



**THE CONVERSATIONAL SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY (CSP)
Calabar, Nigeria**

Presents

Epistemic Responsibility: The Ethics of Knowledge Production,
Regulation and Dissemination Conference

Date: 27-28 November 2024

Day 1

Time: 9.00 – 15.00 (SAST/GMT +2)

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Meeting ID: 966 4464 9287; Password: 649484

Day 2

Time: 9.00 – 14.35 (SAST/GMT +2)

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Meeting ID: 945 5453 1122; Password: 972681

Programme

Day 1			
Time (SAST)	Session	Speaker	Topic
09:00 - 09:45	Keynote Address	Boaventura de Sousa Santos	Epistemologies of the South, reactionary non-neurocentric knowledge and identitarianism
9:45 - 10:05	Session 1	Jaco Louw	Actualising conversationalism Through the Conduit of Philosophical Counselling: Towards an Inclusive Praxis of Knowledge Co-cultivation
10:05 - 10:25	Session 2	Gabriel Otegbulu & Chioma Winifred Ezeanya	Between Value Neutrality and Contextuality
10:25 - 10:40	Q & A		
10:40 - 10:50	Break		
10:50 - 11:10	Session 3	Umezurike Ezugwu	Why Biased Gender Social Norms and Social Exclusion should be Discontinued?
11:10 - 11:30	Session 4	Uchenna Ezeogu	Responsibility: A Model for Decentering Western Hegemony In Academic Discourse
11:30 - 11:50	Session 5	Illia Trubnikov	Marginalization Through Rationality: An Ethical Critique of Externalist Standards
11:50 - 12:05	Q & A		
12:05 - 12:15	Break		
12:15 - 12:35	Session 6	Egbonu John & Isaiah Ngedu	What the Trivalent Logic Should Resolve for the Integrity of Decoloniality
12:35 - 12:55	Session 7	Pius Mosima	The Ethics of Knowledge Production, Regulation and Dissemination
12:55 - 13:15	Session 8	Oko Alex	Reararticulating Records of History And Articulating History For The African Future
13:15 - 13:30	Q & A		
13:30 - 13:40	Break		
13:40 - 14:00	Session 9	Ada Agada	The Decolonisation Question in African Philosophy

14:00 - 14: 20	Session 10	Bambale Zubair	Understanding Epistemic Exclusion under an Africa AI Embedded Justice System
14:20 - 14: 40	Session 11	Solomon Eyesan & Kingsley Christopher Solomon	Re-evaluating the Notion of African Epistemology for African Development
14:40 – 14:55	Q & A		
14:55 – 15:00	Closing		
Day 2	Day 2	Day 2	Day 2
Time (SAST)	Session	Speaker	Topic
09:00 - 09:45	Keynote Address	Jonathan Chimakonam	What is Responsible Epistemology? Navigating the Schism between Epistemic Responsibility and Epistemic Fundamentalism
09:45 - 10:05	Session 1	Paul Michael	Does African social epistemic structure silence the young?
10:05 - 10:25	Session 2	Nasreen Watson	Critiquing Cross-Cultural Ethics in Artificial Intelligence In Education (AIED)
10:25 - 10:40	Q & A		
10:40 - 10:50	Break		
10:50 - 11:10	Session 3	Lucky Ogbonnaya	Understanding and Addressing Epistemic Injustice Using Logic
11:10 - 11:30	Session 4	Chukwugozie Nwoye	Beyond the Fixated Positions of Freedom and Determinism: An Insight of Akalaka from Igbo (African) Episteme
11:30 - 11:50	Session 5	Jason Harris	Worlds of Words: A Linguistic analysis of Israel’s violence-paving words
11:50 - 12:05	Q & A		
12:05 - 12:15	Break		
12:15 - 12:35	Session 6	Osita Nnajiolor	The Epistemic Burden of [the] African Child
12:35 - 12:55	Session 7	Moses Irem	The Decolonisation of Traditional African Medicine (TAM): A Methodological Consideration in health care

12:55 - 13:15	Session 8	Kirk Lougheed	The Proper Ends of Epistemic Decolonisation in African Philosophy
13:15 – 13:30	Q & A		
13:30 – 13:40	Break		
13:40 - 14:00	Session 9	Chinedu Egwuatu	The Epistemology of Underdevelopment in African Politics
14:00 – 14:20	Session 10	Evaristus Eyo	Liberative Epistemology and Sustainable Development in Africa
14:20 – 14:30	Q & A		
14:30 - 14:35	Closing		

Meet our Keynote Speakers:

Boaventura de Sousa Santos is Emeritus Professor of Sociology, University of Coimbra (Portugal), and Distinguished Legal Scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He earned an LL.M and J.S.D. from Yale University and holds the Degree of Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa, by McGill University, University of Paris and more.

