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MORALITIES RS-ACC WORKSHOP, MOI UNIVERSITY

THEME

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Thursday 30th Sept - Friday 1st Oct 2021
Sirikwa Hotel, Eldoret - Kenya

**Programme &
Book of Abstracts**



Prof Isaac Kosgey
Vice-Chancellor, Moi University



Prof. Dr. Peter Simatei
Director,
African Cluster Centre Moi University



Prof. T. Michael Mboya
Academic Coordinator,
African Cluster Centre Moi University.



Prof. Mary Wahome
Dean,
SASS, Moi University

Moi University African Cluster Centre - Profile

This workshop is just one of the many planned research activities of the Moi African Cluster Centre of Excellence in African studies for the year 2021. The Moi University African Cluster Centre (Moi-ACC) is housed in the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS) of Moi University. The overriding objectives of the Moi University School of Arts and Social Sciences are to offer interdisciplinary teaching and research in the broad field of African studies and to act as the center where all other Africa-focused scholarship in Moi University coalesce. Within the context of these objectives, and building on the very strong tradition of exploring and interrogating diverse ways of knowing Africa that has developed in the School in the three and a half decades of its existence, the Moi-ACC is envisioned as a hub of outstanding inter-, multi- and transdisciplinary research and conversations that contribute to the greater understanding of Africa in ways that enable the addressing of significant issues affecting the continent. At Moi-ACC research is carried out under the following sections: Affiliations, Arts and Aesthetics, Mobilities, Moralities, Knowledges and Learning. The research projects that are currently on-going in these sections are: Regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa: An appraisal of the frameworks for interactive markets, effective governance and human rights protection; East African Asian Writing and the Emergence of a Diasporic Subjectivity; Framing Identities from Human Agency Mobility on the Kenya-Uganda Highway; Changing Life Projects: African Identities, Moralities and Wellbeing; Pots, Fire and Gourds: A (Re)presentation of African Knowledge Systems; and Mediated and Mediatization of Islamic Knowledge in Kenya: Educational Institutions, Media Technologies and Performative Aesthetics.

Prof. Dr. Peter Simatei

Director,

Moi African Cluster Centre.

Remarks from RS Moralities Spokesperson

Our distinguished guests, scholars, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great honor for me and the RS Moralities group of the MU-ACC, to welcome you to this workshop themed 'Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa'. Let me take this early opportunity to thank the funders, Directors and Coordinators of the MU – ACC. It's because of them that we were able to put together this workshop. I wish to extend my gratitude too to the Moi University management for according us the honor to grace this workshop. Allow me to recognize member of the RS Moralities for their commitment and selfless contribution towards the organization of this workshop.

Ever since Kenyan theologian John Mbiti (1970) discusses the idea of what it means to be human in African culture, and the later popularization of it by the Nigerian philosopher, Ifeanyi Menkiti (1984), who noted personhood (in consonance with Mbiti) as an ontological journey from birth to ancestorhood that is progressively attained or lost during a human life, there is a widespread discussion on the notion of personhood in African philosophical and anthropological discourses. Today, so many binaries (and concepts) have continued to emerge in the theoretical discussion about personhood in Africa and African philosophy.

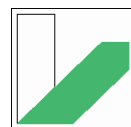
The earlier debate on the nature of personhood in African philosophy focused on its relation to, and difference from, what personhood is taken to mean in Western thought system. Today, African philosophers are more divided on whether insights from African conception(s) of personhood are (more or less) useful conceptual resources in bioethics scholarships in Africa, than in African political contexts of sustained reflections on rights, justice, citizenship, leadership, and development.

Three observations can be made of the discourse on personhood in contemporary African discourse:

1. The uncertainty of the degrees of homogenization/heterogeneity of views and dimensions when reference is made to 'African personhood'.
2. Personhood is yet to gain wider attention in African studies as it seems that the conversation has overtime been dominated and netted in African philosophy.
3. Critical conversations amongst scholars working on personhood in Eastern Africa and other African sub-regions seem to be lacking in the current academic atmosphere.

