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Introduction: The Owl of Minerva Has Flown: Can Equity and Diversity be Done for Success in Higher Education Now?

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race is paradoxically, both everywhere and nowhere, structuring... lives but not formally recognized... in a racially structured polity, the only people who can find it psychologically possible to deny the centrality of 'race'¹ are those who are racially privileged, for whom 'race' is invisible precisely because the world is structured around them, whiteness as the ground against which the figures of other races –those who, unlike us are raced – appear. (Mills 2014: p. 76)

On Monday 23 March 2020, Prime Minister Boris Johnson placed the UK on lockdown in an attempt to arrest the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Before that, face-to-face tuition had ceased in most UK universities. International students had returned home. Education officials and staff were scrambling to prepare material that could be delivered digitally. The financial outlook had become dire. Universities had become

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tone-deaf and long-standing calls for redressing systemic inequalities and institutional racism in higher education (HE) were postponed. Similar scenes were being played out at other universities globally. Amidst growing concerns and unprecedented events as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an upsurge of civil unrest. Overt, virulent acts of racialised violence against Black people, captioned by explosive footage, by way of bystander videos were being staged on virtual platforms in a similar manner to the epistemic violence that had become commonplace and enacted on a daily basis through the university curriculum. Minneapolis had become centre stage for a performance that was to receive viewership globally. The 'knee on the neck' had once again become the contradiction to the mattering of Black lives. People marched in the streets; statues were removed. The #BlackLivesMatter and #SayHerName hashtags were trending and solidarity statements were being hastily prepared and plagiarised. This was a moment not to be missed. Displays of solidarity and allyship would serve as currency hereafter. Performative allyship was again en vogue. While performative allyship often serves as a catalyst for social change in the short term, it should not be confused with real allyship, for example, *White Sanction* (see Miller 2016), which requires an acknowledgement and transfer of privilege by nonmarginalised groups to marginalised groups. Eager to return to business as usual without further disruption, universities were now forced to agree that this period effectively signalled the end of their current existence in the current state. Similar to a time when the social time bomb exploded in America, inspired by the fight for racial, economic, social and political equality, the seminal song in the civil rights movement, Sam Cooke's 'A Change Is Gonna Come', was reverberating once again. The long arc of history that bends towards justice was now bending even further. Change will now have to come to post-secondary education as we knew it. We were at a crucial moment. We hate to say this, but we told you so!

This is a timeless collection that immortalises the perspectives of anti-racist scholars-activists. What follows is bequeathed to those who have sought, seek, are seeking and will seek to do equity and diversity for success in education. *Doing Equity and Diversity for Success* is transdisciplinary/interdisciplinary and proposes that in order to redress structural inequalities in the academy successfully, a guarantee of the basic human

rights to all without regard to ‘race’ is a prerequisite. It warrants revisiting the past and a reflection on the present.

Living in the wake means living in history and presence of terror, from slavery to the present, as the ground of our everyday Black existence; living the geographically dis/continuous but always present and essentially reinvigorated brutality in, and on, our bodies while even as that terror is visited on our bodies, the realities of that terror are erased. (Sharpe 2016: p. 15)

Doing Equity and Diversity for Success allows us to explore perspectives, reflections, methodologies, research and scholarship of activist-scholars and social justice advocates who challenge the seemingly immovable colonial and imperial structures of HE institutions. They bemoan institution’s lack of flexibility to reflect on and review its policies, practices and processes in order to acknowledge its ever increasingly diverse residents and meet their moral and equality imperatives. In what follows, the exceptional authors advocate what I call hereafter an ‘institutional deficit methodology’.² This should be viewed as a framework for illuminating and reconciling historical atrocities that promote inequitable outcomes for racially minoritised students and staff in post-secondary education, and for designing holistic strategies to redress disparities that maintain and exacerbate these structural inequalities. Dismantling these structures and effecting sustainable social transformations will resuscitate our ailing institutions. It is clear that there is no panacea, hence an ethical, holistic, person-centred approach, guided by an institutional deficit methodology seems plausible.

