Recent Work in African Political and Legal Philosophy

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Abstract

In this article I critically survey non-edited books on political and legal philosophy that have been composed by those working in the sub-Saharan African tradition and have appeared in print since 2016. These monographs principally address political, distributive, and criminal justice at the domestic level, with this article recounting the essentials of these texts as well as noting prima facie weaknesses in their positions and gaps in current research agendas. My aims are to enable readers to obtain a bird's-eye picture of key works in recent African political and legal philosophy and to suggest some plausible ways to advance debates.

Keywords

African justice; African jurisprudence; African political philosophy; African philosophy of law; sub-Saharan cultures

1 INTRODUCTION

In this article I critically discuss several recent monographs in sub-Saharan African political and legal philosophy that have been published in English. Such a focus means setting aside Islamic-oriented texts that have been composed by philosophers north of the Sahara desert (say, in Arabic) as well as works in French, Portuguese, or indigenous languages written by those south of it. The overwhelming majority of political and legal philosophy informed by sub-Saharan African cultures has been published in English, and that is true not merely recently, but also since its birth as a literate discipline in the 1960s (with the decline of colonialism, the rise of literacy, and the real presence of African lecturers in universities).

What is routinely self-described as 'African philosophy' is grounded heavily on ideas salient in the sub-Saharan region and is often written by those who have lived there. It is distinct from what is called 'Africana philosophy', which includes, if not focuses on, reflection undertaken by descendants of African peoples who have lived in the northern hemisphere and are responding to cultural and political matters there.

In addressing English-language monographs squarely in the tradition of African political and legal philosophy, I seek even more focus in this article by discussing only those published in the past five years. This approach means not taking up any books prior to 2016, let alone those by the previous generation of African political and legal philosophers, such as Wiredu (1996), Gyekye (1997), or Oruka (1997). Of books published since 2016, it also means setting aside edited collections (including Ajei 2017; Mawere, Mubaya, & Mukusha 2017; Ozumba & John 2017; Johnson & Karekwaivanane 2018; Mangena & Chimakonam 2018; Okeja 2018; Ogude 2019; Afisi 2021; Essien et al. 2021; Masitera 2021; Molefe & Allsobrook 2021) and of course essays such as journal articles or book chapters.

Furthermore, with regard to monographs, I have elected to focus on those that systematically advance an original position that should be of interest to those in a variety of

intellectual traditions around the world, not merely an African one. That means excluding books that recount, apply, or appraise the views of a particular author (More 2017; Dübgen & Skupien 2019), critically reflect on the field's major debates over the past several decades (Mawere & Mubaya 2016; Kasanda 2018), interpret texts for students (Bilchitz, Metz, & Oyowe 2017), analyze case law in a particular jurisdiction (Bennett 2018), or address issues that are circumscribed to a specific country (Afolayan 2018). Finally, I have had to make some tough calls, electing not to engage with books devoted to narrower topics, such as the political functions that *ubuntu* discourse has served in respect of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (Gade 2017), legal ethics (Murungi 2019), or disability justice (Onazi 2019), in favour of those on broader topics.

Despite this way of obtaining focus, many books remain in the purview of this article, for the field has been growing substantially, while also gaining international exposure. In the following, I begin by considering those recent monographs defending an overarching thesis of wide interest that address the allocation of political power (section 2), after which I take up those on the enforcement of civil liberties (section 3), the distribution of property (section 4), and finally the justification of state punishment (section 5). I conclude by briefly noting some topics that, for whatever reason, have not lately received systematic attention in a monograph, but that warrant it (section 6).

2 Power

As the reader might know, pretty much the default position amongst African political and legal philosophers is the demand for consensus in the resolution of disputes. In many indigenous sub-Saharan societies, conflict was resolved either by all affected members talking under the proverbial tree until unanimous agreement was achieved, or by a king deferring to the prescriptions of a group of elders who had all signed on to them. It is, broadly speaking, the latter form of consensual agreement that has been advocated for a

contemporary polity, even if not yet adopted anywhere. Specifically, the proposal has been that, once legislators have been elected by majority rule (such being practically necessary in a mass society), they should be required to come to a unanimous agreement before a statute is considered valid law, effectively giving all legislators equal political power. Kwasi Wiredu is the most well-known champion of this form of representative democracy, but other adherents to consensus include Bénézet Bujo, Kwame Gyekye, Barry Hallen, and Mogobe Ramose.

