

## Viewpoint: Human rights are about more than ‘bioethics’—it’s about inalienable dignity

[W]e’ve grown accustomed to using the timid term of “bioethics” to debate certain subjects that are, in reality, philosophical and moral meta-norms that govern us all — that is, none other than the singular and irreducible dignity of the human species.

...

We are therefore prohibited from treating human beings as animals or objects...Dignity is simply what distinguishes the human from the inhuman.

...

In France, some intellectuals, politicians or practitioners, doctors or militant jurists, see the periodic revision of the laws on so-called bioethics as an opportunity to advance their eternal demands: legalization of surrogacy, artificial insemination for lesbian or single women, euthanasia, and even certain forms of eugenics. They shamelessly invoke the “fight against infertility,” the battle for “equal rights” and, while they’re at it, the “dignity” of those who, often, are also their clients.

...

[France’s Constitutional Council introduced the] first so-called laws on bioethics, that “the protection of human dignity against all forms of enslavement or degradation is a principle of constitutional status.” This is not, of course, about the small narcissistic and subjective dignity wrongly invoked by procreation militants and traffickers. It is, instead, about the transcendent and objective dignity of human nature that is inalienable, eternal and universal. It does not evolve across time or space, nor change according to the mores and whims of the market. To periodically revise this conception of dignity would amount to killing it with the human ego.

*Editor’s note: Anne-Marie Le Pourhiet teaches Constitutional Law at the University of Rennes in France*

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