

Call for Participants

Bodily Autonomy and Identities

An Interdisciplinary German - Israeli Workshop funded by the German Israeli
Foundation (GIF)

Date: 24 – 26 July 2023, Location: Technical University Braunschweig, Germany

Workshop Initiators

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- Prof. Dr. Katinka Schweizer, Department of Psychology, MSH Medical
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The workshop topic and aims:

Meanings of identity are currently discussed both in academia as well as in the general public. A core notion across fields is the dialectic of fluidity and consistency. Belonging and becoming are seen as complex psycho-social, intersubjective and embodied processes. Constructing identities and forming groups, both include ongoing practices of lining boundaries, defining “inside” and “outside”, negotiating between “us” and “them”. Moreover, discourses around bodily autonomy (understood as the idea that individuals have agency over their own bodies and physical integrity) are touched. Thus, identity politics involve physical, emotional, and social costs that may touch, harm or protect bodily autonomy. Examples are initiation ceremonies as entries into a social, religious, political or professional groups as well as laws and norms. Another example is the public debate in Germany on sex and gender self-determination and gender sensitive language, both closely related to battles over the change of gender categories or the right to consent vs. refuse “normalizing” medical treatments, such as in trans youth or children with congenital variations sex development (intersex conditions).

Evolving research fields around bodily autonomy and identities challenge different disciplines, and go far beyond our own academic affiliations in psychology and sociology. Therefore, with the announced workshop, we want to establish one or more multidisciplinary German-Israeli research group(s) that will conduct collaborative theoretical and empirical studies on the **interplay of identity dynamics and bodily autonomy**.

Questions we wish to examine include: How do the relations between body, autonomy and identity change in different socio-political-cultural contexts? Which socio-cultural conditions and values do contribute to bodily autonomy and how? How do liminal physical states and experiences (which challenge existing knowledge / social norms) establish socio-political actions? Which research methods enable a deeper understanding of these concepts and processes?

We wish to gather diverse disciplinary perspectives, e.g. from anthropology, biology, communication science, education, ethics, gender and queer studies, history, law, medicine, psychology, sociology etc. Thus, researchers from diverse academic fields are invited to address related research questions and corresponding research areas.

Criteria for selecting our participants:

- Early-stage researchers from Germany and Israel from varied academic fields interested and involved in the topics we have raised in this call
- Early-stage researchers who are interested in promoting fruitful and sustainable German-Israeli cooperations
- Early-stage researchers with an interdisciplinary perspective

Application

If you are interested, please send us:

- A research plan (2 pages) that highlights idea, methods, intentions, and the benefit from doing a German - Israeli project. This includes the features of an “ideal” research partner you are looking for.
- A short CV (one page) that includes your relevant work
- A reference letter from a supervisor or colleague

Deadline and Contacts

The submissions should be sent by March 1, 2023 to Dr. Limor Meoded Danon, the Azrieli Faculty of Medicine, Bar-Ilan University limor.meoded-danon@biu.ac.il