
THE INDISPENSABILITY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN TRANSHUMANISM: TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE VISION OF HUMAN PERFECTIBILITY

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Abstract

Transhumanism is a philosophical and cultural movement advocating the development and deployment of technology to enhance human physical and cognitive abilities, ultimately transcending biological limitations for the betterment of humanity. This is exemplified in the advancements of artificial intelligence, biomedical technology, genetic engineering, brain computer interfaces, cloning, nanotechnology, and cybernetics. Although, these scientific breakthroughs highlight humanity's natural imperfections, it however demonstrates that deficiencies in humans can be overcome and it offers hope for future perfection. Consequently, it could be deduced that when human reasoning and capabilities are sufficiently augmented and applied to science and technology, the environment and human inhabitants would be optimized for perfection. In spite of this, transhumanism presents only an atomistic, rather than holistic, understanding of human perfectibility, emphasizing technological enhancements over integrated development. Inclusive human perfectibility should be contingent upon self-engineering- the ability of humans to reason and deploy machines with a view to overcoming complex moral dilemma and situations. Aptly put, inclusive human perfectibility therefore requires the development and harmonization of good behavior with transhumanist's engendered physical and cognitive fitness. To neglect human moral perfectibility in a world plagued by conflict and inhumanity would render holistic perfectibility elusive and validate the skepticism that humans cannot sufficiently control themselves and their environment for overall well-being. In other words, transhumanism's focus on external enhancements must be complemented by introspective moral development to achieve true human perfectibility. The paper employs critical, analytical and prescriptive approaches to argue that, a more comprehensive understanding of human perfectibility through transhumanism requires acknowledging both the external and moral aspects of human nature. Technological advancements that does not address human moral weaknesses, vices, and redirect them toward the good cannot guarantee holistic human perfection. When this integration in moral development is factored into transhumanism it would contribute significantly to global peace and productive interpersonal relationships.

Keywords:- Inclusive-Vision, Moral Perfectibility, Transhumanism and Self-Engineering.

Introduction

Human life is marked by inherent limitations and a quest for self-actualization. Natural impediments, such as birth defects, natural disasters and mortality threaten humanity's social and economic well-being. Additionally, self-inflicted calamities including environmental degradation, conflicts, and weapons of mass destruction, exacerbate human suffering.¹ To transcend these limitations and overcome biological finitude, humans have sought innovative solutions throughout history. They have always strived to overcome hindrances to happiness and abundant life. Bostrom, N traced the genesis of this innovative idea to the inception of society and emergence of man. According to him; "... the human species has always sought to narrow the gaps of hindrances and limitations to the full actualization of happiness and abundant life since time immemorial".² Although, the pursuit of this Baconian vision of "the relief of man's estate" began with rudimentary technologies in the Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods when men made pots from clay, embarked on food preservation, produced metal, copper, bronze³ and made fire from kindle stone before graduating to a higher level.

In contemporary times, transhumanism has emerged, promising enhanced human capabilities, super intelligence, extraordinary longevity and optimal well-being. In other words, transhumanism has made it increasingly evident that "man has the capacity not only to redesignor but to also change both his material and social environment".⁴ Consequently, there are fabrications of devices such as wooden legs, hearing aids, false teeth, stem cell therapies, in vitro fertilization, genetically modified food, brain chips and genomics exoskeletons among others, "to make man overcomeher biological limitations physically or mentally"⁵ and to drastically reduce unhappiness, mitigate diseases and minimize scarcity. In this regard, transhumanism representshuman capital development because it enhances human potential and engenders yet another effort towards a more qualitative advancement of humanity, it is also an effort to redefine the human personbecause it strives to improve human nature by emphasizing how we can overcome our biological limitations and, it representsan evolutionary phenomenon because it is a transitional route towards human perfectibility. But fundamentally, by addressing human limitations and mitigating suffering, transhumanism offers a path toward hedonistic pleasure and a better human experience. The questions that readily come to mind are: Is human perfectibility possible?What are the necessary and sufficient conditions that are applicable to such

¹. **Solomon Laleye**, "Humanity and the Existential Threats of Pandemic: the Imperative of a New Social Order in Nigeria". *Falsafa: Journal of Philosophy*, 3 (1)(2020) 51-78

². N. Bostrom, A History of Transhumanist Thought. *Journal of Evolution and Technology*, (2005)1-30. Available at: <https://www.nickbostrom.com/papers/history.pdf>. Accessed on 28th January 2024.

