

THE END OF AUTONOMY?

Call for Abstracts

November 4 – 5, 2022

BISLA, Bratislava

Deadline for abstracts:

June 15, 2022

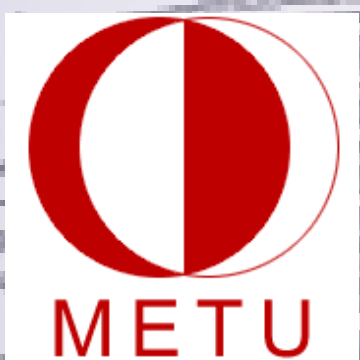
Deadline for full papers*:

October 1, 2022

Link for online submission: https://tlherald.wordpress.com/?page_id=378

Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts (Slovakia), together with the Department of Political Science at the Central European University (Austria) and the Department of Philosophy at Middle East Technical University (Turkey) are pleased to announce the eighth Liberal Herald conference. The conference brings together students and experts from several continents and academic fields to present their research on equal footing. The best contributions have the opportunity to be published in a book publication.

(Please note the separate deadline for the full paper submissions for those among selected participants interested in publication).



The End of Autonomy?

Autonomy is a concept intertwined with modernity given its accent on reason, agency, and the idea of progress. In political science, it is also a term closely intertwined with democracy, and liberal democracy in particular. On the level of individuals, autonomy has been greatly enhanced in its intellectual, material, social, and cultural capacities with the economic development, rising living standards, and significant cultural shifts that resulted from modernization and especially postmodernization in the advanced democratic world. This autonomy, which results in open, tolerant societies rich in solidarity, is an important byproduct of the gradual process of democratization. Democratic societies in many places also grant communities various rights—described as political, cultural, or territorial autonomy—designed to help navigate decision-making in heterogeneous societies.

However, the past decade has been marked by a global decline in democracy, accompanied by weakening trust in political institutions, media, experts, non-governmental organizations, and more. This is connected with increasing political polarization in many countries. Consensus on basic societal values, or at times even on factual truth, is increasingly difficult to come by. Autonomies, personal and collective, appear to be being rolled back in a conservative backlash against the progressive developments of the past decades.

Technological developments contributed to the rise of identity politics. Social media have encouraged the rise of (re-)tribalization, where many find communities that answer their need of belonging. Algorithms map and target individual tastes with such precision that it becomes questionable whether we make choices, from shopping to voting, of our own free will or whether our decisions are products of sophisticated manipulation. In robotics, there has been a steady progress in artificial intelligence techniques toward the long-term autonomy of robots, which poses questions of the future of human autonomy vis à vis AI.

With new challenges come new opportunities for creativity and invention. Hardships and crises may result in developments that enhance rather than end human autonomy in its applications to all domains of life and society.

The main question this interdisciplinary conference poses concerns the impact of the social, cultural, political, intellectual developments on our capacity to act—in relation to the self, to others, and to the world. Are we facing a decline of autonomy, or is human autonomy inalienable and more widespread than ever before?

We invite contributions from any and all social science and humanities disciplines.

General Topic Suggestions

1. Philosophical and psychological conceptions of autonomy

- Moral and personal autonomy
- Conceptions of authenticity
- Action, agency, care as an antidote to the reduction of individuals to "docile bodies"

2. Autonomy in the Social and Political Context

- Personal freedom in the era of post-truth
- Power and autonomy
- Anthropocene and its impact on personal freedom
- Autonomy of collective bodies
- Race, ethnicity, indigenous communities
- Autonomy as self-determination
- Autonomy in the era of identity politics
- Autonomy and decolonization movement
- Autonomy and bioethics
- Artificial Intelligence as an end or enhancement of autonomy

3. Feminist critiques of autonomy

- Autonomy as a masculine idea
- Relational autonomy

CRITERIA FOR ABSTRACTS

Contributors must submit abstracts in English or French.
Please submit abstracts by June 15, 2022
Authors of selected abstracts will be informed by July 15, 2022.
Authors will be required to submit their complete entries, revised and edited, by October 1, 2022.
All abstracts should be submitted via online form or by email at tlh@bisla.sk

COMPLETE PAPER CRITERIA

Selected papers will be published in early 2023 in a co-edited monography published in the Kritika & Kontext publishing house, affiliated with BISLA. Authors interested in publishing their papers will be invited to submit their contribution by October 1, 2022.
Papers should be

- 3000 - 4000 words long
- written in English or French
- in APA citation and reference style format

All submissions will be subject to double-blind peer review process.





Organizers and Contacts:

Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts (BISLA), Bratislava,
Slovak Republic

Mgr. Dagmar Kusá, PhD. Email: kusa@bisla.sk , Phone: + 421 915 373 226

Lukáš Siegel, PhD., siegel@bisla.sk

Central European University (CEU), Department of Political Science,
Vienna, Austria

Robert Sata, satar@ceu.edu

Middle East Technical University (METU), Department of Philosophy,
Ankara, Turkey.

James Griffith, james@metu.edu.tr

This conference was supported by the Slovak Research and
Development Agency under the contract No. APVV-20-0137