Addressing the above tripartite concerns demand that personhood in African Studies be examined from multidisciplinary and diverse perspectives. To this end, the Moi-ACC under the RS Moralities has organized this two-day workshop. The intellectual agenda of the Workshop include (i) contributing to the Research Section Moralities on the multiplicity of norms, beliefs, and experiences of personhood in African culture; (ii) explicating the body of knowledges surrounding personhood, its dynamic nature, multiple meanings and import on different facets of existence in the African world and beyond; (iii) initiating critical dialogues between the theoretical perspectives on personhood and morality in Eastern, Western, Central, North and Southern Africa; and (iv) ventilating theoretical roadmap and appropriate policy pathways for achieving meaningful personhood in contemporary Africa.

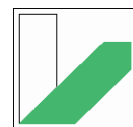
It is my prayer and hope that by the end of this workshop we would have got meaningful insights from the discourses on personhood and moralities, that will impact, not just on our theoretical spectrum, but on our social, political and economics dimensions of our lives too. Thank you and welcome once more.



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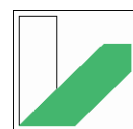
PROGRAMME

DAY 1 THURSDAY 30/09/2021		
08:00 – 09:00	Registration	
	Session 1 Chair: Prof. Mary Wahome Rapporteur: Dr. Bramwel Matui	
09:00 – 09:10	Introduction and opening remarks	Prof. Mary Wahome RS Moralities Spokesperson Moi-ACC, and Dean School of Arts
09:10 – 09:20	Remarks	Prof. Tom Mboya Academic Coordinator Moi-ACC
09:20 – 09:30	Remarks	Prof. Peter Simatei Director Moi-ACC
09:30 – 09:50	Official Opening	Prof. Isaac S. Kosgey Vice Chancellor Moi University
09:50 – 10:15	Health Break	
	Session 2 Chair: Prof. Mary Wahome Rapporteur: Dr. Bramwel Matui	
10:15 – 10:55	Keynote Address 1 Thinking Bioethics and Politics Through Personhood	Dr. Motsamai Molefe, University of Fort Hare, South Africa
	Session 3	
11:00 – 11:20	An African Normative Conception of Personhood and Human Rights Discourse	Dr. Ademola Ofayemi, MU



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11:20 – 11:40	Ancestral Personhood and Eschatology in African Culture	Prof.. Joseph Koech Moi University
11:40 – 12:00	Ontological Conception of personhood and Health in African Culture	Dr. Michael Kariuki Moi University
12:00 – 12:15	Q & A	
	Session 4 Chair: Dr. Alice Kurgat Rapporteur: Philip Musi	
12:20 – 13:00	Guest Speaker Address 1: Personhood, Morality, Leadership, and Politics in Africa	Dr. Bernard Matolino, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	
	Session 5 Chair: Dr. Alice Kurgat Rapporteur: Philip Musi	
14:00 – 14:40	Keynote Address 2 African Ethics: Stemming the Tide of Medical Brain Drain	Prof. Karori Mbugua of the University of Nairobi
	Session 6 Chair: Prof. Catherine Kiprop	
14:50 – 15:10	Morality of Political personhoods in African local and global transitional politics.	Dr. Bramwel Matui
15:10 – 15:30	The metaphysics of rites in African communities and social order	Philip Musi Moi University
15:30-15:40	Questions and Answers	
	Session 7 Chair: Dr. Alice Kurgat Rapporteur: Michael Kariuki	
15:40-16:10	Guest speaker 2 Land, Gender, and Personhood in Africa	Prof. Michael Ntabo, Rongo University
16:20 – 16:40	Health Break	
DAY 2 FRIDAY 01/10/2021 Thematic Two: Dimensions of Personhood and morality in Contemporary Africa		
	Session 8 Chair: Prof. Joseph Kahiga Rapporteur: Dr. Michael Kariuki	
09:00 – 9:40	Keynote Address 2 Modalities of personhood in African Cultures	By Prof. Spire Ssentongo Jimmy



