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**CAN WHITE AMERICANS INCLUDE COLORS IN THEIR CANON?  
SEARCHING A POST-NATIONAL HISTORY OF AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY**

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**ABSTRACT**

Racism in the USA not only takes place in law, economics, politics, mass media and new media, education, literature, and popular culture but also occurs in philosophy. An abundance of Latino philosophers, African-American philosophers, and Native American philosophers are excluded from the American philosophy canon. To discover whether racism happens in the field of American philosophy, the writer surveys 15 American philosophy books written between the 1940s and the 2020s by various American writers, the whites and the non-whites. The writer carries out an ‘index-study’: scanning philosopher names in the index of each book, identifying and scrutinizing the names, listing and categorizing them into race categories, counting them, comparing the number of non-white philosophers and white philosophers mentioned in each book, putting them in a table, and interpreting why there is a disparity between the number of non-white and white philosophers included in the books. The survey result shows that racism happens in American philosophy; the writers of the 15 American philosophy books exclude an abundance of non-white philosophers. There is a critical need to write a new, post-national American philosophy book that does justice to non-white philosophers in the near future so that racism diminishes.

**Keywords:** *American philosophy; Canon; History; Post-National; Racism; White American*

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**INTRODUCTION**

American philosophy, as May Brodbeck stated in her article published in *American Quarterly*, “badly needs a public relations counselor.” (Brodbeck, 1950, p. 39). It is left behind and almost unattended compared to

other topics frequently discussed in American Studies classes. The overlapping character of American philosophy and American literature makes the mention of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Thoreau, for instance, a privilege of American literature. When Americans research Emerson, they have him as an object of literary

research and as the one of philosophical research. Transcendentalism itself is not only a literary genre but also a school of philosophy (Stanlick, 2013, p. 58).

Studies on racism in American philosophy sadly have even been rarer. There has been already an abundance of studies on racism in American pop culture (Rocchio, 2000; Behnken & Smithers, 2015), racism in American law (Marable, Steinberg & Middlemass, 2007; Bell, 2008), racism in American education (Troyna & Williams, 1986; Gillborn, 2002; Chesler, Lewis & Crowfoot, 2005), racism in American politics (Fantina, 2014; Thomsett, 2019), racism in American economics (Jha, 2016; Freeman, 2021), as well as racism in American mass media and new media (van Dijk, 1991; Klein, 2017), yet racism in American philosophy has so far been rarely studied in American Studies. Philosophy is one of the aspects of American culture; hence duly studied, thoughtfully considered, and deemed extremely important (McKeon, 1950, p. 241).

Racism in philosophy has always been “the exclusion of Africa and Asia from modern histories of philosophy” (Park, 2013, p. xi); or the exclusion of African philosophers and Asian philosophers from the Western philosophical canon. Other forms of racism in philosophy are discriminatory treatment and marginalization of African philosophy within the canon of Continental philosophy (Bernasconi & Cook, 2003, p. 6). African philosophers and Asian philosophers are classified by Western philosophy canon writers based on racial discrimination. They are “epistemologically inferior”, whereas Western philosophers are epistemologically superior (Mignolo in Dabashi, 2015, p. 17).

Racism in philosophy can be traced back to Hume’s writing (1711-1776), stating

I am apt to suspect the negroes, and in general all the other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There scarcely ever was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences. On the other hand, the most rude and barbarous of the whites such as the ancient GERMANS, the present TARTARS, have still something eminent about them, in their valour, form of government, or some other particular. Such a uniform and constant difference could not happen, in so many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original distinction between these breeds of men. Not to mention our colonies, there are NEGROE slaves dispersed all over EUROPE, of whom none ever discovered any symptoms of ingenuity; though low people, without education, will start up amongst us, and distinguish themselves in every profession. In JAMAICA, indeed, they talk of one negroe as a man of parts and learning; but it is likely he is admired for slender accomplishments, like a parrot, who speaks a few words plainly (Hume, 1994, p. 86).

