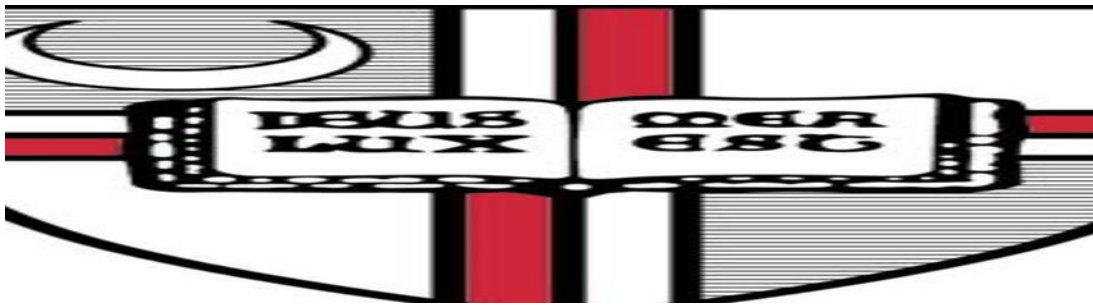


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A Quest for Intergenerational Justice in Africa: A Philosophical Exploration into the Ontology of Global Justice

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Abstract: Philosophical inquiry into global justice is a normative approach to the broader horizon of justice transcending the predicaments of institutional fundamentalism and legalistic frameworks to the theory and practice of justice. It aspires to conceptualize justice beyond borders, both virtual and physical linking generations and various traditions across human civilization. To deepen its epistemic imperatives and ontological grounds a discourse on global justice needs to interrogate various worldviews, lived experiences and the spirit of the times to deal with the ambivalences between the theory and practice of justice. In a contemporary world marked by “a new age of empire”, epistemic violence, discrimination in all forms, ecological crises and technological proliferation, the continuous human exile from deeply held values, doxastic times, and spaces reveals multidimensional manifestations of global injustices. Based on this problematization, this philosophical exploration focuses on the search for an ontology of global justice from an African perspective, with a special emphasis on intergenerational justice. From the standpoint of African relational ontology, intergenerational justice implies healthy communication between generations (transfer of values in time, past, present and future), human and non-human beings for cosmic integrity and sustainability as well as communication with spiritual realm. Accordingly, the central question is: How do the lived experiences and epistemologies of African traditions conceptualize justice and guide the practical dimensions of human moral agency toward social harmony and cosmic integrity? Methodologically, the study employs hermeneutics, phenomenology and intercultural philosophy. Diving into African relational ontology, the study examines frameworks from Ubuntu, Egyptian Maat, Oromo ecotheology, and ascetic Ideals such as Christian and Sufi Mysticism to substantiate its arguments with worldviews from the Global South. Ultimately, the study argues for the necessity of intercultural dialogues and polylogues to realize justice and perpetual peace in our polarized and pluralized world. Consequently, this paper contributes to on-going philosophical debates on global justice, including cognitive, intergenerational, and ecological– climate justice.

Key Words: African Relational Ontology, Cosmic Integrity, Global Justice, Intergenerational Justice, Ontology of Justice.

Biography

Eyasu Berento Assefa is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Philosophy at Addis Ababa University. Prior to this, he was an educator and researcher of philosophy at the Kotebe University of Education (KUE) in Ethiopia. His work focuses on global justice, specifically investigating the structural nature of justice at global levels. For the past 15 years, Eyasu has worked as an educator and researcher across various universities. Beyond his university commitments, he actively participates in social justice advocacy, training and consultancy services as part of his community engagement roles. As an aspiring scholar dedicated to advancing both theoretical undertakings and practical skills within teaching and research in practical philosophy, he has participated in several national and international conferences, workshops, research projects, and policy-oriented public forums. As a result of his teaching and research activities, he has published over sixteen works, including book chapters, conference proceedings, and peer-reviewed journal articles. His primary research interests include practical philosophy, applied ethics, global justice, Ethiopian philosophy, African philosophy, epistemic justice, social justice, the ethics of AI, ecological ethics (ecosystem wellbeing and environmental sustainability), intercultural philosophy, philosophy of education, and indigenous knowledge.

Environmental Justice and Sustainable Development

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Abstract: While sustainable development (SD) is understood to involve allowing future generations to meet their own needs, as well as satisfying current needs, SD does not invariably embody justice, either among contemporaries, or between species, or between generations. Steps towards the introduction of SD often bring societies closer to becoming just ones, but societies with a high degree of sustainability and of provision for the satisfaction of current needs can still fall short of being just ones. Even sustainable practices (e.g. in forestry and in fisheries) can fail to make positive provision for future human needs, or for the needs of nonhuman populations, whether of the present or of the future. This paper argues that incorporating justice within SD would involve making provision for these needs, as far as it is possible to do so in present circumstances and with limited knowledge of future needs and of the needs of nonhuman living beings. Inter-generational justice would involve entrenching institutions and practices likely to provide for e.g. the educational needs of the people of the next century, while environmental justice would involve our various institutions and practices being reconfigured so as to preserve and restore forests and wetlands, seas and oceans, and thus make provision for their resident species (both in the present and across foreseeable decades). It also involves providing green spaces for people resident in towns and cities, who might otherwise lack contact with largely natural areas, and introducing forms of agriculture capable of supporting the current human population without threatening the continued existence of nonhuman species. The author will draw on the recent joint paper of Humphreys and Varghese on 'The Trio-Model: A New, Transformative Framework for an Old, Broken System', which combines an adjusted form of doughnut economics with ecologically appropriate provision for both human beings and nonhuman animals. Additionally, the paper takes fully into account the proneness of armed conflict to disrupt SD, which cannot be maintained or even introduced without peace. Just SD involves working towards cultural harmony and mutual respect among peoples. Peace should be understood as a positive culture, promoting SD and respect for different cultures and different paths towards SD and towards institutions and practices that exemplify and epitomise it, and at the same time promoting social, inter-generational and inter-species justice. One ingredient of a culture of peace is the planting (or re-planting) of trees that could enhance air quality, harbour wild species, and be available for the enjoyment of future generations, and for their aesthetic appreciation and education.

Biography

Robin Attfield is an Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Cardiff University. He attained First Class Honours in Honours Moderations in Greek and Latin Literature (1962), and subsequently First Class Honours in Philosophy and Ancient History (1964), at Christ Church, Oxford, and then First Class Honours in Theology at Regent's Park College, Oxford (1966). After further study at Manchester University, he was appointed a Lecturer in Philosophy at (what later became) Cardiff University from 1968, where he became a Professor in 1991. From 1972 to 1973 he taught Philosophy at University of Ife, Nigeria, and for a term during 1975 he lectured in Philosophy at University of Nairobi, Kenya. He was Chair of the Cardiff University Philosophy Board of Studies from 1991 to 1994. He has supervised postgraduate degrees at Cardiff, and has examined postgraduate degrees at a number of Universities in UK and at English-speaking Universities overseas. Specialising in ethics, philosophy of religion, history of ideas and environmental philosophy, he has published 20 books, over 300 articles or chapters, and 45 book reviews. He retired from full-time employment in 2009, and from part-time work in 2012, but was welcomed as an honorary member by the Cardiff University Institute for Sustainable Places from 2015 until its closure in 2021. He remains a Distinguished Fellow of the Schumacher Institute. Books of his have been translated into Spanish, Italian, Arabic, Farsi and Chinese.

