

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between rights and science is not an easy task. There are a lot of reasons for stating this. Certainly, this introduction is a straightforward, though far from a simple way of explaining the main objectives of our journal. Through *Rights & Science (R&S)*, we will be exploring the many faces and infinite possibilities of this relationship, which I have always called a dangerous one. Why?

Initially, the most relevant perspective of this relationship is the ethical aspect, which implies a natural tension between science and the moral contents of the law. Today it is generally accepted that the law is a privileged instrument to perform the axiological purposes of a society throughout the different historical contexts. Every legal system has, and will have, its moral standards. In many ways, the law is, according to contemporary sociology, the legitimate tool to guarantee the latest objectives and goals of a society or the goals of the group that holds the political power.

Unfortunately, there are multiple examples that place the law as a significant obstacle to science development. This was mainly true in the past, but it is also occurring in our times and might continue in the future. This is the main reason why our journal considers it quite necessary to explore how the law, now supposedly based on the human rights ideals of the Western democratic societies, regulates (I do not say control) scientific development. Obviously, *R&S* is concerned with the importance of directing science development toward the social welfare. But, what does social welfare mean? In a democratic or non-democratic political system, who decides what is the right direction? The previous questions imply multiple answers because we are facing profoundly difficult tasks.

I decided to start this introduction by showing only one of the most disturbing aspects of the relation between rights and science. I did this in order to highlight that our journal is open to receiving contributions with the end of understanding the many other aspects of this relationships. In fact, *R&S* addresses the various juridical and academic aspects of the relationship between law and science, as well as their impacts on the research and innovation activities in the European, international and national legal systems, economies and societies.

R&S has a multidisciplinary and international aim, emphasizing the current problems and challenges that have emerged in the scientific, investigative and innovation activities, paying especial attention, as mentioned before, to the rights, obligations and issues, both legal and ethical, of said activities.

All this having been said, *R&S* will attempt to provide a forum for discussing the juridical, legal and ethical issues of the research and innovation activities. Contributions may explore these topics at different levels. They may analyze the legal instruments to implement them - in particular, the funding programs. Furthermore, the journal welcomes the insights concerning the relation between science and technology as well as other disciplines, such as philosophy, economics, sociology, and history.

Finally, as editor in chief, I want to express on behalf of the *R&S* Editorial Board my gratitude for the generous response from our colleagues who decided to contribute to this issue 0, who prepared their essay specifically for our journal.

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