³. Ayo Fadahunsi&OlusegunOladiipo. (eds.).*Philosophy and the African Prospect: Selected Essays of Professor.J. OlubiSodipo on Philosophy, Culture and Society*. (Ibadan: Hope,(2004) 65.

⁴. Moses Makinde, *Logico- Philosophical Studies*(Ile-Ife :OAU Press,2014)539

⁵. R.S.Souza, (et.al) "The Transhumanist Conception of Body: A Critical Analysis from a Complex Systems Perspective". *Nat. Hum* (2020) 17–33.

perfectibility? What are the implications? Can imperfection be separated from human nature as projected by the transhumanist agenda? If perfectibility can be achieved do we still call human, humans? What role does African moral ideal play in the transhumanist agenda? Attempt would be made to answer these questions.

The Dialectics of Human Imperfection and Perfection

Generally, perfectionism encompasses diverse meanings ranging from normative account of a good human life, a theory of human well-being, a comprehensive moral theory to a distinct approach to politics.⁶ Epistemologically, one would ask if humans can truly comprehend what constitutes perfection given the variations of conception and the obscurity of the nature of the phenomenon. Human perfection is a concept that challenges the fundamental nature of humanity that is marked by imperfection and vulnerability. The anti-perfectibilists, those that object to the possibility of human perfection believe that human beings have the wherewithal to improve themselves and their societies but not without some limitations. These limitations particularly those imposed by human nature are considered insurmountable. This standpoint is in conformity with the aged-long traditional belief that human limitations are inherent aspect of the human condition and they are seen as insurmountable.

It is on records that some philosophers have offered diverse interpretations and debated the feasibility, or otherwise, of human perfectibility. Notwithstanding the fact that technological advancement has moved beyond the level it was during their time, it is however cognitively appropriate to recognize the foundation laid for the present discourse. Aristotle for instance, refers to human perfectibility as the potentials to achieve fullest development and excellence. This reflects in his concepts of *telos*, *eudaimonia* and *virtue* where the formulation of good habits, rational development and practical wisdom as contained in *Nicomachean Ethics* are advocated for as the routes to human perfection. In the opinion of Aristotle, “human perfectibility is the capacity to achieve the goal of fulfilling or realizing one's nature”.⁷ This could imply that, his conception of human perfectibility exclude the roles that machines could play as currently exemplified in contemporary human society by transhumanism.

Jean Jacques Rousseau opines that humans have the potentials for perfectibility but for the surrounding conditions. According to him; it is the socio-political conditions under which men live that corrupted man, if not, man is by nature inherently perfectible. In his words; “everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man”.⁸ In other words, as long as the problems orchestrated by our socio-political conditions

⁶. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* Perfectionism in moral and political philosophy (2017) Available at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/perfectionism-moral..> Accessed on 28th September, 2024

⁷. <https://www.encyclopedia.com> Accessed on 4th November, 2024

⁸. See. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. (1775) Part 1

remain unresolved, then human perfectibility would remain a mirage. Wolff, Christian and Dagobert D. Runes are of the view that perfection is essentially a moral attitude; “the optimistic belief in the ability of man to attain an eventual complete realization of his moral possibilities”.⁹

In all the aforementioned definitions, it is my considered opinion that human perfectibility is not construed from a holistic perspective; rather emphasis is on the moral perfectibility hence, the successive recommendation of education and moral development as the antidote to human imperfection. It is against this backdrop of narrow conceptions of human perfectibility that philosophers and moral educators from the time of Socrates to contemporary period advocated for the right cultivation of the soul through moral education. Unfortunately, the non – cultivation or inadequate cultivation of the soul a right continued to impede human moral perfection. -Man continues to inflict pains and suffering on fellow men through kidnapping, terrorism, tyrannical governments, political and business motivated assassinations, war and other forms of violent conflicts. These and the default in education in molding human character perhaps informed the view of Ogungbemi, S. on human perfectibility, when he posited that the type of education that can make human perfectibility plausible in this century is that one that embraces philosophy, science and technology,¹⁰ By implication, the existing moral education has yielded marginal benefits in ensuring human moral perfection; it remains relatively easier for humans to do evil than to do good. Hence, the need for technology to come to the rescue.

