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Philosophical Society of Southern Africa

2023 Annual Conference

16th – 18th January, 2023

Department of Philosophy, University of

Johannesburg

Day 1 – Monday 16th January 2023

Time	Activity	
08:00-09:00	Registration and Tea	
09:00-09:10	Welcome	
Session 1		
Time	**Venue 1**	**Venue 2**
09:15-09:45	**Veli Mitova** *Decolonising experts.*	**Simon Beck** *Why we are unconventional.*
09:50-10:20	**Abraham Tobi** *Epistemic Reparation: The Victims' Collective Duty to Remember.*	**Ntobeko Shozi** *The Notion of Wellbeing in the Context of Disability.*
10:25-10:55	**Christopher Allsobrook** *A Genealogy of Cultural Colonisation in Segregated Trusteeship.*	**Nkosinathi Dludla** *Progressive utilization theory: A feasible defence against AmaZulu social justice model.*
10:55-11:15	**Tea/Coffee Break**	
Session 2		
11:15-11:45	**Sizwe Maseko** *Conditions for the appropriate expression of anger: Exploring the relationship between expressions of anger and agency.*	**David Spurrett** *Heels and Pockets: Oppression Through Sartorial Dimorphism.*
11:50-12:20	**Gontse Lebakeng** *Black bodies in white academic spaces.*	**Vanessa Nhlapo** *Would racism be eradicated in South Africa if the country became a non-racial society?*
12:25-12:55	**Ryan Timms** *Hostile scaffolding*	**Mark Rathbone** *Happiness, Economic Inequality and Commerce: A Critical Existential Reading of Adam Smith's narrative of The Poor Man's Son.*

13:00-14:00	Lunch	
	Session 3	
14:00-14:30	**Dimpho Maponya** *How Should We Decolonise?*	**Glender Amantle Mothelesi and Chilombo Mbenga-Banda** *Social media and Subjectivity: Challenges and prospects.*
14:35-15:05	**Sarah Setlaelo** *Black Women's Hair Consciousness and the Politics of Being.*	**Gregory Morgan Swer** *Echo Chambers and Existential Extremism.*
15:10-15:40	**Londiwe Xaba** *'Black beauty': colorism and the commercialization of beauty.*	**Christopher Wareham** *Cryonics and the story of a life: Closing the book on the frozen dead.*
15:40-16:00	**Tea/Coffee Break**	
	Session 4	
16:00-16:30	**Clarton Fambisai Mangadza** *Engaging existing underlying United Nations (UN) modes of discourse: An African philosophical perspective.*	**Michelle Brotherton** *Scarcity As A Category Mistake.*
16:35-17:05	**Michael Pitman** *Domains and Dimensions – (Re-)Assessing the Philosophical Ambitions and Achievements of the NIMH Research Domain Criteria.*	**Damon Mackett** *Transhumanism and Full Moral Status.*
17:15-18:00	**PSSA AGM**	

Day 2 – Tuesday 17th January 2023

Time	Activity		
08:00-08:30	Tea/Coffee		
Session 1			
Time	Venue 1	Venue 2	Venue 3
08:30-09:00	**Dominic Griffiths** *Decolonisation, friendship and the 'democracy to come'.*	**Andrew Akanimo Akpan** *Principles for the building of Algorithms.*	**Edmund Ugar** *In Light of Medical Artificial Intelligence in Sub-Saharan Africa: Does Autonomy Matter?*
09:05-09:35	**Mulalo Sekumana** *Frantz Fanon and the continuity of colonial violence in Postcolonial Societies.*	**Anné H. Verhoef** *Dreaming together about happiness in algorithmic ecologies.*	**Linda Maqutu** *African Principlism: An African Approach to Bioethics.*
09:40-10:10	**Aragorn Eloff** *From ontology to ontogenesis: steps towards a philosophy of psychedelics.*	**Chantelle Gray** *This is your brain on algorithms: Thinking the movement of the mind with Deleuze.*	**Benjamin Smart** *The Core Business of Medicine: A defence of the curative Thesis.*
10:10-10:30	**Tea/Coffee Break**		
Session 2			
10:30-11:00	**Luke Buckland** *Practical Ethics and Magic Beans.*	**Rafael Winkler** *Shit, or the fascination with the gruesome.*	**Tony Shabangu** *Can Gangs Be a Source of Ubuntu in Prison?*
11:05-11:35	**Jessica Lerm** *Moral fetishism.*	**Olerato Mogomotsi** *Hegel's Geist Revisited.*	**Mzikayise Msibi** *Zooming into Metz's secular African Moral Theory.*

11:40-12:10	**Shené de Rijk** *Abortion as a form of non-voluntary active euthanasia.*	**Darryl Wardle** *Existence as First Philosophy.*	**Rudolph Nyamudo** *A Defense for an African Ethic of Ubuntu.*
12:15-12:45	**Emmanuel Oboh** *Moderate Antinatalism: An Ally in the Fight Against Climate Change.*	**Patrick O. Aleke** *God and Suffering in Africa: An Exploration in Natural Theology and Philosophy of Religion.*	**Doreen Sesiro** *Would a Transhuman Be Free, Determined or Botho? The Metaphysical Aspect of the Botho Perspective.*
13:00-14:00	**Lunch**		
	Session 3		
14:00-14:30	**Chad Harris** *For and Against Facts: Responding to Betti's argument.*	**Yolanda Mlungwana** *It Starts with the Man in the Mirror: Imaginary Identification in Lacan.*	**Phemelo Olifile Marumo** *Digitalization and African Philosophy in the 21 st Century: Myth or Realty?*
14:35-15:05	**David Scholtz** *A Unified Theory of Coherence.*	**Harry Stanley** *Perceptual and Psychological Limitations in Our Access to Objective Reality.*	**Craig Thrupp** *The Morality of Mankading: Crickets Continued Connection to Colonialism.*
15:10-15:40	**Glender Amantle Mothelesi** *The future of technological solutionism.*	**Aïda C. Terblanché-Greeff** *Unpacking The Construct Of African Time.*	**Gregor Mackenzie** *What is whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa, and how can its rehabilitation be lived out?*
14:40-16:00	**Tea/Coffee Break**		

Session 4			
16:00-16:30	**Mary Carman** *Emotional consciousness, rational agency and normative commitments.*	**Yoliswa Mlungwana** *Analyzing Evil: Human Agency vs The Problem of Evil.*	**Nhlakanipho Hlengwa** *Freedom Charter of 1955 as a liberal egalitarian document.*
16:35-17:05	**George Hull** *Deciding.*	**Gideon Owogeka Onah** *Using The Sense Of Understanding As A Heuristic For Accepting Explanations: A Critique.*	**Lungelo Siphosethu Mbatha** *Legitimacy and the State in Postcolonial Africa.*
17:10-17:40	**Bjoern Freter** *The Problem of Male Supremacist Violence in Philosophy.* **(Online Presentation)**	**Siphamandla Ruiters** *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Contemporary approaches to spiritual exercises in Ancient Eastern and Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy.*	**Awongwa Gcelu** *Post De Jure White Supremacy: A Form of Oppression Against Non-White South African Population Groups.*
18:00	**Conference Dinner**		

Day 3 – Wednesday 18th January 2023

Time	Activity	
08:30-09:00	Tea/Coffee	
Session 1		
Time	**Venue 1**	**Venue 2**
09:00-09:30	**Samantha Vice** *The Aesthetics of Domestic Animals.*	**Jean du Toit** *Shifting boundaries: Critical phenomenology and the shopping mall as capitalist technology.*
09:35-10:05	**Joe Roussos** *Possibilities in climate science.*	**Casper Lutter** *The putative Derrida-Gadamer Debate: A (plausible, possible) re/construction of Western philosophy's relation to the Other.*
10:10-10:40	**Carla Turner** *On the Fundamental Incompatibility between Wildlife Conservation and Animal Ethics.*	**Gabriel Gyang Darong** *Bringing the "Self" into the Classroom: the role of including students' talents and experiences in teaching and learning at a South African University.*
10:40-11:00	**Tea/Coffee Break**	
Session 2		
11:00-11:30	**Yolandi M. Coetser** *Considering second wave animal ethics: Where does African animal ethics fall?*	**Gisela Diedericks** *A critical reimagining of public dialogue for local participatory democracy.*
11:35-12:05	**Patrick Effiong Ben** *Moral Intheses: Towards Conversational Ethics.*	**Josh Platzky Miller** *Legitimacy Debates, the myth of 'Western Philosophy', and the Contribution of Ben Kies.*
12:10-12:30	**Vote of Thanks**	
13:00	**Lunch**	

Abstracts

Veli Mitova

Decolonising experts

What would happen to our notion of expertise if we took seriously decolonial theorists' insight that former colonial subjects continue to be epistemically marginalised and illegitimately stripped of epistemic authority? We should revise our accounts of expertise, I argue in this talk. The argument has three steps. First, I show that the experts of the epistemically marginalised (e.g., traditional healers) are indeed experts: they meet core conditions for responsibly placed trust in scientific experts. Second, I show that existing accounts of expertise cannot accommodate this claim. For instance, a traditional healer arguably meets neither the truth-condition nor the recognition-condition on expertise commonly posited in the literature. Finally, I sketch a view of expertise—what I call communitarian functionalism—that accommodates the thought that the experts of the marginalised are indeed experts. Very roughly: a person counts as an expert in domain D in virtue of (i) her role in her epistemic *community*, (ii) the *needs* of this community regarding D, and (iii) whether she *responsibly* lives up to this role. If the argument works, it helps us make progress both in the epistemology of expertise and with the project of epistemic decolonisation.

Simon Beck

Why we are unconventional

Kristie Miller argued in '"Personal identity" minus the persons' that a strong conventionalist view is preferable to the standard psychological continuity theory of personal identity. She contended that strong conventionalism, which sees socially-based practices as (at least partly) constituting personal identity, could cope with thought experiments that appear to threaten it and, in doing so, it emerges as better off than the psychological view. On top of this, when coupled with the denial that there are any such objects as persons, it stands up better to metaphysical criticisms that might threaten both theories. My paper presents an alternative (though similar) thought experiment to Miller's that is intended to shift the balance back towards the psychological view. Then I consider two possible routes that the psychological theorist might take towards the metaphysical issues raised. One comes from stage theory; the other goes back to Locke's seventeenth-century discussion. Both suggest that there is no need to see persons as conventional.

Abraham Tobi

Epistemic Reparations: The Victims' Collective Duty to Remember

Epistemic colonization – the idea that there is an epistemic dimension to the harms and wrongs of colonization – is a form of epistemic injustice. Most ameliorative theories for epistemic injustice are forward-looking and focus on individual virtues and structural changes that might make the world more epistemically just. These theories are valuable for epistemic justice. However, an often-overlooked dimension of epistemic justice is a backwards-looking approach. This sort of approach can come in the form of epistemic reparation. Seunghyun Song (2021), Ben Almassi (2018), Jeniffer Lackey (forthcoming)

offer different arguments for different varieties of and motives for epistemic reparation. A common theme in these arguments for reparation is focusing on the duties the perpetrators might have towards their victims. One wrong that Lackey identifies as calling for her brand of epistemic reparation is systemic distortion. In this talk, I expand on that notion to show how *an* epistemic duty to remember could rest on the shoulders of the victims due to what I will call deep systemic distortion.

