2016): 520.
[67] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart,* 101-108.
[68] Farmer, 93-94.

to sit at the counter and occupy the seats. Barry L. Gan, Professor of Philosophy at St. Bonaventure University in New York, sees a clear link between Gandhi's strategy of protest and African-American protesters.[69] He argues that protesters in the 1950s, like King and James M. Lawson Jr., copied some methods of Gandhi.

It remains uncertain if Farmer did the same. It could only be concluded from his autobiography that he was inspired by Gandhi and that he knew about his method of protest. Farmer heard about the Salt Marches.[70] It might be a logical result of circumstances that the sit-in was born out of this protest against a restaurant. To add the element of *nonviolent intervention* to the already existing protests like rallies and picket lines, one should occupy something to make a statement. The things which should be occupied in a restaurant to challenge segregation were seats. Farmer described how this first sit-in occurred: 'With the discipline of peacefulness strictly observed, we occupied all available seating spaces at the counter and in booths.'[71] A description where his idea of occupying the seats in a restaurant came from is missing. Perhaps the idea of a sit-down, as conducted by the employees of General Motors in 1936, roamed around. Although it is uncertain where Farmer's idea came from, he added the element of occupation, which was detrimental for businesses, to his protest and remained strictly nonviolent.

The nonviolent strategy was derived out of a variety of elements. Christianity and Buddhism both stand out as critical foundations for this concept. Christianity, because this religion was the most important one in the twentieth century in the United States and people like Thoreau were inspired by the Bible; Buddhism, because transnational currents brought their philosophy across the Atlantic and activists like Gandhi and Shridharani deliberately searched for methods to disseminate their message. The nonviolent strategy was used as a method to protest. Theoretically, nonviolent protest tends to persuade bystanders to choose the side of the protesters. It shames the opposition because of the element of voluntary suffering. In the third chapter, it is analysed how this turned out in practice. Within this nonviolent strategy, the sit-in can be regarded as a *nonviolent intervention*. It tries to challenge established traditions and legal policies. It is not primarily a tool to communicate

[69] Barry L. Gan, ''The Gandhi-King tradition and *Satyagraha*,'' in *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence,* ed. Andrew Fiala (New York: Routledge, 2018), 97-100.
[70] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart,* 93.
[71] Farmer*,* 106.

to bystanders like demonstrations, rallies and picket lines do, but it becomes clear in the next chapter that the mass media picked up the idea of the sit-in. The first nonviolent sit-in, conducted by African-Americans as a method of protest for the Civil Rights Movement, occurred in 1942. Although it did not gain much media attention, this first sit-in was important for the Civil Rights Movement. The sit-in was popularised in the 1960s, but between 1942 and 1960, more sit-ins were organised that did not gain much media attention. The Greensboro sit-in of 1960 assured the widespread dissemination of the idea of this method of protest (see 3.3. The Greensboro Four).

Chapter 3. The popularisation of the sit-in by the US Civil Rights Movement

On the 1st of February, 2020, former President of the United States, Barack Obama, commemorated the sit-in of four young protesters in Greensboro, North Carolina:

> 'Sixty years ago today, the Greensboro Four stood up to injustice by sitting down at a lunch counter. Our journey is full of such stories; of acts of patriotic protest that challenge this country we love to live up to our highest ideals, however long it takes. #BlackHistoryMonth'[72]

The sit-in at the Woolworth's store was the most important sit-in for the popularisation of this method of protest because it triggered a wave of sit-in protests throughout the United States. Kenneth T. Andrews and Michael Biggs, both Professors of Sociology, argued that '[the] consequences of this protest wave can hardly be overstated. The sit-ins mobilized tens of thousands of blacks (and hundreds of whites) and created a new movement organization, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).'[73] What makes the sit-in at the Woolworth's lunch counter on the 1st of February 1960 the most commemorated and important sit-in in United States' history? To answer this question, attention should be given to previous sit-ins to have a better understanding of the success of the Woolworth's sit-in of 1960. This chapter answers the question of how the US Civil Rights Movement popularised the sit-in as a method of protest.

At first, the continuation of the sit-in after the first sit-in of 1942 is discussed. An overview is given about sit-ins and important occurrences regarding the Civil Rights Movement in the 1940s. Secondly, the same kind of overview is given about the 1950s. Thirdly, attention is given to the most important sit-in, staged by the Greensboro Four. This was the essential sit-in for the popularisation of this method of protest. Fourthly, a sub-chapter answers how the sit-in was further popularised by the Civil Rights Movement between 1960 and 1964, but also how the sit-in lost its momentum.

[72] Barack Obama (@BarackObama), ''The Greensboro Four,'' Twitter message, February 1, 2020, https://twitter.com/BarackObama/status/1223706755693187078.
[73] Kenneth T. Andrews and Michael Biggs, ''The Dynamics of Protest Diffusion: Movement Organizations, Social Networks, and News Media in the 1960 Sit-Ins,'' *American Sociological Review* 71, No. 5 (Oct., 2006): 754.

3.1. Sit-ins in the 1940s

As described in the previous chapter, the first sit-in was held in 1942. World War II had a significant influence on this method of protest. Steven F. Lawson, one of the most important historians regarding the Civil Rights Movement, explained how during the war students protested against racial segregation and how this relates to the sit-in. He described that 'on April 17 [1943], student volunteers marched to the Little Palace Cafeteria on Fourteenth and U Streets, NW. Teams of three entered the facility and were rebuffed. While they sat at the tables and read their textbooks, others picketed outside hoisting posters with slogans such as "We Die Together – Why Can't We Eat Together?"'[74] That African-Americans now died for the United States increased the strive for desegregation amongst those who were refused service in restaurants and coffee counters.

Few sit-in campaigns which occurred during World War II were documented. Jen Tebbe, Digital Communications Manager of the Missouri Historical Society, published an article on her local historical organisations' website about a sit-in which was held in 1944.[75] This sit-in was organised by the Citizens Civil Rights Committee (CCRC) and the manifestation, in general, counted several sit-ins before the attempt to desegregate lunch counters ended. As a result: 'CCRC's sit-in campaign ended the following year without achieving true desegregation in the city's dining establishments. It did, however, inspire another group that identified strongly with the principles of nonviolent direct action.'[76]

This other group was founded in 1947, and the founders were inspired by a civil rights organisation that was formed by James Farmer in 1942 in Chicago, the CORE.[77] Mary Kimbrough, a local historian who focusses on the history of St. Louis, Missouri, wrote, together with the co-founder of the St. Louis CORE, Margaret W. Dagen, a comprehensive overview of the first years of this local CORE chapter. The St. Louis CORE carried the same principles of nonviolence as the Chicago CORE. Kimbrough and Dagen explain that everyone was invited to join the St. Louis CORE, '[before] sit-ins and demonstrations began, however, there were numerous in-depth discussions of CORE's roots in the teaching and actions of

[74] Steven F. Lawson, *Running for Freedom: Civil Rights and Black Politics in America since 1941* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 41-42.
[75] Jen Tebbe, ''St. Louis's Forgotten Sit-In Story,'' Missouri Historical Society, accessed April 7, 2020, https://mohistory.org/blog/st-louiss-forgotten-sit-in-story/.
[76] Tebbe, 'St. Louis's Forgotten Sit-In Story.''
[77] Mary Kimbrough and Margaret W. Dagen, *Victory Without Violence: The First Ten Years of the St. Louis Committee of Racial Equality (CORE), 1947-1957* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 21.

Gandhi, of passive resistance, and of the absolute verbal and physical discipline required of anyone wanting to be a member of the organization.'[78] From 1947 onwards, this chapter of the CORE organised multiple sit-ins that were inspired by Gandhian principles. Meier and Rudwick provide details of the CORE chapters and explained that in 1947, the CORE counted thirteen chapters in the United States.[79] None of these chapters were in the South of the United States.

The years after World War II proved to be vital for the success of the Civil Rights Movement, because the United States media landscape changed drastically. Juan González and Joseph Torres, both journalists who focussed on the freedom of press, claimed that the change of media coverage of racial discrimination changed when African-American veterans returned to the United States after World War II.[80] Those veterans were disappointed in the government, for no legislative changes were to in their benefit despite their willingness to fight and die for the country. The popularisation of the television created opportunities for African-Americans to take the places of some broadcast companies who switched their investment to television.[81] The number of radio channels almost tripled between 1946 and 1954.[82] Protesters used the radio to tell the nation about their protests.

The popularity of the sit-in increased due to World War II, because African-Americans could not accept that they were good enough to die for the United States, but not good enough to live in it. African-American war veterans endorsed this view and also joined protest organisations. The news coverage started to increase from the mid-1940s onwards. All these aspects ensured that the Civil Rights Movement was growing in the 1940s. It remains unclear, however, how many sit-ins were actually organised, because media did not pick up the stories of the sit-ins in this decade. Fortunately, people like to co-founder of St. Louis CORE provides first-hand insights. She contributed to *Victory Without Violence* (2000) and only through this oral history those sit-ins can now be enquired, because '[despite] CORE's visibility, the major St. Louis daily newspapers paid little or no notice to their protests.'[83] The reason for this was that the press was also segregated. The mainstream

[78] Kimbrough and Dagen, 30-31.
[79] Meier and Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement,* 23.
[80] Juan González and Joseph Torres, *News for All the People: The Epic Story of Race and the American Media* (London: Verso Books, 2012), 277
[81] González and Torres, 278.
[82] In 1946, 948 AM stations were registered. In 1954, there were 2.824. González and Torres, 278.
[83] Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence,* 7.

press was written by white Americans and the racial discrimination of African-Americans was not covered by the mainstream press.[84] The reason was that African-Americans were regarded as second class citizens, so news items about their struggle were regarded as unimportant. This is one of the established tradition African-Americans started to protest against.

People outside the Civil Rights Movement started to use the sit-in as well. On the 17th of March 1947, *the New York Times* wrote about a sit-in held by delegates of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) at a coffee shop in Columbus, Ohio.[85] In this case, the protesters supported their African-Americans colleagues who were refused service. The protesters were not trained in Gandhian nonviolence, but it may be concluded that other organisations heard of the sit-in and supported the desegregation protests. On the 17th of November 1950, *the New York Times* wrote about a sit-in protest in New York for fair housing.[86] The organisation which organised this sit-in also sponsored this action. In this case, the purpose was not desegregation of public places. Not all organisations in the mentioned examples carried the same Gandhian principles as the CORE chapters. CORE chapters made sure that their members carried out the Gandhian principles. All the members remained nonviolent. No violence was used during both sit-ins, but especially the latter case cannot be regarded as a sit-in based on Gandhian principles, because there was no element of voluntary suffering involved. The protesters got paid. Nevertheless, it may be concluded that people outside the Civil Rights Movement heard about the sit-in and used it in their way.

Sit-ins in the 1940s were not only executed in catering industries like restaurants and coffee houses. In 1947, the CORE and the FOR organised a sit-in campaign in the public travel industry. Lewis Perry, a Professor Emeritus in History at Saint Louis University, described how a mixed racial group of sixteen protesters tested the integration of buses' front row seats in Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia and North Carolina.[87] Bayard Rustin, an African-American leader in several social movements like civil rights, gay rights and socialism, was one the sixteen protesters. Daniel Levine, Professor of History and Political

[84] González and Torres, *News for All the People,* 163.
[85] ''CIO Delegates 'Sit In' at Columbus Hotel As Waitresses Refuse to Serve Negroes,'' *New York Times,* March 17, 1947, 16.
[86] ''Sit-in Protest Ended at Housing Office,'' *New York Times,* November 17, 1950, 29.
[87] Lewis Perry, *Civil Disobedience: An American Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 233.

Science at Bowdoin College, Maine, described how Rustin experienced this trip in this biography of Rustin:

> At a rest stop on the way from Petersburg, Virginia, to Durham, North Carolina, the driver asked Rustin, who was sitting in the front of the bus, to move to the rear. He calmly refused. This situation had been anticipated. The driver said he ''would deal with that in Blackstone,'' but he didn't, and there was no further incident until the group reached Oxford, North Carolina.[88]

The protesters were strongly advised not to travel further south, where the racial tensions were more substantial in comparison to the Northern States.[89] Even though these sit-ins were called 'freedom rides' and the particular tour which was organised in 1947 was called 'Journey of Reconciliation', in terms of the method of protest, a freedom ride can also be regarded as a sit-in. Rosa Parks, who tested segregation in 1955 by sitting in front of the bus and popularised this method of protest, was involved in the Civil Rights Movement and heard about the protest of 1947.[90]

The freedom rides had another important purpose. Where sit-ins in restaurants and coffee counters were not particularly organised to achieve media attention, but simply to test segregation, the organisers of the Journey of Reconciliation had another aim. The CORE, as a civil rights organisation, was growing during the 1940s, but there were only local chapters. Levine described how the CORE members used freedom rides to unify the movement: 'From a purely organizational point of view, a journey through several states might help CORE become more unified rather than a series of local semi-independent chapters and might help establish the organization in the South.'[91] When the theory of Orosco is applied on the freedom rides, it becomes clear that it cannot just be regarded as a *nonviolent intervention* like a restaurant sit-in does, because it is not only a tool to make an obstruction or to protest against segregation. It can also be seen as *protest or persuasion* because it attracted media attention, and it was used as a tool to communicate to bystanders.[92]

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[88] Daniel Levine, *Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 53.
[89] Perry, *Civil Disobedience,* 233.
[90] Lawson, *Running for Freedom,* 101-102.
[91] Levine, *Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement*, 52.
[92] Orosco, ''Pacifism as Pathology,'' 207.