Although these thinkers are often addressing African societies, there is prima facie reason to deem their prescriptions to apply much more widely. When Wiredu (2000), for instance, maintains that there is a right not merely to pick those who choose the laws, but also to have one's interests or voice figure into all the laws chosen, I see no reason to think that such a position should be restricted to the sub-Saharan region. Similar remarks apply to many of the conceptions of justice discussed in this article.

Bernard Matolino stands out as one who rejects the ideal of consensual democracy, while nonetheless advocating a form of democracy that is appropriate for an African context. He has recently published two books on the topic of democratic decision-making, one of which may be viewed as largely 'negative', in the sense of providing reason to reject consensualism (2018), and the other of which is more 'positive', in that it develops an alternative to it for Africa (2019: esp. xiv).

Matolino's primary objection to consensual democracy is that it would be insufficiently respectful of individuality in practice (2018: esp. 115-131). On the one hand, only those decisions would be made that advance the common good, with idiosyncratic interests going unfulfilled. On the other, over time a consensual system would 'induce homogeneity' (Matolino 2018: 127), with people being brought up to think of their interests only in ways that are the same as (or at least consistent with) the interests of others.

One might wonder whether a consensual model could avoid these problems, say, by recognizing these risks of uniformity and instead accepting a 'taking turns' approach to interest satisfaction (cf. Guinier 1994). Instead of invariably settling on what is common to all, perhaps all could agree to satisfy quite divergent interests in succession. Families do it all the time, unanimously agreeing to have, say, pizza one night, even though one person does not want that, on condition that next time this person would get her preferred meal. Is there some reason to think that legislators could not do something similar?

Regardless of whether consensual democracy would truly be a polity that 'whittles the rights of the individual to insignificance' (Matolino 2019: xiv), Matolino's alternative to it remains of interest. One might have thought that, given his support for individuality, Matolino would reject a communitarian value system, but he does not, instead drawing on what he views as communitarian values that are philosophically defensible and of relevance to the condition of 21st century Africa, as opposed to those that have been traditional. A desirable form of community for Matolino consists of relationships of regard for and recognition of the dignity of individuals, along with the promotion of a variety of additional goods such as creativity, individual freedom, care, humaneness, and a sense of togetherness (2019: 92-95, 113-114, 125-126, 131, 135, 149-155). A politics that realizes this constellation of relational and individual values would be just, for Matolino.

The question naturally arises to what such polity would look like, and on this score Matolino does not provide specifics. On the one hand, he is wary of postulating an ideal (2019: 24-35), and, on the other, he is by and large advocating procedural and incremental approaches to institutional choice, whereby the right policies are ones that are responsive to a given context of people suffering from indignity or a poor quality of life and that give due consideration to the above values of recognition, creativity, freedom, care, etc (2019: 86, 114 121-134). However, many readers will naturally hanker for more. If consensus amongst

legislators is unlikely to realize a desirable sort of community for Matolino, then how should political power be allocated? He is critical of majority rule, at least as practiced so far in African contexts (Matolino 2019: 17-25, 35), and so one wonders what the alternative to both it and consensus might be.

In contrast to argumentation about the best way to allocate political power, Gemma Bird's recent book (2019) enquires into the values that prominent African political thinkers have invoked when prescribing allocations of political power. In the name of what have they tended to reject colonialism and favour democracy, for example?

Bird sees in their reasoning a broad commitment to the value of Kantian autonomy, which, for her, is some evidence that it is a universal value and could serve as the foundation of a global ethic. According to Bird, 'a narrative thread running through the work of these scholars is a reliance on concepts of domination, freedom of choice, equality, and self-mastery that can be interpreted to represent a focus on self-law giving' (2019: 12). It is true that African philosophers such as Anthony Appiah, Pauline Hountondji, Kwasi Wiredu, and Kwame Gyekye—whose work Bird analyzes—have at times espoused ideas about the worth of autonomy that are reminiscent of Kant.

However, there are other candidates for basic value in the work of the field more generally and even, at times, in texts by these named thinkers. For example, Gyekye has claimed that 'all other values are reducible *ultimately* to the value of well-being….(W)ell-being can be considered a "master value"' (2004: 41), where it is clear that he does not, in turn, reduce well-being to 'valuing individual choice' (Bird 2019: 4). Gyekye rejects dictatorship principally for being incompatible with promotion of the common good, not centrally for interfering with self-law giving.

