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Towards a transnational social history of "a peaceable Kingdom". Peace movements in post–1945 Britain

> "The outstanding and—by contemporary standards—highly original quality of the English is their habit of *not killing one another*. Putting aside the 'model' small states, which are in an exceptional position, England is the only European country where internal politics are conducted in a more or less humane and decent manner."[1]

The strength of British civil society and the civility of British politics has formed a central part not only of British national identity, but also of scholarly debate.[2] The high level of tolerance towards dissenters, the plurality of British political life, and the strength of voluntary associations form the central elements of this master narrative of a special path which has allowed Britain to escape most of the violence pervading European domestic societies in the 1920s and 1930s.[3] The pioneering role and strength of the British peace movement since the early nineteenth century have been viewed as an important part of this interpretation of British history and have been accepted as axiomatic.[4] Consequently, British peace movement history is amongst the most advanced. Interestingly, however, this statement is less true for the period after 1945. Were one to assess the strength of the British peace movement by looking at the historical writing about it, one could get the impression that it did not survive the bombing raids of the Second World War and the advent of the welfare state. While there are many organisational overviews and while many textbooks contain chapters on post–1945 anti-nuclear weapons movements, more specialised historical-critical studies are rather rare. This is surprising. Not only the activists but also observers from abroad regarded the British peace movements after the Second World War, very much in line with its place in British national identity, as an international trendsetter.

There is certainly no dearth of sources. The archival resources for peace movement history are nearly ideal. The papers of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) are available in the archives of the London School of Economics and Political Science and in the Modern Records Centre at the University of Warwick and available for material even for the 1980s. Regional, and often even local papers are kept at the relevant record offices. Lively and

1 The title follows Brian Harrison: Peaceable Kingdom. Stability and Change in Modern Britain, Oxford 1982. For the quote cf. George Orwell: The English people [1947], in: idem (ed.): Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters, edited by Sonia Orwell and Ian Argus, vol. 3, Harmondsworth 1970, 47. Italics in the original.

2 Harrison, Peaceable Kingdom; most recently: Peter Clark: British Clubs and Societies 1580–1800. The origins of an Associational World, Oxford 2000, especially 470–491.

3 Cf. Bernd Weisbrod: Der englische "Sonderweg" in der neueren Geschichte, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft 16 (1990), 233–252.

4 Cf. Martin Ceadel: Thinking about Peace and War, Oxford 1989, passim.

varied pamphlet and newspaper literature is available, such as *Peace News*, *Sanity* and others. The papers of the Labour and Communist Parties are available in Manchester. Newspaper sources can be consulted at the newspaper division of the British Library in Colindale. The National Register of Archives of the Historical Manuscripts Commission is an important source for locating these as well as regional and local collections on the protests against nuclear weapons.[5] Opinion polls offer an equally underused source for the peace historian.[6] Finally, many of the former activists have left valuable memoirs.[7]

There are multiple reasons for this neglect of peace movements by mainstream historians. The trauma of appeasement seemed to make organised pacifism not a very good object of study. This impression was strengthened further by a concentration on state actions and foreign policy by most contemporary historians, following the analysis of an alleged death of voluntarism in post-World War II Britain, which seemed to make it impossible to regard "society" as an independent object worthy of study.[8] Another reason why the history of peace movements in post-World War II Britain has been relatively neglected might have been the tacit assumptions amongst many historians that "peace", however defined, had now come about, even if that had happened at the price of mutually assured destruction by nuclear weapons. The use of the term "peace" by Communist propagandists to advertise the achievements of the Eastern bloc might have done much to discredit the subject amongst mainstream historians. There has been no study which has tried to connect inter-war pacifism and anti-militarism with the period post–1945. Finally, we have to mention the relatively young age of contemporary history as a historical sub-discipline in the United Kingdom, which has so far concentrated primarily on governmental policies and politics and foreign policy.[9]

To be sure, we do possess a number of well-researched studies on CND in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and peace campaigns form an important part of the major textbooks of the period.[10] Yet, they were either written by contemporaries in the 1960s, or by activists in the

5 Cf. http://www.nra.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra/ [visited: 30 April 2004].

6 Cf., for a stimulating West German example: Michael Geyer: Cold War Angst. The Case of the West German Opposition to Rearmament and Nuclear Weapons, in: Hanna Schissler (ed.): The Miracle Years. A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949–1968, Princeton/NJ 2001, 376–408.

7 Cf., for example, Peggy Duff: Left, left, left. A personal account of six protest campaigns 1945–65, London 1971; Canon John Collins: Faith under Fire, London 1966; Mervyn Jones: Chances. An Autobiography, London and New York 1987.

8 Cf. Geoffrey Finlayson: A Moving Frontier: Voluntarism and the State in British Social Welfare 1911–1949, in: Twentieth Century British History 1 (1990), 183–206. However, cf. also Brian Harrison and Josephine Webb: Volunteers and voluntarism, in: A. H. Halsey and Josephine Webb (eds.), Twentieth-century British social trends, Basingstoke and London 2001, 587–619.

9 Cf. Peter Catterall: Contemporary British History: A Personal View, in: Contemporary British History 16 (2002), 1–10 and his What (if anything) is distinctive about Contemporary History?, in: Journal of Contemporary History 32 (1997), 441–452.

10 Christopher Driver: The Disarmers. A Study in Protest, London 1964; John Minnion and Philip Bolsover (eds.): The CND Story. The first 25 years of CND in the words of the people involved, London 1983; James Hinton: Protests and visions. Peace politics in twentieth-century Britain, London 1989; Frank Parkin: Middle class radicalism. The social bases of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Manchester 1968; Richard Taylor: Against the Bomb. The British Peace Movement 1958–

second wave of CND in the 1980s. They must, therefore, be read both as scholarly historical studies and as evidence of negotiating a movement identity. They offer a wealth of information, but there is a general lack of contextualisation and self-reflection. The literature on the protests against the Vietnam War is very thin indeed. And there is next to nothing on CND in the 1960s and 1970s.[11] The literature on the 1980s is slightly more voluminous since we possess a considerable number of studies from political scientists and sociologists.[12]

Building on this research, this chapter seeks to outline themes for future research on peace movements in post–1945 Britain. The aim is to show ways in which we may contextualise the history of post–1945 British peace movements and regard them as an inroad into the social history of the time, thus avoiding to write their history *sui generis*. Peace movements in post–1945 Britain offer unique ways to problematise the ways in which the legacies of World War II, the Cold War, as well as social, cultural and political changes left indelible marks on British society after 1945. The first part of this chapter gives an outline of the basic chronology, based on the current state of research. The following parts suggests four inter-related readings for the history of post–1945 peace movements: peace movements and the social history of the Cold War; peace movements and violence; peace movements and British civil society; peace movements as social movements. When we try to see post-World War II pacifism in context, we need to be aware that 1945 was not a concrete wall separating the inter-war years from the "affluent society" of the 1950s and 1960s. Rather, social, cultural and even political currents continued.

The history of peace movements in post-World War II Britain

Before a survey of the history of peace movements in post-World War II Britain can be undertaken, some conceptual remarks are in order. There has often been a lack of clarity about what "peace movements" and "pacifism" are, and the terms have often been used for very different phenomena without even attempting a definition. While the most promising inroad is to look at definitions of "peace" and "pacifism" in the contemporary literature, some very general and somewhat schematic distinctions can be made. "Pacifists" are those who oppose wars and the

1965, Oxford 1988; Richard Taylor and Colin Pritchard: The Protest Makers. The British Nuclear Disarmament Movement of 1958–1965 Twenty Years On, London 1980; Meredith Veldman: Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain. Romantic Protest, 1945–1980, Cambridge 1994. From a women's history perspective: Jill Liddington: The Long Road to Greenham Common. Feminism and Anti-Militarism in Britain since 1820, London 1989.

11 A first start is Mark Phythian: CND's Cold War, in: Contemporary British History 15 (2001), 133–156. On the student protests, but without much reference to the protests against the Vietnam War cf. Nick Thomas: Challenging Myths of the 1960s: The Case of Student Protest in Britain, in: Twentieth Century British History 13 (2002), 277–297 and his unpublished PhD thesis: The British student Movement from 1965 to 1972, Ph.D. thesis, University of Warwick 1997. Trevor Fisher's plea for seeing the 1960s in Britain in an international context has still not been heard. Cf. Trevor Fisher: The Sixties. A Cultural Revolution in Britain, in: Contemporary Record 3.2 (1989), 22–23.

12 Cf. Werner Kaltefleiter and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff (eds.): The Peace Movements in Western Europe and the United States, London 1985.

use of violence under all circumstances.[13] "Pacificists" are those who are willing to approve of certain wars when they are fought for a "just" purpose.[14] And "defencists" are not opposed to war in general, but disagree with the concrete defence policies of a government.[15] "Peace movements" can incorporate all of these strands of thought in all different shades.

The period under discussion here revealed a veritable transformation of British society, where the roles of religion, class, the monarchy, education and citizenship changed fundamentally and radically. Andrew Rosen offers a brief summary of these developments in his book. But apart from the rather brief survey on architecture, "Americanisation" and "Europeanisation" of British life, the survey by A. H. Halsey still offers a more detailed and reflected account of these developments.[16]

The history of British peace movements after 1945 is primarily the history of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which appeared on the political stage in early 1958, withered away from about 1962 onwards and reappeared forcefully during the Euromissile crisis in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[17] During the 1960s the history of British peace movements was also the history of the campaigns against the Vietnam War, primarily centred around the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign.[18] The traditional peace movements, such as the Peace Pledge Union, continued to exist, but the primary focus moved from concern with war and international order as such to the issue of nuclear weapons and Cold War conflicts. Studies on traditional post–1945 pacifism and pacificism (rather than peace movements) are even less well developed than research on social movements in contemporary British history in general.

