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**Depiction of Civil Rights Movement in Comic
Books and Graphic Novels**

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1. Introduction

Civil Rights Movement is one of the main milestones in the United States history. After slavery was ended in 1865, African American people wanted to live in equal society. The reality was tremendously different and African Americans lived in segregated world for another half century. They have for example separated seats in public transport and were restricted to eat at counter seats in restaurants. This situation was specific mainly for the Southern states in America. Situation escalated in 1955 when African American woman, Rosa Parks, refused to give up her seat to a white man in a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. A young Baptist preacher Martin Luther King, inspired by Gandhi's non-violent methods, then, took a leadership of the first protest against inequality in the United States. An event known as the Montgomery Bus Boycott had begun. African Americans stopped using public transport in Montgomery and found a different option to travel in the city. Boycott lasted more than one year and at the end, the city representatives cancelled seat's segregation in the whole city. African Americans figured out that they have a chance to change something and continued with protests against race segregation at other places. Sit-in protest and Freedom Rides followed.

The main aim of this bachelor thesis is to introduce main personalities connected with the Civil Rights Movement and analyze the depiction of the Civil Rights Movement in chosen examples of Graphic Novels and Comic Books, namely the graphic novel *March: Book One* authored by John Lewis and the comic book *Martin Luther King and Montgomery Story* by The Fellowship of Reconciliation. After that, the graphic depiction will be compared with reality and events described earlier in the thesis.

The work will be divided into two parts and several chapters. The theoretical part of this bachelor thesis will contain the description of the popular genre of Comic Books and Graphic Novels. After defining the genre, the attention will be paid to the main events that happened during the Civil Rights Movement era. The main personalities, including Martin Luther King, John Lewis, James Baldwin and Rosa

Parks, will be introduced in the last part of the theoretical input regarding the Civil Rights Movement.

The analytical part of the thesis will be focused on the analysis of language, used in chosen Graphic Novels and Comic Books. The analytical part will also compare the depicted situations with the real events which happened in 1960s and 1970s. The comparison of analyzed Comic Books and Graphic Novels will be placed in the final chapter of the thesis. Supposedly, there will be not many differences between reality and its depiction in the Graphic Novels and the Comic Books.

The thesis will be accompanied by several appendices in form of pictures and diagrams.

2. Comic books and Graphic novels

Comic books are very similar to graphic novels because they both use a sequential art to tell a story. Although there is a little difference, graphic novels are (generally) stories which stand alone and which have more complex plots. Short stories published as individual comic books and then collected together can also be called graphic novels. Book length comics or books made up from comics are simply defined as graphic novels. Comic books are considered books which have more parts and their story is not ending in one book, they are still continuing and have much shorter release than graphic novels. (Graphic Novel, 2016)

“Comics are sequential visual art, usually with text, whose story is often told in a series of rectangular panels. Despite the name suggests, not all comics are necessarily funny. Many comics and graphic novels emphasize drama, adventure, character development, striking visuals, politics, or romance over laugh-out-loud comedy.” (Graphic Novels, 2016)

It is possible to distinguish several types of comic books:

Manga:

Manga is Japanese expression for “comic” but in the United States it is perceived as graphic novel with Asian element. However, Manga are thought to be more about style rather than the place of origin. Manga should be read from top to bottom and right to left, which is traditional Japanese pattern. There are several titles of Manga comic books: *Full Metal Alchemist*; *Naruto*; *Fly High!*; *Astro Boy*; *Slum Drunk*

Superhero Story:

This type of comic book is the most popular form and turned from one brief episodic adventure into epic saga. Principally, these comics depict a story with one or more heroes who fight against evil. An evil side is mostly performed by superhero also. There are two mainstream publishers of Superhero stories are Marvel Comics and DC Comics. They produced numbers of comics, for example: *Hulk (Marvel Comics)*, *Captain America (Marvel Comics)*, *Green Lantern (DC Comics)* or *Batman: Dark Knight Returns (DC Comics)*

Personal Narratives (“Perzines”):

These are stories written by a person who experienced some situation in history are called “Perzines”. The stories depict opinions, observations and feelings which the author live through. Several “Perzines” are written in a first-person diary-style and are often traded or sold via smaller storekeepers. One of “Perzines”, *March: Book One* by John Lewis, is also analyzed in this bachelor thesis. Other “Perzines”: *Caboose* by Liz Saidel; *Moonlight Chronicles* by Daniel Price or *The Land of Conch* by Joshua Peck

Non-fiction:

Non-fiction what is very similar to “Perzines” because they are written thanks to personal point of view but author is mainly depicting the social issue in general despite using his own experiences. Writing in the first person is not common as it is in “Perzines” because in this setting the storyteller is not the story’s main character. Non-fiction comic book story, analyzed in this bachelor thesis, is *Martin Luther King and Montgomery Bus Boycott* by Fellowship of Reconciliation. Other Non-fiction stories are: *The Complete Maus* by Art Spiegelman; *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* by Alison Bechdel or *From Hell* by Alan Moore (Graphic Novel, 2016)

The target group for comic books is generally your people. Comic books are published on weekly or monthly basis. Selling propositions are very specific because it is possible to buy comic book at newsstand or in special comic book stores. There are also many shapes and varieties of comic books. It is well to note that comic books are not only for youngsters though publishers do focus on advertising, competitions and puzzles to make them more attractive for teenagers. They can encompass a huge variety of genres and styles. (Graphic Novels, 2016)

On the other hand, graphic novels are more serious (they usually discuss a serious literary theme) and the target audience is older than in comic book’s case. Moreover, several graphic novels are not original publications but rather republished

comics remade as a book. “The extent to which the term signifies a difference in style or form from comics is negligible, but it must be noted that texts that are originally intended for publication in book form sometimes take advantage of the possibilities for a longer narrative, different formats, and superior paper quality, which can be seen as an argument for preserving the distinction between comics and graphic novels.” (Graphic Novel, 2016)

There is also further complication because the term “Graphic novel” is used principally in English speaking countries so it is difficult to find an equivalent term in Europe or in Asia. In France *bande dessinée* (“drawn strips”) play a role like comic book or it can be also considered as a graphic novel. Adults in France had been collecting pieces of comics and making albums from them. This type of collection coexisted also with comics for children and there was no problem to diversify these collections. The same in Japan, people had been reading their Manga, which are dizzying varieties of genres and themes. (Graphic Novels, 2016)

So thereby it is possible to declare, that in non-English-speaking countries, a comic book is exactly the same as a graphic novel. Only English-speaking countries differentiate these two terms in very specific way. The term Graphic Novel experienced boom during 1960s and 1970s and since that time this term is used mainly in depiction of politics or in depiction of social struggle.

3. Civil Rights Movement

African American social movement, called Civil Rights Movement, fought against race segregation and discrimination of African Americans in the United States in 1950's and 1960's. The first main target of the movement was to cancel laws which were based on race segregation. The second aim was to procure the Constitutional Law applied to African American. Constitutional law deals with the fundamental principles by which the government exercises its authority. These principles provide specific powers to the government, such as taxes and limiting welfare of the population. (COBB, James C. *The South and America since World War II*, 2011, p.76)

Civil Rights Movement had begun in 1950s and demanded equality for all African Americans what was meant by the same conditions for everyone in the United States. Civil Rights Movement was identified by non-violent protests. The historic non-violent protest for the independence of India from Great Britain, led by Math Gandhi, were the inspiration for this strategy. One of the most important leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, in the United States, was Martin Luther King, a member of so called "Big Six" group.