The essays contained within this volume draw on critical race theory (CRT), decolonial theory and post-colonial theories and proffer a contemporaneous insight into the development of vehicles and instruments aimed at driving sustainable institutional change in post-secondary education processes, policies and practice at the micro, meso and macro levels, while highlighting praxis in context, concepts and content. The tenets of racial realism, racial idealism, intersectionality, Whiteness as property, QuantCrit, DisCrit, WhiteCrit and BritCrit in CRT are used skilfully as analytical tools for examining how people who are racialised as minorities continue to be marginalised by the interplay between personal, structural and institutional factors. Additionally, the tenets of ‘othering’ and

‘identity and belonging’ within post-colonial studies offer leverage as analytical tools to highlight how the social and cultural effects of colonialism and imperialism disaffirm social justice imperatives. We seek to explore a range of perspectives and explore how the intersection/s of race and identities including gender, being LGBTQIA, religion faith, culture, age and disability can create further academic challenges and shape the outcomes and experiences of racialised minorities in HE, and how moments of empowerment have/can be created. In the words of Audrey Lorde (2003: p. 26), ‘difference must not merely be tolerated, but seen as a fund of necessary polarities between which our creativity can spark like a dialectic’. The incontrovertible consensus presented in this collection mandates a review of the past as a means of informing the future.

A Review of the Past and a Look into the Future

The groundswell of protests globally has served as a call to action for universities to acknowledge and reconcile with their imperial history and legacy of colonialism, in order to redouble their efforts to promote social justice and eliminate institutional racism. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, global responses and solidarity for actions to address the global pandemic of systemic racism, the HE sector now finds itself at a watershed moment, where hindsight must stimulate foresight.

This collection commemorates the work of the late, great, Dame Jocelyn Anita Barrow DBE, one of the most significant Black women of our time, who dedicated her life to ‘doing equity and diversity’ for success. Fifty-two years after the passing of the Race Relations Act 1968, I had the extreme pleasure of conversing with Dame Jocelyn Barrow (see Chap. 2), where she debunked the myth of academic underperformance and illuminated notions of truth. Dame Jocelyn Barrow skilfully and meticulously outlined her methodology for ‘doing equity and diversity’. This was undergirded by her philosophy of what she called *pincher politics*—a set of practices aimed at ‘pinching’ individuals and institutions in order to change their values, beliefs and behaviours. In a life that has inspired so many, Dame Jocelyn Barrow bequeathed an approach to

‘doing equity and diversity’ for success that reflected a counterhegemonic process aimed at reimagining, recurating and reconfiguring society in general and post-secondary education in particular.

Doing equity and diversity is about ‘doing, being and becoming’. In the words of Stuart Hall, the question is not who we are but who we can become (Hall 2017). We are responsible for drawing attention to the injustices of our time. In his exquisitely articulated autobiographical account, the first Back university Professor in Scotland, Professor Sir Geoffery Palmer asserts that ‘A Diverse Society Needs Diverse Solutions’ (see Chap. 3). Drawing on the notions of cognitive dissonance, we are reminded of the mechanisms that maintain *academic amnesia* and ‘*institutional ignorance*’ as falsehoods that sustain racism. This aligns with the comfortable idea that ‘by adopting a “colour-blind” and “complacent” bureaucratic approach, [societies] can claim to be doing something, while doing nothing at all to change the status quo’ (Mirza 2018: p. 7). Therefore, in order to do equity and diversity successfully, Professor Sir Geoffery Palmer implores that system consciousness becomes necessary, as this promotes an understanding of what can actually be done.

Marika Sherwood skilfully chronicles ‘What We Don’t, but Should Know’ (see Chap. 4). In her forensic investigation, she highlights some of the effects of British colonialism in India and Africa and subsequent division of Africa by Europeans. Posing innumerable questions, all about the history that has been (under)researched and (over)reported, we are reminded of Chinua Achebe’s warning of the dangers of not having your own stories. Quoting an African proverb, Achebe exclaimed ‘until lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter’ (Achebe 1994). As Sherwood elucidates a juxtaposition between the colonial contributions and the lack of acknowledgement and research that highlights the profits made by those involved in the nefarious slave trade, we are provided with an entree that glances at the history of peoples of African and Indian origins in the UK and some aspects of discrimination.