The Pragmatic Role of Philosophy in the AI Ethics and Sustainable Development

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Abstract: Philosophy shapes humanistic features in the age of AI by embedding ethical frameworks directly into technology, ensuring AI serves human dignity, autonomy, and sustainable development rather than merely maximizing efficiency. Its pragmatic role involves bridging the gap between technical artificial intelligence development and human values—such as justice, transparency, accountability, and fairness—through proactive interdisciplinary, and “ethics-by-design” approaches. Similarly, the pragmatic role of philosophy helps achieve sustainable development by turning abstract ethical concepts into real-world action. It bridges the gap between theories of justice and practical policies, ensuring sustainability is not just a n ideal, but a working plan for communities, governments and global institutions. Therefore, the pragmatic role of philosophy in the era of artificial intelligence and sustainable development is to transition from abstract ethical debates to applied, actionable frameworks that guide technology toward human flourishing and ecological balance.

Philosophy is the operating system of human thought; it shapes how we view reality, guides our inventions, and defines how we care for one another. The history of ideas reveals how profound shifts in thinking expand our awareness, drive our tools forward, and build fairer societies. In the context of contemporary world, this project aims to examine how pragmatizing philosophy can help achieve sustainable development and ethical AI execution. Specifically, it explores how to mitigate the environmental, social, and economic risks that AI poses to humanity, while offering an argument for the integration of pragmatic philosophy into both AI ethics and sustainable development. To address these issues, I will apply critical, conceptual, and comparative methodologies.

Biography

Esayas Bancha is a PhD student in the Department of Philosophy at AAU.

The Architecture of Faloo: Indigenous Trans-generational Peacemaking and the Restoration Justice in Oromo Society

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Abstract: Faloo is an Oromo indigenous trans-generational peacemaking paradigm associated with the concept of safuu, which sets the moral boundaries for all entities within the cosmic order as ordained by the divine. This study employs a multi-sited ethnographic design. Multiple case analysis of data gathered through indepth interviews with knowledgeable research participants from across diverse Oromo confederacies assisted in exploring how faloo functions as a mechanism for fixing historical injustices. Unlike secular legal frameworks, faloo addresses unresolved issues including ancestral transgressions that manifest as lineage suffering (daafii) or societal collapse (cinna). Through a diagnostic process of unraveling the truth (dhugaa basuu), descendants of the perpetrators themselves assume collective moral responsibility for their kin's past actions. The study maps a specialized institutional ecosystem that facilitates the transition of troubled spirits to the place of truth (iddoo dhugaa). By resolving the moral debts of previous generations, faloo secures the biological and social continuity of the lineage. Although marginalized by modernization and external religious shifts, these practices offer profound insights into restorative justice and the sustainability of long-term peace within Oromo society.

Keywords: Oromo; *Faloo*; *Safuu*; Trans-generational Justice; Indigenous Peacemaking; Restorative Justice; Ethiopia.

Biography

Berhanu Libdi Bekere is a lecturer and researcher at the Institute of Peace and Development Studies, Haramaya University, where he is also a PhD candidate in the Peace and Development program. He holds an MA in International Relations from Addis Ababa University. His research focuses deeply on indigenous philosophy, Oromo concepts of holistic peace, decoloniality, and trans-generational justice. His recent work includes articles in the *Journal of African Identities*, exploring notions of coexistence (*Nagaa and Jiruuf-Jireenya*). In addition to his writing, he was awarded a competitive research grant from the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) Foundation for a comparative project studying traditional and state institutions among the Ituu and Humbanna Oromo.

From (B) to (F): Bouzid's Rule for Conscious Existence ($B+F=Nf$) as a Framework for Understanding Peace, War, and Ecocide from a Global South Perspective

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Abstract: This paper introduces a novel ontological framework, Bouzid's Rule ($B+F=Nf$) to address a fundamental existential question: What distinguishes human war from animal conflict, and why do domination, violence, and ecocide persist despite humanity's capacity for ethical reasoning? The framework proposes three interrelated variables: (B) biological truth, the automatic instinctual drives shared across species, operating without consciousness or ethical judgment; (F) witnessing, the uniquely human sovereign capacity to question, judge, exercise ethical veto, and bear responsibility for one's choices; and (Nf) narrative effect, the ethical, historical, and cultural imprint that transcends biological death and is transmitted across generations.

The paper employs a phenomenological-existential-hermeneutical-postcolonial methodology, combining direct phenomenological description, existential analysis through the $B+F=Nf$ variables, and postcolonial critique drawing on Fanon, Levinas, Ubuntu philosophy, and Gandhian thought.

The framework is tested through three case studies: (1) the 1974-1978 Gombe chimpanzee war, analyzed as pure (B) functional violence driven by resource competition, territorial expansion, and reproductive dominance, entirely devoid of ideology, historical memory, or justificatory discourse;

(2) French colonization of Algeria (1830-1962), examined as a paradigmatic case of co-opted witnessing, where colonialism not only occupied land and bodies but systematically suppressed Arabic language and education, conscripted Algerian soldiers to fight for their colonizer's liberation, and erased their contributions from historical narrative representing what the framework terms absolute sublation: the theft of (F) in life and (Nf) in death; and (3) contemporary ecocide, analyzed as planetary-scale domination where co-opted (B) framed by ideologies of unlimited growth reduces nature to silent resource, producing a distorted (Nf) of environmental debt for future generations.

The paper reveals that human war differs radically from animal conflict not merely in scale or technology, but in structure: whereas animal violence is pure (B), human war amplifies (B) through co-opted (F) witnessing weaponized to justify instinct through ideology, propaganda, and inherited narratives. The framework further identifies linguistic domination as a "sixth face of oppression" (extending Iris Marion Young's five faces), wherein Global South scholars are compelled to write in colonizer languages, reducing authentic witnessing to alien functional processing. It also addresses artificial intelligence as an amplifier of (B) lacking authentic (F), raising urgent questions about ethical delegation and responsibility.

The paper concludes that sustainable peace cannot be achieved through mere ceasefire (silent B) but requires the restoration of active witnessing (F)—the capacity to question before acting, to interrogate inherited certainties, and to recognize the face of the Other even in the enemy. It offers a multi-level roadmap for activating witnessing: individual (practicing daily questioning and the right of veto), familial (education based on inquiry rather than inherited certainty), communal (restorative justice and narratives of reconciliation), and global (linguistic justice, alliances of witnessing, and relational digital justice). Drawing on Ubuntu (I am because we are), the paper argues that human diversity—linguistic, cultural, religious is not a defect to be erased but an existential wealth that distinguishes humanity from both animal and machine, and that true peace emerges when every (F) regains its sovereign right to witness, question, and narrate in its own language and on its own terms.