"Big Six" was a group of civil rights leaders who organized non-violent protest in Southern part of the USA. This group included A. Philip Randolph, Martin Luther King and Roy Wilkins. These men were representing the NAAC (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). John Farmer, as a fourth member, represented the CORE (Congress of Racial Equality). John Lewis the fifth member represented of SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee). The final member of "Big Six" was Whitney Young Jr. who representing Urban League. (COBB, 2011, p.76-77)

Two members of "Big Six" (Martin Luther King and John Lewis) were selected as the main figures for this bachelor thesis. Other figures considered are James Baldwin, who one of the most influential writers during the Civil Rights Movement, and Rosa Parks. Rosa Parks is considered as the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p.36), because, it was her conflict in Montgomery that sparked off the bus boycott. All these historical personalities were widely depicted in graphic novels which. An analysis of these persons is the subject of

later chapters. People were protesting against discrimination with several types of protests. Next paragraphs contain three types of these protest grounded on non-violence.

3.1. Montgomery Bus Boycott

On 1st December 1955, during the drive by bus in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks gave up to leave her seat for white passenger. That meant the infringement of law about the segregation in public transport because the front part of the bus was for white passengers only. Rosa Parks was arrested and that was the reason for the boycotting of public transport. Montgomery Bus Boycott had started protests for cancelation of segregation laws in public transport. (COBB, 2011, p.77-78)

The Boycott was considered as very effective. African Americans in Montgomery started to use their joint cars, taxi cars or they just went by foot to get to work. The mayor and other leaders of Montgomery were under pressure because public transport had a problem with costs. In November 1956, The Supreme Court of the United States declared segregation in public transportation as illegal, and thus ended the bus boycott in Montgomery. The leader of the boycott was Martin Luther King, inspired by Gandhi's non-violent methods. (COBB, 2011, p.78-79)

3.2. Sit-in protests

In February 1960, students of Greensboro College in North Carolina organized first sit-in protest in American history.

The protest took place in Greensboro's segregated buffet. African American students sat in the section for the exclusive use of white customers and they were waiting. They only sat with their hands folded on the table. This was the standard means of protesting relation to segregation of seats in restaurants. This form of protest expanded to other cities in the Southern states of America. This resulted in restaurant proprietors being forced to integrate their facilities and finally end the segregation in public restaurants too. (COBB, 2011, p.79)

These protests had not only managed to encourage many African Americans but also mobilized growing numbers of Black Americans. The sit-in protests also helped to establish SNCC organization under the leadership of John Lewis. The SNCC organized sit-in protests in the southern part of the USA, steadily increasing the number of white people from northern states who began to support the Civil Rights Movement. (COBB, 2011, p.80)

3.3. Freedom Riders

In 1961, black and white students, who worked for CORE, had started their own way of protesting. They travelled by bus across the South and tried to cancel race segregation at the bus stops. They were attacked and harmed by white people at some places so the 35th president of the United States, John F. Kennedy, had to send National Guardsmen to protect the boycotters. Afterwards, John F. Kennedy issued a regulation which ended race segregation at bus stops, train stops and in vehicles of public transport. In the same year, inscriptions, warning African Americans to not use public facilities, had to be removed and segregation at toilets, waiting rooms and restaurants was canceled. In March 1961, American president Kennedy signed the list of affirmative action¹. (COBB, 2011, p.82)

3.4. March to Washington

In August 1963, the struggle for civil rights came to a head. That month more than 200 000 supporters participated on what became a massive march on Washington. A march for jobs and freedom. The Great March on Washington, as it became known was one of the greatest demonstrations for civil rights in US national history. The mass demonstration converged in front of Lincoln Memorial, and here all the supporters heard Martin Luther King declare in a speech “I Have a Dream”.

¹ It refers to a policy that takes into account factors such as race, skin color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability or nationality ,when considering support for disadvantaged groups in the areas of employment, education and entrepreneurship. (COBB, 2011, p.84)

J.F. Kennedy was originally against the March but at the end, he changed his mind and declared his support for the demonstration. (COBB, 2011, p.83) The result of this movement was the formal emancipation of African Americans with whites, but also the beginning of affirmative action.

These mass protests and demonstrations led to the Congress passing the Civil Rights Act in 1964. The Civil Rights Act guaranteed to everyone the equal right to vote, prohibited discrimination based on race, religion, sex and national origin, and eventually led to abolition of segregation in schools. (COBB, 2011, p.85)

The Voting Rights Act from 1965 guaranteed the federal protection of all the black residents who would like to exercise their electoral right. All practices used to preventing African American citizens from voting, for e. g. literacy tests, knowledge institutes, or being certified as being of "good character", became illegal. (COBB, 2011, p.85)

The Law on Immigration and Citizenship (**Immigration and Nationality Act**) of 1965 abolished ethnic quotas and authorized the immigration of non-whites in the USA, and the Law on Fair Housing (**Fair Housing Act**) of 1968 banned discrimination in the providing of housing or accommodation to African Americans. (COBB, 2011, p.86)

The process of the Civil Rights Movement, important dates and events between years 1950 and 1970 are depicted in appended timeline. (see Appendix 3)

3.5. Civil Rights Movement in American Literature

Struggle of black Americans for their civil and social rights is one of the most important events in the twentieth-century American history. The 16th American President, Abraham Lincoln had ended the slavery in 1865 (after the bloody Civil War), but the position of African Americans the United States remained demeaning. Black Americans, particularly from the South, had very low social status employment. This position was supported and maintained by law. Large number of African Americans began to migrate from the Southern to the Northern parts of the country, especially to the cities like New York and Chicago. By the end of the 19th century their situation had slightly improved. A number of young black writers and artists had commenced on their struggle for the civil rights, the struggle for the rights of African Americans. (HIGH, An outline of American literature, 1986, p.211)

Black and white young people joined one another, in the 1960s to support the movement. Nowadays, what was is called before the movement they formed is called the Civil Rights Movement. Pushing for changing the laws was their purpose. The law was the instrument used to suppress. Bias in the law and the administration of the denied justice.

They were calling for “freedom now!” and this chant spread across the United States. The laws were changed but there were other problems which needed to be solved. It is hard for legislation to change attitudes of mind. It still did not mean real freedom because the process was too slow. Generations of prejudice was slow to dissolve.

Another idea that generated movement fighting for the economic and social rights of blacks. This was called “Black Power”. Numbers of black writers supported this movement. (HIGH, An outline of American literature, 1986, p.217)

“In the writings of James Baldwin (b. 1924), we see the rising anger of blacks in the sixties. Baldwin’s first novel, *Go Tell it on the Mountain* (1953), is a story about religion in Harlem. The central character is a boy deeply troubled by religious thoughts doubts and conflicts. There is described how race, sex and religion influence the lives of

people in a small Harlem church. Religion creates deep, strong emotions in these people. But these religious emotions also destroy their ability to see the real world.” (HIGH, *An outline of American literature*, 1986, p.217)

James Baldwin, as one of four main characters in this bachelor thesis, and his life and contribution to the Civil Rights Movement are described in next chapter of this thesis. He became one of the most influential black writers in 1950s and 1960s.

3.6. James Baldwin (1924-1987)

James Baldwin is one of the main personalities in the Civil Right movement. He was an American essayist, playwright and novelist born on August 2, 1924. He grew up in New York City district Harlem. The name of Baldwin’s biological father remained unknown because his mother, Emma Jones, had never told him his name. When James was three years old, Mrs. Jones got married with Baptist minister David Baldwin who worked as a worker in a factory. Relationship between father and son was strained but James Baldwin followed in his stepfather’s footsteps and took David Baldwin as his own father. (James Baldwin. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Fourteen years old James Baldwin started to serve as youth pastor in a Harlem Pentecostal church. During the school era, young James developed his passion for reading and demonstrated a gift for writing. Cooperation with future famous photographer Richard Avedon began on DeWitt Clinton High Schools in the Bronx (district in the NYC), where Baldwin worked on the school’s magazine. In this magazine were published numerous poems, short stories and plays which were written by this man. In his young age, Baldwin showed his understanding for writing sophisticated literary devices. (James Baldwin. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Plans to go to the college after graduating high school never materialized because James had to financially support his large family (7 younger siblings). The situation was very bad and that is why he took almost all work he could. For example, he was laying railroad tracks for the U.S. Army in New Jersey. In this time, Baldwin

experienced the discrimination. Many times, because of his colour, he was turned away from restaurants, bars etc. It was caused because of his African American origin. That was also the reason why he was fired from the New Jersey job and had to find another one. (James Baldwin. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

The next step in Baldwin's life was his moving to Greenwich Village. This New York City neighborhood was popular with artists and writers. The day, his father died in the summer 1943 and an eighth sibling was born. James Baldwin devoted himself to start with writing a novel. His new friend, Richard Wright, helped him to cover his expenses by having him write essays and short stories for national periodicals like the *Partisan Review*, *Commentary* and *The Nation*.