One of the first significant extra-parliamentary campaigns in post-World War II Britain—apart from trade-union activities—was the one concerned with the unilateral abandonment of nuclear weapons around CND. Although the protests began as a more traditional pressure group activities in the late 1950s, they gradually came to be influenced by "New Left" thinking and to attract a younger audience. There were no significant direct connections with the peace protests of the 1930s[19], since CND's aims were more narrowly concerned with the issue of nuclear weapons. Yet CND was not merely a product of social and cultural change in the late 1950s and early 1960s.The protest movement had links to the Movement for Colonial Freedom, based around Fenner Brockway, and was particularly attractive to certain Christian groups. There were also strong links to the Women's Co-opera-

13 Cf. Ceadel: Thinking about Peace and War, 135–165.
14 Cf. Ceadel: Thinking about Peace and War, 101–134.
15 Cf. Ceadel, Thinking about Peace and War, 72–100.
16 Andrew Rosen: The transformation of British life 1950–2000. A social history, Manchester: Manchester University Press 2003. xii and 211 pp. £ 9.99 (paperback); A. H. Halsey and Josephine Webb (eds.): Twentieth-century British social trends, Basingstoke and London 2000.
17 Here, another campaign European Nuclear Disarmament (END) around the historian Edward P. Thompson competed with CND.
18 Cf. Tariq Ali: Street fighting years. An autobiography of the Sixties, London 1987.
19 On earlier peace movements cf. Martin Ceadel: Semi-Detached Idealists. The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854–1945, Oxford 2000. Trevor Fisher has argued for highlighting the continuities to the 1920s and 1930s in another area. Cf. his Permissiveness and the Politics of Morality, in: Contemporary Record 7 (1993), 149–165.

tive League and other extra-parliamentary associations from the interwar years. Folk music and the lifestyle surrounding it, which came to be popular among some sections of British youth in the early 1960s, were rather a revival of a certain strand of 1930s' socialist culture than a genuinely new development. The emergence of the anti-nuclear-weapons movement was linked to perceptions of international relations which interacted with social and cultural changes at home. The period of calm in international relations which had followed the Geneva Conference in 1955 and had given rise to the hope of an end to the Cold War was replaced by a time of international tensions. With the race for the best weapons technology between the superpowers, the theory of war prevention by nuclear deterrence lost credibility, particularly because there was a rising awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons tests among the British population. CND's foundation followed the various protests against British H-bomb tests in general and the National Council for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons Tests (NCANWT) and the Emergency Committee for Direct Action Against Nuclear War (Direct Action Committee, DAC) in particular.

One event especially sparked the foundation of CND. The multilateral disarmament negotiations at Geneva had failed at the end of 1957, yet the reformist leadership of the Labour Party around Hugh Gaitskell did not want to adopt a policy of unilateral disarmament for Great Britain. When one of Gaitskell's main opponents, the left-wing politician Aneurin Bevan, joined the camp of the multilateralists in the party, the only solution to prevent 'universal catastrophe and apocalypse', argued the writer J. B. Priestley, was an extra-parliamentary campaign.[20] Following Priestley's call, some intellectuals—among them Kingsley Martin, the editor of the *New Statesman*, and Canon John Collins of St. Paul's Cathedral and Priestley himself—planned such a campaign. The first public meeting in Central Hall, Westminster, on 17 February 1958 showed that the idea resonated within British society. 5,000 attended, and, within a year, there were 270 local CND groups.[21]

Both the aims and the strategy of the campaign were under discussion from the beginning. Supporters disagreed whether it should be a pressure group to influence a Labour Party, a moral campaign against war in general, or a socialist campaign to change the framework of British society. With the influx of a younger student population attuned to its ideas, the New Left's emphasis on fostering social change became more important. CND's aims widened from demanding the unilateral abandonment of nuclear weapons to include Britain's departure from NATO.

Debates about aims were intimately connected to debates about strategy. Those who regarded CND as a pressure group to influence Labour advocated lobbying. Others, particularly those around the DAC wanted to make the campaign more visible in public. The DAC's idea of an annual Easter March between the nuclear weapons research establishment Aldermaston and London was, at the beginning, only grudgingly supported by the CND executive. In the end, however, the annual Easter Marches became the trademark of the Cam-

20 J. B. Priestley: Britain and the Nuclear Bombs, in: New Statesman, 2 November 1957, 554–556, here 555.

21 Taylor: Against the Bomb, 48–59.

paign. After a relatively small start in 1958, between 60,000 and 100,000 people took part in the final rally on London's Trafalgar Square in 1960. In 1961, about 40,000 to 50,000 people attended.[22] There was also disagreement over forms of direct action and non-violent disobedience like sit-ins. Following these debates, the Committee of 100 (C100), a group advocating more radical social aims and more direct forms of protest, was founded in autumn 1961. Amongst the more traditional CND supporters, C100 became notorious for its mass sit-downs on Trafalgar Square and in front of the US embassy in London, culminating in the leaking of the location of the secret regional seats of governments in 1963, bunkers which were allocated to members of the government and the civil service in case of a nuclear attack.[23] The protests subsided when, in the wake of the Cuba crisis in autumn 1962, détente appeared to reduce the threat of nuclear war. The election of Harold Wilson as leader of the Labour Party and as Prime Minister in 1964 contributed further to the demise of CND. Due to Wilson's more accommodating style, protesters on the Party's left could be re-integrated into the Labour Party. CND continued to campaign against America's involvement in Vietnam and against nuclear disarmament in general and worldwide, for example against the acquisition of nuclear weapons by China in 1964.[24]

The issue of nuclear weapons was increasingly eclipsed by that of the Vietnam War, which was taken up by the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC). The VSC was founded in 1967 by Tariq Ali and the supporters of a Trotzkyite anti-Vietnam War periodical, called *The Week*. Different from CND and the C100, VSC was intimately connected to student radicalism in the 1960s, which was first sparked by the appointment of a new director of the London School of Economics and Political Science. The new director was the white Rhodesian Walter Adams, who was alleged to have close links to Ian Smith, the hard-line Prime Minister of Rhodesia.[25] The student protests thus became directly linked to the movements for decolonisation, whose pedigree went back to the 1930s.[26] It was through the emphasis on decolonisation that the American intervention in Vietnam came into the focus of the student protesters. Britain's Vietnam was primarily Britain's colonial past. Remarkably, the VSC's founder himself had links to the colonial world: Tariq Ali was a student at Oxford who had arrived in Britain from Pakistan in 1963. Ali had made a name for himself when he televised the debate on Vietnam from the Oxford Union debating society's chambers in 1965. The VSC staged many protests outside the US Embassy at London's Grosvenor Square, culmi-

22 Taylor: Against the Bomb, 57 and 77.

23 There is still no adequate study of the Committee of 100. Cf. Frank E. Myers: Civil Disobedience amd Organizational Change: The British Committee of 100, in: Political Science Quarterly 86.1 (1971), 92–112, and the passages in Taylor: Against the Bomb, 190–272. For a new assessment cf. my forthcoming Oxford D.Phil. thesis on the Protests against nuclear weapons in Britain and West Germany, 1957–1964. On the regional seats of government cf. Peter Hennessy: The Secret State. Whitehall and the Cold War, London 2002, 140, 150, 169.

24 Cf. Phythian, 143–148.

25 Ralf Dahrendorf: A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science 1895–1995, Oxford 1995, 443–475.

26 Cf. Stephen Howe: Anticolonialism in British Politics. The Left and the End of Empire, 1918–1964, Oxford 1993.

nating in a massive demonstration on 17 March 1968 against the American Tet Offensive. The protests against the Vietnam War merged with the protests by students against the conditions at their universities, which were centred at the London School of Economics and Political Science.[27]

Peace protests declined in the early 1970s, but were revived again at the end of the decade. Until then, mainly Quakers and the British Communist Party, which had joined the protests belatedly in 1959/60, had kept CND alive. In 1977, CND had 4,278 members, in 1980 already about 9,000, in 1984 about 100,000.[28] In 1978, there had been 102 local groups and 293 affiliated organisations, by 1982 both numbers had grown to about a thousand.[29] Like two decades earlier, the protest movement was a coalition of different groups, dominated by CND. Even the right-wing Conservative politician Enoch Powell was a vocal, albeit not active, supporter of one of CND's aims, namely abolishing a British independent deterrent. There were sub-sections within CND for Christians, students and women. CND competed for public attention with the Campaign for European Nuclear Disarmament (END) and the Freeze Campaign. Like in the 1950s, the end of a period of détente between the superpowers together with a rising awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons and a peculiar domestic political situation made the protests possible. Unlike the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, the Labour Party in opposition, under the leadership of the protest veteran Michael Foot, appeared to be favourable towards the protesters' demands. In December 1979, the new Conservative government accepted the stationing of 160 US-controlled Cruise Missiles on British soil as part of NATO's double-track decision to balance the Soviet Union's SS–20 intermediate-range missiles. At the same time, the arms race seemed to take on a new horrible face with the American development of the neutron bomb which could destroy human beings while leaving buildings intact. Thus, CND supporters were appalled when the Conservative Government under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher seemed to embark on the building of a warfare state at the expense of the welfare state by announcing an increase in defence spending and a cut in spending on social and public policies. There was also an increasing lack of trust in the government's assurances that nuclear deterrence worked when the Government's efforts to issue a civil defence leaflet called "Protect and Survive" became public. Moreover, there was a series of accidents involving US missiles in June 1980. The protesters made use of a huge repertoire of protest: petitions, most prominently the collection of 250,000 signatures against the American neutron bomb in 1978, street theatre, lobbying MPs and local authorities, as well as publishing newsletters, magazines and journals. Under Joan Ruddock's chairmanship from 1981 onwards, CND increased its focus on lobbying the Labour Party for adopting a unilateral platform. Most important among the forms of protests were the mass demonstrations, organised by CND's General Secretary Monsigniore Bruce Kent and often co-ordinated with similar protests in the whole of Western Europe. The 'Protest and Survive Rally' on 26 October 1980 drew 80,000 people to Trafalgar Square; on 6

27 Cf. Ali; Sheila Rowbotham: Promise of a Dream. Remembering the Sixties, Harmondsworth 2001.
28 Cf. Paul Byrne: Social movements in Britain, London 1997, 91: table 6.1.
29 Minion and Bolsover (eds.): CND Story, 150.