The vision for the intervention of technology in the development of morality could results in the debate on whether or not the tools and the recorded achievements of technology as personified in transhumanism can be deployed and replicated in the moral sphere of humans to achieve inclusive human perfectibility. In my opinion, if transhumanism can make humans “more humane”¹¹ by paying more attention to the elements that controls human moral action for a holistic and inclusive perfectibility then there is prospect for human perfectibility, if it cannot then the dream of inclusive human perfectibility would remain a mirage. By inclusive human perfectibility, reference is to the general, holistic and all-encompassing perfection of humans in all areas including both internal and external components that defines man.

It is against this backdrop that the opinion of J. H. Newman on human perfectibility becomes more instructive. To J. H. Newman, perfection connotes a state of flawlessness existence, characterized by completeness, soundness and consistency in thought and action.¹² This notion implies a transcendence of human fallibility, deficiency, and limitation, inherent to finite beings.

⁹. D. D. Runes, *Dictionary of Philosophy* (Totowa :Littlefield, 1979) 228

¹⁰. SegunOgunbemi, *Philosophy and Development* (Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2007) 180

¹¹. I. Persson, &J. Savulescu, “Moral Transhumanism” *The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy: A Forum for Bioethics and Philosophy of Medicine*, vol 35. No 6. (2010) 1. 656-669.

¹². Cf. SegunOgunbemi, *Philosophy and Development* (Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2007) 181

The rapid advancements in science and technology have sparked debate about the possibility of overcoming these natural impediments and achieve complete human perfection but transhumanism as it were, does not address the moral standpoints of humans especially in their interpersonal relationships; the focus of transhumanism has been on exclusive human perfectibility. Since the vision for human perfectibility attributable to transhumanism is one sided, it cannot achieve the desire goal of ensuring hedonically pleasing life for humanity. Pleasant life should not be predicated solely on the dividends that technology can deliver to the external component of the human person in the form of making our “clothes stain resistant, camouflage soldiers being use for security, ailments diagnosed and treated with relative ease”,¹³ or the correction of defective gene, recreation of genes that can make man immortal as well as correcting aging and prolongation of life.¹⁴ It must include the internal component of man.

The question then remains: can human innovation and technological progress ultimately bridge the gap between humanity's current state and the aspired ideal of perfection? The answer to this has ontological and ethical perspectives. Ontologically, would perfected humans still be human? Ethically, given the truism of the law of unintended consequences which suggests that interventions can have unforeseen effects, one may ask; whether or not, the pursuit of perfection could lead to unintended consequences?

The seat of human reason is proposed as the area that calls for intervention by transhumanism because, existing records have regrettably shown that even as species with rationality humans have not sufficiently internalized the principles, norms, values and conduct that should guide the choice of right course of actions in social and political relations. In spite of the laws, moral codes, social and religious institutions put in place to achieve peaceful social co-existence humans continue to default, sometimes we act right but most times our actions cast aspersions on humanity. We easily get tangled in morally pernicious conduct hence kidnapping, torture, terrorism, war, spousal abuse, corporal punishment, belligerent games and other moral estrangements that threaten social cohesion pervades contemporary human society. Since it is obvious that the ingenuity behind scientific and technological development as manifested in cybernetic modifications etcetera is to make life pleasing and more organized for humans and, since further tasking of reason in the areas of science and technology could broaden the scope of these disciplines beyond their present status to deliver more dividends to humanity, the posers therefore are; Can technological advancement in transhumanism add more pragmatic values to humanity through the reconstruction of morality? Beyond or as complement to moral education, are there no roles that science and technology could perform to make humans more humane?

¹³. N. Bostrom, “A History of Transhumanist Thought”. *Journal of Evolution and Technology*, (2005) 14. 1-30. Available at: <https://www.nickbostrom.com/papers/history.pdf>. Accessed on 28th January 2024.

¹⁴. N. Bostrom, “A History of Transhumanist Thought”. *Journal of Evolution and Technology*, (2005) 14. 1-30. Available at: <https://www.nickbostrom.com/papers/history.pdf>. Accessed on 28th January 2024.