Decolonising HE has been thought of as a post-colonial thought-revolution that unsettles and reconstitutes standard processes of knowledge production. Hakim Adi, in his chapter ‘Decolonisation or Empowerment in Higher Education?’ (see Chap. 5), explores contemporary struggles between decolonisation and empowerment in HE. In a riveting conversation, Adi dismissed claims that Britain is a post-racial

society, then accounts for the absence of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) histories in the school curriculum. Adi then highlights practical strategies to shape praxis by highlighting how the process of decolonisation can be operationalised to effect sustainable change in the curricula in post-secondary education as a means of redressing structural inequalities.

In a fascinating conversation with the editor, Amina Mama takes us on a journey ‘Travelling Between Historical Memory and the Current Predicament of Educational Reforms in Higher Education: A Transnational Perspective’ in her passionate contribution (see Chap. 6). Mama explores the current knowledge systems employed in Westernised universities and the barriers that these epistemologies and ontologies present to people from racially minoritised backgrounds. Mama investigates the relationship between neoliberalism, capitalism and the decolonisation project and then importantly highlights how the praxis of educational policies and legacy of colonialism promote *Black Suffering*. Mama calls for a pan-African approach as a means of enhancing the decolonisation project in post-secondary education.

Olivette Otele in her chapter ‘Fencing the Race: Responding to the Past to Help Shape the Future’ (see Chap. 7) makes the point that the history of colonialism shapes and maintains structural inequalities in higher education institutions. As Otele points out, academic disciplines are based on methodological and ontological notions on *Whiteness* that render other philosophies inferior. Otele proposes that having benefited from the bequest of slavery, HE as a sector should seek to provide reparations to people who are most affected by the disreputable slave trade, as a means of redressing structural inequalities.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity or Decolonisation: The Big Conundrum

Education is a mechanism for promoting cultural integration, social mobility and egalitarianism; universities may be considered sites for hybridity of equality. Paradoxically, universities are also seen as sites for the preservation of institutional racism (Law 2017). Racialised attitudes that lead to institutional racism in universities also lead to the choking of minority ethnic people, subsequently precluding them from achieving

optimum attainment, progression and success. Some commentators believe that students are framing these expectations of post-secondary education with a consumerist and/or liberatory paradigm (Peters 2018; Grosfoguel 2012; Axelrod 2002). Allied to these demands are cries to re-curate and re-contextualise the curriculum (Shilliam 2015, 2016), by interrogating the formation of the 'Western hegemonic province'.³ The contemporary university may be seen as the gatekeepers of the nation's consciousness in maintaining knowledge hierarchies. Despite the overwhelming number of inquisitions, the canons and subsequent curricula have not seriously been reviewed, in terms of its debates, policies, practice and praxis. A set of defences have been provided by critics, who accuse people who campaign to decolonise the curriculum of cultural policing, ineptitude to grapple with intellectually difficult questions and attempting to censor history, literature, politics and culture (Williams 2016; Phillips 2019). Others assume the role as gatekeepers of the traditional cannon and Lords of the Western hegemonic province, for fear of it being desecrated by vulgarism, identity-politics and narcissism. Ramon Grosfoguel declared that one of the major successes of colonial world systems has been to get people located on the oppressed side of power relations to think epistemically like the ones on the dominant side of power relations (Grosfoguel 2012). This is generally enacted in colour-blind ideologies, policies and practices that see 'race' being trumped by class, gender or sexuality, with a lack of appreciation for the intersecting axes of discrimination. Educational organisations seem to be faced with the conundrum of placating 'the consumers', maintaining the status quo, or defusing the decolonising incursion with more palatable alternatives. In the following chapters, the contributing authors interrogate concepts such as equality, diversity, inclusivity and decolonisation by unearthing their theoretical underpinnings of these concepts and the complex ways in which they are operationalised in post-secondary education. Our aim in this section is to establish robust means of demonstrating the efficacy of these approaches to redress systemic inequalities that catalyse and sustain inconsistencies in the curriculum.