June 1982, on the eve of US President's Ronald Reagan visit to London, some 200,000 joined the protests. A demonstration in Hyde Park in October 1983 brought about 400,000 protesters together.[30]

Like two decades earlier, there was strong disagreement over the forms of protest. This time, however, there was no disagreement about civil disobedience as such, but about the particular kind of civil disobedience advocated by the women's peace camps, most famously the one at Greenham Common airbase. The camps had started with the protest march of a group of women in late August 1981 from South Wales to the US Airforce Base in Berkshire at which the cruise missiles were likely to be stationed. Many of the protesters had strong links with the women's and gay liberation movements. They advocated a strategy of direct action, possibly even breaking the law. Groups all over the country supported the Greenham women, impressed by their resilience in face of material discomfort and what was perceived as harassment by the police.[31] Support for the campaign withered away from 1983 onwards. The Conservatives won the 1983 election with a landslide against Labour, which had campaigned on an anti-nuclear platform. With the accession of Mikhail Gorbachev to the Soviet leadership in March 1985, Cold War tensions started to subside, resulting in the signing of a treaty between the US and the Soviet Union in December 1987 which provided for the removal of intermediate range ballistic missiles from European soil.

Peace movements and the social history of the Cold War

The Cold War left indelible imprints on British society and social relations, and on the processes of social change. This interaction between Cold War and British society, especially the legacy of the Second World War, had a particular relevance for British peace movements. The Cold War crucially restricted the meaning of "peace" and made its use more problematic. Given the nuclear stalemate, many argued that a great power conflict within Europe would be increasingly inevitable—protesting for peace without further definition thus became somewhat problematic. Many thus considered it crucial to define more clearly what kind of peace they intended, for example by highlighting the dangers of nuclear weapons, or by criticising the American intervention in Vietnam. At the same time, the British state itself now claimed to be a peaceful state, probably most commonly implied by the abolition of National Service in Britain in 1959.

The Cold War framework of the British protests offers an ideal inroad into transnationalising contemporary British history. It is in this field that we can interpret peace movements as one dimension of central social and political conflicts which transcended boundaries, an element which has been neglected by a nation-centred historiography. The

30 Adam Lent: British social movements since 1945. Sex, Colour, Peace and Power, Basingstoke 2001, 129.

31 Cf. Sasha Roseneil: Disarming Patriarchy. Feminism and political action at Greenham, Buckingham 1995 and eadem: Common Women, Uncommon practices. The queer feminisms of Greenham, London 2000.

similar problems in learning to live with the Cold War and with nuclear weapons, coupled with parallel processes of social and cultural change in Western societies, allowed the peace movements in different societies to discover common identities which went beyond borders.[32]

Most fundamentally, the Cold War limited the borders of the sayable and the doable particularly harshly with regard to peace. The dreams of those who protested had not been fulfilled by the Government and that "peace" had become a dirty word, sounding like Communist propaganda.[33] Especially the supporters on the left regretted that—because of the anti-Communist political culture and because of the Cold War—the aims of peace and freedom had become separated, with the word "peace" being defined for use by the East only, and the word "freedom" being confined to the West.[34] They thus aimed to go "beyond the Cold War" as the historian Edward Thompson, himself a CND member, called it in 1981. For him, the Cold War was "an abnormal political condition". In their views, it was not a "long peace" as John Gaddis has called it[35], but they thought that it affected their lives like a hot war. They bemoaned, again in Thompson's words, that the "Cold War has been a received condition, which has set the first premises of politics and ideology [...]. It is now a settled and unquestioned premise: a habit."[36]

British peace movements thus had a fundamental role in the reconfiguration of the Left in Britain, which was far more complicated than a shift from Old Left to the New. It consisted in a complicated renegotiation of left-wing identities in which political traditions from Britain, Europe and the colonies were creatively adjusted to a new context. British peace movements in the 1960s and 1970s were the loci in which this happened. We can only establish these links with an increased attention to language in our study of peace movements. The language of British peace protests in the 1950s and 1960s was strikingly similar to the one of radical dissent in the 1920s and 1930s. The Cold War and the atomic bomb did not merely cast their clouds over political, social and cultural continuities. Rather, reformulations had already been under way earlier and were now, under the new conditions, merely able to assert themselves.[37] We can observe this in several issue areas, which have so far been neglected by peace movement research. We still do not have a systematic and contextualising survey of discourses about international relations within the peace movements and beyond which tries to write the history of post–1945 peace movements as a story of how British society learned how

32 This aspect is highlighted by systems theory. Cf. its application by Benjamin Ziemann: Überlegungen zur Form der Gesellschaftsgeschichte angesichts des "cultural turn", in: Archiv für Sozialgeschichte 43 (2003), 600–616, here 613–614 and, without theoretic elaboration: Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser (eds.): Culture Wars. Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe, Cambridge 2003.

33 On government assessment of Communism cf. Phillip Deery: "The Secret Battalion": Communism in Britain during the Cold War, in: Contemporary British History 13 (1999), 1–28.

34 Cf. Edward P. Thompson: Beyond the Cold War, London 1982, 6.

35 Cf. John Gaddis: The Long Peace. Inquiries into the History of the Cold War, New York 1987.

36 Cf. Thompson: Beyond the Cold War, 3.

37 Cf. for the USA: David Engerman: Rethinking Cold War Universities: Some Recent Histories, in: Journal of Cold War Studies 5 (2003), 80–95, here 87–88.

to come to terms with the threat of nuclear weapons and the Cold War. In this context, a careful analysis of images of nuclear war, nuclear technology, and nuclear apocalypse within British peace movements is necessary.[38] It is in this, but not only in this context that the continued relevance of religion can be studied. The importance of non-conformist or non-mainstream theology within CND is striking indeed. And CND's rhetoric was highly religious. This is in marked contrast with the general decline of Christian religion and the Anglican Church which many authors have identified, with a drop of adult membership in the Anglican Church from 3,000,000 in 1950 to 1,785,000 in 1990.[39] We can also observe the desire within CND to preserve Protestant religion from corruption through the Cold War, very much in line with the Barthian theology advocated by Canon Collins.[40]

Peace movements as social movements

Sociologists and political scientists have classified both waves of CND, the VSC and the student peace protests as a new form of protest: as "social movements". "Social movements" can be defined, very generally, as "[...] informal networks, based [...] on shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize about [...] conflictual issues [...]."[41] British historians in general and peace historians in particular have also been rather slow in taking up and developing further research by sociologists and political scientists on social movements.[42] Instead, they have preferred to analyse peace movements as pressure groups among other, such as trade unions, the Confederation of British Industry, or the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Those who do not agree with a social-movement approach argue that it "cannot be pushed too far without implying that peace activism was an obliquely expressed form of introspection about social conditions rather than a sincere attempt to tackle the problem of international war."[43]

38 Cf. the sketch by David Seed: The Debate on Nuclear Refuge, in: Rana Mitter and Patrick Major (eds.): Across the Blocs. Cold War Cultural and Social History, London 2004, 117–142 and Kirk Willis: The Origins of British Nuclear Culture, 1895–1939, in: Journal of British Studies 34 (1995), 59–89. Cf. as a starting point for concepts of international relations: Martin Ceadel: La Campagne pour le désarmament nucléaire (CND) et l'approche britannique des relations internationals, in: Relations Internationales 53 (1988), 83–91 and the rather confusing A. J. R Groom: British Thinking about Nuclear Weapons, London 1974.

39 Cf., for example, Rosen, 47.

40 Cf. Dianne Kirby: Church, state and propaganda. The Archbishop of York and international relations. A Political study of Cyril Forster Garbett, 1942–1955, Hull 1999 and eadem (ed.): Religion and the Cold War, Basingstoke 2003. For the context cf. Peter Brierley: Religion, in: Halsey/Webb: British social trends, 650–674 and Hugh McLeod: The Sixties: Writing the Religious History of a Crucial Decade, in: Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte 14 (2001), 36–48.

41 Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani: Social Movements. An introduction, Oxford 1999, 16

42 For Peace movements as social movements cf. Lent, as well as my The Growth of Social Movements, in: Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (eds.): A Companion to Contemporary Britain, 1939–2000, Oxford, 2004, forthcoming.

43 Ceadel: Semi-detached Idealists, 5. Cf. also the classification in Brian Harrison: The Transformation of British Politics, Oxford 1996, 157–179.

Another dominant interpretation is one which continues to believe in the essentially class-based character of British politics, adhering to a sociologically rather narrow definition of class. According to this strand of analysis, peace movements in post–1945 Britain were manifestations of "middle-class radicalism". This middle-class activism in peace movements seemed to run counter to materialist theories of "class" as it involved actors campaigns for non-material interests, such as peace.