Can't there be scientific and technological developed route to ensure that man do not consciously choose wrong course of actions in interpersonal and international relations? The essence of these questions and perhaps, answers to them is to make humans "more humane" through the reawakening of transhumanist agenda in order to pay more attention to the elements that controls human moral action for a holistic and inclusive human perfectibility. It is the contention of this paper therefore, that perfection that does not cognize all aspects of man is a haphazard perfection.

Technological Mediation of Human Morality

According to Chukwuokoli, C J., speculative method involves the power of the human mind. In his words; "the human mind by nature seeks to see things as a whole...how reality could form a sort of meaningful totality".¹⁵ Since this article is partly in the area of speculative philosophy, it intends to explore veritable guides from science and technology in actualizing human perfectibility. Although "historically, philosophers have proposed ideas that are first perceived to be preposterous and later regarded as common sense".¹⁶ For instance, when in November, 2002 some group of scholars and scientists converged in Bellevue, United States of America to speculate on what human beings were likely to become in the nearest future. A significant number of individuals deemed their submissions to be absurd. The findings of the group includes that; in the next twenty five years there will be the use of genetic medicine to treat most major diseases, such that gene therapy would be as inexpensive as a shot of penicillin or insulin, utilization of nanotechnology sensors, availability of various artificial body organs and the extension of human-life expectancy to one hundred years. In the next twenty five decades, there is an anticipated improvement and increasing diversity in the human genome, various body enhancement technologies to meet the future world class attributes such as voice, body and brain argumentations. It is also anticipated by these scholars that the year 3000 will experience difference in humanity, which includes extreme enhancements, variation in humankind and speciation global governance, space travel as necessity, further extension of human and health life...¹⁷ These projections may not have all come to reality but rapid and amazing advancement in the field of science and technology does not rule out the actualization of the projections. More importantly is that speculative philosophy has been a pointer to what lies ahead for mankind and, since transhumanism offers the elevation of humanity and *build hope for the removal of all forms of impediments to humanity realization of a perfect being then, it is not out of place to anticipate a technology that would work on humans particularly the seat of morals*, whence lies peace, love,

¹⁵. C. J. Chukwuokoli, "An Examination of the Methods of Philosophy and its Implication for the Development of Human Society". *Flash: Journal of Philosophy, Religion and Peace Studies* vol 10, no 1. (2023) 12

¹⁶. G. Middendorf, "African Philosophy; A Key to African Innovation and Development" *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development* 6:1. (2014) 3-12.

¹⁷. C. P. Olatunji & Solomon Laleye "The Threat of Globalization to the Growing Population of Africa", Diane Stinton, (ed) *The Arts, Man and Globalization: Trends, Issues and Problems*, (Accra: Deocraft Publishers, 2006) 251. 245-261

care, justice, compassion and cooperation with a view to making humans “more humane”

Immanuel Kant, the German philosopher, argues that perfective action is an action commanded categorically and not hypothetically i.e. it is an action commanded by a true moral obligation as ends and not by necessity of means.¹⁸ The source of a true moral obligation is traced by Pierpaolo L. & Giusi A. T.¹⁹ and Avise J.C & Francisco J. Ayala²⁰ who offer socio-biological explanations as the origin of morality. According to them, morality is a product of human nature and cultural evolution. Humans have a moral sense because their biological make-up determines the presence of three necessary conditions for ethical behavior: (i) the ability to anticipate the consequences of one's own actions; (ii) the ability to make value judgments; and (iii) the ability to choose between alternative courses of action. The cultural evolution accounts for the diversity of cultural norms among populations. Suffice it to say, the three necessary conditions highlighted are tantamount to arguing from universality to human nature. From the universality of the three conditions biological bases are provided for morality.

It is pertinent to say, substantial interventions have been made through technology to perfect the physical components of the human person whenever they are deficient. Records abound on successful heart and kidney transplants. In the same vein, the application of anesthetics on the human body has shown tremendous and positive effects on human consciousness. The challenge before transhumanism therefore, in the attempt to regulate human moral behavior involves how consciousness and matter could effectively relate and compel the human person to always pursue the right line of action in his social relations in the society. In this regard, if intuition and empirical evidence that stare us on daily basis are anything to go by, they suggest the dual ontology of the mental and physical entities as the constituents of the human person. Given this, one can then argue that consciousness, like matter is very real and they both remain the possible points of intervention for any proposed technology on the morality of human person. The challenge however remains the exact point of the intervention.