This European philosophical racism was embraced by John Locke, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Hegel, Bertrand Russell, Martin Heidegger, Friedrich Nietzsche, Lucien Levy-Bruhl, Karl Marx, Hannah Arendt, among others, (Mills, 1998, pp. xi-xx; Bernasconi & Cook, 2003, pp. 1-7; Valls, 2005, pp. 1-13; Park, 2013, pp. xi-xiii; Hidayat, 2015, pp. 36-38, 48) still prevails in European world until today. The question is, do Americans inherit this European racism in their philosophy? Do Americans maintain the European philosophical racism in American history of philosophy? Do Americans keep

their racist white supremacist misogyny of non-white wisdom?

McCall & McReynolds (2021) argued that racism also occurs in American philosophy since American philosophy "... bears the scars of a racialized past and present that are the product of a racialized colonialism." American philosophy is 'the product of a racist and colonial culture...', and so '...it contains residua of that culture.' (McCall & McReynolds, 2021, p. 4). The commonplace practice of racism in American philosophy is in the form of exclusion of Native American philosophers (McCall & McReynolds, 2021, p. 52); African-American philosophers (McKenna & Scott, 2015, p. 281); and Latino philosophers (McKenna & Scott, 2015, p. 261; McCall & McReynolds, 2021, p. 148) from American philosophy canon. However, the philosophical exclusion has been contested by the fact that some American philosophy book writers have recently included Native American philosophers, African-American philosophers, and Latino philosophers in their books. The 11 out of 15 American philosophical books in which the writer surveys have already included people-of-color philosophers. With this, the writer must advance a counter-argument that the inclusion still maintains racism; the American philosophy books writers include the people-of-color philosophers who imitate European philosophy or copycat lines of thought produced by white American philosophers. Philosophers of Native American descent, of African-American descent, and of Latino origin who teach and develop their native, indigenous thinking, which is considered strange and peculiar to American white philosophers' taste, are still excluded from the canon. Whyte & Meissner (2021) are true when they wrote this saddening fact.

While Indigenous peoples have been philosophizing in "America" since creation, philosophy as an academic discipline has abysmally small numbers of Indigenous philosophers. Many Indigenous philosophers cite the hostility of the discipline as a reason for pursuing other academic and nonacademic positions. Not only are Indigenous PhDs routinely excluded from the discipline by means of discrimination, hostility to our communities' epistemologies, and sexism, our community knowledge keepers are excluded by the Western academy via gatekeeping practices like the requirement that professors have advanced degrees (e.g., PhDs) that do not correspond to the attainment of the relevant expertise. In Indigenous communities, knowledge-sharing protocols are different than they are in the Western academy. While white men, often those perceived to be within certain adult age ranges, are typically (in our experiences) revered as the most credible producers of knowledge in Western communities, Indigenous communities often acknowledge children and elders of all genders as knowledge keepers, since they are usually closest to the spirit world in their life journeys. Philosophical expertise, then, in our communities is not determined by PhDs but rather by life stage, community responsibilities, and ceremonial and cultural protocols. That Indigenous philosophical experts, our children, and our elders, are systematically excluded from the Western academy, speaks volumes about the (im)possibility of American philosophy to decolonize (McCall & MyReynolds, 2021, p. 52).

The problem of excluding the indigenous philosophy of colored people from the canon of American philosophy has been expressed verbally. The writer wants to prove the existence of exclusion based on racism in a somewhat empirical manner. Hence, this paper

attempts to empirically prove the exclusionary racism taking place in American philosophy by surveying 15 American philosophy books written between the 1940s and the 2020s by various American writers, being the whites and the non-whites. The writer employs a simple research method, namely ‘index-study’: scanning philosopher names in indexes of each book surveyed, identifying and scrutinizing the names with their place of origin, listing and categorizing them into race category, counting them, comparing the number of non-white philosophers and white philosophers mentioned in each book, putting them in a table, and interpreting why there is a disparity between the number of non-white and white philosophers included in the books.