In their chapter 'Decolonising Academic Spaces: Moving Beyond Diversity to Promote Racial Equity in Postsecondary Education' (see Chap. 8), Frank Tuitt and Saran Stewart skilfully present a conceptual framework for framing decolonised academic spaces. Tuitt and Stewart

address the concepts of (1) decolonising the mind through ways of knowing and knowledge construction; (2) decolonising pedagogy; (3) decolonising structures, policies and practices; and (4) reimagining the academy from a decolonised lens. Their framework moves beyond diversity to promote racial equity and inclusion by exploring what the framework may look like in praxis.

Extending reflections on University syllabi Sandeep Bakshi propounds the idea of unmaking canons in his chapter, 'Towards the Unmaking of Canons: Decolonising the Study of Literature' (see Chap. 9). Bakshi interrogates terms associated with decolonised curricula to clear the space for building a 'decolonial option' in canonical literary knowledges and proposes routes for their construction.

Harshad Keval meticulously explores the shifting landscape of what 'success' has come to mean in terms of meritocracy in education systems in his theoretically rich chapter "Merit", "Success" and the Epistemic Logics of Whiteness in Racialised Education Systems' (see Chap. 10). Keval proffers 'racial-parallax' and 'epistemologies of ignorance' as instruments to excavate the myriad ways in which Whiteness and merit occupy central but often invisible positions of power. Through a decolonial lens, Keval proposes the ontology of racialised being and racialised knowing as means of deconstructing Whiteness and a pathway towards liberatory routes.

Ilyas Nagdee and Azfar Shafi present an ecology of the formation and crystallisation of the movement to decolonise education in British universities in their chapter 'Decolonising the Academy: A Look at Student-Led Interventions in the UK' (see Chap. 11). In their illuminating chapter, Nagdee and Shafi account for the contributions of student and faculty-led campaigns to contemporary discourses relating to 'race' and racism within UK universities, as well as the implications for practice of this approach.

Nadia Mehdi and Maryam Jameela explore the dichotomy between desires to decolonise and actions that impede the process of decolonisation in their chapter 'On the Fallacy of Decolonisation in Our Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)' (see Chap. 12). Mehdi and Jameela's critically reflect on two purported attempts of decolonisation in HE and the co-optation of endeavours to decolonise, as a means of personal career advancement. Mehdi and Jameela ultimately argue that efforts to decolonise should be underscored by an endeavour to achieve social justice.

Michelle Grue introduces a framework to trigger the process of change in making the academic curriculum more inclusive for BAME students in her chapter, 'Diversify or Decolonise? What Can You Do Right Now and How to Get Started' (see Chap. 13). Grue skilfully and meticulously explains the meaning of contested terms, such as equity, equality, diversifying or decolonising, and then poses pertinent questions to promote introspection by organisations and individuals who are interested in redressing structural inequalities.

Big Data: Am I a Name or a Number

The datafication of learning and teaching in HE to measure the 'distance travelled' by students on their academic journey is still exploratory. Consequently, the datafication of epistemic inequality as a statistical measure to identify and quantify disparities in academic attainment has proven effective in illuminating the size and scale of these inequalities, but not why they occur. Hence, the datafied student remains visibly invisible, with Administrators and faculty firmly transfixed on achieving success, based on their statistical metrics. There is little evidence to suggest that the current use of statistical measures to assess excellence in research, teaching, learning opportunities, assessment and feedback at universities and colleges, is with the intent of providing a satisfying, personalised learning experience for students. Rather, the datafication of students may be seen as a means of achieving institutional status and market positioning. This section provides insight into some of the complexities and inconsistencies associated with the use of data in advancing the interests of students and institutions in the academy. Drawing on research, theories, policy and vignettes, this chapter reflects on the current use of data in addressing disparities in student attainment and presents a plausible view of the opportunities available with the functional use of data to mitigate racial academic inequality in the academy. The implications of this chapter may prove effective in informing policy and practice within the academe.