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9:40 – 10:00	Personhood, and African Cultural worldview	Prof. Joseph Kahiga Moi University
10:00 – 10:15	Health break	
	Session 9 Chair: Prof. Joseph Kahiga Rapporteur: Dr. Michael Kariuki	
10:15 – 10:35	Appraisal of Political Personhoods: Locating space for an Afro-Worlding practice	Dr. Bramwel Matui Moi University
10:35 – 10:55	Technological advancement and the conception of Personhood and morality in Africa	Prof. Cletus Chukwu Moi University
10:55 – 11:15	Personhood and socio-economic and political Relations in contemporary Africa	Dr. Alice Kurgat Moi University
11:20 – 12:00	Q & A	
	Session 10	
12:05 – 12:45	Guest Speaker Address 3 African Humanism: The possibility of a Global Morality	Dr. Francis Owaka, University of Nairobi
12:45 – 14:00	LUNCH	
	Session 11 Chair: Bramwel Matui	
14:00 – 14:40	Guest Speaker Address 4 An African Personhood and Physician Patients Encounters in a Pandemic	Dr. Jonathan Kathenge, Chuka University
14:40 – 15:00	Foetal Personhood vs. Legal Personhood: Implications for Policy on Abortion in Kenya	Dr. George Kegode Moi University
	Session 12 Chair: Prof. Mary Wahome Rapporteur: Dr. Kegode George	
15:00 – 16:00	Roundtable	Prof. Kahiga, Dr. Ademola, Dr. Alice & Dr. Owaka
16:00 – 16:25	Closing Remarks	Prof. Tom Mboya & Matui
16:25 – 16:40	Health Break	

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Dr. Alice Kurgat

Moi University - Kenya

Personhood and Conflicts: Reflection on the Traditional Conflict Management Methods Among the Nandi of Kenya

The acts of conflict and conflict management have bedeviled humankind since time immemorial. Every community mooted mechanisms for self- preservation through construction of community social moral fabric web to regulate intra-personal, interpersonal and group relations. In most African communities relationships are informed by the observance of rights and responsibilities woven around sanctity of human life, right to own and use property and sanctions in case of violation. In each scenarios the actor(s) are personified. This paper will attempt to illustrate how traditional conflict management methods among the Nandi of Kenya are targeted at personhood. For instance, how “selfhood” is negotiated in conflict situations. The paper will interrogate how during such occasions the community invoked the power of morality through the use of curses and oaths to investigate and punish perpetrators through “withdrawing” their personhood on one hand and cleansing rituals for restoration on the other hand. Further, it will explore how the belief on the concept of personhood prevents conflicts and therefore sustains peacefully co-existence in society.

Keywords: *Nandi, personhood, curses, oath and loathing, transgression, traditional conflict management*

Bionote

Dr. Alice Kurgat lectures at The Department of History, Political Science and Public Administration, Moi University, Kenya.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Dr. Bramwel Matui

Moi University - Kenya

Morality of Political Personhoods in African Local and Global Transitional Politics

This paper is a follow-up to my paper that explored how appraisal of political personhoods can be a discursive space to locate afro-worlding practice. The paper, like the conceptual paper, is part of my current project on *The Worlding of Civilizations* which revisits two theses on global development: Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the last Man*, published in the *National Interest* in the Summer of 1989; and Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* which was published in *The Foreign Affairs* in Summer of 1993. My Thesis gives a benign vision of global politics. It is premised on the idea that all world civilizations are dualistic in nature- for they have the benign and the malignant entangled together- and so all these global civilizations are unfinished projects that can be reshaped towards moral prudence. The limits of these global civilizations are being exposed and appraised in an increasingly globalized and cosmopolitan world. I define worlding as trends that generate global effervescence or cause social and political systems to have global effervescence. Since these global trends can be located at the civilizational level, one can talk of Afro-worlding, Asian-worlding, Euro-worlding, and Americo-worlding. In this paper I illustrate appraisal of political personhoods case studies and show how they are constituted as afro-worlding practices. Some of these practices generate (or ought to generate) global effervescence; while others are supposed to cause social and political systems outside Africa to have global effervescence.