In 1948, James Baldwin moved to Paris. This was one of the most dramatic changes in his life. He found that he could write more freely about racism as there were no restrictions from the French government. Baldwin's speech to New York Times while he was in France: "Once I found myself on the other side of the ocean, I see where I came from very clearly...I am the grandson of a slave, and I am a writer. I must deal with both." (James Baldwin. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Some time later, Baldwin was granted by a new fellowship with Guggenheim publishers. His novels were about his life in Paris and his depiction of homosexuality (*Giovanni's Room*, 1954), another novel focused on the theme of love between men (*Just Above My Head*, 1978). There was also his exploration of interracial relations a very controversial topic at this time (*Another Country*, 1962).

It was now well known that the author was homosexual, a topic he openly spoke about. We can say that Baldwin did not confine his writing to racism and oppression, but now began to explore the world of human sexuality. He was convinced that the focusing on rigid categories is only limiting freedom. (James Baldwin. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Next literary development in his creative life was the writing a play called *The Amen Corner*. This was produced at Howard University (1955) and ten years later on Broadway. It was his essays that helped Baldwin to become one the most famous writers of the times. Showing his own life through essays or novels gave the people insight into

the black experience in the United States. A book *Nobody Know My Name: Note of a Native Son* (1961) became a bestseller with more than one million books sold. (James Baldwin. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Baldwin believed that non-violent methods could solve America's race problems. That is why he was one of the leading voices in the Civil Rights Movement. The collection of essays *The Fire Next Time* (1963) became a standard text in the schooling of many white Americans. The collection shows the meaning of being black, and the contrast between the lifestyles of white and of the black community. In that book we can find many brutally realistic photos of race relations, but Baldwin did not give up anything and suggested the possible way out: "If we...do not falter in our duty now, we may be able... to end the racial nightmare." (James Baldwin. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

People took his recommendations seriously. The book sold more than a million copies also. *Time* magazine put Baldwin on the cover and said in the feature: "There is not another writer-white or black-who expresses with such poignancy and abrasiveness the dark realities of the racial ferment in North and South." (1963) (James Baldwin. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

In his later work he went back to popular themes - sexuality, family and the black experience. In early seventies, Baldwin became famous in his work. He saw so much violence in this decade (assassinations of Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.) so began to use. This gave his work a more strident tone in his work than ever before. The literary fame started to fade and Baldwin became a college professor at University of Massachusetts (Amherst and Hampshire College). The last days of his life was spent at his home in St. Paul de Vence, France. He died on the 1st of December 1987. (James Baldwin. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

He never wanted to be a leader but he did what he considered as good and left humanity an extensive, rapturous and literary legacy.

3.7. Martin Luther King (1929-1968)

One of the most important personalities during the Civil Rights Movement's era was Martin Luther King (MLK), who was a leader of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States from the middle of the 1950s until his assassination in 1968 in Memphis.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner Martin Luther King was born on 15th of January 1929 in city of Atlanta in Georgia, the son of Michael King Sr. and Alberta Williams King. He had younger brother Alfred Daniel Williams and one older sister Willie Christine. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Martin Luther King's father was from poor sharecropper² family and he acted as pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church. He adopted the name Martin Luther in honor of the German Protestant leader Martin Luther. His son did the same. Martin Luther King's children grew up in safe and loving environment but it was impossible to shield the children from racism completely. MLK Sr. fought against racism because he thought that racism and segregation were an affront to God's will. This left a deep impression on King Jr. King's family had roots in rural Georgia after the moving to Atlanta in 1893 and King Jr. eventually took over the struggling Ebenezer Baptist church with 13 members and he changed it into very forceful congregation. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Martin Luther King Jr. grew up in Atlanta and he entered public school at age of 5. A very traumatic event for Martin was the death of his grandmother Jennie who died of a heart attack. That was also a reason why he tried to commit a suicide (allegedly) by jumping out from the second floor window in their family house. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Being a precise and bright student at Booker T. Washington High School, MLK skipped the ninth and eleventh grades and started to attend Morehouse College in Atlanta. In his 15 years, King Jr. became very popular students between his female

² a farmer especially in the southern U.S. who raises crops for the owner of a piece of land and is paid a portion of the money from the sale of the crops Sharecropper. (Merriam-Webster, 2016)

classmates. Feeling uneasy, young King Jr. questioned the religion in general, although his family was involved in the church and worship. Despite his father's dismay, Martin Jr. decided not to enter the ministry but after taking a Bible class in his junior year, he changed his mind and began a career in the ministry. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

After getting a sociology degree from Morehouse College in 1948, MLK started to attend the liberal Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester in Pennsylvania. Afterwards he became valedictorian of his class in 1951 and was elected as a student body president. Morehouse College President Benjamin E. Mays helped him in his spiritual development. Mays worked also as an advocate for racial equality and encouraged King Jr. to show Christianity as a potential force for social change. Several colleges like Yale and Edinburg in Scotland accepted him for doctoral study but he had chosen Boston University as his next educational programme. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

While studying in Boston, he met Coretta Scott, a singer and musician. He married her in June 1953 and they had four children, Yolanda, Martin Luther King III, Dexter Scott and Bernice. One year later, King became a pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church of Montgomery in Alabama. In only 25 years of age he finished Ph.D. title and obtained degree in 1955. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

The night when Rosa Parks was arrested, King met the head of the local NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) E.D. Nixon and other local leaders of Civil Rights Movement. They planned bus boycott in the city. King took a lead of the boycott although he was the youngest. The other reason why he became a leader was that he had much less enemies than any other member of the black community. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

In first speech, King declared:

“We have no alternative but to protest. For many years we have shown an amazing patience. We have sometimes given our white brothers the feeling that we were being treated. But we come here tonight to be saved from that patience that makes us

patient with anything less than freedom and justice.” Martin Luther King. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

This speech gave a new energy to the civil rights struggle in Alabama. The bus boycott lasted 382 days of walking to work, harassment and intimidation for the Montgomery’s black community. The houses of leaders (King’s and Nixon’s) were both attacked by the people who were against the boycott. Community fought with the Supreme Court with argument that “*separate is never equal*”. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 45)

The second step for the black community was to help coordinate their own efforts for a national organization. King and 60 ministers and activists had decided to establish the Southern Christian Leadership Conference with the aim of building up the moral authority and organization of the power in “black churches”. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Non-violent protests were promoting civil rights reform. King achieved a political platform and also a base of operation throughout the South. The sponsoring from SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) helped to realize more than 20 mass meetings in key areas of the South. Across the country, MLK was lecturing civil rights leaders about race-related issues (Martin Luther King. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

It is well known that King was inspired by Gandhi’s non-violent activism and he also visited him in India. That was one of the most important events in Martin Luther King’s life because it increased his allegiance for civil rights struggle in the USA. Bayard Rustin, King’s mentor, studied Gandhi’s teachings and was one of the main organizers of the Washington’s meeting in 1963. Several King’s friends were concerned about cooperation with Rustin because of his communist background. (Martin Luther King. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

One of the non-violent methods, which MLK supported, known as “sit-in” movements. Sit-in movements were the actions organized by students across the southern cities. Students came into the restaurants or stores and sat at sections for non-colored people. Even if they were asked to leave, they remained seated. This movement

helped to end the segregation at lunch counters in more than 25 southern cities but not in Atlanta. King had returned to Atlanta in 1960 and continued with civil rights movement. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

On October in the same year, MLK and 75 more students were denied when they went into a local store and wanted lunch-counter service. They were arrested only for a short time because the mayor of Atlanta thought that it could hurt the reputation of the city. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Another of King's imprisonments was in 1960 was resolved during the presidential campaign of John F. Kennedy who used his influence to get King released. After another demonstration in Birmingham, Alabama, was MLK jailed with large numbers of sympathizers and he spelled out the theory of non-violence:

“Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community, which has constantly refused to negotiate, is forced to confront the issue.” (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Since this speech, King and other leaders of SCLC prepared for leading a massive demonstration in the capital city of the USA.