Ntobeko Shozi
The Notion of Wellbeing in the Context of Disability

In this I discuss the notion of wellbeing with respect to disability. That is, what is it that analytic philosophers and disability activists have in mind when talk about wellbeing as something which disability has an impact on. There is a long-standing debate between analytic philosophers on the one hand, and disability activists on the other about disability's impact on wellbeing. The former asserts that disability is in and of itself bad for wellbeing. That is, disability is something which makes you worse off with respect to how well your life is going for you. On the other hand, the latter asserts that disability is and of itself neutral with respect to wellbeing. That is, disability is something which neither makes you worse off or better with respect to how life is going for you. Rather, it is merely something which makes you different just like being gay, black, and blond. Much of this debate is centred around the concept of disability. That is, the definition of disability tends to denote a theory regarding disability's relationship to wellbeing. For example, analytic philosophers tend to explain disability as a negative departure from normal functioning. From this definition of disability emerges the view that disability is bad for wellbeing. On the other hand, what is meant by the concept of wellbeing tends to be treated as obvious. In this paper I argue that in order to arrive at a proper conclusion as to what disability's relationship to wellbeing is, there is a need to understand the concept of wellbeing in the context of disability rather than just accepting its universal definition.

Christopher Allsobrook
A Genealogy of Cultural Colonisation in Segregated Trusteeship

Contemporary arguments for the decolonisation of knowledge commonly misconceive of colonialism as an *imposition*, pressing down Western cultural and epistemic norms on vulnerable foreign communities, and substituting Western cultural practices for suppressed indigenous practices. While it is certainly the case that most indigenous cultures have been fundamentally transformed by Western contact, one ought not to underestimate indigenous agency in the demand for Western culture. More significantly, for this paper, one ought to appreciate the insatiable Western appetite for foreign culture. American hunger for Mexican food, like the British appetite for Indian spices, should not be mistaken for supportive cultural, political, or economic respect. African academic resources devoted to the study of African cultural and traditional practices are dwarfed by European and American institutions soaking all this up. Regional expertise on local cultural matters is typically tempted away from the ramshackle institutions of our continent. This is nothing

new. The very first European explorers collected cultural artefacts no less readily than slaves, animals, plants and minerals. A coloniser does not set out to kill its host. The culture industry is less an industry than an anaemic rationale that surveys, incorporates, and exploits cultural and counter-cultural capital. Your phone stalks you, counting your steps, measuring your sleep, recommending what you will like. The paper identifies features of cultural colonialism embedded within the imperial heritage of contemporary decolonisation discourse, which may be traced back to a *segregated* conception of Trusteeship that informed the realignment of global political order after WWI, under the League of Nations, a forerunner of the United Nations, established to displace and replace the Age of Empires. Costly foreign colonial government was devolved to self-sufficient, imperial governmentality. But the tyranny of this outbound extractive rationality came home to haunt the Empire, just as Edmund Burke warned in his original formulation of Direct Trusteeship. The segregation of Trusteeship, which evolved in the colony, now leaves Britain truly trussed.

Nkosinathi Dludla

Progressive utilization theory: A feasible defence against AmaZulu social justice model

Modern political philosophy is largely Kantian. This Kantian method of treating politics as ethics appears to be the main source and origin of the problem. Kantian ethical formulas of dignity and universalisation inform the liberal discourse of human rights. This has produced the race and class problem whose effects are adequately captured by Fanon. The solution to the problem tends in most cases to emanate from the cause of the problem itself. This paper investigates an alternative that has not received sufficient attention in the scholarly literature. Progressive utilisation theory whose feasibility I shall test against AmaZulu social justice model before colonisation holds incisive insights to the raging problem. The various scholars in the literature have identified the problem as excessive wealth accumulation by a minority in the population. The estimation which leans on the economic theory's pareto principle says that 80% of the global wealth is concentrated in the 20% population. This means that the global resources are utilized and benefitting the 20% of the people. The progressive utilization theory proposes sanctioning the accumulation to ensure there is no unnecessary excess wealth in the context of my primary focus, South Africa. AmaZulu justice model provided solution thus: every member in the immediate region had the responsibility of providing the means to ensure sustainable livelihood for the new member who had no land and livestock. This provided the minimum necessities for living in the new region/isigodi.

Sizwe Maseko

Conditions for the appropriate expression of anger: Exploring the relationship between expressions of anger and agency.

Emotions play an important role in our lives and through our social interactions with others. An emotion like anger morally demands attention and scrutiny, where moral anger has been argued as anger that is a response to injustice or wrongdoing. In researching the relationship between expressions of anger and agency within a democratic state, a question I am interested in exploring is: Given the way expressions of

anger can impact the agency of both the oppressed and the powerful, are there conditions on the appropriate expression of justified anger? I answer yes, there are conditions on the appropriate expression of justified anger. In 'The Expression of Anger in the Public Sphere' (2017), Sorial argues for conditions for the appropriate expression of anger. By focusing on agency, I build on those conditions to argue that appropriate expression of anger is one that clearly communicates a perceived injustice, whether it is towards the known source of injustice, towards those in power to rectify the injustice or towards the state' institutions; and, in treating the other person with the same consideration, it does not advance violence but pursue to rectify the injustice. These will be my proposed two conditions. Expressing your anger towards these agents becomes a tool in initiating agency, and this agency is the one that brings about change in tackling and rectifying injustices.

David Spurrett

Heels and Pockets: Oppression Through Sartorial Dimorphism

There is a long history of feminist criticism of gendered norms and expectations about clothing. Some of this criticism focuses on appearance and objectification, but some is intensely practical. In New York in 1910, for example, early suffragettes used a tailors' association event to promote a "Suffragette Suit" distinguished among other things by having "plenty of pockets". And in the 1970s Andrea Dworkin discussed high heels in the context of an account of foot-binding, arguing that high heels were part of a system tending to make women a "sex of lesser accomplishment".

Here I attempt to accommodate these and other insights specifically about unequal provision of pockets, and the physical effects of high heels, in the framework of embodied and extended cognitive science. Proponents of embodied and extended cognitive science emphasise the role of the body, and its situation and augmentation by tools and supports of various kinds, seriously. But they also tend to focus on cases where the effects are beneficial or supportive. This paper is inspired by, and contributes to developing, recent work considering ways that external and embodied factors can be harmful, especially Liao and Huebner's paper "Oppressive Things".

Gontse Lebakeng

Black bodies in white academic spaces

There have been historical instances of overt racism and discrimination towards the black body. In most cases, the instances as well as the moral and epistemic harms that accompany them are easily identifiable. While institutions that enabled overt racism have, for the most part, been disbanded (e.g. apartheid in South Africa), other forms of racism and discrimination still exist in society today. These instances of covert racism and discrimination are not easily identifiable. For this reason, theorists such as Charles W Mills (with his idea of white ignorance) explain ways to identify them. The instances not only exist in social spaces but are also present in academic spaces. Therefore, I ask: how can we understand these occurrences or experiences, particularly from the perspective of a black student in historically/ideologically white spaces?

In this talk, I aim to probe into how these instances of racism and discrimination reveal themselves. I focus specifically on philosophical spaces. As a starting point, I utilise Miranda Fricker's (and subsequent theorists) varieties of epistemic injustice to show how these spaces are, in themselves, channels for injustice. I then utilise Alison Bailey's notion of 'privilege-preserving epistemic pushback' to explain more nuanced and obscure instances of racism and discrimination. This is simply the idea that those in positions of power can, at times, rely on seemingly legitimate philosophical tools to push back against ideas from the marginalised. This occurs especially when ideas from the marginalised threaten to disrupt the privilege of those in positions of power. Therefore, I argue that these forms of epistemic injustice best capture the sort of occurrences of racism and discrimination that black students might face in their attempt to make sense of their realities in predominantly white academic spaces.

Vanessa Nhlapo

Would Racism Be Eradicated In South Africa If The Country Became A Non-Racial Society?

Non-racialism has been used as a concept in South Africa from the time of apartheid as a political strategy to negate the ideology of racism. Many South African political activists such as Steve Biko and Nelson Mandela preached non-racialism. This term acknowledges the division caused by the social construct of race in the South African context. In other words, it is not blind to the reality that race exists as a social construct. Our belief in a non-racial society is so strong that we have this principle inscribed in the founding provisions of our Constitution. As an ideal, it stands as a guiding principle in the values promoted in our society. One strategy proposed towards realising non-racialism in South Africa is the idea of racial eliminativism. Those who advocate for the elimination of race talk such as Kwame Appiah and Naomi Zack have argued that doing away with racial terms and practices can help do away with racialised ways of thinking. If non-racialism is a state in which we no longer think about race, I argue that such a state is probably not in the future of South Africa. In this paper, I show that we should retain or conserve the use of racial terminology for the purposes of evaluating the problems of race. Eliminativism about race tends to ignore the ways in which Black South Africans have been systemically disadvantaged and discriminated against to promote notions that racism no longer exists. If it were possible that there was no more talk of race and racial thinking, South Africa would remain a perpetually racialised society in the distribution of wealth, goods, and services. It is for these reasons that I argue against the eliminativist view.

Ryan Timms

Hostile scaffolding

Most accounts of cognitive scaffolding focus on ways that external structure can support or augment an agent's cognitive capacities. I call cases where the interests of the user are served *benign* scaffolding and argue — with Aagaard (2020) and others — that it should not be taken for granted that scaffolding will generally be benign.

Sterelny's (2003) notion of hostility is taken as a starting point to think about one class of ways in which scaffolding can fail to be benign. Sterelny made extensive use of the idea of informational hostility in thinking about the evolution of cognition. Sterelny's point was that slogans about the world being its own best representation neglected the fact that the world contained competitors and enemies, and that their interests could be expressed through information.

I develop and defend demanding criteria for scaffolding to be hostile, requiring both victim and beneficiary agents, as well as significant changes in the cognitive demands of a task. I also present real cases of scaffolding that depends on the same capacities of an agent to make cognitive use of external structure as benign scaffolding, but that undermines or exploits the user while serving the interests of another agent. In cases where scaffolding facilitates the offloading of significant cognitive work, hostility exploitatively manipulates cognition itself. I also argue that design features of electronic gambling machines and casino management systems satisfy the criteria for being hostile scaffolding, in prolonging many gambling episodes and pulling some customers past their prior budget constraints, including to the point of pathological gambling.

Mark Rathbone

Happiness, Economic Inequality and Commerce: A Critical Existential Reading of Adam Smith's narrative of The Poor Man's Son

Economic inequality erodes the happiness of most people of the world and even attempts to work harder to attain a decent standard of living does not seem to resist the increasing disparity between wealth and poverty. To search for some recourse the narrative of the *Poor Man's Son* in the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) by Adam Smith will be analysed from a critical existential perspective. This narrative is significant because it deals with the difference between wealth and poverty, and the effort of people to achieve happiness through labour. It will be argued that a critical existential analysis provides an alternative perspective of the views of Smithian scholarship regarding this narrative. These perspectives range from arguing that the narrative articulates Smith's criticism of superficial ambition-driven-capitalism over and against beneficence. Other scholars argue that the narrative is not an attempt to champion beneficence, it is rather a matter of misplaced ambition. A critical existential analysis follows the latter perspective and expands on it by arguing that the narrative and its post-script is a clear critique of the type of commerce and labour that is in-authentic because of structural subjection and functionalism. Subjection to capitalist forces make authentic existence impossible and leaves people disillusioned, unhappy and struggling to find meaning in life. In other words, commerce and labour without authenticity and only for the sake of wealth (as means to attain happiness) may perpetuate structural inequality and reduce human-beings to functions of subjection.