Keywords: *Political Personhoods, political philosophy and African studies*

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Bionote

Dr. Bramwel Matui is a Senior Lecturer in Political Science & Public Administration, and Researcher in Politics of Development, Development Management and International Relations.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Dr. Bramwel Matui

Moi University - Kenya

Appraisal of Political Personhoods: Locating Space for an Afro-Worlding Practice

This paper is part of my current project on *The Worlding of Civilizations* which revisits two theses on global development: Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the last Man*, published in the *National Interest* in the Summer of 1989; and Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* which was published in the *Foreign Affairs* in Summer of 1993. My contention is that the former puts a ceiling on human intelligence; while the latter casts world politics as an overly malignant process. These two theses therefore restrict the picture of global politics and silence other trends that are empirically apparent. My thesis gives a benign vision of global politics. It is premised on the idea that all world civilizations are dualistic in nature- for they have the benign and the malignant entangled together- and so all these global civilizations are unfinished projects that can be reshaped towards moral prudence. The limits of these global civilizations are currently being exposed and appraised in an increasingly globalized and cosmopolitan world. I define worlding as trends that generate global effervescence or cause social and political systems to have global effervescence. Since these global trends can be located at the civilizational level, one can talk of Afro-worlding, Asian-worlding, Euro-worlding, and Americo-worlding. My concern in this paper is to explore how appraisal of political personhoods can be used as a discursive space to locate afro-worlding practices.

Keywords: *political personhoods, political philosophy and African studies*

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Bionote

Dr. Bramwel Matui is a Senior Lecturer in Political Science & Public Administration, and Researcher in Politics of Development, Development Management and International Relations.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Ademola K. Fayemi, PhD

University of Lagos – Nigeria

Interrogating Motsamai Molefe's Conception of Personhood Through Kwame Gyekye's Notion of Rights

Philosophical discourse on the relationship between personhood and human rights is roughly a recent preoccupation in African studies. In his seminal essay, “Personhood and Rights in an African Tradition,” Motsamai Molefe revisited the debate between Ifeanyi Menkiti and Kwame Gyekye on the nature of Afro-communitarianism and its theoretical import on personhood and rights. While advancing (and taking side with) Menkiti's normative conception of personhood that gives primacy to duties over rights, Molefe argues that Gyekye's Afro-communitarian construction of personhood that grounds rights as primary over duties is fundamentally problematic. In this presentation, I seek to defend Gyekye against the three-prong criticisms leveled against his perspective by Molefe – (i) strawman fallacy against Menkiti's metaphysical notion of personhood; (ii) unjustifiable introduction of foreign philosophical anthropology to African axiology; (iii) and non-articulation of African ontology of rights. In interrogating Molefe's arguments, I argue that none of the arguments is strong enough to vitiate the strength of Gyekye's robust analysis of personhood and rights in African politico-philosophical landscape. Drawing insights from both the early and roughly recent works of Gyekye, I contend that his views cogently provide an intersectional (non-conflicting) relation between Afro-communal moral duties of personhood and rights. However, I identify some other critical problems in Gyekye's analysis of personhood and human rights that can further stimulate conversation in future African philosophical studies.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Prof. Michael Ntabo Mabururu

