

How Global is Global Justice? Towards a Global Philosophy

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Introduction

Global justice as a field must confront a central problem: how *global* is *global justice*? A defining feature about the burgeoning literature in global justice is its operation within a bounded, philosophical tradition. Global justice research is too often a product of one tradition in self-isolation from others that nonetheless claims to speak for what is best for all. This criticism applies to various philosophical traditions whether so-called “analytic,” “Continental” or others. The problem is that each tradition too often works independently from others to construct new ideas about the promotion of global justice: these ideas are designed by some for application to all. “Global” justice may have an international reach, but it too often lacks a more global character. The development of a more *global* approach to global justice raises several vexing questions. What does it mean to have a “global” approach to global justice? How “global” should any such approach be? And how can a coherent and compelling model for it be constructed?

This chapter develops a new approach for a more distinctly global view of global justice: *the idea of global philosophy*.¹ Most approaches to global justice are developed within bounded philosophical traditions. One problem is that each offers contributions to global justice that is constricted by the narrow bounds of their particular tradition. The issue is not only that global justice may be overly culturally-specific, but rather that bounded traditions close off important resources for addressing philosophical problems that can be accessed through closer engagement with other philosophical traditions. A global philosophy is then a more “unbound philosophy” better suited for a globalized world (Brooks 2013). Our world is ever-changing with ideas and people travelling as never before. It is time for philosophy to catch up with these developments and this chapter will explain why and how.

Philosophy: bounded by tradition?

Philosophical traditions are often *bounded* by their traditions. The idea of a *philosophical tradition* is complex. Traditions are frequently sites of great diversity. It is perhaps appropriate to speak of many traditions in terms of a wide tent.

The liberal tradition is a useful illustration. This tradition captures a large range of diverse canonical figures from Thomas Hobbes and John Locke through T. H. Green and John Stuart Mill to Brian Barry and John Rawls and beyond (Barry 2001; Hobbes 1996; Locke 1988; Mill 1989; Rawls 1971; Rawls 1996). Liberals include both advocates and opponents of popular democracy. They also include countless others, such as contractarians, Hegelians, utilitarians and much more. Their inclusion in a liberal tradition centres on some acknowledgments of a shared identity that can be embodied in a common concern or engaged conversation. Hobbes and Rawls disagree about several significant issues, but one important factor that unites them as fellow members of a shared liberal tradition is their sense of a

¹ This chapter substantially redevelops themes and ideas first presented in Brooks (2013a).

linked identity and common philosophical belonging to a mutual project. Rawls says that Hobbes' *Leviathan* is "surely the greatest work of political philosophy in English" and, importantly, Rawls understands his project as a further development of problems that Hobbes first raises (Rawls 2001, 1). Rawls and Hobbes share a conversation and common concern; they are connected through an identity about common concerns and the available horizon of possibilities for satisfactorily addressing them. We can locate a common thread linking these two figures together, such as the centrality of consent and a contractarian framework. The idea of a philosophical tradition is found in this shared belonging and identity, whatever else it may be.²

Philosophical traditions often operate within bounds. Each tradition seeks to address problems from its own set of philosophical resources. A tradition's approach to problem solving typically excludes substantial engagement with multiple traditions. Admittedly, this is more common in contemporary Western philosophical discourses. This is not because they are more error-prone, but rather because non-Western traditions operate against a global backdrop of a dominant, Western discourse. It has been more generally accepted for work in a Western philosophical tradition to lack any connection to or awareness of related work in non-Western philosophical traditions, but this is less true *vice versa* and one example is contemporary work in Indian philosophy (Raghuramaraju 2009).

Philosophical traditions are bounded; each exists like an island in a sea of otherness. One illustration is the liberal tradition and its attempts to address the problem of political stability over time (Hobbes 1996, Rawls 1996). These attempts may acknowledge non-liberal traditions, engagement is limited in most cases to those sharing important spheres of established contact breeding greater familiarity. So traditional boundedness may become less rigid—or, we might say, less *bounded*—as engagement becomes further embedded over time. Hegel's philosophy offers an alternative to liberalism, but it engages with canonical liberal philosophers and ideas (Brooks 2007, Hegel 1990). This engagement over time across traditions has led to later engagement in future (Rawls 1996, 285-88; Rawls 2000, 329-71).