This emphasis on pressure-group activity and class has entailed a number of problems.[44] It has paid an undue attention to class as the decisive variable in explaining political behaviour in post-World War II Britain. Race and gender have not usually been included as parameters with which peace movements might be analysed. Generational patterns have equally been neglected with the result that there has been an inability to explain why the student movement has been relatively tame and small in Britain in comparison to other West European countries and the United States, apart from the usual reference to the special character of Britain's civil society. This shift of attitudes has often been attributed to the rise of a different middle-class sociability since the 1920s and 1930s, but we need to know more in order to fully understand this phenomenon and link it to changes in values and assumptions about politics and society.[45]

British peace movements in the late 1950s and early 1960s were the first to be classified as "social movements". By following the ways in which the general public, published opinion, political scientists, sociologists and, not least, peace movements themselves interpreted their own actions in a social context, we can make a first and important step towards a history of the discovery of society in post-war Britain. This area of research is much overdue, given the importance of self-reflexivity for modern societies.[46] In highly differentiated modern societies without central co-ordinating mechanisms, social movements function as immune systems.[47] Through protests, social movements thus describe society to itself in a way that is not

44 Cf. Paul Bagguley: Middle-class radicalism revisited, in: Tim Butler and Mike Savage (eds.): Social Change and the Middle Classes, London 1995, 293–309; John Mattausch: The Sociology of CND, in: Colin Creighton and Martin Shaw (eds.): The Sociology of Peace and War, Basingstoke and London, 1987, 199–217. On the local dimensions cf. Graham Day and David Robbins: Activists for Peace: The Social Basis of a Local Peace Movement, in: ibid., 218–236.

45 Cf. Simon Gunn: The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class. Ritual and Authority and the English Industrial City 1840–1914, Manchester 2000; and Johannes Paulmann: Freizeit in der bürgerlichen Klassengesellschaft von der großen Depression zur Wohlstandsgesellschaft, in: Archiv für Sozialgeschichte 33 (1993), 211–244. Cf. on value change: Ronald Inglehart: The Silent Revolution in Europe: Intergenerational change in Post-Industrial Societies, in: American Political Science Review 65 (1971), 991–1017.

46 Cf. Benjamin Ziemann, applying Luhmann's systems theory: Sozialgeschichte jenseits des Produktionsparadigmas. Überlegungen zu Geschichte und Perspektiven eines Forschungsfeldes, in: Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen 28 (2003), 5–35, here 20, 25, 27, 33–34. Not many of Luhmann's books have been translated into English. Cf. his The Differentiation of Society, New York 1982 and his Observations on Modernity, Stanford 1998.

47 Cf. Kai-Uwe Hellmann: Sytemtheorie und neue soziale Bewegungen. Identitätsprobleme in der Risikogesellschaft, Opladen 1996, 69 ff.

available through other sources.[48] They highlight functional problems of modern societies[49]; and describe society by showing the unity of society through protests.[50] It also enables us to write post-war British history as a history of risk, with "risk" being the central word in the anti-nuclear-weapons movements language and rhetoric. It is this area in particular in which we can try to connect British environmental history with the history of British society and to examine whether the awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons was coupled with an awareness of the dangers of nuclear energy in general.[51]

Conceptualising peace movements as social movements rather than as pressure groups entails shifting the emphasis onto the dynamic character of the movements instead of focusing on their aims alone. The crux of all definitions and theoretical models of social movements is the emphasis they put on identity and communications, rather than on social class as a dependent variable. They thus offer another way in which to transcend the analysis of middle-class radicalism. They enable us to conceptualise protests which are only loosely organised and in which the constant re-negotiation of a common identity in engagement with the world outside the movement comes centre-stage. They thus allow us to break through the boundaries between protest politics and society and to regard the peace movements as intimately bound up with society. At the same time, historians should, however, transcend the rather naïve analysis of the classlessness of social movements, by regarding its classless rhetoric as a result of these processes of constant renegotiation of an identity.

Another area in which the concept of "social movement" has huge advantages over "pressure group" as an analytical model is the dynamics of the peace protests, their languages and their symbolism itself. Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly have recently introduced the term "contentious politics" into the debate.[52] The term refers, broadly speaking, to "episodic, public, collective interaction[s] among makers of claims and their objects".[53] In their wide-ranging, historically-informed study, they seek to challenge the boundary between institutionalised and non-institutional politics and to emphasise the dynamics of interaction between the two, thus making social scientific theorising accessible for those scholars who are interested in the *Alltagsgeschichte* or "history from below" of protests.[54] In their case studies on the French Revolution, protests in 1960s, Italy and the American civil rights movement,

48 Niklas Luhmann: Ökologische Kommunikation: Kann die moderne Gesellschaft sich auf ökologische Gefährdungen einstellen?, Opladen 1986, 234
49 Niklas Luhmann: Soziologie des Risikos, Berlin and New York 1991, 153.
50 Niklas Luhmann: Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft, Frankfurt/Main 1997, 805.
51 Cf. the attempts by Veldman who regards the emphasis on nature as a revitalisation of tradition, rather than as the by-product of the differentiation of modern societies. Similarly unconvincing and with questionable comparisons to Germany: Frank Trentmann: Civilization and its Discontents: English Neo-Romanticism and the Transformation of Anti-Modernism in Twentieth-Century Western Culture, in: Journal of Contemporary History 29 (1994), 583–625. David Matless: Landscape and Englishness, London 1998 offers a wealth of information on personal and ideological links.
52 Cf. Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly: Dynamics of Contention, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001. xxi and 387 pp. £ 14.99 (paperback).
53 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 5
54 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 6.

as well as African, Latin American, Middle Eastern and Asian cases, they seek to identify common patterns of the dynamics of contention rather than building a model of contentious politics, thus making their ideas useful for historical application.[55] They aim to show the multitude of interactions between processes of social change, the study of mobilising and opportunity structures, repertoires of contentious actions[56] and the way in which these actions are understood and interpreted (the "framing processes"). For them, social interactions serve not merely as expressions of structure, ideological consciousness, or culture, but "as active sites of creation and change"[57] in which "interpersonal networks, interpersonal communication, and various forms of continuous negotiation"[58] come centre stage. In their case studies, the authors convincingly show that opportunities and threats are not objective categories but need to be actively appropriated by the protesters. Similarly, mobilising structures, such as movement organisations, do not merely act by themselves, but they need to be employed as the vehicle of a struggle. Innovations of new actions may happen and introduce an entirely new dynamics into episodes of contentious politics.[59] Rather than assuming movement identities to be stable, they observe the plurality of identities which are dependent on very specific situations. They focus on the constant renegotiation of identities amongst movement actors and between the movements and the government.[60] This approach thus makes it necessary to explain the politics of contention by describing and explaining the processes in which actors and their identities form, and it also draws attention to the changing social relations as the basis of contentious politics.[61] Within these social relationships, the appropriation or rejection of historical models of contention, local knowledge and culture as the shared understandings and their representations in symbols, objects and practices come centre stage.[62] They thus highlight one of the main paradoxes of social movement politics: "how contingent assemblages of social networks manage to create the illusion of determined, unified, self-motivated political actors, then to act publicly as if they believed in that illusion."[63]

In particular, the concept of pressure groups does not allow us to conceptualise the "street politics"[64] which emerge when protesters occupy public spaces to propagate their aims. Pressure group models do not allow us to problematise actions which defy the aims and the orders of the peace movements executive. They ignore that many protests are dynamic and work

55 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 24
56 On this cf. Charles Tilly: Popular contention in Great Britain, Cambridge/Mass. and London 1995.
57 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 22
58 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 22
59 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 44–52.
60 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 130–131, 137.
61 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 141.
62 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 345–347.
63 McAdam/Tarrow/Tillly, 159
64 For the term: Thomas Lindenberger: Straßenpolitik. Zur Sozialgeschichte der öffentlichen Ordnung in Berlin 1900 bis 1914, Bonn 1995. For a similar study on nineteenth-century Britain cf. Mark Harrison: Crowds and History. Mass phenomena in English towns, 1790–1835, Cambridge 1988. Cf. also: Michel Pigenet and Danielle Tartakowsky: Les territories des mouvements sociaux. Les marches aux XIXe et XXe siècles, in: Le Mouvement Social 202 (2003), 3–13.

themselves out unplanned. Research on the British student peace movements of the later 1960s could profit from analyses which conceptualise the links between protest behaviour and reaction by the authorities when the protests happen—this would go some way to explain why the British protests were, in a European context, relatively peaceful.

It is in this area that generational accounts which explain the rather slow and gradual involvement of students in CND proper in the late 1950s and 1960s have their place.[65] It is also in this area that the lack of working-class involvement in the protests—despite some support from trade unions—has to be analysed. Rather than emerging as a specifically middle-class affair, the peace movement would thus appear as intimately bound up with a specific life-style. The left-wing rhetoric of the movements thus appears less as a result of a direct connection to the labour movement, but as an attractiveness of lifestyle.

Some elements of this lifestyle harked back to labour movement and radical traditions of the 1920s and 1930s: folk songs, rambling, and marching.[66] The working-class in an affluent society had, however, already left this world behind and had become increasingly a part of mainstream developments.[67] Primarily the middle-class youth and the members of the Labour left as well as middle-class intellectuals, by contrast, were still willing to maintain these ideas because of their attachment to the values they seemed to purport.

Analysing post-World War II British peace movements as social movements also allows us to pay attention to the network character of these movements. Because of the fluidity of the concept, it will be much easier to show links to earlier and later movement and to establish a genealogy of extra-parliamentary protests in post–1945 Britain.[68] From this perspective, the par-

65 On generational approaches to history cf. article by Hans Jaeger: Generations in History. Reflections on a Controversial Concept, in: History and Theory 24 (1985), 273–292.