It was August 28, 1963 when one of the most important speeches of the history of the United States took a place. More than 200, 000 people, in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C., had seen the famous “I Have a Dream” speech, where MLK also explained his belief that one day all men could be brothers. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 44)

His attention, to focus not only on the present but also on the future, was indubitable and unambiguous: “I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Right after the speech, things started to move. People who never experienced racial tension began to question the nation's Jim Crow laws. Supporting of blacks led to the Civil Rights Act in 1964 which enforced desegregation of public accommodations

and outlawed discrimination on public facilities. It was also a reason to award MLK by the Nobel Peace Prize (in the same year). (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

The Struggle did not stop in the 1960s because on March 7, 1965, a planned march from Selma to the Montgomery (capital of Alabama) was suppressed by police with nightsticks and tear gas. Many people were severely injured and hospitalized. The event is remembered as “Bloody Sunday”. Two days later, 2,500 marchers were confronted by the state troopers, trying to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge (Selma, Alabama). King was also present and he led his followers to kneel in prayers and took them back. That was also a reason why he lost the support of some parts of black community leadership; but it also helped to gain support for the Voting Rights Act in 1965. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

The Civil Rights Movement expanded from 1965 to 1967 but criticism did not stop. Many middle-class white and black citizens thought that his methods were too weak and came too late. For example, blue jean young urban blacks were saying that King is not effective and passive. MLK started to criticize the Vietnam War and according to him, the involvement in Vietnam was politically untenable. He set up a multi-race coalition which should have helped to not discriminate against the world’s poor. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

After many imprisonments, demonstrations and marches, King grew tired and started to live under constant threat of death. It was April 3, 1968 when MLK told to his supporters in Memphis: “I have seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the promise land.” (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

One day later, 4th April 1968, Martin Luther King was shot dead on a balcony of his room at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. The shooter named James Earl Ray was captured two months later after an international manhunt. (Martin Luther King. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

The impact of Martin Luther’s King life and involvement in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States was enormous and he is the most widely known African

American in the era since 1960s. A national holiday was named in his honor as were schools and public buildings.

3.8. John Robert Lewis (1940-present)

John Lewis, born in Troy, Alabama on 21st February 1940, despite his hard work as an assistant of sharecropping parents, he had a happy childhood. The main inspiration to act for the changes in Civil rights was the hearing of sermons with Martin Luther King and news of the 1955-1956, especially Montgomery bus boycott. (John Lewis. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

He attending the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville gave to John Lewis an awareness of non-violent protests (sit-ins). Lewis also took a part in these sit-in demonstrations and was arrested. This upset his mother greatly, but John wanted to stay being a part of the Civil Rights Movement. His participation in the Freedom Rides in 1961, which was challenged segregated facilities, had been made as illegal by Supreme Court, had Lewis been arrested and beaten. (John Lewis. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

The year 1963 was very busy for John, because he was elected as a chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and was also involved in the planning of The March on Washington. Being the youngest speaker at this event, Lewis declared in a powerful oration:

“We all recognize the fact that if any radical social, political and economic changes are to take a place in our society, the people, the masses, must bring them about.” (John Lewis. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

It was John Lewis and Hosea Williams who were the leaders of the march in Selma (Alabama) in spring 1965. Many of their supporters had been beaten by state troopers, trying to cross Edmund Pettus Bridge, “Bloody Sunday”. (John Lewis. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Two years after leaving SNCC (1966), devastated by the murders of MLK and Robert Kennedy, Lewis did not stop to support minorities. He became director of the Voter Education Project (1970). The election helped millions of blacks to be registered as voters. In 1981, Lewis had won a seat on the Atlanta City Council and five years later got a seat on the House of Representatives. Nowadays, representing 5th District on Georgia, Lewis helped to improve health-care reform and educational system. After taking a part on health-care reform, Lewis also participated in the most important renewal of the Voting Right Acts, but Supreme Court refused to change it overall. (John Lewis. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

When Barack Obama became the 44th American president, Lewis stated that, “When we were organizing voter-registration drive, going on the Freedom Rides, participating on sitting-ins, coming here to Washington for the first time, getting arrested, going to jail, being beaten, I never thought - I never dreamed - of the possibility that an African American would one day be elected president of the United States.” (John Lewis. *Bibliography.com*, 2016)

Another part of Lewis’s work was in creating series of graphic novels for teenagers. These graphic Novels are depicting his struggle during the Civil Rights Movement. John Lewis was awarded with many appreciations, *Presidential Medal of Freedom*, NAACP’s *Spingarn Medal* and the sole John F. Kennedy “*Profile in Courage Award*”.

3.9. Rosa McCauley Parks (1913 - 2005)

Rosa McCauley was born on 4th February, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama. Her forefathers were Indians, Irishmen and Africans, for that she was considered as an African American. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 47)

This rule is called “One drop rule”. During her childhood, she helped to her uncle, who was a pastor in small church in Tuskegee. This was a place where she figured out that she want to fight for racial pride. When she was 11, her parents sent her to girl’s school in Montgomery where all African American girls were taught by white

staff. There was also founded that not all of white people are full of evil and hate against African Americans. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 46)

She wanted to be a teacher but her mother fell ill and Rosa Parks had to take care of her. When she was 18, she met a barber Raymond Parks and later they got married. In 1943, Rosa Parks joined the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP). (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 47)

The most important event in her life had happened on 1st December, 1955, in Montgomery where Rosa Parks worked as a seamstress. She boarded the bus to home, tired but happy that the hard day is over. She took a seat in the section for coloured people because all other seats were already taken. A few minutes later, white man boarded the bus and the bus driver asked Rosa Parks to give up her seat because white man wanted to sit. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat and that is why she was arrested by police for four days and later she had to pay a fine (14 dollars). She did not even know that her act would lead to what would be called “Montgomery Bus Boycott”. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 47)

The leader of this boycott was the young Baptist preacher Martin Luther King and it also would launch his civil rights career. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 46)

Only thing she wanted to do was to sit down and go home. “I did not get on the bus with intention of being arrested,” she said later. “I got on the bus with the intention of going home.” (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 46)

Rosa Parks and her husband lost their jobs immediately after the boycott erupted and that was also the reason why they moved to Detroit later in 1957. After losing their jobs, her husband suffered a nervous breakdown.(Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 46)

Rosa Parks continued to work for civil rights. She supported Martin Luther King’s efforts and she also joined him on several protests. During her life, Rosa Parks was awarded numbers of medals and awards. (Free At Last, 2008, p. 47)

The main ones were:

1979 - Spingarn Medal - Medal dedicated by NAACP for African American people who reached some important successes

1980 - Martin Luther King Jr. Award

1993 - induction into the National Women's Hall of Fame

1996 - the 44th US president Bill Clinton awarded Rosa Parks by Freedom Award

After her death in October 2005, she was buried in honour in the rotunda of the US Capitol. She was first African American woman who was buried there. This act was approved by Congress. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 47)

She became a symbol for Civil Rights Movement and its fight against inequality in US society. Her modesty and courage not to surrender the seat inspired many people to rise up against the racism and racial discrimination in the United States.

