

## WORKSHOP

### Eco-Phenomenology:

Exploring Eco-Phenomenology Concepts and Theories  
From and For Africa's Ecological Lifeworld



13-15 December 2023  
Neue Aula, Room 236  
(Geschwister-Scholl-Platz, Tübingen)



Find more information  
here

COLLEGE OF FELLOWS



## THEME:

Despite the recent wave of eco-phenomenology, there is a surprising need for abundant eco-phenomenological perspectives from the African continent, whose situated experiences are often connected to the flora and fauna of the natural environment. The engagement of human's experience in, and with, the natural environment and how the natural world (including its constituent species) shows up for them is central to eco-phenomenology. The sense here is that eco-phenomenology adopts the methods and insights of phenomenology and, at the same time, uses these methods, concepts, and insights for studying the interrelationship between human beings and the natural world in their metaphysical and axiological dimensions. This workshop aims to use eco-phenomenology to analyze Africa's nature-related problems in a bid to contribute important insights that would direct and infuse a transformative eco-consciousness in the habits of thought and action, particularly in the everyday lives of African people implications of meaning for health, well-being, or virtue and perhaps elsewhere.

- For participation via Zoom, send an email to:  
[Abiodun-paul.afolabi@cof.uni-tuebingen.de](mailto:Abiodun-paul.afolabi@cof.uni-tuebingen.de)
- <https://uni-tuebingen.de/forschung/zentren-und-institute/college-of-fellows/focus-groups/intercultural-studies/#c1858826>

# PROGRAMME

## DAY ONE: 13th DECEMBER, 2023

1:30 – 2:00 PM

Welcome and Introduction  
Niels Weidtmann and Abiodun Afolabi

2:00 – 3:00 PM

More and Serequeberhan on Eco-phenomenology  
**Abraham Olivier**, University of Fort Hare,  
South Africa

3:00 – 4:00 PM

Reinforced Reality:  
An African Eco-phenomenological Perspective  
**Pius Mosima**, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam/  
University of Bamenda, Cameroon

10:00 - 10:10

Opening and Welcoming

4:00 – 4:30 PM

Tea Break

4:30 – 5:30 PM

Environmental Sustainability and the Notion of  
Solidarity With(in) Nature: A Phenomenological  
Defence of Afro-Complementarity (online)  
**Bukonla Olisa**, Lagos State University, Nigeria

5:30 – 6:30 PM

Environmental Vulnerability and *Anthropo  
Interaffectivity*: An inverted African Environmental  
Theory  
**Abiodun Afolabi**, University of Tübingen/  
Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko,  
Nigeria

## DAY TWO:

14th DECEMBER, 2023

Moderator: Abiodun Afolabi

9:00 – 10:00 AM

Rescuing Mother Earth from Destruction:  
An Afro-Phenomenological Intervention  
**Chiedozie Okoro**, University of Lagos, Nigeria

10:00 – 11:00 AM

Towards a Phenomenology of Nature:  
Some Remarks From an Intercultural Perspective  
**Niels Wiedtmann**, University of Tübingen, Germany

11:00 – 11:30 AM

Tea Break

11:30 – 12:30 PM

Poached Djinns and the Hydrocolonisation of  
Kenyan Coastal Waters  
**Jacky Kosgei**, University of Tübingen, Germany

12:30 – 2:00 PM

Lunch break

Moderator: John Sanni

2:00 – 3:00 PM

Exploring the Intricate Connections Between the  
Nigerian Nature Experience and Nigeria's Ecological  
Landscape for Improved Human-Nature Interaction  
**Temidayo Enetanya**, Fachgebiet Nachhaltiges  
Handeln und Wirtschaften (560G), Universität  
Hohenheim, Germany

## DAY TWO:

14th DECEMBER, 2023

3:00 – 4:00 PM

The Dynamic Web We Live In: Bantu Philosophy as Phenomenology of Human-Nature Relations  
**Angela Roothaan**, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Netherlands

4:00 – 4:30 PM

Tea Break

4:30 – 5:30 PM

Towards an Eco-Phenomenological Quest for Hydrosocial Perspectives of Water in Africa: An Epistemic Approach (Online)  
**Akinpelu Oyekunle**, University of South Africa

5:30 – 6:30 PM

Human-Nature Lived Experience: An African Eco-Phenomenological Perspective (online)  
**Aanuoluwapo Fifebo Sunday**, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Nigeria

## DAY THREE: 15th DECEMBER, 2023

Moderator: Chiedozie Okoro

9:00 – 10:00 AM

Eco-phenomenology and Morality:  
Re-defining Relationality in African Philosophy  
John Sanni, University of Pretoria, South Africa

10:00 – 11:00 AM

*Spiriticide*: Conceptualizing the Disruption of  
Human and Nonhuman Ecological Intersubjectivity  
in Indigenous African Thought (online)  
Adewale Owoseni, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

11:00 – 11:30 AM

Tea Break

11:30 – 12:30 PM

African Traditional Herbal Medicine as “(African)  
Environmental Lived Experience”: Fostering Eco  
affectivity in Human-Nature Relationship (Online)  
Ugochukwu Stophynus Anyanwu,  
Pontifical Gregorian University Rome, Italy

12:30 – 1:30 PM

Kukurúùkúù': Eco-Spiritual Implications of the  
Sounds of the Cockcrow in Yoruba Rural Dwellings  
(online)  
Ibukunolu Olodude, Obafemi Awolowo University,  
Ile-Ife, Nigeria

## LISTS OF ABSTRACTS

1

### MORE AND SEREQUEBERHAN ON ECO-PHENOMEMOLOGY

## Abraham Olivier

University of Fort Hare, South Africa.

