

Acknowledgments

On November 3–5, 2022, two parallel International Conferences titled “Paul Ricœur and the Challenges of Autonomy” and “The End of Autonomy?” were held at the Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts (BISLA) in Slovakia. These events were organized by Maria Cristina Clorinda Vendra (University Jana Evangelisty Purkyně, Ústí nad Labem; Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague), Paolo Furia (University of Turin), and Dagmar Kusa (BISLA), who also serve as the editors of this book. The essays collected in this volume were selected on the basis of the advice of the Editorial Committee from a large number of papers initially presented during the two colloquia. We are eager to acknowledge with gratitude our colleagues and institutions, the conference participants and the volunteer students, the editorial assistants, and the publisher *Kritika and Kontext*, whose invaluable contributions enabled the conferences and the publication of this book to be successfully undertaken.

First and foremost, we are grateful for the fortunate coincidence that brought the two teams and two conferences together around a shared interest in studying autonomy and its destiny in present-day social crises. Both the “Ricœurian” and the “Liberal Herald” organizers deeply believe in the value of interdisciplinary and post-disciplinary approaches to sharing research among renowned experts and students and engage both in in-depth philosophical inquiry and in its practical application.

Above all, we wish to acknowledge Lukáš Siegel (BISLA) for the co-organization of the conferences, development of the conferences’ websites, and for his patient assistance during the process of collecting and editing materials for this publication. We also express our sincere thanks to our colleagues, Jaroslava Vydrová (Institute of Philosophy of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava) and Robert Karul (Institute of Philosophy of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava), for their unwavering personal and professional support in organizing the practical details for the sessions of our invited keynote speakers.

The host institution, the Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts (BISLA), and the partner institutions, the Institute of Philosophy of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava, and the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague, deserve acknowledgment for having provided their facilities and services for the realization of all the parallel and plenary sessions. We are especially thankful for the financial support of the Slovak Research and Development Agency (APVV) within the project “Philosophical Anthropology in the Context of Current Crises of Symbolic

Structures" (APVV-20-0137), and the project "Culture and Empathy" of the Czech and the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAV-21-06), which has allowed us to organize the conferences and to publish this collective monograph. We also thank the Society for Ricœur Studies and the Fonds Ricœur for their symbolic support.

We would like to acknowledge all the conference participants for bringing their knowledge and creativity in discussing the topic of the events from many interdisciplinary perspectives. We are particularly grateful to our two keynote speakers, Jakub Čapek (Charles University, Prague) and Johann Michel (University of Poitiers; École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris), for their insightful discussions and for their enthusiasm in accepting our invitations. We owe our gratitude to the contributors to this volume, from doctoral students to renowned professors, for their flexibility and the remarkable efforts that they have made to ensure the success of this editorial project. We sincerely thank the anonymous reviewers for their generous time, a careful reading of each chapter, and insightful comments.

We also express a special note of appreciation to several students of the Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts (BISLA) and the Ph.D. candidates of the Institute of Philosophy of the Slovak Academy of Sciences who volunteered for ensuring technical assistance, the registration of participants, the setting up of banquets, and the preparation of the tables for the closing dinner. In particular, we would like to thank Marcel Šedo and Michal Kalnický for their invaluable work in caring for our guests.

The editors appreciate the exceptional help of the language editor and proofreader, Bénédicte Williams, for her patience and efficiency at all stages of the editorial process. We are also grateful to Katalin Nun Stewart for her beautiful craftsmanship of this book's layout and graphic design. The artwork that graces the pages of this publication is used with the kind permission of Mrs. Eva Kernová, wife of the late Michal Kern.

Last, but certainly not least, we would like to truly thank the Publisher, *Kritika and Kontext*, and the director doc. Samuel Abrahám (Rector of BISLA), for their trust in our project.

Finally, we do not want to draw conclusions. We hope this book provokes honest and open discussions with researchers across disciplines about one of our times' most challenging and controversial issues: autonomy.