Such examples are indicative only of how traditions containing great diversity should be understood as bounded, but not closed. A *closed* tradition is one which would deny *any* engagement with other traditions. While most philosophical discourses can be located within a single tradition, few omit any acknowledgement of others. The issue is not whether a tradition is open or closed, but rather whether a tradition might benefit from becoming unbound through engaging more substantially with alternative traditions. So philosophical traditions, especially in the West, are bounded although this comes in degrees.

It is surprising to discover how relatively rarely different philosophical traditions substantively engage with one another. One reason is that an established history of mutual engagement has a long track record of leading to important innovations for each participating tradition (Bosanquet 1923, Brooks 2012, Brudner 2009, Green 1986). There is much potential future promise for additional philosophical pay-offs from wider engagement with new and less familiar traditions as these examples indicate. This is not overlook existing and important, fruitful attempts at bridging Western and non-Western philosophical traditions (Barnhart 2012, Carpenter and Ganeri 2010, Hutton 2006, Hutton 2008, Parekh 2006). However, it is to argue that such attempts are too rare and much more should be encouraged.

² My discussion is meant to be indicative and not exhaustive. Nor do I want to suggest that a tradition is a mere set of family resemblances. Whatever else a tradition may be, I claim that a tradition is related to a *recognition* of a shared belonging. I am unable to explore further issues concerning the possible roles for intended meanings and their reception which I bracket here because of space constraints. Nonetheless, I note my awareness of these and other important issues that may bear on my analysis (Bevir 2002, Brooks 2006).

Philosophical Bridge Building

There have been several attempts at bridge building between Western and non-Western philosophical traditions. This typically takes the form of so-called ‘comparative philosophy’ in the West (see Scharfstein 1998). Comparative philosophy is a largely underexplored and neglected disciplinary area that has not attracted widespread attention from leading figures in the field. This is notwithstanding important advances for our knowledge about our philosophical traditions and illuminating revealing points of relation to others. One well known example is research uncovering fascinating philosophical connections between Machiavelli’s *The Prince* and Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* (Brown 1953: 49-52).

Comparative philosophy has failed as a disciplinary project to convince most philosophers to see the need for wider engagement with different traditions.³ One possible reason for this might be that comparative philosophy has focused too often in the history of philosophy examining various canonical figures and how their ideas relate to each other. This has not attracted satisfactory attention from scholars working in the history of particular historical figures or time-periods. Comparative philosophy may fare even less well with philosophers working on non-historical topics. So the study of Kant and issues such as the development of legal realism or work on the doctrine of double effect has been largely untouched by insights exposed by comparative philosophy.

The problem is that case has not yet satisfactorily been made for the *philosophical* importance of bringing bridges between traditions.⁴ This is a case that can and should be made. Global justice offers a terrific example. It *should* be surprising that *global justice* as a field has developed as a closed tradition claiming international reach. In short, global justice isn’t global, but partial. Most of the leading work in global justice can be found within a relatively narrow set of philosophical traditions in the West (Brooks 2008a). Global problems, such as so-called ‘just war’ theories or the existence of severe poverty, are neither exclusively Western nor non-Western. Yet, global justice research too often addresses these global problems in a non-global way from a partial, perhaps even tribal, approach locked within a bounded philosophical tradition. This approach fails to capture the global diversity of rich philosophical resources on hand to respond to these and other pressing international problems. If global justice is about justice for the globe, then we should be encouraged to at least consider how our philosophical insights might become more global: global justice may require a *global philosophy*.

But let us clarify further how “global” our global problems are. First, these problems are global *geographically*. This is obvious: global problems occur across continents. Secondly, global problems are also global *philosophically*. These problems are not the exclusive subject-matter for any one philosophical tradition. So the issue here is that much of the most influential work on global justice has operated almost entirely within a relatively *bounded* approach. Global justice is about global problems, but its formulation has lacked sufficient global *thought*. Global philosophy aims to fill this void.