Any history on the dichotomy between consciousness and matter, at least in western philosophy, without recourse to Rene Descartes's analysis is a default. It is on record that Rene Descartes was the first to have articulated such distinctions. Descartes, and later the Cartesians postulate propagate the view that “conscious experience is capable of being logically independent of

¹⁸. William B. Hund, “Kant's Attitude toward human perfection as a moral determinant”. *Proceedings of the Third International Kant's Congress*. White Beck L (eds) Synthese: Historical Library vol 4. (1979) 339-340

¹⁹. L. Pierpaolo & A. T. Giusi “Origin and Development of Moral Sense: A Systematic Review” *Frontiers in Psychology*. vol 13. (2022)

²⁰. J.C. Avise & J. Ayala Francisco “The Difference of Being Human: Morality” *National Academy of Sciences*, (Washington (DC): National Academies Press, 2010).

matter and vice-versa, even though both can affect and be affected by the other.”²¹ To Descartes and its advocates, both the mind and the body interact. However, this position and similar ones are deficient in the provision of convincing explanation on how the physical (body) relates with the mental (consciousness). Osei, R. N.²² argues for the possibility of the existence of “a unitary regulative principle that underpins and sustain the relationship between the body and the mind”. If such interaction is to hold any water-tight compartment. Science and technology can therefore explore this principle for action.

In African philosophy, particularly within the precinct of the Yoruba *weltanschauung* (worldview), the positions of Gbadegesin, S.²³ Hallen B. & Sodipo, O.²⁴ are pointers to area where the science of transhumanism could explore to effect necessary changes in the behavioural attitudes of the human person,²⁵ identified the seat or source of all human actions and thoughts to be the human *inu*, that is, the inner, private, mental, enduring conscious element or the dimension of the person. This is further corroborated by Gbadegesin who identified *okan* as the source of conscious thought and emotion. As a challenge, these are areas that the science of transhumanism could explore with a view to activating the good nature of the human person and make it a dominant trait. However, it is debatable whether tinkering with the seat of human morality will not change the nature of man.

In my opinion, human nature is complex and multifaceted, it comprises of emotions, rationality, sociality and morality. While machines may influence certain aspects, such as moral decision-making, they cannot alter the intricate complexities of human nature. Again, the fact that human morality is influenced by historical events, cultural norms and social contexts it shields away the possibility of machines altering the dynamic interplay between these factors. So human nature will still retain its nature, irrespective of the level of manipulations by machines.

Perfectibility, Technology, and the Reimagining of Human Nature

Discourse on human nature, humanism and transhumanism centres on the human person. Humans have unique, natural qualities and tendencies that they all exhibit as a species irrespective of race, colour, and religion. For instance, by nature humans are susceptible to illness and death, they are creative as manifested in art and music, they are also by nature constituted to

²¹. R. N. Osei, *The Mind–Body Problem: An Analysis of the Core Issues*. (Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2006) 175

²². R. N. Osei, *The Mind–Body Problem: An Analysis of the Core Issues*. (Ibadan: Hope Publications, 2006) 176

²³. Segun Gbadegesin, “Eniyan: The Yoruba Concept of a Person”. *The African Philosophy Reader*, P. H. Coetzee & A. J. P. Roux (eds.), (Routledge: London, 1998). 157. 149-168,

²⁴. Barry Hallen, & O. Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft: Analytical Experiments in African Philosophy*, (London: Ethnographical, 1994) 5

²⁵. Barry Hallen, & O. Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft: Analytical Experiments in African Philosophy*, (London: Ethnographical, 1994) 5

love and hate and, according to Aristotle; they are endowed with rationality, thereby suggesting that humans are problem solving and decision making species.