The following part of the bachelor thesis contains analysis of two chosen graphic novels which are connected with the characters and Civil Rights Movement mentioned above. Firstly, we need to shortly introduce the comic books under study.

4. Introducing of both chosen graphic novels

John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, Nate Powell -

March: Book One

The book is an autobiography of US Congressman John Lewis who was a leader of the Civil Rights movement and one of the key figures in the struggle to end segregation. This book depicted his life; starting from modest beginning at an Alabama farm to just before 1963 March on Washington. The book is divided into three parts. First part is depicting a march on Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma. Second part is connection between all other parts because there is an old John Lewis who is telling the story of his own life. The story is told to an old woman Rosa and to her two sons. The cancelation of segregating restaurants in Nashville is depicted at the end of the story.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation -

Martin Luther King and The Montgomery Story

The story about the Civil Rights movement taking individuals through the methods and thought process used to protest the Montgomery policy obliging African Americans were to ride in the back of the bus. The narration is from an individual named "Jones" and his experience through the protest. The story is also an introduction of civil rights activists who are expressing/showing nonviolent protest by explaining the tactics made up in the 1955 Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott, broken out when Rosa Parks refused to leave her bus seat to a white man.

5. Martin Luther King and Montgomery Story

Graphic novel deals with Martin Luther King's struggle in Civil Right movement and depicts Gandhi's success during the India's path to independence.

It is a coloured novel with numbers of aspects of a comic book. There are many features which are typical for short comics such a length of the book or pictures using bubbles with quotations. Throughout most of the story, dark shades and colours are used.

The font of quotations is only black in bubbles with white background. Added information over the quotations are written with yellow background (see app. 1, pic. 1) or with white background (see app. 1, pic. 21) and font remained the same. It is possible to say, that the colours have no specific function in the text. Thanks to these information, Author is giving some extra relations which are necessary to understand the story.

The novel is written in non-fiction style of personal narratives³. All situations are depicted according to the reality and beginning with childhood of Martin Luther king and ending with several advices how the African American nation won its freedom.

5.1. Language Analysis

The type of language is a standard⁴ with no vulgarism. There is only one word which can be considered as an offensive, the word "negroes" (see app. 1, pic. 1)

sg. Negro, pl. Negroes

- countable and animate noun

- concrete and common noun

Etymology:

"Negro is member of a black-skinned race of Africa," 1550s, from Spanish or

³ genre of writing that uses literary styles and techniques to create factually accurate narratives

⁴ standard languages arise when a certain dialect begins to be used in written form, normally throughout a broader area than that of the dialect itself (Standard Language, 2016)

Portuguese negro "black," from Latin nigrum (nominative niger) "black, dark, sable, dusky," figuratively "gloomy, unlucky, bad, wicked," of unknown origin. Use with a capital N- became general early 20c. (e.g. 1930 in "New York Times" stylebook) in reference to U.S. citizens of African descent, but because of its perceived association with white-imposed attitudes and roles the word was ousted late 1960s in this sense by Black."

(Negro. *Online Etymology Dictionary*, 2016)

All additional information over the pictures begins with first letter boldfaced (see app.1, pic. 1) which is the effort of the author to stress the given information. It is also possible to find some boldface in the text itself, the effort is also the same, to stress some important information. Example: "**WITHOUT VIOLENCE AND WITHOUT HATING**" (see app. 1, pic. 1).

The author also used some specific fixed expressions which are depicting the life of Martin Luther King. The first expression is "**to grow up in the shadow of sth. or sbd.**" (see app. 1, pic. 22). In the context, it means that MLK was influenced by his family to visit a church regularly or to be a Baptist. In case of MLK it was both options.

King is depicted as young boy sitting in the church with Holy Bible in hands and with his mother on the left side of him. (app. 1, pic. 22)

King's father has used the old English words during a little talk to his son and holding Bible. "... **and love thy neighbour as thyself**" (app. 1, pic. 2). The Bible used is the King James /Authorised Version from 1611.

thy

possessive pronoun of 2nd person singular, late 12c., reduced form of þin; until 15c. used only before consonants except -h-. Compare my/mine, a/an. (Thy. *Online Etymology Dictionary*, 2016)

thyself (pron.)

Middle English þi-self, from Old English þe self; One word from 16c. A pronoun used reflexively for emphasis after (or in place of) thou.

Thyself. *Online Etymology Dictionary*, 2016)

Using phrasal verbs and shortening is also very intensive in researched graphic novel (app. 1, pic. 3). “**We’re all caught up** in it in one way or another!” , it means that we are all involved with the person or situation occurred.

catch up

verbal phrase; used from early 14c. in sense "raise aloft" and from 1855 in sense "overtake"; catch (verb) + up (adverb).

(Catch up. *Online Etymology Dictionary*, 2016)

5.2. Content analysis

In another example, the author is depicting the situation where Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat in the bus. The author used an imperative in meaning of question. Bus driver came to her and said: “For the last time...are you getting up...or aren’t you! (app. 1, pic. 4) Rosa did not give up her seat in the section for coloured people and she was arrested and had to pay a court tax (app. 1, pic. 5). (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p.35-36)

That was the reason why the protest had begun. Thanks to help from Newspaper of Montgomery City, The Montgomery Bus Boycott became very popular. (app. 1, pic. 6) Many people took a part in Boycott which lasted 381 days. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p.46)

Martin Luther King encouraged boycotters to persist until the day of riding a bus with social dignity for African Americans was achieved. (app. 1, pic. 7).

People refused to travel by bus and followed Martin Luther King in protests. (app. 1, pic. 8) Supporters of the Boycott used to go to work on foot and African American taxi drivers charged boycotters with the same fare as they would pay for the bus before (10 cents). (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 36)

Occasionally, taxi drivers offered to people a drive with no charge and helped them to get to the work. The city had to pay a heavy economic price for these segregationist ways of travelling, so the police started to fine taxi drivers for trivia. (app. 1, pic. 9)

Depicted fining of Martin Luther King (app. 1 pic. 10) is considered as fictitious because there are no proofs that this situation ever happened. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 38)

That was not the only thing that happened because Martin Luther King's house was attacked by several non-sympathizers who threw a bomb on the garden. King's wife thought, it was a brick and stayed calm. (app. 1, pic. 11) This situation depicting King's wife determined to be inactive and continue to talk with her female friend.

According to *Free At Last* book, King, E.D. Nixon and more than 100 boycotters were arrested for "hindering a bus" but they continued with grace and adherence to nonviolent tactic (app. 1, pic. 12). All these things had happened after attacking the King's house. King earned respect for the movement and discredited the segregationists in Montgomery. Coretta King and her daughter were safe. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 39)

When the bus boycott ended, people began to prepare for the same situation which happened to Rosa Parks and which may have happened again to them. (app. 1, pic. 13) It was all about non-violent behaviour and courtesy. People came to the bus, sat down and clasped their hands what meant that they cannot be accused of violence. (app. 1, pic. 14)

In November 1956, the Supreme Court of the United States rejected the city's final appeal what meant that the segregation of Montgomery buses ended. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p.37)

That situation had met with disagreements between several people who wanted to drive segregated buses. Those people shouted vile and abusive words at African American fellows who were getting on the bus but the African Americans kept calm. (app.1, pic. 23) The first success came as people started to accept that they will not change anything and Martin Luther's way of non-violent method was effective. (app. 1, pic. 15)

However, there were some situations depicted in the comic book where not all the people were reconciled to terminating bus segregation. A woman, depicted in

appendix 1 picture 24, had to pay for her fare twice and bus driver did not want to negotiate and started to shout at her. Shouting is depicted with usage of imperative sentence written in the bubble over the driver.

