Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economics,
Volume 19, Issue 1,
Summer 2026, pp. aa–aa.
https://doi.org/10.23941/ejpe.v19i1.1178

Review of Ingrid Robeyns's (ed.) *Pluralizing Political Philosophy: Economic and Ecological Inequalities in Global Perspective*. Oxford University Press, 2025, x + 339 pp.

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Contemporary academic practices are shaped by colonial structures that privilege certain Western or white ways of thinking and being while invisiblizing and devaluing non-Western ones (Santos 2014), with non-white communities and individuals involved in maintaining privileges associated with whiteness (Christian 2019). Thus, what are seen as Western theories and traditions are more often centered and taken as the default basis for knowledge production, while what are seen as non-Western knowledges, including those originating in Western societies, receive less academic recognition and attention (Alatas 2003).[1] Such a structure of exclusion can be found in academic analytical philosophy as well. Academic analytical philosophy can be seen as an approach to fundamental questions with an emphasis on theoretical argumentation, logical analysis, and the English language, which is practiced in many academic institutions in the Global North as well as the Global South.[2] In this discipline, perspectives of those who are not male, not white, not able-bodied or are dispossessed are marginalized (Catala 2024), which leads to a philosophical undertaking that alienates these communities from their own experiences (Silva 2019). In the discipline's approaches to social, political, and ecological issues, such marginalization can be found in analytical political philosophy. The dominance of certain Western perspectives can also be identified in more direct political interventions carried out by societal actors that are considered as international or local.

[1] Features for ways of thinking and being to be seen as Western might include being developed by or among communities considered as white or communities who are considered non-white but adopt some ways of thinking and doing that are developed in a community considered as white.

[2] In this review, I use 'the Global North' to broadly refer to places where meanings, cultures, and institutions associated with white communities appear salient and 'the Global South' to refer to places where meanings, cultures, institutions, and communities are marked as non-white from a global perspective. However, the Global North and the Global South in this sense can be found in a single space.

However, in philosophical engagement with social, political, and ecological issues, efforts of thinking through non-Western traditions and strands marginalized within Western traditions are ongoing across academic and non-academic spaces.[3] Using English-language academic journals as an example,[4] more articles regarding gender and race are being published in journals focusing on analytical political philosophy. Journals without a typical reputation of specializing philosophy and yet fostering dialogue and community building concerning gender, sexuality, race, and disability are thriving, which can be seen as spaces for critiquing issues faced by underprivileged communities. In various social spheres, political and cultural production grounded in traditionally marginalized perspectives against dominant and colonial ways of knowing and being are ongoing.

The volume *Pluralizing Political Philosophy: Economic and Ecological Inequalities in Global Perspective* is one such effort of supporting the flourishment of diverse ways of working on social, political, and ecological issues. While the editor Ingrid Robeyns modestly suggests that this volume primarily aims to address an audience familiar with approaches of analytical political philosophy (2025a, 7), the volume not only brings insights to the tradition of analytical political philosophy, exploring more inclusive and effective ways of working in this tradition with contributions grounded in various marginalized philosophical traditions, but also sheds light on how marginalized philosophical approaches to social, political, and ecological issues can be strengthened. Therefore, it can be helpful for those who intend to explore or intervene in social, political, and ecological issues no matter whether the philosophical basis they work from is considered dominant or marginalized. In this review, I focus on two themes that can be found in this volume which do not exhaust its contribution,[5] with an aim of demonstrating how the volume might be valuable for readers with different philosophical outlooks. The first theme is practicing political

[3] By philosophical traditions I mean a relatively stable set of philosophical thinking and doing that can be identified in one or more communities that is recognized by these communities as philosophical in a sense they adopt. I use this concept for the purpose of my discussion but recognize that it is limited, since many communities might not use a concept of philosophical tradition.

[4] English-language journals is not the best example for demonstrating the vastness of philosophical approaches to social, political, and ecological issues, even in academic contexts. I hope readers of this review can refer to ways in which such philosophical engagement unfolds in contexts using other languages.

[5] While these themes are intertwined in many contributions, I group the contributions based on an interpretation of them as showing a focus on either of the two themes.

philosophy in ways other than a traditional approach in analytical political philosophy, and the second theme is reflecting on methodology of engaging with marginalized philosophical perspectives.