The books chosen for the study are as follows:

1. Max Black’s *Philosophy in America*
2. Yervant H. Krikorian’s *Recent Perspectives in American Philosophy*
3. Michael A. Weinstein’s *The Wilderness and the City: American Classical Philosophy as a Moral Quest*
4. John Edwin Smith’s *The Spirit of American Philosophy*
5. Charles Hartshorne’s *Creativity in American Philosophy*
6. Bertrand P. Helm’s *Time and Reality in American Philosophy*
7. Vincent G. Potter’s *Doctrine and Experience: Essays in American Philosophy*

8. Stanley J. Scott’s *Frontier of Consciousness: Interdisciplinary Studies in American Philosophy and Poetry*.
9. Bruce Kuklick’s *A History of Philosophy in America, 1720-2000*
10. Armen T. Marsoobian & John Ryder’s *The Blackwell Guide to American Philosophy*
11. Douglas R. Anderson’s *Philosophy Americana: Making Philosophy at Home in American Culture*
12. Richard P. Mullin’s *The Soul of Classical American Philosophy*
13. Nancy Stanlick’s *American Philosophy, The Basics*
14. Erin McKenna & Scott L. Pratt’s *American Philosophy: From Wounded Knee to the Present*
15. Rebecca L. Farinas’ *Classical American Philosophy*

After reading all the 15 American philosophy books thoroughly, employing the simple research procedures the writer set by himself, it is crystal clear that American philosophers originating from minority groups in the U.S.—African-Americans, Native Americans and Latino-Americans—are not yet equally represented. The numerical gap between the white philosophers and the colored philosophers seems to be unbridgeable (see Table 1 below). The American philosophy book authors seem to maintain the European philosophical racism by excluding and marginalizing the American philosophers of the minority groups.

Table 1. Numbers of Philosophers based on Race

BOOK	WHITE	NATIVE	AFRICAN	LATINO
Max Black’s <i>Philosophy in America</i> (1964)	180	-	-	2
Yervant H. Krikorian’s <i>Recent Perspectives in American Philosophy</i> (1973)	37	-	-	-
Michael A. Weinstein’s <i>The Wilderness and the City: American Classical Philosophy as a Moral Quest</i> (1982)	87	-	-	2

John Edwin Smith's <i>The Spirit of American Philosophy</i> (1983)	55	-	-	1
Charles Hartshorne's <i>Creativity in American Philosophy</i> (1984)	248	-	-	1
Bertrand P. Helm's <i>Time and Reality in American Philosophy</i> (1985)	100	-	1	-
Vincent G. Potter's <i>Doctrine and Experience: Essays in American Philosophy</i> (1988)	283	-	1	1
Stanley J. Scott's <i>Frontier of Consciousness: Interdisciplinary Studies in American Philosophy and Poetry</i> (1991)	56	-	-	-
Bruce Kuklick's <i>A History of Philosophy in America, 1720-2000</i> (2001)	276	-	1	1
Armen T. Marsoobian's & John Ryder's <i>The Blackwell Guide to American Philosophy</i> (2004)	276	1	8	2
Douglas R. Anderson's <i>Philosophy Americana: Making Philosophy at Home in American Culture</i> (2006)	121	2	7	3
Richard P. Mullin's <i>The Soul of Classical American Philosophy</i> (2007)	66	1	1	-
Nancy Stanlick's <i>American Philosophy, The Basics</i> (2013)	50	6	10	1
Erin McKenna's & Scott L. Pratt's <i>American Philosophy: From Wounded Knee to the Present</i> (2015)	298	16	21	20
Rebecca L. Farinas' <i>Classical American Philosophy</i> (2021)	137	-	5	9

## DISCUSSION

There are 39 Latino philosophers mentioned in the 15 American philosophy books. However, out of 15, only 11 books specifically include Latino philosophers; the rest four books exclude them. Max Black's *Philosophy in America* mentions 182 philosophers, but he only includes 2 Latino philosophers, leaving the rest to 180 white philosophers. Charles Hartshorne's *Creativity in American Philosophy* mentions 249 philosophers in his book, yet he includes 1 Latino philosopher, leaving the rest to 248 white philosophers. Vincent G. Potter's *Doctrine and Experience: Essays in American Philosophy* factually mentions 285 philosophers in his book; however, he only includes 1 Latino philosopher and 1 African-American philosopher, leaving the rest to 283 white philosophers.

