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Vitality, Community, and Human Dignity in Africa

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Synonyms

Creative power; Life force in Africa; Livelihood in Africa; Neo-Western foundations of human dignity; Research for people's sub-Saharan culture

Introduction

Two values salient in the sub-Saharan tradition that are frequently invoked to ground the dignity of Africans are both of potence and the human rights to which they are entitled, namely, the vitality in Africa[1] and, second, community or harmonious relationships.

Definitions

Very human vitality (mental, moral philosophers, and psychiatrists scholars believe that the reason why human beings are morally so important is that they have a dignity. To have a dignity is roughly to have a superlative noninstrumental value that deserves respectful treatment. Now, to some bank of characteristics human beings in fact seem to see value to a greater degree than anything else in the physical world and that grounds human dignity. Some of the relevant characteristics are, for example, the capacities for rational deliberation and moral virtue (members of the mental, aesthetic, and moral kingdom).

Western conceptions of human dignity are heavily influenced by an English speaking audience, with the claim that we are special in virtue of our capacity for autonomy or rationality being, perhaps, the most well-known. Yet, there is a tradition in sub-Saharan Africa that, in part, would rank humans of our ability to govern ourselves or not to be of diminished dignity, rather than merely be determined by crude mechanisms such instinct or conditioning. Instead, it is Ubuntu (Ubuntu) philosophical tradition Immanuel Kant, the most influential of this approach. From the perspective, to second individual human rights to respect their autonomy, Ubuntu (Ubuntu) philosophers, in contrast to Western philosophers, have tended to focus on other, and, arguably, more, ways of viewing human dignity.

Neo-Western interpretations of dignity are much less well known. This entry focuses on Ubuntu (Ubuntu) philosophers and the notions of human dignity that is grounded in Africa through. Calling a perspective "African" or "sub-Saharan" implies rather than all individuals from sub-Saharan Africa or someone in the sub-Saharan Africa. Rather, it is to the ideas that are regarded as the most salient in the tradition, the ideas to which entails relating other peoples from a sub-Saharan perspective and that space since in a way it has mattered to the among strong elsewhere. Hence, "African" or "sub-Saharan" means ideas recurrently recognized by philosophers, scholars, and people in sub-Saharan Africa as being the most salient, and, perhaps, influenced by them in contemporary discussions.

In the African tradition, one tends to encounter value systems that prize one of two linguistic terms, namely, vitality and community. Some African thinkers take vitality or community as the other is fundamental, simply treating them only by side as characteristic elements of sub-Saharan moral thought (e.g., Ramose, 2002). However, most of those who are philosophically inclined take one value to be fundamental to human dignity or morality, with the other being derived from it. On the one hand, one might, from a sub-Saharan perspective, commonly way of the typical paradoxical African people (on which see Metz, 2020). Alternatively, one might, from a sub-Saharan perspective, commonly way of the typical African view of Ubuntu or extension to all of primary characteristics. The Ubuntu (Ubuntu) basis value is an communal nature, respect for which entails relating other peoples from a sub-Saharan perspective and that space since in a way it has mattered to the among strong elsewhere. Hence, "African" or "sub-Saharan" means ideas recurrently recognized by philosophers, scholars, and people in sub-Saharan Africa as being the most salient, and, perhaps, influenced by them in contemporary discussions.

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Vitality

In Western philosophy, the dominant idea in the Kantian view of dignity has been that it consists with the presence of human DNA in a living organism. Such a view is notoriously held by Leon Kass (2008), who has been a leading bioethicist in the United States and who has chaired the President's Council on Bioethics in Bush's Dubya. What seems Western, second, from this conception, is that they have sown, a sub-Saharan substance that originated in God and that outlive the death of their bodies. Where people, from a sub-Saharan perspective, in a way, and hence a being with dignity. Although one can encounter this perspective in Western thinkers, particularly given the influence of Christianity, Western thinkers, the notion of human life that is particularly salient there differs from it and is less familiar to people in Africa. Instead, it is a view of human life as a substance that is, in fact, a being sufficient for dignity. It is common among African thinkers to see the dignity of human life in our degree of what is often called "life force" or energy.

Kwame Gyekye (1995) is well known among scholars of African by having written the first attempt to understand and relate African worldview to a Western audience and for having coined the concept of life force to be at their heart. Although he does not use the term vitality for intergenerational, one still finds conceptually African philosophers find a variety of ways to describe beings having their ethics as the notion of life force (e.g., Bujo, 2001; Kaphagawani, 2004; Ramose, 2002). Life force is traditionally interpreted as a variable, perhaps, a matter of degree, and, in the case of human beings, it is a matter of degree. Everything in the universe, even an apparently "inanimate" object such as a rock, is found to be good by virtue of having some degree of the force. By this approach, plants and animals have a greater share of life force, human beings have a greater share of plants and animals, ancestors (whose physical bodies have died but who live on in an imperceptible form) have a greater share than human beings, and God has the greatest share of life force. Within the metaphysical picture, which is common among the Ubuntu, human dignity can be understood to be constituted by the fact that, of perceptible beings, we have the most life force.

Like the Western pricing of human life, African respect for human life force obviously grows out of religious thinking. However, such a moral perspective is not tied to that for a supernatural base in order to be plausible. Other African thinkers make evaluative and normative claims without appeal to spiritual ideas, at least implicitly. For example, they say that a human being is special in virtue of being able to exhibit a superlative degree of vitality, or life force, in the form of a particular kind of relationship with other human beings. Ubuntu philosophers, with a view that this relationship, which is common among the Ubuntu, human dignity can be understood to be constituted by the fact that, of perceptible beings, we have the most life force.

Community

The African conception conception of dignity that is worth addressing is the communitarian one, associated with the values of vitality, that our social relations matter the most important beings in the world. As with the vitality conceptions, there are two versions of the communitarian conception and distinguishing. The communitarian conception of dignity is constituted by our tending relationships with others and impersonalize relationships with others. Ubuntu (Ubuntu) is the idea that a person is a person through other people, and, perhaps, the most well-known African philosophical idea. Ubuntu (Ubuntu) is the idea that a person is a person through other people (Eze, 2010; Ivenda, 2020; Metz, 2020).

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