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Making Afro-ethics Computational

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Arguably, research in computational ethics and particularly any attempt at composing an ethical scheme for machines or autonomous intelligent systems will require three steps. First, identifying and adopting an ethical system, which will be compatible with a top-down, bottom-up or hybrid approach to computation. Second, schematizing this ethic in analytic form and third, developing appropriate syntax and a utility function for the development of an ethical algorithm. In this talk, I consider the underexplored ethical system common to peoples of sub-Saharan Africa, which I have christened 'Afro-ethics'. I show in this talk that the nature of Afro-ethics, unlike deontological or consequential ethics, is unstructured and makes the problem of tractability more evident. For lack of space and time, I address the first two steps of creating an ethically computational framework for artificial intelligent systems. These are identifying the primary features of Afro-ethics and schematizing these in analytic form.

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