Dimpho Maponya

How Should We Decolonise?

The project of decolonisation has been confronted with at least two significant questions on which the success of the movement depends: why should we decolonise? and how should we go about it? While the answer to the first question is clearly informed by the long and brutal history of colonialism, it has not been very clear, from the various factions of decolonisation or the scholarship on decolonisation, how we should decolonise. My aim in this talk is to attempt to fill this theoretical gap.

The question of how we should decolonise is essentially about constructing a method of decolonisation that is cognizant of removing undue colonial influence while extracting, advancing, and applying suitable traditional and indigenous knowledges.

In my talk I identify two fundamental challenges that arise when theorizing decolonisation: a) the methodological challenge and b) the practical challenge. In an attempt to address both challenges, and more broadly, to address the question of how we should decolonise, I propose what I call a pragmatic African feminist standpoint theory. I argue that this theory will not only provide us with guidelines for resolving conflict that may arise in the process of decolonisation, but also with an overall theoretically fruitful criteria for how we ought to decolonise.

Glender Amantle Mothelesi and Chilombo Mbenga-Banda

Social media and Subjectivity: Challenges and prospects

Technology is one of the greatest segments of modernity and evolutionism. The world has experienced technological advancements which lays a foundation for algorithmic ecologies and such advancements include social media. The presence of social media has presented several benefits such as keeping in contact, collaboration, content creation as well as sharing content. However, the other side of social media has also presented the culture of shapeshifting, and the dramaturgical presentation of the self. Therefore, the question of subjectivity comes into play. The perception of what is social media and what it is intended for differs from person to person. With social networking sites such as Instagram, the notion of personal branding versus the question of authenticity has raised debates in the field of whether the culture is that of self-expression. Deleuze (1991:112) contends that "expressions correspond to a moment, a step, or a dimension of the subject". The question becomes, will this self-expression be the foundation of the future usage of social media? These expressions are reflected in human aspects such as socialization, morality, and ethics. The theorist Goffman, in his dramaturgical presentation of self, observes that identity formation and impression [on social media], are usually formed about others in the online space. It is in this that the lexicon, finsta has been coined to describe the "conscious backstage setting constructed by users utilizing the platform affordances of Instagram where all of these practices come into play" (Rassmussen, 2020: 15). This paper will firstly discuss the history of social media alongside subjectivity. Secondly, the paper will discuss social media together with the social identity theory, and technological evolutionism. The paper will

also discuss the contemporary usage of social media by outlining the challenges that arise with the usage. Lastly, the paper will discuss the prospects of social media.

Sarah Setlaelo

Black Women's Hair Consciousness and the Politics of Being

Black women do not want to become white women because they know that this is impossible. Yet, some black women straighten and curl their naturally kinky hair, or wear hair extensions, weaves and wigs that resemble Caucasian hair. Still, they recognize that hair is only one attribute of their Being and that even if they choose to wear non-African hairstyles, they can concurrently embrace other aspects of their black identity. So, is this a matter of cultural assimilation or integration, or is there a deeper ontological problematic underlying these cross-racial hair styling choices? I interrogate three arguments that black women usually advance for their hairstyling choices – the Survival Strategy Argument, the Protective Styling Argument, and the Options-Choice Argument. I use Mabogo Percy More's interpretation of Jean-Paul Sartre's concepts of "the Look", "facticity" and "bad faith", to analyze Black women's hair consciousness through the lens of his "Politics of Being" concept.

Gregory Morgan Swer

Echo Chambers and Existential Extremism

This paper draws upon the existential phenomenology of José Ortega y Gasset to analyse the genesis and phenomenology of extremist echo chambers. Ortega argued that extremism is a recurrent feature of human history and tends to appear in moments of existential upheaval when the existing cultural system can no longer integrate the contents of our experience. The existential disorientation this produces, Ortega argues, leads to a flight towards simplicity as a means of securing existential security for one's own existence. Ortega considers contemporary forms of extremism to be a response to the excessive complexity of the technology-mediated world. Whilst Ortega could not have foreseen the ways in which digital technology would exacerbate this complexity, nor that those same technologies would be used to provide existential shelter for the disoriented, I argue that his analysis of extremism can still provide an insight into the existential function and phenomenological structure of extremist echo chambers in online spaces.

Londiwe Xaba

'Black beauty': colorism and the commercialization of beauty

This paper takes issue with contested identities based on color. To have your physical appearance 'in question' is to have your entire existence challenged. From the analyses of the tendencies of popular culture, with regards to beauty, a black woman's face has to first meet certain standards of acceptability while lighter skin women are typically exempt from such narrow scrutiny. Since light skin is considered to be the measure of acceptable beauty, light skin is so desired that whitening creams have become the bestselling item around the whole globe. By creating and marketing skin-bleaching cosmetics, the beauty industry commercializes

and feeds on the enduring legacy of colorism. This paper argues that there is complexity in complexions and that requires a philosophical analysis. Colorism intersects with capitalist commercialization, and patriarchal control, of the human body. This paper intends to reconstruct and critique this convergence of oppressive forces.

Christopher Wareham

Cryonics and the story of a life: Closing the book on the frozen dead

In Europe and the United States, cryo-preservation of the dead is increasingly common. The aim of cryonics techniques is to preserve the body in the hope that it will one day be possible to repair the damage that led to death. If successful, cryo-preservation and similar biostasis technologies may challenge the conceptualization of death as something that is irreversible.

While it is uncertain that cryonics or other biostasis technologies could be used to resurrect a human, they already present prudential, moral, and medical ethics challenges. For the most part, ethical theorists have tended to be in favour of such technologies, arguing that they are permissible (Sandberg and Minerva 2017), prudentially desirable (Shaw 2015), and even that there may be ethical duties for states to provide such technologies and even to make them compulsory (Thau 2020).

Such proponents of cryonics defuse a host of objections to these technologies. However, a neglected consideration is the idea that the irreversibility of death is necessary for valuable 'closure.' I argue that the absence of closure potentially has implications both for those close to the user, and for the user's self-understanding of the narrative of her life. While the absence of closure is not a decisive argument against cryogenics, I make the case that it has implications for the meaning of life, and should thus figure prominently in the ethics of cryonics.

Clarton Fambisai Mangadza

Engaging existing underlying United Nations (UN) modes of discourse: An African philosophical perspective

United Nations (UN) discourse of so-called "global challenges": e.g. human rights, gender equality, democracy, and so on; have failed to champion a case for African notions of personhood that are underexplored, neglected, epistemically ostracized, or maybe opportunely ignored. I approach this project from a non-reductive physicalist (NRP) perspective and engage African philosophical thinking to interrogate how UN discourse in gender equality is approached, addressed, and articulated. This paper is exploratory: Firstly, I advocate for an in-depth interrogation of such apathetic behavior towards African notions. Could it be epistemic injustice (Fricker 2007)? Or misplaced valorising (More 1996: 109) of other conceptions of personhood? Although these questions will assist directly to amplify African notions of personhood, they are not representative of the thrust of this project. Secondly, my aim is to find out to what extent does current UN discourse related to gender equality and human rights presuppose Western notions of personhood? Based on that belief it is reasonable to suspect that Western (overly psychological/individualistic) notions of personhood influence UN discourses. Thirdly, I explore an

African-centred alternative. African notions of personhood have been crowded out and continue to lag; yet, they deserve an equal stake in UN debates. Kwasi Wiredu's (1987) interpreted Akan concept of mind is a non-substance view that gives a unified account of personhood away from the individualistic and psychological theories of Descartes and Locke, respectively. African notions of personhood as alternatives in UN debates ought to be championed; which might then, in turn transform the discourse.

Michelle Brotherton

Scarcity As A Category Mistake

Scarcity of resources is a convoluted concept, all the more so when considering resources for the achievement of global justice and distributive justice. In looking at the example of diamonds, we can see that scarcity can be created, it is malleable to human interference. But what do we mean by scarcity? Do we mean absolute scarcity in the sense of an endangered species; or do we mean lack of access, presenting itself as scarcity of resources. Suppose there are two kinds of scarcity: absolute scarcity and relative scarcity. On the premise of this, I argue that there is a conflation between these two kinds of scarcity that amounts to a category mistake. In some instances, both terms are used under the general guise of scarcity despite there being a fundamental difference in the different kinds of scarcity. In this paper, I seek to provide clarity on the concept of scarcity and pinpoint assumptions and fallacies made regarding the scarcity of resources. A clearer conceptual understanding of scarcity has consequences for interpreting and engaging with theories of global justice and distributive justice. The potential category mistake has consequences for the understanding and application of these theories. Thus, an evaluation of how this conceptual understanding implicates some key theories is necessary to illustrate the importance of the need to distinguish between absolute and relative scarcity.

Michael Pitman

Domains and Dimensions – (Re-)Assessing the Philosophical Ambitions and Achievements of the NIMH Research Domain Criteria

In previous work on the philosophy of psychiatry and psychopathology, I critically examined some of the philosophical assumptions and ambitions of the US National Institute of Mental Health's (NIMH) Research Domain Criteria (RDoC), with a primary focus on the declarations of the then-director of the NIMH, Thomas Insel. At the time of its launch, Insel's expressed views regarding the nature of psychological disorders were strongly 'bio-centric' and reductionistic. The RDoC would move psychiatry forward to a new era of nosological and clinical clarity in which mental disorders would be properly understood as biological disorders. In the decade or more that has followed the launch of the RDoC, much effort has been made to distance the project from such apparent 'bio-centrism.' RDoC has been characterised as a philosophically ambitious enterprise that will transcend the 'hyperbiological' approach previously promoted by the NIMH, with a key element being the development of 'hybrid' concepts that equally weight and integrate biological and psychological phenomena. In this paper/ talk, I will embark on a critical (re-

)assessment of the philosophical ambitions and achievements of the RDoC, and search the field for signs of delivery on some of the philosophical promissory notes that have been issued under its banner. The guiding focus of my assessments will be the perennial interest in how we should best understand the possible relationships between biological, psychological, and psychosocial processes in the domain of psychopathology and clinical practice.

Damon Mackett

Transhumanism and Full Moral Status

Radical human enhancement that perfects human biology is the aim of transhumanism. Perfecting human biology may aim to reduce or eliminate the experience of suffering. The lack of suffering may seem optimistic at first. However, as I explore, being unable to suffer negatively impacts transhumans' ability to attain full moral status. The conditions for attaining moral status and, by extension, full moral status does not explicitly mention harm. Instead, the ability to have interests and denying beings their interests leads to harm. The ability to experience harm appears inseparable from moral status and full moral status. My thesis explores how this implication may result in transhumans being unable to attain full moral status on the basis that perfecting human biology involves eliminating the capacity to experience harm. Transhumans can have interests, but denying them their interest may not cause harm. The central claim is that perfecting human biology may have the unintended side effect of denying transhumans full moral status. Current literature does not explore this aspect central to my thesis, highlighting an underexplored and overlooked concept of transhumanism. The idea is that transhumanism may perfect human biology yet disqualifies transhumans from attaining full moral status. Simply put, transhumans abolishment may be an insurmountable obstacle to attaining full moral status.

Dominic Griffiths

Decolonisation, friendship and the 'democracy to come'

In recent years many positive endorsements have been written on decolonisation and democracy. However, what is often elided in these discussions is that 'democracy,' in its original Ancient Greek definition and conception, and development in the European Modern age, is a Western political construct. Thus, while numerous authors argue for the importance of democracy in the decolonial debate, they do not acknowledge or critique the fact that democracy is a Western, colonial import. To adopt, uncritically, the ideal of democracy in decolonisation is to succumb to the mentality of coloniality. Epistemological decolonisation will not be achieved, but rather, as Mamdani warns, "high cost caricatures" (2019, p. 26), ready-made using the categories and language of Western political theory, but without any real theoretical originality or significance.