There are also 27 Native American philosophers mentioned in the 15 American philosophy books analyzed herein. However, out of 15, only five books specifically include Native American philosophers; the rest ten books exclude them. Armen T. Marsoobian & John Ryder's *The Blackwell Guide to American Philosophy* (2004) mention 287 philosophers. However, they only include 1 Native American philosopher, leaving the rest to 276 white philosophers, 8 African American philosophers, and 2 Latino philosophers. Erin McKenna & Scott L. Pratt, despite being Native American philosophers themselves, merely include 16 of their fellow Native Americans out of 339 philosophers.

Then, 30 African American philosophers are mentioned in the 15 American philosophy books studied herein. However, out of 15, there are only nine books specifically that include Native American philosophers; the rest six books exclude them. Charles Hartshorne's

*Creativity in American Philosophy* (1984) mentions 249 philosophers, but he only includes 1 African American philosopher, leaving the rest to 248 white philosophers and 1 Latino philosopher. Bertrand P. Helm's *Time and Reality in American Philosophy* (1985) mentions 101 philosophers in his book; however, he only includes 1 African-American philosopher, leaving the rest to 100 white philosophers. Vincent G. Potter's *Doctrine and Experience: Essays in American Philosophy* (1988) factually mentions 285 philosophers, but he only includes 1 African American philosopher and 1 Latino philosopher, leaving the rest to 283 white philosophers. Stanley J. Scott's *Frontier of Consciousness: Interdisciplinary Studies in American Philosophy and Poetry* (1991), mentions 56 philosophers in his book; however, he excludes all American philosophers of the minority groups. Lastly, Bruce Kuklick's *A History of Philosophy in America, 1720-2000* (2001) mentions 278 philosophers in his book; however, he only includes 1 African-American philosopher and 1 Latino philosopher, leaving the rest to 276 white philosophers.

Why the 15 American philosophy books exclude or include is based on criteria set by the book authors themselves. The first criterion set is originality. Black, Hartshorne, Helm, Scott, and Anderson include American philosophers who have an original thought, "powerful generative idea;" "Each brings a unique voice," distinct from European philosophical heritage (Black, 1964, p. 11; Hartshorne, 1984, p. xii; Helm, 1985, p. 2 ; Scott, 1991, p. xv; Anderson, 2006, p. xi). The second criterion is vitality. Weinstein, Smith, Potter, and Mullin include in their books American philosophers whose thought "... can be brought forward from it into our own time

as the foundation for a contemporary philosophy of life." The philosophers whose thoughts "continue to be part of the solution of our problems," so as to find "new insights and inspiration..." (Weinstein, 1982, p. vii; Smith, 1983, p. v; Potter, 1988, p. 1; Mullin, 2007, p. vii). The third criterion is trendiness. Krikorian includes the philosophers in his book because "they represent some of the major trends..." (Krikorian, 1973, p. 1). The fourth criterion is representativeness. Kuklick selects American philosophers who serve as characteristic examples to represent philosophical schools over others. For instance, "... among instrumentalists, John Dewey over George Herbert Mead; among public intellectuals, Richard Rorty over Herbert Marcuse, Sidney Hook, and Noam Chomsky." (Kuklick, 2001, p. xii). The last criterion is experientiality. Anderson, Stanlick, McKenna & Pratt, as well as Farinas, pick out American philosophers whose thoughts grow "... out of the New World environment and experience..." and "...deal with the everyday experiences... from the perspectives of our experiential homes." (Anderson, 2006, pp. 4-7; Stanlick, 2013, p. 5; McKenna & Pratt, 2015, p. 6, and Farinas, 2021, p. 1).

However, inconsistency in the criteria set by the authors mentioned above is clearly found. If Black's, Hartshorne's, Helm's, Scott's, and Anderson's criterion of originality is honestly withheld, that they include American philosophers who have original thought, "powerful generative idea;" "Each brings a unique voice," distinct from European philosophical heritage, why do they not include a lot of Native American philosophers, many an African-American philosophers, a great number of Latino philosophers, whose philosophical insights are original? (Marti, 1983, p. 47; Outlaw & Roth, 1997, p. 29;

Nuccetelli, 2002, p. 527). Also, if the second criterion of vitality is consistently followed that Weinstein, Smith, Potter, and Mullin include philosophers whose thought,

... can be brought forward from it into our own time as the foundation for a contemporary philosophy of life.” whose thoughts “continue to be part of the solution of our problems,” so as to find “new insights and inspiration...

