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VIOLENCE AND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

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The paper concerns the relation between violence and the acts of civil disobedience. Its aim is to answer the question whether more extreme forms of protest should be excluded from civil disobedience as a manifestation of violence or they could be included in it as justifiable forms of coercion. Realizing this task I analyze three groups of arguments supporting the exclusion thesis: the argument based on the concept of *satyagraha* and *ahimsa*, the argument referring to the idea of social contract, and the argument based on understanding civil disobedience as a civic appeal taken to be a part of just social dialogue. My next step is to distinguish between violence and coercion. The three arguments mentioned above allow for the exclusion of violence but they do not allow for the conclusion that no forms of coercion can be justified within civil disobedience. The conclusion is that some forms of coercion, when meeting certain conditions, might turn out to be necessary and justified elements of civil disobedience.