

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910795606103321
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Titolo	Toward the critique of violence : a critical edition / / Walter Benjamin ; edited by Peter Fenves and Julia Ng
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Stanford, California : , : Stanford University Press, , [2021] ©2021
ISBN	1-5036-2768-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (368 pages)
Classificazione	CI 1397
Disciplina	172.2
Soggetti	Justice (Philosophy) Violence - Philosophy Law - Philosophy
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Note on the Translation of Benjamin's Writings -- Acknowledgments -- Abbreviations and Conventions -- INTRODUCTION -- "TOWARD THE CRITIQUE OF VIOLENCE" -- Associated Notes and Fragments -- 1. <Notes toward a Work on the Category of Justice> -- 2. <Vivification and Violence> -- 3. <From "Life and Violence"> -- 4. On Morality -- 5. <All Unconditionality of the Will Leads to Evil> -- 6. On Kantian Ethics -- 7. <The Spontaneity of the I> -- 8. <Ethics, Applied to History> -- 9. Modes of History -- 10. Methodical Modes of History -- 11. Death -- 12. <As Many Pagan Religions, So Many Natural Concepts of Guilt> -- 13. On the Problem of Physiognomy and Prediction -- 14. The Meaning of Time in the Moral World -- 15. <1) World and Time> -- 16. <Morality, Ethics> -- 17. The Right to Apply Force / Use Violence Blätter für religiösen Sozialismus, I 4 -- 18. Capitalism as Religion -- 19. Notes on "Objective Mendacity" I -- 20. Notes toward a Work on Lying II -- 21. Schemata for the Psychophysical Problem -- 22. Literatur zu einer ausgeführteren Kritik der Gewalt und zur Rechtsphilosophie -- AFTERWORD Toward Another Critique of Violence -- HERMANN COHEN, FROM ETHICS OF PURE WILL -- KURT HILLER, "ANTI- CAIN: A POSTSCRIPT TO RUDOLF LEONHARD'S 'OUR FINAL BATTLE AGAINST WEAPONS' " -- GEORGES SOREL, FROM REFLECTIONS ON VIOLENCE --

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Sommario/riassunto

Marking the centenary of Walter Benjamin's immensely influential essay, "Toward the Critique of Violence," this critical edition presents readers with an altogether new, fully annotated translation of a work that is widely recognized as a classic of modern political theory. The volume includes twenty-one notes and fragments by Benjamin along with passages from all of the contemporaneous texts to which his essay refers. Readers thus encounter for the first time in English provocative arguments about law and violence advanced by Hermann Cohen, Kurt Hiller, Erich Unger, and Emil Lederer. A new translation of selections from Georges Sorel's *Reflections on Violence* further illuminates Benjamin's critical program. The volume also includes, for the first time in any language, a bibliography Benjamin drafted for the expansion of the essay and the development of a corresponding philosophy of law. An extensive introduction and afterword provide additional context. With its challenging argument concerning violence, law, and justice—which addresses such topical matters as police violence, the death penalty, and the ambiguous force of religion—Benjamin's work is as important today as it was upon its publication in Weimar Germany a century ago.