An ongoing irony of the current decolonial turn in theory is that this theory emerges from universities, which are institutions created by colonisation, created by academics who are products of these colonial institutions, and readily draws on and uncritically adopts concepts, including 'democracy,' which are colonial

inheritances. Decolonisation must begin with acknowledging these several elephants in the room. This paper thus develops and defends a critical decolonial definition of democracy and locates its importance in debates around decolonising political theory. I draw on the work of Derrida and his politics of friendship, exploring the notion of a 'democracy to come' as a possibility for thinking decolonial democracy. However, for this to work the concept of 'friendship' must be explored and articulated from the African perspective, in terms of relational personhood. Here I draw on the work of Metz and Hountondji to bridge the deconstructive and the decolonial.

Andrew Akanimo Akpan

Principles for the building of Algorithms

Philosophical principles should guide the building of algorithms to avoid the worst outcomes and inform the best future of algorithms. Existing solutions to problems with algorithms focus on addressing or mitigating existing algorithmic problems. Sound philosophical principles for developing algorithms hopes to address existing issues and avoid emerging problems that will arise from the evolutions of algorithms. These principles will shape the development of algorithms to ensure that algorithms do not birth issues for human beings and the world in the first place.

I use Scenario Planning - a futures thinking tool - to sketch the future of algorithms in 2050. The future of algorithms is uncertain because the world is changing in complex interrelated ways and at a pace not seen in human history. Scenario Planning allows possible futures to be imagined so that we can develop strategies around them. I introduce the Scenario Planning tool to philosophy and move it away from domains where it has been traditionally employed for strategy.

I do this not for the sake of envisioning the future for its sake and building strategies for those possible futures. My intention is to devise philosophical principles that guide the development of algorithms that avoid not just current problems with algorithms but also emerging problems that will surface in the future while at the same time offering principles for the best future of algorithms.

Edmund Ugar

In Light of Medical Artificial Intelligence in Sub-Saharan Africa: Does Autonomy Matter?

Currently, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for clinical diagnosis in the medical space has become ubiquitous. Early uses of sociotechnical artefacts in public health occurred in the 1970s when early forms of AI were used to diagnose and treat pathologies such as glaucoma and other infectious diseases by implementing Bayesian approaches. However, with the growing application of machine learning techniques in the second decade of the present century, AI has already come to play a much more significant role in medicine and, increasingly, in public health. Image recognition, in particular, has become extremely effective, and clinicians increasingly rely on machine learning technologies for clinical diagnosis and prognosis of medical conditions. While these technologies have proven to be relevant and efficient in carrying out medical diagnosis, some bioethicists fear that these technologies will limit a patient's value of

autonomy in their treatment. They contend that distorting the need for autonomy in medical diagnosis using medical AIs reinforces paternalism, thereby causing malfeasance in these technologies. In this paper, I seek to investigate whether the value of autonomy is a universally feared impediment to medical AIs. I submit new insights that: first, medical technologies make recommendations to clinicians rather than impositions; this ought not to lead to paternalism as conceived above. Second, the fear that medical AIs limit patients' autonomy depends on the role autonomy plays in a particular society; thus, this fear does not apply to all contexts, especially sub-Saharan Africa, to warrant any hindrance of the technologies from being used.

Mulalo Sekumana

Frantz Fanon and the continuity of colonial violence in Postcolonial Societies

Frantz Fanon's stance on violence and its influence on various liberation movements has been read as giving justification for violence. In the first chapter of his book *The Wretched of the Earth* (2004), "On Violence," Fanon talks about violence as being central to freedom and decolonisation. Decolonisation deals with the undoing of colonialism, it "implies the urgent need to thoroughly' challenge the colonial situation" (Fanon, 2004:2). In a world where there is an agent need to decolonise, South African universities and, more generally, communities at large have never been confronted with such an agent task to decolonise. This was made more apparent with the #FeesMustFall and the #RhodesMustFall movements. Fanon's ideas of violence were revived when his ideas of decolonisation took centre stage in these movements. For a country engulfed with the wave of violence and, in particular gender-based violence, it would seem that Fanon taking centre stage would be a contradiction given his flaws as argued by feminists as being against women. The gendered dynamics of violence that characterised the #FeesMustFall and the #RhodesMustFall movement speak volumes on the charge often laid by feminists against Fanon as being ineffective in dealing with the oppression of women. In this paper, I set forth an interpretation of how Frantz Fanon would have understood decolonisation concerning gender-based violence in post-colonial African societies.

Anné H. Verhoef

Dreaming together about happiness in algorithmic ecologies

To live in algorithmic ecologies is to live in a world of control, of Big Data, social media, deep learning, ubiquitous computing, ambient intelligence, and digital surveillance technology, is to be captured in the "technological enmeshed ontologies of the present" which makes is impossible (amongst other things) to dream anymore. To dream means here to envision a different future, a different world, one that is not controlled by various forms of technology. A world free of algorithmic ecologies.

Perhaps such a world is not necessarily possible to imagine, but we can try to imagine, through the work of Deleuze, the conditions that realised this world and perhaps we should then, with him, question these conditions. For example, what does it mean to have an image of the truth, and what is the alternative?

More: what is difference and what is the alternative way of thinking about representation and subjectification? What possibilities does this helps us to uncover?

My question is: how can we 'dream together about happiness'? Why happiness? Because this is such a topical and important philosophical concept. One that can open various routes to immanence, transcendence, representation, subjectification, politics, and ethics. Can we dream together about happiness? Should we do it? And how will we manage to do it within or beyond algorithmic ecologies?

Linda Maqutu

African Principlism: An African Approach to Bioethics

Bio-medical practitioners are regularly faced with ethical dilemmas. Without a strong ethical framework, decision-making in these instances could prove difficult and result in ethical failures. Tom Beauchamp and James Childress developed a bioethical theory, Principlism, as an ethical framework for decision-making in medicine. I contend that field of bioethics is context-specific and requires an ethical framework that reflects the values and moral norms of the country in which it operates. For this reason, I contend that the use of Principlism in South African healthcare is inappropriate, as it is a Western-dominated approach unreflective of South African moral beliefs. In this paper, I argue for an African approach to bioethics that consists of the salient moral ideals of the cultures in South Africa, such as Ubuntu. I present my novel African bioethical account, African Principlism, and explain why we should favour this approach over Beauchamp and Childress' Principlism. I illustrate that African Principlism is an ethical framework for healthcare professionals and encompasses South African moral values like Ubuntu. African Principlism consists of three central principles that determine how physicians ought to act in healthcare, (1) Medical Ubuntuism, (2) Contextual Relational Autonomy, and (3)Social Consciousness. I contend that the African Principlism approach is not only context-specific but is uniquely African in its approach and application, which are necessary features of any bioethical framework.

Aragorn Eloff

From ontology to ontogenesis: steps towards a philosophy of psychedelics

The past decade has seen a substantial resurgence of research into the therapeutic and neurobiological effects of psychedelic substances. This has included the development of REBUS, a new unified model of psychedelic action on the brain that brings together cutting-edge neuroscientific work in brain imaging with various predictive coding and Bayesian models of neural activity. REBUS, and its corollary, the anarchic brain hypothesis, are largely based on the work of Karl Friston, the neuroscientist responsible for the development of the free energy framework/active inference model of cognition that has become near-hegemonic in the field of enactive cognition. Within this framework, cognitive agents are seen as autopoietic systems that seek to preserve themselves by maximising their self-evidence through iterative action and belief updating. Running alongside this research there has also been a concerted attempt to think philosophically about the subjective effects of psychedelics and the consequences this may have for

philosophy of mind more broadly. For the most part, however, this work does not ground itself in contemporary neuroscience, drawing instead on older phenomenological and process philosophical approaches. I argue that this is a serious limitation, and that we can develop a robust philosophical account of psychedelics grounded in contemporary models like REBUS. Via the work of philosopher of science Gilbert Simondon and his most famous interlocutor, Gilles Deleuze, this account provides not just an ontological grounding for the idea of self-evidencing systems but draws attention to the more fundamental notion of ontogenesis, or how systems come to be, and argues that psychedelics are best understood as agents of ontogenesis in metastable systems that can always become otherwise.

Chantelle Gray

This is your brain on algorithms: Thinking the movement of the mind with Deleuze

Computer-related metaphors of biological systems came of age with the invention of the Turing machine, while the development of cybernetics shortly thereafter gave rise to the image of humans as information-processing beings, setting the foundation for what we now know as the information age. Steadily, the noun information and the prefix cyber became part of our everyday vocabulary, informed by the basic premise of cybernetics that all organisms use information-feedback pathways to adapt their behaviour to their environments. Regrettably, this premise came to be understood reductively over time, effectively transforming organisms into informational or data selves, not unlike the way in which information became reduced to digitised data.

If first-order cybernetics dramatically changed how we think about information, it was second-order cybernetics that gave to us the idea of autopoietic systems capable of accounting for both autonomy and emergence. Of special importance here is the injunction against flows of information across self-referential system boundaries, emphasising two aspects: operational closure and operational recursion. The former is closely related to what neuroscientists Mark Solms and Karl Friston call a 'Markov blanket' – a statistical boundary that enables a system to minimise prediction error and reduce metabolic expenditure – entropy. But what happens when the affects enabling a system to mobilise the information it gets from its Markov blankets are arrested or bypassed by automation? In this paper, I argue that Solms's theory of affect can help us grapple with this, while Deleuze's theory of the logic of sensation provides at least some ways to counter the automation of thought.

Benjamin Smart

Philosophy of Medicine has for a long time been preoccupied with analyzing the concepts of health, disease and illness. Relatively speaking, the concept of medicine itself has received very little attention. This is somewhat surprising, since analyses of the title features of philosophical subfields are frequently their primary concern. This paper is a contribution to the relatively neglected debate about the nature of medicine. Building on the work of Alex Broadbent (Broadbent, 2018), Chadwin Harris (Harris, 2018) and

Thaddeus Metz (Metz, 2018), in this paper I refute Broadbent's account of the "core business" of medicine, The Inquiry Thesis, and propose an alternative: The Sophisticated Curative Thesis.

Whereas it may be tempting for those raised in the West to consider western Mainstream Medicine the only legitimate form of medicine (and all other medical paradigms a form of quackery, that cannot properly be called medicine), this would be both a deeply colonial attitude, and one that shows an ignorance of the history of medicine. Medicine as practiced in the West two hundred years ago (in many ways) does not resemble what we know as medicine today (Wootton, 2006). Similarly, there are many medical paradigms globally (Sindiga, et al., 1995; Croizier, 2013; Ravina, 2011), that despite being regarded as medicine by those who use them, have few methodological similarities with modern Mainstream Medicine (Fontanarosa & Lundberg, 1998). Despite their differences, there are commonalities between the various existing medical traditions, and between the contemporary traditions and those they superseded (Broadbent, 2019).