The, why do the authors not include an abundance of Native American philosophers, African-American philosophers, and Latino philosophers, whose philosophical indigeneity has been vital until to date? (Whyte & Meissner in McCall & McReynolds, 2021, p. 52).

The third criterion of trendiness rigidly abided by Krikorian that he includes philosophers because “they represent some of the major trends...”. It is reasonable that he does not include the philosophies of people of color; many a people-of-color philosopher never follows “the major trends” since the American white majority belongs to the analytic bent of philosophy or Continental bent of philosophy. The fourth criterion, which is representativeness, is the criterion that is never obeyed consistently. As an illustration, Kuklick never selects philosophers who represent all races of America; he only chooses philosophers who represent the American whites. The most inclusionary criterion is the last criterion which is experientiality. However, the authors disagree if experientiality is of the New World or New and Old Worlds. Anderson only includes philosophers, the whites and the non-whites, whose experientiality is in the New World. Consequently, he excludes Native American philosophers whose philosophy is in the Old World. At the same time, Stanlick, McKenna

& Pratt, and Farinas include philosophers of all races in America whose experientiality is in the Old and the New Worlds.

Douglas R. Anderson’s *Philosophy Americana: Making Philosophy at Home in American Culture* (2006) excludes Native American philosophers. Instead, they state,

American philosophy is a history—perhaps a natural history—of ideas, persons, and actions that begins, roughly speaking, with the writings of the Mathers and Jonathan Edwards and runs through to the present. It is “American” not for jingoistic reasons, but because it is autochthonous—it grows out of the New World environment and experience. It is “American” in part because it is not native. As Scott Pratt and others are now showing, American Indian thought is both complex and philosophical, but in origin it is pre-Vespucci and thus pre-American. Such native philosophy plays no overt role in this text, but it should be kept in mind as an important indigenous forerunner of and influence on what I am calling “American philosophy.” (Anderson, 2006, p. 4).

To include George Santayana (1863-1952), a famous Spanish-born pragmatist, into American philosophy books, two of the 15 philosophy book authors are hesitant. John Edwin Smith (1983) excludes the prominent pragmatist because of his un-Americanness:

A word about George Santayana may be in order here. I have not discussed him in this study, for it seems to me that despite his presence in the ‘golden age’ of American philosophy his thought is not representative of the main drift of American thinking. The American mind, as Santayana himself saw, is voluntaristic and not contemplative; it is moral and moralistic rather than aesthetic; it would sooner give up religion altogether than retain it as mere poetry; it will not accept

any theory of reality according to which the self is either an appearance or evanescent. The American mind, in short, has been everything but what Santayana was and stood for. (Smith, 1983, p. xii).

Charles Hartshorne, while preferring Alfred North Whitehead, who is an Anglo-American philosopher, excludes George Santayana, who is a Spanish-born, saying:

I have omitted some important philosophers whose work has been primarily in ethics (for example, Charles Stevenson, John Rawls) or in aesthetics (DeWitt Parker, Monroe Beardsley). Also some philosophers whose training was in other countries (Rudolf Carnap, John Findlaya superb writer and thinker), with the exceptions, justified by the unique extent to which they learned from and became influential in American philosophy, of Whitehead and Tillich. Perhaps another exception should have been Gustav Bergmann. The writers dealt with in chapters 1-9 include all but one (Santayana) of Max Fisch's "six classical American philosophers." Santayana (Chapter 16) I consider somewhat marginal to the main line of development of metaphysics in this country.

With Max Fisch I treat Whitehead as American, although Anglo-American is more accurate. But it was an American university, Harvard, that gave this mathematician, physicist, and logician the opportunity he needed to devote himself full time to reading, teaching, and writing philosophy. England, like Europe generally, has been too much given to exclusive specialization to afford Whitehead this opportunity. Whitehead gladly accepted his new role as philosopher among our philosophers. He stopped reading physicists and gave all. (Hartshorne, 1984, p. xii)

Despite the fact that the authors of American philosophy books set criteria of

inclusion and exclusion for their books, it is true that a system of arbitrariness dictates them more, as shown above, than the criteria they set up.