The 1940s were not the most important decade for the popularisation of the sit-in as a method of protest, but after the first sit-in was organised in 1942, civil rights protesters kept using it. African-Americans started to use the sit-in during this decade, because World War II increased their willingness to change society. The sit-in was expanded to more than only cafeteria industries, as public transport was also used as a place to protest. The idea might have transmitted to people outside the Civil Rights Movement, because the sit-in is also used for other purposes than to protest against racial segregation. It should, however, be taken into account that other sit-ins did not carry the same principles as an organisation as the CORE did. The fact that the popularity of the method of protest increased in the 1940s had to do with the increasing press coverage that started to take off after World War II of which African-Americans profited from disseminating their message of protest.

3.2. Sit-ins in the 1950s

The Journey for Reconciliation of 1947 embarked the new aim to go South for the Civil Rights Movement. The challenge of the 1950s was to establish a CORE chapter in the South and introduce the idea of protesting in these states.[93] A CORE chapter in the South would prove important for the popularisation of the sit-in, for local CORE chapters organised those protests. On the question about the differences between sit-ins in the Northern States and sit-ins in the Southern States in the 1950s, Bruce Hartford, one of the two interviewees for this thesis, remembered from his time in which he was involved in the CORE what made the sit-in in the South problematic:

> The segregation was much less intense [in the North]. There was incidents of violence, but not enormously so or devastatingly so. Sit-ins in the Deep South just couldn't survive in the '50s. You won't see any sit-ins in Alabama or Mississippi in the '50s. You will see in Oklahoma, which is on the periphery. North Carolina is known as Mid South, meaning at that time it wasn't quite as vicious as the Deep South. But even there, that was a rare outlier. That was an exception.[94]

[93] 'The 1949 Convention, acting upon Rustin's recommendation, passed a resolution that ''immediate action be taken toward the setting up of CORE groups in key locations in the South.''' Meier and Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement*, 48.
[94] Bruce Hartford, interview conducted by Milan Weber, February 26, 2020.

To only use the sharp delineation between the Southern States and the Northern States is not satisfying to use as a differentiator to point out the difference of the acceptability of African-Americans. States like Oklahoma and North Carolina can be regarded as peripheric states. Hartford explained that the acceptance of African-Americans was not only a difference between types of states, but also between types of places:

> [If] you look at the places in the South where sit-in movements succeeded in desegregating some public accommodations, it was almost always in a college town, which tended to be more liberal and there was an economic incentive for college towns to not be seen as racist, because they were desperately trying to increase the status of Southern colleges to compete with Northern colleges.[95]

The sit-ins of the 1950s is a story of the strive to move South for the Civil Rights Movement. With 'the South', this thesis does not only focus on the Southern States, but on the places which were historically regarded as lion dens for African-American protesters. It is essential to understand the popularisation of the sit-in as a method of protest in light of the aims of the movement.

It is also important to mention who organised these protests. Predominantly students organised sit-ins. Theodore Carter DeLaney, Professor of History at Washington and Lee University, pointed to the role of local CORE and National Association for the Advancement for Colored People (NAACP) chapters who were involved in the continuation of these sit-ins after the 1940s.[96] The people behind these organisations were often students. DeLaney endorses the view that from the 1940s onwards, more sit-ins were documented. Still, he also reminds us that this has nothing to do with improved acceptability of the African-American struggle to desegregate. The increasing newspaper coverage of the anti-segregation struggle was responsible for the increase of sit-in documentations.[97]

Not only African-American news coverage increased. Interestingly, the world took an interest in the woeful situation of African-Americans. Dudziak doubted to what extent changing legislation to the advantage of African-Americans is owed to the work of

[95] Hartford, interview.
[96] Theodore Carter DeLaney, ''The Sit-In Demonstrations in Historic Perspective,'' *The North Carolina Historical Review* 87, no. 4 (October 2010): 432.
[97] DeLaney, 435.

protesters. 'Newspapers throughout the world carried stories about discrimination against nonwhite visiting foreign dignitaries, as well as against American blacks.'[98] International pressure increased on the US government to change legislation in favour of African-Americans. In an article about the role of the Cold War in relation to the Civil Rights Movement, Dudziak argues that the landmark decision *Brown versus Board of Education*, which officially ended educational segregation in 1954, was decided in favour for African-Americans through international pressure.[99]

For the popularisation of the Civil Rights Movement and the sit-in as a method of protest in the United States, however, the underlying reason why the court granted Linda Brown permission to enrol on the school of her own choice did not matter. Whether international pressure or national court cases ended educational segregation is not important for the popularisation of the sit-in. The outcome itself did matter. Although the Supreme Court declared that educational segregation was unconstitutional, nothing really changed in the United States' education system. Juan Williams, a journalist and political analyst, pointed out that due to the *Brown* decision and the fact that African-Americans were still not able to enrol on every school, the NAACP opened more youth council chapters.[100] African-Americans started to understand that legislative improvement did not change the roots of racism which lay deep in American society.

One year after the *Brown* decision, an important public transport sit-in was held. David Reynolds, a British historian and Professor of International History at a Fellow of Christ's College in Cambridge, described how Rosa Parks used the idea of a freedom ride for an individual act.[101] On the 1st of December, 1955, Parks refused to move to the back of the bus after the driver asked her to. This happened in the Deep South, in Montgomery, Alabama. Exemplary for 1950s media coverage in the United States, *the New York Times* described this act of civil disobedience as a crime.[102] Reynolds explained that after *Brown,* many people started an initiative to protest as Parks did. The importance of this sit-in was

[98] Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 2000), 12.
[99] Dudziak, ''Brown as a Cold War Case,'' 35.
[100] Juan Williams, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965* (New York: Penguin Books, 2013), 121.
[101] David Reynolds, *America, Empire of Liberty* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), 411.
[102] The *New York Times* reports about the crime Parks committed. Although the newspapers openly wonders why so many African-Americans supported the bus-boycott after Parks' action, it does not justify the act of Parks and calls it a criminal act. ''''Crime Wave'' in Alabama,'' *New York Times,* February 24, 1956, 24.

that it was followed by a bus boycott.[103] A boycott is, in line with Orosco's theory, a form of *non-cooperation*, so the direct consequence of Parks' sit-in was not a direct popularisation of the sit-in. Still, Parks' act turned out to be very important for the popularisation of the Civil Rights Movement and therefore indirectly for the sit-in as well.

James M. Lawson Jr., an African-American organiser of sit-ins and nonviolent trainer during the 1950s, argued that in contrast to what conventional histories claim, Parks' action was not a one-off operation. He claims that 'Rosa Parks' Struggle represents, then, the explosive spark that became the first organizing and emerging campaign to push back against segregation and hopelessness for millions of people.'[104] This revision also implies new insights on Parks' relation to the Civil Rights Movement. Writing in 2019, Grim revised Parks' role within the Civil Rights Movement: 'Often misremembered as a feeble old woman, Parks was actually a trained and able [NAACP] activist and was ready to take a stand for civil rights that fateful day on a bus in Montgomery.'[105]

Local protesters in Montgomery decided to use the story of Parks for their cause against discrimination. Reynolds described why she stood out as a symbol to popularise the civil rights struggle in the South. She was 'married, middle-aged and a steady churchgoer, she would be a perfect symbol.'[106] Parks, as a symbol of innocence, would encourage African-Americans in the Deep South to join the Civil Rights Movement. Rufus Burrow Jr., Professor Emeritus of Christian Thought and Martin Luther King expert, points to another factor that made Parks' sit-in more important. During the Bus Boycott that followed, Martin Luther King came up as a civil rights leader.[107] King was to become an important leader to further popularise the Civil Rights Movement. His message was disseminated, not only within the United States, but also to the rest of the world.

Although the sit-in of Parks is not a story which directly popularised the sit-in, it helped to spread the Civil Rights Movement into the Deep South. A wave of protests followed in which King became the leader of the movement. Hall described that many conventional histories consider the *Brown* case as the starting point of the Civil Rights

[103] Reynolds, *America, Empire of Liberty,* 412.
[104] James M. Lawson Jr., ''Afterword: Nonviolence and the Non-Existent Country,'' in *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence,* ed. Andrew Fiala (New York: Routledge, 2018), 387.
[105] Grimm, ''One Man's Peace,'' 110.
[106] Reynolds, *America, Empire of Liberty,* 412.
[107] Rufus Burrow Jr., *Extremist for Love: Martin Luther King Jr., Man of Ideas and Nonviolent Social Action* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 144.

Movement.[108] Although this idea does not fit within current historiographical trends, because earlier essential things happened before 1954, *Brown* proved to be of outstanding importance. Parks' sit-in and the boycott that followed, served as an important catalyst for the popularisation of the Civil Rights Movement and therefore also the sit-in.

In the South, the CORE did not succeed in affiliating new chapters. The number of CORE chapters varies from seven to nine in the middle of the 1950s.[109] King understood the situation in the South. He founded a new organisation to help African-Americans coordinate their protest in the South, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).[110] The SCLC organised many sit-ins in peripherical cities like Kansas City, Missouri; Louisville, Kentucky; and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, explained Peter Ackerman, who obtained a PhD in international relations and Jack Duvall, the President of the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict.[111]

DeLaney described how training sessions took place in cities and towns in the Southern States like Baton Rouge, Louisiana and Nashville, Tennessee.[112] One of these training sessions was attended by Diane Nash, an American civil rights activist. She moved from Boston to Nashville in 1959 to study in Tennessee. Linda T. Wynn, Professor of History at Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee enquired the activities of protesters in the late 1950s in Nashville. James M. Lawson Jr. organised workshops in nonviolence at Fisk University.[113] The training session of Lawson ensured the nonviolent character of the sit-ins, which followed in 1959 and 1960. Due to Lawson, the principles of Gandhi were communicated to the protesters.

In early 1959, the Nashville Christian Leadership Council (NCLC) organised sit-ins in which protesters left the restaurant after it became clear they were refused service.[114] The protesters followed the Gandhian steps of negotiation, just like James Farmer did in 1942.[115] The Gandhian influences came from the organiser of the workshops. Lawson was a Christian

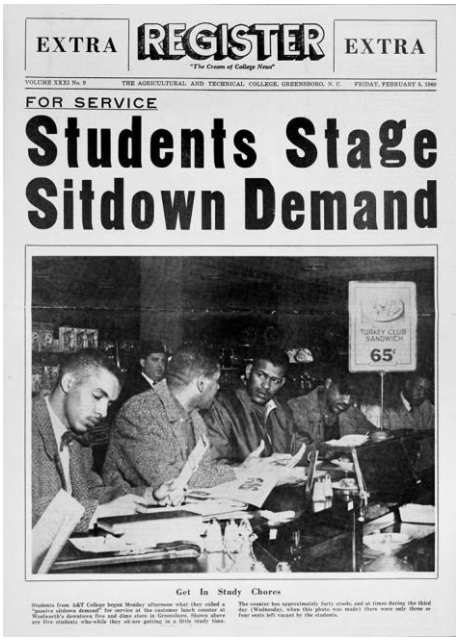
[108] Hall, ''The Long Civil Rights Movement,'' 1234.
[109] Meier and Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement*, 73.
[110] Lawson, *Running for Freedom,* 138.
[111] Peter Ackerman and Jack Duvall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 312.
[112] DeLaney, ''The Sit-In Demonstrations in Historic Perspective,'' 435.
[113] Lindy T. Wynn, ''Diane Judith Nash (1938–) A Mission for Equality, Justice, and Social Change,'' in *Tennessee Women: Their Lives and Times,* ed. Sarah Wilkerson Freeman, Beverly Greene Bond and Laura Helper-Ferris (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 287.
[114] Wynn, 288.
[115] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart,* 93-94.

pacifist and a member of the FOR and the CORE. He studied Gandhian principles in India.[116] Full-scale sit-ins were organised in 1960, meaning that the students remained seated when they were refused service at coffee counters. The full-scale sit-ins are regarded as the start of the Nashville Movement, which occurred on the 13th of February 1960.[117] The most influential sit-in of United States history, however, took place in the 1st of that month.