Keywords: $B+F=Nf$ model, witnessing (F), animal war, human war, linguistic domination, ecocide, Global South, sustainable peace, Ubuntu, Fanon, Levinas, postcolonial philosophy

Biography

Fatiha Nesrine Bouzid Is an independent Algerian researcher and international trainer in

complementary medicine, specializing in the intersection of existential philosophy, consciousness studies, and ethical AI. She is the founder of the $(B)+(F)=Nf$ framework, which distinguishes between functional processing (B) and internal moral sovereignty (F). Her work has been presented at the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow, 2026), the Nordic Summer University (Latvia, 2026, as a scholarship recipient), and by invitation from the Hannah Arendt Center at the University of Verona, Italy, 2026). Her philosophy emerges from the lived experience of the Global South.

Epistemic Injustice, Colonial Dichotomies, and Mental Decolonization: Rethinking the Marginalization of Dubusha for Sustainable Peace in Ethiopia

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Abstract: This paper argues that the persistent marginalization of Dubusha, the Gamo people's indigenous institution of public deliberation and conflict resolution, is not merely a legal issue. It also represents a form of epistemic injustice that limits the pursuit of sustainable peace in Ethiopia. Drawing on Miranda Fricker's account of testimonial and hermeneutical injustice, Kwasi Wiredu's project of mental decolonization, and Valentin-Yves Mudimbe's critique of colonial epistemology, I contend that these frameworks complement one another. Fricker explains how indigenous knowledge is systematically discredited, while Wiredu and Mudimbe show how colonial intellectual structures produce and sustain such exclusion. Together these perspectives provide the basis for understanding indigenous institutions not merely as cultural practices but as sources of normative knowledge. The paper advances the claim that sustainable peace requires epistemic pluralism as well as legal pluralism. Although Ethiopia formally recognizes customary institutions, dominant state-centered and Western-derived conceptions of law continue to marginalize indigenous mechanisms such as Dubusha within systems of governance. As a result, this epistemic hierarchy undermines their contribution to reconciliation, participatory justice, and social cohesion. Rather than replacing state institutions, the paper argues that indigenous systems should complement Ethiopia's constitutional and federal order by supporting locally grounded approaches to dispute resolution and community participation within a genuinely plural framework of governance. Methodologically, the paper combines conceptual analysis and normative critique, drawing on philosophical scholarship on epistemic injustice and decolonization as well as constitutional, legal, and scholarly discussions of indigenous institutions in Ethiopia. It argues that overcoming colonial epistemic dichotomies is both a philosophical necessity and practical requirement if inclusive peacebuilding and sustainable development are to be achieved. By conceptualizing Dubusha as a legitimate source of normative knowledge, the paper contributes to debates on epistemic justice, decolonized peacebuilding, and the role of indigenous knowledge systems in contemporary African governance.

Keywords: Epistemic Injustice; Dubusha; Mental Decolonization; Indigenous Knowledge Systems; Legal Pluralism; Sustainable Peace.

Biography

Dr. Getahun Dana is an academic based in the Department of Philosophy at Addis Ababa University. He holds an MA and a PhD in Philosophy from Addis Ababa University and a Master's degree in Applied Ethics from Linköping University, Sweden. He teaches several philosophy courses at Addis Ababa University and has also taught internationally for a short term, at University of Hradec Králové in the Czech Republic. His research focuses on environmental ethics, African philosophy, social and political philosophy and critical social theory. Dr. Getahun has published in peer-reviewed journals and in international book volumes such as those by Routledge. His scholarship engages both global philosophical traditions and local contexts, with particular attention to linguistic identity, statehood, cultural diversity, African philosophy and indigenous cultural studies. In addition to his academic work, he has held leadership roles at Addis Ababa University, including Associate Dean at the College of Social Sciences and Postgraduate Coordinator, and currently serves as Staff Affairs Head in the College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities. Beyond academia, he has contributed to community and professional service through board memberships and participation in national and international conferences on African philosophy, language rights, epistemic justice, and human-nature relations.

Restorative Justice as a Philosophical Pillar for Peace Advocacy in Ethiopia: Healing Historical Wounds, Empowering Youth, and Advancing Sustainable Development

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Abstract: In Ethiopia, where layered historical wounds from successive regimes and ethnic conflicts continue to undermine social cohesion, restorative justice stands as a vital philosophical pillar for peace advocacy. This paper argues that restorative approaches—integrating indigenous Ethiopian practices with transitional justice mechanisms—offer the most promising framework for healing these wounds, fostering positive peace, and empowering youth as agents of sustainable development. Centered on the research question, How can restorative justice serve as a philosophical and practical framework for healing historical wounds and advancing youth-led sustainable peacebuilding in Ethiopia?, the analysis demonstrates how such mechanisms move beyond punitive models to prioritize relational repair, truth-telling, compensation, and reconciliation. By grounding abstract principles in concrete indigenous systems like the Gadaa and Borena Aboled, and leveraging legal instruments such as the Transitional Justice Policy, this approach addresses root causes of division while building intergenerational trust and equity aligned with SDG 16. Furthermore, by incorporating authentic domestic narratives of cyclical regime changes, structural alienation, and deep-seated societal suspicions, this paper provides an expansive socioeconomic blueprint. It positions comprehensive trauma healing and robust youth investment—encompassing capital, high-impact capacity building, and structural equity—as non-negotiable prerequisites for breaking cycles of violence, mitigating mass migration, and securing sustainable national development.

Keywords: Restorative Justice, Healing Historical Wounds, Positive Peace, Youth Empowerment, Ethiopia, Transitional Justice, Indigenous Systems, Gadaa, Sustainable Development.

Biography

Ashenafi Didimos is an emerging international lawyer and diplomatic youth advocate based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He holds an LLB from Wolaita Sodo University and is pursuing an LLM in Public International Law at Addis Ababa University. With expertise in corporate governance, fintech regulation, human rights, climate justice, and ESG, Ashenafi has served as Legal Advisor and Company Secretary at KebronHill Microfinance Institution, Attorney at Global Bank Ethiopia, and Public Prosecutor at Wolaita Zone Justice Department. Internationally, he is an Ambassador for the Institute for Economics & Peace, and Head of International Affairs at Pioneers of Change Africa, working as volunteer and peace advocate.

Reconciling Moral Crossroads for Intergenerational and Environmental Justice

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Abstract: A critical challenge within the study of environmental and intergenerational justice is the conceptual tension between different environmental values and contending moral frameworks approaching matters of environmental justice across generations. This contention demands a multi-directional investigation. As a way of approaching such conceptual tensions, this paper aims to develop a theoretical framework by synthesizing concepts from environmental justice, intergenerational justice, and environmental holism. Going beyond a human-centrist theoretical position, the paper argues that environmental justice is significantly anchored in the recognition and appreciation of intrinsic value, which can be synthesized from anthropocentrism and non-anthropocentrism. The paper considers that the well-being of the environment and life-supporting systems goes beyond short-term and presentist human interests. Moreover, the paper critiques the prevailing temporal and genealogical conceptions of generations, and advances the notion of a parasol generation, considering humankind as a collective and rational species interconnected across temporal and spatial situations. Morally speaking, this idea of generation shapes our environment-related obligations and rights as boundless spatial-temporal necessities. Discharging our environment-related responsibilities presumes the recognition of intrinsic value within the framework of hierarchical environmental holism. This framework should normatively operate with the communitarian view of intergenerational justice, considering humanity within a historical community of obligation. The paper also considers that ecosystems, biodiversity, biospheres, and climatic systems are moral patients with life-sustaining capacities that are intrinsically valuable. Most significantly, the defended moral framework of the paper considers humans distinctively as both eco-value-recognizers and components of those intrinsic values. Thus, theoretically, there is a shared philosophical framework of intrinsic value that is synthesized from instrumental and intrinsic conceptions of value, considering instrumental environmental benefits as subsets of those intrinsic moral values. Therefore, by adopting an intrinsic value-based moral framework, the paper defends an account that transcends particular temporal and spatial limits, upholding a harmonious human-environment relationship that can govern intergenerational matters of environmental justice.