He is Director Emeritus of the Center for Social Studies at the University of Coimbra and has written and published widely on the issues of globalization, sociology of law and the state, epistemology, social movements and the World Social Forum, in Portuguese, Spanish, English, Italian, French, German, Chinese, Danish, Romanian and Polish.

His most recent *project ALICE: Leading Europe to a New Way of Sharing the World Experiences* was funded by an Advanced Grant of the European Research Council, one of the most prestigious and highly competitive international financial institutes for scientific excellence in Europe.

His most recent books in English are: *Decolonising the University: The Challenge of Deep Cognitive Justice* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021); *Toward a New Legal Common Sense. Law, Globalization, and Emancipation - Third Edition* (Cambridge University Press, 2020); *The End of the Cognitive Empire: The Coming of Age of Epistemologies of the South* (Duke University Press, 2018); *If God Were a Human Rights Activist* (Stanford University Press, 2015); *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide* (Paradigm Publishers, 2014), *The Pluriverse of Human Rights: The Diversity of Struggles for Dignity* (Ed. with Bruno Sena Martins) (Routledge, 2021); *Demodiversity: Toward Post-Abysal Democracies* (Ed. with José Manuel Mendes) (Routledge, 2020); *Knowledges Born in the Struggle. Constructing the Epistemologies of the Global South* (Ed. with Maria Paula Meneses) (Routledge, 2019).

Jonathan O. Chimakonam is professor of philosophy at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. He taught at the University of Calabar, Nigeria, for several years. He has been a research fellow at various institutions in Europe and Africa, including Tübingen University, Stellenbosch University and the University of South Africa. His teaching and research interests include African Philosophy, Logic, Ethics, Philosophy of Mind, Race Studies and Decolonial thinking. He is an author, co-author, editor and co-editor of more than one hundred and forty research works in books, articles and chapters. Chimakonam has delivered several invited lectures and keynote talks at universities around the world. He has been interviewed by many academic blogs and media outlets. His theories and concepts have been themes of international conferences and panels. His works have inspired several rejoinders, reviews and theses. His ideas are part of various universities' curriculum and philosophy modules. He developed the theory of Ezumezu logic and the method of conversational thinking, and he is a major proponent of conversational philosophy. Chimakonam has past and ongoing research collaborations with colleagues in other universities. He has received funding from national and international organizations such as the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, The National Research Foundation, the John Templeton Foundation and many others. He is a logician, public intellectual, social thinker and multiple award-winning philosopher.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

The Proper Ends of Epistemic Decolonisation in African Philosophy

Kirk Lougheed

LCC International University/University of Pretoria

Abstract: The nature of epistemic decolonisation in African philosophy is hotly debated. For instance, some urge that the project is an abject failure because it has thus far been unsuccessful in delivering what can broadly be called political goods (e.g., Matolino 2020). Many of the black peoples in sub-Saharan Africa remain impoverished, disenfranchised, and disempowered. Alternatively, others have suggested that it is the very lack of successful epistemic decolonisation that at least partly explains the continued lack of certain political goods (e.g., Mitova 2023). However, in both cases, there seems to be agreement that the proper ends of epistemic decolonisation in Africa are political. I argue that reframing epistemic decolonisation to aim exclusively at knowledge and related epistemic goods is a better approach. Not only does this approach help to safeguard it from undue political influence, but it will also further bring about political goods if indeed it is true that successful epistemic decolonisation should really be expected to bring them to fruition. And if it fails to deliver the political goods, its success can still be measured based on the degree to which it contributes to epistemic goods.