3.3. The Greensboro Four

Two sit-in campaigns started almost simultaneously. In Greensboro, North Carolina and Nashville, Tennessee. The first one was the most important sit-in. The popularisation on a big scale started with the sit-in which occurred on the 1st of February 1960, the sit-in of the Greensboro Four (see image two). According to Dudziak, this sit-in served as the catalyst for the popularisation of this method of protest:

> On February 1, 1960, four African American college students held a sit-in at the segregated lunch counter at Woolworth's in Greensboro, North Carolina. The North Carolina protest inspired many others, by August 1961 more than seventy thousand people had participated in sit-ins and more than three thousand had been arrested. Student involvement in the sit-ins and other movement activity was a catalyst behind the founding of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in April 1960.[118]


EXTRA REGISTER EXTRA

"The Cream of College News"

VOLUME XXXI No. 9 THE AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE, GREENSBORO, N. C. FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1960

FOR SERVICE

Students Stage Sitdown Demand

TURKEY CLUB SANDWICH 65¢

Get In Study Chores

Image 2. *The Greensboro Four.* Source: ''Student Stage Sitdown Demand,'' Register: The Cream of College News, February 5, 1960, 1.

Harvard Sitkoff claimed in *The Struggle for Black Equality: 1954-1992* (1993) that this sit-in occurred spontaneously: 'They were not content to wait forever for the courts and the white South to grant them rights they felt were their due. They had frequently expressed their desire to act.'[119] Sitkoff did not mention any background information about the involvement of the four protesters in the Civil Rights Movement.

[116] DeLaney, ''The Sit-In Demonstrations in Historic Perspective,'' 435.
[117] DeLaney, 435-436.
[118] Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 157.
[119] Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality: 1954-1992* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 62.

Current historiography refutes Sitkoff's premise and points to the connections these students had with other civil rights protesters. Christopher W. Schmidt, Professor of Law at Chicago-Kent College of Law, wrote a book about this famous sit-in. He explained that the Greensboro sit-in was less spontaneous than the students wanted people to believe:

> The students tended to emphasize the spontaneous elements of the sit-ins. The protests, they insisted over and over again, were nothing more than a necessary, commonsense response to this particular racial injustice. (…) Leaders of civil rights organizations emphasized connections between the 1960 sit-ins and earlier protest campaigns – campaigns in which their organizations had more conspicuous roles.[120]

The question of whether the sit-in in Greensboro was a spontaneous act or not is important. The reason for this is because it answers the question about the involvement of the Greensboro Four in the Civil Rights Movement. Without their involvement, previous sit-ins were less important, because in that case these activists spontaneously invented a new method of protest. Due to a revision of their story, it became clear that sit-in cases of the 1940s and 1950s were important for the ultimate catalyst of this sit-in, the Greensboro sit-in.

On Tuesday the 2nd of February 1960, twenty-seven students, including four women, joined the sit-in campaign. The day after, sixty students sat-in at Woolworth's in Greensboro. On Tuesday the 4th, white protesters joined the sit-ins, and during the same week, protests were organised in another company which supported racial segregation in Greensboro.[121] The sit-in spread rapidly from Greensboro to other places in the state. 'On February 8, students in Durham and Winston-Salem started protests at their local lunch counters. In the following days, students in Charlotte, Raleigh, Fayetteville, Elizabeth City, High Point, and Concord joined what quickly became a statewide movement,' explained Smith.[122] In comparison to sit-ins of the 1940s and the 1950s, a wave of students heard about what happened in Greensboro and copied this idea. It did not take long before it spread to other states.

[120] Christopher W. Schmidt, *The Sit-ins: Protest and Legal Change in the Civil Rights Era* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), 16-17.
[121] Perry, *Civil Disobedience,* 227.
[122] Schmidt, *The Sit-ins*, 21.

Sociologists Andrews and Biggs provided quantitative data which helps to explain the direct successes of the sit-in in North Carolina. 'Within two months of the initial event in Greensboro, sit-ins had been staged in every Southern state except Mississippi.'[123] Between the 1st of February and the 14th of April 1960, sit-ins were organised in sixty-six cities across the United States.[124] They argue that predominantly African-American students were responsible for the popularisation of the sit-in. Media attention was also very important, just like the political acceptance of the state in which a sit-in was organised for the first time.[125] The sociologists also pointed out how important the role was of civil rights organisations: 'As for the initiation of protest, the presence of a CORE Chapter or NAACP College Chapter at least doubled the chance of a sit-in.'[126] In contrast to how Hartford describes how in the 1950s sit-ins in the South were impossible to occur, protesters started to organise sit-ins from 1960 onwards, despite the danger of violence.

The results of Andrews and Biggs, based on quantitative data, can be supported by qualitative sources. Heather Booth, a civil rights organiser, serves as an example of someone who was inspired by the sit-in in Greensboro:

> In 1960, when I heard about the sit-ins at Woolworth's in the South, I was living in New York City. (…) Hearing about this, there were demonstrations then in support of those who were at Woolworth's and I joined those demonstrations. CORE was sponsoring them, and I joined in with CORE, and that led into a network of people who were doing different things. A sort of a social movement network on civil rights and also on some other related issues.[127]

Media attention contributed to the popularisation of the sit-in, but also to the unification of the Civil Rights Movement. Booth described that she was introduced into a social movement network which resulted in her involvement in the SNCC, the Vietnam Movement and

[123] Andrews and Biggs, ''The Dynamics of Protest Diffusion,'' 754.
[124] Andrews and Biggs only counted sit-ins in places where African-Americans were excluded. Sit-ins with purposes other than racial segregation are not counted in this figure. Andrews and Biggs, 759.
[125] Andrews and Biggs, 765-766.
[126] Andrews and Biggs, 770.
[127] Heather Booth, interview conducted by Milan Weber, January 28, 2019. This interview was conducted for a bachelor thesis. Milan Weber, *We Shall Not Be Moved: International Perspectives Applied to the US Civil Rights Protest Movements* (Bachelor Thesis, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2019).

protests for women rights.[128] Hartford argued that sit-ins in the South were only possible in college cities.[129] That is also in line with the quantitative conclusions of Andrews and Biggs, which shows that predominantly African-American students organised sit-ins. Andrews and Biggs also argue that political acceptability was a crucial factor for the success of the sit-in to occur. DeLaney endorses their conclusion: 'Full civil rights for African Americans was a cause whose time was long overdue in 1960. In spite of all the ugly segregationist resistance and violence, the political climate was becoming more liberal, and many whites were more open to accepting equal rights for blacks.'[130]

On the 25th of July, almost six months after the Greensboro Four started the Greensboro sit-in, Woolworth's gave in and started to serve African-Americans.[131] The campaign to end segregation in public spaces worked and therefore, the sit-in campaign at Woolworth's ended. *The New York Times* reported in August 1960 that '[white] merchants in twenty-eight cities and counties have desegregated their lunch counters this year without incident or reported business losses.'[132] From this article, it may be concluded that almost half of the sixty-six cities where sit-ins were organised after the Greensboro sit-in desegregated their lunch counters.

Miles Wolff, an author who obtained a Master degree in Southern History, calculated in 1970 that Woolworth's dropped 200.000 dollars in sales due to the sit-ins.[133] Although business losses were not reported in *the New York Times*, this aspect could have been influential in the process of desegregation. When applying the theory of Orosco, it is the aspect of money losses which assures that next to a *nonviolent intervention*, which focusses on the uncomfortable feeling of the people who are involved in established traditions like segregation, the sit-in can also be regarded as *non-cooperation*.[134] Although this was not the primary aim, the aspect of *non-cooperation* assured that an important source for the oppressor was reduced, i.e. money. It should be taken into account that a loss of money also contributed to the decision to desegregate the Woolworth's lunch counter.

[128] Booth, interview.
[129] Bruce Hartford, interview.
[130] DeLaney, ''The Sit-In Demonstrations in Historic Perspective,'' 436.
[131] Schmidt, *The Sit-ins*, 42.
[132] Claude Sitton, ''28 Cities of South Show Sit-in Gains: Racial Bars Lifted at Lunch Counters Without Incident,'' *New York Times,* August 7, 1960, 43.
[133] Miles Wolff, *Lunch at 5 & 10* (New York: Stein and Day, 1970), 174.
[134] Orosco, ''Pacifism as Pathology,'' 207.

The Greensboro sit-in was the most important sit-in protest in the history of the Civil Rights Movement. The idea of the sit-in disseminated throughout the United States and African-American protesters in many states followed the example of the Greensboro Four. Especially in college and university cities, the sit-in became popular, for predominantly students used this method of protest. Its campaigns throughout the country assured desegregation in almost half of the lunch counters where sit-ins were organised. The question remains, however, whether the wave of sit-ins started in Greensboro. Was there no sit-in activity in other cities if the Greensboro sit-in never happened?

3.4. Sit-ins between 1960 and 1964

At some places in the United States, sit-ins were already organised in the late 1950s. In Nashville, Tennessee, the NCLC leaders were already planning a large-scale sit-in campaign when they heard of the Greensboro sit-in. The sit-in campaign in Nashville serves as an excellent example of how Gandhian principles were executed. The NCLC leaders wanted to arrange lawyers, medical personnel and money to bail out arrested protesters, but the news of the Greensboro sit-in reached Nashville, and this increased the will to start the protest before all the arrangements were made.[135] Lawson, who already organised workshops in nonviolence at Fisk University, Nashville, intensified the training sessions to maintain the Gandhian principles during the first sit-in in Nashville.[136] A wave of protesters joined the NCLC.

The NCLC was determined to remain nonviolent and stick to the principles of nonviolence while protesting. Writing in 1998, John Lewis, one of the NCLC leaders during the 1960 sit-ins, remembered how the NCLC dealt with students who wanted to join the sit-in campaign last minute. Those who were not trained in nonviolence received a small letter before joining the protest:

> **Do not:** 1. Strike back nor curse if abused. 2. Laugh out. 3. Hold conversations with floor walker. 4. Leave your seat until your leader has given you permission to do so. 5. Block entrances to stores outside nor the aisles inside.
> **Do:** 1. Show yourself friendly and courteous at all times. 2. Sit straight; always face the counter. 3. Report all serious incidents to your leader. 4. Refer

[135] Wynn, ''Diane Judith Nash,'' 288.
[136] Ackerman and Duvall, *A Force More Powerful*, 316.

> information seekers to your leader in a polite manner. 5. Remember the teachings of Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. Love and nonviolence is the way.[137]

Lewis recognised the importance to remain nonviolent. As explained in the introduction, he advised Black Lives Matters activists to do the same.[138] He also thought about strategies to thoroughly convey their message. Lewis remembered how he gave thought about the performance when he wrote his book. Each sit-in was planned to begin around lunchtime, because that was the busiest moment of the day.[139] He wanted to make sure that people noticed the nonviolent response of the protesters. That was the most important weapon for the NCLC.

The Greensboro sit-in was also important for the popularisation of the sit-in in Tennessee. Still, without the dissemination of the news from North Carolina, a sit-in campaign would also have been started in 1960. It is not clear how popular the sit-in campaign would have been without the wave of sit-ins which flowed over the United States.

The situation in Tennessee was different in comparison to more moderate states. Nashville, in general, was more committed to remaining segregated than Greensboro, North Carolina. Hartford explained the differences between peripheral states like North Carolina and a Deep South state like Tennessee. The problem of the Deep South became clear after Zephaniah Alexander Looby's house was bombed.[140] Looby, a lawyer who successfully ended educational segregation in Nashville, supported the students who sat-in in the city. He survived the attack. It served as a perfect catalyst for the popularisation of the Civil Rights Movement in Nashville. Ackerman and Duvall claim that approximately 4.000 protesters joined a protest march which followed the day after the assault.[141]

Ella Baker, an SCLC activist who got frustrated by the SCLC as the organisation rather focussed on legislative change instead of direct action by the end of the 1950s, was involved with sit-ins in North Carolina and noticed how popular and effective the sit-ins were. On the

[137] John Lewis, *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998), 105-106.
[138] ''Civil Rights Icon Rep. John Lewis Calls For 'Love, Peace and Nonviolence','' YouTube channel MSNBC.
[139] Lewis, *Walking with the Wind,* 104-105.
[140] Ackerman and Duvall, *A Force More Powerful*, 325.
[141] Ackerman and Duvall, 325-326.