Biography

Andebet Hailu Assefa (PhD) is a Part-Time Assistant Professor at Addis Ababa University, where he currently instructs the course *Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking*. He previously served as a Lecturer of Philosophy within the Department of Political Science and International Studies at Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia. Andebet received his PhD from the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa, Italy; his doctoral research focused on Hierarchical Environmental Holism and the Conceptualization of Intergenerational Justice through the Perspective of Intrinsic Value. He also holds both a BA and an MA in Philosophy from Addis Ababa University. His research interests focus on environmental and climate ethics, moral and political philosophy, applied ethics, and global politics. In April 2026, Dr. Assefa was honored with the prestigious *Elena Pulcini Award* for the best doctoral dissertation by the Association of Social Philosophy for the Care of the Living World at the University of Florence. Over an academic career spanning more than fifteen years, Andebet has made notable contributions to teaching, research, and community service. His professional profile includes delivering philosophy courses across various academic institutions, leading the development of the undergraduate philosophy curriculum at Bahir Dar University, and co-authoring academic articles in peer-reviewed journals. In addition, Andebet has co-organized various national and international conferences and seasonal schools, and conducted a research visit at the University of Graz in Austria as part of his doctoral fellowship.

Detailed information regarding his scholarly work can be found on his ORCID profile: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8698-2364>.

Biopolitics and the Ethics of Peace: Governing Life in Postcolonial Africa

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Abstract: The relationship between the ethics of peace and biopolitics investigates how governance regulates life while pursuing peace and sustainable development. Peace is not merely the absence of violence, but a dynamic political process through which populations are governed, protected, and, at times, excluded. In postcolonial Africa, peacebuilding is deeply intertwined with security policies, migration and development programs that shape the conditions under which life is valued and administrated. This paper explores African states construct peace through regulatory practices and risk management. While these interventions seek stability and security for the human, they can also reinforce inequalities, limit political agency, and produce new forms of marginalization. To counter this, we propose an ethical framework grounded in African philosophies of rationality, justice, responsibility, and solidarity to rethink peace beyond technocratic governance. Theoretically driven and relying on qualitative analysis, this study offers interpretive conclusions. Biopolitics transformed the understanding of political power: instead of governing solely through coercion and punishment, modern governments regulate populations by managing health, security, migration, education, and democratic processes. Drawing on classic studies that distinguish negative peace from positive peace (Johan Galtung, 1969), this paper concludes that true peace requires not only the protection of the human but also the consolidation of institutional system that guarantee that protection.

Keywords: Violence, Ethics, Peace, Biopolitics, Africa, Protection.

Biography

Lassana Kanté (born June 1998, Senegal) is a PhD researcher in Anglophone and Comparative Studies at Université Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar (Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Département d'Anglais), where he specializes in African and Postcolonial Studies. His current research critically examines the intersections of biopolitics, governance, and postcolonial identity, with a particular focus on how power structures shape life, mobility, and belonging in contemporary African contexts. His work engages deeply with theories of power, including biopolitics and decolonial thought to analyze issues such as migration, health governance, and social regulation within regional African institutions. He is particularly interested in the ethical implications of governance and the ways in which peace and sustainable development are constructed, negotiated, and contested in postcolonial societies. Kanté's broader research interests include anticolonial and decolonial theories, questions of power and social justice, gender and sexuality, and African literary studies. He has authored several academic works in African literature and the social sciences, contributing to ongoing debates on postcolonial governance, identity, and the politics of life in Africa.

A Philosophical Reflection on Global Economic Injustice: The Case of the Transnational Discourse of T3 “Conflict Minerals” in Eastern Congo.

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Abstract: In this paper, I argue that the Washington Consensus world economic order has escalated the divide between the rich and the poor through a conscious promulgation of neoliberal policy directives such as privatization, deregulation, financial and market liberalization, and austerity in the name of “poverty reduction” and “democratic governance.” To that end, I set out to inquire into the enabling conditions for the neo-colonial ideological and physical violence that the hegemonic system exerts by dictating the terms of life and death, drawing on Franz Fanon’s phenomenological analysis of the logic of colonial violence and Achille Mbembe’s necropolitics. I contend that sustainable development and world peace cannot be achieved unless the structural conditions that perpetuate inequality, conflict, and tyranny in the Global South are dismantled through a genuine commitment to both positive and negative peace in line with Johan Galtung’s conception of peace. This holistic vision for peace presupposes a pragmatic solution to the intricate issues related to the interests of state and non-state actors that feed on the instability and insecurity of the poor and vulnerable in the global South. I take the case of the transnational discourse on T3 “conflict minerals” in eastern Congo to illustrate how transnational actors’ extractive strategies sustain the global hegemonic system by designing policy guidelines along Eurocentric and Orientalist discursive lines regarding the situation in eastern Congo. The incessant violence and necropolitical reality in eastern Congo are not collateral damage but the very conditions of possibility for the continued exploitation and extraction of minerals by global economic powerhouses. Thus, genuine peace and development are sought not just as moral ideals but also as liberation from the structural conditions of poverty and inequality through the deconstruction of the global economic infrastructure, i.e., by dismantling the conditions that make injustice and misery possible. Eastern Congo has been transformed into a hell to which locals are continuously consigned so that global capital can reproduce itself. Transnational initiatives have strangled the property and land rights of local artisanal miners in the name of standardization and formalization, while ignoring established informal channels of extraction. Thus, I contend that peace and development can be achieved not merely by correcting policy and diplomatic blunders, but also by mending the deep structural flaws, which leave the poor and vulnerable to “suffer what they must”. In this paper, I aim to integrate a qualitative theoretical inquiry on global economic injustice with an empirical case study of the transnational discourse of T3 “conflict minerals” in eastern Congo.

Keywords: *global economic injustice, global South, necropolitics, neoliberalism, T3 “conflict minerals”, Washington Consensus*

Biography

Eskendir Sintayehu Kassaye is an Assistant Professor of philosophy and politics at Adama Science and Technology University in Adama, Ethiopia. He holds BA and MA degrees in philosophy from Addis Ababa University, and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the Sant’Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa, Italy. He works at the intersection of political philosophy, political economy, development ethics, and postcolonial theory with a focus on Africa.