Following image is depicting a woman slapped by a man who sat next to her. The author had also expressed thoughts of that woman.

“I could really wallop him - He is smaller than me! But I am going to remember what reverend King told me about peace and violence...” (app. 1, pic. 16)

The African American people were disciplined despite being abused during drives by bus.

Afterwards convulsions had erupted. Night buses were attacked by people with shotguns. (app. 1, pic. 17) Author had used an idiom “**to be peppered with**” which means to shower someone or something with something, such as stones, bullets, etc. In this case, he meant shotgun pellets.

One night later, the Ku Klux Klan (radical extremist movement which used to killing coloured people, especially African Americans) burned the crosses and bombed 7 houses of African Americans. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 38) Situations occurred did not force harmed people to stop believing in Martin Luther King’s philosophy. Reverend Robert Graetz, one of injured, had planted a tree in one bomb crater in his garden to remind that “in the midst of death, there is life...and hope.” (app. 1, pic. 18)

The author is depicting two men, talking in the forest, who made a deal that the bombing will stop because it is giving a bad name to Montgomery city. Bombing stopped and Martin Luther King had thrown his imagined gun away. (app. 1, pic. 19) In relation to the story, it meant that he was not scared to live in Montgomery despite being Black.

In second part of the graphic novel is depiction of the Gandhi’s movement in India. The author shows how the people gained equality above the British Empire with

using a non-violent way. The way of non-violence and courtesy that inspired Martin Luther King to fight for the human rights of African Americans.

The India became independent country and this historical event is depicted as an effort to keep the voters in London on the side government's side. Depiction of two men talking about the situation in India, where unarmed men and women were shot and jailed, meant troubles for the elections in Great Britain. That was an author's effort, to explain the reason why did they let India become independent country. (app. 1, pic. 20)

At the end of the story, Martin Luther King talks to his supporters and gives them an example how India won their sovereignty claiming that the unusual thing about non-violence is:

“Nobody is defeated, everybody shares in the victory.” (app. 1, pic. 25)

6. March: Book One

This comic book begins with the childhood of John Lewis and ends with abolition of race segregation in restaurants, Nashville, Tennessee. The comic book is written only in black and white colour. The font of quotations is only black in bubbles with white background. Most of the quotations in the bubbles are mainly short sentences or interjections containing 1-10 words.

The comic book is written in “perzine’s” style, has the narrator is as the main character. All the situations depicted are true related to the author's own experiences.

Before the story begins, there are few pages depicting the conflict on Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma (1965). This conflict is known as a “Bloody Sunday”.

There is also a short depiction from the Washington in year 2009, where the man (John Lewis), waking up early in the morning, prepares for the day at work. He had visitors at work, a woman with two young African American boys, and the story begins when one of these boys asks John Lewis a question:

“Why do you have so many chickens?” (see App. 2, pic. 1) Retrospective narrative is typical for Book One.

6.1. Language analysis

The type of language is a colloquial⁵ one with usage of some vulgarism. The story is made as much authentic as possible. A word “**Nigger**⁶” was found as a first vulgarism. (see App. 2, pic 2)

sg. Nigger, pl. Niggers

- countable and animate noun
- concrete and common noun

Etymology:

- slang word, extremely disparaging and offensive, very similar to word “Negro”. A contemptuous term used to refer to a black person. Earlier neger from French nègre, from Spanish negro. From the earliest usage it was the term that carries with it all the obloquy and contempt and rejection which whites have inflicted on blacks. (Nigger. *Online Etymology Dictionary*, 2016)

At the beginning of the story John Lewis explained that he is “**drawn to the chickens**” and also introduced his effort to be a chicken farmer. (see App. 2, pic. 3)

to be drawn to something, verb

- an idiom usually used to express that someone is interested in something

Author also applied specific abbreviation which is used especially in comic books. (see App. 2, pic. 4)

⁵ characteristic of or appropriate to ordinary or familiar conversation rather than formal speech or writing; synonym for „informal“ (Colloquial, 2016)

⁶ a member of dark-skinned race

li'l, adjective

- abbreviation of word “little”; Li'l is understandably common since 1934 since the comic strip Li'l Abner was published.

In the same picture (App. 2, pic. 4) is used a word “**pullet**”

Pullet, verb

- pullet is a young hen; specifically a hen of the domestic chicken which is younger than one year. (Pullet. *Merriam-Webster*, 2016)

Sometimes happened that Lewis's chickens died and he took this event seriously. He conducted a funeral for those chickens. That was caused by his believing in God. (App. 2, pic. 5) In this appendix also appeared rarely used word which is not typical for colloquial language.

grief - stricken, adjective

- it means to be very sad because of loss; to be affected by grief (Grief-stricken. *Merriam-Webster*, 2016)

Graphic novel also contains some examples of idiomatic expression of adjectives or noun. In this case is the word “**hand-me-down**” in meaning of noun, concretely an old vehicle/bus. (App. 2, pic. 6)

hand-me-down, adjective or noun

- something with inferior quality; something shabby (Hand-me-down. *TheFreedictionary.com*, 2016)

Second vulgarism founded in the graphic novel is “**son of a bitch**” which is a term for a person (especially a man) who is strongly disliked and hated. (App. 2, pic. 7)

6.2. Content analysis

The situation on Edmund Pettus Bridge in the first part of the graphic novel is depicted as the end of the boycott because state troopers did not allow to boycotters to go through. African Americans led by John Lewis kneeled and started to pray. (App. 2, pic. 8)

What happened afterwards is written in the history as “Bloody Sunday”. State troopers, shouting invectives, used tear gas and started to beat boycotters. There were numbers of injured people who had to be transported to hospital. (App. 2, pic. 9)

During the first Lewis’s drive to the South, he drove past prison work field and he saw only African Americans working in the fields. That made him sad because he could not help them and he felt powerless. (App. 2, pic. 10)

The first time John Lewis heard about Martin Luther King Jr. was when he listened to WRMA radio and that moment changed his life. He was considered to support Martin Luther King Jr.’s movement as what MLK Jr. was saying resonated with him. (App. 2, pic. 11)

On December 1st 1995, Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus. The bus driver told her to move or he will be forced to call the police and they will arrest her. Rosa Parks refused and told to driver that he may call the police. Lewis’s family knew plenty of women who were in the same situation as Rosa Parks was. She was actually arrested after refusing to give up her seat. (App. 2, pic. 12)

Martin Luther King Jr. prepared the Montgomery bus boycott as a president of The Montgomery Improvement Association and plenty of other African Americans joined him. The boycott lasted more than a year and forced Montgomery’s representatives to cancel bus segregation in the city. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 39) John Lewis was inspired by Martin Luther King’s act and decided to preach his own sermons. He was sixteen years old when he started to preach. (App. 2, pic. 13)

The violence against African Africans escalated and John Lewis decided to meet Martin Luther King and join him in Montgomery city. He met him in his office and

Martin Luther King explained the possible threats which might be made to Lewis and his family. There was possibility of losing their jobs or the bombing of their house. These same things had befallen Martin King Jr. and his family. (App. 2, pic. 14)

John Lewis, like Martin Luther King, also referred to and preferred, Gandhi's non-violent methods. These he mentioned in a popular graphic novel "Martin Luther King and The Montgomery Story". He explained King's effort to follow Gandhi's footsteps depicted in that graphic novel. (App. 2, pic. 15)

Segregation at the downtown stores is another part of the comic book where the author depicting the humiliation of African Americans. People were bothered because they paid the same prices as white customers but they were not allowed to use dressing rooms or sit at lunch counter. (App. 2, pic. 16)

John Lewis and other supporters decided to plan sit-in protests. Their plan was to come to the restaurant, sit at lunch counter and wait until they will be served by employees. They were waiting half a day until the manager came and said that they will not be served if they stay at lunch counter. Supporters accepted his words with courtesy and left the restaurant. It was the non-violent way how they fight against segregation and inequality. In following days the situation remained the same. People came to the restaurant and after refusing to be server, they went out with thanks. (App. 2, pic. 17)