My argument is not that standard, Western approaches to global justice should be jettisoned. There remains much of *vital* interest and recent breakthroughs have been

³ It pains me to state this claim. My original philosophical interest was in Indian philosophy and comparative political thought aiming to reveal arresting points of relation and contrast between figures working independently of each other in different traditions. I continue to find this field a rich source of philosophical insight and understanding. This may underscore my belief that more philosophers may come to see the benefit of building philosophical bridges when there is a more clear philosophical pay-off rather than mere intellectual curiosity.

⁴ My claim is that the case for the *philosophical* importance has not been made because the *intrinsic* interest, I take it, is more obvious.

particularly exciting. Nevertheless, my claim is that this work might be improved much further through greater philosophical engagement through bridge building with other traditions. Global justice has been insufficiently global philosophically. Different traditions can and should meaningfully engage with each other to improve philosophical problem-solving. Once bridges are built long-term positive engagement can grow. But the problem is that these bridges are so difficult to forge. The challenge is to make a more convincing case for why new philosophical horizons are worth exploring for greater philosophical benefit. I believe it is time our philosophy rose to this great challenge by ending its bounded approach to global problems: global justice deserves a more *global* philosophy.

Global Philosophy: The New Frontier?

Global philosophy is an *unbounded* approach. It is a method whereby we open our individual tradition to others beyond our immediate boundaries to pursue philosophical benefits. Global philosophy is unfettered by self-limitation to engagement with what is established and familiar; it is open to what is new. Global philosophy can be adopted by any and all whether liberal, Hegelian, post-structuralist or others. For example, the liberal or radical feminist engages in global philosophy by an openness to exploring new ideas from a wider range of philosophical traditions. Global philosophy is motivated by the potential for an improved ability to address philosophical problems through revised or new philosophical resources. So a liberal global philosophy might attempt to engage with traditions of both East and West to reveal new insights that might be redeployed within liberalism improving its success at constructing compelling arguments. A global philosophical approach is about improving the traditions we work within. So global philosophy is not about abandoning our individual traditions, but rather their growth and improved success. Stated differently, global philosophy is *unbounded* in its not being bound entirely within any one philosophical tradition. Thus, global philosophy is about opening the horizons for the traditions we wish to improve and reinvigorate. Global philosophy – to be clear – is *not* unbounded in the sense of lacking any bounds: its aim is about improving our traditions and not merging all into a single World Philosophy.

I have highlighted throughout the notion of the Western philosophical tradition – broadly defined – as a relatively *bounded* tradition. This distinction is made because the situation is generally different for non-Western philosophical traditions, such as found in Indian thought (see Ganeri 2011; Parekh 2006; Raghuramaraju 2011; Sivaraksa 1992). There is an increasing amount of work aiming to make Indian and other Asian philosophical traditions more accessible to a Western audience as well (see Bushan and Garfield 2011; Nhat Hanh 2008; Kontrul 1987). Furthermore, there is highly impressive work undertaken within the Indian philosophical tradition that has developed with a deep awareness (and appreciation) of developments in Western philosophical traditions (see Radhakrishnan and Moore 1957, 575-637; Raghuramaraju 2006; Raghuramaraju 2009). The problem is not that non-Western philosophical traditions have nothing interesting to offer or lack philosophical sophistication. Nor is the problem for a lack of trying to communicate to a Western audience, especially as this work has become increasingly available. While so many Indian philosophers have engaged meaningfully with Western philosophical ideas, this has regrettably not been reciprocated.

There are several ways in which our taking more seriously an engagement with less familiar philosophical traditions may lead to illuminating avenues for future work in fields such as global justice. My illustrations will be confined to how Western traditions might engage further with Indian philosophical traditions. These examples are meant to be only

indicative of the likely future benefits of building bridges between philosophical traditions: an exhaustive examination would require several volumes. Plus, the main hurdle is convincing philosophers working in Western traditions to see the value in greater engagement with non-Western traditions and not *vice versa*. Indian philosophy is selected because it is a non-Western tradition that I'm most familiar with. I do not claim or suggest that it has any exclusive bridges to Western thought over and above other non-Western traditions.