My aim is to show that Mabogo More and Tsenay Serequeberhan offer African phenomenological concepts which can be well used to address eco-phenomenological issues. Two of these issues I focus on are the African environmental lived experience of “eco-disjunction” and, related to it, human-animal relational awareness. Recent popular and scholarly work increasingly finds reference to a new geological age, the Anthropocene, characterized by human-induced massive and accelerated changes to the earth’s climate, land, oceans, and biosphere. The Anthropocene is premised on the assumption of human supremacy, the claim that humans are masters of the world entitled to subject it to exploitation to the point of destruction. Serequeberhan uses Heidegger to call such an act of exploitation “enframing”, an act of framing in which humans introduce a disjunction between themselves and the environment. This is intrinsically connected to the issue of humans’ relations to nonhuman animals. Human-animal relationships today are predominantly framed by the human use of domestic animals for food, clothing, recreation, and experimentation. The horrendous conditions of massive intensive farming world-wide reflect humans’ grievous disregard for the status and well-being of animals. The underlying assumption is once again human supremacism, or what More, like Sartre, calls the “original project” of playing God over others. I first try to show how Serequeberhan’s phenomenological notions of enframing and transformation can be used specifically to address the issue of eco-disjunction. Second, I address the issue of human-animal relations by linking Serequeberhan’s work with More’s work, specifically with More’s concepts of contingency as the origin of supremacism and its resolution by means of solidarity. Thus, I endeavour to show how More’s and Serequeberhan’s works can be linked to help address eco-phenomenological problems.

#### Biography:

Abraham Olivier is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Fort Hare, Visiting Professor at the University of Bayreuth and Co-Founder and Co-Chair of the Centre for Phenomenology in South Africa. He is the author of *Being in Pain* and editor/co-editor of the anthology *Phenomenology in an African Context* as well as several special journal issues, including, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* the *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* and *Angelaki*. He published numerous peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on topics relating phenomenology, philosophy of mind and African philosophy.

## Pius Mosima

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam/  
University of Bamenda, Cameroon

The way humans think about the natural environment certainly affects the way they relate and behave towards it and all its life forms. Much of what humans conceive of the environment has been greatly influenced by the philosophical underpinnings in their respective communities and beyond. In this paper, I focus on African worldviews, common values, themes and lived experiences shared by African societies about nature and how these foster their understanding of and interaction with the natural world. I argue that self-realization and the wholeness of life can only be attained and celebrated by associating oneself with other cosmic beings. Environmental lived experiences can provoke or promote attitudes of eco-dissonance, eco-disjunction, and eco-affectivity. In a bid to clearly articulate African perspectives on eco-relations, first, I engage in the traditional African views or cultural paradigms of the universe and the philosophical underpinnings on which these views are based. Second, I take a close look at African ontology and African ethics, showing how they articulate African views on nature with eco-phenomenological theories like that of vital force and Ubuntu communitarian ethics. This permits me to explain further what I mean by reinforced reality, arguing for the possibility of a global ecological rebirth with lessons from indigenous African lived experiences with the rest of nature. These lived realities, entrenched in African worldviews, serve as a potential cultural resource to enrich ecological consciousness across the globe and have the potential of heightening our sensibilities to the intrinsic value of all of creation in all of its interrelatedness. In this way, African cultural paradigms could cross-fertilize the Western views with a new, enriching, broad-based and promising framework to wrestle with the ecological crises of our time.

**Keywords:** African cosmology, African ethics, African ontology, Beings, Community, Eco-phenomenology, Nature, Reinforced reality, Ubuntu, Vital Force

### Biography:

Pius Mosima is from the Department of Philosophy, University of Bamenda, Cameroon and currently a Senior Research Fellow in the Bantu Philosophy Project, which is established at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He is an expert in African Intercultural philosophy, with a focus on the methodological and socio-political aspects of interculturality. From his PhD on philosophic sagacity on Henry Odera Oruka (Mosima 2016) onward he has worked on the question how African philosophical perspectives can help to address humanity's common problems in this age of globalized difference. He published widely in ethics, philosophy of religion, environmental and intercultural philosophy, always with the questions of an African ontology and epistemology in mind.