The Decolonisation Question in African Philosophy

Ada Agada

Federal University Otuoke

Abstract: The clamour for the elimination of hegemonic Western influences in African epistemological spaces has grown steadily in the early 21st century. The clamour is especially loud in the human sciences and in the field of philosophy in particular. In this article, I identify the decolonisation project in African philosophy with the Africanisation project, the search for African philosophical knowledge systems not beholden to Western philosophical traditions and autonomous in a way that enables it to contribute to global philosophy. I argue that African philosophers must not be content with the recognition of a global condition of epistemic hegemony that favours the West but must vigorously challenge the hegemony by systematically developing and expanding their own epistemic space. I explore the idea of decolonisation against the background of the universalism-particularism conundrum in African philosophy and identify the universalisation challenge that indigenous knowledge systems like *ubuntu*, *igwebuike*, and *opiatoha* face as ethnophilosophical knowledge modes. I argue in favour of the viability of African knowledge systems like *ibuanyidanda* philosophy and *ubuntu* eventism that transcend ethnophilosophy and make claims to universal relevance.

Key words: Decolonisation; African philosophy; indigenous knowledge systems; *ibuanyidanda* philosophy; *ubuntu*; ethnophilosophy

Actualising Conversationalism Through the Conduit of Philosophical Counselling: Towards an Inclusive Praxis of Knowledge Co-Cultivation

Jaco Louw
Stellenbosch University

Abstract: Philosophical counselling, despite the claims of bringing the counselee into contact with the breadth of what “philosophy” itself has to offer, remains largely tethered to Western conceptual frameworks. This necessitates a delinking from these dominant paradigms – a need echoed by some philosophical practitioners. In the following paper, I propose a re-centring of African philosophy – specifically, conversational philosophy – resulting in the transformation of the very practice of philosophical counselling itself, with the philosophical counsellor informing their practice by listening to and conversing with diverse perspectives. This re-conceptualisation, i.e., delinking, of philosophical counselling requires a four-step process. Firstly, I root philosophical counselling in conversationalism, emphasising the influence of the philosophical place from where one is speaking. Secondly, I reconceptualise philosophical counselling as a method proper, underscoring its adaptability to the philosophical place from where it is employed and actualised. Thirdly, I bridge the gap between theory and practice by framing conversational philosophy as an inherently philosophical way of living, demonstrating the embodied and embedded nature of knowledge co-cultivation. And lastly, the *philosophical village* – a community of citizen philosophers and lay public engaged in collaborative knowledge cultivation – is potentially restored through this inclusive and diversely inspired practice. Emerging from this four-step argument is what I call *African philosophical counselling* – a situated, i.e., rooted, and place-bound praxis. This praxis, indicating both deconstructive and reconstructive purposes, facilitates a continually developing conversation that takes diversity seriously, but which also continually adapts to the shifting needs of both the counselee and the ever-evolving philosophical place.

Between Value Neutrality and Contextuality

Chukwuebuka Gabriel Otegbulu
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
&
Chioma Winifred Ezeanya
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract: There has been a raging debate among scientists on which approach should be the best in a scientific investigation between value neutrality and contextuality. Value Neutrality is the principle that argues that scientific study, should be free from personal or cultural bias, and should emphasize objective and impartial approaches. It advocates for framework that prioritizes universal standards and criteria to ensure fairness and consistency across different scenarios. Value neutrality aims to prevent the imposition of subjective values on others with the aim of promoting a sense of equity and universality. On the other hand, contextuality acknowledges values, beliefs, social and cultural norms in scientific studies and researches. Hence it understands that context must be considered in order to grasp the full implications and choices. Contextuality highlights the importance of understanding the specific circumstance and cultural context in order to proffer solutions that attend to specific need. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the tension that exists between Value neutrality and contextuality with the aim of examining how different

perspective shape research outcome. This paper also examines the limitations and the strength of each approach, this will help to establish a research balance. This paper argues that an integration of value neutrality and contextuality will provide a solid ground for a scientist or researcher. This work will adopt the methods of philosophical analysis, discursive and evaluation.

