

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part I **Vulnerability from theory to international human rights law**

CHAPTER 1

APPRECIATING OUR NATURE:

VULNERABILITY IN THE WORKING 'SYSTEM'
OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

SECTION I

VULNERABILITY IN LEGAL THEORY: THE DESCRIPTIVE FEATURES OF HUMANITY

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Vulnerability as universal enduring condition of humanity | 3 |
| 2. A taxonomy of vulnerability | 6 |
| 3. The ontological elements of vulnerability | 8 |
| 3.1. Risk | 8 |
| 3.2. Relational autonomy and resilience | 12 |
| 4. The consequences of vulnerability for humanity | 15 |
| 4.1. A <i>moral</i> responsive State | 15 |

SECTION II

VULNERABILITY IN IHRL

- | | |
|---|----|
| 5. A <i>legal</i> responsive State: the relational character of human rights and their relation to duties | 19 |
| 6. The international human rights law (IHRL) as a working ' <i>system</i> ' for vulnerability | 23 |
| 6.1. The autonomist's theory of IHRL | 23 |
| 6.2. Normative, institutional and procedural discrepancies endangering the character of a ' <i>system</i> ' | 26 |
| 6.3. Possible correctives | 28 |

A)	Elements of normative coordination between universal and regional provisions	28
B)	Elements of contiguity in establishing the normative content of conventional human rights	29
C)	Elements of contiguity as to the nature of decisions	33
D)	The interpretative coherence of the <i>systemic</i> integration	37

SECTION III

STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE BOOK

7.	Research plan	45
----	---------------	----

CHAPTER 2

VULNERABILITY FROM *UNDERLYING* TO *EXPLICIT* NOTION
IN INTERNATIONAL LAW

SECTION I

VULNERABILITY CONCEALED

1.	The roots of vulnerability in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights	50
2.	Group vulnerability as underlying rationale of legally binding human rights treaties	54
2.1.	Non-discrimination clauses: an implicit vulnerability rationale behind the disproportionate impact doctrine	55
2.2.	Vulnerability behind the affirmation of category-related rights provisions	60
2.3.	Relational vulnerability and the proliferation of targeted human rights treaties for emancipatory rights	62
3.	Indirect vulnerability behind the laws of humanity: the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (GCIV) and the First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (API)	70
4.	Underlying vulnerability as encompassed in general principles of international law	73
4.1.	The context of human rights law and a possible vulnerability rationale encapsulated within the general principle of human dignity	75

SECTION II

VULNERABILITY DISPLAYED

5. The ‘outing’ of vulnerability in international human rights treaties	79
5.1. The explicit reference to vulnerability in the thematic conventions dealing with the rights of older persons	79
5.2. The explicit reference to the notion of vulnerability in international conventions with reference to women who are victims of violence	84
5.3. The explicit reference to the notion of vulnerability in the context of migration and trafficking	86
6. Vulnerability explicitly acknowledged in international soft law	89
6.1. Vulnerability in soft law as a vehicle towards hard law incorporation	89
6.2. Vulnerability in soft law as instrumental for a deeper qualification, though with some pitfalls	96
6.3. Vulnerability in biolaw as a soft law principle	98
7. Vulnerability explicitly acknowledged in acts of international organizations. The case of the European Union: an essentially context-dependent notion in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ)	103
7.1. Context-specific vulnerability in the criminal cooperation virtual block of the AFSJ	103
7.2. Context-specific vulnerability in the civil cooperation virtual block of the AFSJ	106
7.3. Context-specific vulnerability in the immigration and asylum virtual block of the AFSJ	108
7.4. Common denominator: resilience and “compounded” vulnerability	111