Liz Austen skilfully employs the principles of QuantCrit in her analysis of an institutional research project in a UK university in her chapter,

‘The Unknown Student and Other Short Stories: An Ethical and Methodological Exploration of Student Data’ (see Chap. 14). Austen employs her typology of institutional research (2018, 2020) to discuss typical data collection approaches within an institution. Primarily, Austen illuminates the usually hidden voices of students through digital storytelling. Austen asserts that all those involved in institutional research and evaluation ‘should engage in critical self-reflection to avoid perpetuating racist narratives through data’ (Cross 2018: p. 268).

Nathan Ghann, in his chapter, ‘Turning Big Data into Informed Action’, reasons that the persistence of disparities in degrees awarded may be the resultant effect of the misuse of data as a standalone artefact (see Chap. 15). Ghann highlights the value-added (VA) approach to data analysis as a better approach to inform conversations related to redressing systemic attainment disparities in UK universities.

In her chapter, Katharine Hubbard advocates ‘Using Data-Driven Approaches to Address Systematic Awarding Gaps’ (see Chap. 16). In the absence of a consensus on the most effective means of mitigating against and addressing systemic degree awarding gaps, Hubbard presents a case for the incorporation of awarding gap statistics into national league tables and quality assurance exercises as a means of motivating institutions to act with due diligence to redress the datafication of epistemic inequality.

Identity and Belonging for Outliers, Space Invaders and Others Within the Brick Walls

Institutional somatic norms are challenged when Black and brown bodies come to inhabit, or seemingly invade institutional spaces within its ‘brick walls’. Within the academy, White bodies are ‘tacitly designated as being the neutral occupants of such spaces, with others marked out as trespassers’ (Punwar 2004: p. 8). When these ‘other’ bodies enter institutional spaces (physically, epistemically or ontologically), they often provoke a level of suspicion, anxiety and super-surveillance. Paradoxically, these ‘dissonant bodies’ are now entering UK universities proportionally at a higher rate than their counterparts in the case of students, through

initiatives such as ‘Widening Participation’ (Moore et al. 2013) and ‘Internationalization’ (Knight 2008). In spite of this, they are perceived as “space invaders”, part and apart from... a society that grapples with [their presence]’ (Punwar 2004: p. 23). In the case of staff, there is a severe underrepresentation of minority ethnic staff among the professoriate in UK universities, where there are 35 Black female professors among a cohort of 20,000 professors (HESA 2019). Intersectional disparities in pay between Black and White staff (Universities and Colleges Employers Association 2019) and the career pipeline blockage (Williams et al. 2019) are examples of institutional somatic norms that impact negatively on these seemingly ‘dissonant bodies’. Taken together, these are all but some of the factors that compromise identity and belonging for students and staff from racially minoritised backgrounds in universities. Minority ethnic staff and students in universities are being asphyxiated by sustained pressure owing to the weight of Whiteness in unhealthy institutionally racist universities globally on a daily basis. ‘Race’ is a determinant of health (Marmot et al. 2020); racism is a matter of life and death. Writing in his seminal work in the history of sociology—*The Souls of Black Folk*—W.E.B Dubois aptly warned that ‘the problem of the [twenty-first] century is the problem of the color line’ (Dubois 1903). If universities are to move beyond its twenty-first-century anachronistic veil, there needs to be an urgent recognition that ‘race’ is a determinant of health, similar to education (Dahlgren and Whitehead 2006). The evidence amassed in this book unanimously proclaims that ‘race’ shapes inequality in post-secondary education. University leaders will need to engage with the inconvenient truth that racism and its offspring race inequality is a matter of life and death and that universities need to reconcile with the past in order to shape the future. The past is dead and the future is the present!

How issues of ‘race’, faith and cultural differences are recognised and addressed in exclusionary institutional spaces of elite White privilege, particularly in relation to students from minority ethnic backgrounds is an issue that concerns Heidi Safia Mirza in her chapter, ‘Recruitment, Retention and Progression: Navigating the Flashpoints of Gender, Race and Religious Discrimination in Higher Education’ (see Chap. 17). By way of meticulously crafted case studies, Mirza highlights the myriad ways in which White tutors support Black and minority ethnic (BME)

students on Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses, before skilfully and poetically presenting ‘best practice’ case studies in order to illuminate the everyday barriers to recruitment, retention and progression for BME students on PGCE courses.

