

Summary

„Menschenwürde und Selbstverfügung“

by Peter Schaber

Human Dignity is a contested concept. It is unclear what it means and also whether it has any meaning at all. But at the same time, it is an important concept used in many juridical and ethical discussions. Is it possible to give the concept of human dignity a precise meaning? It is argued in this paper that a precise concept of dignity should account for paradigmatic violations of dignity. It is the aim of this paper to show that dignity should be understood as having normative authority over oneself. Normative authority should not be taken as autonomy. Having normative authority over oneself is having a moral status from which rights can be derived. The violations of the derived rights are violations of autonomy, but not necessarily the violation of dignity. Dignity is the moral status autonomy is based on. We have rights of autonomy, because we have dignity, it is argued: a normative authority over ourselves.