Others in the field, including Bénézet Bujo, are vitalists, holding life-force to be the ultimate good, where colonialism and dictatorship are deemed antithetical to a people's

liveliness. Still more, there are relationalists, who hold that harmonious or communal ways of interacting merit pursuit as ends and that colonialism and dictatorship are objectionably discordant, with elements of such a view present in John Ayotunde Bewaji's recent book on Yoruba legal systems (2016: 6, 13-46, alongside some welfarist appeals to the common good).

Appeal to the common good, life-force, or harmonious relationship are plausible, non-Kantian ways to ground anti-colonial and pro-democratic views of how to allocate political power in a society. As Bewaji remarks, it is 'presumptuous of the Western social contract protagonists to suppose that they have captured *the only logically valid* basis of democratic practice universally—individualism' (2016: 6). However, it does remain worthy of debate to consider whether Bird's individual autonomy or one of these other, characteristically African values *best* justifies democratic practice.

3 Liberty

In the way that consensual democracy has been the default position amongst African political and legal philosophers, so has the view that human rights are not the be-all and end-all of how the state ought to enforce civil liberties or how best to approach citizen freedom. In general, African philosophers tend to be suspicious of individual rights, because they seem to invite people to think of themselves as distinct from others in their community and to permit people to do much less than they could for it (reminiscent of Karl Marx in 'On the Jewish Question').

Some African philosophers reject human rights altogether, say, in favour of group rights, with Claude Ake having once held that position, contending that indigenous African peoples aptly disregard the moral category of human rights (which historical and normative claims are in effect disputed by Bewaji 2016: 119-145 and Balogun 2018: 277-296). However, more common has been the view that there are human rights that must be balanced

against group rights, which has been famously enshrined in the African ('Banjul') Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, as well as the view that duties are in some sense 'prior' to rights.

An instance of the latter view has appeared in a new book by Motsamai Molefe (2019; see also Onazi 2019). Molefe advances a politics of virtue oriented towards the common good, which, he argues, means that rights have a merely remedial role to play in political and legal thinking. Individual rights 'take a secondary status because they will tend to clash with the fundamental moral-political goal….to secure the well-being of all human beings' (Molefe 2019: 147; see also 165-166). Why think so? For Molefe, virtue involves being motivated to meet people's needs out of sympathy, which needs include the freedom to become good people who meet still other people's needs. Acting out of sympathy differs from treating people in certain ways because they have claimed a right. We should above all want a 'responsive and caring society' (Molefe 2019: 165) that meets everyone's needs spontaneously and compassionately and so does not require people to press rights claims. However, when there are contexts of 'scarce sympathies, rights may be invoked as a remedial measure to secure the human good' (Molefe 2019: 166; see also 168); roughly, if you do not love your neighbour, either seeking to oppress her or failing to help her, then the state should step in.

One may expect a village to form a good society that meets the needs of all its members out of sympathy, but it is perhaps unrealistic to expect citizens in a metropolis like Johannesburg to be able to do so. Meeting the needs of all in a mass society probably requires political organization, where sympathetic motivations seem less important than effective policies.

This author has focused on developing a principle of right action that is meant to govern interpersonal interaction and institutional choice (Metz 2021). According to it, people should be treated with respect in virtue of their dignified capacity to participate in

relationships of sharing a way of life and caring for others' quality of life. Sharing includes enjoying a sense of togetherness and engaging in cooperative projects, while caring means meeting others' needs and doing so for their own sake. Respect for the ability to share and care and to be shared with and cared for normally means sharing and caring with innocent parties and avoiding the opposite ways of interacting with them.

Out of this conception of respect flows an account of human rights violations, according to which they are egregious failures to honour people's capacity to be party to relationships of sharing and caring (Metz 2021: 106-128). Instead of coordinating with innocent parties, a human rights violator is one who intensely subordinates them (or refuses to interact at all, leaving them to impoverished agency), and instead of helping them, a human rights violator is one who seriously harms them (or fails to rescue them from terrible lives when he easily could). In a word, to violate a human right is roughly to treat an innocent person with enmity, a relational account of what is so gravely wrong with rape, torture, slavery, segregation, starvation, and the like that is meant to rival the influential Kantian conception of a human rights violation in terms of a reduction of autonomy.