The Problematic Nature of National Identity in Ethiopia

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Abstract: This paper explores the complex assumptions and rhetoric surrounding national identity in Ethiopia. Despite having never been colonized, Ethiopia's dominant epistemological framework is influenced by Western paradigms. Therefore, the perspective of decoloniality is relevant to Ethiopia's situation. The paper addresses two critical questions regarding the narration of identity in Ethiopia: first, how Western epistemological paradigms, as a form of coloniality, influence identity formation in the country and the historical and theoretical contexts of this influence; and second, how applying a decoloniality framework can clarify and address the challenges posed by coloniality. The study underscores the philosophy of Social Identity Theory (SIT) and the Critical Philosophy of Race (CPR), which examines how colonialism shaped identities by utilizing Westernized elites to promote identity politics. The identities generated through this process have failed to foster cohesion and harmony among Ethiopia's diverse ethnic groups; instead, they have often led to conflict. By adopting a decolonial perspective, the paper explores the challenges of achieving a unified national identity in Ethiopia and offers alternative approaches for interpretation and understanding.

Keywords: Identity, history, ethnicity, coloniality, decoloniality

Biography

Yerasework Kebede is a researcher based at the University of South Africa, the Ethiopia Regional Learning Centre. She is actively engaged in reviewing PhD proposals for the College of Economic and Management Sciences at UNISA. Yerasework holds a Doctorate in Development Studies from UNISA and possesses extensive experience in leading academic support initiatives at the institution. She supervises Master's students at Addis Ababa University in her capacity as an Adjunct Assistant Professor. In her professional role, Yerasework serves as a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Expert for the Ethiopia Women in Energy initiative. She also serves as Chapter Chair of the Ethiopian Directors of Quality and Implementation Forum. Her research interests are focused on development frameworks that embrace decoloniality, gender issues, and quality maturity.

Extracting Wealth, Exporting Harm: Multinational Corporations and Africa's Fight for Environmental Justice

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Abstract: This paper explores the multifaceted negative impacts of multinational corporations (MNCs) on Africa and examines Africa's ongoing quest for environmental justice. Using specific case studies, the paper demonstrates how multinational corporations plunder Africa's natural wealth, frequently in partnership with African leaders and warlords, causing extensive environmental deterioration. This persistent environmental exploitation directly undermines both genuine peace and sustainable development. Furthermore, MNCs have perpetuated distributive and intergenerational injustice, given that local communities have not benefited from their resources but have instead borne the brunt of exploitation. A key manifestation of this exploitation is the transboundary dumping of highly polluting industrial and toxic materials, particularly electronic waste (e-waste). Although some companies claimed that supplying Africa with used electronics is an effort to bridge the "digital divide" between the continent and the West, this justification is neither genuine nor ethically defensible. Instead, the primary driver is profit maximization through the evasion of safe disposal costs in Western nations. Ultimately, vulnerable African populations absorb the heavy social and environmental toll of this illegal waste trade. To combat this, this paper argues that transnational corporations and powerful states must be held accountable and barred from applying environmental double standards. Achieving this accountability will directly contribute to achieving genuine peace, human security, and equitable sustainable development. Finally, this study advocates for global equity and recommends that African nations develop robust, autonomous environmental policies to protect their ecosystems, safeguard human rights, and aggressively challenge global environmental injustice.

Keywords: Africa, Corporate Accountability, Environmental Injustice, Environmental Justice, Multinational Corporations (MNCs), Peace and Security, Sustainable Development.

Biography

Workineh Kelbessa is a Professor of Philosophy at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, where he has taught since 1988. His wide-ranging, interdisciplinary research spans African philosophy, indigenous knowledge, environmental philosophy, the philosophy of love and sex, and environmental, development, climate, and water ethics. A widely published scholar, his recent works include "African Environmental Philosophy and the Quest for a Sustainable Future" (2024), "Remapping Global Realities: The Need for Building a More Sustainable and Inclusive World" (2025), and "Biodiversity and the Environment: With Special Reference to Africa" (2025). Throughout a career spanning nearly four decades, Professor Kelbessa has engaged in international academic exchange as a visiting scholar and lecturer across five continents, holding appointments at institutions such as the University of Oxford and the University of Tübingen. He has also served on several prestigious international bodies, including the UNESCO World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) from 2012 to 2019 and the International Panel on Social Progress from 2015 to 2017. A former Research Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany, he is currently a

member of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, the Nominating Committee of the International Society for Environmental Ethics, and various other international professional associations. Additionally, Professor Kelbessa is currently serving as a Senior Research Scholar leading a four-year project (2024-2028) titled “Environmental Ethics and Values in Ethiopia,” which is funded by the Institute of Global Value Inquiry in Germany.

Navigating Competing Paradigms in Ethiopian Education: Crisis of Subjectivity, Emancipation and a Utopian Future

Fasil Merawi (PhD)

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Department of Philosophy

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Abstract: Contemporary Ethiopian education is embroiled in a crisis of subjectivity, manifested in the fragmentation of national identity, the erosion of cultural cohesion, and the disempowerment of the individual within a disconnected educational framework. Such a crisis is fuelled by a Eurocentric paradigm that subordinated indigenous knowledge and a decolonial epistemology that has introduced a world of knowledge production that is grounded in a static notion of identity. Utilizing Michel Foucault's conception of power/knowledge and Paulo Freire's conception of critical consciousness, this paper demonstrates how contemporary Ethiopian education, under both Eurocentric and decolonial paradigms, has facilitated the fragmentation of Ethiopian identity. Overcoming such disempowerment of the human subject, an alternative educational approach that facilitates the reimagining of a utopian future could be developed. Such an emancipatory practice can be grounded in Ernst Bloch's conception of "the-not-yet conscious," showing that Ethiopian education can serve an emancipatory function by revitalizing the latent collective potential of Ethiopian subjects. By liberating Ethiopian education from the pitfalls of Eurocentric and decolonial epistemologies, there is a need to develop a philosophy of education that is attentive to the nation's unique historical path, shared history and collective struggles and long histories of interaction and interdependence that have shaped its complex contemporary reality.

Keywords: education, emancipation, subjectivity, Eurocentric, decolonial.

Biography

Fasil Merawi is a philosopher, academic leader, and researcher specializing in Ethiopian philosophy, ethics, and social and political thought. He currently serves as an Associate Professor of Political Philosophy at Addis Ababa University (AAU) in the Department of Philosophy under the College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities. In addition to his academic role, he holds the position of Vice Executive Dean for Academic Affairs, a leadership role he assumed in September 2025, where he contributes to shaping academic policy, curriculum development, and institutional strategy. Prior to this, he served as the Chairperson of the Department of Philosophy from 2022 to 2025. Dr. Fasil completed all his higher education at Addis Ababa University, earning his BA in Philosophy in 2008, his MA in Philosophy in 2011, and his PhD in Philosophy in 2020. His research engages deeply with Ethiopian philosophy and indigenous ethical systems, contributing to ongoing efforts to articulate locally grounded philosophical traditions. His work spans moral philosophy, political philosophy, and social philosophy, with particular attention to issues of identity, modernity, and ethical transformation. He has also contributed critical analyses of the legacy of Marxism in Ethiopia, the philosophical implications of land reform policies, and the challenge of overcoming Eurocentrism in knowledge production. His scholarship reflects a strong commitment to rethinking modernity and subjectivity from African philosophical perspectives.