Why, despite inclusion, is there still a disparity between the number of white philosophers and the people-of-color philosophers mentioned in the books? Why does the number of the non-white philosophers mentioned not equal the number of the white philosophers therein? Why is the ratio gap between the white philosophers and the non-white ones included in the books poles apart and oceans away? There are some interpretations to understand this phenomenon. First, the disparity happens because the authors intentionally expose more white philosophers than the people-of-color philosophers in their books. They intentionally included more white philosophers than colored philosophers. They fill in their books with more white philosophers than the colored philosophers, realizing that there are many books out there that deal primarily with colored philosophers, such as Lott & Pittman's *A Companion to African-American Philosophy* (Blackwell, 1998), Tsenay Serequeberhan's *The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy: Horizon and Discourse* (Routledge, 1994), Jacoby Adeshei Carter's *African American Contributions to the Americas' Cultures* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2016), Nuccetelli, Schutte & Bueno's *A Companion to Latin American Philosophy* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), and Anne Waters' *American Indian Thought: Philosophical Essays* (Blackwell, 2004). These books intentionally include more colored philosophers than white ones. However, one may ask why there must be different books to deal with the philosophers of color? Why cannot one book include all? Does not the



very fact that there are segregated books dealing with the philosophers of color itself prove that the philosophical discrimination based on color is still there? A confession of this unconscious philosophical segregation by the white philosophy book writers is found in Stanlick's *American Philosophy: the basics* (2013):

... it is important to note ... an important detail regarding me, a white, middle-aged, "native born," secular American woman of Western European descent... There are very few books (relatively speaking) on Native American philosophy and even fewer books in American philosophy that make more than vague or passing references to Native American thought, and some make no reference to Native American philosophy at all. My and Bruce Silver's *Philosophy in America, Volumes I and II* are among those in which Native American philosophy is never mentioned. I rectify the omission in those two books in this book, doing my best to present an accurate picture of Native American philosophy (Stanlick, 2013, pp. 111-112).

However, one may argue that the presence of the books such as Lott & Pittman's *A Companion to African-American Philosophy*, Nuccetelli, Schutte & Bueno's *A Companion to Latin American Philosophy*, and Anne Waters' *American Indian Thought: Philosophical Essays* are themselves segregational; it is the colored book writers themselves who do the segregating. Albert G. Mosley, an African American philosopher, once said,

At the gates to Western philosophy Plato declared "Let no one enter who has not studied mathematics." At the gates to African philosophy we may imagine the ethnophilosopher to have declared "Let no one enter who has not communicated with ancestral spirits and internalized the

rhythms of traditional music." (Mosley in Lott & Pittman, 2006, p. 195).

The argument, on second thought, is unjustifiable; it is against an ironclad historical fact that African American philosophy had been born only recently. Tommy L. Lott & John P. Pittman explain:

It was the social movements of black people themselves—from Garveyism and the Harlem Renaissance to the Civil Rights movement and its more radical progeny—that compelled social change and forced the larger American society's grudging acknowledgment of the deep historical racial injustices. Out of the tumult of the 1960s African-American philosophers began to focus on some of the ideas expressed in this volume. Indeed, the advent of Black Studies in the academy is concurrent with the development of African-American philosophy as a field of inquiry. Without the 1960s political movements, however, Black Studies would not have been established. Hence, political activism gave Black Studies, and African-American philosophy, its initial momentum and reason for being, its ideological coloring, practical aims, and its first recruits (Lott & Pittman, 2006, p. xiii).

The writing of separated books by the colored book writers is not meant to be segregational but to be inclusionary. It is to include whom had been for a very long time until the 1960s excluded from American philosophy canon. It is liberational; it is,

to declare independence from a dominant culture that has brought both pain and loss"; it is "'independent' philosophical investigation as a part of the tradition of resistance" (McKenna & Pratt, 2015, p. 2).