While a principle of respecting people's social nature is argued to entail human rights, additional moral categories are also shown to follow. Such respect arguably entails that there are partial moral obligations (Metz 2021: 117-119), there are some duties without correlative rights (Metz 2021: 138-139), and people can be owed consideration as members of communities (viz., bonds of sharing and caring) (Metz 2021: 119-120). However, many African political and legal philosophers will find this theory 'too western' or otherwise unattractive for deeming state enforced human rights to be central to (even if not exhaustive of) the way a society ought to be organized.

In particular, Omedi Ochieng's recent book (2016), like Molefe's, also focuses more on developing a good society as opposed to a just state, an approach that will resonate with

many in the field. However, unlike Molefe and many others in the contemporary African tradition, but like Matolino, Ochieng refuses to postulate a grand principle or ideal, instead prescribing piecemeal engagements informed by empirical awareness of the histories and ontologies of local contexts and the realistic opportunities they present for some improvement. Note that by 'improvement', Ochieng, also like Matolino, rejects appeal to what might be viewed as traditional, authentic, or pure African culture; instead, for Ochieng, reflection should be global, with his book notably informed by a wide array of African, Continental, and Anglo-American ideas.

Although Ochieng's work is largely critical and methodological, i.e., focused on arguing against many dominant ways of approaching normative political and legal philosophy, he does at times offer some positive alternatives, which are broadly similar to those offered by Molefe. For both thinkers, the good life is one focused on the natural (perceptible) world, with Ochieng being particularly suspicious of claims about supernatural (imperceptible) agency as requiring a transcendental viewpoint that he argues is unjustified. In addition, for both, the good life is egalitarian, one that recognizes the equal moral worth of human beings and hence that fights oppression and facilitates good lives for all with the provision of liberties and resources.

Considering the three books addressed in this section, as well as Matolino's two books from the previous section, all five prescribe respect for the individual as having an equal dignity and hence protections of many civil liberties. In addition, in them one encounters the view that one proper job of the state or any political organization is to promote good lives, such that the philosophical liberalism of John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin, requiring the state to be neutral amongst conceptions of the good, is repudiated. The African tradition suggests that a philosophy of human rights without liberal neutrality is possible and appealing. It would be well worth critically comparing the two approaches to see which

makes the best sense of the kinds of liberties the state should protect or that should feature in a good society.

4 Property

It is well known that, in the two or so decades after independence from colonialism, many African states adopted a socialist economic model, in which a one-party state controlled large-scale firms and natural resources and legally prohibited private ownership of these means of production. It is also well known that those economies tended not to improve the lives of the worst off sections of society, although there remains debate about precisely why many African people have remained poor in the post-colonial era.

These days, African philosophers tend to be explicit that socialism is to be avoided, at least the planned and dictatorial sort that had been prominent in the 20th century (e.g., Matolino, 2019). At the same time, though, these philosophers invariably express grave misgivings about neoliberal, multinational capitalism and particularly its effects on African societies, where the creation of a group wealthy black elites has failed to help lift people generally out of extreme poverty (Matolino 2019; Murove 2019, 2020). A number now maintain that markets are probably unavoidable in order to create wealth and to respect individual freedom adequately (e.g., Ochieng 2016; Edozie 2017; Kayange 2020). The key debate has been about how to temper capitalism so that it does not undermine characteristically African values as much as the current form does, although it would also be worth considering whether full-blown capitalism, as opposed to market socialism, is justified.

One proposal, from Grivas Kayange's recent book (2020: 249-264), is to ground a certain form of capitalism on *ubuntu*, the southern African Nguni term for humanness or virtue. Kayange seeks a 'third way' between radical communitarian values that seem to entail socialism and extreme individualist values that are embodied in neoliberal capitalism. His proposal is to interpret *ubuntu* in a way that includes both self-regarding and other-regarding

conceptions of human excellence. Key examples of the former are being patient with oneself, persevering, having foresight, being prudent, and exercising self-control (Kayange 2020: 259-260).

As many readers will know, *ubuntu* is usually understood in a purely relational way, e.g., in terms of obtaining virtue through participating with and giving to other persons, and probably most African ethicists would try to demonstrate that what appears to be a virtue of self-regard in fact is valuable merely as a means to other-regard. For example, perhaps one ought to be prudent ultimately so that one is not a burden on others, or maybe one should persevere only when it comes to projects from which others are expected to benefit (cf. Molefe 2019, who holds a purely other-regarding conception of how to become virtuous). It is clear, though, that Kayange favours an interpretation of self-regarding virtues as independently good for their own sake, calling for a balance with the other-regarding ones. Although the introduction of self-regarding virtues into a conception of African moral virtue is somewhat revisionist (but cf. Bewaji 2016: 177), it could well be a philosophically attractive way to understand how to live and hence reasonable to invoke when appraising an economic system.

