

Abstract:

Human Dignity as a Universal Value: The Future of Multicultural Discourse

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This paper focuses on three points. First, it discusses the notion of human dignity and the rational grounds for adopting it as a universal value. Second, it looks into the connections with other human values and recognized human rights. Third, the main part of the paper concerns the practical problems people encounter in experiencing, internalizing, and implementing this notion in social life. The obstacles are numerous. On the collective level one must note the antagonistic representations associated with conventional ways of thinking about nationality, race and ethnicity, social class, and particular cultures, while on the individual level one has to reckon with various negative interpersonal feelings and attitudes conditioned by the aforementioned antagonistic representations. In conclusion the paper argues that a better understanding of the functionality of values and symbolism may help in taking down the numerous hurdles on the roads of intercultural communication and multicultural discourse.