The permanence and malleability of human nature are highly contested issues, but with the advent of transhumanism the age long belief concerning permanency of human nature has been shown to be false. Advancement in science and technology has demonstrated that human nature is amenable to change. According to Leidenhag, M. "...Freaks of nature can be corrected." For instance, natural strength and stamina of humans can be enhanced by drugs.²⁶ Drugs enhance the strength of athletes, cosmetic surgery improves physical appearance, prescribed drugs for students "not just treat learning difficulties but it enhances their mental abilities".²⁷ Again, transhumanism, through science and technology, has continued to record progress in the area of health services. Fiala, A. A aptly captures this when he posits that; transhumanism is a phenomenon that addresses the issues of a post-human future in which human capabilities, including better health... longer life expectancy, and gene pool will be improved..²⁸ This is apt because, it shows that artificial intelligence and genetic engineering steadily gravitates humans toward a perfect health status. Ailments that emanate from neurological and genetic disorders, chronic diabetics and kidney diseases, among others that hitherto defied medications are now being cured. In addition, the increasing impact of technology on man has shown that man can become more intelligent and resilient. Suffice it to say that, the fundamental objective of transhumanism is to elevate human existence, achieving unparalleled intelligence, vitality and longevity thereby overcoming the inherent limitations and imperfections of human nature through technology. These and many other achievements of science and technology strengthened the hope of a perfectible man.

In spite of this, transhumanism is akin to a two edged sword with a side that promises to supplant human natural impediments and deliver good life through revitalization and elimination of aversive experiences. The flip side of the ambiguity in this technological development is that transhumanism can lead humanity to existential risk and complete chaos because, given the nature of man, as captured by Thomas Hobbes as self-centred,²⁹ the goal of transhumanist technologies which *interalia* is to prolong human lifespan or enhance cognition could be appropriated exclusively by the affluent in the society especially when the cost of procurement is understandably beyond the reach of the ordinary man. This would widen the inequality gap

^{26.} M. Leidenhag, "Saved through technology: Exploring the soteriology and eschatology of transhumanism". *Relig. Compass* 14, (2020) 1–9

^{27.} R. Cole-Turner, *Transhumanism and Transcendence : Christian Hope in the Age of Technological Enhancement* (Washington: George Town University Press, 2011) 1

^{28.} Andrew Fiala, "Defense of Cis-humanism: Humanism for the Anthropocene". *Essays in the Philosophy of Humanism* 27, (2019) 1–20

^{29.} See Thomas Hobbes *Leviathan*

between the haves and the have-not in human society.

Again, the commodification of the human body reminiscent of articles that can be offered for sale and purchase by the highest bidders in the society also has the tendency to foist unpleasant social stratification of the haves and the have-not in human society aside the risk of over-population that may have negative consequences on resources which are already adjudged to be scarce and being highly competed for. More worrisome is the stake of third world societies such as Africa who are backward both scientifically and technologically. They may end up as objects of experiments. There is no gainsaying the fact that transhumanism as it were is not an inclusive human perfectibility drive. The transhumanist agenda engenders conflict with many cultures particularly the African culture.

African Moral Ideals in Transhumanist Agenda

A comparative analysis of African and Western worldviews which transhumanism seems to represent reveals fundamental differences that may lead to tensions and conflicts when attempting to integrate African moral values with the principles of transhumanism. This disparity stems from the distinct cultural, philosophical, and ethical underpinnings of these two perspectives. For instance, African moral values draw its strength and cherished values from a rich and diverse cultural heritage, encompassing various ethical and philosophical traditions. These include: *Ubuntu*, communalism, environmental harmony and spirituality. These principles foster a communitarian and spiritual framework that guides African moral decision-making.

The fact that traditional African society is essentially communitarian, contemporary African society has not taken too far departure from that trait hence, Africans would only support technologies that promote collective well-being rather than individualism. In other words, to Africans, technology that does not promote collectivism would breed social disharmony, unhealthy rivalry and intolerance. African understanding of *Ubuntu* includes humanity towards others, empathy and compassion, equality and fairness in sharing of benefits and burden. This is because to the Africans collectivity is power, the weak and the strong must support one another hence; a man is nothing outside his community. The community does not only determines the moral being of her members but also the social, religious and political life. This is why Mbiti, J appropriately captures the individual-community relationship as “I am because we are, since we are therefore I am.”³⁰ This is in contradistinction to the position of transhumanism that prioritizes individual autonomy, freedom, and self-improvement. The communitarian emphasis of the African moral values is at variance with transhumanism's focus on individual autonomy and self-improvement. In this regard, African moral ideals may view excessive technological enhancement as undermining the pride of the community, whereas transhumanism sees it as a

³⁰. John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Nairobi: East African Educational Press, 1969) 108-109

means to improve human existence.