Beyond inviting debate amongst African ethicists about how best to understand virtue, there is the matter of how to ground an economic system on the favoured understanding of it. While one sees how a virtue ethic that includes both individualist and relational dimensions promises to entail a kind of economic system ‘in between’ socialism and neoliberal capitalism, Kayange does not spell out the derivation in any detail. It would be of interest to know which specific changes should be made to the current form of capitalism in order for it to be consistent with Kayange’s conception of virtue. Should land be commodified? How should the law regulate disparities in holdings? Must a business owner

hire the most qualified applicant or may she instead hire her less qualified family member? These kinds of concrete questions about how to organize the economy deserve answers.

Rita Kiki Edozie's book (2017) also tries to articulate a 'third way' for African economies and to do so by seeking to answer the question 'What would capitalism look like if infused with Ubuntu?' (Barbara Nussbaum cited in Edozie 2017: 96). Appealing to what Edozie calls the 'Ubuntu Business' model advocated by some in South Africa, as well as the 'Afri-Capitalism' model espoused by some Nigerian business leaders, she argues for a new kind of capitalism that is more human. Unlike Kayange, who articulates a foundational ethic on which to ground an economy, Edozie does not. She instead invokes a wide array of mid-level values, such as collectivism, cooperation, egalitarianism, solidarity, and helping to lift others as one rises, which are contrasted with disvalues such as individualism, competitiveness, hierarchy, selfishness, and treating humans as mere objects.

The positive values are thought to prescribe the following policies for business (Edozie 2017: esp. 90-100). Rather than impoverished people relying on aid or merely selling natural resources to those abroad who then refine them, a firm should be galvanized to process raw materials, create new technologies, and exhibit a general entrepreneurial spirit. Instead of seeking to maximize profit for shareholders, a firm ought to seek to promote wealth throughout society. In contrast to doing what is good for people understood as separate individuals, a firm should strive to foster community. As opposed to satisfying only material interests, a firm has reason to promote culture as well. Instead of viewing land and other material resources strictly in terms of economic value, a firm should recognize that they might have religious and related kinds of deep meaning to people. In contrast to permitting grotesque inequalities of wealth and extreme poverty to subsist, a firm should do what it can to ensure that a decent minimum standard of living is maintained and consistently raised.

Instead of focusing on short-term profit, a firm ought to produce in ways expected to benefit future generations.

Many readers—and not merely those in the African tradition—will find these prescriptions from Edozie to be attractive. Of course, they beg for some specification; one wonders whether there are principled answers to questions such as, for instance, how much inequality is too much or how much a present generation should sacrifice for a future one. In addition, future work would usefully address how to see these kinds of policies put into practice. What should a board do to implement them? Should the membership of a board change, so as to make it more likely it would act on them? How should the state intervene to steer a firm's board towards adopting the above policies? Edozie does mention the possibility of a state adopting a law forbidding the use of foreign workers and firms for certain projects or industries (2017: 122, 151), but more could be considered.

5 Punishment

In this section we turn away from considerations of how a legislature ought to make decisions towards matters that have more to do with the judicial branch of government. In the past few years, three books have appeared that mine Nigerian indigenous traditions for answers to a variety of questions pertaining to courts, such as why a legal system should be set up in the first place, how to rank various kinds of crimes, what role lawyers should play in a criminal trial, what counts as conclusive evidence of guilt, as well as whether, why, and how guilty parties should be punished (Bewaji 2016; Balogun 2018; Nnam 2020).

Let us consider the justification of punishment, which both Bewaji and Balogun address in the course of their detailed analyses of the way indigenous Yoruba legal systems tended to operate. At times, they offer a fresh perspective on how the state ought to approach punishment that many people around the world, and not just Yorubas, should take seriously.

There are many occasions in both texts where Bewaji and Balogun suggest that the point of criminal justice should be to foster the common good, which is reminiscent of western utilitarian prescriptions to promote the general welfare. On this score, they sometimes recommend using punishment to make potential offenders fearful of the consequences of committing crime (Bewaji 2016: 44, 175; Balogun 2018: 311-312), to detain people so as to prevent them from being able to commit crime (Bewaji 2016: 44), to prevent vigilante behaviour (Bewaji 2016: 52), and to appease angry ancestors and gods and thereby prevent harm to the community (Balogun 2018: 310).