66 On these traditions cf., for example, David Prynn: The Clarion Clubs, Rambling and Holiday Associations in Britain since the 1890s, in: Journal of Contemporary History 11 (1976), 65–77. Cf. also: Bill Osgerby: Youth in Britain since 1945, Oxford 1998, 82–103. Cf., for the context: Duncan Hall: "A Pleasant Change from Politics". Music and the British Labour Movement Between the Wars, Cheltenham 2001 and Georgina Boyes: The imagined village. Culture, ideology and the English Folk Revival, Manchester and New York 2001. On Scotland: Ailie Munro: The Democratic Muse. Folk Music revival in Scotland, Aberdeen [2]1996. On the far left: Gerald Porter: "The World's Ill-Divided": the Communist Party and Progressive Song, in: Andy Croft (ed.): A Weapon in the Struggle. The Cultural History of the Communist Party in Britain, London 1998, 171–191.

67 Cf. the voluminous Arthur Marwick: The Sixties. Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c. 1958-c.1974, Oxford 1998. On the problems of the Labour Party to adapt to these developments: Steven Fielding: Activists against "Affluence": Labour Party Culture during the "Golden Age", circa 1950–1970, in: Journal of British Studies 40 (2001), 241–267 and Lawrence Black: The political culture of the left in affluent Britain, 1951–1964. Old Labour, New Britain?, Basingstoke 2003.

68 Cf. Brian Harrison: A genealogy of reform in modern Britain, in: Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher (eds.): Anti-slavery, religion, and reform: Essays in memory of Roger Anstey, Folkestone and Hamden/Conn. 1980, 119–148. On links to contemporary movements cf. Tom Buchanan: "The Truth will set you free": The Making of Amnesty International, in: Journal of Contemporary History 37 (2002), 575–597. On the theory: Mario Diani and Doug McAdam (eds.): Social Movements and Networks. Relational Approaches to Collective Action, Oxford 2003, especially chs. 1, 2, 12 and 13.

ticipation of Communists, in particular, will appear less as attempts of Moscow-planned manipulation, but rather as the working out of specific social networks which had their roots in common lifestyles and varied according to different regional political traditions. The focus on class-based politics on the one hand and the emphasis on the *political* history of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) has rather obscured these connections.[69]

Of particular importance were the connections between the New Left and the peace movements. The organisation-centred focus of most peace movement studies and the lack of awareness of international issues in studies of the British New Left has so far prevented a systematic elaboration of these issues.[70] Various recent biographies and autobiographies of key activists, such as John Saville, Ralph Miliband, Eric Hobsbawm, Sheila Rowbotham, and Tariq Ali[71] as well as rather journalistic pieces on 1960s' counterculture offer good starting points for such an endeavour.[72] These networks were not restricted, however, to the national context, but had important transnational dimensions. Elements of the specific lifestyle were exchanged through a variety of transnational channels: papers, journals, letters and personal interaction as well as the more organised interaction within international organisations such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the War Resisters International.

The analysis of peace movements as social movements will thus contribute to the debate about why social movements were weak in Britain in comparison to other European countries.[73] In this context, one of the elements which would need to be followed more closely is the

69 On CPGB history cf. Harriet Jones: Conference Report: Is CPGB History Important?, in: Labour History Review 67 (2002), 347–353 and the high-politics centred overview by John McIlroy and Alan Campbell: Histories of the British Communist Party: A User's Guide, in: Labour History Review 68 (2003), 33–59. For a slightly more social-history angle cf. John Callaghan: Cold War, Crisis and Conflict. The CPGB 1951–1968, London 2003. Very stimulating still: David Widgery (ed.): The Left in Britain 1956–68, Harmondsworth 1976.
Cf. also Willie Thompson: The New Left in Scotland, in: Ian MacDougall (ed.): Essays in Scottish Labour History. A Tribute to W. H. Merrick, Edinburgh 1978, 207–225. On the traditions cf. Martin Ceadel: The First Communist "Peace Society": The British Anti-War Movement 1932–35, in: Twentieth Century British History 1 (1990), 58–86.

70 Cf. the two most important studies of the New Left: Michael Kenny: The First New Left. British Intellectuals after Stalin, London 1995 (who devotes a section to the connections between CND and the New Left) and Lin Chun: The British New Left, Edinburgh 1993, who does virtually not mention the connections to CND. Nigel Young: An Infantile Disorder. The Crisis and Decline of the New Left, London and Henley 1977 is rather a contemporary source than a historical analysis.

71 Cf. Ali; Eric Hobsbawm: Interesting Times. A twentieth-century life, London 2002; Michael Newman: Ralph Miliband and the Politics of the New Left, London 2002; Rowbotham; John Saville: Memoirs from the Left, London 2003; Stephen Woodhams: History in the Making. Raymond Williams, Edward Thompson and Radical Intellectuals 1936–1956, London 2001. On E. P. Thompson cf. the sketch by Michael D. Bess: E. P. Thompson: The Historian as Activist, in: American Historical Review 98 (1993), 19–38. For a Scottish perspective cf. Ewen MacColl: Journeyman. An Autobiography, London 1990.

72 Jonathon Green: Days in the Life. Voices from the English Underground, 1961–1971, London [2]1998; idem: All Dressed Up. The Sixties and the Counterculture, London 1998; Mick Farren: Give the anarchist a cigarette, London 2002, especially 20 and 88.

73 Cf. Chris A. Rootes: The new politics and new social movements. Accounting for British exceptionalism, in: European Journal of Political Research 22 (1992), 171–191.

connection between the dynamics of peace movements in relation to the dynamics of labour movements, possibly in a transnationally comparative manner.

Public communication of their aims was essential for peace movements as social movements. Due to their lack of official representation, media attention came centre-stage for many social movements. Many protocols and statements from activists from within the British peace movements, especially the Committee of 100 and the VSC show that protests were staged as media events. The protesters sought to get pictures of policemen beating or abusing helpless protesters, old people and women; and the aim was to get the press to report on the events in the papers.[74] It is, therefore, probably not coincidental that many in the New Left were concerned with media studies later on in their career, the most prominent examples in Britain being Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall.[75] The media were crucial in helping to bring post–1945 British peace movements about, both nationally and internationally. An "attribution of similarity" took place, a "mutual identification of actors in different sites as being sufficiently similar to justify common action."[76]

Conceptualising the relationship between the movement and the British media will thus contribute not only to a history of the public sphere in Britain, but to a history of British society as such. Communication and the media through which it happens is central for modern differentiated societies. For such a history, Jürgen Habermas's rather static and unhistorical model of a public sphere, free from power and characterised by rational discourse amongst equals is rather unhelpful.[77] Instead, the emphasis should be on the practices of establishing such a sphere within a specific social, political and cultural environment. The attempts by British peace movements to stress themselves as part of world-wide campaigns would then appear less as an accurate depiction of historical reality, but as the attempt to establish an identity by establishing a public. The establishment of a public sphere within British peace movements does not appear as a powerless endeavour, but as an essentially political act in search for power.[78] Moreover, more attention to the symbolics of the peace protests is

74 Cf. the account in Ray Monk: Bertrand Russell. The Ghost of Madness 1921–1970, London 2001, 404–405.

75 For the US: Todd Gitlin: The whole world is watching. Mass media in the making and unmaking of the New Left, Berkeley and London 1980. In general: William Gamson and Gadi Wolfsfeld: Movements and Media as Interacting Systems, in: Annals of the American Academy for Political and Social Science 528 (1993), 114–125.

76 Cf. David Strang and John W. Meyer: Institutional Conditions for Diffusion, in: Theory and Society 47 (1993), 242–243 and Doug McAdam and Dieter Rucht: The Cross-National Diffusion of Movement Ideas, in: The Annals of the American Academy of Political Social Science 528 (1993), 56–74 as well as Michael A. Schmidtke: "1968" und die Massenmedien – Momente europäischer Öffentlichkeit, in: Jörg Requate and Martin Schulze Wessel (eds.): Europäische Öffentlichkeit. Transnationale Kommunikation seit dem 18. Jahrhundert, Frankfurt and New York 2002, 273–294.

77 Jürgen Habermas: The structural transformation of the public sphere. An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society, Cambridge 1989.

78 Cf. Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge: Public sphere and experience: Toward an analysis of the bourgeois and proletarian public sphere, Minneapolis 1993.

needed. In the absence of official political channels, the symbolic language of the protests actions themselves became a crucial way to communicate the aims of the movements.[79] While those who had opted for civil disobedience preferred the occupation of airforce and missile bases as their tactics, CND and the VSC chose to protest at the heart of British politics: the governmental and parliamentary centres in Whitehall and Westminster, as well as the American and Russian embassies. The protesters, strategy itself and their display in the media became symbolic. Non-violent civil disobedience stressed both the protesters, peaceful intentions in contrast to governmental violence and the importance of civic involvement, here understood as civilian and civilised.

Peace movements, violence and civil society

Peace movements have been regarded as an essential part of civil society, and, for many, they embody the very values of civility and moderation which nearly all notions of "civil society" seem to suggest. It is, therefore, quite surprising that those historians and political scientists who have studied post-World War II British pacifism and peace movements have not discussed the connection between pacifism and civil society in post-war Britain. It is, equally surprising that the recent collections of essays on the history of civil society do not contain any essays on pacifism or peace movements, neither before nor after 1945. The volumes, however, suggest various ways of how to—and of how not to—conceptualise the history of British pacifism post-1945.