It is a decolonizing of what had for a very long time been colonized (McCall & McReynolds, 2021, p. 6).

The second interpretation of why there is inequality between the number of white philosophers and that of colored philosophers mentioned and included in American philosophy books is that white book writers know only a few colored philosophers; they know white philosophers more than white philosophers know the colored ones. If there are only a few colored philosophers included in their books, it is just because they do not know much about a lot of colored philosophers. Their ignorance of the existence of many philosophers of color is caused by the fact that "...it is not clear that even Native American philosophers can explain their philosophy adequately to others in written form" (Stanlick, 2013, p. 112). In other words, there are only a few colored philosophers who can make themselves understood before the whites; consequently, the whites-only include colored philosophers whom they understand and exclude those they fail to understand. The validity of this argument is so shaky since the books such as Lott & Pittman's *A Companion to African-American Philosophy*, Nuccetelli, Schutte & Bueno's *A Companion to Latin American Philosophy*, and Anne Waters' *American Indian Thought: Philosophical Essays* have nowadays been accessible to even those inexperienced in African-American philosophy, in Latino American philosophy, and Native American philosophy. Only the stubbornness of the white book writers drives them to deliberate neglect.

The third interpretation to answer the question of why the white book writers include less colored philosophers than the white ones in their books is that minority-class

philosophers are demographically rare. Charles W. Mills (2015) explains,

Demographically philosophy is just 2-to-3 percent minorities, maybe 97 percent white. Roughly 1 percent African-American, maybe another 1 or 2 percent Latinos/as and Asian Americans, and a handful of Native Americans. So, there's little chance of students on the undergraduate level, or the graduate level for that matter, being exposed to a class taught by a person of color. Insofar as the role model argument has some value to it, some minority students will think, "Well, I don't see anybody like me in this subject." (Mills, 2015, p. 83).

According to Mills, the fact of demographical disparity compels the white book writers to include only a few philosophers of color in their books. Demographically, the minority is less in number than the majority. The small number of colored philosophers included is due to the colored philosophers' status as a demographical minority. However, one may argue that the reason why the colored philosophers are a demographical minority is due to the white philosophers' "gatekeeping practices" (Whyte & Meissner in McCall & McReynolds, 2021, p. 52)—they keep the gate of the philosophy academy; they open the gate only for those who have undergone formal academic training, starting from Bachelor's Degree to Doctor's Degree to Professor in university, and the university owns curriculum created on the basis of the whites' academic tradition; they close the gate for those who have undergone 'other' formal trainings, such as that based on African indigenous curriculum of philosophy or Latin indigenous wisdom tradition or Native American traditional transmission of knowledge. The gatekeeping practice by the white philosophy academy has so far been so effective that the

door of the white academy can only be opened for philosophers of color who are willing to assimilate into the white academy of philosophy, who are just a minority.

The presence of diverse philosophical issues and methods at the annual APA (*American Philosophy Association*—F.H.) meetings has grown dramatically since 1979. New venues for publication have emerged and a wide range of new philosophical resources (including new histories of American philosophy) have continued to transform the discipline. Yet, perhaps strangely, most philosophy departments around the country continued on their course within the larger philosophical agenda still set by an elite committed to “protecting” the discipline. Despite the changing APA and new work by individuals inside and outside the academy, philosophy departments remained marked by what Lachs called “the tendency to exclude the different”... An explanation for the continued narrowness of the academic field might be found in the declaration of Ruth Marcus after the election in 1979: “You keep the conventions! We’ll keep the graduate schools” (McKenna & Pratt, 2015, p. 196).

## CONCLUSION

There are two general conclusions. The first is related to the criteria of inclusion and exclusion of philosopher names set up by the surveyed 15 book writers. The second is related to inequality in the number of colored philosophers mentioned and included in the surveyed 15 books.

Firstly, it is concluded that the 15 American philosophy book writers who set up criteria of inclusion and exclusion of philosopher names in their books are relatively inconsistent with their criteria, particularly when applied to colored

philosophers. Many original thoughts can be found within the traditions of people of color’s philosophy, which can enrich the tradition of American philosophy. However, since the original thoughts belong to the people of color, the surveyed American philosophy book writers seem reluctant to include them.