However, both authors at times also mention a different purpose of punishment, one that is more distinctively African and that serves as a potential supplantation of (and not merely supplementation to) the familiar protection rationales above focused on deterrence and incapacitation. Here, these authors use different terms and associated concepts, with 'reconciliation' and 'restoration' being prominent.

Probably the most common interpretation of these ideas, particularly in the wake of South Africa's TRC, has been to suppose that they are alternatives to punishment. The thought has been that, instead of fining or jailing a guilty offender, he ought to listen to how his victim was harmed, apologize for his wrongful behaviour, seek to make amends, assure the victim that he will not reoffend, and then be readmitted into society. However, Bewaji and Balogun interestingly suggest that a proper reconciliation should also involve punitive accountability. For example, Balogun remarks that

> the reconciliatory factor is lacking in Western theories of law and penology where the offender is punished without making restitutions; and emerging from prison, he is reconciled neither to himself, his victim, nor to society…(W)hen a culprit is punished, such is done with the view to fine-tuning the character of the said offender in line with the communalistic ethos of the Yoruba culture (2018: 246, 311).

Similarly, Bewaji reports, apparently approvingly, that those who had committed crimes that 'do not threaten the existence of society' were usually punished in Yoruba society by 'being forced to labor on community projects or those of their victims in reparation/restitution for the loss caused' (2016: 164).

These passages suggest two globally under-considered, but prima facie attractive, approaches to punishment. Perhaps as a default approach to punishment, contemporary courts should force offenders to undergo burdensome work that would be productive in the sense of compensating their victims, reforming their (offenders') characters, or ideally both. These approaches would not be retributive, since some good, whether compensation or reform, would be expected to come from a punishment that is justified. However, they would also not be oriented towards deterrence and incapacitation, with the ultimate aim instead being to effect reconciliation between the offender, the victim, and the broader society.

Neither Bewaji nor Balogun says more on these approaches to sentencing that I can see beyond the quoted passages above. I submit that philosophers of law should devote systematic reflection to these accounts of why and how to punish the guilty.

6 Conclusion: Some Neglected Topics

From a bird's eye perspective of this article, one sees that it has discussed issues of political justice, distributive justice, and criminal justice, all at the domestic level. If the reference list below, purporting to capture all books on African political and legal philosophy published in the past five years, is complete, it follows that certain aspects of justice have not received thorough treatment in any recent monograph. In particular, it appears that no philosopher working in the African tradition has lately written a book devoted to transitional, compensatory, or global justice. I conclude by briefly saying a word about each.

When it comes to transitional justice, Gade's book might be thought to count. However, his aim is to understand the nature of discourse about *ubuntu* and which political

functions it has served in South Africa in respect of its TRC; Gade is not particularly out to evaluate the TRC, let alone to provide an attractive account of transitional justice. In future work, it might be worth considering how characteristically African understandings of transitional justice compare with others, such as hypothetical models proposed by Kantians in the West and actual models adopted by non-African societies, such as the fairly recent Peace Agreement in Colombia.

There also has been no monograph squarely advancing a conception of compensatory justice, insofar as it concerns reparations for wrongful physical and economic harm. Only as I write has there appeared the first collection of African philosophical essays devoted to land reform (Masitera 2021), and there is, somewhat oddly, no recent book-length defence by an African philosopher of a particular position on that topic or more generally on restitution for slavery, colonialism, apartheid, and the like. Perhaps the closest the field has come lately are some works on epistemic justice (normally edited collections, but see Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018), understood to be the justice of responding to the injustice of the suppression of African and other indigenous ways of interpreting the world. Here, the focus has largely been on changes that should be made to public higher education, in terms of curricula, pedagogy, the content of research, and also research methods, in order to effect redress for what is often called the ‘epistemicide’ of peoples beyond the modern West.

Finally, there are no monographs developing African approaches to issues of global justice, whether that is understood in terms of the allocation of political power at an international level, the just distribution of wealth across the globe, the just allocation of environmental burdens between countries, or just war theory (for an edited collection on some of these topics, see Okeja 2018). Here, too, the field is open for substantial contributions, which I hope this article will help to spur.

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