



The Human Person, African Ubuntu and the Dialogue of Civilisations

Chris Vervliet

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The Human Person, African Ubuntu and the Dialogue of Civilisations contributes to the ongoing discussions about the clash of civilisations, illustrating the potential of a dialogue based on the dignity of the human person. The author invites the reader to an intellectual exploration, which is premised on the thesis that "a person is a person through other persons", the central idea of the (South) African Ubuntu philosophy. He discusses the differences and similarities in the philosophies of such reputed African leaders like the late Leopold Senghor, Julius Nyerere and Kwame Nkrumah, showing how Ubuntu not only shares similar concerns about interpersonal relations but also attempts to come to terms with present-day requirements and hindsight. The book highlights Ubuntu's potential to promote corporate life and reconcile it with African concerns for consultation and participation. It widens the debate by comparing Ubuntu with the personalism inherent in European, American and some non-Western traditions through a discussion of such themes as corporate culture, societal pluralism and sustainable development. -----

----- Dr. Chris Vervliet completed studies in social sciences (doctorate), political sciences (M.A.), economics (M.A.) and business economics (M.B.A.). He fell in love with Africa years ago, when he lived and travelled in Southern Africa as a freelance journalist, author and post-graduate researcher. He explains his fascination for the African continent by quoting the French philosopher Pascal: "The heart has its reasons, which reason does not understand." His views on consultation within enterprises are reflected in his professional experience where he combines a responsibility in risk management with a mandate as trade union representative in a major financial institution. In his home country, Belgium, Dr Vervliet is a councillor in the municipality of Boutersem. _____ "This script is a major source of inspiration in what seems to be a common pursuit of establishing the role of UBUNTU in contemporary thinking, interpersonal relationships, organizational leadership and management. It departs from a sound and solid researched historical base and systematically leads one to where the contemporary discourse is". Reuel Khoza, author "Let Africa Lead", South African entrepreneur "Against the background of a globalizing world, Chris Vervliet manages to link in an original way thinkers from different backgrounds, cultures and traditions. It is amazing how striking comparisons can be made between their premises and concepts of man." Wouter Beke, Belgian senator.

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