Insecurity and Sustainable Development in African States: A Critical Evaluation

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Abstract: Insecurity has continued to undermine Africa's quest for sustainable development. Today, about half of the continent's 1.4 billion people face insecurity amid overlapping ecological challenges and endemic poverty. Beyond the kinetic and non-kinetic military interventions, this paper examines the ontological and environmental root causes of the complex existential challenge in African States such as Nigeria. The problem is that the dominant Western anthropocentric theories and their attendant neocolonial structures in Africa are fundamentally inadequate to engender the desired social order for peace, security, and sustainable development. This paper critically evaluates Western and African ontological bases of relating to others and the environment, with attendant consequences for security. Findings show that Western monistic-dualism and its linear view of reality engender a rigid approach to reality and knowledge. It has been instrumental in the contest and conquest of nature and, in extreme cases, in attitudes of strife, vengeance, and violent conflicts. Conversely, the indigenous African integrative philosophy and normative ethics of care offer an alternative foundation for harmonious living with self and nature. Its ideals of mystical interdependence and empathetic solidarity better serve the quest for stability, peace and security in troubled communities. Despite some limitations of the authentic paradigm, we argue for a rethink of the African developmental foundation along an indigenous ethical framework that emphasises security and sustainable development as holistic, with material and cultural layers. It recommends that development initiatives be predicated on the proper decolonisation of African States, embracing the ideals of indigenous ethics of care, inclusivity, and social order within broader security interventions.

Keywords: African States, Duality, Ethics of Care, Insecurity, Monistic-dualism, Sustainable Development

Biography

Dr Olumide Oyewole Oyebade is a fellow and philosophy teacher in the Department of Philosophy and Ethics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. He has teaching and research competencies in character ethics, African, and comparative philosophy. Dr Oyebade is an alumnus of the University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria.

Legitimizing Reciprocity: New Frameworks for Cooperation between the European North and the African South

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PISA
Italy

Abstract: The talk revolves around a critical discussion of current theories of intergenerational justice and, more specifically, the intrinsic constitutive element of any theory of justice: the concept of reciprocity. We will consider reciprocity as a requirement for any form of justice from both an inter-individual and a systemic point of view. The talk will develop this concept by analyzing two of the most important principles expressing intergenerational commitments to justice: the "polluter pays principle" (PPP) and the "beneficiary pays principle" (BPP). Both principles will be addressed by framing a comprehensive discussion of their correlative, differing understandings of reciprocity.

Furthermore, the concept of reciprocity will be reconsidered through a twofold intertwined optical view: on the one hand, by trying to go beyond a broad – and therefore often only rhetoric – counter position that frames justice interaction as a dynamic of restitution that should be directed solely from the so-called "Global North" toward the "Global South". While the list of potential flaws in that conventional approach is quite long, our goal is to narrow down the viable "rights-and-duties"-based approaches. We do this by focusing on a concept of reciprocity that bridges European interpretations of "Global North" commitments with African interpretations of "Global South" responsibilities. In pursuing this approach, we aim to outline a unifying framework of mutual commitments that can be integrated into a long-term review process and refined through an analysis of the specific context of relationships among institutional actors.

On the other hand, Western theories of Intergenerational Justice should take into consideration the possibility to overcome what we might call "climate neo-colonialism"—namely a subtle and often implicit form of cultural and political colonialism that seeks to implement a unique and uniform standard of climate-change-sensitive policies worldwide and in each specific context. This under-acknowledged approach implicitly tries to implement a unique perspective of "climate justice" that corresponds to the idea of idealizing, enforcing and supporting just Western-grounded models of equality or of reciprocity. Taken by itself, this conventional approach is admittedly aimed at rebalancing systemic forms of injustice historically suffered by the African continent as a whole. Nonetheless, the theoretical insights of African Environmental Ethics represent an immense opportunity to integrate and enrich these Western-oriented approaches. This intersection deserves to be analytically explored as a way to enforce and legitimize new forms of both direct and indirect reciprocity within a vivid, evolving network of institutional relationships.

Biography

Alberto Pirni is an Associate Professor in Moral Philosophy at the Interdisciplinary Center Sustainability and Climate" (CISC) of the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa, Italy. At SSSA, he serves as the Coordinator of the Research Area in "Ethics and Global Challenges" (<https://www.santannapisa.it/en/institute/dirpolis/ethics-and-global-challenges>) and is a member of the scientific board for the PhD program in "Human Rights, Global Politics and International Relations" and "Health Science, Technology, and Management". He has also served as the Coordinator of the Curriculum 4 of the National PhD School in "Sustainable Development and Climate Change" –

<http://www.iusspavia.it/phd-sdc>. Currently, he is the Director of the scientific journal *Lexicon of Public Ethics*.

He is an affiliated researcher at the Interdisciplinary Center for Research Ethics and Integrity (CID Ethics) of the Italian National Research Council (*Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche*).

He has been a visiting researcher and professor at several universities in Germany, France, Spain, Luxembourg, the Russian Federation, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile.

He has coordinated, and continues to coordinate, a significant number of scientific projects at local, national and international levels in cooperation with public institutions, research centers, and enterprises.

The main focus of his research revolves around three branches of ethical theory and applied ethics: *public ethics*, with specific reference to contemporary social philosophy and institutional ethics; *ethics and philosophy of technology*, with specific reference to human enhancement, social robotics, robot-companionship, artificial companionship, and AI; *ethics and climate justice*, with specific reference to theories of climate, intergenerational, and energy justice, together with ethics and sustainability. In this last domain, his focal points of interest include theories of individual and collective motivation, as well as the field of “water ethics”.

Democracy and Populism in Science and Technology Policy

Professor Riccardo Pozzo
Tor Vergata University of Rome
Italy

Abstract: This paper focuses on the capacity of the next generation of global citizens to actively and democratically shape their own societies. As Saint John Paul II prophetically underlined in Centesimus Annus (1991, 46), the quality of a democratic life depends on the values it embodies. Given that the future of democracy is hanging in the balance, a key imperative is to develop educational frameworks and resources grounded in national traditions of thought. The methodological approach of this paper is interdisciplinary as it integrates issues such as migration and social exclusion, digital media environments, democratic education and values, and references to social rights. The main idea is that populism requires the consideration of a sound science and technology policy for education, social infrastructures, and democratic values. The first part of the paper examines the evolving meanings of key concepts such as democracy, statecraft, populism, and critical reason. The second part analyzes populism and xenophobia in response to migration. The third part proposes policy lines to uphold the normative core of democracy in the digital age. The paper concludes with a bird's-eye view of global perspectives.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Bubble Society; Democracy; Populism; Science and Technology Policy

Biography

Riccardo Pozzo graduated from the State University of Milan (1983), *Dr.phil.* at the University of Saarland (1988), *Habilitation* at the University of Trier (1995), and *Tenure* at the Catholic University of America (2000). Professor of the History of Philosophy at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. (1996), the University of Verona (2003), and Tor Vergata University of Rome (2019). From 2009 to 2012 Pozzo directed the Institute for the European Intellectual Lexicon and History of Ideas of CNR; 2012 to 2017 he was head of the Department SSH and CH of CNR; and 2008 to 2024 he served on the Steering Committee of the Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de Philosophie. Member of the Institut International de Philosophie, the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, the Academia Europaea, the Europäische Akademie der Wissenschaften und Künsten, the Accademia degli Agiati, and the International Confucian Association. He is the author of *History of Philosophy and the Reflective Society* (De Gruyter, 2021). Pozzo's lines of research are in Philosophy, Migration Studies, and Science and Technology Studies.