In their chapter, Michael Roy Hobson and Stuart Whigham contribute ‘Reflections on Redressing Racial Inequalities, When Teaching Race in the Sociology of Sport and Physical Education’ (see Chap. 18). In their uniquely candid reflections on their privilege as White academics, Hobson and Whigham explore structural the impact of structural Whiteness on teaching in HE, before discussing critical practices and pedagogies aimed at decentring Whiteness. Hobson and Whigham tentatively proffer recommendations which may promote introspection and inform the pedagogical practices of White academics, in order to effectively and equally empower students of all ethnicities.

In her illuminating chapter, ‘Fighting Back While Black: The Relationship Between Racialised Resistance and Well-Being’, Rianna Walcott skilfully uses Black feminist frameworks to explore the effects of underrepresentation of Black female and non-binary scholars in British academic institutions (see Chap. 19). Walcott interviews four Black Caribbean scholars and illuminates the extent to which underrepresentation within the academy poses barriers to their progression, retention and mental well-being. Walcott evaluates institutional systems that negatively impact on Black participation in the academy and the extent to which these historical opposition to these systems has led to the identification of the radical potential of marginal communities. Walcott proffers recommendations to redress factors that promote racialised oppression and sub-optimal well-being for people from racially marginalised backgrounds in the academy.

Situated against a historical narrative of academic development in South Africa, Dina Belluigi and Gladman Thondhlana in their chapter critically reflect, ‘In Whose Interest Is ‘Training the Dog’? Black Academics’ Reflection on Academic Development for ‘Access and Success’ in a Historically White University in South Africa’ (see Chap. 20). Within the context of post-apartheid South Africa, the critical reflections bequeathed here reveal fraught negotiations and resistances to transitions of authority and varying approaches to access, equity, inclusion, diversity

and decolonisation that were operationalised within a problematic, hidden curriculum of academic ‘success’.

The hazards and benefits associated with a critical interrogation of Whiteness are of primary concern to Michael Cole in his theoretically rich chapter, ‘Understanding Critical Whiteness Studies: Harmful or Helpful in the Struggle for Racial Equity in the Academy?’ (see Chap. 21). Cole calls for an acknowledgement of a need for a symbiotic relationship between intersectional analysis and anti-colonial and anti-capitalist scholarship. Cole proffers a schematic framework that offers a mechanism to contextualise, navigate and unpack problems encountered by fixations with White personal shame, contributing to growth and eradication of anti-Black racism in HE that is served by individual grapples with *White privilege*, *White guilt* and *White fragility*. Cole generously offers insight into his attempts at anti-racist praxis in HE, before unearthing his anti-colonial schema of authentic engagement with Critical Whiteness studies in a manner that centres Black radicalism as transformational.

Lez Henry, in his chapter ‘Who Feels It Knows It! Alterity, Identity and ‘Epistemological Privilege’: Challenging White Privilege from a Black Perspective Within the Academy’ (see Chap. 22), considers some of the contemporary issues faced by Black academics, by deftly elucidating the constant struggles for equal and fair treatment, amidst the sheer weight of Whiteness. Henry’s detailed and considered chapter locates, interrogates and exposes the nebulous concepts of Whiteness and White privilege with clear-sighted, forensic aptitude. Henry suggests that when negotiating identity through the lens of ‘curricular decolonisation’ or ‘equitable inclusion’, only White knowledges seem to matter, in a system which was deliberately designed in this manner.

Jason Arday and Marcia Wilson, in their chapter, ‘Many Rivers to Cross: The Challenges and Barriers Facing Aspiring Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Leaders in the Academy’ (see Chap. 23), consider some of the challenges in relation to leadership trajectories and career progression for BAME leaders in universities. Arday and Wilson’s treatise skilfully illuminates synergies between constructions of leadership and ‘race’ in HE and the interplay between these elements in delimiting pathways for prospective BAME leaders. Arday and Wilson outline

pertinent considerations for universities in advancing better mechanisms for mobilising and supporting aspiring BAME senior leaders. Arday and Wilson importantly explain that the ideas proffered throughout their exquisite treatise should serve as stimulus to unblocking the progression pipeline for prospective BAME senior leaders in HE.