Take the issue of our diverse identities. Every society contains social spaces filled with diversity. The challenge lies in how to respond best to maintaining political stability over time in light of the reasonable pluralism that characterizes each society. This is understood as the problem of political stability (Rawls 1996, 3-4). One solution to this problem is the creation of an overlapping consensus through the use of public reasons (Rawls 1996, 131-72). The idea is that reasons acceptable to all provide satisfactory public support for policies that respect the reasonable diversity around us.

This solution has not gone unchallenged. Several important objections have been raised. One is that any overlapping consensus we construct might be too fragile to guarantee political stability because of our deep differences (see Wenar 1995). A second objection is that an overlapping consensus should be rejected as a contractarian, and thereby flawed, view about justice (see Nussbaum 2006). Instead, we require some further connection between persons to secure stability, such as bolstering an overlapping consensus by the guarantee of a social minimum consisting in capabilities (see Brooks 2014).

The Indian philosophical tradition offers several useful insights into how problems like this might be better addressed. The first insight is to challenge the model of so-called "moral monism" and the resistance to cultural pluralism found at the core of much Western political thought: we should develop greater understanding of an "intercultural" (and not merely multicultural) view about equality and fairness, a perspective indebted to Indian philosophical traditions (see Parekh 2006). A further insight might be the view that political stability is best secured through guaranteeing a threshold of human capabilities (see Nussbaum 2000, Brooks 2014). Indeed, the capabilities approach is to some degree a major achievement of a more global philosophical approach to problem-solving with deep roots in multiple traditions, including Aristotelianism and classical Indian philosophy (see Sen 2009). This approach claims all persons should have their well-being guaranteed in terms of a capability to do or be (where debates continue about what should constitute our capabilities and how many we have). Political stability is thought best secured through the protection of human capabilities. But how we understand "capabilities" is a product in some measure of intercultural thought and interchange between traditions. Resources in Indian philosophical traditions can be mined to supplement or further develop Western philosophical traditions to improve their resourcefulness in providing new insights into how we should best address the challenge of diversity in modern society, a growing problem for both domestic and international politics as globalization becomes an ever greater presence in our collective lives.

A second philosophical issue concerns our moral duties. The standard view of most Western philosophers is that moral duties cannot conflict. But can there be possible conflicts? Immanuel Kant argues our moral duties do not conflict because they flow from a universal moral law (Kant 2011). Hegel famously rejects this argument as "an empty formalism" lacking in content (see 1990, 161-63; Brooks 2013b). Notwithstanding whichever side we might choose, the idea that our duties should not – and perhaps never – conflict has continued appeal for many, if not most, Western philosophers today. The potential problem is this view might be more dogmatic in its insistence upon non-contradiction among moral duties divorced from reality. It is not difficult to consider cases of potential moral conflict between what we might owe some versus what could be owed others.

The Indian philosophical tradition provides real use for us on this issue. The *Bhagavad Gita* is one of the most well-known Indian texts. The *Gita* contains a famous dialogue between the divine Krishna and the human warrior Arjuna (see Radhakrishnan 1948). The dialogue's setting is the eve of a great battle pitting Arjuna and his army against his cousins. Arjuna is concerned: while his cause is no doubt just and victory appears certain, these results can only be obtained through much bloodshed and human suffering including the death of many, such as his own relatives. Arjuna has a moral duty to fight his righteous battle, but also a moral duty to support his family and avoid causing them harm. Arjuna becomes resigned to the view that perhaps it would better to permit his unjust cousins to govern if only to avoid confronting his clash of duties. Krishna advises Arjuna that his view is mistaken: he must engage in battle using, in Amartya Sen's words, "duty-centred and consequence-independent reasoning" (Sen 2009, 209). (Note that this account reveals new horizons of "duty-centred" ethics and "consequence-independent reasoning" that is neither consequentialist nor deontological, or at least not in the traditional ways these views have been understood in Western traditions.)

