

*Should we care about autonomy also? – Degrowth and crisis of human life*

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Degrowth sets a goal for a society that is not materially or culturally dependent on growth. Growth economy has given birth to two kind of crises. First is well known and studied ecological crisis whose foundation has a firm base. Second crisis considers human life in general. In my paper I will concentrate on this second crisis.

Second crisis differentiates from first in many ways. I will bring up three factors. Firstly the content of this crisis is vague. Some degrowth thinkers claim that growth economy has endangered diversity of human life (Järvensivu). Others insist that our capacity to think, feel and imagine otherwise is constrained because of this crisis (Castoriadis, Latouche).

Secondly victims of crisis are more difficult to identify. According to degrowth literature it seems that nations as well as human beings in general are victims of this second crisis. It also appears that global divide between rich north and poor south is relevant (Kallis, Martinez-Allier, Schneider).

Thirdly verification of crisis is different. It is challenging to collect empirical evidence that endorses this interpretation distinctly. Probably the best we can do is to have indirect proofs through empirical research. Second crisis is essentially in our hearts and minds. Basically we either believe that it exists or not. Of course we can be also indifferent or oblivious about this crisis. Because of this subjective nature of second crisis we might think it is a matter of personal opinion or political interest.

In my paper I will claim that despite of above mentioned difficulties the nature of second crisis is moral. Autonomy or actually lack of it is fundamentally in the heart of this second crisis. I will argue that distinguished thinkers (Castoriadis, Illich, Latouche) who are strongly connected to intellectual ground of degrowth share this stance likewise. However what they are short of is a proper analysis of the concept of autonomy. They offer interesting drafts referring to collective nature of autonomy. In my paper will connect these drafts to general philosophical analysis of autonomy and try to formulate a suitable concept of autonomy to articulate the nature of this second crisis.

In the end of paper I will speculate about the relationship of this second crisis to first crisis considering the ecological environment.