In Britain, civil society, very much in contrast to historiographical developments in Germany[80], has only recently become the object of historical study. The most recent survey is a volume produced by a group of scholars from Oxford University, claiming to give an outline of "the ideas, identities and institutions" of civil society.[81] There is a heavy concentration on the intellectual history of the concept, as the volume does not productively engage with research in other countries or disciplines.[82] One author does not make any analytical use of the

79 Cf. Kathrin Fahlenbach: Protest-Inszenierungen. Visuelle Kommunikation und kollektive Identitäten in Protestbewegungen, Wiesbaden 2002; and, from a theoretical perspective: Thomas Mergel: Überlegungen zu einer Kulturgeschichte der Politik, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft 28 (2002), 574–606, as well as Gottfried Korff: Symbolgeschichte als Sozialgeschichte? Zehn vorläufige Notizen zu den Bild- und Zeichensystemen sozialer Bewegungen in Deutschland, in: Bernd Jürgen Warneken (ed.): Massenmedium Straße. Zur Kulturgeschichte der Demonstration, Frankfurt/Main et al. 1991, 17–36.

80 Cf., amongst the most recent examples: Jürgen Kocka: Zivilgesellschaft als historisches Problem und Versprechen, in: Manfred Hildermeier, Jürgen Kocka and Christoph Conrad (eds.): Europäische Zivilgesellschaft in Ost und West. Begriff, Geschichte, Chancen, Frankfurt and New York 2000, 13–39 and Arnd Bauerkämper (ed.): Die Praxis der Zivilgesellschaft. Akteure, Handeln und Strukturen im internationalen Vergleich, Frankfurt/Main and New York 2003.

81 José Harris (ed.): Civil Society in British History. Ideas, Identities and Institutions, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2003. x and 319 pp. £ 50 (hardback).

82 E.g. Frank Trentmann (ed.): Paradoxes of Civil Society. New Perspectives on Modern German and British History, New York and Oxford 2000.

concept.[83] Another author even explicitly doubts the usefulness of the concept.[84] Although José Harris mentions the very general themes of the term's development in her introductory and conceptual chapters[85], there could have been more elaboration on the ways in which the concept served, within Cold War and post-Cold War societies, to delineate clear borders against totalitarian regimes.[86]

The distinctive characteristic of most contributions to the Oxford volume seems to be the assumption that state and civil society, both in theory and in practice, were not two distinct phenomena, but have fallen together. The surprising result is that voluntarism per se was never purely equated with civil society in Britain until the 1980s.[87] This is proven with reference both with regard to the British Isles and to certain colonies. The topics covered include an overview of "civil society" in British political thought (José Harris); an overview of changing practices of "civil society" from 1700–1850 (Joanna Innes); gender, politics and civil society in the late eighteenth century (Kathryn Gleadle); civil society and the Edwardian middle classes (Philip Waller); countryside, planning and civil society (John Stevenson); civil society and the clerisy in the 1930s (Matthew Grimley); civil society and citizenship (Michael Freeden). Unfortunately, José Harris's astute observation that Britian drew "a common European heritage" when discussing and practising civil society does not resonate within the pages of the book.

Four pieces are noteworthy in showing the strengths and weaknesses of this approach. The potential shortcomings of an approach to civil society from the perspective of intellectual history become clear in Lawrence Goldman's article on civil society in nineteenth-century Britain and Germany. He captures the social reformers' *perceptions* of civil society in Britain and Germany at the time rather than its social reality.[88] Adrian Gregory's refreshing piece on British military service tribunals during the First World War[89] is the only essay

83 Raphael Schapiro: Public or Private Ownership? The Dilemma of Urban Utilities in London and New York, 1870–1914, in: Harris (ed.): Civil Society, 135–148.

84 Cf. Nicholas Owen: British Progressives and Civil Society in India, 1905–1914, in: Harris (ed.): Civil Society, 149–176, here 174–175.

85 Cf. José Harris: Introduction: Civil Society in British History: Paradigm or Peculiarity?, in: eadem (ed.), Civil Society, 1–12, and eadem: From Richard Hooker to Harold Laski: Changing Perceptions of Civil Society in British Political Thought, Late Sixteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries, in: ibid., 13–37.

86 Cf., for the United States, Benjamin L. Alpers: Democracy and American Public Culture Envisioning the Totalitarian Enemy, 1920s – 1950s, Chapel Hill 2003; and more generally: Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann: Geselligkeit und Demokratie. Vereine und zivile Gesellschaft im transnationalen Vergleich 1750–1914, Göttingen 2003, 100–102.

87 Harris (ed.): Civil society, 9, 11, 29, 30.

88 Lawrence Goldman: Civil Society in Nineteenth-Century Britain and Germany: J. M. Ludlow, Lujo Brentano, and the Labour Question, in: Harris (ed.): Civil Society, 97–113. For approaches which stress the fluidity of the concept cf. Kathryn Gleadle: "Opinions deliver'd in conversation": Conversation, politics, and Gender in the Late Eighteenth Century, in: Harris (ed.): Civil Society, 61–78, here 74; and Philip Waller: Altercation over Civil Society: The Bitter Cry of the Edwardian Middle Classes, in: ibid., 115–134, here 134.

89 Adrian Gregory: Military Service Tribunals: Civil Society in Action, 1916–1918, in: Harris (ed.): Civil Society, 177–190.

which addresses the relationship between violence and civil society, and it is one of the few essays in this volume which adopts a praxeological perspective. Gregory's claim is that, paradoxically, these military tribunals exemplified the strength of British society. The problem with this approach is that it departs from an implicit assumption of the nature of British "civil society", rather than constructing a meaning from the sources. Finally, Brian Harrison's superb *tour de force* through two centuries of associations in British society can be commended for its eye towards the paradoxes and the changing definitions of the concept in British history and probably offers the best starting point for the contextualisation of post-World War II peace movements.[90] Similarly, John Davis's piece on urban planning in London—and middle-class resistance against it—may offer some interesting material for those interested in the networks of peace activists in other issue areas.[91]

In order to make the most of the concept[92] for the history of peace movements, five approaches seem to offer promising inroads into the connections between post-1945 peace movements and British civil society, however defined. First, historians need to realise that "civil society"—like "society"—reflects as much a social reality as a result of the self-reflection of a society.[93] George Orwell's observation, in 1941, that "We are a nation of flower-lovers, but also a nation of stamp-collectors, pigeon-fanciers, amateur carpenters, coupon-snippers, darts-players, crossword-puzzle fans" and that "all the culture that is most truly native centres round things which even when they are communal are not official—the pub, the football match, the back garden, the fireside and the 'nice cup of tea'" is a case in point.[94]

Here, the alleged strength of peace movements in Britain has often served to underline the analysis of Britain—and here decidedly not the United Kingdom!—as an unambiguously civil and civilised society. Both the analysis of the strength of British civil society can thus be seen as a centrepiece of British national identity, confronting Nazi Germany in the Second World War and confronting the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Thus, in 1939, the British diplomat Harold Nicolson wrote that the approach of Britain in domestic and international affairs was founded on the virtues that merchants needed to conduct their trade—the

90 Brian Harrison: Civil Society by Accident? Paradoxes of Voluntarism and Pluralism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, in: Harris (ed.): Civil Society, 95 and 96. Most of the other authors, with the exception of Tim Rowse: Britons, Settlers, and Aborigines: Civil Society and its Colonized "Other" in Colonial, Post-colonial, and Present-day Australia, in: ibid., 293–310, 294, do not discuss the findings of more recent research on civil society which stresses civil society's exclusive (in addition to its inclusive) elements. On these cf. Trentmann (ed.): Paradoxes of Civil Society, especially Trentmann's excellent introduction, 3–46.

91 John Davis: "Simple Solutions to Complex Problems": The Greater London Council and the Greater London Development Plan, 1965–1973, in: Harris (ed.): Civil Society, 249–273, here 257.

92 On the many problems with the concept cf. Krishan Kumar: Civil Society: an Inquiry into the usefulness of an historical term, in: British Journal of Sociology 44 (1993), 375–395.

93 Cf. for the theory: Ziemann: Sozialgeschichte; for German studies: Lutz Raphael: Die Verwissenschaftlichung des Sozialen als methodische und konzeptionelle Herausforderung für eine Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft 22 (1996), 165–193; Paul Nolte: Die Ordnung der deutschen Gesellschaft. Selbstentwurf und Selbstbeschreibung im 20. Jahrhundert, Munich 2000.

94 George Orwell: The Lion and the Unicorn: Socialism and the English Genius, London, 1941, 15.

"sound business principles of moderation, fair-dealing, reasonableness, credit, compromise." He contrasted this with the bullying and deception of non-democratic states, which, in his opinion, belonged to a "warrior" culture.[95]

This distinction continued to remain prominent during the Cold War, but it received a different slant, this time primarily directed against the Soviet enemy. Tracing the ways in which this shift occurred within a peace movement context appears to be a particularly interesting mode of analysis. The ways in which, if at all, the picture of a totalitarian enemy could first manifest itself and then become part of British peace movements, discourses is one of the areas worthy of further analysis. It can show for the second half of the twentieth century that peace movements do no operate outside discourses of the national.[96] Indeed, many of those who participated in the production of this discourse of the national, such as J. B. Priestley in his BBC radio broadcasts, took an active role in CND. Through their involvement, they sought to keep the ideals of a people's community alive, against the odds of a society which seemed increasingly individualised.[97]

The gendering of these discourses of national identity and national reliability is another important area of research: were the male peace movements' supporters regarded as too female; were female protesters regarded as unreliable and irresponsible mothers who either left their children at home or carried them with them on marches—and this at a time when home and family seemed to be the main areas of stability and order?[98] The connections with the discourses of national identity and citizenship during the Second World War are of particular importance in this context. Sonya Rose's excellent study on this relationship offers a wealth of material on this issue. She asks how national belonging was envisaged in British popular culture during the Second World War, which was then regarded as a "people's war". Unlike others, Rose does not dispute the huge impact of the Second World War on British society.[99] During the war, Rose argues, citizenship became inextricably linked to social responsibility in civil society and in public affairs. Those, like Jews, foreigners, immigrants, and often women, who were regarded as socially irresponsible were consequently excluded from the national community.[100] Discourse stressed the importance of a "temperate masculinity"[101], conscien-

95 Harold Nicolson: Diplomacy, London [3]1963, 132 and 144.

96 For the nineteenth century: Sandi E. Cooper: Patriotic Pacifism. Waging War on War in Europe, New York and Oxford 1991.