Local white people became angry because African Americans taken their places and stayed sitting on them. Angry men were shouting abusive words against them but a after a while, they wore themselves and left the restaurant. (App. 2, pic. 18)

The threat of violence against African Americans grew still higher and higher. White people warned John Lewis that if he will continue with sit-ins, it will not end only with abusive words. John Lewis and students were not scared and continued with non-violent protests at lunch counters. It did not take a long time and white people started to attack black people. (App. 2, pic. 19) After all these convulsions, police went to the restaurants and placed only African Americans under arrest (John Lewis was also arrested) because they did not leave the seats. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 41)

After the arresting of these people, thousands of supporters gathered to march on the City Hall in Nashville. The Mayor of the city accepted their appeals and ended discrimination in Nashville. (App. 2, pic. 20) And at 3:15 PM on May 10, 1960, six Downtown stores served food to African American customers for the first time in city's history. (Free At Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement. 2008, p. 41)

7. Comparison of both graphic novels

In the Montgomery Story, Martin Luther King is depicted as the main character, but in Book One, he plays an inspiring role for John Lewis who is the main character there. The situations depicted in both comic books are very similar. Rosa Parks and Montgomery bus boycott is described completely in the same way as it happened in reality. Depiction of Sit-in protests appears only in Book One and plays the main role in the comic book.

There is a big difference in colors of both books, Montgomery story is animated in color, while Book One is only black and white. In Montgomery Story is standard language with less quotation but in Book One is colloquial language using quotation everywhere.

Book One is written by John Lewis and taking his own experiences he blends into the comic book, whereas Montgomery Story is more descriptive and using only serious information about the history. There were found no differences in depiction of real events. Montgomery story is written in chronological order, while Book One is in retrospective order because John Lewis is introducing his life story to young boys who came to visit him in his office in Washington. This is also one of the main differences between both books. Time range of the Montgomery story is much shorter than in Book One. It is also seeable on number of pages. The Montgomery story has 16 pages, whereas Book One has more than 120 pages.

The Montgomery Story is focused more on depiction of bus boycott and consecutive behavior of African Americans during the protests. The Book One is mostly about John Lewis's life, his struggling during Sit-in protests and about his cooperation

with Martin Luther King Jr. Both books depicted childhood of their main characters, but the Book One is more concrete about the life of John Lewis, especially about his desire to have a chicken farm.

There are different areas where the stories took a place. The Montgomery story is mainly from the city of Montgomery and partially from Washington. The Book One is from much more cities like Nashville, Washington, Selma and Pike County.

Whereas the Book One is mainly about conversations between two or more people, Montgomery Story tells the story through additional information depicted over the pictures. Book One is full of short interjections and vulgar words in comparison with Montgomery Story.

The situation in the Book One was severer because white people were attacking black people during the Sit-in protest and on Edmund Pettus Bridge. African Americans taking part in Sit-in protests were attacked by white community, whereas people protesting on the bridge were attacked by police. Protests in Montgomery were calmer, although there were some bomb attacks of white community on houses of black community.

The both main characters succeed in their struggle against inequality but everyone in something different. Martin Luther King achieved that public transport in Montgomery city was not segregated anymore. John Lewis achieved that counter seats in downtown restaurant in Nashville were available for colored people.

In general, we can say that both books are depicting the struggle against inequality and race segregation of African Americans but Book one is more personal, while Montgomery Story is more serious and descriptive.

8. Conclusion

The bachelor thesis deals with the depiction of Civil Rights Movement in Comic Books and Graphic Novels.

The thesis is divided into the theoretical and the practical part. The theoretical part has two sections, including literary and historical background. The literary background makes readers familiar with the genre of Comic Books and Graphic Novels together with their specialties. As these terms are sometimes used interchangeably, the definitions discussing particular features and some similarities as well as differences between both of them are given in the chapter 7. The descriptions contain general characteristics, main definitions and types of Comic Books and Graphic Novels, extended using several examples.

The historical background deals with the main personalities of the Civil Rights Movement and also with the Civil Rights Movement as such. The short summary of the Civil Rights Movement discusses the main events which happened during the 1950s and 1970s in the United States and also further describes three types of protests against race segregation of African Americans. These three types of shortly explained protests are Freedom Rides, Montgomery Bus Boycott and Sit-ins. The second part of the historical background is based on biographical information related to the main personalities involved extensively in the Civil Rights Movement, including Martin Luther King Jr., John Lewis, James Baldwin and Rosa Parks. This part concerns personal and professional life of these people.

The practical part then contains the analysis of two both chosen books, *Martin Luther King and Montgomery Story* by The Fellowship of Reconciliation and *March: Book One* by John Lewis. Both sources are easily accessible online, especially the comic book, in order to make them available for broader readership. Both language and content of the graphic material are analyzed. The content is then further compared with real events and supported with short pieces from the both chosen books.

The comic book, *Martin Luther King and Montgomery Story* is a colored story written in non-fiction style. All situations are depicted according to the reality. The

story begins with childhood of Martin Luther King Jr. and ends with several pieces of comments on how the African American nation won their freedom. The language used is standard with no vulgarism. Characters in *Montgomery Story* use mainly more comprehensive quotations based on explanations.

The graphic novel, *March: Book One* begins with the childhood of John Lewis and ends with abolition of race segregation in restaurants. The graphic novel elaborated only in black and white colour. The novel is so called “perzine” which means that the story is autobiographical. All situations are depicted according to the reality and author’s own experiences. For *Book One* is typical colloquial language with vulgarisms and interjections. Characters in *Book One* have mainly short quotations based on discourse.

The comparison of these two stories demonstrates that *Book One* is more personal and detailed, while *Montgomery Story* presents more serious and descriptive narrative. Both books depict the struggle of African Americans and introduce the real situations that happened during the Civil Rights Movement, such as Rosa Parks fight in Montgomery city and her refusing to give up seat in segregated public transport or sit-in protests in Nashville which led to the end of segregation in Downtown restaurants. *Montgomery Story* took place mainly in the city of Montgomery, whereas *Book One* took place mainly in Nashville in Alabama and in Washington D.C. According to reality, the both main characters succeed in their struggle against inequality. Martin Luther King achieved that public transport in Montgomery city was not segregated anymore. John Lewis achieved that counter seats in downtown restaurant in Nashville were available for colored people.

Therefore, the initial hypotheses that the graphic stories are not that different from the real events as known to reader, was approved.

At the end of the bachelor thesis are attached several appendixes which contain examples of analyzed parts of the graphic novel and comic book. These parts were used for the comparison between the novels and real events.

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10. Resumé

Témat o potlačování lidských práv a svobod lze v dnešní době nalézt opravdu hodně a nedá se říci, že by tento problém z nynějšího světa zcela vymizel. Pokud nahlédneme do historie, tak můžeme s jistotou říci, že nerovnoprávnost ať už vůči ženám nebo různým etnickým skupinám a rasová segregace byli nedílnou součástí dějin převážně 19. a 20. století.

V této bakalářské práci byla zvolena ta část historie, která se týká hnutí za občanská práva ve Spojených státech amerických během padesátých a šedesátých let dvacátého století. Konkrétně je práce zaměřena na zobrazení hnutí za občanská práva v komiksových knihách a grafických novelách. Cílem této práce je představit hlavní postavy hnutí a jejich roli během dvou dekad boje Afroameričanů za jejich občanská práva. Dále se v práci objevuje stručná charakteristika komiksových knih a grafických novel a doplněna o příklady. V teoretické části také najdeme stručný přehled událostí, které byly podnětem pro již zmíněné hnutí za občanská práva a také způsoby, jakými Afroameričané vyjadřovali nesouhlas s jejich vlastním postavením ve společnosti Američanů bílé pleti.