“Misooma” itti Fufiinsa Qabu kan Liqaa Biyya Alaa itti Fufiinsa hin Qabne Deebisuu Irratti Hundaa’e

Piroofeesar Mogobee Raamooseen
Yuunivarsiitii Preetooriyaa
Afrikaa Kibbaa

Abstract: Warri dhihaa “misooma” akka jecha salphaa liqiitti kalaqan. Liqiin kun lola haqa hin qabne koloneeffannaa warri dhihaa ummatoota dhalootaan Afrikaa irratti geggeessan irraa kan dhalatedha. Ummatoota kana erga mo’atanii booda warri dhihaa naannoo isaanii irratti abbaa qabeenyummaa himatu, isaan jala galchaniif fi itti fayyadaman. Naannoowwan mo’aman eeguun ba’aa maallaqaa hin danda’amne ta’e. Sana booda warri dhihaa walabummaa siyaasaa qofaaf mirga kennanii ummatoota kolonii irraa bilisa ta’an irratti abbaa biyyummaa dinagdee qabatanii turan. Yeroo kanatti, “misoomni” ummatoonni koloneeffannaa irraa bilisa ta’an gabroomfamuu isaaniif galata akka agarsiisan, akkasumas, abbaa biyyummaa dinagdee warra dhihaa Afrikaa irratti qaban garboomfamuu dinagdee akka hayyaman dirqisiisuuf kan kalaqame. Biyyoonni biroo ammoo “misooma” amma misooma itti fufiinsa qabu jedhamee waamamu kanaan warra dhihaatti makamaniiru. Barreeffamni kun barreeffamni kun ittifame “misoomni” jal’ina seena qabeessa ta’uu isaati. Jireenyi gargaarsa alagaa osoo hin taane, wal-faana malee, maxim naamusaa ubu-ntuu (Namummaa; Afaan Oromiffaa, Ethiopia) jedhu haqamee bakka bu’uu qaba.

Jechoota ijoo: koloneeffannaa, “misooma”, waraana haqa hin qabne, ubu-ntu, itti fufiinsa hin qabne

Tswelopele ye e swarelelago ga e thekgwe godimo gago hloka toka

Mafase a Bodikela a hlamile seo a se bitsago tswelopele ele ge gabotse a raya molato goba sekoloto. Molato wo o hlotswe ke di hlaselo tsa mafase a Bodikela morago ga gore a fenyee abe a thope naga tsa Afrika. Dihlaselo tse kamoka gadi thekgwe ke molao ofe goba ofe malebana le toka. Erile mola mafase a Bodikela a imelwa ke morwalo wa go thekga dinaga thotjwa tsa Afrika ka masheleng, tsa namile tsa dumela go neya naga tse tokologo lehlakoreng la sepolitiki fela. Di ile tsa tswela pele go rena godimo ga mahumo kamoka a Afrika go fihlela lehono le. Di namile tsa hlaola maemo a sefsa tsa a bitsa tswelopele yeo e swarelelago. Moonno wa leina le le lefsa kego gapeletsa maAfrika go leboga gore mafase a a ile a ba dira makgoba le gore maAfrika a dumele gore mafase a Bodikela a tswela pele go rena godimo ga mahumo kamoka a Afrika. Nyepo ye mafase a Bodikela a e fihleletse go fihla lehono le. Sengwalwa se se ganetsana le maemo a. Se ema ka la gore ka seAfrika batho re a phedisana go swana lege re tsena letsema. Phedisano ke botho(namummaa, ka polelo ya seOromo nageng ya Ethiopia) gase go kolota ka gore motho o kile a dirwa ebile o tswela pele go dirwa lekgoba. Bana ba motho, re ngoathogana hlogwana ya tsie.

Sustainable “Development” founded on Unsustainable Foreign Debt Repayment

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South Africa

Abstract: The West invented “development” as a euphemism for a loan. The loan is born from the unjust wars of colonisation waged by the West on the indigenous peoples of Africa. Having conquered these peoples, the West claim title to their territory, subjugated and exploited them. Keeping the conquered territories became an unbearable financial burden. The West then made a concession to political independence only and retained economic sovereignty over the decolonised peoples. At this point, “development” was invented by the West as a design to compel the decolonised peoples to show gratitude for having been enslaved and, to consent to economic enslavement to Western economic sovereignty over Africa. Other countries joined the West in this “development” syndrome now called sustainable development. The thesis defended in this article is that “development” is an historic injustice. It must be abolished and replaced by the ubu-ntu (Namummaa; Oromiffaa language, Ethiopia) ethical maxim that life is mutual, and not, foreign aid.

Keywords: colonisation, “development”, unjust wars, ubu-ntu, unsustainable

Biography

Mogobe Ramose is retired Professor of philosophy born in conqueror South Africa. He obtained his D Phil (Philosophy) from the Katholieke Universiteit in Leuven, Belgium in 1983. He holds the Master of Science degree (International Relations) from the University of London (The London School of Economics and Political Science). He lectured in Philosophy in the universities of Tilburg, (The Netherlands), Zimbabwe, Venda, Ethiopia and South Africa. Was Research Fellow at the Centre for the Philosophy of Law (CGR), Faculty of Law, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium. He has published many articles and contributed book chapters. Recent book chapters available in African philosophy and the politics of food systems, Springer, 2026 and Nature as resource, aesthetic experience and ecological challenge, De Gruyter, 2026. African philosophy through *ubuntu* is his monograph.

The Environmental Factor in the Sustainable Development of Modern Society

Professor Sergei M. Sokolov,
East Siberia State University of Technology and Management
Russia

Abstract: In the 20th century, Erich Fromm wrote, "Man is dead." In the 21st century, with the transition to the sixth technological paradigm, humanity itself has become one of the central philosophical problems. Notably, one of the themes at the 24th World Congress of Philosophy, held in Beijing in 2018, was "Human, Non-Human, Posthuman." The congress convened under the motto "Learning to be Human," where scholars from various countries emphasized that a humanistic approach to the development of science, technology, and engineering must be a priority.

The renowned American scientist Stanislav Grof once wrote that the 21st century requires a global citizen who embodies a duality—being both rationally educated and spiritually developed. Environmental awareness plays a major role in this spiritual development. In its broadest sense, it represents a sphere of social and individual consciousness connected to the reflection of nature as an essential part of existence. The results of modern biological experiments are intriguing; they have shown that even plants and bacteria are capable of sensing and responding to human attitudes toward them, thus demonstrating the systemic unity of nature and humans.

Environmentalists around the world have long been discussing the potential for a global environmental catastrophe in the 2040s. An environmental crisis is primarily a crisis of worldview, meaning environmental problems are fundamentally anthropological in nature. A lack of environmental awareness drives human behavior that poses a threat to both ourselves and our environment.

The environmental factor has played a crucial role at all stages of the formation and development of both global and local civilizations. A key characteristic of non-Western societies has traditionally been their continued connection with nature. This connection, characteristic of all ancient cultures, was reflected in the ethical, religious, and philosophical practices of Siberian peoples, including the Buryats. For them, natural and cultural sacred sites were recognized as bearers of higher ideas and values. Today, the Buryat people continue to preserve rituals, distinct behavioral norms around sacred sites (such as trees, mountains, and springs), and rational nature management. Overall, perceiving the world as a unified whole, alongside the dominance of environmental and spiritual values, serves as a vital factor in the sustainable development of modern society.

