

# Keynote Talk: AI at Africa's Crossroads: Extractive or Generative Future?

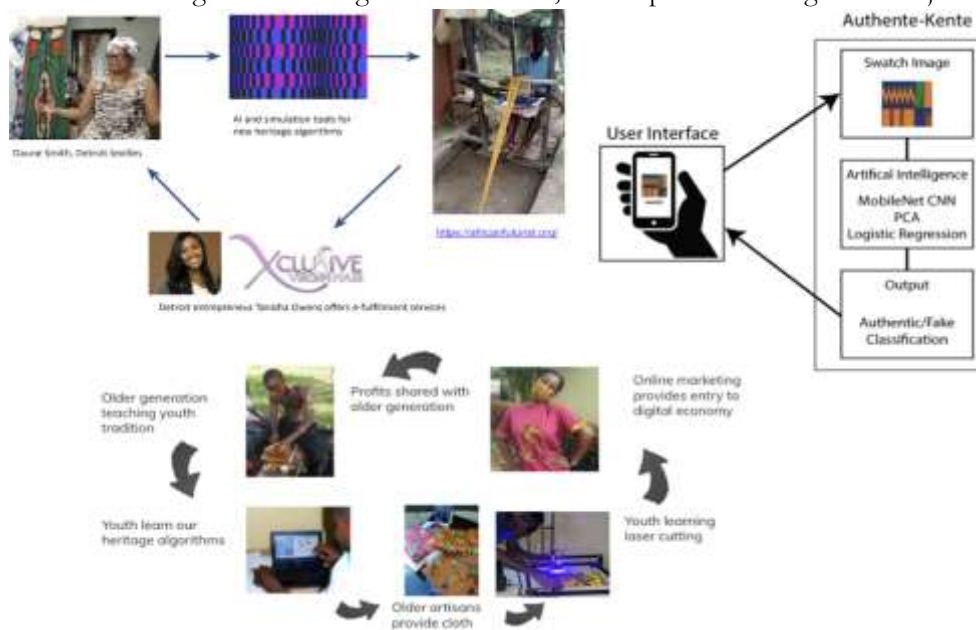
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## ABSTRACT

In African traditions, the crossroads is where the trickster makes his/her appearance. Eshu, Legba, Anansi and others create complexity when our decisions fold back on themselves. AI has created yet another crossroads, and again the trickster brings surprises. What might have seemed like Africa's worst challenges—"underdeveloped" from the colonial perspective—could be the basis by which computational aids can facilitate more sustainable and egalitarian futures. Blending the heritage algorithms of Africa's past with full stack decolonization can guide us through the crossroads, on the path towards generative justice.



## Speaker's Bio

Dr. Ron Eglash is a Professor in the School of Information at University of Michigan. He received his B.S. in Cybernetics, his M.S. in Systems Engineering, and his PhD in History of Consciousness, all from the University of California. His work as Fulbright scholar was published as *African Fractals: modern computing and indigenous design*. His "Culturally Situated Design Tools" software, offering math and computing education from indigenous and vernacular arts; works on the theory of generative justice; design experiments with artisanal cyborgs and more can be found at <https://generativejustice.org/>

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