Rongo University – Kenya

Land Gender as an Idol of some African Communities: Metaphysical Implication

The importance of land for rural economies of Africa cannot be overemphasized. The problem of gender relations as regards land has continued unabated despite efforts by governments and development agencies to promote gender equity. In most communities the ownership and accessibility to land is governed by the community structure, philosophy and culture. In such communities patrilineal descent and patriarchal residence provide the organizational framework structure upon which ownership/or control of land and related practices and beliefs are based. Men thus retain a virtual monopoly of all power and wealth as relates to land. The stipulation of rules or norms governing land ownership is a reflection of metaphysical and psychological attachment to the land by members of any given community. Its economic and social utility also reflects the central position it has in the day today lives of the member. In most communities in Africa, Land provides one with identity. For instance, among the Abagusii, Land gives one a sense of belongingness, permanence and power to the community. Therefore, those who own or have a right to own more so ancestral land are 'perceived' to date (even with pronouncements of the new constitution 2010 of equal rights between men and women on land ownership) to be of higher social status than those who do not have such rights. The writer of this paper is of a different view as far as ownership of land between men and women is about. It is the contention of this paper that distributive justice negates any view that advances disparity between male and female in resource sharing in this context land. The writer of this paper argues to the effect that land ownership should not be based on gender because human beings as human beings ontologically are the same. In conclusion, the paper argues that the

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debate on accessibility to land raises a question as to whether one should be denied access to land by virtue of community philosophy, belief systems, customs, norms and values which are anchored on gender. This paper therefore examines beliefs, norms, values and philosophies governing land ownership between male and female in some African communities to support gender equity in land ownership.

Bionote

Prof. Michael Ntabo Mabururu, an Associate Professor of Philosophy in the School of Arts and Social Sciences Department of Economics and Humanities, Rongo University – Kenya. He is married with three children. He has been teaching since 1992 both in Moi University and Rongo University. He is the current Dean, School of Arts and Social Sciences, Rongo University. He has several Publications in both book chapters and referred journals. He has attended many local and international conferences. He has served as Director Jomo Kenyatta Foundation. He seats in several boards in the education sector and County government.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Dr. Jonathan Kathenge, PhD, MBA

Chuka University – Kenya

An African Personhood and Physician-Patients Encounters

Our conceptual understanding of personhood in Africa guides of moral determination, as well our moral concept in African context affects our perception of personhood. Therefore, the concept of morality, personhood and health in African context should be understood as correlated either by cause or effect relationship with issues pertaining to each either springing from or leading to the other. Morality deals with individual character and the moral rules that govern and limit our conduct. It investigates questions of right and wrong, duty and obligations, and moral responsibility. With this perspective, it can be argued that the moral rightness or wrongness of any ethical norm in the African context should be judged not solely from an outside world view of an individual, but also taking consideration of the African conceptual perspective of morality and personhood because of their co-relationship. It is from this understanding I discuss in this paper an important ethical norm known as Dead Donor Rule, an ethical norm formulated as follows; 'Organ Donors must clinically be dead before procurement or harvesting of organs can begin. Procurement of the organs must not cause or be the cause of the Donors death'. The problem I am addressing is, "Is it permissible from an African perspective of morality and personhood to directly bring about the disabling mutilation of a human being, even to delay the death of other person or persons? What criteria can we use to make a morally acceptable decision in such a case?" The hypothetical ethical rule or moral norm tested here is Dead Donor Rule. The ethical theory that I apply here is Kantian ethical theory or Kantian categorical imperative. The conclusion is an emergency of two opposing groups one supporting and the other opposing the application of the Dead Donor Rule.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

The recommendation is further unbiased discussion the objective criteria on organ donation/organ harvesting that also take into account an African concept of personhood and moral standards that conceive human life as sacred and transient beyond physical life.

Bionote

Dr. Jonathan Kathenge, PhD, MBA is a Philosophy Lecturer and Director of Online, Distance and E-Learning-Chuka University. Holds a BA, MA and PhD in Philosophy, a MBA, and Certificate in Bioethics.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Dr. Francis Owakah