97 On Priestley's broadcasts and their role for national identity-formation during the war cf. Sonya O. Rose: Which people's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain 1939–1945, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2003. xiii and 328 pp. £ 35 (hardback), here 3. On a pacifist's experience of World War II cf. Frances Partridge: A Pacifist's War, London 1978. On the context of 1950s and 1960s cf. José Harris: Tradition and Transformation: society and civil society in Britain, 1945–2001, in Kathleen Burk (ed.): The British Isles Since 1945, Oxford 2003, 91–125, here 102 and 124–125.

98 Cf. for the background: Harris: Tradition and Transformation.

99 This is an argument against the apathy thesis advanced by Steven Fielding, Peter Thompson and Nick Tiratsoo: "England Arise!": The Labour Party and Popular Politics in 1940s Britain, Manchester 1995.

100 Rose, 2, 19; 71–92 (women), 92–106 (Jews), 239–284 (foreigners, colonials).

101 Rose, 292.

tious objectors were consequently regarded as effeminate.[102] Despite the rhetoric of a people's war, class differences continued to matter.[103] At the same time, the United Kingdom and its citizens were interpreted as the standard bearers of civilisation.

Yet this rhetoric of civil society *within* the peace movements was not only linked to the discourse outside. It was also an essential part of the constant re-negotiation of the peace movements' collective identities. The emphasis on morality which scholars have often found to be distinctive about early CND[104] thus does not seem to be a reflection of its un-political character, but rather as an essential component of its internal workings. One could, with Meredith Veldman, interpret the moralising language of these movements and the use of religious language as proof of the traditional and romantic character of this movement. Yet, it does make more sense to differentiate between the language of morals within the movements and the underlying causes for the use of that language. Social movements, protests and their moral demands appear as consequences of the shortcomings and dysfunctions of highly differentiated modern societies. They have a crucial function as the immune system in a differentiated society which does not have a central co-ordinating mechanism, or control centre. In such modern societies, morals have stopped being integral parts of the different social systems of society. They have either become institutionalised within the different systems, or they are applied to the system from outside, through protests.[105]

From such a system-theoretical perspective the protests appear as the main instrument with which morals can be imposed on modern societies. Media and communication play a crucial role here. They build up moral standards and measure the deficits of the different systems of society accordingly. Protest morals were mobilised when institutionalised patterns of action, for example governmental foreign policies, seemed to lead to shortcomings, for example the increased risk of death through nuclear weapons.

The moralisation of action emphasises moral sentiments through which a common identity within the movement can be built. At the same time, the moralisation of discourses helps the protesters to gain respectability and thus gain the acceptance of the protest aims. As the moralisation of protests is often not directly linked to personal experiences, the representation of risks in the media which highlights the differences between risk assessment and risk perceptions becomes important. Similarly important is the establishment of group solidarities which centres around substantial values, such as life, death, or nature. Once these ele-

102 Rose, 170–178.

103 Rose, 29, 44–69.

104 Most recently: Phythian.

105 Cf. for this, and for the following: Wolfgang Krohn: Funktionen der Moralkommunikation, in: Soziale Systeme 5 (1999), 313–338. This reasoning follows Niklas Luhmann's systems theory. Cf., for an introduction in English: Luhmann: Differentiation and idem: Observations on Modernity. On protests: Niklas Luhmann: Protest. Systemtheorie und soziale Bewegungen, edited by Kai-Uwe Hellmann, Frankfurt/Main 1996, and Kai-Uwe Hellmann: "... und ein größeres Stück Landschaft mit den erloschenen Vulkanen des Marxismus." Oder: Warum rezipiert die Bewegungsforschung Luhmann nicht?, in: Henk de Berg and Johannes Schmidt (eds.): Rezeption und Reflexion. Zur Resonanz der Sytemtheorie Niklas Luhmanns außerhalb der Soziologie, Frankfurt/Main 2000, 411–439 as well as Hellmann: Systemtheorie.

ments have been established, an analysis of the language of morals and its pedigrees is feasible and sensible.[106]

At the same time, these moral discourses within the peace movements were linked to conceptions of respectability and middle-class values. We still know very little about this field for the time after 1945, and the study of peace movements offers a good starting point for probing into the changing parameters of respectability. After all, members of the peace movements were regarded as "middle-class radicals". But instead of seeing this as a paradox, following Frank Parkin's influential sociological study[107], we should regard it as intimately related. In order to make the most of this area of study, however, contemporary historians need to become more attuned to the relevance of language in constructing that respectability – even the languages of classlessness which the peace movements often employed can be linked to certain conceptions and perceptions of a moderating "middle ground" in British society after the Second World War which could save the country from the extreme disasters of nuclear-powered anti-communism and dangerous communism at once.[108] A sensitivity to the importance of language for politics is crucial in order to overcome the explanatory weaknesses of an overly materialist approach to the analysis of popular politics. Gareth Stedman Jones and other language-sensitive historians have repeatedly demanded that "the complexity of the connections between economic, social, cultural and political change"[109] be examined through considerations of language. But an approach which combines an awareness of language with an awareness for social structures has been difficult to find.[110]

While the mid–1950s saw a modest nationwide rise in Protestant and Catholic church attendance[111], and a boom in clubs and youth groups attached to religious denominations, the political culture of the period was, in general terms, analysed as non-participatory and passive. Investigators for the civic culture study found the British people exceptionally supportive of democratic institutions and tolerant of others' attitudes. But they appeared to be no longer a nation of joiners in the public sphere, with political involvement by and large confined to general election.[112] In the self-description of British society which social and political scientists have offered, this was an "age of affluence" in which socially cohesive family life

106 Cf. Jeff Goodwin et al.: Why Emotions Matter, in: idem et al. (eds.): Passionate Politics. Emotions and Social Movements, Chicago and London 2001, 1–24.

107 Cf. Parkin.

108 Cf. Jonathan Schneer: Hopes Deferred or Shattered: The British Labour Left and the Third Force Movement, 1945–49, in: Journal of Modern History 56 (1984), 197–226.

109 Mike Savage and Andrew Miles: The remaking of the British working class, 1840–1940, London 1994, 7. Cf. also Gareth Stedman Jones: Languages of Class. Studies in English working-class history 1832–1982, Cambridge 1983, 22.

110 One successful example for the nineteenth century is Jon Lawrence: Speaking for the People. Party, Language and Popular Politics in England, 1867–1914, Cambridge 1998.

111 Cf. Rosen.

112 Cf. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba: The civic culture. Political attitudes and democracy in five nations, Princeton 1963. Cf. also Harris: Tradition and Transformation, 102. The term "nation of joiners" was originally coined by Arthur M. Schlesinger and applied to the American context. Cf. Arthur M. Schlesinger: Biography of a Nation of Joiners, in: American Historical Review 50 (1944), 1–25.

dominated the scene.[113] From the early 1900s, it was no longer as necessary as it had been to belong to voluntary associations to participate in leisure-time activities.[114] On the other hand, however, the history of peace movements in post–1945 Britain can be used to show the continued importance of associations in British political culture.

These discourses of respectability should also be linked to the context of respectability in popular politics in general. Jon Lawrence has recently argued that the vision of Britain as a "peaceable kingdom" and the emphasis on the peacefulness of popular politics was the result of a fundamental reconfiguration of the British discourses of violence after the First World War. While right up to the First World War, violence was regarded as a by-product of electioneering and popular politics in general, "the apocalyptic visions suggesting that civilization had been undone by the brutality of war" brought this change about.[115] The legitimation of violence in popular politics had now become abhorrent to many, and public discourse moved to an attitude which regarded violence in popular and domestic politics as something un-British. Although myths of British peaceableness had a long pedigree[116], these views were strengthened by the antimilitarist emphases of the immediate post-World War I years.[117] This brought about a reconceptualisation of the public. It was no longer thought of as an "active, demonstrative body", but as "an essentially passive, reflective, and above all individualised entity."[118] Although violence remained an important component of British popular culture[119], peace protesters after the First World War found themselves in a novel and paradoxical situation: They now acted within a discourse which put a premium on peacefulness. At the same time, they would have to transcend this discourse by protesting rather than being content to operate within the boundaries of the reflective and individualised discourse. New methods of campaigning, such as balloting, were invented by the peace movements even before the advent of mass public opinion polling.[120]

113 Harris: Tradition and Transformation, 102.
114 Gunn: Public Culture, 187–199.
115 Jon Lawrence: Forging a Peaceable Kingdom: War, Violence, and Fear of Brutalization in Post-First World War Britain, in: Journal of Modern History 75 (2003), 557–589, here 558.
116 Cf. Paul Langford: Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650–1850, Oxford 2000, 137–157 and Donna T. Andrew: The Code of Honour and Its Critics: The Opposition to Duelling in England, 1700–1850, in: Social History 5 (1980), 409–434.
117 Lawrence: Peaceable Kingdom, 559.
118 Lawrence: Peaceable Kingdom, 561. Lawrence thus corrects and differentiates earlier research which tended to follow contemporary assessments of a importance of violence of post-World War I British society. Cf., for example, Susan Kingsley Kent: Making Peace: The Reconstruction of Gender in Interwar Britain, Princeton/NJ 1993.
119 Michael Paris: Warrior Nation. Images of War in British Popular Culture, 1850–2000, London 2000, 151–85 (interwar years), 222–231 (post–1945).
120 Cf. Martin Ceadel: The First British Referendum: The Peace Ballot, 1934–5, in: English Historical Review 95 (1980), 810–839. On opinion polling cf. Robert Worcester: British Opinion Polling: A Guide to the History and Methodology of Political Opinion Polling, Oxford 1991. Violent methods were, in contrast to other countries, rejected by Communist groups. Cf. John Stevenson: The Politics of Violence, in: Gillian Peele and Chris Cook (eds.): The Politics of Reappraisal, 1918–1939, London 1975, 146–165; on Fascists cf. Jon Lawrence: Fascist Violence and the Politics of Public Order in Inter-War Britain: The Olympia Debate revisited, in: Historical Research 76 (2003), 238–267.

