

Peter G. Kirchschläger (Hg.)

Violence — Protest —

Inequality from an

Ethical Perspective

Religionsrechtliche

Studien

—

5

EDITION **N Z N**
BEI **T V Z**



Peter G. Kirchschläger (ed.)

Violence – Protest – Inequality From an Ethical Perspective

T V Z

Religionsrechtliche Studien
Volume 5
Herausgegeben von Adrian Loretan

Peter G. Kirchschräger (ed.)

Violence – Protest – Inequality From an Ethical Perspective

EDITION **N Z N**

BEI **T V Z**

Theologischer Verlag Zürich

This book is supported by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI.

The Theologische Verlag Zürich is supported by the Bundesamt für Kultur for the years 2021–2025.

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

Cover design: Simone Ackermann, Zürich

Proofreader: Stefan Backes, Bad Kreuznach

Typeset by Claudia Wild, Konstanz

Hyphenation: Merriam-Webster's Collegiate® Dictionary, 11th Edition

Printed by gapp print, Wangen im Allgäu

ISBN (Print) 978-3-290-20201-9

ISBN (eBook) 978-3-290-20202-6

© 2025 Theologischer Verlag Zürich

www.edition-nzn.ch

All rights reserved.

To my sister Barbara

Content

Violence – Protest – Inequality From an Ethical Perspective	11
<i>Peter G. Kirchschräger</i>	
1 Introduction: Violence – Protest – Inequality From an Ethical Perspective	11
2 Human Rights as Ethical Point of Reference	11
3 Does Nonviolence Imply Justice?	21
4 Protest	22
5 Inequality as Violence	23
6 This Book – An Outlook	24
References	26
 From a Petition to Demonstrations: Is Violence Really Avoidable?	29
<i>Priscillia Ludosky</i>	
1 From a Petition to the Yellow Vest Movement	29
2 Day One – First Violences	31
3 Violence From the Government or Violence From Citizens? – Exclusive Interview With a Black Bloc	34
4 From Pacifist Acts to Violent Acts	37
5 The Destruction of Rights Continues, so Does Our Struggle	39
References	40
 On the Character of Equality	41
<i>Ernst von Kimakowitz</i>	
1 We Are All Egalitarians – In One Way or Another	41
2 What Aspects of Social Arrangements Do We Want Equality In?	43
3 What Conflicts Arise Between Differing Demands for Equality?	50
4 The Value of Equality	53
5 Conclusion	55
References	56

Racial Oppression and Violence: Right Action versus The Good	59
<i>Aaron J. Butler</i>	
McGary, Jr.'s Solution	60
McGary, Jr.'s Solution Assessed	64
The Good, The Right, and Racial Oppression	66
Concluding Remarks	69
References	70
 The Ethics of African Womanhood	 71
<i>Katiúscia Ribeiro</i>	
References	81
 The Role of Religion in Violent Political Protest	 83
<i>Wolfgang Palaver</i>	
1 A Theology of Righteous Indignation	84
2 Prophetic Anger Must Be Accompanied by Sapiential Compassion	88
3 Nonviolence as the Way to Fight Injustice, Inequality, and Climate Change	90
References	91
 On the Cybernetics of Police Abuse of Power	 93
<i>Germán Bula</i>	
Introduction	93
1 Racism, Excessive Police Force and Neoliberalism	93
2 A Threat to Democracy	95
3 Let's Ban the Sheriff, but Let's Also Keep the Deputy	98
References	101
 Civic Participation as Violence Prevention	 105
<i>Nelly Corbel, Lisa Sebold</i>	
1 Introduction	105
2 Civic Participation as a Democratic Instrument	106
3 The Significance of Individual Perception Within Civil Society	109
4 Everyday Challenges as Catalysts for Violence	110
4.1 The Differentiation of Radicalization Processes	111
4.2 Factors for Radicalization	113

5	Communication as an Integral Part of Civil Society Engagement	115
6	Conclusion	118
	References	121
	Digital Change and Violence	125
	<i>Evelyne Tauchnitz</i>	
1	Introduction	125
2	The Meaning of Structural Violence	126
3	The Relationship Between Inequality and Injustice	127
4	Why Do People Protest	128
5	Opportunities of Digital Change	131
6	Risks of Digital Change	134
7	Conclusions	136
	References	137
	Activist Scholars in Action: A Case Study of Refugee Learning Centers in Cisarua, Indonesia	141
	<i>Nina BurrIDGE, Lucy Fiske</i>	
1	Introduction: Purpose of Education in a Globalized World	141
2	The Motivations of Scholars to Be Activists	143
3	Refugee Learning Centers in Cisarua, Bogor Indonesia: Brief Background to the Refugee Crisis	146
3.1	The Refugee Situation in Indonesia	146
3.2	Refugee Learning Centers: Background	148
3.3	Involvement of Activist Scholars	149
4	Providing Educational and Emotional Support for Volunteer Teachers	149
4.1	Mentoring	150
4.2	Building Trust in Transit Communities	152
4.3	Student Participation and Perspectives	154
5	The Activist Scholar in Action: Conclusion	156
	References	157
	Contributors	163

Violence – Protest – Inequality From an Ethical Perspective

Peter G. Kirchschräger

1 Introduction: Violence – Protest – Inequality From an Ethical Perspective

What is inequality? Are humans entitled to protest against decisions, actions, and realities they perceive as unequal? Is it legitimate to use violence as a form of protest against inequality? These and other thematically linked questions of urgent topicality need ethical guidance. The following introduction will try to address this need. Firstly, it will justify on ethical grounds human rights as an ethical point of reference offering ethical orientation in this thematic area. Secondly, it will reflect on whether non-violence does indeed imply justice. Thirdly, the right to protest will be analyzed. Fourthly, inequality will be discussed as a form of violence. Fifthly, an outlook will be given on this book, *Violence – Protest – Inequality From an Ethical Perspective*.