24th of March 1960, Septima Clark, a Director of a School in Tennessee, asked Baker why only African-American students were invited to participate in the sit-ins:

> The Sit-In demonstration by *Negroes* have proved to be very challenging. A few white Southerners feel that they should have been invited to join in the movement. It's rather startling but revealing to note that neither Negro adults not white Southerners were considered. The young *Negro* students revolted against the Southern way of life and started an action program which has spread like a prairie fire.[142]

In the eyes of Baker, the SCLC was too old-fashioned, as they were reluctant in their support of the sit-in as a method of protest. She wanted a more democratic organisation, instead of the SCLC which was led by King.[143]

Barbara Ransby, Professor of History, Gender and Women Studies and African-American Studies, argues that Baker wanted to keep the momentum of the first months of 1960, in which the sit-in successfully popularised and the Civil Rights Movement expanded to many places within the United States.[144] During her organised conference in North Carolina, which was attended by two hundred protesters, including sit-in leaders, she explained why sit-ins were essential for her and all the African-Americans in the United States: 'The Student Leadership Conference made it crystal clear that current sit-ins and other demonstrations are concerned with something much bigger than a hamburger or even a giant-sized Coke.'[145] A new organisation was founded during that conference, the SNCC.

The SNCC was important for the popularisation of the sit-in. Andrews and Biggs calculated that by the time the SNCC was founded, sit-in campaigns were organised in sixty-six cities.[146] The exact numbers of the number of sit-ins that were held are missing. Some statistics can be used, however, and they point out the success of the method of protest.

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[142] Septima P. Clark letter to Ella Baker, Director of Education Highlander Folk School Monteagle, Tennessee, March 24, 1960, Records of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, 1954-1970 reel 12.
[143] Lawson, *Running for Freedom,* 150.
[144] Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 239-240.
[145] Ella Baker, ''Bigger Than a Hamburger,'' *Southern Patriot* 8, 1960, https://amistadresource.org/documents/document_08_04_010_baker_hamburger.pdf.
[146] Andrews and Biggs calculated that by the 14th of April, 1960, sixty-six sit-in campaigns were organised. Andrews and Biggs, ''The Dynamics of Protest Diffusion,'' 759. The SNCC was founded during the Southwide Student Leadership Conference on Nonviolent Resistance to Desegregate, which was held between the 16th and 18th of April, 1960. Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, 240.

King praised the sit-in in June 1961, because by that time, lunch counters had been desegregated in more than 142 Southern Cities.[147] Between the 1st of February 1960 and August 1961, more than seventy thousand protesters have participated in sit-ins.[148]

Although protesters from several organisations cooperated during sit-ins, each organisation remained independent. Jane Stembridge, Office Secretary of the SNCC, sent a letter to the CORE after the conference organised by Baker.[149] In this letter, she praised the several protests that were held in the Southern States and thanked the CORE for its anti-segregation protests. Gordon R. Carey, Acting Executive Secretary of the CORE, responded on Stembridge's letter: 'We in CORE feel that it is most important that the various civil rights agencies keep in close touch with one another. We look forward to working with you on occasion and will certainly do anything that we can to assist.'[150] Although both organisations were nonviolent in the start of the 1960s and shared the same aims, the organisations did not merge.[151]

Due to the success of the sit-in for the desegregation of lunch counters, the focus on lunch counters lessened from 1961 onwards. The wave of popularity of lunch counter sit-ins was over. In the Deep South, segregation remained a big problem, even after 1961. Hartford explained that the issue of the South, in comparison to moderate states, was the legislation: 'In the South, segregation was mandated by law. So, theoretically, a business that served an integrated customer base, the owner could be arrested and be put in jail, and I believe that in some cases that actually happened, although it was quite rare.'[152]

Many lunch counters successfully desegregated in 1960, so during 1961, the protests shifted to desegregate other public facilities. Hence, spin-offs of the sit-in were initiated in places like cinemas, beaches, and hotels. The 1st of February, 1961, was to become a special day, because it was the anniversary of the start of the Greensboro sit-in. Civil rights protesters were asked not to step down once lunch counters were segregated. On this day,

[147] Schmidt, *The Sit-ins,* 77.
[148] Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 157.
[149] Jane Stembridge letter to the Congress of Racial Equality, June 14, 1960, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Papers, 1959-1972 reel 4.
[150] Gordon R. Carey letter to Jane Stembridge, Office Secretary of the SNCC, November 3, 1960, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Papers, 1959-1972 reel 4.
[151] The SNCC became a violent organisation during the middle of the 1960s. Weber, *We Shall Not Be Moved*.
[152] Hartford, interview.

the theatre stand-in was introduced through a pamphlet by the SNCC.[153] Protesters entered cinema's and stood in the lobby to blockade the entrance as a statement against racism. The sit-in spin-offs slightly differed in comparison to the sit-in, because the idea of sitting was abandoned. Instead, the same idea behind protesting was employed to make a statement against racism.

Sit-in spin-offs like stand-ins, which were organised against theatres, and jail-ins, which was a strategy to occupy jails, were less popular in comparison to sit-ins. This becomes clear through the number of participants. Jim Peck argued in a CORE pamphlet that eighty-five students jailed-in in Atlanta, Georgia.[154] This was the highlight of the jail-in as a method of protest. It is noteworthy, however, to look at some alternative manifestations that derived out of the sit-in, even though they were less important for the Civil Rights Movement. On the question where the suffix '-in' came from, Hartford answered that this derived from the sit-in, and compared it with the 'gate' suffix which derived from the Watergate scandal.[155] Like after some scandals, the suffix 'gate' follows, so also was the suffix '-in' used for comparable methods of protest. Sit-in spin-offs carried the suffix 'in', but the many methods of protest that were inspired by the sit-in were not in every case acts of civil disobedience or to protest against racial segregation. The hippie movement started to use the suffix 'in' as well in their 'be-in' and 'love-in' manifestations.

Not only the sit-in transformed during the 1960s but also the Civil Rights Movement. Chris Dixon, Professor of African-American History and American Cultural History at Macquarie University, Sidney, and Jon Piccini, Lecturer in History at Australian Catholic University, argue that a majority of African-American protesters joined the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations.[156] The organisation Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) organised teach-ins, inspired by the sit-ins, argue Dixon and Piccini: '[initially], university-based activism borrowed from the civil rights movement, especially the tactic of "sit-ins" used to claim African Americans' rights to equal access to educational and other facilities.'[157] A

[153] ''February 1, Freedom Day Action,'' Pamphlet by the SNCC, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Papers, 1959-1972 reel 5.
[154] Introduction by Jim Peck in the CORE Pamphlet. Gaither, ''Jailed-in.'' Thomas Gaither, ''Jailed-In,'' Congress of Racial Equality Pamphlet, accessed, 28 April, 2020, https://www.crmvet.org/docs/610400_core_jail-in.pdf.
[155] Hartford, interview.
[156] Chris Dixon and Jon Piccini, ''The Anti-Vietnam War Movement,'' in *The Routledge History of World Peace since 1750*, ed. Christian Philip Petersom, William M. Knoblauch, and Michael Loadenthal (London: Routledge Tayler & Francis Group, 2019), 373.
[157] Dixon and Piccini, 373.

teach-in was used to ask attention to the Vietnam War and to put pressure on the government.[158]

The purpose of the sit-in also changed. The places were sit-ins were staged changed, because many lunch counters were desegregated in the middle of the 1960s. The sit-in continued to exist for other purposes, like anti-Apartheid protests. Booth described in her interview that the reason for a sit-in at a bank named Continental Illinois was not segregation in the United States, but because the bank supported Apartheid in South Africa.[159] She explains that the SDS organised this sit-in. The Civil Rights Movement shifted its focus to other places in the world. In 1966, for example, the SNCC held a sit-in at the embassy of South Africa in Washington against Apartheid, explained Borstelmann in *The Cold War and the Color Line* (2001).[160] In both examples, the sit-in, which included the Gandhian principles of nonviolence, was used to protest, but it was different than a lunch counter sit-in. This also had its implication on the transnational dimension of the sit-in. As is analysed in the next chapter, the anti-Vietnam War protests carried an international character. The sit-in crossed the ocean as part of this worldwide struggle against the Vietnam War.

A new law was put in effect that changed legislation in 1964 in favour of the African-Americans. Four and a half year after the Greensboro sit-in, the Civil Rights Act was put in effect.[161] It officially meant the end of segregation, for discrimination based on the colour of the skin was prohibited. Hartford explained that the sit-ins and the other protests that occurred between 1960 and 1962 moved president John F. Kennedy in 1963 to discuss legislation to end segregation.[162] A year after he brought this up, also one year after Kennedy was murdered, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the new bill. Approximately three thousand protesters were waiting to be prosecuted, because they staged sit-ins in the previous year, claims *the New York Times*. These protesters were nearly all cleared of all charges after the Civil Rights Act.[163]

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[158] Dixon and Piccini, 377.
[159] Booth, interview.
[160] Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 2001), 199.
[161] Schmidt, *The Sit-ins,* 10.
[162] Hartford, interview.
[163] ''Sit-in Cases Die: Prosecution is Barred if Demonstrations Were Peaceful,'' *New York Times,* December 15, 1964, 1.

This chapter explained how World War II increased the willingness of African-Americans to change American society. Racial segregation was no longer accepted and an increasing number of activists started to participate in sit-ins. Due to the changing media landscape, the sit-in as an idea to protest successfully disseminated throughout the United States. It waited for an event that spawned a nationwide sit-in movement. This followed on the 1st of February 1960. The sit-in was successful because many lunch counters desegregated and a bill was signed to prohibit racial segregation in 1964. The sit-in was a very popular method of protest in 1960 and it lost its momentum after the first years of the 1960s. It remained a used tool, however, to protest against other issues. In the next chapter, an answer is given on the question of how transnational the character of the sit-in was.

Chapter 4. The transnational character of the sit-in

After the first sit-down demonstration organised by the Committee of 100, Bertrand Russell, a British philosopher who was involved in the anti-nuclear weapons demonstrations, made up the balance of the success of this first manifestation:

> The demonstration was much more auspicious than we had any right to expect. During the next months the fortunes of the Committee prospered. Branch Committees were established about the country and in some foreign countries; and some countries developed their own Committees. (…) owing to the generous and often self-sacrificing voluntary efforts of many people, the Committee grew in strength.[164]

Russell clearly explained the transnational influence that the Committee of 100 was for foreign protest organisations. In the Netherlands, activists heard about the news and decided to copy the method of protest Russell chose for his protest.

The sit-in was popularised in the United States, and the idea was brought to Europe. Dutch and English protest organisations used this particular method of protest as well. This chapter answers how the idea of sitting-in reached these European countries. It starts with a discussion of how the history of the sit-in should be placed in current historiography. Should scholars focus on each countries' unique elements of the sit-in and see it as part of the history of a country? Or is the history of the sit-in a general, international history of a shared idea? The aims of protest were different between various countries and circumstances, but did this also influence the sit-in? There are both strengths and weaknesses for categorising the sit-in as a national or international history, and by paying attention to each countries' sit-ins, this chapter answers how transnational influences disseminated the sit-in. Secondly, an explanation is given about transnational grassroots movements. What are those, and how does this relate to the sit-in? After this, the transnational character of the sit-in is analysed for both the Netherlands and England.

4.1. The 1960s: An international history and national histories

Is it appropriate to categorise the history of sit-ins in the 1960s as a worldwide, general phenomenon? In other words, was the sit-in the same method of protest in each country? Or should unique elements of sit-ins in each country be central in the debate and see them

[164] Bertand Russell, *Autobiography* (London: Routledge Classics, 2009), 586.

as national phenomena? A similar question aroused in the 1990s, after the publication of several works on the history of the 1960s.

As explained in the historiography, Paul Righart and James Kennedy disagreed on how some elements of the 1960s should be explained. Righart looked at the protest landscape of the Netherlands and explained that this was part of a general, international struggle. According to him, Dutch protesters started to protest, because activists in other countries did this as well.[165] Provos were inspired by international events and started to copy this behaviour. Kennedy does not necessarily disagree on the premise that methods of protest were copied by activists, but points to the differences between activists in various countries. In the Netherlands, for example, there was no major social problem comparable to the civil rights struggle in the United States.[166]

There are both strengths and weaknesses for Kennedy's and Righart's arguments if their theories are applied to the sit-ins of the 1960s. This thesis deals with the same dilemma, but it compares the situation in the United States, the Netherlands and Britain. So, this thesis also enquires, for example, how English circumstances differed from the situation of African-American students. For each country, the question is answered whether the sit-in manifestations belong to a general history or if they contain too many unique elements which do not cohere to an international protest movement. Which similarities and differences are relevant to the context in which the sit-in took place?