Firstly, many contributions are themselves undertaking political philosophy in ways that are traditionally marginalized in analytical political philosophy. This includes not only work building on non-Western philosophical traditions but also work based on traditions that are marginalized within Western political philosophy (Robeyns 2025b, 330). First of all, in discussing social, political, and ecological issues, instead of taking a salient canon of Western theories and frameworks of political philosophy as the default foundation, many contributions are foremost grounded in ways of thinking about the world and the society that are traditionally marginalized within analytical political philosophy. Because of this, they contribute to not only making analytical political philosophy more diverse and effective but also strengthening marginalized ways of thinking and living in multiplicity beyond the discipline and the academia. For example, Krushil Watene argues that pūrākau as stories or storytelling can be seen as a crucial way in which Māori communities undertake philosophical inquiry. Seeing the current academic philosophy itself as a limited form of pūrākau that privileges Western, theoretical, and academic articulations, Watene argues that more dialogue with Indigenous philosophies can help academic philosophy further engage in community building beyond academic spaces. In exploring how to realize just distribution, Lisa Herzog argues that seeing individuals as interrelated, rather than separate as traditionally understood in analytical political philosophy, helps identify more downsides of high social inequalities and thus offers reason for limiting societal wealth disparity, with a re-reading of John Rawls who lays a foundation for theorizing justice in Western political philosophy. Some other contributions that practice marginalized philosophies include Tondong Bai's chapter based on Confucianism in Asian thought, Eva Feder Kittay's chapter based on values and practices of care, Motsamai Molefe's chapter based on Ubuntu in African thought, Avner de Shalit's chapter based on ecofeminism, Facundo García Valverde's chapter based on Buen Vivir in Indigenous worldviews and anti-extractivist movements, Constanze Binder's chapter based on an interconnected understanding of human and nature, and Thaddeus Metz's chapter based on values of family.

While practicing philosophy in ways that are traditionally marginalized in analytical political philosophy might seem natural, it is

not easy. Decolonial authors have long discussed how people in colonized communities face external destruction as well as internal devaluation of their knowledges, which provides a helpful lens for contextualizing differently marginalized knowledges concerning social, political, and ecological issues. Regarding the external destruction of knowledges of marginalized communities, the contribution by Watene points out that colonizers have tried to destroy Māori communities, which includes undermining material and spiritual conditions by which Māori philosophy is undertaken (90–91).[6] Knowledges developed by a marginalized community can be undermined by processes reinforcing their marginalization, making it more difficult for the community to philosophize on their own terms. Regarding internal devaluation of such knowledges, Frantz Fanon points out that colonized peoples face "an inferiority complex" that makes them see the culture of the colonizers' community as superior (1986, 18–19). There may well be a trend of thinking in a colonized or otherwise marginalized community that sees its own ways of thinking and doing as inferior, affecting how the community is organized and thus how philosophies are undertaken. Another difficulty in engaging with marginalized political philosophies lies in the current academic environment. As Robeyns's reflection points out, there is high work pressure for academic philosophers (2025b). Consequently, reflecting on one's own work through marginalized perspectives can be seen as optional and burdensome. The effort of changing marginalization in and beyond academic philosophy, against dominating discourses in Western and non-Western spaces and institutional demands on academic production, should not be taken for granted.

Furthermore, the contributions show that political philosophy can be understood as not only 'theory', but more broadly, as part of various efforts of addressing issues raised by communities.[7] For example, Watene's contribution builds on the Māori tradition of pūrākau with philosophical aspects and insights and can be seen as an effort of strengthening Māori communities in better relation with other

[6] The concept of 'colonizer' includes people and actors who can be seen as being inside a colonized community but play a role of reinforcing colonization of the community. As pointed out by many decolonial authors, a critical part of colonization consists in processes led by the colonized community.

[7] This does not mean that such issues are faced only by communities who are considered as leaders in addressing them. One example is climate change with increasing visible impact on communities in different places, which is not faced only by those who are seen as involved in environmentalist movements.

communities. Molefe's contribution builds on the Ubuntu tradition that can be found in African communities to make a case against colonization faced by African and other peoples, strengthening movements against colonialism including its damage and marginalization of diverse knowledges. Valverde's contribution examines extractivism as an issue more saliently faced by the Global South based on Buen Vivir that can be found in Indigenous and anti-extractivist perspectives, seeking to improve an eco-society that disproportionately affects the Global South. Political philosophy can be situated in broader engagement with social, political, and ecological issues undertaken by communities.

