

# SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## **Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy Establishes Prize Named in Honor of Bhimrao Ambedkar**

APRIL 12, 2026 - The Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy (SAAP) announces the establishment of the Bhimrao Ambedkar Prize in Global Pragmatism. This prize rewards high-quality scholarly research that explores interactions between American philosophy and thinkers in India, China, greater Asia and the Pacific region, Africa, and other understudied regions. This is the first prize established by an American scholarly organization named in honor of Bhimrao Ambedkar.

Bhimrao Ambedkar (1891-1956) was a renowned political figure, philosopher, and civil rights leader in India. Ambedkar was also a devoted student of John Dewey, a well-known American intellectual, during his education at Columbia University in 1913-1916. Upon returning to India, Ambedkar would lead a lifelong movement against caste discrimination, take an important role in the drafting of India's democratic constitution in the 1940s, and orchestrate a mass conversion movement to Buddhism in the 1950s. He also developed his own theory of democracy, thereby adding to the global evolution of pragmatist thought beyond its American context.

This prize aims to reward high-quality scholarship presented at SAAP's annual conference that explores the interaction of American thinkers with understudied traditions and movements around the globe. The prize will also encourage research on what other cultures and traditions can contribute to the refinement of American philosophy.

"This award is significant," says SAAP's president, Tess Varner, "because it recognizes the vitality of the American philosophical tradition as it expands through global engagement and influence."

"Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was not only a jurist and social reformer but also a profound philosopher whose ideas reshaped modern Indian thought," says Manoj Shambharkar, executive member of Ambedkar International Mission, "We appreciate SAAP's commitment to fostering scholarly excellence and expanding the horizons of philosophical research across the globe."

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Scott Stroud, a member of SAAP's Board of Directors, says "this award will encourage more research into pragmatism's engagement with other cultures—and into what American philosophers can learn from thinkers in China, India, Africa, and beyond."

All scholarly papers dealing with pragmatism and American philosophy in its global context submitted to the annual SAAP conference are eligible for the prize. The prize will be awarded at the yearly SAAP conference held in each spring. Funding for this award was provided by the Stroud family in memory of Herman Stroud.

The Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy (SAAP) is a scholarly organization dedicated to the promotion of research and teaching in the diverse areas of American philosophy. The society's annual conference and its official journal, *The Pluralist*, feature work on important figures in the American tradition such as John Dewey, William James, Charles Peirce, Jane Addams, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Richard Rorty, and support research and collaboration among scholars on important contemporary topics in ethics and political philosophy. SAAP was formed in 1973 and currently includes over 400 members from around the globe. For more information on SAAP, please visit: <https://american-philosophy.org/>.

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