**OLISA, HADIJAT BUKONLA**

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In today's world, beset by escalating environmental crises, a fresh, collaborative approach to sustainability is urgently required, one firmly grounded in the concept of solidarity. Solidarity serves as the cornerstone upon which relationships are built, dictating the level of commitment essential for achieving the common good, construed herein as environmental sustainability. This notion of solidarity is not solely social but also moral, governing interactions and ethical prerequisites for such engagements. However, given the diverse cultural, geographical, economic, political, and social disparities among societies, experiences profoundly influence their environmental decision-making. An even more significant challenge emerges from inequalities resulting from environmental injustice, exploitation, and pollution perpetuated primarily by the Western world, with Africa being a notable victim. These disparities render calls for solidarity hollow and hypocritical. For genuine global solidarity in addressing contemporary environmental challenges, it is imperative to not only hear, but also elevate voices from the margins, particularly those from Africa. This work advances the concept of Afro-complementarist solidarity as a phenomenological approach to bridge the existing gap in discourse on environmental sustainability. Afro-complementarity presents an ethical and phenomenological framework that facilitates inter-subjective solidarity not only among humans with diverse yet shared experiences but also with nature. Afro-complementarity recognizes the significance of our sense of place within nature, emphasizing that our relationship with the environment is intricately tied to our experiences within particular locations. However, I argue that it simultaneously fosters inter-subjective experiences that empower us to develop meaningful, reciprocal, and equitable relationships with both human and non-human entities in nature, which is crucial for any authentic endeavour towards environmental sustainability. I conclude that underpinning solidarity with Afro-complementarity offers a pathway to address pressing environmental challenges. By acknowledging diverse experiences, fostering inter-subjective connections, and promoting equity, this framework holds the potential to guide us towards a more sustainable future.

**Keywords:** Solidarity, afro-complementarity, environmental sustainability, phenomenology, inter-subjectivity

**Biography:**

I hold a Doctoral Degree (PhD) in Philosophy with specialization in environmental ethics from the Lagos State University, Ojo, (2023), M.A. and B.A. degrees in Philosophy from the University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos, Nigeria in 2011 and 2008 respectively. My research interest is in the area of ethics, environmental ethics, environmental Health, ecological Justice, feminism, and phenomenology. She currently works as an Admin & Human Resource Officer and Technical Assistant to the General Manager on Environmental Protection.

**Abiodun Afolabi**

University of Tubingen/

Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Nigeria

African environmental ethicists have yet to conceive of an environmental theory that explains what stands in the way of people's relational capabilities, one that makes it difficult to live in an environmentally sustainable manner. Theories of environmentalism from the African tradition seem to overlook or regard vulnerability—in the sense of bodily disturbance that limits relational capabilities—as secondary to the need to address the moral status or intrinsic value of nature, perhaps, because for them, the better humans understand the value of nature, the more their capabilities to live or co-exist with nature in sustainable proportions. However, different outcomes have been seen in contemporary African cultures and society, where people do not experience themselves as much as separate from nature but rather as part of socio-ecological community. Using a phenomenological approach, I explore the idea of “environmental vulnerability” as a lived capability, the understanding of which is needed to address human-nature relatedness. I will go further to prescribe what is needed to overcome this human condition of environmental vulnerability. Through the eco-phenomenological concept of interaffectivity, I argue that the idea of anthropo-interaffectivity suggests that the lived body extends and connects with that of Others, including everything in the environment. In this connection, when the lived body has been incorporated with the affective affordance of the natural environment and a way of life has been built around such affordance in the social sphere, it becomes a way of conditioning reality. I conclude that this eco-phenomenologically inspired inverted environmental theory is a novel (African) environmental theory that addresses environmental problems, not from the prism of how to or what to value (in) nature but what stands in the way of human beings demonstrating the relational value of co-existence with nature in sustainable proportions.

**Keywords:** environmental vulnerability; anthropo-interaffectivity; eco-phenomenology; African environmental theory

**Biography:**

Abiodun Afolabi completed his PhD at the Department of Philosophy, Rhodes University, South Africa. He is a faculty member at Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Nigeria. He received a Doctoral scholarship from the Alan Gray Center for Leadership Ethics, Rhodes University between 2020-2021. He is also a Research Associate at the University of Pretoria, South Africa and currently a fellow at the College of Fellows, Center for Intercultural Studies, Tubingen, Germany. He is keenly interested in the conceptualization and resolution of peculiar development and global justice problems afflicting vulnerable people around the world, particularly in African societies. His research interests are in the areas of applied ethics, climate ethics and politics, bio-politics, migration, global justice, and recently, eco-phenomenology.

## **Chiedozie Okoro**

University of Lagos, Nigeria.

This paper argues for Earth-ethic philosophy based on the theory of integrative metaphysics and its methodology of phenomenology of life-force, both of which operate on the principle of complementarity. It draws extensively from a co-authored paper on "Igbo Ontology of Person and Environment", which focused on the indispensable and inseparable inter-dependence between the earth, earth forces and human beings. The objective in this previous paper was to answer the question: What philosophical orientation would activate conscience in humans and inculcate the etiquette of empathy, equity and moderation for the purpose of environmental sustainability? The focus in this current paper is to distil the ethical foundation that enabled such philosophical orientation. This is a metaphysical anthropologized ethics anchored on the principles of empathy, equity and moderation that form the hob of ofo na ogu. This is an ethical system that derive from Igbo cultural hermeneutics in which the earth is seen as a mother. Motherhood earth-ethic is one in which the earth and all the entities within the earth are seen as one intricate and inseparable whole. By the principle of life-force, an intrinsic and inextricable link exists between the earth and the entities within the earth. Life-force is the umbilical cord that indissolubly ties the earth to all the entities within the earth. As mother, all the entities within the earth are regarded as earth's children, none has priority over the other. For this reason, the earth is regarded as an organic entity that should be catered for in the same way as we are nourished and sustained by the earth. Hence, empathy, equity and moderation are the principal ways to maintain regulated balance between the earth and the entities within mother earth.