University of Nairobi – Kenya

African Humanism: The Possibility of a Global Morality

The ethics of a society is embedded in the ideas and beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad character. This defines a society's morality. In turn morality is embedded in the conceptions of satisfactory social relations and attitudes held by the members of the society. These two define forms or patterns of behavior that are considered by the members of the society that bring about social harmony, justice, and fairness. The ideas and beliefs about moral conduct are articulated, analyzed, and interpreted by the moral thinkers of the society who are considered to be free actors. Morality thus becomes a function of the individuals who relate with others in some predetermined and predictable ways. This require an understanding of the concepts person and human. We use the African lenses to evaluate the relationship and basis of morality. Our argument is: does African philosophy and the emphasis on humanism presents the best option for a global ethics. It is interesting to study global ethics in the local context, assuming that the ethical values are substantively understood and implemented. Still, formally the names and items formulated in the Declaration of Parliament of the World's Religions are unknown. By utilizing the qualitative approach and the socio-theological method, this study revealed that: Firstly, the implementation of global ethical values is possible, although the implementation is strenuous because of some local context obstacles. Secondly, stakeholders who may involve in the implementation are religious leaders, practitioners in the field of education, community leaders, governmental bodies, politicians, and also family. Thirdly, low levels of education among society members as well as exclusivity in society and religion are significant barriers in the implementation process of global ethics in the Central Java context.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Bionote

Dr. Francis Owakah, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, University of Nairobi, specializing in Logic, Practical Philosophy and Human Rights. He is currently the Program Coordinator for Human Rights at the Centre for Human Rights and Peace (CHRP), University of Nairobi. Dr Owakah has been a Visiting scholar at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), Tanzania, Universidade Pedagogica (UP), Mozambique and many local universities. Dr. Owakah has been involved in Curriculum Reviews, including Master of Arts degree programme on Ethics, Integrity & Governance, a Common Course on National Cohesion, Values and Principles of Governance, and, a taught PhD Program, designed and established a Philosophy Syllabus at the United States International University-Africa; was the lead consultant for the establishment of the Department of Philosophy at University of Dar es salaam (UDSM) and was the External Quality Moderator until 2016; consultant in establishing a PhD program at Universidad Pedagogica, Mozambique. Dr. Owakah is the Secretary of the Philosophical Association of Kenya (PAK), and founder member of East African Network on Ethics & Governance (ENEG); Editor of 'Thought & Practice: A Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya', and 'HAKI: A Journal of Human Rights, and, Journal Global Ethics', a member of Organizing Committees of many International and Local conferences, Lead Consultant for the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, (KNCHR) on the 'Public Inquiry on Insecurity and its Impact on the Enjoyment of Human Rights in the Coastal Region of Kenya, 2016-2019'. He is published widely.

Prof. Joseph K. Koech

Moi University – Kenya

Ancestral Personhood in African Thought and Implications for Christianity Today

This paper is guided by the view that Traditional African worldview (TAW) is at the center of understanding personhood in the African setup. It attempts to respond to the question of the meaning of being human in the African thought. African pneumatology forms the basis of the importance of spiritual agencies in the African thought and practice particularly in the aspect of defining the self. The spirit world in African thought is populated by various spirit agencies such as God, ancestors, and other spiritual forces who participate in the shaping of individual human beings within community. Ancestors are the closest to humans and are accessed directly by various means or through the help of social agents such as the diviners, herbalists, priests, and elders among others. It is argued that in spite of the invasion of the Western world through education, Christianity and other dimensions of their cultural influences, traditional African worldview is still pervasive mostly at the subconscious level. In this paper, first, I briefly explain the place of TAW, its resilience and its importance in understanding personhood. Second comprises a discussion on the TAW particularly ancestral characteristics, their roles and place in the definition of self. Third, the conversation then shifts to the implications for Christianity touching specifically ecclesiology, missiology and bibliology. Discussion on bibliology highlights hermeneutics and bible translation.