Robbert-Jan Adriaansen, Professor in the Theory of History and Historical Culture at Erasmus University, explained how Righart applied the theory of Karl Mannheim for his explanation about the similar experiences of youngsters in the 1960s.[167] The rise in prosperity for both generations – those who experienced World War II, and those who have not – created a double generation conflict. The youngest generation was criticised by the elder for their consumerism, because the oldest generation was used to save their money.[168] In general, the new generation – the students in the 1960s – had more money to spend and had more spare time in comparison to their parents. The theory of Mannheim explains how generations cohere in terms of social experiences, and this explains attitudes and

[165] Righart, *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig,* 18.
[166] Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in Aanbouw*, 120.
[167] Robbert-Jan Adriaansen, ''Generaties, Herinnering en Historiciteit,'' *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 124, no. 2 (2011): 222.
[168] Righart, *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig,* 83.

behaviour.[169] Is the theory of Mannheim also applicable to the transnational history of the sit-in? As is analysed in the next section, there is overlap in the generation of protesters in the Netherlands, but this differs for the situation in England.

Geert Buelens, Professor of Modern Dutch Literature at the University of Utrecht, also contributed to this historiographical debate. In his book about the 1960s, which is published in 2008, he claimed that the general sphere of the 1960s was tangible in more regions of the world than has been presumed so far. For example, the Beatles even became popular outside Europe and the United States. It even reached the communist Soviet Union.[170] Buelens focussed on popular cultures, like music and movies, and concluded that the sphere of the 1960s was tangible in more corners of the world than has been given attention to so far. He stepped away from the traditional focus on western countries. He concluded that through transnational influences, aspects of popular culture, like popular songs, reached other continents.[171]

Another debate about 1960s historiography is about the delineation of this timeframe. In the first issue of the journal *The Sixties*, an article was written by the editors of the journal, Jeremy Varon , Michael S. Foley and John McMillian, about the question when the 1960s started and ended.[172] Their suggested timeframe – 1954-1975 – is based on a general, international view of the 1960s. Their choice to use an expanded timeframe suggests that their chosen period is based on their approach to describing the spirit of the age of the 1960s, instead of using the objective timeframe of the 1960s, 1960-1969. Piet de Rooy, a former Professor of History at the University of Amsterdam, compared different histories of the 1960s and concluded that a variety of timeframes are used by scholars writing a history of the 1960s.[173] In contrast to Varon, Foley and McMillian, Buelens published his book about the 1960s, following the chronological timeframe of the 1960s, starting in 1960 and ending in 1970. Each chapter deals with another year.[174] He acknowledged, however, that pre-1960 phenomena had a profound influence on the 1960s.

[169] Adriaansen, ''Generaties, Herinnering en Historiciteit,'' 222-223.
[170] Geert Buelens, *De jaren zestig: Een cultuurgeschiedenis* (Amsterdam: Ambo|Anthos Uitgevers, 2018), 345.
[171] Buelens, 282-285.
[172] Jeremy Varon, Michael S. Foley and John McMillian, ''Time is an ocean: the past and future of the Sixties,'' *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics and Culture* 1, no. 1 (June 2008): 5.
[173] Piet de Rooy, *Alles! En wel Nu! Een geschiedenis van de jaren zestig* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2020), 53-54.
[174] Buelens, *De jaren zestig: Een cultuurgeschiedenis*.

For example, he explains how the Holocaust relates to 1960s cultural phenomena.[175] A chosen expanded timeframe outside the objective timeframe of the 1960s, however, is left out in his book.

A timeframe has been chosen for this thesis which corresponds to the spirit of the age, based on the sit-in as a method of protest. Although the sit-in lost its momentum after 1961 in the United States, it continued on a smaller scale in that country and became popular in Britain and the Netherlands. Therefore, the delineation of this thesis exceeds 1964, the year in which the Civil Rights Act was passed. That year would seem logical if a history of the sit-in in the United States was written, as is done by Christopher W. Schmidt.[176] This thesis, however, starts with the Greensboro sit-in of February 1960 and ends in 1968, when the nonviolent sit-in in both the Netherlands and England lost its momentum.

This chapter focusses, in line with the discussion between Righart and Kennedy, on the differences between international history and national histories. The approach is in line with the intention of the journal *The Sixties*, to look for transnational connections of seemingly national phenomena:

> We are especially interested in work that explores the transnational diffusion of ideas and images; local resistance to and appropriations of "foreign" influence; the forging of political and cultural alliances across national boundaries; the development of explicitly internationalist ideologies; and the ways in which so many ostensibly national phenomena had global roots.[177]

This thesis determines whether it is appropriate to link national phenomena to this international spirit of the age. This will be done for the Netherland and England.

4.2. A transnational grassroots movement

What is the link between protesters in the United States, the Netherlands and England? Emily S. Rosenberg explains that '[participants] in transnational networks often proclaimed that they stood for universalistic goals articulated against the presumed particularism of national states and empires.'[178] Although American, Dutch and English protest organisations

[175] Buelens, 39-40.
[176] Schmidt, *The Sit-ins*, 173-175.
[177] Varon, Foley and McMillian, ''Time is an ocean,'' 5.
[178] Rosenberg, *Transnational Currents*, 44.

had different aims to protest, each organisation protested against their government. Despite the differentiation in the aims of protests, the sit-in is shared between protesters from different countries, so protesters with different objectives to protest. In some cases, however, the aims were universal, as is analysed in the section which covers the protest against the Vietnam War and the protests to demand democratisation at universities.

As analysed in the next section, there were universalistic goals, as explained by Rosenberg, between activists on an international level, but also on a national level. James Farmer was one of the founders of the CORE in the United States, which immediately after foundation started to organise the first sit-in in 1942. Bayard Rustin supported Farmer when the CORE was founded.[179] He was a member of the FOR when the CORE was founded and helped Farmer with the foundations for Gandhian nonviolence. The FOR closely cooperated with the anti-war organisation the WRL.[180] Although Rustin did not participate in the sit-in in 1942, he organised workshops in nonviolence for the FOR and the CORE in 1943.[181] The members of the FOR, the CORE and a local organisation, the American Friends Service Committee, all joined several of these meetings. Daniel Levine explains that '[the] three organizations, and often a local human relations committee, had overlapping membership, worked together, and were, for these purposes, almost one organization.'[182] The aims to achieve civil rights, and an anti-war lobby, unified several activists and is in line with Rosenberg's universalistic goals.

As described in chapter three, some members of the Civil Rights Movement were also involved in protests against the Vietnam War. Martin Luther King is a good example of this connection, and it even aroused tension within the Civil Rights Movement, as the moderate organisation the NAACP dissociated themselves from King after he openly criticised the US government for their role in the Vietnam War. The NAACP rather focussed on American situations and called King's criticism 'a serious tactical mistake', reported the *New York Times.*[183] Again, in line with Rosenberg's theory, there is an overlap between protest organisations within a country.

Although there is no evidence for the support of the Civil Rights Movement regarding

[179] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart,* 102.
[180] Bennett, *Radical Pacifism,* 30-31.
[181] Levine, *Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement*, 35-36.
[182] Levine, 35.
[183] ''N.A.A.C.P. Decries Stand Of Dr. King on Vietnam,'' *New York Times*, April 11, 1967, 1.

gay rights, there are links to be found in the application of the sit-in. The sit-in – or in this case, a spin-off of the sit-in – was used as a method of protest by Gay Rights activists in the 1960s, reported *the New York Times* in 2016: 'Mr. Leitsch, then the head of Mattachine's New York Chapter, and his cohorts called their action a ''Sip-in,'' a tipsy tip of the hat to the civil rights lunch-counter sit-ins then being held at places that segregated black patrons.'[184] The protest was held against bars that refused service to gay people. The tactic was comparable to the lunch counter sit-in. The protesters ordered a drink and denounced to be gay after being served.[185] Inspired by the Civil Rights Movement, these protesters copied the method of protest. Although this latter example does not necessarily point to a universalistic goal, it proves how different protesters used the sit-in.

As is analysed in the previous section, on a national level – in this case, the United States – there was overlap between several protesters in terms of the aims of protest. It became clear that protesters against racial discrimination and protesters against the Vietnam War were unified. It also displayed overlap in the use of protest methods, as people also used a sit-in spin-off for other reasons than racial segregation. This chapter further enquires international overlaps between protesters and protest organisations to answer how the sit-in as a technique was transported from the United States to Europe.

4.3. The Netherlands

Righart and Kennedy disagreed about the question of whether Dutch protesters belonged to the general spirit of the 1960s. Kennedy emphasised that the problems between protesters and authorities were not as severe in comparison to a country like the United States.[186] An important protest organisation in the Netherlands was the Provo Movement. Participants of this organisation called themselves the Provos, short for provocateurs. Interviewee Jan Pen explained the importance of international occurrences for the Provos: 'The Provo Movement was influenced by a kind of post-WWII phenomenon, in which youngsters stood up for themselves. One of the important influences were the nuclear disarmament marches, which originated from England. These have been adopted in the Netherlands, initially by Roel van

[184] Jim Farber, ''Before the Stonewall Uprising, There Was the 'Sip-In' at Village Bars,'' *New York Times,* April 21, 2016, 23.
[185] Farber, 23.
[186] Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in Aanbouw*, 120.

Duijn.'[187]

Like in the United States, the nonviolent sit-ins in the Netherlands were preceded by violent manifestations of protests in which the sitting technique was used. Eric Duivenvoorden, a Dutch sociologist and philosopher, explained how the youth organisation of the Dutch communist party organised a sit-down protest which ended in violence by the protesters in 1959.[188] The technique of sitting down as a protest was already known in the Netherlands, but the element on nonviolence was still missing. Next to international influences, which this thesis exposes, the violent sit-down method might have evolved in the nonviolent sit-ins which followed in the 1960s. Activists might have heard about this violent method of protest and implemented the nonviolent strategy in this sit-down protest. Wang and Soule called this development 'tactical innovation'.[189]

Van Duijn was important for the first nonviolent sit-in in the Netherlands. Righart elaborates on the role of van Duijn in the protests against the nuclear bomb. On the 11th of November 1961, van Duijn organised a sit-in by lying and sitting down to create a traffic blockade in the Hague.[190] This was before the Provo Movement was founded. In his autobiography, van Duijn explains that he was inspired by an article he and some friends read in Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* about Bertrand Russell:

> The image of the demonstrating philosopher touched me. Resistance against the arms race. War to the war! The Second World War cannot be succeeded by a third one. Wisdom versus authority, that's what the old philosopher's face exuded. ''Very well,'' I said to my friends, ''We will also held such a *sit-down* demonstration.''[191]

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[187] Translated quote. 'De Provo beweging op zich is denk ik beïnvloed doordat er een soort post-Tweede Wereldoorlog fenomeen, waarbij jongeren toch meer voor zichzelf opkwamen. Een van de grote invloeden zijn de anti-kernwapen marsen geweest die oorspronkelijk in Engeland plaatsvonden. Die zijn overgenomen in Nederland, in eerste instantie door Roel van Duijn.' Jan Pen, interview conducted by Milan Weber, February 6, 2020.

[188] Eric Duivenvoorden, *Rebelse Jeugd: Hoe Nozems en Provos Nederland veranderden* (Amsterdam: Nieuw Amsterdam Uitgevers, 2015), 120-121.

[189] Wang and Soule, ''Tactical Innovation in Social Movements: The Effects of Peripheral and Multi-Issue Protest,'' 520.

[190] Righart, *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig*, 197.

[191] Translated quote. 'Het beeld van de demonstrerende filosoof raakte mij. Verzet tegen de bewapeningswedloop. Oorlog aan de oorlog! De Tweede Wereldoorlog mag niet op een derde uitlopen. Wijsheid contra gezag, dat straalde van het gezicht van de oude filosoof. 'Goed zeg,' zei ik tegen mijn vrienden, 'laten wij ook zo'n *sit-down*-demonstratie houden!'' Roel van Duijn, *Diepvriesfiguur: autobiografie van PD106043 in samenwerking met de AIVD* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij van Praag, 2012), 13-14.

Van Duijn's explanation is a clear link between Russell and the Dutch activist. The sit-in was brought to the Netherlands through the media, and this explains why the Dutch 'Ban the Bomb' Movement used this method of protest. Unfortunately, no evidence has been found for direct transnational links between van Duijn and international activists that explains why the sit-down technique was copied.