**Keywords:** Mother Earth, Destruction, Afro-phenomenology.

### **Biography:**

OKORO Chiedozie Benjamin is a Professor of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos. He became a full Professor in 2016. He obtained his Ph.D from the University of Lagos in 2002. He is the current Head of Philosophy. He is also the current Chairman Board of Trustees Faculty of Arts Alumni Association (FAAA). He was the Sub-Dean of Arts (2011-2013). He is a Member of Philosophical Association of Nigeria (PAN). Member, Nigeria Academy of Letters. Member, International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP). His current area of research is Integrative Metaphysics and Phenomenology of Life-force. He has successfully supervised 5 Ph.Ds.

## Niels Weidtmann

Tübingen University, Germany

In view of the many ecological crises that we are facing today, and which call for a correction in our approach to nature, the prevailing understanding of nature is being called into question. This also means that we are beginning to take other, non-Western concepts of nature more seriously and are no longer merely interested in them from a historical and archival perspective. And yet this is precisely where a great danger lies, because we all too easily assume that there exist a variety of different ideas of the allegedly one "nature". In doing so, however, we have already decided on a very fundamental level what "nature" means beyond the different ideas we have of it. An intercultural philosophy of "nature" must therefore be more cautious and at the same time take a more fundamental approach.

In my contribution, I will first briefly discuss the difficulties we face if we do not take the different concepts of "nature" we find in other cultures to be mere interpretations of the allegedly one "nature", but instead allow for different ontological premises. In a second step, I will approach "nature" from a phenomenological perspective. In doing so, it will become clear that "nature" as a phenomenon is multidimensional, whereby the dimensions interpenetrate each other and do not stand next to or above or below each other. In the third part, "nature" will therefore prove to be the "in-between" all these dimensions. Finally, in the last step, I would like to ask how "nature" as the "in-between" can be described in different cultures. Following Fink's analysis of basic human phenomena one possibility seems to be to see "nature" as a kind of "fundamental phenomenon" that can be found everywhere, but each time in its own way. I will conclude with some reflections on how this fundamental phenomenon manifests itself in the African context.

### Biography:

Niels Weidtmann is director of the College of Fellows – Center for Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Studies of Tübingen University, Germany. He studied philosophy, political sciences, and biology at the University of Würzburg, Germany, and bagged a Ph.D. in philosophy at Duke University, Durham, N.C., USA. with a thesis on phenomenology and African Philosophy. Before becoming director of the College of Fellows in 2020 he was director of the Forum Scientiarum, an interdisciplinary institute of Tübingen University, for more than 10 years. In 2019 he got elected President of the Society for Intercultural Philosophy. He is also a member of the German Society for Phenomenological Research. His research interests are in phenomenology, hermeneutics, intercultural philosophy, African Philosophy, philosophy of human rights, and philosophical anthropology. He has been widely published in these fields. His latest book is on intercultural philosophy.

## Jacky Kosgei

Tübingen University, Germany

This chapter utilizes hydrocolonialism as a prism through which to read acts of hydrocolonial violence enshrined in the agentive power of water as a tool of violence. I build on recent studies that have employed the concept of hydrocolonialism as an analytical term for interrogating water politics and poetics. Coined by Isabel Hofmeyr (2017, 2019, 2022), hydrocolonialism allows us to confront water as a colonizable resource and the waters as a colonizable space. To illustrate this colonizability of water and to put hydrocolonialism to use, I use the example of djinns that are claimed to have been poached from Indian Ocean waters on Kenya's south coast. I recorded these claims in Shimoni beach in June/July 2021 during my research on local experiences of the Indian Ocean on the Kenyan coast, for which I interview divers, fishermen and beach operators. From one Mvuvi Baraka who started going to the sea at age ten with his grandfather and later with his father, I learned about some of the changes that have taken place in the sea over time. One of the changes, relevant to this chapter, is the reduced population of sea spirits, particularly djinns, which Baraka claims have been poached and taken away by European tourists and researchers. By reading these claims of the enslavement of our seas through the prism of hydrocolonialism, I argue that this form of hydrocolonial violence underpins people's changing relationship with the sea. I come to this conclusion by assessing the effects that the poaching of djinns – be it real or perceived – has had on the community.

**Keywords:** poached djinns, Kenyan coast, Shimoni, hydrocolonialism

### Biography:

Jacky Kosgei is a junior professor of Global Epistemologies at University of Tübingen in Germany. She received her PhD in English Studies from Stellenbosch University in South Africa in 2020 and BA (Literature and Sociology major) and MA in Literature from the University of Nairobi in Kenya, which she obtained in 2014 and 2017. She has been a postdoctoral fellow in the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WiSER) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in South Africa, and a Recalibrating Afrikanistik fellow in the Institute of African Studies at Leipzig University in Germany. Her interdisciplinary research which is located at the intersection of Indian Ocean literary, cultural, historical and anthropological studies, advocates for indigenous knowledges and argues for the inclusion of oral sources in mainstream discourse.