Luke Buckland

Practical Ethics and Magic Beans

Iimbotyi Zomlingo, isiXhosa for "Magic Beans", is a proposed South African, not-for-profit investment company and public benefit organisation (PBO). The PBO aims to use an endowment of Ether, the cryptocurrency token of the Ethereum network, as a productive asset to generate an ongoing income denominated in Ether. This income will be used to provide direct funding to organisations that most effectively alleviate poverty, as assessed by an independent panel of researchers appointed every ~3 years. I briefly describe and motivate the proposed PBO considering a variety of questions of practical ethics that arise concerning its situation, formation, and operation. For one, the nature of the PBO involves moral trade-offs between current and future benefits that might flow from a charitable endowment. Other practical ethical issues that arise concern the methods of income generation of the PBO, particularly those involving the sustainability of cryptocurrencies and crypto ecosystems, their externalised costs of pollution and e-waste, as well as predatory methods of "maximal extractable value" production and blockchain censorship. Finally, I call for critical comments and practical suggestions on the design of *Iimbotyi Zomlingo* before its launch.

Rafael Winkler

'Shit, or the fascination with the gruesome

In this paper, I tackle with a commonplace phenomenon that is yet in contradiction with the common sense utilitarian view that the human being avoids what it finds unpleasurable or that it pursues what it finds pleasurable: sometimes the human being cannot help but be captivated by what it finds distressing, disgusting, intolerable, etc., including corpses and the like. I bring together several authors, including Plato, Don DeLillo, Sade, Lacan and Freud - in an attempt to make sense of this commonplace experience.

Tony Shabangu

Can Gangs Be a Source of Ubuntu in Prison?

I consider how gangsterism in South African prisons is detrimental to prisoners' personal and social development in how it pretends to have the solidarity and identity of prisoners as a priority. Specifically, after pointing out how indigenous values in South Africa tend to prescribe honouring harmonious relationships, I reveal what such an approach to morality entails for the way we understand prison conditions, prison relations and criminal justice. I posit that the values of Ubuntu have the potential to aid in prisoner rehabilitation and help prisoners stand against gang life in prison. In the same light, I propose ways in which gang heads and leaders can be included and contribute to implementing the values of Ubuntu in prison by improving their state of Ubuntu. I suggest that the harmony found in Ubuntu has implications different from gang conformity and redress the collective nature of prison gangs against the backdrop of communal harmony found in Ubuntu. Lacking the space to systematically defend harmony as a fundamental value, I urge theorists not to neglect it when considering transforming prisons in South Africa. The implications of this research are not limited to the prison system alone, but the communities that rehabilitated prisoners are to live in upon release.

Jessica Lerm

Moral fetishism

Some, like Kant, hold that an action has moral worth only when it is performed because it is morally right, out of a sense of duty. In the contemporary literature this is known as *de dicto* moral motivation. Since about the turn of the century, however, the dominant view has been the *de re* view, according to which an action had moral worth only when it is performed for the reasons that make it right, e.g. out of direct concern for human wellbeing, or in order to demonstrate compassion, or because it fosters *ubuntu*, etc. Much of the support for this *de re* account of moral worth derives from Michael Smith's claim that *de dicto* motivation, the desire to do what's right just because it's right, amounts to a "fetish". Though Smith's claim takes place quite quickly, constituting only a minor premise in a much larger argument, it has been appealed to by many defenders of the *de re* account, such as Nomy Arpaly, Julia Markovits, Brian Weatherson, and Xiao Zhang.

In this paper, I critically assess the popular charge of *de dicto* fetishism. I begin by providing an account of what constitutes a fetish, and then go to show that either the charge doesn't stick or defenders of the *de dicto* account have a ready response to it. I end by considering what lingering doubts one might have about *de dicto* moral motivation, even if these are doubts not accurately captured by the charge of moral fetishism.

Olerato Mogomotsi

Hegel's Geist Revisited

In this paper, I defend a deflationary narrative interpretation of Hegel's Geist. My account of Geist emerges from the contentions in the debate between the metaphysical and non-metaphysical interpreters of Hegel's

Geist, attempting to provide a solution to the limitations of either interpretation of Geist whilst retaining their appealing aspects. The metaphysical interpretation of Geist, whose proponents include Charles Taylor (1977), Robert Solomon (1970)and more recently JM Fritzman and Kristen Parvizian (2014), aims mainly to conceive of Geist as a superindividual agent who presides over and realizes itself through the social world. On the other hand, the non-metaphysical interpretation, supported by Robert Pippin (1989) and more recently, Marina Bykova (2009), argues that Geist is just a set of intersubjectively established practices and norms that we arrive at historically. In recent literature, the metaphysical interpretation has been dismissed as unacceptably speculative, while the non-metaphysical interpretation has faced critique as making talk of Geist significantly superfluous. In response to these issues, I argue for a conception of Geist as an *incomplete historical narrative of the social world whose nature is only comprehensible retrospectively* – where I retain much of the non-metaphysical reading of Geist and illustrate the analogical usefulness of the metaphysical interpretation of Geist in highlighting critical aspects of Geist. What differentiates my account of Geist is my use of narrativity to provide a more realistic and grounded conception of Geist, which still allows us to see how essential talk of Geist is in enabling the most extensive comprehension of social reality.

Mzikayise Msibi

Zooming into Metz's secular African Moral Theory

In this article I zoom into Metz's secular African Moral Theory[1]. The article aims to show that it is incorrect to conclude that African Moral Theory can only be construed as a secular Moral Theory as Metz did in his paper titled "Towards an African Moral Theory" (2007a). In zooming into Metz's secular African Moral Theory, I will attempt to show that African Moral theory is (perhaps) best understood as Spiritual Moral theory or as having a Spiritual aspect[2] or element, *pace* Metz's secular African Moral Theory as concluded in this article (ibid). I will do this by delving into the Spiritual part of African Moral Theory while also looking into some literature that seems to support this view. I will attempt to show that metaethically speaking, Spirituality has always been, still is and will always be part of Africans and their Morality. There are several African Philosophers who have hinted on the Spiritual element of African Moral Theory; however, I have not yet come across any philosopher who has made it their project to defend this view. Therefore, I find it necessary to start a discussion on the Spiritual part of African Moral Theory. While in this article I will not make an argument with regards to the Spiritual element of African Moral Theory, I will, however, try to point out limitations and/or incorrectness of concluding that African Moral theory can fully be understood in secular terms.

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[1] secular African Moral Theory
[2] Spiritual Moral theory

Shené de Rijk

Abortion as a form of non-voluntary active euthanasia

In this paper, I argue that abortion is a form of non-voluntary active euthanasia (NVAE). I provide a definition of abortion and discuss some ethical issues that surround abortion. I then provide a definition of NVAE and discuss some of the ethical issues in the wider euthanasia debate with specific focus on NVAE. Based on these discussions, I argue that abortion is sufficiently similar to NVAE to be considered a form of NVAE. This is because NVAE bears ethically relevant similarities to abortion, namely 1) that a life is being ended, 2) that no consent *can* be given to end the life, and 3) both NVAE and abortion can be performed in the interests of ending/preventing further suffering, which are sufficiently salient to consider abortion a form of NVAE. I further argue that the differences between abortion and NVAE, specifically that 1) abortion is a beginning-of-life decision and NVAE is an end-of-life decision, and 2) the knowledge of the person whose life is at stake, are less morally relevant than the similarities between abortion and NVAE providing further reason to classify abortion as a form of NVAE. Finally, I anticipate the objection that abortion is not a form of NVAE and respond to it.

Darryl Wardle

Existence as First Philosophy

The philosophical contemplation of "first philosophy" is as old as Western philosophy itself, and yet "first philosophy" is often eschewed in contemporary philosophical thought. This is because attempts at arriving at a first philosophy have often been steeped in metaphysical thinking that aims at non-finite foundations as the constitutive ground of human reality. However, in our contemporary world in which metaphysical postulates render themselves increasingly outmoded and immaterial, can we still speak of first philosophy today? This is to ask whether or not it may be possible to formulate a first philosophy based on strictly finite principles. This paper seeks to demonstrate that the concept of finite "existence" can be read as first philosophy in the contemporary thought of Jean-Luc Nancy (1940 – 2021). The argument will commence with a careful examination of Nancy's conception of "sense" and how it develops through Nancy's oeuvre. Through this examination it will be argued that Nancy's conception of sense collapses into obscurity without the presupposition of finite existence as first philosophy to ground it. Since "sense" is a seminal concept in Nancy's body of work, it will further be argued that existence as first philosophy is in fact written in the margins of Nancy's philosophy as a whole. Finally, the argument will conclude by contemplating the possibilities of (re)thinking metaphysics in finite terms by adopting Nancy's thinking of existence as first philosophy as a possible point of departure for a finite metaphysics of meaning(s).

Rudolph Nyamudo

A Defense for an African Ethic of Ubuntu

In this essay, the research is devoted to providing a plausible defense for ubuntu/hunhu ethic, i.e., an African moral philosophy common among the inhabitants of the Southern region of Africa. I advance

ubuntu ethic interpreted as honouring communal relations with others who have a dignity. First, I focus on illumining ubuntu ethic. I lay down reason to believe relational ethos, that is, ubuntu as a plausible moral theory for contemplations of practical responses to human problems. Relational ethos has the capacity to engage with the problem of responding or relating with needy new members of the community, that is, provides a way to resolve conflicts of interest. Conditioning one's actions to become favourable to the society is essential since it is in the community that one lives and attains his or her life goals. Thus, an individual's character is tapered in such a manner that includes one's life goals and those of the community at the same time. Ubuntu captures the intuitions that have positive duties to others. Secondly, I contrast ubuntu with Kantian ethics, the most influential account of dignity. The chief reason to favour ubuntu is that the African ethos contemplates accomplishment of concrete loving relationships that are plausibly demonstrated by marriage, friendship, and communal devotion, which are intuitively ideal forms of moral interaction. Therefore, by demonstrating practical responses to human problems, including concrete suggestions for how one can achieve relational ethos this essay brings originality to ubuntu debate. Furthermore, the paper brings novelty by engaging the question of African moral philosophy with Kantian ethics.

Emmanuel Oboh

Moderate Antinatalism: An Ally in the Fight Against Climate Change.

In this essay, I propose a view of antinatalism known as moderate antinatalism. Moderate antinatalism is the view where the current human population is reduced to an optimum population size to enable humans to tackle the problem of climate change, following which the human population is moderated within that 'optimum population' to avoid the possibility of facing human-led climate change in the future. I will look at moderate antinatalism as a possible ally in the fight against climate change and why it will be challenging to implement. I will begin by looking at the problem of climate change and the main arguments Gardiner gave as reasons why solutions to climate change will be challenging to implement. Then I will be looking at how antinatalism can serve as a possible ally in the fight against climate change, during which I will propose a new view of antinatalism known as 'moderate antinatalism', a view of antinatalism that does not call for total human extinction. I will conclude with reasons why it might be challenging to implement antinatalism as a potential ally in the fight against climate change.

Patrick O. Aleke

God and Suffering in Africa: An Exploration in Natural Theology and Philosophy of Religion

Belief in God or religiosity and suffering are two evident existential phenomena in Africa. African religiosity is quite evident that it is said the African is incurably religious. From the empirical stance, African religiosity is *prima facie* evident considering the plethora of places of worship – churches mosques and shrines – on the continent. In fact, there seems to be religious undertone to all spheres of live on the continent. One could argue that all African are explicitly or implicitly theists. On the other hand, suffering is an undeniable

phenomenon on the African continent. From the empirical stance, the reality of suffering is evident when one analyses the economic situation, health conditions, social realities, life expectancy, et cetera of many Africans. It would be naïve to denial the reality of hardship and suffering in Africa. Considering that the two existential phenomena, theistic belief and suffering, seem paradoxical; their presence in Africa raises some serious questions. For example, how does one make sense of Africa religiosity in the face of suffering? Is African religiosity merely an opium? Can the existence of God be taken serious the face of suffering and heinous evil on the African continent? In this paper, I claim that presence of existential suffering is not contradictory to theistic belief and hence does not undermine the affirmation of the existence of God. In order to defend my principal claim, I argue that in exploring the relationship between theistic belief and suffering, phenomenological or descriptive approach is in adequate since it will account for what is the case but not necessarily, why it is the case. Secondly, I argue that relation between theistic belief and suffering, if any, should not be viewed as a logical question as done in the past by natural atheologist or natural atheologians. Lastly, I argue that an exploration in natural theology or philosophy of religion must distinguish between philosophical issues and issues of revelation and must not confused the two.

