

Editor's Note

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The *Dominican University Journal of Humanities* (DUJOH) proudly presents its ninth volume, June 2025 edition, a collection that brings to the fore some of the most pressing questions of our age—questions that touch the heart of human identity, freedom, governance, morality, and spirituality. The papers gathered in this edition demonstrate both rigour and creativity, while also carrying a distinctive concern for the African and global contexts. Each contribution challenges assumptions, deepens dialogue, and charts pathways for renewal in society, philosophy, and theology.

The opening paper, “**Transformative Educational Formation: A Pathway to Emancipation from the Absurdity of the Modern Self**” by *Mary Christine Ugobi-Onyemere*, critiques the prevailing rote-based educational system in Nigeria. It argues that genuine education must transcend the mechanical reproduction of knowledge and instead foster empathy, inclusivity, and holistic formation. By presenting transformative education as a liberating model, the paper envisions Nigerian youth as protagonists of their own narratives, empowered to resist the paradoxes of modern identity and to contribute meaningfully to society.

In “**Transcendent Freedom: Harmonising Liberal and Communitarian Perspectives,**” *Gerald Chibueze Azike* revisits the perennial question of freedom. Drawing on a rich philosophical lineage—from Aristotle and Aquinas to Rousseau, Hegel, Rawls, and Arendt—the study critiques the limitations of liberal and communitarian models. It advances the concept of “transcendent freedom” as a universal value that escapes reduction to either perspective, thus offering fresh insight into one of humanity's most fundamental aspirations.

Turning to the social dimension, *Patrick Idoko Abem*, in “**The Moral Challenge of Homophily in the Light of Fratelli Tutti by Pope Francis,**” addresses the divisive tendencies in human relationships that foster conflict, inequality, and exclusion. By situating Pope

Francis' call to social friendship and universal fraternity at the centre, the paper highlights the moral imperative of building bonds that respect human dignity. It presents a persuasive case for solidarity as the antidote to the culture of segregation that undermines social cohesion.

The theme of governance is approached from a metaphysical standpoint by *David Ogar Okata* in “**The Metaphysics of Governance in Postcolonial Nigeria.**” This paper critiques superficial attempts at blending traditional African governance systems with modern state structures, arguing that their failures point to a deeper ontological and epistemological rupture. By grounding governance in first principles such as justice, purpose, and human dignity, the paper invites reflection on how a metaphysical foundation could transform political practice in Nigeria and beyond.

Philosophical inquiry continues in *Agordi Paul Oluwatosin's* “**Cartesian Dualism and Its Metaphysical Implications in Today's Philosophical Landscape.**” This study contrasts Cartesian dualism with Aristotelian hylomorphism, probing its impact on enduring philosophical problems such as personal identity, free will, consciousness, and the afterlife. While recognising its enduring influence, the paper also exposes the weaknesses of Cartesian dualism—particularly the mind-body interaction problem—yet demonstrates how it continues to animate debates on responsibility, machine consciousness, and even artificial intelligence.

In the theological domain, *Emmanuel Actor Oyewole* and *Timothy O. E. Popoola* contribute “**The Church and Purgatory: A Theological and Systematic Balance.**” The paper revisits a doctrine often clouded by misunderstanding, situating purgatory within its scriptural, historical, and doctrinal development. Sensitive to ecumenical concerns, it reinterprets purgatory as a merciful process of purification and emphasises its pastoral significance. In doing so, it not only addresses contemporary misconceptions but also highlights its continuing relevance for Christian hope and eschatology.

The volume concludes with “**Rethinking Democracy in Africa: A Thomistic Perspective on Governance, Identity, and the Common Good**” by *Mary Christine Ugobi-Onyemere* and *C. Raymond Okoro*. This paper interrogates the conceptual foundations and practical realities of democracy in Africa. By bringing Aquinas' philosophy of governance and the common good into dialogue with contemporary African challenges, the authors propose a Thomistic lens through which democracy may be reclaimed, redefined, and reoriented toward authentic human flourishing.

Together, these contributions reflect DUJOH's mission to foster scholarship that is not only academically sound but also socially transformative. They remind us that education, freedom, fraternity, governance, philosophy, and theology are not isolated pursuits but interconnected dimensions of the search for truth and meaning. As readers engage with the insights of this volume, may they find inspiration to continue this journey of intellectual inquiry and human renewal.

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Editor