Part II**Vulnerability in International Human Rights practice**

CHAPTER 3

VULNERABILITY IN A CONSTRUCTIVIST INTERPRETATION OF IHRL

SECTION I

VULNERABILITY IN A CONSTRUCTIVIST ARGUMENTATION OF DISCRIMINATION

1. Expliciting vulnerability in the “suspect grounds” classification: the ECtHR approach	119
--	-----

1.1. The grounds of ethnic origin/race: the historical discrimination and stigma against Roma	121
1.1.1. Possible criticism against such a historical discrimination grouped approach to vulnerability	126
1.2. The grounds of gender/sex for women victims of domestic violence	127
1.3. The grounds of sexual orientation/LGBTI status... and disability	130
2. Expliciting vulnerability as a social interpretative tool in intersectionality discourse. The attitude of the UN Committees	133
2.1. The experience of the CEDAW Committee: hidden intersectionality as a stronger basis for the externalisation of the argument of vulnerability	139
2.2. The argument of vulnerability in intersectionality discourse between descriptive and full normative exploitation	143
3. Gender and the situational vulnerability in intersectionality discriminatory discourses before the regional Inter-American experience	147
4. Age and the argument of a social construction of vulnerability in the intersectionality discourse	153
4.1. A closer look at the experience of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)	158
5. Expliciting vulnerability through a focus on discriminatory limitations in the access to conventional rights because of structural elements of the State in the migratory context: regional experiences	160
5.1. The Inter-American perspective and sensitiveness	161
5.2. The European perspective: from a timid experience as to irregular migrants...	163
5.3. ... to a more generous – but not unanimous – approach as to asylum seekers	167
5.3.1. The EU legal order and its <i>selective</i> vulnerability for only some asylum seekers	170

SECTION II

VULNERABILITY AS CONSTRUCTIVIST ARGUMENT

IN A CAPABILITY THEORY OF EMANCIPATORY RIGHTS

1. Legal capacity and disability: vulnerability and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)	176
2. Legal capacity, disability and the place for vulnerability within the ECtHR case law	182
3. Disability and the argument of vulnerability in the Inter-American experience between a legal capacity discourse and a tool for complementing it with a social dimension	188
4. The argument of capacity in emancipatory dimension of women in the	

CEDAW as the ancestor of the capacity discourse as to disability and (minor and older) age	194
5. Legal capacity and children	197
5.1. The still traditional approach of ECtHR apprehending children as dependent on their family...	197
5.2. ... with a use of the argument of vulnerability as purely linked to the minor status without any contextual relevance	201
6. The principle of 'evolving capacities' appearing in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and CRC Committee' related practice	205
7. From an embodied approach to child vulnerability towards a social dimension of vulnerability: the IACtHR's perspective	210

CHAPTER 4

VULNERABILITY AS A CRITERION IMPACTING ON THE PARAMETER FOR ENGAGING STATE RESPONSIBILITY AND ITS REDRESS

SECTION I

VULNERABILITY AS A CRITERION IMPACTING ON THE *SERIOUSNESS* OF A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE *SEVERITY* OF ITS *RISK*

1. Introduction	217
2. Vulnerability as a presumption of the seriousness of the risk	220
2.1. The case of prisoners	220
2.1.1. From the presumed vulnerability of detainees a characterization of a particular risk of ill-treatment by the authorities, but also by other detainees	227
2.2. The case of children, namely of migrant children	230
2.2.1. The ECtHR perspective	230
2.2.2. The European Union perspective	235
2.2.3. The ESC Committee's approach	238
2.2.4. The IACtHR's approach	241
3. Vulnerability as a criterion downgrading the strict severity standard of the risk	
(a) the case of State inaction and indifference (to extreme poverty) towards those who seek international protection...	244
(b) the case of State inaction towards vulnerable irregular migrants	248
5. Vulnerability as criterion impacting on the severity of the risk from the side of lowering the national margin of appreciation: health grounds and the 'very exceptional circumstances' test	250
5.1. Disability and the still unexplored potential of vulnerability in a context of paucity of resources in the return State	255

5.2. Vulnerability on the grounds of health conditions and the development of positive obligations by the Court of Justice of the European Union for the administrative authorities as to third country nationals awaiting a transfer decision	259
6. Vulnerability as a criterion impacting on the severity of risk imposing a higher national due diligence in assessing 'Dublin returns'	262
7. Vulnerability as a criterion for reconsidering the awareness of risk and interpreting the real nature of the risk: the emergence of a structural risk test before the IACtHR	271