Doreen Sesiro

Would a Transhuman Be Free, Determined or Botho? The Metaphysical Aspect of the Botho Perspective

My paper will tackle, from the metaphysical aspect of the *Botho* perspective, the issue of whether or not transhumanism would impair free-will. I will demonstrate how the *Botho* perspective incorporates both determinism and free-will. According to the *Botho* perspective, there would be determinism and free-will, each to a certain degree, in both un-enhanced and hypothetically enhanced human beings. From this viewpoint, human beings are free in accordance with reason, which is a determined process. I apply this framework to hypothetically enhanced human beings and argue that transhumanism need not undermine free-will. I will also show that some forms of biotechnological enhancement could in fact improve freewill, while other forms could limit freewill, although not necessarily eliminate it together. This paper adds new knowledge by applying a prominent metaphysical orientation within the *Botho* worldview, particularly its discussion of determinism and freewill, to debate about enhancements. This paper will also add new knowledge to the literature on African philosophy by introducing a metaphysical understanding to the notion of "person" that emanates from the *Botho/Ubuntu* and Afro-communitarian worldviews, which is under-considered relative to the moral understanding of it.

Chad Harris

For and Against Facts: Responding to Betti's argument

In *Against Facts* (2015), Prof Arianna Betti puts forward the argument that we have no good reason to accept facts as 'part of the furniture of the world', as they are commonly taken to be. Her master argument against facts presents a challenge to those who endorse an ontology containing facts. It places the burden on factualism to come up with a response to her unity problem, which is in essence about explaining the

ontological ground of the difference between facts as unified entities, versus as mere mereological sums of their constituents (typically objects and universal). In this talk I take up this challenge. I aim to defend facts against Betti's argument by coming up with a response to the unity problem as well as clarifying what facts are, why we need them, and how we can be confident they exist.

Yolanda Mlungwana

It Starts with the Man in the Mirror: Imaginary Identification in Lacan

In this talk, I use insight from Lacanian psychoanalytic theory to explore the philosophical concern with *identity* and its relation to *images*. My concern is on examining how a subject's sense of self combines a specular image—ideal ego—and an objectified image—ego ideal—to retroactively form its meaning. In his paper, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience", Lacan reintroduces what will become, for the subject, an entrance into the Imaginary. The starting point of his account of the genesis of the ego is when the infant begins to recognize his own image in the mirror. For the infant, the image in the mirror, according to Lacan, represents or works as a gestalt of the body as a complete whole, and it is through this gestalt that he or she anticipates bodily unity and self-mastery. The mirror stage, for Lacan, initiates the process of both *identification* as well as *self-alienation*. That is, although the image represents the stability and mental permanence of the I, it also simultaneously "prefigures its alienating destination" (Lacan, 2006:76). I aim to analyse *the paradox of the image*, which is that it is not only what the subject strives to become, but also what the subject can never become because *it is an other*. Otherwise put, I examine Lacan's conception of the mirror stage, as a demonstration of the paradoxical nature of the formation of the subject that involves the "the constitutive and perpetual alienation of the subject" (Eyers, 2012:24), as well as its implications.

Phemelo Olifile Marumo

Digitalization and African Philosophy in the 21st Century: Myth or Realty?

Global technological development in the 21st century has thrown up challenges in all spheres of disciplines and African Philosophy is not an exception to this trend. There have been debates about the life history of African philosophy. The dominant question is whether African philosophy will survive in global technological development. That is followed by whether African philosophy can have a place in the 4th Industrial revolution. This is due to the dominance of eurocentrism in the philosophical discourse which has generated heated debate on the historical trajectory of African philosophy. This practice has contributed to most African people being influenced by technology and digitalization to an extent that morality and ethnicity compasses cannot find the direction. The paper aims to investigate the implication(s) emergence of humanities digitalization for the life-span of African philosophy. To unpack this issue, the paper will focus on the principalities of African philosophy and how they contribute to the welfare of society. And drawing from eurocentrism whether is there something that African philosophy can learn to enhance its future?

The paper will adopt an extensive review of the literature on African Philosophy and how it has over time looked at the impact of African philosophy's trends in the postmodern era. The information will then be marched with eurocentrism to ascertain whether the African philosophy is the way to the future as a reality to sustain African culture.

David Scholtz

A Unified Theory of Coherence

The conditions under which some set of propositions is coherent can be different than the conditions under which another set is coherent. The propositions that make up *Crime and Punishment* cohere in a different way than the propositions given by Euclid for Pythagoras' theorem cohere. One might dismiss this difference as semantic; there are different meanings of 'coherent' which explains different conditions for coherence.

I argue that, despite different conditions for a set of propositions to count as coherent, there is a common feature among coherent sets of propositions. I claim that this common feature is one of allowing inferences in general to be made, and that what distinguishes forms of coherence is the kinds of inferences one is allowed to make from some set of propositions.

I begin by describing what I mean by 'allowing inferences in general' in terms of justifiably bringing into that set of propositions a member that was not given in that set or that was given but could have been brought in were it not given. I then outline several modes of coherence – such as consistency, explanatory, and narrative – motivating for their distinctiveness in form and the manner in which each allows for certain kinds of inferences. I respond to some objections, most notably the claim that all instances of coherent sets of propositions can be reduced to sets of consistent propositions. I conclude by suggesting ways in which my claims have philosophical utility, including how they can be used as a basis for demonstrating different permissions for reasoning.

Harry Stanley

Perceptual and Psychological Limitations in Our Access to Objective Reality

The common-sense view on how our perceptual modalities work is that we see reality more or less as it objectively exists. Evolutionarily it makes sense to conclude that this is the case since organisms that had accurate perceptions of their environments were significantly advantaged and thus natural selection gave us remarkably accurate perceptual capability. However, such a view takes for granted just how much computational power is required of the brain to generate conscious perception as well as the fact that perception itself is reconstructed within the mind rather than delivered unfiltered into consciousness. Moreover, such views are unable to account for how little information in the world we have access to with our primitive sensory capacities. Examples of such limitations are plentiful from us having access to less than 1% of the light spectrum to the fact that there are many animals with superior sensory capabilities and even animals that have senses that we do not. Accordingly, I seek to show how our access to an objective

reality is more severely limited than most people are willing to accept. I draw upon the metaphysics of Immanuel Kant's transcendental idealism and evolutionary psychology to try and conceptualize a more accurate picture of just how and how much we perceive the world around us. I conclude with some suggested conceptualizations to reconcile the essentially blinded world we are left with and present arguments that access to an objective reality was never in our best interest to begin with evolutionarily speaking.

Craig Thrupp

The Morality of Mankading: Crickets Continued Connection to Colonialism

The dismissal known as 'Mankad run out' is possibly the most controversial dismissal in cricket. In recent years, public opinion on the morality of Mankading is steadily shifting toward acceptance. While such a dismissal is legal according to the official rules of cricket, it is often decried as an action which goes against the 'Spirit of the Game'. The concept of the spirit of the game is nebulous, and its proponents tend to originate from former colonial powers. While the people who advocate the use of Mankad run out tend to be from former colonial territories. So the question must be asked; is Mankading morally acceptable behaviour? In this paper, I seek to evaluate the arguments against Mankading and the link such arguments have to cricket's history of colonialism. In particular, I examine the argument that Mankading is cheating and the argument that Mankading goes against the spirit of the game. I challenge these arguments as remnants of colonial thought by examining the history of Mankading, the hypocrisy of proponents of anti-Mankad rhetoric, and the evolution of cricket. I conclude this paper by arguing for the rejection of anti-Mankad arguments as well as a revised understanding of the spirit of the game.

Glender Amantle Mothelesi

The future of technological solutionism

Transitions around the world are marked by progress in technological advancements. Thus, Deleuze outlines this transition as moving towards "undulation and continuous formation" rather than the historically enclosed societies (Conley, 2009:32). The digital world is fundamentally part of our everyday life, and we cannot divorce ourselves from it. Harmer (2018:12) adds that "… technology cannot be considered in isolation from what it means to be human". It cuts across the social, political, cultural, and economic spheres. This is also evident in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (published between 1989 and 1992) where they address the new media mainly focusing its social and cultural impact (Conley, 2009:36). Conley (2009:32) outlines that the globally networked societies that we have are a result of digital technologies.

As we are faced with many problems and trying to combat them, technological solutionism became one of the resorts. When interviewing Evgeny Morozov, asked the question of whether humans are solutionist and technological creatures by nature?, and his response was that solutionism is part of problem-solving (Schüll, 2013). Various authors have expressed their opinions about technological solutionism, while others

applaud and have faith in it, others refer to it as folly. One of these authors is Evgeny Morozov who wrote a book in which he refers to technological solutionism as an endemic ideology.

In contrast, Deleuze and Guattari, who have been keen on machines and technology, do not see technologies as dehumanizing, rather, they outline a new perspective of the "becomings" of both humans and technology (Conley, 2009:32-33; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:5). They also outline technology from assisted subjectivities which places the emphasis on the relation between humans and technology including solutionism. We, therefore, need to think ahead and think of the future in the world of everchanging technology.

The paper will, therefore, in line with the arguments Deleuze and Guattari made on technology discuss the following: Firstly, the history of technology. Due to the critique of technological solutionism, the paper will secondly discuss the benefits and the detriments of technological solutionism. The technological advancements experienced across the world are dependent and accelerated by the end users, humans. Therefore, the paper will discuss technological solutionism and technological consumerism. Lastly, the paper will discuss the prospective technological solutionism.

Aïda C. Terblanché-Greeff

Unpacking The Construct Of African Time

Cultural values - the building blocks of culture – are characteristically prescriptive, normative, and evaluative of people's affect, behaviour, and cognition, indicating that cultural values relate to morality. One such cultural value is time orientation. Time orientation is described as the socially legitimised and shared assumptions about time, which include the attention allocated to a specific timeframe (past, present, or future), as well as the subjective use of time (clock-time versus event-time), paired with the focus and order in which the individual or group conducts tasks (sequential versus concurrent). Time orientation is often categorised on a spectrum as monochronism vs polychronism. An example of a nuanced context-specific time orientation is African time. The term African time is often used in South Africa in a derogative manner based on the assumption that Africans exhibit high levels of tardiness and that they allocate little attention to schedules. To break down the stigma and open up the academic arena to fair discussion regarding African time, it will be of value to elaborate on the characteristics of the construct. More specifically, African time can be differentiated from Western time, with the latter being quantitative, monochronic, and industrialised. In contrast, African time is typically qualitative, polychronic, and socialised. In this paper, I will unpack the construct of African time - the concept will be discussed based on these three aforementioned main traits as well as some aspects of John S. Mbiti's (1969) African time perspective.

Gregor Mackenzie

What is whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa, and how can its rehabilitation be lived out?