2 Human Rights as Ethical Point of Reference

As human rights represent a minimal standard that enables survival and living with human dignity for every human (Kirchschräger, 2013a, pp. 194–195), human rights are the first thing that comes to mind in order to master this complex task. Human rights can serve as an ethical principle providing guidance to the topic of violence, protest, and inequality because they are ethically justifiable – e. g., based on the principle of vulnerability (Kirchschräger, 2013a; Kirchschräger, 2016).

The *first step of filtering* of the justification approach based on the principle of vulnerability, starts from the observation that humans will recognize their own vulnerability – a first element of the principle of vulnerability (see in more detail Kirchschräger, 2013a, pp. 231–267). For example, the person who is healthy today knows that he or she might become ill tomorrow, or – while living happily in the present – that he or she could be killed by others tomorrow. In this thought process, the person will go through a process of uncertainty. For he or she is made

aware of his or her own vulnerability and, as a last consequence, his or her transience (Hoffmaster, 2006, p. 42). This possibility of self-awareness is true for all humans.

Secondly, an essential part of the principle of vulnerability is the “first-person perspective” (Runggaldier, 2003, pp. 143–221). The awareness-building of one’s own vulnerability is a human self-recognition process, the empirical correctness of which is not relevant. It is crucial that humans are willing to do something about this awareness of their vulnerability, namely to protect themselves from vulnerability or to find a reasonable way to deal with it. This affects all humans.

When during this awareness-building process a human being becomes aware of his or her own vulnerability, he or she recognizes the “first-person perspective” *ex negativo*. This encompasses the awareness of a human that he or she as a singular person is a subject of self-awareness through which they can access their own vulnerability. On the other hand, they experience this basic anthropological situation of vulnerability as subjects (i. e., in the first person singular). The acts, decisions, sufferings, and the lives of human beings originate from them being subjects. Furthermore, they interpret this basic anthropological situation of vulnerability as subjects.

By acting and suffering, humans experience themselves as living beings which are not just living like all other beings but which live by living their own lives. To relate to themselves, to act neither compulsively nor arbitrarily, but to be guided by reason and to pursue freely chosen purposes constitutes the life form connecting them to all humans as being of their own kind. This life form makes them vulnerable because the “self-relation” inherent in it depends on fundamental conditions for realization (Honnefelder, 2012, pp. 171–172).

Thirdly, vulnerability will be perceived and revealed by humans *from* their “first-person perspective” as well as the “self-relation” as well as *for* the “first-person perspective” itself and for “self-relation”.

This awareness-building process of one’s own vulnerability, the “first-person perspective” as well as the “self-relation”, leads, fourthly, to humans relating themselves to all other humans. In the course of this process, they realize that this vulnerability does not make them different from other human beings but rather is an aspect they share with all humans.

Fifthly, the process of becoming aware of their own vulnerability and that of all other human beings enables humans to realize that they not only share vulnerability with all other humans but also the individual “first-person perspective” on individual vulnerability and the vulnerability of all other humans as well as the individual “self-relation”: Every human being is the subject of his or her own life.

Humans, therefore, realize that the “first-person perspective” and “self-relation” are prerequisites of human life.

Based on the perception of vulnerability through their own “first-person perspective” and their own “self-relation”, humans become aware of the same vulnerability of all other humans. Humans who first and foremost want to survive and live as humans – with human dignity – become aware that vulnerability concerns their own survival as well as the survival of all other humans and also their own life as humans and the lives of all others as humans, because from the “first-person perspective” and from “self-relation” vulnerability does not stop as a prerequisite to human life. Faced with one’s own vulnerability, a human being primarily wants to survive and live a dignified life. Survival and a life with human dignity should not be allowed to be taken away from humans. Both must be legally enforceable in order to offer real protection and have to be applicable to various dimensions because vulnerability can encompass legal, political, historical, and moral dimensions. Based on the abovementioned high priority they possess, and based on the unpredictability of vulnerability itself, survival and a life with human dignity should be non-conditional. Humans share the desire to survive and live a life with human dignity with all other humans equally. This desire is not individual, even if it is the concern of an individual, which each individual discovers through his or her “first-person perspective” and “self-relation”.

Because, sixthly, humans are aware of their vulnerability but at the same time do not know if and when this vulnerability will manifest itself and turn into a concrete injury or violation, they are prepared to accord all humans the “first-person perspective” and “self-relation” based on the equality of all humans because this presents the most rational, prudent, and advantageous solution for themselves. Which means, to accord all humans rights – that is to say *human rights* – in order to protect themselves and all others because vulnerability also contains the “first-person perspective” and “self-relation”. On the one hand, this protection through human rights aims at avoiding the transformation of vulnerability into a concrete injury or violation and, on the other hand, in the case of a possible transformation of vulnerability into a concrete injury or violation, to receive active compensation. Humans are aware that the protection of human rights also encompasses the duties corresponding to human rights because they are not exclusive rights but rights to which all humans are entitled.

Concerning this sixth element the question arises, whether it is really rational, prudent, and advantageous for anyone to agree to human rights. Because it is conceivable, for example, that a person because of his or her religious or world-