Keywords: Contextuality, Social Norms, Culture, Objectivity, Value Neutrality

The Epistemology of Underdevelopment in African Politics

Chinedu Chukwudi Ekwuatu
University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

Abstract: The concept of underdevelopment is not a new concept in academics. In fact, it is almost an everyday conventional concept in our word usage in the third world; especially when describing the socio economic and socio-political states of affairs. It can be understood from various perspectives ranging from the structural to the dependency perspectives of theorizations. However, while theories abound for explaining the problems with development in Africa, this paper concerns itself with the attempt on how to succinctly and aptly show how a deliberately contrived ignorance is primarily responsible for the sustained perpetration of the underdeveloped state of Africa. The study thus explores an epistemological dimension to the understanding of the developmental woes of the African state, especially as it relates to African politics. It argues that the continued and perpetual underdevelopment of the African state, aside the traditional theories for explaining this, presupposes a contract: a deliberate contract for underdevelopment, working under an epistemology of deliberate contrivance from ignorance, and sustained also through a 'veil of ignorance'. It makes passionate effort to establishing how the quartet processes—knowing, not knowing, pretending not to know, and the politics of not knowing—all jointly make up an epistemic configuration that jeopardizes the development prospects and capacities of both the African individuals and the continent at large.

Keywords: Epistemology, veil of ignorance, underdevelopment, politics of forgetting or not knowing, Epistemology of ignorance, epistemology of underdevelopment

Critiquing Cross-Cultural Ethics in Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED)

Nasreen Watson

Abstract: Ubuntu, an African ethical principle advocating for a communal way of life and interconnectedness among citizens in South Africa, has been purported to apply to all areas of social and economic spheres. However, challenges persist in the development and deployment of Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED), which includes a consensual agreement on ethical frameworks to guide practical usage in supporting first-year university students. In response to these challenges, Enslin and Horsthemke (2004) argue that Ubuntu's tenets should be considered universal because of the overarching similarity with other humanistic philosophical approaches. They argue that the prioritization of Ubuntu principles in education fails to recognise common value structures and principles from Western ethical influence, thereby challenging Ubuntu's effectiveness as the primary ethical framework in AIED. This paper addresses the central question:

What tensions persist in the practical application of Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED) within a cross-cultural ethical framework? My aim is to expand upon the arguments of Enslin and Horsthemke (2004) by critiquing the constituents of 'citizenship education' and its ethical framework in Ubuntu as the underpinning principle of African democracy. Although recent efforts by African philosophers have attempted to establish various ethical frameworks for AI, the application and implementation of these frameworks within the educational sector remain unclear. Moreover, current literature commits the 'fallacy of equivocation'; ethical concepts such as 'Ubuntu' are used to assert that successful ethical frameworks of AIED can only be achieved through the critique of Eurocentrism. However, this focus hinders the advancement of African educational institutions to adopt and implement a global standard of partnership that could advance student development.

Keywords: Ubuntu, Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED), Citizenship Education, Western Philosophy, Eurocentric

Beyond the Fixated Positions of Freedom and Determinism: An Insight of Akalaka from Igbo (African) Episteme

Chukwugozie Donatus Nwoye

Abstract: The idea of human destiny often provokes the thoughts of freedom and determinism. In Western episteme, scholars are often divided between the two major lines of people being free to become whatever they desire and those who maintain that one's destiny is predetermined. This polarized position appears to have defined Western knowledge system and tries to make it the knowledge that exists in terms of human destiny discourse. But in this paper, I want to argue that, from (Igbo) African world-view of *Akalaka* (destiny), that a person's destiny is not either of individual's freewill or predestination. Rather, it is an amalgam of the disposition of one's *Onyeuwa chi* (the person that reincarnates in an individual) and one's own freewill in constant consultation with one's *Onyeuwa chi* through a diviner.

Keywords: Freedom, Determinism, Akalaka, Conversationalism, Episteme

Why Biased Gender Social Norms and Social Exclusion should be Discontinued?

Umezurike J. Ezugwu

Abstract: In this essay, I argue that gender biased social norms and social exclusion is the root of undervaluation of women, gender stereotypes, disparities and inequality or inequity, which have seriously hampered the comprehensive development of men and women. The notion that there is strict gender norm, from which identities and expressions vary, operates on preconceptions and prejudices, and presents barriers to women's ability to fulfill potential and recognition. This kind of binary structure occasioned by social discrimination and negligence can lead to negative emotional experience, thus jeopardizing innate equal gender dignity and intrinsic value, and limiting the individual's independent development and capabilities. My strategy here would be to analyze the problem by dismantling the inherent bivalence. With an African complementary model of explanation, I will argue that the only way to discontinue gender biased

social norms and social exclusion is to recognize a person as an independent being, rather than just notice his/her gender differences. Using the principles of complementarity, I will demonstrate how acknowledging and embracing gender differences and values will dispel sexism. Finally, I will argue that women, just like men, are not less important, and should be treated with high level of respect and cognitive attention.