The question which arises from this is whether these discourses within and outside the peace movements were maintained or reconfigured after the Second World War. These debates also have a decidedly transnational character. It is in this context, for example, that "non-violent civil disobedience" has to be interpreted. Although it was a practice which came to be connected mostly with the civil rights campaigns in the United States[121], it has its roots in the discussions of pacifists since the 1920s about how to change protests techniques[122], which was revitalised after 1945 by the War Resisters, International.[123]

An emphasis on the discourses of public protest may also allow for a more precise assessment of the social history of post–1945 peace movements, and CND in particular. Many members of the executive—J. B. Priestley, Canon Collins, A. J. P. Taylor, Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, Peggy Duff, Richard Acland, Bertrand Russell—had links to earlier radical and extra-parliamentary causes. Many had been involved in the popular front campaign for the republican side in the Spanish Civil War, many had been involved in Priestley's and Acland's Common Wealth Party, founded during the Second World War, and many amongst the supporters just had a general sympathy for the causes of the Labour left.[124]

These connections within the CND executive to other and earlier extra-parliamentary movements now appear in a different light. Labour's rhetoric of peacefulness and rational conflict convinced many middle-class radicals that the party was more than the party of organised labour, but was the true inheritor of the reforming traditions of nineteenth-century radicalism.[125] They were, at the same time, those who had not been won over by the Conservative Party's inroad into the increasingly privatised and individualised middle-class, which emphasised membership in associations not for political but for leisure purposes.[126]

121 Cf., on the USA civil rights movement: Adam Fairclough: To redeem the soul of America: the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King Jr., Athens/Ga. and London 1987 and Robert Cook: Sweet land of liberty? The African-American Struggle for civil rights in the twentieth century, London 1998.

122 Cf. Martin Ceadel: Pacifism in Britain 1914–1945. The Defining of a Faith, Oxford 1980, passim.

123 Cf. Howe, 27–81. On the transnational links cf. my Towards a social history of transnational relations. The case of the British and West German protests against nuclear weapons, 1957–1964, in: Jessica Gienow-Hecht and Frank Schumacher (eds.): New perspectives on Culture and International Relations, Oxford 2004 (forthcoming).

124 Cf. on Common Wealth: Angus Calder: The People's War. Britain 1939–1945, London 1969, 546–550 and D. L. Pryn: Common Wealth – A British "Third Party" of the 1940s, in: Journal of Contemporary History 7 (1972), 169–179. On the Popular Front: Tom Buchanan: The Spanish Civil War and the British Labour Movement, Cambridge 1991 and David Blaazer: The Popular Front and the Progressive Tradition. Socialists, Liberals, and the Quest for Unity, 1884–1939, Cambridge 1992. Still: Ben Pimlott: Labour and the Left in the 1930s, Cambridge 1977.

125 Lawrence: Peaceable Kingdom, 585–6.

126 Cf. Ross McKibbin: *Classes and Cultures*: A Postscript, in: Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen 27(2002), 153–165, here 162–163; and idem: Classes and Cultures. England 1918–1951, Oxford 1998, passim and idem: Class and conventional wisdom: the Conservative Party and the "Public" in Inter-war Britain, in: idem: The Ideologies of Class: Social Relations in Britain, 1880–1950, Oxford 1990 as well as Martin Pugh: The Rise of Labour and the Political Culture of Conservatism, 1890–1945, in: History 87 (2002), 515–537.

These discourses should also be linked to changing conceptions of the state within European societies. While states had been regarded as intimately connected with the application of controlled violence domestically and abroad until the Second World War, a new consensus appeared to emerge after 1945 which changed conceptions of statehood to ones regarding the guarantee of peace at home and abroad as its main task, in which the emotional attachment of citizens to die for their states had consistently declined.[127] This displacement of violence cannot have remained without an impact on the rhetoric within the peace movements. Were these changes in general conceptions of statehood connected to changes in emphasis within peace movement rhetoric? Were the aims radicalised? Or were the states accused of failing in their promises to keep the peace?

Conceptualising the practice of peace

It is precisely the symbolic importance of the practices of peace in British peace movements which makes their understanding so important for scholars of peace movements. Peace movement history needs to be written much more than it has been as the history of peaceful practices of conflict solution. It is in their own practices that peace movements could translate their visions of a peaceful and non-violent world into reality. These practices were discussed in peace movements since the 1920s, if not earlier. The discussions took place in a transnational context where Gandhi's methods of non-violent resistance were a crucial, albeit often heavily criticised model. Other models discussed in Britain included anarchist traditions (Petr Kropotkin and Leo Tolstoy)[128] as well as the writings of Henry David Thoreau. It is in this area that the firm connection of peace movements to the life reform movement is clearest. It is this line of tradition and the support of non-violent civil disobedience which is behind the shift in emphasis in the Peace Pledge Union's journal *Peace News* towards subject of earlier life-reform movements such as vegetarianism and Eastern forms of spirituality—areas which have been virtually untouched by contemporary historians. It is with this methodology that we may come closer to an explanation of why certain peace movements have remained non-violent in their actions, even when attacked, while others have started to condone violence against objects, if not human beings.

At the same time, conceptualising peace movements in this way may help us more in understanding violent social protests. Violence and peace have, for a long time, been regarded as different stages in the continuum of modernisation. In this pattern of explanation, violence was the traditional mode, while peaceful means were linked to the modern ways of conflict regula-

127 Cf. James Sheehan: What it means to be a state: States and Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe, in: Journal of Modern European History 1 (2003), 11–23, 19–20. Sheehan's bold argument itself would, of course, need further elaboration for the British context.

128 Cf. George Thayer: The British Political Fringe. A Profile, London 1965, 119–155, and David Stafford: Anarchists in Britain Today, in: David E. Apter and James Joll (eds.): Anarchism Today, London and Basingstoke 1971, 84–104.

tion and solution.[129] As Benjamin Ziemann has recently suggested, following Heinrich Popitz, it makes sense to move to a phenomenological approach to violence.[130] It does therefore only make sense to demand a phenomenology of peace, an approach which would look at the internal patterns of identity formation around "peace", the logic of peaceful action in local and regional case studies, as well as the gendered conceptions of the discourses of peace.[131]

Conclusion

The main weakness of the existing research into British peace movements is the lack of contextualisation. While we do possess advanced organisational histories and many autobiographical accounts of the varieties of pacifism in post-World War II Britain, these studies still stand alone and have not been linked to the studies on social and cultural change, the impact of the Cold War on British society and culture, and to developments in other countries. It is important for future research not to regard peace movements as an object *sui generis*, but to embed them into the emerging wider socio-cultural histories at the time. In particular, we need more studies on the symbolics of protest and on the networks in which the protesters operated. We also need more regional studies on Wales and Scotland, but especially on Northern Ireland, on which we know next to nothing. Moreover, it is high time to overcome the dominance of ill-defined class-based explanations for social behaviour which have influenced British history-writing for too long. Particularly for the time after 1960, we need forms of analysis which take account of differences in social standing, but operate through the symbolic realms rather than through the expression of socio-economic interests. The debate about the social foundations of the anti-nuclear-weapons movements in the late 1950s and early 1960s concerning its middle-class radicalism has ended in a deadlock and should be closed sooner rather than later. The movement against the Vietnam War in particular cannot be meaningfully conceptualised with class-based analyses: the imperial context of both the underlying ideology and its participants are crucial here, as are conceptions of gender for the problems of its workings. Finally, it is high time that contemporary British history leaves its national shell and stops reproducing tropes of British nationalism. In an era of increased global communications and increasingly similar patterns of economic and social change, comparative and transnational research is needed to make sense of the developments. Peace movements offer an ideal inroad into this area as they are domestic social and cultural mani-

129 Cf. Charles Tilly: Popular contention in Great Britain, Cambridge/Mass. and London 1995; as well as, even from a post-structuralist perspective: James Vernon: Politics and the people. A study in English political culture, c. 1815–1867, Cambridge 1993.

130 Benjamin Ziemann: Germany after the First World War – A Violent Society? Results and Implications of Recent Research on Weimar Germany, in: Journal of Modern European History 1 (2003), 80–95. Cf. also Heinrich Popitz: Phänomene der Macht, Tübingen [2]1992.

131 Cf. Benjamin Ziemann: Perspektiven der Historischen Friedensforschung, in: idem (ed.): Perspektiven der Historischen Friedensforschung, Essen 2002, 13–39, here 20–26; and the rather unhistorical account by Ulrich Bröckling: Technologie der Befriedung – über Mediation, in: ibid., 229–249.

festations of international problems with global consequences. The attempts to transform Britain into a "peaceable kingdom" were intricately connected in manifold ways to developments in other countries, and their form, shape and character can only be fully understood if we take account of this.