I aim to propose a new existential phenomenological account of whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa, which takes seriously Simone De Beauvoir's ideas of existence, disclosure and sedimentation. Situated in a

place wherein mechanisms of white privilege and significations of white racism are still operative, the white South African will likely grasp their body from a correlating perspective. I contend that this results in an outlook, or way of thinking, constituted by conscious and unconscious projects, which turns on white racism. I offer this outlook as an account of whiteness as something that becomes increasingly sedimented. As such, this means that what the white can think to think to do, how the white discloses the world, as well as their self, all becomes constrained as that white racism becomes more sedimented. This approach allows me to point to whiteness as a facticity of being white in the post-apartheid South African context, as well as its sedimentation as a further layer of facticity. Moreover, this approach construes whiteness as a part of the trajectory along and through which the existent intentionally projects their self into the world. Thus, whiteness not only has to do with how the white discloses the world, but also how the white moves towards what is disclosed. Then, given this account of whiteness, I aim to propose a way of rehabilitating whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa that can be lived out which remains cognisant of the sedimentation of white racism and how this constrains the future.

Mary Carman

Emotional consciousness, rational agency and normative commitments

A dominant approach to conceptualising a role for emotions in rational agency has been to focus on a relation between emotions and reasons, whereby emotions are claimed to track reasons via their intentional content. Yet, if we reflect on the phenomenology of emotional consciousness and take seriously a growing consensus that emotions involve intentional feelings, then such an approach proves to be impoverished when conceptualising a role for emotions in rational agency. If so, we need to look elsewhere for an account of the role of emotion in rational agency, one that does justice to the way in which emotions are intentional feelings. In this paper, I thus do two things. Firstly, taking as a starting point that emotions involve intentional feelings, I argue that an approach relying on the idea that emotions track reasons via their intentional content only provides part of the story, at best, and at worst is fundamentally misguided because of problems with its theoretical base. Secondly, and more tentatively, I propose that the normative category of commitments offers a promising alternative for thinking about the role of emotions in rational agency, an alternative that has to the potential to do justice to emotional phenomenology and intentional feelings.

Yoliswa Mlungwana

Analyzing Evil: Human Agency vs The Problem of Evil

The question of evil is one philosophers have for centuries worried about. To start with, I should clarify that what I have in mind by the 'Problem of Evil', is not the longstanding issue in theology and philosophy of religion about how we might reconcile our conception of God, as all-good, all-knowing, and all-powerful, with the fact that evil and suffering exists in the world. Rather, the question I am broaching here is specifically related to a theory of identity, i.e., Christine Korsgaard's view that human/self-identity is created and constituted in our actions. Korsgaard's conception or theory, I think, begs the question: Is evil possible

or can it be explained on this model? That is, does or can an evil deed follow from a unified agent? This question, I believe (and will attempt to show), poses a limitation on Korsgaard's theory.

What I am interested in here is the human tendency or in Kantian terms the *predispostion* for evil and how we can reconcile such evil with human agency. The mystery is how a human being can be or do evil and still be himself, an author, rather than clinically sick; it is about making sense of being the author of evil actions, and, beyond that, being an author (a unified self) and evil at the same time. Hence, I aim here to explore various conceptions of evil, what constitutes evil (evil persons and evil deeds). My inquiry will mostly focus on the works of Korsgaard, Hannah Arendt and Immanuel Kant (as well as secondary literature on the two). To be sure, my aim here is *not* to explain *why* people commit evil; what I am rather interested in is what sorts of actions, that is, misdeeds and moral wrongdoings constitute evil.

Nhlakanipho Hlengwa
Freedom Charter of 1955 as a liberal egalitarian document

Liberal egalitarianism is a philosophical tradition which embodies a defense and emphasis of two values, namely liberty and substantive equality. In light of this, I address the question that says: 'can we consider the Freedom Charter as a liberal egalitarian document?' And I argue that the Freedom Charter of 1955 can be conceived as liberal egalitarian document. In essence, the Freedom Charter document can be categorize as leaning in a philosophical tradition of liberal egalitarianism. Objectively, I illustrate ordinary people's conception of justice as exemplifying this philosophical tradition.

George Hull
Deciding

We take decisions in both the theoretical and the practical spheres. We decide, for instance, to perform action A. But we can also, for example, decide that p is the case. A popular view among philosophers is that decisions are actions distinct from the actions or beliefs which ensue upon them. I will argue that this position is unsatisfactory and defend an alternative view of what it is to decide. On this view, what theoretical and practical deciding have in common is not that they are actions, but that they are the onset of something: to decide that p is to start to believe that p, to decide to A is to start to A. I defend this view from objections.

Gideon Owogeka Onah
Using The Sense Of Understanding As A Heuristic For Accepting Explanations: A Critique

Some philosophers, such as Trout (2002) and Nguyen (2022), observe that we often accept explanations of phenomena as accurate if they evoke a sense of understanding in us. The sense of understanding is the feeling that we understand. However, is this feeling a tenable criterion for accepting explanations? If not, what may be a tenable criterion? Trout (2002), for example, argues that we should never accept explanations because they give us a sense of understanding, as this sense is not a trustworthy marker of their truthfulness.

For him, we should only accept explanations if they meet the scientific criteria of good explanations, including being supported by observations and experiments. In response, Nguyen (2022) argues that this demand, albeit optimal for long-term epistemic projects, such as academic inquiries, is unsuitable for practical life, which requires acting or deciding based on explanations whose veracity we cannot comprehensively assess. Hence, Nguyen (2022) argues that we should also create useful heuristics for provisionally accepting or rejecting explanations when we cannot conduct sufficient investigations on their veracity. Following Nguyen, I propose a heuristic, namely, the idea that explanations may be provisionally accepted when they are hard to vary. This is based on Deutsch's (2011) argument that difficulty in variability is an essential feature of the truth, which can be determined without elaborate investigative efforts, such as experimentation.

Lungelo Siphosethu Mbatha

Legitimacy and the State in Postcolonial Africa.

For most political philosophers, it is claimed that wherever a state exists, it is always required to morally justify its activities; to legitimize its activities. If we take it to be the case that legitimacy roughly refers to the state possessing the right to impose and sanction rules, and punish those who do not abide by its directives, a right which places a corollary duty on citizens to abide by the state's directives, then what would be an appropriate relation between citizens in postcolonial Africa and their state which generates this entitlement for the state? There have been many options in our intellectual history from which one could choose, ranging from Locke's consent, to Weber's principle of legal-rationality, and to HLA Hart's principle of fairness. Of course, these suggestions are not without their opposition from skeptics like Hume, to Nozick's libertarian criticisms. I argue in support of the thought that any principles which appeal solely to the subjective attitudes of citizens will be untenable, while maintaining that any principle of legitimacy requires some form of voluntarism from its citizens.

Bjoern Freter (Online Presentation)

The Problem of Male Supremacist Violence in Philosophy

Misogynist thought in Western thought is documented for roughly 2600 years and yet, as it seems, there has not been a single *philosophical* argument provided as to why any human being should consider the assertion that 'male human beings are superior' to be true. Andro-Superiorism has never been philosophically explained, it was posited as a quasi-axiom.

Superiorism is to be understood as the conviction of someone's own normative superiority as an observable factual reality that entitles – without any further moral self-doubt – to dominate and suppress those who are not like this someone. The created Others are not embraced by the moral standards of the non-Others, they can be treated – seemingly without producing a contradiction – by divergent moral rules. *Superiorism is an inability and/or unwillingness to accept the Other, to incorporate the Other into reality, to take the Other seriously*.

Female human beings were violently excluded from the human endeavor of philosophy – because of nothing other than certain philosophers *violently willing them out of the human endeavor of philosophy*. Andro-superiorism is indeed necessarily violent. However, this violence as violence is *arbitrary violence*, it only depends on whether the consequence suits the violator or not. We have to re-evaluate our understanding of the history of philosophy as a *history of arbitrary, exclusionary, will-breaking violence*. Philosophy is to a significant degree, the result of this violence. What is needed is thus a project of rehumanizing philosophy against the tendency to remain male supremacist.

Siphamandla Ruiters

Philosophy as a Way of Life: Contemporary approaches to spiritual exercises in Ancient Eastern and Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy

The Ancients thought of philosophy as a way of life aimed at living a good life. This idea has continually been reinvented across most of philosophy's history. However, this conception of philosophy is quite different from the way we understand philosophy today. One could say that for Ancient philosophy, the conclusion of philosophical speculation is a complex activity, whereas contemporary philosophy rarely strays beyond the purely theoretic. In more recent years, however, we are witnessing a resurgence of the idea of philosophy as a way of life. One of the key figures in this resurgence is historian and philosopher Pierre Hadot. Focusing principally on Stoicism and Epicureanism, Hadot's work has played a significant part in reanimating the idea that philosophy should be understood as a way of life.

Taking its lead from Hadot's work and from the traditions he explores, this paper aims to develop a novel approach to philosophy as a way of life. I will explore how Stoics and Epicureans understood the idea of animating the present inquiry.

In his book Philosophy as a Way of Life, Hadot discusses the importance of "spiritual exercises" in his interpretations of ancient philosophical texts. I wish to expand on this discussion of spiritual exercises by incorporating a discussion of how Eastern, particularly Chinese and Japanese, traditions of thinking about spiritual exercises are related to those of the Ancients. Current work after Hadot rarely compares Chinese, Greek, and Roman conceptions of what a spiritual exercise is. This is a shame as I think a comparative analysis of these traditions will allow us to understand better how we can incorporate their understandings into our lives and also help us reexamine mainstream contemporary philosophy's self-conception as a purely intellectual discipline.

Awongwa Gcelu

Post De Jure White Supremacy: A Form of Oppression Against Non-White South African Population Groups

During the Apartheid era, white supremacy was arguably at its peak in South Africa. Consequently, the Black population group was faced with a *de facto* as well as *de jure* matter of oppression. There were various ideas pertaining to what was the cause of this problem, what form of solution ought to be implemented, and what kind of society would result from it. Biko discusses two of these ideas. The one he contends was

suggested by white liberals and the one he offers through the black consciousness movement. I argue that Biko was correct in his contention that White Supremacy is the main problem which may then manifest itself in various forms of oppression. Mills argues that the phrase white supremacy connotes a system, one that encompasses white privilege and the domination of the world by Europeans as well as its consequence of racialised distribution of power across the entire fields of human affairs. He argues further that white supremacy as a system exists through a variety of forms. I argue that white supremacy continues to exist through the nationalisation of western culture, standards and practices. I will then use Iris Young's five faces of oppression to conclude that this continued existence of white supremacy constitutes oppression of other South African population groups, especially the Black majority.

Samantha Vice

The Aesthetics of Domestic Animals

While there is a growing literature on the aesthetics of the natural environment, there is very little on the aesthetics of animals in particular, and even less on domestic animals. I explore what the standard account of natural aesthetics could say about domestic animals, raise some problems with the approach, and suggest an alternative. Any plausible account of the aesthetics of domestic animals must take their embeddedness in human lives, and our partial relations to them, into account. I argue that these features of our relation to then are aesthetically relevant and that they significantly affect how we evaluate and respond to their beauty.

Jean du Toit

Shifting boundaries: Critical phenomenology and the shopping mall as capitalist technology

The shopping mall as nexus for meaning-making is increasingly in flux. Since first constructed during the latter half of the 20th century, these prominent features of the built environments of cities have undergone various transformations – from the West's initial understanding of the mall as space for social integration to its present-day decline in these countries. Concurrently and relatedly, the mall has been extended beyond material construction into cyberspace through online retail.