We may learn several suggestive lessons from this account. The first is that any duty we have *to justice* trumps our other duties where these duties might conflict. Arjuna might have duties to his just cause and duties against causing harm to his relatives: our moral duties can conflict and where they do our duties to justice are primary. The second suggestive lesson is that our duties *require* commitments. The decision to perform duties might be consequence-independent, but the resolve to satisfy our duties must account for our personal responsibilities (Sen 2009, 213-14). Some moral decisions may be easier said than done: this is independent from questions about whether we might suffer from any weakness of will. The claim that we should weigh up our different prospective moral duties in light of our full range of moral commitments informs important work in the Western philosophical tradition, too: Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* is an example (Hegel 1990). So my argument is not that Western traditions lack a similar perspective, but rather that they might benefit from a closer engagement with related ideas found in less familiar traditions.

The implications for global justice are clear. Much of the debates about any responsibilities affluent states or people have to those in severe poverty is often couched in terms of our duties (see Pogge 2002, Singer 1972). Philosophers choose sides between accounts focused on positive or negative duties and other considerations of the moral duties we might owe distant others. But are these the only or even best ways to address such a pressing international problem? Is our solution to one of our biggest international, humanitarian challenges to work within a single, largely culturally-specific enterprise to determine universal moral duties binding on all meant to illuminate the way forward? Is it desirable, if possible, to defend approaches to global problems that fail to acknowledge the potential merits of approaches to thinking about moral duty found in non-Western societies? These questions are deliberately provocative, but I hope point towards the strong intuitive appeal of the need for global justice to be more *global* for it to have greater authority (and to be more compelling) as a theory about *justice*.

My brief illustrations have covered issues such as diversity and the problem of political stability as well as the problem of conflicting moral duties. These are longstanding problems in ethics and political philosophy with clear relevance for global justice. But perhaps a more clear issue as an issue of *global justice* concerns so-called "just war" theory. The standard, Western view of just war theory is that wars can be justified: a side can be right to wage war against others. Debates largely centre on which specific justifications are sufficient to confirm a war as "just." These debates have developed substantially in recent years after pioneering work by Augustine and Thomas Aquinas where it had been argued that just wars required elements, such as a just cause, just conduct and waged by a just

government (Augustine 1998, Aquinas 2002). Current debates centre on Jeff McMahan's powerful critique of orthodox just war theory where he rejects the moral equivalence of combatants (McMahan 2011). This orthodox view is that combatants on all sides have moral equivalence: in war, all are equal and the only persons who ought not be harmed are non-combatants (on all sides). McMahan argues that this view rests on an important mistake and, in fact, unjust combatants lack moral equivalence in war. So it is not the case that all combatants may be liable for attack during warfare. Instead, only unjust combatants can be held liable. And so debates have moved forward to work out the wider implications of this now increasingly dominant view: how to identify the "just" versus "unjust" combatants? Who are "combatants"? And so on.

If McMahan's challenge to orthodox just war theory marked a revolution in this field, then Indian philosophy might reveal a second revolution. McMahan and others may disagree on several important issues, but all agree that wars can be justified even if what might figure in considerations about their justification remains hotly contested. Buddhism is a religion with roots in India and well-known for its general opposition to violence. The Dalai Lama, a Tibetan in exile in India, in his *Ethics for a New Millennium* argues that harm to other sentient beings is wrongful and beyond justification (1999). Justifying causing harm does nothing but add to the suffering already in existence today. If decreasing, if not ending, harm is a crucial good, then we should stop justifying hurting others and even in self-defence. Of course, this has strong connections to early Greek thought: in the *Crito*, Socrates also accepted the view it was better to suffer harm than cause it.⁵

The implication for just war theory is that "just war theory" is based on a mistake, namely, that war can be "just." All wars involve the deaths of non-combatant civilians who are innocent. Such activity might be *excused* based on certain narrow justifications including the cause of the conflict and how any activity is conducted. The analogy is individual self-defence. No one is "just" in causing harm to others even if wrongly attacked by others. Any self-defence is not a just harm inflicted to others, but rather an *excused* harm: self-defence is not a right (such as a right to free expression or to cast electoral ballots), but a defence against prosecution for crimes where the elements of a specific crime may be otherwise found. So I do not require any defence where no crime might have been committed, but I do otherwise. If I have not been attacked or threatened by another, then my actions may be unlikely to constitute self-defence. Likewise, if I am attacked and refuse or unable to fight back, then I have not engaged in self-defence. But if I have harmed another, then I may require a defence against any charge of assault or perhaps causing actual bodily harm. Self-defence is an excuse, a defence to prosecution to charges that might otherwise hold. Similarly, we might see engaging in war as an activity that is always wrong, but sometimes excused. And so war is an evil to be avoided wherever necessary, but sometimes necessary if never "just" (or morally good).

