



UG

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY & CLASSICS INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM



Dates:
April 29-30, 2025

Mode:
**Hybrid – University of
Ghana and Online**

Emergent Personhood: A Philosophy from Africa and the West

What makes us 'persons' in the moral sense, beings with a certain dignity and worth? This symposium explores personhood by considering a compelling new view of persons as *emergent*. Emergent Personhood, first introduced by Nancy Jecker and Caesar Atuire (in *What is a Person? Untapped Insights from Africa*, Oxford 2025) characterizes persons as beings that emerge through social relational processes involving human beings yet are more than the sum of these relationships. Persons have an identity of their own and exhibit superlative moral worth, a remarkable feature not present at the base. Emergent Personhood justifies personhood for all human beings from birth to death, held equally by them, that cannot be lost or diminished. It also gives strong support to personhood for a wide range of animals, soils, rocks, and ecosystems.

This symposium brings together scholars from Africa and the West to engage in a critical conversation about the concept of emergence and its application to personhood. Taking the book as its focus, specific questions to be addressed include:

- What is 'emergence'?
- Can beings of superlative moral worth emerge through human relationships?

- Could an artificially intelligent (AI) agent be a person? Could a tree or river?
- Is a prenatal human being a person?
- How does a person cease to be a person?
- Is consciousness necessary for personhood?
- Is personhood based on properties or processes?
- Is personhood relational or intrinsic?
- Does the historical rendering of person as *persöna* apply today?

Invited Speakers

1. **Prof. Nancy Jecker**, *University of Washington*
2. **Prof. Caesar Atuire**, *University of Oxford*
3. **Prof. Thaddeus Metz**, *University of Pretoria*
4. **Prof. Hasskei Majeed**, *University of Ghana*
5. **Prof. Kevin Behrens**, *Wits University*
6. **Prof. Martin Odei Ajei**, *University of Ghana*
7. **Prof. Katrin Flikschuh**, *London School of Economics and Political Science*
8. **Dr. Nancy Myles Gyamfi**, *University of Ghana*
9. **Dr. Chris Wareham**, *Utrecht University*
10. **Dr. Richmond Kwesi**, *University of Ghana*
11. **Dr. Chika Mba**, *University of Ghana*
12. **Dr. David J. Gunkel**, *Northern Illinois University*
13. **Dr. Anthony Oyowe**, *University of Western Cape*

To participate in this
Symposium

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