Keywords: Gender, Biased social norms, Social exclusion, Inequality, Complementarity

What the Trivalent Logic Should Resolve for the Integrity of Decoloniality

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Federal University of Lafia

&

John Okwuchukwu Egbonu

St. Albert Institute Kagoma

Abstract: In 2021, Jonathan Chimakonam and L. Uchenna Ogbonnaya published their book on *African Metaphysics, Epistemology and a New Logic*. The book promises to be a decolonial approach to knowledge. While making a case for epistemic decolonisation, there is an aspect that the two scholars did not resolve. It is the claim that by seeking complementarity that was neglected in the Boolean logic, we may have attained epistemic decolonisation. In our paper, we refute the claim that complementarity can be achieved when we move beyond the Boolean logic to the sort of trivalence that is championed by Chimakonam and Ogbonnaya. Our disagreement is hinged on the fact that the Boolean logic maintains a position that threatens complementarity. This is because in bifurcating reality, the two opposites that are in need of complementation do not assume 'equal' positions. In an attempt to address the bifurcation created by the Boolean logic, the three-valued logic proposes a new approach more than resolving the problem of bivalence. We refer to this as a pre-multivalent epistemic crisis, that indirectly assigns importance to one of the values in epistemic realities. With the aid of the conversational method, we will hold that we need to resolve this pre-multivalent epistemic issue in order to avoid internal conflicts.

Keywords: *Conversationalism, Decolonisation, Multivalence, Trivalent Logic*

The Epistemic Burden of African Child

Osita Nnajofofor

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&

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Abstract: The continent of Africa is currently beleaguered by plethora of problems ranging from crisis of identity, underdevelopment, political and economic instability, unemployment, wars, sickness and diseases and subsequent deaths as a result of poverty. The multidimensional poverty in Africa (especially the poverty of the mind) can be traced to the "politics of alienation" that was introduced by the imperialists during the colonial era with the intention of making them foreigners in their own land, thereby robbing them of their identity, values and essence and replacing them with their acclaimed superior western episteme. This foundational misplacement

has become a serious epistemic burden for an African children because their entire knowledge production, dissemination and application processes are faulty. First, the African child is taught using a language that is alien to his environment and a complete estrangement from his African reality. Secondly, the educational method that imparts the African child is western and it simply transforms him more to a westerner than an African. Thirdly, the African child is turned to a misfit because what he learnt in school is inconsistent with his working environment. These challenges have created a serious burden in the life of an African child by making him the person whom he is not. I contend in this paper that no continent has ever committed this fallacy of internal contradiction and developed. I also noted that Africa must explore and appreciate her environment and identity through knowledge synthesis. I conclude by recommending a holistic epistemic consciousness of all African intellectuals towards exploring the positives in African environments (space), values, essence, identity etc. and synthesize them through a formalized curriculum for the nurturing and grooming of the African child.

Keywords: African child, Politics of Alienation, knowledge synthesis, epistemology, epistemic consciousness, Burden.

Understanding Epistemic Exclusion under an Africa AI Embedded Justice system

Bambale Zubairu Lawal

Ahmadu Bello University Zaria

&

The Conversational School of Philosophy

Abstract: This paper demonstrates the ontological basis for understanding epistemic exclusion arising from embedding African Justice Systems (AJSs) in Artificial Intelligence (AI). From the prism of its technical and social aspects, I consider the essence of AI and the circumstances under which it would properly function in a justice system to actualize the purpose of doing justice by providing unhindered access to knowledge for all. I consider Africa's socio-economic context marked by widespread ignorance, poverty, insufficient power and poor connectivity. I contend that this is a condition that impedes AI's capacity for actualizing its purpose. The consequence of the uncritical deployment of AI under this condition would, therefore, be the exacerbation of existing epistemic disparities and exclusion. While the majority suffers from technological neglect, the privileged few benefits from AI-driven legal mechanisms that are critical to knowing. Within the purview of the conversational system of thought, I argue that this is relevant to the fundamental question of existence within a legal framework of a society in which AI excludes rather than benefits on account of technological inadequacy. I argue further that this exclusionary tendency particularly conflicts with the Afro-communitarian thought that emphasizes relationality and complementation.