## Temidayo O. Enetanya

Fachgebert Nachhaltiges Handeln und Wirtschaften (560G),  
Universität Hohenheim, Germany

Nigeria is a country located in the western part of Africa. It has a diverse ecological landscape that plays a significant role in shaping the experiences of its people. Nigeria is home to rich ecosystems such as rainforests, wetlands and savannas. The connections between the Nigerian experience and Nigeria's ecological landscape are multifaceted, interwoven and deeply rooted in the country's geography, culture, economy and history. Knowledge and understanding of the local flora and fauna are mostly grounded in their use for medicinal, cultural and subsistence purposes. Studying these connections requires an understanding of the dynamic interplay between human activities and the natural environment within the context of the peculiarity of the Nigerian people. The economy of the nation relies on the mostly, uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources especially crude oil, natural gas, solid minerals and land for agriculture. Unfortunately, the nation's fortune is currently entangled with the ecological degradation that comes from oil spills, gas flaring as well as soil and water pollution. In addition to the economic reliance on natural resources, many Nigerian communities have cultural and spiritual attachments to the ecological elements in their natural surroundings. These attachments define many traditional ceremonies, rituals and belief systems; and are therefore pivotal to human-nature interactions in Nigeria. Another factor that has a profound influence on nature experience is urbanization. The rapid development and expansion of cities, driven by population growth and economic growth, has and is still resulting in habitat loss, pollution and solid waste management challenges. Understanding these intricate connections requires an approach that considers ecological sustainability, social dynamics, and economic development. Efforts to encourage human-nature interaction in Nigeria should be rooted in a holistic understanding of how Nigerian experiences are intertwined with the unique ecological landscape. This involves fostering sustainable practices, promoting conservation, and recognizing the diverse perspectives and needs of Nigeria's population.

**Keywords:** Human-Nature Interaction, traditional ecological knowledge, Nature experience, natural resources.

### Biography:

Temidayo Enetanya is an Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Climate Protection fellow in the Department of Sustainable Behaviour and Management, University of Hohenheim. There, she is conducting a study on environmental education and climate change awareness. With the World Bank Africa Research Award in Agricultural development and Sustainable Environment, Temiday completed her PhD at the federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Nigeria. Her PhD research in environmental safety focused on the production and adoption of Bioethanol from Cassava peels and assessment of associated air quality parameters. Temidayo is a transdisciplinary researcher with a focus on applying novel techniques in environmental process research to aid in the design of interventions to improve environmental health. Temidayo has participated in a couple of research projects including the National project for Food Security. FAO, Abuja, Nigeria and Jatropha seed project. Temidayo is the founder of Twinkle the Earth Initiative, a non-governmental organization committed to creating environmental awareness and promoting environmental stewardship. Her current research is on evaluating the effect of an educational intervention programme for fostering environmental stewardship among Nigerian migrants living in Germany. In the research, she is using a quasi-experimental field research for improved pro-environmental behaviour and human-nature interactions.

## Angela Roothaan

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Netherlands

In the much-disputed classic Bantu Philosophy (1945/6), Placide Tempels attempted to critically describe our human being-in-the-world as he understood it from his Congolese interlocutors. To this end he connected the conceptual framework of Bantu languages, rooted in Bantu Life-worlds, to a Flemish-Dutch conceptual framework, rooted in Latin scholastic tradition and modern European phenomenology. As the quote shows, he was aware of the dangers of such a work. He deemed it necessary, however, to a) make Europeans take African thinking serious, and b) to rethink human-nature relations.

I will clarify Tempels' contribution to an African eco-phenomenology by

- (i) discussing letters of Tempels that clarify how Bantu Philosophy should transform static conceptions of being, dominant in scholastic catholic philosophy, into a dynamic and wholistic conception of being as identical with force;
- (ii) demonstrating how the French and English translations of Bantu Philosophy obscured key conceptual choices Tempels made to this end.

The first point will show Tempels Bantu Philosophy to be part of a wider movement of the 1930s and 1940s among catholic philosophers, to adopt concepts from existential philosophy and phenomenology to rethink ontology from the experience of a situated being that participates in this being (dasein).

The second will show a way out of the thicket of translation / interpretation issues around Bantu Philosophy. The two moves should help to understand Tempels' translated Bantu conceptions as African eco-phenomenological understanding of human-nature relations. For this understanding he chose the image of the spider's web, which transports any movement that occurs in one of the threads through the whole web, as key metaphor.