Thomas and Mikel urgently implore us to recognise that transformational conversations pertaining to 'race' equity can only be productive if evidence-based mechanisms are instituted to reconcile proposed actions for redress, in their chapter, 'Understanding and Interrupting Systemic Racism: A 'Race Equality Receipt' as a Mechanism to Promote Transformational Conversations and Stimulate Actions to Redress Race Inequality' (see Chap. 24). Thomas and Mikel skilfully expedite an amalgam of socio-legal theory and CRT in an integrated fashion to provide a chronology of systemic racism that has manifested in myriad ways for at least 400 years, distorting and shaping the lives of people from BAME backgrounds and Black backgrounds in particular. Thomas and Mikel proffer a 'Race Equality Receipt' as tangible proof of delivery on commitments to promote 'race' equality.

In the final chapter, 'Sowing the Seeds: Embracing and Re-imagining a More Racially Inclusive Academy' (see Chap. 25), Arday declares that higher education seems eternally to be placed in a state of flux. Arday challenges the higher education sector to accept the responsibility for promoting social mobility and cohesion through penetrative and resourced interventions to advance diversity and inclusion agendas.

Has the Owl of Minerva Flown?

'The owl of Minerva flies only at dusk.'⁴ Wisdom often comes too late, once the ship has sailed and the damage has been done. Will this be the fate of HE in relation to *Doing Equity and Diversity for Success*? Amid unprecedented changes and challenges, equity and justice in society remains elusive for people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Universities are a microcosm of a society whose foundations are built on colonialism and imperialism. Racism xenophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, homophobia and other manifestations of hate are poisonous

to our societies. Myriad consequences of inequality negatively and disproportionately affect people from minority ethnic backgrounds, who are now, more than ever struggling to breathe. An acknowledgement of these inequalities and their effect on people who are disproportionately affected may empower universities to take personal responsibility for their role in sustaining systemic inequalities, then make the necessary steps for redress and reparation. Those who ignore institutional racism and acts of racial discrimination because they are immune to it, and because of their privilege, are complicit in sustaining and reproducing these inequalities. Interrogating policies, practices, processes, experiences and philosophies are imperative in promoting equity and justice. Far from business as usual, universities now need to demonstrate an appetite and agility to engage with issues of racism, xenophobia, structural inequality and all forms of discrimination and disparate practices. To what extent can we individually and collectively demonstrate greater care about social justice within our society, in order to realise before it is too late?

Notes

1. I use the word 'race' in a similar manner to Professor Kevin Hylton, signposting that it should never be used or read uncritically.
2. An institutional deficit methodology promotes the use of a critical race theory (CRT) perspective as praxis to explore how societal racialised hegemony, re-affirm privilege and promote power relations that appear neutral within institutional structures, thus impacting on and influencing institutional arrangements, strategies, policies, processes and practices intersectionally in order to reinforce oppression and disproportionately marginalise staff and students of colour in higher education. An institutional deficit methodology interrogates transnational issues, challenges narrow ideologies, agendas and epistemological and ontological (in)consistencies in HE in agitating for social justice and the reduction of disparities that exacerbates these inequalities. An institutional deficit methodology is practical, liberatory and transdisciplinary in presenting mainstreamed discourses, processes, policies and practices in a re-imagined reality by repositioning causation from a deficit with the student/staff, to a deficit in institutional structures, strategies, practices, processes and policies that promotes and exacerbates inequality within the wider context where students and staff operate.

3. Western hegemonic province—A repository of knowledge systems, veiled in utilitarianism, by people from five Western countries (Italy, Germany, France, England, and the USA) as a means of maintaining colonialism through epistemologies, ontologies and social stratification.
4. G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of The Philosophy of Right* (trans! H. B. Nisbet, Cambridge, 1991), 23.

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