SECTION II

VULNERABILITY AS AN INTERPRETATIVE CRITERION

IMPACTING ON THE *STANDARD OF CONDUCT* OF STATES

1. Introduction: due diligence as a standard of conduct	274
2. Vulnerability impact on the due diligence as to <i>legislative</i> conduct of States	275
2.1. The case of enactment of criminal law in case of child victims of private violence	275
2.2. The case of enactment of criminal law in case of victims of trafficking	281
3. Vulnerability impact on the <i>administrative standard of conduct</i> of States	285
3.1. The impact of victims' vulnerability on <i>prosecution and the standards of proof</i> : the awareness of States and their duty to investigate	285
3.2. Vulnerability and national investigation favouring the development protective measures to ensure the reliability of evidence, preventing it from becoming the source of further harm	289
3.2.1. Inherent vulnerability and protective duties during States' investigations: the case of children's vulnerability	295
3.2.2. Vulnerability and the effectiveness of investigating possible racist motives for acts of violence which might be difficult to prove	300
3.2.3. <i>A re-worked duty of investigation</i> for the case of sex trafficking, but not to its maximum extent	303
3.3. Vulnerability modelling States' investigative <i>due diligence</i> in cases of victims of domestic violence	308
3.3.1. Vulnerability and the lowering of the threshold of the procedural obligation to investigate	309
3.3.2. The criterion of vulnerability as an interpretative tool for anticipating at an earlier stage the arising of the investigative obligation	312

3.3.3. The criterion of vulnerability working on the side of the adequateness of investigation as incorporating a gender perspective	315
3.3.3.1. A convergence between the universal practice...	315
3.3.3.2. ... and the regional Inter-American practice	318
4. Vulnerability impact on the <i>judicial standard of conduct</i> of States	323
4.1. The case of the proportionality assessment of the arbitrariness of the initial decision of detention and its prolongation	323
4.2. The case of a compression of national margin of appreciation in discrimination cases – but with still indetermined scope	332
5. Vulnerability as criterion which determines the <i>modification of the structure</i> of States' <i>obligations</i>	336
5.1. The shifting of obligations of best effort to obligations of result	336
5.2. Vulnerability as criterion legitimizing positive actions/discrimination	338

SECTION III

VULNERABILITY AS AN INTERPRETATIVE CRITERION IMPACTING
ON VICTIM'S REDRESS

1. The notion of redress	340
2. <i>International</i> procedural remedies and vulnerability as a criterion for granting a <i>more favourable interpretation of the standing of a victim</i> before international human rights bodies	341
2.1. <i>De jure condito</i>	341
2.2. <i>De jure condendo</i>	349
3. <i>National</i> remedies and vulnerability: the accommodation of special procedural needs for granting the effectiveness of the right to be heard before national courts	352
3.1. The perspective of the Court of Justice of the European Union and the impact of vulnerability on migrants in immigration decisions...	352
3.2. ... in comparison with the ECtHR attitude towards the right to be heard in collective expulsions	358
4. The Committee of the Convention of the Right of the Child and the right to an effective remedy and access to justice	360
5. Substantive dimension of redress	365
5.1. Compensation	366
5.2. Rehabilitation	374
5.2.1. Vulnerability impact before the Committee Against Torture: the illustration of rehabilitation and <i>non refoulement</i>	375
5.3. Satisfaction	378

5.3.1. Vulnerability as rationale for <i>training</i> obligations and <i>structural compensatory</i> obligations	378
5.3.2. Vulnerability as a criterion for States' obligations of resilience-building	383

Part III

Proposal for a juridical qualification of vulnerability

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

1. The hypothesis: vulnerability as regulatory criterion of the canon of interpretation of effectiveness	389
2. The principle of effectiveness in the Vienna Convention on the Law of the Treaties (VCLT) and in the international practice	390
3. The complementary dimensions of the principle of effectiveness in international human rights practice: the evolutive interpretation and the elaboration of positive obligations	396
4. Vulnerability as regulatory criterion of the principle of effectiveness according to Article 31 (1) VCLT: data emergent from the analysis	402
5. The advantage of such a juridical qualification: vulnerability as a possible beneficial guarantor of universalism of human rights?	405
6. A possible future development: the emergence of the protection of vulnerable persons as a general principle of international law	409
<i>Bibliography</i>	417