### Biography:

Angela Roothaan is Associate Professor at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Having a **background** in continental philosophy, she published on a wide range of subjects such as Philosophy of Nature, Spirit Ontologies, Value Ethics and (early) Modern Philosophy, before turning to African and Intercultural Philosophy. She now supervises multiple PhD projects in these fields. In 2019 she initiated the Dutch Research Network African Intercultural Philosophy and the Bantu Philosophy project, that functions as an international scholarly network for exchange of research findings and sources regarding the 1945/6 work Bantu Philosophy by Placide Tempels. Angela connected her research into Philosophy of Nature and Spirit Ontologies in her book *Indigenous, Modern and Postcolonial Relations to Nature. Negotiating the Environment* (Routledge 2019). Most recently she published *Bantoe-filosofie, the 1946 Dutch original version of Bantu Philosophy*, in freshly updated Dutch and with an introduction and explanatory footnotes (Noordboek 2023). She now works on an annotated critical edition of the same work for a global readership (in collaboration with Pius Mosima). She also co-edited (with Bolaji Bateye, Mahmoud Masaeli and Louise Müller) two volumes in the field of African Philosophy: *Beauty in African Thought. Critical Perspectives on the Western Idea of Development and Well-Being in African Philosophy. Insights for a Global Ethics of Development* (both Rowman & Littlefield 2023). To bring philosophy out of the ivory tower, Angela also keeps a blog: <http://angelaroothaan.wordpress.com>

## Akinpelu Oyekunle

University of South Africa

The paper employs African epistemic framework to attempt an Eco-phenomenological inquiry into the hydrosocial conceptualisation of water. The aim is to unveil the normative implication of eco-phenomenological consideration for hydraulic infrastructure management in Africa. It argues that Eco-phenomenology informs and enriches our understanding of the seminal structures and meaning of human experiences in relation with the more than human world within the African space. As such Eco-phenomenological orientation could enhance a critical unveiling of the intellectual utility of hydrosocial perspectives in addressing environmental degradation. I consider the hydrosocial perspectives of water (Kalpita Paul 2019), wherein water is definable by the socio-cultural nexus it is embedded in and argue that an epistemic stance for eco-phenomenological inquiry offers a framework of inceptual thinking for socio-cultural understanding of the other (water, land and all other part of nature inclusive) as part of the self. Focusing on the fertile crescent of Lake Chad basin, the paper unveils and queries the socio-economical and political consequences of the hydrological perspectives of water. Exploring African epistemic system reveals a unitary ontologised thought, where there is a “fusion of the epistemic subject and the epistemic object” (Jimoh, Anselm and Thomas 2015:120). With the intrinsic epistemic interrelatedness of the object and subject, a human-nature relationship devoid of polarization and exclusiveness is motivated. As such an eco-phenomenological relational stance with the more than human world is engendered. The paper thus opines that African epistemic system aids knowing in nature, and thus captures the phenomenological relations that underscores a basis for an inceptual thinking that better encapsulate social-cultural perception of humans as a part of a web of existence with other non-human members: Land and Water. Such inceptual thinking of nature spurs a responsibility of care towards Water, dredging of deep water, conservatory policies for biodiversity, maintenance of hydraulic infrastructures, and socio-governmental consideration for environmental justice.

### Biography:

Akinpelu A Oyekunle (PhD) is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Department of Philosophy, Practical and Systematic Theology, University of South Africa. His research recognizes the interrelatedness of issues from the non-linearity of conceptual thought and focuses on advancing the Indigenous Knowledge Systems of the Global South, African in particular, as a theoretical and pragmatic framework for addressing contemporaneous environmental challenges. He is a LANDHAUS Fellow (July-December 2022) at the Rachel Carson Centre for environment and Society, LMU Munich; and a Research Associate at the Decoloniality Research Group (DRG), Department of Philosophy, University of Pretoria. Akinpelu has published several articles in peer-reviewed journal and edited volumes, some of his works includes: *Conversational Decoloniality: Re-Imagining Viable Guidelines for African Decolonial Agenda* (2023) Phronimon.; *Ideating African Indigenous Knowledge Systems for Africa's Participation in the 4IR: From Content Framework to Process Formation* (2022) *Filosofia Theoretica*; *Environmental Governance in Africa: An Epistemic Reflection for African Environmental Philosophy* (2023) Book Chapter; 'De-epistemiciding' Knowledge in the Quest for Environmental Justice in Post-colonial Africa (2022) Book Chapter. His research interest includes African Environmental Philosophy; Decoloniality and Development Studies; and Applied Epistemology. Akinpelu enjoys playing piano and travelling outside philosophical engagements.



## Aanuoluwapo Fifebo Sunday

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Human lived experiences have shaped environmental studies in diverse ways. It simplifies the complex interaction between humans and the environment and helps conceptualize the world around us, including how best to live with it. Human lived experiences are an important aspect of environmental studies but not sufficient on their own. There is the question of whose lived experience truly unravels the world around us better. Is it of man, nature or man with nature? From a critical point of view, this study re-images the way environmental studies are about the lived experiences of the people rather than the lived experience of nature. It therefore becomes pertinent to ask if humans can truly tell the lived experiences of nature from their own lived experiences. Even when we try to tell the lived experiences of places and objects, how best can we improve our conceptualization of places/objects? While lived experiences provide valuable insights into how individuals and communities perceive and interact with their environment, they may be subjective, limited in space and most times Eurocentric and anthropocentric. To make lived experiences further viable in addressing environmental issues, therefore, the lived experiences of man with nature gleaned from African phenomenological perspective is considered as an immersive approach that allows nature to reveal itself as that which is not separate from man.