There are also many vital philosophical thoughts found inside the philosophical traditions of the people of color, which can be the foundation for the American people’s contemporary philosophy of life and can be part of the solution to American people’s problems. However, as the people of color own the vital philosophical principles, the surveyed book writers seem to exclude them. Moreover, there are an abundance of philosophical thoughts that represent the complete configuration of race in the U.S. However, the surveyed book writers do not seem to consider philosophical ideas of the people of color as suitable representatives of the American philosophy academic world. Furthermore, there are wealthy stocks of philosophical thoughts born out of original American experience, experienced physically and mentally, and spiritually by all American people, including people of color. Nevertheless, as the experientiality belongs to the people of color, the surveyed American philosophy books seem to be reluctant to include it.

Secondly, inequality in a number of colored philosophers included in the 15 surveyed books above is interpreted as due to racial segregation of American philosophy books, due to the white book writers’ stubbornness and negligence and reluctance and indifference toward the peculiar and the strange kind of philosophical tradition, and

due to gatekeeping practice of the white academy of American philosophy.

Following those two general conclusions, the writer cannot but infer that all in all, there is racism in the American philosophy canon. Bernasconi (2003, p. 6) remind,

Racism is not confined to thoughts, utterances, and deeds, but finds its most important embodiment in institutions. Within the institution of philosophy, the treatment of African philosophy, its exclusion or marginalization to the point that it seems in constant need of self-justification, is particularly painful.

Racism in the form of exclusion of the minority groups from the American philosophy corpus must be eradicated. To eradicate racism in American philosophy, it is urgent that the white American philosophy book writers re-write the American philosophy books so as to include the colored philosophers with full justice and complete fairness: a post-national book of American philosophy. Without re-writing, it is impossible that racism goes away but in the field of philosophy—the field where all philosophers of the world become wiser and wiser on and on.

This article is ended with the best reminder by Charles Wade Mills (2015),

... the largely white professoriate—need to self-consciously seek out minority writings and try to incorporate them into mainstream courses. It would also be good if people tried to teach a course in race. It's not the case that you have to be a person of color to teach a course on race. If you're smart enough to get a PhD, you're certainly smart enough to be able to educate yourself in these fields and to try to teach a course in critical philosophy of race, African American philosophy, Latin American philosophy, and so forth.

At the same time, of course, the danger of courses such as these is that they could have a kind of ghettoizing effect. "If you want to do race, then take these courses; if you want to do regular philosophy, then don't bother with them.

So, in addition to teaching courses on race. People then should also make a self-conscious effort to incorporate such themes into mainstream courses: for example, a course in ethics, a course in political philosophy, a course in metaphysics, a course in epistemology. One might wonder, "How could you do that?" Nevertheless, in fact, there is a growing body of work by people, for example, Sally Haslanger at MIT, who are looking at the metaphysics of race and gender. Political philosophy can be expanded to include writings on the theme of racial justice. Social epistemology lends itself easily to bringing in social factors like race. For the history of philosophy, one could ask, "What non-traditional figures are there, people of color, who could be incorporated into such a history?" For example, W. E. B. Du Bois, whose Ph.D. was in history, had an acquaintance with philosophy, which shows in some of his writings, like *The Souls of Black Folk*. Metaphysical claims about race can be found in his famous 1897 essay, "The Conservation of Races."

Therefore, white philosophy professors could educate themselves on what is available, include such material in their courses, and enable minorities to see philosophers address their experiences. Such material would be suitable for white students as well. One thing that the Ferguson affair has brought home—not as if it needed bringing home very much because it has been there for a long time—is the divide in perceptions between whites and people of color. If you take courses like this as

a white person, it is valuable for others as well. It will expand your philosophical perspectives, giving you a different sense of the world and exposure to a different worldview, experience, and perspective on things. One should probably emphasize this point more. Incorporating such materials is not merely good in terms of possibly increasing the percentage of people of color in the profession. However, it would have a positive effect on white students also (Mills, 2015, pp. 84-85).

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