

Against the background of the idea of labour power as that which is intrinsically one's own, I will examine some recent developments in the 'soft law' of the European Union that 'operates relatively silently, linking national and global economies.' In the radical asymmetry that characterizes, on the one hand, the protection of people in the public sphere around given political transactions, and on the other, their exposure to new management in the workplace, there has grown a literature that focuses on 'dignity' as lever of protection across the board. I will develop some thoughts on the leverage of dignity, and discuss the question of the protection of labour as it relates to the first of the themes of our colloquium:

'The relationship between property, autonomy and dignity: while critiques of liberal political theory show the failings of a theory of the social built on private property, how might we think of alternative conceptions of property relations in which autonomy and dignity are not eradicated?'

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