Righart claims that Dutch activists were also inspired by the American Civil Rights Movement.[192] There is not much evidence of how American sit-ins influenced the protest landscape of the Netherlands outside of newspapers. Dutch newspapers, like *De Volkskrant,* covered the occurrences of lunch counters sit-ins.[193] American lunch counter sit-ins must have been noticed by Dutch students, because on the 10th of March 1961 W.H. de Beaufort, Secretary for International Affairs of the Netherlands, sent a telegram on behalf of de *Nederlandse Studentenraad* (Dutch Student Council) to the SNCC: '''Dutch Students Council expresses solidarity with sit-in demonstrations and sympathy with arrested students.'' Signed Schimmelpenninck, President.'[194] In contrast to van Duijn's explanation about Russell, no records have been found of Dutch activists who started to sit-in after finding out about African-American protesters. In a timeframe, however, in which media attention was focussed on the United States, coverages of sit-ins could have encouraged people to copy the method of protest.

In the early years of the 1960s, the nonviolent sit-in was introduced in the Netherlands. Although the sit-in was used by youngsters who belonged to a general protest generation, there was a variety of aims to protest. Dutch newspaper *Tubantia* mentioned on the 22nd of February 1966 how long-haired protesters sat-down in front of a barbershop which refused to cut the hair of the protesters according to their will.[195] This speaks in favour of Kennedy's argument that Dutch protesters were less political oriented in comparison to protest organisations in other countries.[196] On the other hand, although this particular sit-in was not aimed against international politics, long-haired protesters fitted within the international protest image of the 1960s, claimed Buelens.[197]

[192] Righart, *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig*, 198.
[193] ''Zit-staking van negers,'' *De Volkskrant*, February 13, 1960, 3.
[194] W.H. de Beaufort telegram to Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, March 10, 1961, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Papers, 1959-1972 reel 5.
[195] ''Sit-Down Protest,'' *Tubantia,* February 28, 1966, 1.
[196] Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in Aanbouw,* 120.
[197] Buelens, *De jaren zestig,* 15.

Despite Kennedy's view on Dutch protesters, the sit-in is often used for political-related protests. It is uncertain whether foreign stimuli were still necessary to use this specific method of protest from the middle of the 1960s onwards, as the sit-in was a widespread nonviolent technique to use in both the Netherlands and the United States. The SNCC, as explained in chapter three, organised a sit-in in 1966 against the South African embassy. This occurrence was covered by Dutch newspaper *De Waarheid*.[198] After its introduction in the early 1960s, an intensification of the use of the sit-in was tangible during the middle of the 1960s.

Anti-Vietnam War protests also occurred in the Netherlands, and the sit-in was often chosen as a method to conduct this protest. Using a pamphlet, the Provos called for a sit-in at the American consulate in Amsterdam in December 1965.[199] In May 1966, Jan Blok, a Dutch Labour Party politician, organised a sit-in at the Portuguese embassy against the arrest of Portuguese civilians, mentioned *Limburgsch Dagblad.*[200] He was also responsible for the organisation of an anti-Vietnam War protest in which the sit-in was used in July of the same year. This time, the place of protest was at the American embassy in the Hague, explained *Trouw*.[201] Niek Pas, Professor of History at the University of Amsterdam, explained that '[there] was never a Dutch "1968," as it were, but there was a 1966.'[202] The peak of popularity of the sit-in was reached in this year, as a decline of sit-ins became visible in the years to follow.

One of the most important differences between the Provos and American anti-segregation protesters was the way in which they were involved in civil disobedience. As explained in chapter two, the tradition of involvement in civil disobedience in the United States dates back to the nineteenth century when Henry David Thoreau published a book about this strategy. In the Netherlands, this phenomenon was quite new. Pas explained in a publication about the Provo Movement that some elements of their repertoire of protests can be explained as acts of civil disobedience, but in general, the movement carried a rather

[198] ''Betoging in New York,'' *De Waarheid,* March 22, 1966, 1.
[199] Provo Pamphlet to call for a sit-in at the US embassy, ''Oproep,'' Provo Images, December 17, 1965, accessed May 25, 2020, https://www.provo-images.info/images/Oproep.jpg.
[200] ''Politie contra sitdown-demonstranten,'' *Limburgsch Dagblad*, May 27, 1966, 13.
[201] ''Demonstraties tegen Vietnam-politiek VS,'' *Trouw,* July 4, 1966, 3.
[202] Niek Pas, ''Subcultural Movements: The Provos,'' in *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956-1977,* ed. Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 13.

spontaneous and playful character.[203] Pas claims that some elements were copied by the British anti-nuclear weapon protests and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States.[204] The Provo Movement, however, was known for their playful character. Despite their ideology to change society, their methods of protests were predominantly spontaneous manifestations.

Van Duijn was the exception regarding the playful character of the movement. He was the one who introduced a nonviolent method of protest in the Netherlands, which was also an act of civil disobedience, explained Pas.[205] Within the Provo Movement, van Duijn was the most outspoken person who embraced the anarchistic idea of the movement.[206] Other Provos rather focussed on the playful characteristics of the movement. This latter group also initiated other forms of protest, which were not necessarily acts of civil disobedience. Van Duijn was the Provo leader who focussed the most on international events to protest against. This focus went hand in hand with the sit-in. The sit-in suited best to protest against embassies. Therefore, this method of protest cannot be regarded as a playful method of protest. The Provo Movement, in general, differed from the Committee of 100 because of the playful character. Van Duijn, however, was similarly involved with global issues as Russell was.

Did Dutch sit-ins also carry a nonviolent character? It is difficult to answer this question, as there was no clear organisational structure behind an organisation like the Provos. According to Pen, the Provo movement was not known for their violent behaviour, although they did not specifically mark themselves as nonviolent, like US activists like James Farmer, Bayard Rustin and Martin Luther King did.[207] Dutch sit-down protests can be seen as acts of civil disobedience, without the use of physical violence. Although there was no outspoken Gandhian philosophy involved during these protests, it can be seen as an act of *nonviolent intervention*, as described by José-Antonio Orosco (see 2.1. Nonviolence).[208]

One specific incident can be used as counter-argument for the nonviolent character of the Provo Movement in 1966, the protest during the wedding of Princess Beatrix and

[203] Niek Pas, *Imaazje! De Verbeelding van Provo (1965-1967)* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2003), 335.
[204] Pas, 336.
[205] Pas, 28-29.
[206] Pas, 50.
[207] Pen, interview.
[208] Orosco, ''Pacifism as Pathology,'' 207.

Claus von Amsberg.[209] During the wedding, a Provo activist threw a smoke bomb in the crowd of the procession. This does not stroke with Gene Sharp's theory of nonviolent protest, which he regards as an 'intervention without physical violence.'[210] A smoke bomb might have hurt people who panic in the crowd. Although the Provo Movement claimed not to use violence, their followers might have. Despite this, the movement can be regarded as a nonviolent organisation, which applied, as explained, rather creative, playful methods of protest, like their *White Plans*. These were plans to make a better society, and one of their practises was to distribute public goods, like bicycles.[211]

Some American elements are involved in the sit-in protests in the Netherlands. American protesters, on their turn, also copied elements from Dutch protesters. American Provos copied the name of the Dutch organisation and were also inspired by their street demonstrations. Pat Thomas, an author of several books about sub-cultures, published an interview with the co-founder of Provo in the United States, Dana Real, which supports the link between the Netherlands and the United States:

> The Provos, from Amsterdam, were much more copacetic about us using our name. So we started something called New York Provo. (…) In 1966, the Dutch Provos led a series of provocative street demonstration that forced the Mayor of Amsterdam out of office. In many ways, they were the forerunners of the French Student Revolt of 1968. The Provos were the first set of people that came up at that period of time. We saw them in *The Village Voice*, and we though ''those guys are cool, let's do that here.'' [212]

The Americans Provos also used the suffix 'in' for a series of protests to legalise marijuana in New York, named the smoke-in. The American Provos claimed to unite Americans from various backgrounds in their newsletter *The Open Press*: 'The police aren't ready for smoke-ins. They still think only a small fringe smokes. And they expect violence to come from people smoking grass. That is why they can't bust 3.000 hippies, Puerto Ricans,

[209] Pas, ''Subcultural Movements,'' 17-18.
[210] Sharp, *Exploring Non-violent Action*, 20-21.
[211] Pas, ''Subcultural Movements,'' 16.
[212] Pat Thomas, *Did It! From Yippie To Yuppie: Jerry Rubin, An American Revolutionary* (Seattle, WA: Fantagraphics Books, 2017), 57.

and *Negroes* for peacefully standing and smoking.'[213] This is an excellent example of a sit-in spin-off. Next to the suffix, the protesters also copied some elements of the sit-in. The smoke-in was an act of civil disobedience in which no violence was used. Although an outspoken Gandhian philosophy is missing, it contains vital elements of the original sit-in, like occupation, civil disobedience and nonviolence.

The year 1966 in the Netherlands was comparable to the year 1968, a year which is regarded as a highlight of the international protest landscape. Pas explained that through the playful protests employed by Provo and the nonviolent sit-ins, 1966 should be seen as the highlight of the protest movement in the Netherlands.[214] In 1967, fewer protests were organised, and the Provo Movement ceased to exist. During 1968, the nonviolent sit-ins were increasingly replaced by violent methods of protests. Two factors led to the decrease of nonviolent sit-ins in the Netherlands. On the one hand, the hippie movement in the Netherlands became popular.[215] Although some features about this newly developed counterculture were disapproved by the authorities, like naked hippies in 1970 at the *Kralingenfestival* in Rotterdam, it seems that there were fewer problems with this new counterculture in comparison to the Provos. Illustrating for the decline in the degree of civil disobedience within protests is John Lennon's protest against violence. In 1969, the Beatle spent five days in bed with his wife, Yoko Ono. The Hilton Hotel in Amsterdam was rather happy with these guests, explained *De Volkskrant*.[216] The element of civil disobedience was missing. Apart from hippies who joined anti-Vietnam War protests, Pen explained that hippie manifestations were quite innocent.[217]

On the other hand, the year 1968 saw a violent wave throughout the world. It was the year in which King was murdered, so the number of violent Black Power activists increased, students violently revolted in Paris, and also anti-Vietnam War activists intensified their use of violence.[218] This affected the use of the sit-down as a method of protest in the Netherlands. In 1967, youngsters sat down peacefully in Amsterdam to protest against the

[213] New York Provo Newsletter, ''3.000 turn out at 4th Tompkins Square Park Smoke-in,'' Provo Images, August 6, 1967, accessed May 26, 2020, https://www.provo-images.info/images/3,000turnonfront.jpg.
[214] Pas, ''Subcultural Movements: The Provos,'' 13.
[215] Righart, *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig,* 264.
[216] ''Yoko en John: Protest Tegen Geweld,'' *De Volkskrant*, March 26, 1969, 5.
[217] Pen, interview.
[218] Buelens, *De jaren zestig,* 623.

Vietnam War.[219] In 1968, several international political oriented sit-ins were organised. Anti-Vietnam War protesters organised a sit-in at the American embassy for the use of chemical weapons, mentioned *Het Vrije Volk*.[220] These protests occurred without any violence. Throughout the year, however, the peaceful atmosphere changed. A sit-in which was organised to protest at the Mexican consulate, although it began peacefully, ended in violence and this violence was used by some protesters, not the police, explained *Het Parool.*[221] Students caught up with the international protest movement, and there was an increase in radicalisation tangible in the Netherlands.[222]

The Provo Movement already envisaged a shift towards violence amongst its activists in 1967. It was the year in which the movement was dissolved after too many people joined the movement. Van Duijn explained that their mission was accomplished after it successfully established their *White plans*.[223] Two months before the end of the movement, it published an article in which it explained how the character of the sit-in has changed. In *De Wittekrant*, the movement explained that 'lately, the word sit-in is less often used by militant leftist groups. The majority of this group made a swift and expected turn towards violent actions.'[224] It foresaw what was about to happen in the Netherlands in 1968, as is also expected international protest movements to radicalise.[225]

The sit-in was copied from English protesters who demonstrated against nuclear weapons. It was used in some cases early in the 1960s, but was increasingly used from 1965 onwards. The Provo Movement supported several sit-in manifestations and also organised them. In 1966, the sit-in peaked in the Netherlands, as did the Provo Movement. The extraordinary behaviour of the Provos influenced foreign youngsters. Activists in the United States even copied this idea behind this organisation, because they admired the Dutch Provos. At the end of the 1960s, a dichotomy in the landscape of protest caused a decrease in the use of the nonviolent sit-in. An increase in radicalisation changed the nonviolent sit-ins from 1968 onwards into aggressive manifestations. The nonviolent sit-in as a method of

[219] ''Sit-in van dertig uur voor VS-consulaat,'' *Het Parool,* September 15, 1967, 6.
[220] ''Actiegroep Vietnam organiseert dertiguurs 'sit-in','' *Het Vrije Volk,* May 16, 1968, 7.
[221] ''Betogers slaags met Amsterdamse politie,'' *Het Parool,* October 23, 1968, 5.
[222] Righart, *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig,* 259.
[223] Duijn, *Diepvriesfiguur,* 120.
[224] Translated quote. 'Het woord sit-in komt overigens de laatste tijd duidelijk minder voor in het taalgebruik van de militante linkse groepen. Het grootste deel van hen heeft een snelle en te verwachte zwenkeling naar gewelddadiger acties gemaakt.' ''Sit-in of Be-in,'' *Wittekrant: De Papieren Tijger*, March 2, 1967.
[225] ''Sit-in of Be-in.'' *Wittekrant.*

protest lost its momentum during 1968. In general, protests which followed upon the sit-in were either violent or could not be regarded as a protest at all due to a lack of civil disobedience.