This also implies that doing political philosophy cannot be adequately captured by a dominant understanding that separates 'philosophical thinking' from 'political doing', which is often seen in Western contexts. Rather, political philosophy can be seen as a dimension of a broader subject matter that might be seen as primarily 'political doing'. Cultivating the diversity of philosophies itself can mean disrupting traditional academic norms and situating philosophies in social movements (Maldonado-Torres 2025), which are often seen as foremost 'political'. However, what is philosophical about something that appears political remains a question that cannot be adequately answered without engagement with diverse perspectives regarding what philosophy is.

I have discussed a theme of this volume regarding practicing philosophy in ways that are marginalized in traditional analytical political philosophy. Next I will focus on a second theme that the contributions attend to, namely how to better practice political philosophy in more diverse ways.

Instead of seeing the support of diverse political philosophies as a distant future, some contributions explore practical steps in existing conditions. Based on the consideration that a field can be more easily developed when learning and dialogue rely on a finite set of views, Jonathan Wolff proposes that a canon of political philosophy can be remade by assessing whether a text has implications beyond its context of origin, contributing a more flexible understanding of canon that is able to include marginalized approaches. Robeyns's reflection (2025b) proposes a gradual approach to improvement in consideration of the limited time and energy of academic philosophers in the existing academic environment. Robeyns's discussion of the material conditions in which academic philosophers work shows that their answers to questions about pluralizing political philosophy are affected by their

different positionalities in their own society as well as the globe (331). For many academics in the Global South, the academic structure that privileges certain Western forms of knowledge production brings unequal burden and harm in facing pressure of disconnecting from knowledges of their own communities and prioritizing certain Western approaches of academic production, which is itself rooted in historical and contemporary colonial processes (Schöpf 2020). This includes academic engagement with social, political, and ecological issues, as discussed by Cristian Pérez-Muñoz's contribution. Supporting the diversity of political philosophies requires contextualizing academic philosophical production in a broader ecology and changing how communities relate at a global level.

In addition, many contributions raise critical points regarding engagement with marginalized philosophical perspectives.[8] One requirement is to respect marginalized philosophies as they themselves are. As Simon Caney's contribution points out, preserving diversity does not only mean having more perspectives but also requires understanding marginalized perspectives on their own terms. One aspect is respecting and learning from a perspective of seeing things in the world as interrelated, which can be found in philosophical traditions with a marginalized position in analytical political philosophy, as proposed by Serene Khader's contribution. Another aspect involves addressing diversities within what is often seen as a single tradition, as pointed out by Sor-hoon Tan's contribution.

For those working in marginalized communities or those working with marginalized philosophical approaches, attending to themselves against pressure of prioritizing dominant perspectives can help decolonize or demarginalize themselves and reconnect with their own communities[9]. As Pérez-Muñoz's contribution suggests, for those who think and live in the Global South, the problem is not foremost one of 'including others' in efforts of supporting more diverse practices of political philosophy. Rather, a critical agenda is reconnection with their local philosophical

[8] Who are engaging with marginalized philosophical perspectives? Both dominant and marginalized philosophies can be actors. In particular, such work is far from irrelevant for marginalized philosophies, since communities associated with these philosophies might consciously or unconsciously adopt a dominant understanding, as decolonial authors point out. Moreover, a globally marginalized philosophy might face the need of engaging with internal or external perspectives that are underrepresented within itself.
[9] This can include reconnecting with a tradition that has been left behind by many contemporaneous people.

traditions and issues of their local eco-society in the face of the dominance of a traditional canon of Western philosophy.

Overall, this effort of pluralizing political philosophy and strengthening marginalized philosophies and communities brings into dialogue diverse non-Western philosophical perspectives as well as philosophical perspectives that are traditionally marginalized within Western societies, showing that exploration of and intervention in social, political, ecological issues can take many forms in and beyond academic spaces. In doing so, it not only offers insights for those who work in academic analytical political philosophy but also supports efforts of strengthening marginalized philosophical perspectives and marginalized communities. In pluralizing political philosophy that is typically identified in the Global North with certain, dominant Western ways of thinking, it also seeks to make interventions on the hierarchical relationships in global philosophical engagement with social, political, and ecological issues by seeing and applying marginalized philosophies as a valid foundation for addressing such issues. While the volume makes use of academic tools and platforms to present and connect different philosophical perspectives, it is not confined to a binary distinction between the academic and the non-academic in bringing into focus proposals of more engagement with philosophies beyond the dominant academia and processes of philosophizing in the work of improving communities.

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