Keywords: *ancestors, personhood, Traditional African Worldview, ecclesiology, missiology, bibliology*

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Bionote

Joseph Koech is an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Religion and Theology at Moi University. He has been the Chair of the department and holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Religion with special focus in New Testament Studies. He also holds M.Phil.- Moi University and BA (Bible/Theology) - Pan Africa Christian University. Prof Koech's areas of specialization include New Testament Studies, Contemporary Theology, Charismatic Movement, African Christian Theology and Hermeneutics. His research interests also include Christian leadership and pastoral care. He has membership in several associations. He has published several articles in refereed and academic journals and a book entitled 'The Spirit as Liberator: A Study of Luke 4:14-30 in the African Context'.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Prof. Cletus Chukwu

Moi University – Kenya

Insights into Personhood and Morality from Recent Scientific Advancements

The present discourse is intended to revisit the notion of personhood in view of appreciable contemporary new knowledge from scientific and technological advancements and to accentuate a philosophical need for a viable paradigm shift in prevailing concepts of the human person. Most importantly, to attempt to transcend models of personhood, which seemingly delimit, circumscribe and excoriate the intrinsic natural qualities or attributes of personhood in the material world. Various definitions of personhood abound and are often related to human capabilities as social, rational, political, aspects of personhood which are evident and can hardly be contested. However, this paper attempts to show how a clear understanding of ontology of person and the universe in light of Ancient Greek philosophical traditions can shade light for a tenable holistic view of personhood and the place of morality in our social, political, scientific and technological endeavors. Thus, a unified field to knowledge of personhood will be beneficial to future generations of persons to be masters of life, science and technology; instead of remaining trapped or confined to some cultural thought systems, religious beliefs, and traditional dogmas in society and science which enslave, demoralize and undermine the noble opportunity a human person has in the world of appearances. The ideas expressed in this presentation may be relevant in the general quest for individual and collective wellbeing so as to improve our chaotic global social situation and climatic challenges.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Bionote

Prof. Cletus Chukwu is a Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy, Religion and Theology, Moi University. His area of specialization is Philosophy of Existence. Prof Chukwu's research interests are in Ancient Philosophy and Current Scientific and Technological Advancements.

Prof. Karori Mbugua

University of Nairobi – Kenya

Medical Migration and African Personhood: Stemming the Tide of Brain Drain

This paper focuses on the migration of skilled health care workers from Africa to the rich countries of the North. I argue that this migration is not morally defensible from an African point of view. I base my argument on the African concept of communal personhood which emphasizes individual duties over individual rights. However, I maintain that discouraging African healthcare workers from migrating by invoking Afro-communal ethics alone will not stop the medical brain drain from the continent. Focus must shift away from the sending countries to the destination countries and recruitment of highly-skilled health care workers from Africa must be criminalized.

Bionote

Prof. Karori Mbugua is an Associate Professor in Philosophy and Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, University of Nairobi. He holds an MSc from the London School of Economics and a PhD from the University of Cape Town. He has served on the National Bioethics Committee and is a founder member of the Bioethics Society of Kenya. His main areas of academic interest are philosophy and history of science, African philosophy, and bioethics.

Personhood and Morality in Contemporary Africa

Prof. Joseph Kahiga Kiruki

Moi University – Kenya

Personhood and African Worldview

A person is a product of a metaphysical world view of any given culture. The most important aspect of a culture is its value system. A value system is a product of a synthesized life experience of a people within specific space and time. This paper uses the rational critical approach in unpacking the concept of personhood in its varied contexts. The concept of a person is the apex of a value system of a culture. A person is a value laden logical concept that is ontologized in the human being. Each specific African culture has its unique metaphysics and hence its own value system that pins down what they consider a person to be or not to be. Who a person is or might be in one culture, might not be the same in the 'other' culture on account of diversities of metaphysical perceptions. Metaphysical depersonalization of the 'other', is the source of human conflicts, intermitted wars and genocides. Universalization of the concept of personhood is hence an urgent project both in Africa and the global world.

Bionote

Prof. Joseph Kahiga Kiruki is a Professor of Philosophy in Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy, Religion and Theology within the school of Arts and Social Sciences, Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya. He holds a Ph. D. (1993) in Philosophy from Vienna (Austria) University. His current research interests include the following disciplines, Critical Thinking, Epistemology, Metaphysics, African Knowledge Systems, Applied Ethics, Philosophy and Development, Gender, Culture, Education and conflict Management. He has published widely in refereed journals and has several books to his credit.

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