The choice in the delineation of the sit-in in the Netherlands is to start in 1961 and end in 1968. In 1961, van Duijn organised the first nonviolent sit-in which was an act of civil disobedience. In 1968, some nonviolent sit-ins were organised, but the general protest landscape changed. The momentum of the nonviolent sit-in was over. After the peak in 1966, the sit-in became a less used tool to protest in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, it did not mean that the sit-in was never used after 1968. In 1969, an important protest was organised by students. The majority of the students stuck to nonviolence in their act of civil disobedience.[226] The activists occupied the administrative building of the University of Amsterdam named *Het Maagdenhuis* and demanded democratisation of students. In contrast to 1966, however, this occupation, which can be regarded as a sit-in, is an exception that illustrates that the influence of 1966 was still tangible in the Netherlands.

Sit-in protests in the Netherlands carried an international character. Even though there were less social or political problems in the Netherlands in comparison to the United States, the sit-ins were predominantly organised to protest against foreign institutes. The protesters who were involved in the sit-in were internationally oriented, as they noticed what happened in the world and responded to this. Indirect transnational influences brought the sit-in to the Netherlands. Dutch activists even exported the idea behind the movement to the United States. Contributing to the debate between national and international histories, the history of Dutch sit-ins in the 1960s should be seen in the light of global, general history.

4.4. England

One of the most important activists who organised sit-down protests in England was Bertrand Russel. A transnational link can be discerned between Russell and American civil rights activists. As Rosenberg described, in some cases, activists from different countries supported each other, despite their different aims of protest. As is analysed in chapter three, African-Americans were interested in the struggle for independence in India and studied the philosophy of Gandhi. A shared interest is also what brought English and American

[226] Righart, *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig,* 260.

protesters together. Bayard Rustin and Martin Luther King were involved in the Sahara Project at the end of the 1950s. This organisation supported African activists in their struggle to become independent from European colonisers. Russell was also a member of this project.[227] Brenda Gayle Plummer, Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, claimed that this project united activists from the United States and England.[228]

In the Netherlands, this particular idea of protesting was imported through newspaper articles. The Anglo-American link might have been made when protesters met up with each other. Levine wrote in the biography of Rustin that he, and four other American pacifists, travelled to London to join the Aldermaston March of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) in April 1958.[229] Plummer explained how the African-American struggle, anti-nuclear weapon protests, and decolonisation struggles united protesters into a general Peace Movement.[230] Exemplary for this is the speech Rustin held during his meeting in London. He linked the struggle of African-Americans in the United States with the struggle against nuclear weapons.[231] Through the explanations of Levine and Plummer, it can be concluded that Rustin and Russell met each other in the late 1950s.

It is important to note that in the late 1950s, the CND did not organise sit-ins. This is also one of the reasons why Russell split off from the CND: '[the] chairman of the CND did not approve of civil disobedience and so, though nominally the Direct Action Committee was to be tolerated, it could not be aided openly by the CND.' Russell believed that direct action was needed to intensify the call for nuclear disarmament. Harriet Jones, lecturer of contemporary British history at the University of Luton, described how this direct action wing was founded: 'In 1960 a group of around 2,000 members, including Bertrand Russell, broke off from CND to form the Committee of 100, which advocated non-violent direct action in support of a broader set of political aims.'[232] This committee was more radical in their protests in comparison to the CND, as they were involved in civil disobedience instead of approved demonstrations.

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[227] Bennett, *Radical Pacifism,* 232.
[228] Brenda Gayle Plummer, *In Search of Power: African Americans in the Era of Decolonization, 1956-1974* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 76.
[229] Levine, *Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement*, 103.
[230] Brenda Gayle Plummer, ''Peace Was the Glue: Europe and African American Freedom,'' *Souls. A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society* 10, no. 2 (2008): 110.
[231] Plummer, 110.
[232] Harriet Jones, ''The Impact of the Cold War,'' in *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000,* ed. Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 32.

The founding of this organisation paved the way for acts of civil disobedience. The sit-down protest of the 18th of February 1961 was the first sit-down protest the organisation held, explained Russell in his autobiography.[233] It was not a spontaneous sit-down protest. *The Times* already announced in December 1960 that 'Lord' Russell intended to stage a sit-down protest on that particular 18th of February (see image three).[234] The first sit-down protest occurred quite smoothly, explained Russel: 'Finally, over 5.000 people were sitting or lying on the pavements surrounding the Ministry. (…) A good many people joined us during this time, and more came to have a look at use, and, of course, the press and tv people flocked about asking us.'[235] Russell was determined to organise another sit-down protest, after this successful first one.

It remains unclear whether African-American activists who visited England in the late 1950s discussed the use of the sit-in. Permission was granted to the CND to organise marches. Rustin might have brought the idea of sitting-in to England. As explained in chapter three, Rustin was involved in Gandhian nonviolence and workshops to train activists in the sit-in technique. Once Russell founded his Committee of 100, he used the method of protest which Rustin also used to organise against segregation in the United States. As explained in the methodology, there is a strong expectation that Rustin brought the sit-in to England, but unfortunately, evidence of direct transnational influences is missing. Therefore, the conclusion about their relationship is that the two have met each other and that they shared their opinions about activism.

Image 3. *The first sit-down protest of the Committee of 100.* Source: Ida Kar, ''Anti-nuclear demonstrators including Michael Randle, Michael Scott; Bertrand Russell and Hugh MacDiarmid,'' February 18, 1961, National Portrait Gallery, accessed June 1, 2020, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw127618/Anti-nuclear-demonstrators-including-Michael-Randle-Michael-Scott-Bertrand-Russell-and-Hugh-MacDiarmid.

Russell was eighty-eight when he organised the first sit-down

[233] Russell, *Autobiography*, 584.
[234] '''Sit-Down'' Outside Ministry,'' *The Times,* December 15, 1960, 4.
[235] Russell, *Autobiography*, 585.

protest in 1961. His old age turned out to be a vital element to popularise the Committee of 100 and the sit-down protest throughout the world. English people received the news that Russell was not able to join the sit-down protest he organised for April 1961, because an article about his absence was published in *The Times.*[236] During this demonstration, 800 activists were arrested, claims April Carter, a British peace activist and Honorary Research Fellow on the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies at Coventry University.[237] The Committee of 100 organised another sit-down demonstration, but this time, some organisers, including Russell, were arrested in advance.[238] His arrest was, in line with Gandhian principles of nonviolence, exactly what he hoped for. This act of voluntary suffering had an effect on how protesters looked at his struggle. Buelens explained that his arrest was covered by multiple foreign media platforms.[239] Russell was aware of the consequences of his arrest. This becomes clear in his autobiography: 'When the sentence of two months was pronounced upon me cries of 'Shame, shame, an old man of eighty-eight!' arose from the onlookers. It angered me. I knew that it was well meant, but I had deliberately incurred the punishment and, in any case, I could not see that age had anything to do with guilt.'[240]

The sit-down demonstration peaked in December 1961, when 4.000 demonstrators sat down at a US airbase to protest against nuclear weapons.[241] In the light of this sit-down protest, Russell explained that the Committee of 100 was already dissolving, because some members also wanted to protest against social injustices.[242] In 1962, the Committee of 100 organised some sit-down demonstrations, but the number of participants declined.[243] The movement lost its momentum. From 1963 onwards, protesters became aware of other international struggles, claimed Jones: '[this] first wave of protest subsided after 1963, reflecting the generally calmer international climate following the signing of the Limited Test Ban Treaty; anti-war protest shifted in the mid-1960s to issues such as US involvement in the

[236] ''Lord Russell Will Not Take Part In Demonstration,'' *The Times,* April 21, 1961, 9.
[237] April Carter, *Peace Movements: International Protest and World Politics Since 1945* (London: Routledge Tayler & Francis Group, 1992), 50.
[238] Carter, 50.
[239] Buelens, *De jaren zestig,* 122.
[240] Russell, *Autobiography,* 588.
[241] Carter, *Peace Movements*, 51.
[242] Russell, *Autobiography,* 591-592.
[243] Carter, *Peace Movements*, 51.

Vietnam War.'[244]

Righart claimed that the coherence as a generation explains the behaviour of Dutch protesters in the 1960s.[245] Piet de Rooy criticises this theory by pointing at several prominent people who belonged to the protest generation, but did not belong to the generation based on the ages of activists Righart referred to.[246] Russell also did not belong to this generation, because he was way older in comparison to the generation of students in the 1960s. He played, however, a very important role for the protest generation of the 1960s. His arrest inspired Roel van Duijn to do the same thing in the Netherlands.[247] Russell was not the only old man sitting down to protest. He explained how 'Augustus John, an old man, who had been, and was, very ill (it was a short time before his death) emerged from the National Gallery, walking into the Square and sat down.'[248] In this regard, sit-down manifestations by the Committee of 100 were different than American and Dutch protests, in which predominantly students sat-in.

Russell established transnational contacts when he was a member of the Sahara Project in the 1950s. Bayard Rustin even paid him a visit in 1958. It remains unclear, however, whether Rustin imported the idea of sitting-in as a method of protest to England. Where van Duijn explained in his autobiography how he was inspired by Russell, this is not the case for Russell. He does not elaborate on why he chose a sit-down protest. Sit-ins continued in England, but with different aims.

In contrast to the Committee of 100, which cannot particularly be regarded as a youth movement, there were several youth cultures in England in the 1960s. Generally, the English youth is considered to be less politically oriented in comparison to the Netherlands and the United States, claimed Righart.[249] Some aspects are relevant to mention for the sit-in in relation to the English youth. In general, the sit-in was used as a politically oriented method of protest. The aims were to protest against segregation, nuclear weapons, the Vietnam War, and other international occurrences. The sit-in, therefore, was less used in England in comparison to the Netherlands and the United States, as the English youth was less

[244] Jones, ''The Impact of the Cold War,'' 32.
[245] Righart, *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig,* 18.
[246] Rooy, *Alles! En wel Nu!,* 45.
[247] Duijn, *Diepvriesfiguur,* 13-14.
[248] Russell, *Autobiography,* 590.
[249] Hans Righart, *De Wereldwijde Jaren Zestig: Groot-Brittannië, Nederland, de Verenigde Staten* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2004), 93.

interested and involved in global problematics. Following Righart's theory, the youth who sat-in in the 1960s were the exceptions who were interested in international occurrences.

The first sit-ins that exclusively took place amongst students in the 1960s were in light of the arrest of Russell. After his arrest, several students staged a sit-down protest against his imprisonment, like at the Trinity College in London, explained *The Times.*[250] Bill Osgerby, Professor of Media, Culture and Communications at London Metropolitan University, explained the influence this first wave of 1960s protests had for the campaigns to follow during that decade: 'In Britain the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND, formed in 1958) had also won many young supporters, and its direct-action campaigning helped pioneer the forms of protest that became a feature of later radical movements.'[251]

The second wave of sit-in protests started from 1965 onwards. The sit-in was used by students to protest against the Vietnam War and to respond to the international call to demand democratisation at universities. The same pattern can be distinguished in England in relation to the Netherlands and the United States. The aims of protest overlapped. Holger Nehring, Professor in Contemporary History at the University of Stirling, explains the repertoire of protest of students: '[the] first anti–Vietnam War protests were held in 1965 and primarily took the form of traditional walking demonstrations, but there were also occasional sit-ins and teach-ins.'[252] In the United States, the Netherlands and England, the sit-in was used, but in some cases, the aims differed. Wang and Soule explained how sit-down demonstrations industries in the United States evolved in sit-ins.[253] A comparable tactical innovation can be distinguished in the case of England. Young people copied the method of protest, which was initiated by Russell.

A direct link between English and American activists can be made in the sit-in protests against racial segregation. Although sit-ins to protest against racial segregation are often linked to the United States, there are a few examples of anti-segregation sit-ins in England. Nick Juravich, Professor of History and Labour Studies at the University of

[250] ''Sit-Down Planned at Trinity College,'' *The Times,* September 15, 1961, 6.
[251] Bill Osgerby, ''Youth Culture,'' in *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000,* ed. Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 132.
[252] Holger Nehring, ''Great-Britain,'' in *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956-1977*, ed. Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 130.
[253] Wang and Soule, ''Tactical Innovation in Social Movements: The Effects of Peripheral and Multi-Issue Protest,'' 520.