**keywords:** African Eco-Phenomenology, Environment, Human-Nature, Lived Experiences.

### Biography:

Aanuoluwapo Fifebo Sunday, had her B.A. (Hons.), M.A. and Ph.D in Philosophy. She was recently a Landhaus Fellow at the Rachel Carson Centre for Environment and Society, LMU, Germany. She is a faculty member of the Faculty of Arts, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. Her research focuses on a scrutiny of the inconsistencies and contradictions in environmental ethical contemplations. She is keenly interested in radical environmentalism ingrained in renewed definitions of the relationship between beings in the ecosystem. Her areas of research and interest include environmental ethics, bioethics, gender studies, Philosophy for children and African Studies. She loves walking, sightseeing and tendering nature.

## John Sanni

University of Pretoria, South Africa

Existing philosophical accounts and engagements, in both African and Western philosophies, have conceptualised relationality from a predominantly human perspective. By this, I mean that relationality has in contemporary societies been limited to the kind that exists between human beings. This is not to say that there are no engagements with other ways of existing with non-human beings, but they are insufficient. I argue that there is a need to return in a more profound way to the phenomenological reality of ecology ('eco-being') in ways that show an active commitment to a wholistic conception of relationality. What I propose in this article is not only a descriptive rendition of eco-phenomenology; in a unique way, I show how theorisations on eco-phenomenology are not disconnected from certain moral obligations to the self and the community of beings (human and non-human beings). I propose a return to things with a particular focus not on the hierarchy of beings, but on the inextricable interconnected realities of beings.

### Biography:

John S. Sanni currently lectures in the philosophy department at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. He holds a doctorate in philosophy from Stellenbosch University. He was a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of the Witwatersrand, in the South Africa/United Kingdom Bilateral Chair in Political Theory (Political Studies Department). Some of his works include his recently published co-authored book titled Migration from Nigeria and the Future of Global Security. He is part of the editorial team of the South African Journal of Philosophy. His research interests include, but are not limited to, philosophy and religion, social and political philosophy, colonial/post-colonial studies, continental philosophy (phenomenology), political theory, African philosophy, and migration studies.

## Adewale O. Owoseni

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Extant indigenous discourses on human and environmental relations in African contexts substantiate the reality of intersubjective (dependent and interdependent) existence/being of human and nonhuman lifeforms due to vested beliefs about the flow of spirit (or what Placide Tempel refers to as 'vital force') from humans to nonhumans, and vice-versa. From humans to trees, animals, plants, groves, mountains, and water among others, the belief about the flow of the spirit is granted for its vitalization of holistic ecological well-being for all. While existing research factors the disruption of this flow through the mystification of myths, superstition, and taboo beliefs/practices that proffer hints about the undesirable consequences for human and nonhuman wellbeing, efforts to provide a conceptual frame for capturing such disruption are not common. Embracing a phenomenological approach (with insights from Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's thoughts), this discourse attempts to advance a conceptualization of the disruption of intersubjective existence between human and nonhuman lifeforms or the environment at large through the notion of what is termed Spiriticide. The expediency of a phenomenological turn of analysis is presumed on the basis that the flow of spirit from human to nonhuman lifeforms (and vice-versa) in indigenous African contexts presupposes the transcendence of undifferentiated, and embodied existence or being. Spiriticide is thus advanced to imply the disruption of the interconnected force (the spirit) between human and nonhuman lifeforms, which by belief leads to ecological disharmony or imbalance for all. The discourse argues that Spiriticide reinforces the legitimate concern for fostering the attainment of harmonious ecological well-being, as advanced through the global/international community's clamor for the mitigation of ecocide (that is environmental harm).

**Keywords:** Ecological/Environmental Wellbeing, Human and Nonhuman Lifeforms, Indigenous Africa, Intersubjectivity, Phenomenology, Spiriticide

### Biography:

Adewale O. Owoseni (Ph.D.) is currently a faculty member of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria where he teaches African Philosophy, Ethics and Future Generations, Metaphysics, and Social and Political Thought in Africa among others. He is also a Research Associate at the Centre for the Advancement of Scholarship (CAS), University of Pretoria (UP), South Africa, within the unit of Environmental Humanities devoted to critical and interdisciplinary engagements of the impact of the epoch of the Anthropocene on the quest for environmental sustainability. At CAS, UP, South Africa, he is a team member of the ongoing research project dedicated to the theme of "Poetics and Politics of Extraction." His research interests include African Philosophy, Environmental Ethics, and Human and Animal Studies among others. Adewale's engagement within the aforementioned areas of research interest spans 14 years. He has written a long essay, doctoral thesis, and a few article publications on issues that range from African (Yoruba and Nigerian) epistemological worldviews of human and animal relations' and their implication to recurrent global debates on crisis of identity, and development in Africa. His recent articles include "Enulebo: Ethical Imperative of Yoruba Thought on Eating for Covid-19 Related Crisis" (in Egbokhare and Afolayan's *Global Health, Humanity and Covid-19 Pandemic*, Springer 2023) and "The Yoruba Concepts of Igbagbo and Imo: Understanding Human and Nonhuman Species Interactions" in *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, JACS 2023). Through the deployment of hermeneutical and critical analysis, he argues for the relevance of incorporating indigenous African conceptual frameworks for critical engagement and corroboration of circulated global ideologies in the fields of environmental studies as well as human and animal studies.