Note the way this is phrased. The insight from the Dalai Lama and its relevance for Western views about just war theory need not be the theory should be abandoned because we should endorse pacifism. Instead, a key idea is to identify the ever-present wrongness of war and reinterpret this in a way that might best bring out already present philosophical resources – for example, common understandings of self-defence from legal philosophy – to further develop our tradition. Nor is this the only way we might find uses for ideas imported from other traditions in our own traditions.

I conclude this section by considering a different issue: what is the goal of philosophical disputes? For many in the Western tradition, this may be little more than the

⁵ See Plato (1997) and the *Crito* at 46b-50a.

aim for greater clarity into some important philosophical issue. Or perhaps others may be motivated by the goal of convincing others into agreement.

Broadly conceived, the Indian philosophical tradition has a fairly clear position on this issue: our goal is to seek *liberation* (see Radhakrishnan and Moore 1957, 46-47, 95-96; Swami 1935). Literally speaking, the truth will set you free (Rinpoche 1991). This idea of liberation is through a pursuit of knowledge carrying several connotations that are philosophical, religious and otherwise. Nonetheless, there is something genuinely liberating about the satisfaction we enjoy from improving our understanding about philosophical issues. Perhaps our pursuit of philosophical arguments is not merely for their own sake, but to learn more about ourselves. In these ways, this philosophical tradition may help inform how we engage in philosophical disputes.

Let me conclude this part of the discussion by reaffirming that my comments here are intentionally suggestive and only indicative of where future benefits might be mined from non-Western philosophical traditions. My ambition is to argue our issues are not exhaustively considered by any one tradition and that alternative traditions may contain resources worth re-employing for our traditions. The importance of global philosophy is that it may encourage us to look more closely at our debates in new ways and with new insights. In short, global philosophy is about better philosophy.

The Challenges for a Global Philosophy

There are several potential challenges for the future promise and popular appeal of global philosophy for global justice and other areas in philosophy. I will consider a range of potential challenges here in order to identify the possible obstacles – many of which are a commonplace in discussions I have participated in over the years – and show how global philosophy can overcome them.

The first possible challenge is the redundancy objection. This is the view that global philosophy might yield greater redundancy rather than illumination. The worry is that less familiar traditions might be too far removed for any meaningful engagement philosophical or otherwise. Instead, we should cash out these less familiar traditions in ways that are more readily recognizable to enable progress. The problem is that this may render less familiar traditions largely redundant. Suppose we understood an unfamiliar philosophical tradition in light of its close proximity to another more familiar. So we attempt to grasp the work of the philosopher Shankara in terms of a related Hegelian-inspired philosophy. While this might help render Shankara's distinctive Advaita Vedantan philosophy more intelligible in some sense, the problem is we might remain better off examining Hegelian philosophy more closely instead. If all insights from Shankara are limited to the medium of Hegelian philosophy, then we don't have any clear pay-off from considering these insights. To grasp Shankara in this way is to reinvent our philosophical wheel.

The redundancy objection mistakes the goal of global philosophy. The goal is not to compare and contrast, but rather uncover new philosophical insights to further develop our own traditions. A deeper engagement with figures such as Shankara is surely highly rewarding on many levels, but this is also highly time intensive. The goal of a global philosophy-inspired approach is not necessarily to inspect and comprehend every possible school of thought. Instead, our goal is to further develop our own tradition through engagement with others. We need not come to any definitive views about alternative traditions. What matters is how their ideas may be put to good philosophical use within our tradition. Global philosophy is not about making philosophy more redundant, but rather shining greater light on wider philosophical diversity.