Biography

Sergei M. Sokolov is a Russian philosopher, researcher, and academic based at the East Siberia State University of Technology and Management (ESSUTM) in Ulan-Ude, Buryatia. Over a prolific career spanning nearly three decades (1998–2025), his work has focused extensively on Eurasianism, historiography, cultural and ethnic identity, and the philosophical intersections of science, technology, and religion.

Peacebuilding and Reconciliation through Intercultural Philosophy

Professor William Sweet
St Francis Xavier University
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Abstract: Peace building is a long-term process aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict to prevent or to address the outbreak or recurrence of violence. It also often requires a sustained effort to engage in reconciliation. Altogether, then, even before engaging in structural change and long-term transformation, peacebuilding requires developing mutual respect among the parties, openness, the ability to identify a broad range of points of contact, a commitment to a 'dialogue-based' reason, and also a willingness by all parties to question their presuppositions in the conflict. These are also features of intercultural philosophy, and they have been employed by those involved in reconciliation efforts – for example, in Canada, where there is an ongoing effort to engage in reconciliation with Indigenous populations. This paper outlines some of the characteristics of intercultural philosophy, describes briefly challenges to it, and illustrates how it can be employed in attempting to reconcile parties in conflict, and, by extension, to build peace.

Biography

Professor William Sweet is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Centre for Philosophy, Theology, and Cultural Traditions at St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia, Canada. Sweet studied the history of philosophy, principally at l'Université d'Ottawa (Ph.D); political theory at the Université Paris 1-Sorbonne (D.E.A.); and epistemology of religion at the Centre Sèvres (Paris), l'Université Saint-Paul (D.Phil.), and the University of South Africa (D.Th.).

He is a Past President of the Canadian Philosophical Association and of the Canadian Theological Society. He currently serves as a Vice President of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (Washington), and was a member of the Steering Committee of FISP (Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de Philosophie) from 2003 to 2018. He is the author and/or editor of some 30 books, has taught as a Visiting Professor at universities in China, Poland, Taipei, and India, and has lectured on six continents. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in 2013 and of the Royal Society of Canada in 2017, and a Membre titulaire of the Institut international de philosophie (Paris).

From the Balance of Power to Federative Solidarity: The Difference between Overcoming War and Achieving Peace

Professor Joao J. Vila-Chã
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Italy

Abstract: This paper argues that a genuine articulation of peace and sustainable development requires moving beyond the classical paradigm of “balance of power” toward a normatively thicker ideal of federative solidarity and communicative responsibility among peoples and states. Drawing on modern European debates from Utrecht and Vienna to contemporary critiques of imperialism and cultural domination, it first reconstructs how peace was long conceived in terms of equilibrium between rival powers, containment of imperial ambitions, and juridical regulation of war. While this “balance of diplomacy” succeeded for a while in limiting open conflict among great powers, it remained structurally blind to social injustice, colonial and post-colonial domination, cultural imperialism, and ecological degradation, thereby reducing peace to a precarious absence of war. In a second step, the paper contrasts this paradigm with projects of federative order and “republican Europe” that reinterpret peace as an institutionalization of mutual recognition, shared law, and cooperative self-limitation, rather than as mutual deterrence. These projects anticipate a philosophical shift from possessive individualism to an ontology of relationality and interdependence, where the dignity of persons, peoples, and ecosystems is co-constitutive of political order. Finally, the paper engages contemporary discussions of cultural imperialism and total war to show how unsustainable development is tied to practices that seek to conquer the minds and resources of others, erode moral restraints on violence, and externalize ecological and social costs to vulnerable populations. Reinterpreting peace and sustainable development as a unified ethical project, the paper proposes a framework of “federative responsibility” that links non-violence, environmental justice, and intergenerational equity with institutional reforms—regional and global—aimed at transforming power equilibria into shared global commitments for a just and livable world.

Biography

VILA-CHÃ, João J. – Studied Philosophy and Theology in Portugal (1982-1987), Germany (1987-1991) and the United States (1991-1997). Concluded his PhD. in Renaissance Philosophy at Boston College (USA) in 1998 with a Thesis on Leone Ebreo and the Intelligibility of Love. At Boston College, taught in the Programs Philosophy of the Person (1992-1993) and Perspectives on Western Culture (1993-1996). From 1998-2008 taught History of Contemporary Philosophy and Philosophy of Religion at the Catholic University of Portugal (Braga) and since 2008 has been teaching Social and Political Philosophy at the [Pontificia Università Gregoriana](#), in Rome (Italy). Was Editor-in-Chief of the [Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia](#) (2000-2009) and served as member of the Editorial Board of journals such as [Concilium](#) (2012-2019), [Síntese](#) (Brasil), and [Pensamiento](#) (Spain). Was President of the European Association of Jesuit Professors of Philosophy (2002-2008) and of the [Conférence Mondiale des Institutions Catholiques Universitaires de Philosophie](#) ([COMIUCAP](#), 2013-2022). Since 2011, functions as Vice-President of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (U.S.A.) and as Director of the [Post-Graduate International Seminar](#) that the same Council offers yearly to chosen Scholars from different parts of the world. Member of University Senate of the Pontifical Gregorian University between 2010-2018, and rejoined the Senate in the Fall of 2024. In 2017, received the International Karl-Otto Apel Prize for Philosophy. During the World Congress of Philosophy in Beijing, China (2018), was elected Member of the Steering Committee of FISP–International Federation of Philosophical Societies; in Rome, during the XXV World Congress of Philosophy, was reelected for another 5 year term (2024-). – For more information, please access [here](#).

Harmony and Unity of Heaven and Human: A Confucian Perspective on Sustainable Development

Hu Yeping (PhD)

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and The McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values
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Abstract: This paper examines the classical Confucian concept of the harmony and unity of Heaven (Tian 天) and the human (Ren 人) as a philosophical resource for contemporary sustainable development challenges. Drawing on Confucian texts, such as The Doctrine of the Mean and The Inquiry on the Great Learning, and other intellectual resources, such as Tu Weiming, Cheng Chung-ying, and Vincent Shen, the paper argues that Confucian “life ontology” offers a relational, transcendent-immanent framework that complements contemporary approaches to sustainability. It argues that sustainable development is not merely a technical or socio-political challenge but a philosophical and metaphysical one that requires rethinking the relationship between human beings, nature, and the cosmos. The Confucian ideal of the morally self-cultivated person (Junzi 君子), whose virtuous life is grounded in the Mandate of Heaven (Tian Ming 天命), provides normative guidance for a responsible relationship between humans and the natural world.

Biography

Dr. Hu Yeping is the Executive Director of both the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) and the McLean Center for the Study of Culture and Values at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. Her academic background spans literature, history, library and information science, and philosophy, with degrees from institutions in China, the United States, and Poland. Dr. Hu Yeping has co-organized and participated in regional conferences in more than 40 countries, coordinated international seminars through the RVP, and overseen the RVP publication series *Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change*, which includes more than 350 volumes. Her publications have appeared in numerous countries, including Austria, China, Germany, India, the Philippines, and Vietnam.