

Decolonising the University: A Profound Exploration of Vijay Prashad's Revolutionary Concept



Decolonising the University by Vijay Prashad

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1249 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 265 pages

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In the realm of higher education, the concept of decolonisation has emerged as a transformative force, challenging the traditional paradigms of knowledge production and institutional structures that have been shaped by centuries of colonial domination. Vijay Prashad, a renowned historian, scholar, and activist, stands as a leading voice in this movement, advocating for a profound decolonisation of the university.

The Roots of Colonialism in Higher Education

Prashad traces the roots of colonialism in higher education to the establishment of Western universities in the colonies. These institutions, he argues, were designed to serve the interests of the colonising powers, imposing Eurocentric perspectives and marginalising indigenous knowledge systems. The legacy of colonialism lingers in many universities

today, manifesting in the dominance of Western thought, the lack of diversity in faculty and curriculum, and the perpetuation of systemic barriers for students from marginalised backgrounds.

Decolonising Knowledge Production

Central to Prashad's vision of decolonising the university is the decolonisation of knowledge production. He calls for a fundamental shift in the way knowledge is created and disseminated, challenging the hegemony of Western epistemologies and embracing diverse perspectives from the Global South. This involves recognising the value of non-Western scholarship, incorporating indigenous knowledge systems, and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Transforming the Curriculum

Decolonising the curriculum is another crucial aspect of Prashad's proposal. He argues that the traditional curriculum often perpetuates colonial narratives and fails to reflect the diverse experiences and perspectives of the world's population. A decolonised curriculum would incorporate a wider range of voices, perspectives, and histories, providing students with a more comprehensive and inclusive education. This would involve incorporating marginalised histories, highlighting the contributions of non-Western scholars, and challenging Eurocentric biases.

Reforming Institutional Structures

Beyond decolonising knowledge and curriculum, Prashad also emphasises the need to decolonise institutional structures. This involves addressing systemic barriers that hinder the participation and success of students from

marginalised backgrounds. It requires universities to implement policies and practices that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, such as affirmative action programs, culturally sensitive support services, and inclusive teaching practices.

The Significance of Decolonisation

Decolonising the university is not merely an academic exercise; it is a fundamental step towards creating a more just and equitable society. By challenging colonial legacies and embracing diverse perspectives, universities can become agents of social transformation. They can empower students from all backgrounds to critically engage with the world, contribute to the production of knowledge, and work towards a more just and sustainable future.

Vijay Prashad's call for decolonising the university is a profound and timely intervention in the field of higher education. By challenging the colonial foundations of knowledge production, curriculum, and institutional structures, we can work towards creating a more inclusive, equitable, and just academy that reflects the diversity of the world we live in.



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