Keywords: Existence, AI, Epistemic Exclusion, Nigerian Legal System, Conversational

Liberative Epistemology and Sustainable Development in Africa

Evaristus Matthias Eyo

Conversational School of Philosophy

Abstract: In this paper, I will argue that one of the reasons behind the slow pace of development in Africa is due to the problem of coloniality of knowledge, sustained by the two-valued logic of coloniality, which excluded, subjugated, killed, and silenced the epistemic voice from Africa. This epistemic subjugation and killing of the African indigenous knowledge system led to the imposition of the epistemic accumulations of the West on Africa, and these Western epistemic ideals inform the cultural, political, economic, and even religious practices in the continent. To address this issue, it is essential to reinvent the African indigenous knowledge system and recognize their knowledge production sites as authentic epistemic sites capable of generating genuine knowledge to underpin economic policies. Here, I propose the idea of liberative epistemology as an epistemic framework that can ground sustainable development in Africa. Liberative epistemology here entails an epistemic framework that is anchored on the idea of equal epistemic rights and the application of indigenous knowledge to solve existential problems in Africa. In this way, liberative epistemology, as an African epistemic perspective can contribute to the development of the continent.

Keywords: liberative epistemology, Africa, sustainable development, coloniality, logic.

Reararticulating Records of History and Articulating History for the African Future

Oko Jerome Alex-Hounnouve

University of Calabar, Nigeria

&

The Conversational School of Philosophy

Abstract

Dominant extant accounts of history of the world are designed to glorify the West and denigrate non-Western peoples, especially, Africans. The Western narrative of African history or history about Africa/Africans has a twofold effect. First, it denies Africans positive memories of the past that should serve as evidence of tradition of excellence. Second, it puts Africans in such a position that they would have to struggle too hard to produce contents of the present in words and deeds that can serve as materials for tomorrow's history. Perhaps, on account of racism and European supremacy, there is a tacit understanding/agreement among some Western scholars to deny Africa or people of African extraction any pride of place in recounting stories of conquest and exploits of the past through false narratives, doctoring of records and deliberate omission of facts. This has a direct overlapping consequence on Africa's future, which is itself determined by activities of the present. But since the present is to a large extent, characterised by disillusionment of a negative past, emptiness of records of achievement and absence of a tradition of excellence as projected in the falsification of African history, it becomes herculean to create a viable future. To change the narrative, therefore, I propose that Africans consciously undertake the task of reararticulating records of the past that concern Africa/Africans by engaging in incisive research to unearth twisted, doctored and hidden facts, and audaciously presenting same in scholarly literature and other outlets. Another dimension is that Africans should be purposeful in practically creating a viable future through positive social transformation, intensive research and deeper learning, innovations in science and technology, economic rejuvenation and true political self-determination. In these

ways, the truth of history would prevail, and Africa/Africans will regain her/their pride, and be set on paths of enduring progress.

Keywords: History, Records of history, African future, falsification

Does African social epistemic structure silence the young?

Paul Michael

African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science, University of Johannesburg

&

The Conversational School of Philosophy

Abstract: The question I interrogate in this paper is whether African social epistemic structures – procedures for knowledge generation and validation embedded in the epistemic assumptions of African cultures of the African peoples – engender epistemic silencing of the young. This question arises, for instance, from the assumption and practice of epistemological superiority and monopoly of the old over the young in African societies. Consequently, African philosophers such as Wiredu, and Kaphagawani and Malherbe have called to question such assumptions. One such assumption is the infallibility of elders in relation to the young. I contend that African social epistemic structures engender epistemic silencing of the young. In doing so, first, I will demonstrate that the young are knowers from a unique perspective. Second, I will show that elders in African societies are an epistemic institution positioned as superior to, and in ways that impedes the epistemic agency of, the young. Third, I will discuss how the young are in turn positioned in African social epistemic structure and argue that this positioning suggests their epistemic status as silenced.