A second concern is the incoherence objection. This concerns the issue that our traditions possess some identifiable coherence that makes possible their recognition as a tradition. The problem is that a closer engagement with other traditions could undermine the existing coherence found in our traditions rendering them incoherent. We should then avoid unbounded philosophical pursuits and instead maintain the distinctiveness – and separateness – of our philosophical positions.

This objection rests on a mistake about the nature of philosophical traditions. Traditions are never static and constantly evolving in response to changing issues confronting traditions over time. One good example already highlighted previously concerns the historical development of liberalism from Hobbes through Mill to Rawls. Traditions change. The problem cannot be that we might revise our arguments in light of engagement with alternative traditions and so produce change within our philosophical tradition. On the contrary, our goal should be to improve the ability of our tradition to address philosophical issues. We should actively forage for new resources that better facilitate this goal. One promising approach is the idea of philosophy as unbounded and engaged with diverse traditions. Global philosophy need not render any tradition incoherent. However, it may help improve our ability to address philosophical issues. The benefits clearly outweigh the costs.

A final, third problem is the objection that global philosophy may be insufficiently global. What is so “global” about “global philosophy”? Global philosophy is an unbounded approach to how traditions might improve their ability to solve philosophical problems. Global philosophy is not a claim to there being one true Philosophy that best combines all others: global philosophy is not a World Philosophy. Nor is global philosophy about bringing together as many traditions as possible for their own sake. Instead, global philosophy is about our having an openness, a receptiveness for the need to pursue wider philosophical engagement in order to improve our potential philosophical argumentative power. Global philosophy is only global in terms of its pursuit for philosophical resources. Nonetheless, it remains true that some philosophers, such as Hegel, have defended philosophical accounts about philosophical developments across the world in an attempt to bring them together in one unity. However, global philosophy need not be about speaking to all traditions – this might even be impossible because they are too plentiful – but rather speaking with diverse traditions. This not pursued for its own sake, but rather philosophical improvement through unbounded openness to new horizons.

These three main objections to global philosophy are not exhaustive. Nevertheless, they offer serious obstacles that must be overcome by global philosophy if it is to become a more dominant approach to future philosophical developments. Global philosophy can overcome these problems although it must be born in mind that “global philosophy” as an approach exists only in its infancy. I consider myself to be addressing a philosophical field that I firmly believe will rise to some future prominence in academic circles and not identifying any established field.

Conclusion

Global philosophy is an approach to philosophical problem-solving that is likely to become more commonplace as our societies (and universities) further diversify. While many philosophers have already engaged meaningfully across different traditions, this engagement has been largely confined to established and more familiar links. More importantly, this work too often excludes meaningful engagement more widely with less familiar traditions, including Indian philosophy. There have been any number of substantial contributions already that arise from deep engagement, but these have been largely restricted to the

relatively marginalized sub-field of comparative philosophy where analysis is often limited to historical comparisons without highlighting clearly enough the wider merits of bridging philosophical traditions for problem-solving.

This situation has contributed to a crisis of sorts for work in global justice. The main problem is not that this work is substandard or lacks for fascinating insights into our most pressing problems. No, the problem is that there isn't much "global" about "global justice" philosophically-speaking. Global justice might be about justice for all, but the ideas that underpin these views of justice too often develop within bounded traditions.

Global philosophy accepts this challenge. It calls on each of us to engage across philosophical traditions and build bridges. The goal is not to develop one single view of Philosophy for all, but to improve the philosophical traditions we already accept. I have indicated briefly potential areas for how such engagement might be established and my discussion only indicative of the wider possibilities of global philosophy extend far beyond these fields and traditions.

If we want global justice to become more *global*, then we should warmly embrace a future with an unbounded, global philosophy. We have much to learn from other traditions to improve our understanding of philosophical issues. As our world grows ever smaller, so our philosophical engagement should develop ever more widely. Philosophy should become less bounded and tribal and more unbounded and engaged. The future, in short, is global philosophy. And this should prove to be good news for work in global justice and for philosophy more generally.⁶

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