In terms of spirituality, Africans believe fervently in life-after-death and the vital roles of the living ancestors. These belief systems especially through *Sankofa*, (Go back and fetch it) encourages learning from ancestral traditions which plays important roles in the lives of ancestral offspring. The transhumanist agenda of life extension will constitutes threat to ancestral values and legacies with African belief systems

Again, African moral ideals prioritize balance with the natural world, ethics of nature - relatedness is given pride of place in the belief systems of Africans. The ecosystem and its inhabitants are revered. African culture emphasizes living in harmony with nature because to them, nature is sacred and must be treated with utmost care and diligence. It will be recall that some African countries have resisted the adoption of genetically modified organisms due to cultural concerns about altering nature and potential health risks. In the same vein, African communities have protested fossil fuel extraction citing environmental degradation and harm to traditional lands whereas transhumanism's emphasis on technological progress may lead to environmental degradation and disruption of natural processes.

Addressing these potential conflicts will require a nuanced understanding of both African moral values and transhumanism, as well as a willingness to engage in open and respectful dialogue. The upshots of the above analysis is to underscore the fact that to achieve inclusive human perfectibility, at least from the African perspective transhumanism would have to incorporate African traditional knowledge and values into technological innovation and ensure that technologies align with African cultural and environmental principles.

Given the actualization of the objective of transhumanism and perhaps, the proposed inclusive human perfectibility can we still refers to humans, as humans? This is debatable because, on the one hand, what makes humans, humans include the essential qualities of emotions, experiences, self - identity and fallibility. If transhumanism can completely wipe away these qualities then the word 'human' would be inappropriate to designate human species that is now perfect, infallible and perhaps have a new moral framework contrary to human nature. Such species could be classified as a *Transoptum species*- a species that has transcended human limitations to achieve optimal existence.

On the other hand, if the changes orchestrated by transhumanism on humans do not affect humans' essential characteristics then the resultant human perfection would have succeeded in contributing to the evolution history of man. Succinctly put, humans would still belong to the class of *Homo sapiens*.

Conclusion

The paper argued that humans from the inception of society had not relent in her efforts to overcome all impediments to becoming a perfect *Being*. In contemporary times, through science and technology, transhumanism drives the transition phase between human natural state of imperfection towards perfection. In this regard, transhumanism has demonstrated beyond the doubts expressed by the skeptics especially the anti-perfectibilists who argued that man is not perfectible, to show that human capabilities can be enhanced beyond her natural state through genetic engineering, biomedical technologies, cybernetic modifications and the likes.

In spite of the numerous achievements of transhumanism, the article argued that it has been unable to effect an inclusive vision of human perfectibility fundamentally because it only addresses the physical part of human nature. It has not shown enough capacity for addressing the non-physical side of man particularly the seat of morality. Since humans continued to be morally deficient or bankrupt as typified by the preponderances of war, terrorism, assassination and other heart rending man's inhumanity to man that pervades contemporary human society then the attainment of a holistic perfection of the human person raises doubt. The paper argued that a comprehensive human perfectibility is achievable if and only if, science and technology could also be directed to enhance the moral capability of the human person to always do what is right and good as against what is wrong and bad. This is without prejudice to the significant roles that education can play to reshape human character. But over the years, the success of education in this regard has been marginal. Succinctly put, holistic human perfectibility requires the combination of both the physical and the mental (moral), or the inner and outer aspects of the human person. This vision of complementarities is a direct challenge to the scientists. A breakthrough that involves the physical and mental aspects of man could facilitate peaceful co-existence and inclusive human perfectibility.

Finally, the paper also argued for *culturalizing transhumanism*, using the African moral ideals as a point of departure. In this sense, inclusive human perfectibility would not only consider human morality but also integrate local values, belief systems and cultural contexts of the different humans into the achievement of science and technologies.

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