Reevaluating the Notion of African Epistemology for African Development

Solomon Eyesan & Kingsley Christopher Solomon

Abstract: This paper examines the link between epistemology and African development. This interrogation is imperative because of the gap between Africa as a continent blessed with plenty of natural resources and her economic development. The shortfall in African development has resulted in scholars questioning the epistemic foundation of the African and its relevance in the current African situation. Specifically, this paper attempts to clarify the following issues: What is the relationship between epistemology and development? What is African epistemology? Is there a link between African development and African epistemology? To transform the abundant natural resources in Africa into wealth that enhances the quality of life and wellbeing of Africans, knowledge is essential. Hence, this paper argues that African development shares an inalienable link with Africans' epistemological identity. Consequently, for Africa to develop properly, there is a need to reevaluate and reconstruct African epistemology. The paper's main aim is to examine and determine how African epistemology can be instrumental to African development, that is, African knowledge-based development.

Epistemic Responsibility: A Model for Decentering Western Hegemony in Academic Discourse

Uchenna Azubuiké EZEÖGU

Abstract: The challenge of Western hegemony has long dominated academic discourse; marginalizing non-Western voices and epistemologies. To address this, I propose the concept of epistemic responsibility, which involves recognizing and addressing the power dynamics and biases that shape knowledge production and dissemination. Through decentering Western perspective, contextualizing knowledge, interrogating assumptions, collaborative knowledge production, and epistemic humility, scholars can take responsibility for promoting a more inclusive and diverse academic discourse. By embracing epistemic responsibility, we can work towards a more equitable and just knowledge production process, one that values and amplifies non-western voices and epistemologies. This model offers a crucial step towards decolonizing knowledge production and promoting global intellectual diversity.

Keywords: Epistemic Responsibility, Western Hegemony, Decolonizing Knowledge, Academic Discourse, and Inclusive scholarship.

Understanding and Addressing Epistemic Injustice Using Logic

L. Uchenna Ogbonnaya

African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science, University of Johannesburg

&

The Conversational School of Philosophy

Abstract: What is epistemic injustice? How can logic help us to understand and address epistemic injustice? These questions are my central concern in this paper. In addressing them, I will make two arguments: 1.) logic informs epistemic injustice, and 2.) logic is an organon that can help us live beyond the problem of epistemic injustice. I will argue that bivalent logic undergirds and promotes epistemic injustice. Also, I will contend that monovalent logic, such as Zen logic, can help us overcome epistemic injustice. Furthermore, trivalent logic, such as Harmonious monism and Ezumezu, helps us understand and address epistemic injustice. To this end, after the introduction (section 1), I will discuss epistemic injustice in section 2. I will examine logic, focusing on monovalent, bivalent, and trivalent logic in section 3. In section 4, I will demonstrate how epistemic injustice can be understood and addressed using logic. In section 5, I will conclude.

Worlds of Words: A Linguistic analysis of Israel's violence-paving words

Jason Harris

Abstract: Emerging from the reporting of events concerning the humanitarian crisis within Palestine, one can see depictions of agents and events which betray a violent project built upon dehumanisation and self-vindication. 18-year-old Israeli soldiers are described as “girls”¹, while a 4-year-old Palestinian child is called a “Young Lady”². While Palestinians are said to be “dying”, Israelis are described as “being killed”. Those who defended against the 2023 7th of October invasion are purported as defenders and “the children of light”³, while those who defend

¹ Jehring and Lisbona 2024; p. 21.

² Jackson and Elliards 2024; p. 1.

³ Netanyahu 2023; p. 1.

against the perpetually repeating invasions of Gaza are labelled “terrorists” and “the children of darkness”. This selective attribution of accountability, humanity, and innocence betrays an instrumental defence of an ideologically settler-colonial project wrapped in the trappings of specific speech and selective narration. Historical analyses often treat settler colonialism as a series of isolated, unjust actions, overlooking the rationalisations that led individuals to accept or ignore the inherent abhorrence of their behaviour. Although the use of propaganda in the past is recognised, there is frequently a failure to identify how more subtle and insidious mechanisms lay the groundwork for contemporary atrocities and settler colonial projects. The Israel-Palestine conflict illustrates this phenomenon, where ideologically driven narratives and language rationalise settler colonialism. The language illuminated and deconstructed in this piece constructs a system of thought that not only justifies violence but also roots itself in a violent ideology, directly facilitating violent actions.