Massachusetts in Boston, explained the transnational story of Paul Stephenson, a black Englishman who travelled to the United States in 1964. He imported the sit-in to England:

> One of his first actions drew inspiration from the youth-led sit-in movement that had taken hold in Richmond and so many other cities. In 1965, he went for a pint at the Bay Horse, a local pub, and refused to leave when he was not served, earning himself a trip to jail but ultimately winning damages from the pub's ownership in court. Similar sit-ins (or "drink-ins," as one highly-publicized but somewhat anticlimactic action was dubbed) took place around the United Kingdom.[254]

Stephenson serves as a direct link between American and English protesters. Newspaper articles provided indirect transnational links. *The Times* reported about sit-ins staged in the United States, even when the momentum of the sit-in movement was over after 1964.[255]

The sit-in was not as often used in England as in the United States to protest against segregation, but it lasted at least until 1968. During this year of revolt, students staged a sit-in against a hairdressing salon which refused to help black women. Thirty-six people were arrested for civil disobedience, but no violence was used by the activists, mentioned *The Times*.[256] Although this campaign is not comparable to US sit-ins in terms of numbers of participants, it might be concluded that this sit-in campaign is part of international history. English and American protesters used the same method of protest, the aim was to protest against segregation, and a transnational link can be discerned.

The most popular aim to sit-in in England, however, was to demand democratisation at universities. The London School of Economics (LSE) was influential for the rest of England to demand democratisation at the institute. Brian MacArthur, a reporter of *The Times,* explained that representation of students in the board of the university was demanded by the protesting students.[257] This sit-in campaign does not belong to national history, because democratisation was demanded amongst many universities across the globe, explained

[254] Nick Juravich, ''A Black Englishman in the Heart of the Confederacy: The Transnational Life of Paul Stephenson,'' in *The Other Special Relationship: Race, Rights, and Riots in Britain and the United States,* ed. Robin D.G. Kelley and Stephen Tuck (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 51.
[255] ''Negro Sit-Down in the White House,'' *The Times,* March 12, 1965, 12.
[256] ''39 held in Oxford Sit-Down,'' *The Times*, June 8, 1968, 2.
[257] Brian MacArthur, ''L.S.E. Sit-Down Goes on After Concessions: Students Defy Director,'' *The Times,* March 16, 1967, 1.

Melanie Tebbutt, Professor of Youth history at Manchester Metropolitan University: 'The year 1968 was a significant moment of crisis and confrontation in student protest movements across Europe and the United States, with sit-ins in higher education institutions across western Europe.'[258] Although it already started at the LSE in 1967, these protests intensified a year later.

David Fowler, an Honorary Visiting Fellow in the Department of History at York, pointed to the international influences at the LSE that led to demonstrations: 'LSE's students, 40 per cent of whom were international students in the late 1960s were primarily interested in concrete political and indeed educational issues such as the higher fees the Labour government had imposed on international students studying in Britain.'[259] The student protests in England did not last long. It peaked in 1968 and declined afterwards. Righart emphasised the notion that the histories of Dutch and English students to demand democratisation should be regarded as international, general history, although the movement in the Netherlands was more intense in comparison to England.[260]

The history of the sit-in amongst students in the Netherlands and England is comparable in many regards. During the same year, 1968, the sit-in lost its nonviolent character in both countries. Exemplary for the sit-in amongst students in 1968 is a newspaper article which covered two sit-in manifestations in one day. On the 6th of December 1968, students sat down at universities in Birmingham and Bristol, explained *The Times.*[261] In the same year, however, riots broke out during sit-in manifestations. A sit-down protest at Manchester University ended violently, reported *The Times.*[262] The same English newspaper mentioned six days after the riots in Manchester how an anti-Vietnam War sit-down protest escalated in London.[263] The sit-in lost its momentum during this year. It is striking, therefore, that the biggest nonviolent sit-in campaign was held in 1968, claimed *Good Trouble Magazine*.[264] Students occupied the School of Arts for almost two months. The

[258] Melanie Tebbutt, *Making Youth: A History of Youth in Modern Britain* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 165.
[259] David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain, c.1920-c.1970: From Ivory Tower to Global Movement – A New History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 126.
[260] Righart, *De Wereldwijde Jaren Zestig,* 138.
[261] ''Student sit-in ends then another one starts,'' *The Times,* December 6, 1968, 2.
[262] ''Students and Porters in Clash,'' *The Times,* March 13, 1968, 4.
[263] ''Violent Protest,'' *The Times,* March 19, 1968, 9.
[264] ''The Guildford Sit-in: May 68 in the UK,'' *Good Trouble,* May 9, 2018, accessed June 1, 2020. https://www.goodtroublemag.com/home/guildford-sit-in-may-68-in-the-uk-protest.

number of sit-ins, however, declined after 1968, and the degree of violent sit-ins or other violent methods of protest increased after the peak in 1968.

The English history of the sit-in to demand democratisation can be seen as a general, international history. Firstly, in contrast to the Committee of 100, the protesters were all young people. Obviously, in demand to change the structure of universities, it was students who organised the protests. This is in line with manifestations in the Netherlands, but also other countries which encountered the same aims of protest, like France.[265] Even though the use of the sit-in declined in the United States after the first years of the 1960s, similar demonstrations took place at American universities.[266] Secondly, as already mentioned, several countries throughout the world protested against educational institutions. The sit-in was the transnational weapon which illustrated the international character of these protests. Thirdly, several transnational influences encouraged students to protest, like the international students at LSE and Paul Stephenson who experienced the sit-in in the United States. It must be noted, however, that the media played crucial role in the dissemination of the sit-in.

Foreign influences might have been important for the dissemination of the sit-in. African-American activists established relations with English protesters, like Bertrand Russell. It remains uncertain, however, which points have been discussed. There is no proof for direct transnational links that inspired Russell. The English philosopher started to sit-in in 1961. Dutch activist Roel van Duijn read about the English philosopher and copied this method of protest. The Provo Movement, the organisation which organised sit-ins, influenced American activists, and those Americans started to organised sit-in spin-offs to protest against the prohibition of marijuana. In the Netherlands, England and the United States, the sit-in was used as a method of protest to demand democratisation at universities. In each case, protesters were inspired to use this particular method of protest, because the protesters heard about sit-ins in other countries. Newspapers played the most important role in this process of copying the sit-in.

The protests against the Vietnam War and to demand democratisation at universities can be regarded as international history. The anti-nuclear weapon protest carries some

[265] Especially the student revolts in Paris are marked as the most illustrating protests for the student revolts of the late 1960s. Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain,* 148.
[266] Righart, *De Wereldwijde Jaren Zestig,* 181.

unique national elements. In the Netherlands, in contrast to England, this protest was held by predominantly students. In England, also elderly people joined the sit-in protests. In the Netherlands, the sit-in peaked in the middle of the 1960s. In England, it peaked both in 1961 and in 1968. In both countries, the sit-in lost its momentum in 1968 after the sit-in radicalised and other methods of protests were used. Despite its unique national elements and circumstances, the history of the sit-in in the Netherlands and England cannot be understood outside the realm of transnationalism, whether these links were direct of indirect. Therefore, without losing focus on national elements of the sit-in, the history of the sit-in can best be explained as a general, international history.

Conclusion

The sit-in tries to challenge established traditions and legal policies. The strength of this method of protest is that it shames the oppressors. A transnational network established relations between activists throughout the world who discussed this method of protest. Evidence has been found for direct transnational influences. The protests of Mohandas K. Gandhi in India were highly influential for nonviolent protesters in the United States. Inspiration for nonviolence was also found in religions. Although religions do not preach nonviolence by definition, African-American protesters often referred to holy books as inspiration for nonviolence. The notion of nonviolence also derived from American philosophers. Martin Luther King, for example, was inspired by Henry David Thoreau, next to the Bible. Thoreau formulated his philosophy on nonviolence already in the 19th century.

The sit-in can be seen as an act of *nonviolent intervention*. This means that it focusses on established traditions. It tries to raise questions about what society considers normal, and what should change. Initially, it was not a tool to communicate on a mass scale, although several media platforms disseminated news items about the sit-in to the rest of the United States and other countries. The first African-Americans who used the sit-in applied the Gandhian principles of *Satyagraha*, which means that a set of steps were followed before starting to protest. In line with *Satyagraha*, James Farmer first negotiated with a bar owner before. After the bar owner refused to allow Farmer in a segregated section, Farmer decided to start protesting. The nonviolent strategy was applied to protest against a bar which refused to serve African-American. This is how the sit-in started in 1942.

Sit-ins in the 1940s and 1950s were influential for sit-ins that were to follow in the 1960s, but it did not gain much media attention. The lack of media attention changed in February 1960, when four African-American started to sit-in at Woolworth's in North Carolina. The media attention triggered a wave of sit-in protests throughout the United States. After a year, sit-in spin-offs were initiated to protest at all types of segregated public places, like theatres, beaches, and hotels. The sit-in lost its momentum after the United States successfully desegregated its public facilities. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 officially prohibited segregation. The sit-in, however, remained a popular tool to protest against other issues, such as the Vietnam War.

Due to the involvement in transnational networks of activists, and newspaper coverages of sit-ins, the idea of sitting-in crossed the Atlantic. Bertrand Russell was

influential for the introduction of the sit-in in Europe. He met African-American nonviolent activist Bayard Rustin in the late 1950s and started to use the sit-in technique to protest against nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, it remains uncertain why Russell chose to use the sit-down technique to protest, but there is a strong expectation that Russell learnt about this method of protest from Rustin. Roel van Duijn, although he did not belong to a transnational network, copied the idea from Russell. The Dutch activist organised several sit-ins. The suffix 'in' became popular in the 1960s and it was used for several sit-in spin-offs, although not every spin-off was a method of protest. Activists throughout the world copied methods of protest from each other. Therefore, to tell the history of the sit-in of the United States, the Netherlands, and England, transnational influences cannot be ignored.

At this point, there is more evidence to be found of indirect transnational influences like newspaper articles that served as inspiration than direct transnational influences like letter contacts. Due to the corona crisis, only research at internet archives and the archives of the Roosevelt Institute for American Studies have been conducted. Although the uniqueness of some national characteristics behind the sit-in should not be ignored, – like the older protest generation in England and the absence of major social problems in the Netherlands – the history of the sit-in can be regarded as a general, international history.

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Abstract:

In the early 1960s, sit-ins – a nonviolent method of protest – were organised in many different countries across the globe. In many cases, the aims to protest against were similar to those in other countries. An international grassroots movement helped to disseminate the sit-in from the United States to Europe. This thesis focusses on the transnational links that brought the sit-in as a method of protest over to the Netherlands and England. The idea behind nonviolent acts of civil disobedience originates from a variety of influences. Gandhi's philosophy *Satyagraha,* which focussed on nonviolent methods of protest was very influential for the initiation of the sit-in. National influences were also important for the character of nonviolent in the sit-in. Phrases from the Bible were used by activists to explain why they remained nonviolent while protesting, but also the philosophical books by people like Thoreau. The nonviolent sit-in started in 1942 in the United States. James Farmer, an African-American protester, started to use this method of protest against a restaurant which was racially segregated. The Congress of Racial Equality and the Fellowship of Reconciliation started to organise workshops in nonviolence for protesters, and during these workshops, the philosophy of Gandhi was tangible. The catalyst of the popularisation of the sit-in followed in February 1960, when four students sat-in at a restaurant in Greensboro, North Carolina. A wave of sit-in protests followed after this famous sit-in. In the United States, the sit-in lost its momentum after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 officially prohibited segregation in public facilities. Activists in the United States, but also in the Netherlands and England, started to use the sit-in to protest against other issues as well. Transnational relations were responsible for the dissemination of the sit-in across the Atlantic. Indirect transnational relations, newspaper articles, were the most important aspect behind the dissemination of the sit-in. Protesters in various countries felt to be connected through what they read in newspapers about activists abroad, although some direct relations were also established. Without a focus on the international dimension of protest organisations like the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, the Provo Movement in the Netherlands, and the Committee of 100 in England, the history of the sit-in cannot be adequately told. This thesis contributes to the historiography of transnationalism.

Keywords:

Sit-in, nonviolent protest, nonviolence, Satyagraha, Gandhi, Civil Rights Movement, Provo, Bertrand Russell, transnationalism, anti-Vietnam War protests, anti segregation protests, the sixties.