V praktické části najdeme analýzu dvou zkoumaných grafických novel, které zobrazují většinu historických událostí, jež se uskutečnily během dvaceti let boje za rovnoprávnost v Americe. Jedná se jak o jazykovou analýzu, ve které jsou zkoumány jazykové jevy použité v grafických novelách, tak i obsahovou analýzu, která porovnává pohledy autorů novel se skutečnými historickými událostmi.

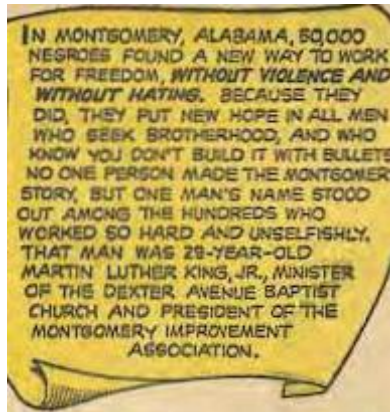
11. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Pictures related to Martin Luther King and Montgomery Story

Appendix 2 - Pictures related to March: Book One

Appendix 3 - Civil Rights Movement Timeline

Appendix 1



Picture 1 - Table



Picture 2 - Language



Picture 3 - Young MLK



Picture 4 - Rosa Parks -



Picture 5 - Arrest of Rosa



Picture 6 - Newspaper



Picture 7 - Preparing



Picture 8 - Plan



Picture 9 - Taxi Driver



Picture 10 - MLK Fining



Picture 11 - Bombing



Picture 12 - Arresting



Picture 13 - Preparing



Picture 14 - Preparing pt. 2



Picture 15 - Reporters



Picture 16 - Slap



Picture 17 - Shotgun



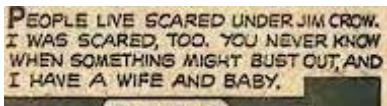
Picture 18 - Robert Graetz



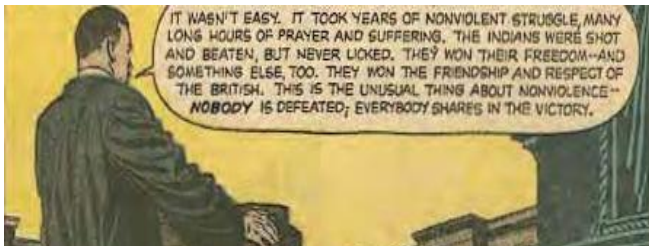
Picture 19 - Throwing



Picture 20 - Voting



Picture 21 - Addition



Picture 25 - Final Speech



Picture 24 - Incident



Picture 22 - MLK in Church



Picture 23 - Angry Man

Appendix 2



Picture 1 - Boys in office



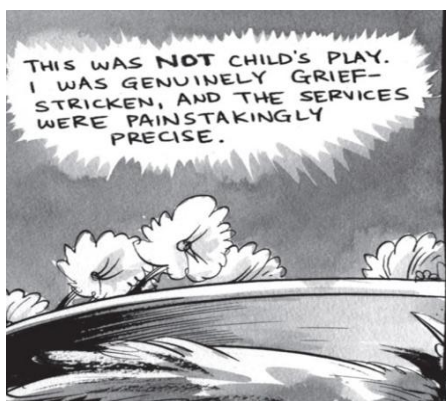
Picture 2 - Gas station



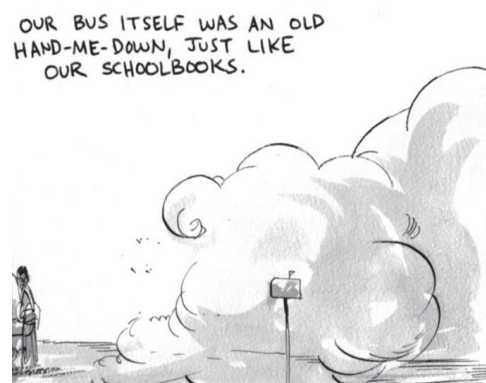
Picture 3 - Chicken 1



Picture 4 - Chicken 2



Picture 5 - Funeral



Picture 6 - Bus



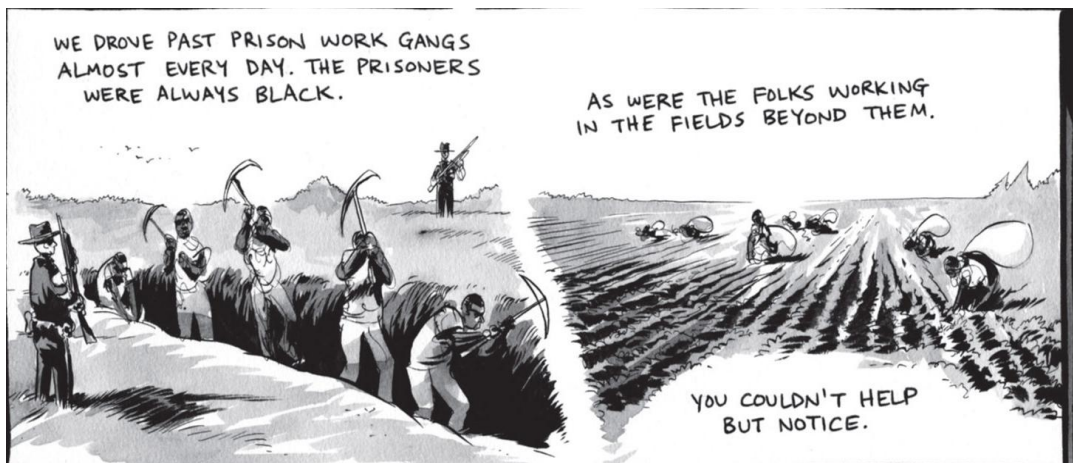
Picture 7 - Son of *



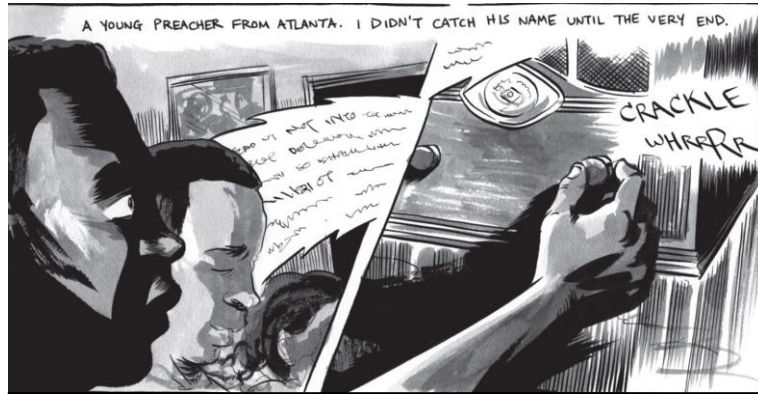
Picture 8 - The Bridge



Picture 9 - Bloody Sunday



Picture 10 - Prisoners



Picture 11 - Radio



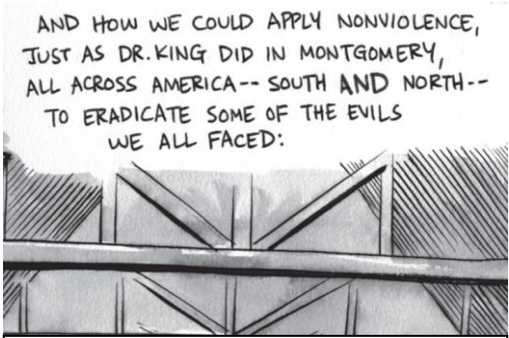
Picture 12 - Rosa Parks



Picture 13 - First Preach



Picture 14 - Threats



Picture 15 - Gandhi



Picture 16 - Lunch Counter



Picture 17 - Sit-in



Picture 18 - Angry Men



Picture 19 - Conflict



Picture 20 - Mayor

Appendix 3