Drawing on the linguistic analytical tools of Hayden White, John Austin, and Patrick Wolfe, this piece explores the mechanisms birthing narratives which are consciously and unconsciously wielded to enact a view and intent which seeps from the words of the narrative, which in this case is a settler colonial ideology. In a contemporary paradigm laden with residual coloniality, structural racism, and entrenched social and material injustice, it is crucial to find the origin or markers of such inherent and rationalised injustice. By analysing a given situation coughing with manipulative discourse, one could find the mechanisms through which the discourse perpetuates harmful structures and events. This will be done by beginning with an investigation of oppositional narrativized depictions of the history of Palestine so that one can see the influence of language on the interpretation of events. Subsequently, the mechanisms of narrative employment and the weaponisation of such linguistic mechanisms by settler colonial projects to reinforce and defend their ideologies of entitlement and superiority will be illuminated. After this, an exploration will be performed on John Austin’s Speech Act Theory and the role of speech acts in linguistic manipulation. Finally, drawing on an expanded speech act and narrative emplotment theory, the presence and purposes of specific speech acts and narrative emplotments will be illuminated by deconstructing the defence given by Israeli representatives during the 12th of January 2024 ICJ hearing. Only through such deconstruction can the effectiveness of such manipulative language be neutered.

Thinking beyond the Colonial Library in African Philosophy: Intercultural Perspectives on Epistemic Responsibility

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Abstract: In this paper, I argue for an epistemic responsibility by thinking beyond the colonial library (la bibliothèque colonial - Mudimbe 1988). This entails recognising and rectifying epistemic injustices within African philosophy and Studies in general. I rethink epistemic injustice through an African philosophical lens that goes beyond colonial ideologies and frameworks. The colonial library is the canon, which overlooks or misrepresents African knowledge systems, leading to systemic forms of epistemic injustice. I argue that the pursuit of epistemic justice is crucial as it would not only acknowledge historical wrongs but also promote

and include African indigenous ways of knowing which challenge dominant paradigms as seen in the colonial ideologies. Finally, the major challenge or epistemic responsibility, is one that reimagines African Philosophy beyond colonial frameworks and engages with alternative epistemic practices as seen in indigenous African knowledge systems that not only validate but also enrich global knowledge systems.

Marginalization Through Rationality: An Ethical Critique of Externalist Standards

Illia Trubnikov

Abstract: Rationality is often celebrated as a hallmark of responsibility and virtue, shaping how individuals justify their beliefs. Many scholars assert an inseparable link between rationality and justification: a belief is justified if and only if it is rational, making rationality essential for knowledge. However, what it means to be rational remains a subject of ongoing debate. The internalist, or deontic, conception holds that an agent is rational if they have good reasons for their beliefs based on their own epistemic norms, keeping control within the individual's hands. In contrast, the externalist, non-deontic notion posits that an agent is rational only if their epistemic norms align with current, widely accepted standards—placing judgment beyond the individual's control. This externalist perspective raises ethical concerns by transferring the authority to define rationality to dominant institutions—typically universities and laboratories in the most developed and wealthiest nations. As a result, these institutions dictate who is considered rational and prescribe how beliefs should be justified, producing measurement systems that compel others to conform to their norms. This practice perpetuates injustice, discrimination, and marginalization in intellectual fields, supports colonial discourse, and reinforces a Eurocentric worldview. In my paper, I will argue against the externalist, non-deontic notion of rationality from this ethical perspective, viewing it as a scholarly practice that increases social injustice. My methodology includes the use and re-examination of classical epistemological thought experiments on rationality, analysis of the representation of rationality in the public sphere, and Kuhnian insights on the conventionality of scientific academic practices.

The Decolonisation of Traditional African Medicine (TAM): A Methodological Consideration in Health Care

Moses Irem

Abstract: The outbreak of Corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic upturned the stereopic way knowledge is claimed and produced in the fields of Medicine, Culture, Ecology and Science in general. Africa is endowed with a rich cultural heritage in traditional application of medicinal plants in health care. A literature search and an exposition of some empirical results in the use of traditional African medicinal plants with anti - viral potentials also, show that majority of African population (85 - 90%) rely on plant based medicine or phytotherapy. This paper employs Decolonisation to evaluate empirical testing and application of some of the traditional African medicinal plants and other substances from Nigeria, Benin Republic, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Togo and Uganda. We posit that, based on functional viability, economic benefits, availablity and safety of traditional medicinal plants in Africa, there is justification for

its adoption against the Western parochial universal patent system which we consider as a tool to stampede any knowledge which is non - Western