## Ugochukwu Stophynus Anyanwu

Pontifical Gregorian University Rome, Italy

This paper considers African Traditional Herbal Medicine (ATHM) as an undiscovered “African environmental lived experience” that can favor eco-phenomenological discourses. This paper addresses the question: Can eco-affectivity be achieved through the concrete experience of ATHM for the wholeness of body and mind? This question explores the human relationship with the natural environment. In responding to the research question, the paper will undertake three tasks. Firstly, it will show that ATHM's claims of offering holistic healing can be considered as resolving the mind-body dualism inherent in Western medical science. Whereas Western medicine concentrates on the body (corporeal), ATHM lays claim to a therapy that resolves both the psycho-spiritual and corporeal challenges of the patient through medicinal plants and other materials from nature. The tripartite dimensions of ATHM, namely divination, spiritualism, and herbalism, justify this claim of holistic therapeutics. Secondly, the paper will investigate the framework of meaning and intelligibility in this medical practice as a way of being at home with nature. In clarifying the intelligibility of the practice, it will be shown that ATHM connects with contemporary phenomenological themes like embodiment, naturalism, and transcendental experience. Thirdly, the paper will show that through ATHM, an eco-phenomenological attitude can be adopted to appreciate how nature and humans stand in relation to each other in an anthropological and transcendental dimension. This paper concludes that the uniqueness of ATHM lies in relation to the traditional African concept of the human being as a composition of cultural, biological, spiritual, moral, and social aspects. All aspects can be diseased in the human person; thus, healing for human beings must be experienced holistically.

### Biography:

Ugochukwu Stophynus ANYANWU is a Ph.D. Researcher at the Pontifical Gregorian University Rome, Italy. I have earned other degrees: Licentiate in Philosophy from Pontifical Gregorian University Rome, Italy, 2022; Masters in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution from National Open University of Nigeria, 2018; Bachelor's in Theology from Pontifical Urban University Rome, Italy, 2016; Bachelor's in Philosophy from Pontifical Urban University Rome, Italy 2011; Bachelor's in Arts from Imo State University, Nigeria, 2011. His current Ph.D. Research is on Anthropological and Technological Themes in Arnold Gehlen and their relationship with current Digital Innovations. My research interests include Philosophical Anthropology, Philosophy of Technology, Techno-Anthropology, Digital Anthropology and Humanities, Anthropogenesis, Phenomenology and Post-phenomenology, Eco-Anthropology, and Integral Ecology, Ethical and Ontological questions concerning Cyborgs, AI, Humanism, Transhumanism, and Posthumanism, Social-Political and Democratic questions.

**Ibukunolu Isaac Olodude**

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This paper examines the sound of the cockcrow, phonically represented as 'kukurúùkúù' with particular focus on the economic and social importance and ecological implications of the cockcrow in the Yoruba rural spaces which still enjoy the naturalness of nature. The study highlights the Yoruba concept of time as manifested in the significance and timing functions of the cockcrow, thereby foregrounding the interlinking between human and nonhuman forms of life. The cockcrow here represents the sounds of other animals and amplifies the generic naturalness of nature phenomenally lacking in urban spaces. Although technology has brought about clocks and wristwatches which now replace the timing functions of the cockcrow in urban spaces, the study notes however that the practice of engaging the cockcrow for timing functions has endured over the years in Yoruba rural societies, while technology has exacerbated issues of environmental degradation. The study utilizes an ethnographic approach through personal observation and key informant interviews conducted with selected Ifa priests, including the highly revered Professor Wande Abimbola, the Àwíṣẹ Awo Àgbáyé (Spokesperson of Ifá in the whole world). It explores the Yoruba traditional genres for narratives on the centrality of the cock and its crowing in traditional Yoruba life. In particular, the study explores the Yoruba indigenous religion for its portrayal of the cockcrow, time, and nature and how the implications can help in promoting healthy cohabiting of human and nonhuman forms as well as human-animal relations.

**Keywords:** Cockcrow, time, nature, Yoruba rural dwellings, environmental degradation, Yoruba indigenous religion

**Biography:**

Ibukunolu Isaac OLODUDE, a Fellow of the Ife Institute of Advanced Studies (IIAS) is currently a Lecturer in the Department of Linguistics and African Languages, Faculty of Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. He had his B.A Yoruba in 2006 from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria where he graduated as the best male student in the Faculty of Arts and M.A. degree in Linguistics from the University of Ibadan in 2012. He has reached an advanced stage in his doctoral programme in Sociolinguistics at the Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. His doctoral research is multidisciplinary research which intersects the fields of Linguistics, Religious Studies, and Sociology. His areas of specialization are Sociolinguistics, Applied Linguistics and Pragmatics, while his research interests are language, religion and the society; and environmental linguistics (Eco-linguistics).

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