

A day Colloquium

Transhumanism in Africa: Questioning the Concept of Radical Enhancement of Humans' Moral Capacities

Centre for Phenomenology in South Africa and The Conversational School of Philosophy, April 10, 2024

Overview

Radical moral enhancement aims to radically augment individuals' moral capacities through scientific and technological interventions that would help them to surpass their moral limitations, making them always act morally in posthuman fashion (Bostrom 2008, Persson & Savulescu 2012, DeGrazia 2014, Crutchfield 2018, Sorgner 2022, AE Chimakonam 2021, 2023). This colloquium aims to consider how African philosophy can provide novel ways of understanding the relation of transhumanism and moral enhancement. The basic question is whether there are African axiological values that can be invoked to refute or support radical moral enhancement from African philosophical perspectives. In this regard, African philosophers have made some effort to contribute to the discourse of moral enhancement from African philosophical perspectives. For instance, Ademola Fayemi and Cornelius Ewuoso defend radical moral enhancement by envisioning a posthuman era in Africa, while Amara Esther Chimakonam argues that radical moral enhancement would truncate the process of acquiring normative personhood. Such and other African philosophical contributions to the discourse of moral enhancement open new vistas for thought that this colloquium calls for such exploration.

Possible themes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Transhumanism, moral enhancement and African philosophy
- Moral enhancement, moral status and Afro-communitarian personhood
- African phenomenology and transhumanism
- Transhumanism, singularity and the African understanding of immortality
- African feminist approach to transhumanism
- Transhumanism and the African meaning in life
- Transhumanism, techno-politics and the future of Africa
- Transhumanism and African religion
- Transhumanism and African logic
- Transhumanism and African environmental ethics
- Transhumanism and African humanism

Submission Guidelines

This colloquium will be held virtually via Zoom. We invite anyone interested in the themes of the colloquium to submit an abstract of no more than 250 words by November 31, 2023, to Amaraesther35@gmail.com. The selection committee will evaluate abstracts and the results will be communicated by email before December 20, 2023. Selected abstracts must then be prepared

for a presentation of 20 minutes in length. Talks will be followed by 15 minutes of questions, comments, and answers.

After the colloquium, speakers will be encouraged to submit their work for a special issue in an internationally accredited journal. Speakers are also encouraged not to submit works under review or in the press or already published elsewhere, in whole or part, for this colloquium.

Organized by

Amara Esther Chimakonam, PhD., University of Fort Hare