In South Africa, the mall has recurringly been a politicized structure that sustains and supports the assertion of social identities, and has provided a space for political contestation, since the apartheid regime and into the post-apartheid era – with the 2021 South African Riots providing a salient and contested contemporary example of how political reconfiguration of the mall may occur.

The various societal conceptualizations of the mall – as social space, ruinous space, political space, or virtual space – serve to shed light on the individual's dynamic lived relation to constructed environments, both offline and online. In this regard, critical phenomenology provides a useful lens for investigating the mall through its integration of a phenomenological sensitivity as regards lived experience with a critical perspective on how subjectivity arises under specific sociocultural and economic conditions.

This paper will investigate how the constructed environment of the shopping mall may engender meaning-making through the establishment and reinforcement of boundaries, while questioning whether

online commerce provides the same opportunities. More specifically, does virtual space entail an intertwining of body-subject and technological artefact that allows for boundary negotiation and transactional meaning-making, or does it entail an omnipresent structuring of consumerist performativity and conformity?

Joe Roussos

Possibilities in climate science

This paper examines how climate scientists use models to explore possibilities—so called "modal modelling." I begin by distinguishing several senses of "possible" and considering how they might be relevant to the project of studying climate change. These include epistemic possibility, metaphysical possibility, and possibility according to a set of laws of nature—e.g., physical possibility. Determining whether a claim is possible in the relevant sense is a question of modal epistemology. I contrast this with the task of determining whether a claim is supported by a body of evidence, which is a matter of confirmation theory, a subset of ordinary epistemology. I then examine a debate about the interpretation and use of collections of climate models, for example in the IPCC assessment reports. One party argues that climate models don't provide the right sort of information to allow us to make probabilistic claims about how the climate will be in future. They argue instead that climate models allow for only claims about *possible* futures rather than probable futures. I call these critics possibilists, and their more orthodox opponents probabilists. The possibilists think that climate models allow us to distinguish between which possible futures are "nearer" or "more relevant", and that these distinctions reflect facts about our evidence. I argue that there isn't a concept of "possibility" that can do the work these critics want: fitting the evidence from climate models, admitting of degrees, supporting decisions, and yet *not* amounting to probability.

Casper Lutter

The putative Derrida-Gadamer Debate: A (plausible, possible) re/construction of Western philosophy's relation to the Other.

The aforesaid debate between Gadamer and Derrida in Paris during April 1981 may of course not have taken place, but had it, it could have turned out to be very fruitful in terms of Western philosophy's relationship with the Other. This notion is underdeveloped and this contribution aims to fill the gap in the literature. One might remark that from a Derridean perspective this non-event is vintage Derrida, since it confirms the quasi-transcendental character of transplanting the signifier – the embeddedness of meaning in a new context which might/might not transpire. My thinking is that this is an insight, among others, shared by Gadamer. In dismissing the possibility of a potential fructuous debate (rather than a mere 'encounter') with Gadamer (Michelfelder & Palmer 1986, 52-4), a somewhat arrogant Derrida ironically displayed the same imperialistic tendency of which he has accused the Western philosophical canon since Plato. It also confirmed the nub of his criticism against hermeneutics, namely, that it obliterates the 'Other'. A possible re/construction (one among others) is, accordingly, in order and represents a legitimate exercise.

In fact, I argue that such a re/construction is potentially fruitful, in that many ideas in Gadamerian hermeneutics could serve a heuristic task in illuminating (often obscure) notions in Derridean deconstruction. Interweaving hermeneutics and deconstruction could, however, also potentially advance a {re}shaping of both of these seminal currents in continental philosophy "in an important and enduring way" (Reynolds & Roffe 2004, 3).

Carla Turner

On the Fundamental Incompatibility between Wildlife Conservation and Animal Ethics

Wildlife conservation, broadly construed, is the practice of protecting plant and animal species and their habitats. More specifically, it aims protecting populations of the worlds' most economically, culturally, and ecologically important species, and preventing activities that harm them, like poaching or the illegal trade of these species. While these activities, based on common conservation values such as species fitness and biodiversity, are no doubt beneficial to animals in general, there seems to be a fundamental disjoint between this approach and the mainstay of current ethical theories regarding animals, which focus on the wellbeing of individual entities. In this paper, I argue that wildlife conservation is incompatible with animal ethics on two broad points: Firstly, regarding the *aims* of conservation, the focus on certain species and genetic fitness in a group leaves very little room for individual ethical consideration. Secondly, the *application* of wildlife conservation is also questionable when it comes to individual animal welfare, most notably in cases of culling or the killing of problem animals. To demonstrate these two points, I will use the case study of the cloning and reintroduction of the currently extinct Northern White Rhino. I will then conclude that wildlife conservation, while aiming to benefit animals, is fundamentally at odds with any animal ethic that considers individual wellbeing as central.

Gabriel Gyang Darong

Bringing the "Self" into the Classroom: the role of including students' talents and experiences in teaching and learning at a South African University

Assessments are meant to aid in identifying what students already know and what they need to learn, especially in higher education. At this level, acknowledging and utilising students' talents and experiences, "formal" or "informal", is critical in attaining deep learning, especially within the arts and humanities. This study evaluated how incorporating students' talents and lived experiences in teaching and learning an Anthropology module at a South African university contributes to deep learning. Multi-modal approaches to teaching and learning, such as group work, fieldwork, classroom lectures, and tutorials, were used. Reflective essays and group presentations were the key forms of assessments used. Group presentations utilised formats such as drama, poetry, collage, PowerPoints, podcasts, music, and skits. They were carried out using multiple languages. These assessments and the module's evaluation were the qualitatively generated study data analysed thematically. The study found that peer learning enabled students to learn more about themselves and other classmates. In the reflections, both group and individual, students could

think about their learning process and the characteristics of their families in comparison to those visited in the module. Presentations allowed students to utilise their talents to effectively share what they had learned in the module. Creating avenues within the university for students to learn through various modes and languages has a major implication in boosting their self-confidence, growth, and better academic learning. Universities, especially in South Africa, should continue to embrace multilingualism and promote the use of diverse approaches to assessment to enhance students' learning.

Yolandi M. Coetser

Considering second wave animal ethics: Where does African animal ethics fall?

Animal ethics has, for long, been dominated by what Offor calls 'first wave animal ethics' (2020: 269). This includes the work of, for example, Peter Singer, Tom Regan and Gary Francione. While these scholars have added immense value to the field of 'animal ethics', there is, however, a second wave of animal ethics (Offor, 2020: 269). Where first wave animal ethics are liberal-rational, contextual, and considers animals' similarity to humans as a basis for moral consideration, second wave ethics rather focusses on differences between human and non-human animals. Second wave ethics engages with (intersectionally) marginalised communities to seek alternative paradigms (Offor, 2020: 295).

Since animals are treated in ways that are "broadly analogous to the treatment of women, ethnic and religious minorities, disabled people and queer people" (Offor, 2020: 268) it follows then that ethical theories that come from these spaces, rather than the dominant space (i.e., male, white, able-bodied, heterosexual, cisgendered and human), are perhaps better suited to consider the moral plight of animals. Second wave animal ethics often arise from these non-dominant spaces, and is embodied by feminist, intersectional, poststructural, Marxist, posthumanist, and postcolonial approaches, amongst others.

In this presentation, then, I explain second wave animal ethics in more depth. Thereafter, I consider African animal ethics, and ask whether it should also be seen as part of the second wave, as described by Offor, or whether it is more in line with the first wave. I conclude that African Animal Ethics can be conceived as part of second wave animal ethics.

Gisela Diedericks

A critical reimagining of public dialogue for local participatory democracy

Public participation, that is, the public providing their input in governmental processes, is indispensable to the democratic process. However, this participation is often thwarted by internal and external factors. Such factors include a lack of training among government staff to engage the public, cultural and language barriers between government and citizens and the public's cynical attitude toward the participatory process. One way to address these barriers is to reconsider local public participation through a critical philosophical perspective of dialogue.

During the participation process, local government and the public enter into a dialogue to establish/create/adjust the community's policies, legislation and administration through collaboration. Yet,

the entire process is frustrated because of the dynamic power relations inherent in the public participation process. The participation process is a constant power play between the community members' emergent power to generate political, policy, administrative and legislative meaning (through engaging in public participation), and the government's convergent power to govern responsively, transparently and accountably. Although this is a practical problem facing local and national government, the political philosophical concept of power underlies this process.

Arendt's views on power (explored within the *Human Condition*) and Foucault's distinction between juridical power and contingent power (examined within *Discipline and Punish*) provide an incisive point of departure for understanding the conflicting emergent and convergent power relation in local public dialogue. This presentation will reimagine local participatory democracy as a transformative public dialogue.

Patrick Effiong Ben

Moral Intheses: Towards Conversational Ethics

In search of a moral frame of reference that seeks to bypass the exclusionary relativism of predominant binary moral principles, I argue for a conversational ethical framework that de-emphasizes the negative borders of a relativistic conception of morality in favour of a positive moral *intheses* – the interaction of theses – that allows for the interchangeability of divergent ethical principles, to create an inclusive moral framework. Here, I present the idea of *Intheses* as a philosophical building block that allows for the interaction of divergent moral principles to open up new moral vistas that are inclusive and capable of providing a grounding for indeterminate moral positions and nonhuman entities like robots and nonhuman animals. At the center of my proposition for Conversational Ethics – hereafter referred to as 'CE' – is the prioritization of the nuanced contents and demands of morality within a given ethical context in arriving at moral outcomes/judgments. My proposal will draw heavily on the works of the Calabar School of Philosophy, the leading proponents of conversational thinking to make a case for CE. Thus, drawing on the principles of conversationalism, I attempt to formulate the idea of CE grounded in the system of conversational thinking.

Josh Platzky Miller

Legitimacy Debates, the myth of 'Western Philosophy', and the Contribution of Ben Kies

For several centuries, numerous philosophical traditions have been subject to 'Legitimacy Debates' about whether they are 'really' philosophy. This has long taken place about African Philosophy (see e.g., Momoh 1985), but also for philosophy that can be classified as Chinese (e.g., Defoort 2001; Lee 2018), Indian (e.g., Guerrero, Kalmanson and Mattice 2019), Islamic (e.g., Diagne 2018), Latin American (e.g., Vargas 2007), and Indigenous/First Nations (e.g., Muecke 2011). In each case, philosophy *proper* is taken to be 'Western Philosophy', supposedly a millennia-old bastion of logic, argument, and reason (Bernasconi 2003). 'Western Philosophy' itself is never called into question, only whether other traditions live up to its standards (Allais 2016).

In this paper, I argue that the tradition that does *not* actually exist is 'Western Philosophy'. To make this claim, I draw on the work of Ben Kies (1917-1979), a South African public intellectual, schoolteacher, trade unionist, and activist-theorist. In his 1953 lecture, *The Contribution of the Non-European Peoples to World Civilisation*, Kies argues that the idea of 'Western Philosophy' is the product of a legitimation project for European colonialism, through white supremacist projects to post-second world war Pan-European identity formation. In so doing, Kies became the first person to argue that 'Western Philosophy' is a myth. Building on Kies' insights, I argue that the 'Legitimacy Debates' are at an impasse because they rely on a mistaken comparison to a reified Eurocentric and colonial ideological project. Abandoning the myth of 'Western Philosophy' overcomes this impasse, opening new terrain for philosophy globally.