

Bridge walk

a series of lectures on bridging the gap between different faculties and disciplines

Date & Time: Wednesday 23.10.2024 | 17:00 – 18:15

Organizers: Mohammad Khair Nahhas & Fares Damien

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Tech Progress and False Promises? The Urgent Need for Social Sciences & Humanities

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Abstract

This lecture challenges the dominant belief that technological innovation automatically leads to progress. The speaker, a health technology researcher, will unveil the often-overlooked consequences of unchecked tech development: erosion of mental health, threats to individual freedoms, and reinforcement of colonial power structures. The speaker will delve into the philosophical and political foundations of our relentless technological drive and its connection to capitalism, alienation, and fear of freedom. Drawing insights from philosophy, cognitive psychology, and spiritual traditions, he will argue that technology alone cannot solve our deepest societal problems. Finally, this presentation advocates for a critical integration of humanities and social sciences into the technological landscape. The speaker will emphasize the urgent need for collective action that prioritizes human well-being and ethical considerations alongside rapid technological advancement.

Biosketch

Christo El Morr is a Professor of Health Informatics, the director of the Center for Feminist Research (CFR) at York University (Toronto, Canada), a theologian, and a poet. His research subscribes to an Equity Informatics perspective; it covers Equity AI (e.g., patient readmission, disability advocacy), Patient-Centered Virtual Care (e.g., chronic disease management, mental health), Global Health Promotion for equity (e.g., equity health promotion), Human Rights Monitoring (e.g., disability rights, Gender-Based Violence). As a theologian and a poet, his wider intellectual contribution to Social Justice subscribes to a defense of the human person against alienation, whether in the form of infringement of human freedom or dignity in the face of irrational powers and exploitation. His intellectual work encompasses work of freedom from oppression (e.g., analysis of exclusive identities, communion and solidarity, freedom, liberation of reason), freedom from exploitation (e.g., analysis of illusions of freedom, political and religious exploitation), and freedom to celebrate life (e.g., poetry).