

The Challenges of Curriculum Decolonisation within the Postcolonial Indian Context: A Case Study



27 February 2024

David Mills: Good afternoon to everyone from a sunny February, Oxford. Good morning, or good evening wherever you are. Welcome to another center for global higher education webcast. My name is David Mills. I'm deputy Director of Center for Global Higher Education

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00:24:05.260 --> 00:24:09.699

David Mills: and as always, we have a great speaker and a great topic.

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00:24:09.860 --> 00:24:13.769

David Mills: And today we're welcoming Professor Mousumi Mukherjee.

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00:24:13.810 --> 00:24:24.470

David Mills: who, is associate professor and deputy Director of the International Institute for Higher Education Research Capacity Building, which is at Opi Jindal global University.

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00:24:24.590 --> 00:24:43.430

David Mills: And I think you're also an honorary senior fellow in Melbourne. Which I think is possibly how you you knew sound anyway, we're we're really delighted to welcome you today.

Masumi, and your topic. On the challenges of curriculum decolonization within the post. Colonial context feels really important.

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00:24:43.470 --> 00:24:54.009

David Mills: We all know just how important the politics of curriculum change and canon reform are, and how sensitive and how fraught they are. So this is going to be a great conversation.

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00:24:54.210 --> 00:25:06.259

David Mills: as always we we we have an hour so roughly half an hour for your presentation, and then lots of time for questions, so please do use the chat function. But let me just remind everyone of the housekeeping

86

00:25:06.370 --> 00:25:12.459

David Mills: guidelines as always. We suggest you keep yourself muted.

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00:25:12.680 --> 00:25:20.379

David Mills: You don't need to be a video on. But when we get to the point of having questions and answers, and

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00:25:20.550 --> 00:25:28.669

David Mills: I'll invite you to turn your video on. So you can ask a question. Do put your comments in the chat first. So I know you're interested in asking a question.

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00:25:28.840 --> 00:25:35.610

David Mills: and and then what I will do is I'll invite you to come forward to, to, to, to, to ask a question.

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00:25:36.140 --> 00:25:37.670

David Mills: And

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00:25:37.710 --> 00:25:43.170

David Mills: With that just one more reminder that we, we are recording this webinar.

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00:25:43.190 --> 00:26:02.240

David Mills: and we will make it available on our website. Along with all the other 400 plus webinars that are are there, and the next couple of days. So but that's all. Assuming it's and the screens yours, if you're worth most welcome to to share your slides and begin. Look forward to it. Thank you very much.

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00:26:14.870 --> 00:26:15.830

David Mills: That's great.

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00:26:19.690 --> 00:26:21.709

David Mills: You're muted missing. Just a reminder.

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00:26:29.010 --> 00:26:30.980

Mousumi Mukherjee: Thank you. Thank you, David.

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00:26:32.150 --> 00:26:37.530

Mousumi Mukherjee: Have wherever you are. Good morning. Good afternoon, or Good evening.

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00:26:37.670 --> 00:26:48.250

Mousumi Mukherjee: And I'm really delighted to join at this webinar series of the center for global high education. Thank you, David, and thanks to Sam and Ma

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00:26:50.730 --> 00:27:04.230

Mousumi Mukherjee: Hutchinson, who is not here with us today for inviting me for this webinar talk. As all of. You know. The title of my talk is the challenges of curriculum decolonization within the post-colonial Indian context. And

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00:27:04.490 --> 00:27:24.400

Mousumi Mukherjee: and this is a work. You know, I've been studying personally out of personal interest for a while, and currently, actually, a doctoral scholar is who's working under me is doing actual empirical research documenting the English literature curriculum reform

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00:27:26.860 --> 00:27:38.849

Mousumi Mukherjee: that has happened over several decades, particularly the last couple of decades with the post-colonial Indian context. But my presentation today is particularly focused on a particular

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00:27:38.910 --> 00:27:58.419

Mousumi Mukherjee: controversy that happened over a particular change of curriculum about which I'm talk, going to talk about more later. But there is actually very little empirical research on curriculum decolonization within the larger Indian context or

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00:28:01.050 --> 00:28:30.110

Mousumi Mukherjee: curricular reform in general, within the larger Indian context and in India, English studies had primarily remained static from a mid nineteenth century to the almost like mid twentieth century, I should say, even to the late twentieth century when I studied undergraduate English literature as a English literature owner, student. It was all British English literature, from old

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00:28:30.480 --> 00:28:40.639

Mousumi Mukherjee: in English, like epics like Bow Wolf and Chaucer, and up until Victorian era, till the more

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00:28:43.210 --> 00:29:13.040

Mousumi Mukherjee: times we didn't even have any American literature or Australian literature or English literature from any other part of even the Western world. In in the 19 sixties some nominal changes began. And thereafter major changes started happening only in the late 19 nineties, and and th those changes were happening. But we were

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00:29:13.040 --> 00:29:24.619

Mousumi Mukherjee: not aware of much of the debates and discourses as students. Within the higher education sphere within Academia, within his stakehold

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00:29:27.330 --> 00:29:31.359

Mousumi Mukherjee: holders, with regards to the changes that was happening.

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00:29:31.640 --> 00:29:58.910

Mousumi Mukherjee: As as I mentioned. You know that there has been, of course. A lot of debates and discourses within the academic circle, over the years, about the disconnect between the literary texts that the students were reading in classroom versus the social text of the diverse socio cultural milieu inside and outside the Indian classroom. And this is not necessarily. A very post colonial

108

00:30:01.420 --> 00:30:23.759

Mousumi Mukherjee: ill phenomenon, I should say. This. Debates were as old as you know. You know the the times when India was part of British India. In fact, there is a very interesting essay written by none other than Robinron, who's the Indian national poet, and was the first Nobel Laureate

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00:30:23.760 --> 00:30:31.699

Mousumi Mukherjee: in literature from Asia, and he wrote this essay as early as 1892,

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00:30:32.140 --> 00:30:43.120

Mousumi Mukherjee: and unfortunately a lot of his writings on education and pedagogy, and particularly his prose writings, are not very well known

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00:30:45.650 --> 00:31:00.289

Mousumi Mukherjee: around the world. Unlike his poetry because his collection of poems, Kitani were translated into English, for which he got the Nobel Prize for literature. But a lot of his prose writings remained in the Bengali language, which was his

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00:31:00.330 --> 00:31:21.449

Mousumi Mukherjee: mother tongue, and he consciously chose to write in Bengali, and this is an essay called Shikarfi, which is an essay that he wrote back in 1,892. Now I got trained myself in comparative and international education from the Us.

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00:31:21.450 --> 00:31:35.210

Mousumi Mukherjee: And then thereafter did my Ph. D. From Melbourne, Australia. I personally. When I first picked this essay and started reading, I said, Wow, this is such a great essay to

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00:31:37.830 --> 00:31:54.799

Mousumi Mukherjee: read in terms of comparative and international education. This could be a core reading, particularly in a context like India, and this entire essay, which which has now been translated into English, Tebow, reflects on his own experiences.

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00:31:54.870 --> 00:32:11.399

Mousumi Mukherjee: As a student in India, and thereafter reflections of his own reflections after visiting England, and the main argument that he makes in this essay. It was once again this discontent

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00:32:13.990 --> 00:32:37.840

Mousumi Mukherjee: connect between the literary text and the social text, and and he, in fact, analyzes in this essay to highlight some of the problems of rote memorizing of grammar rules and even sentence structures. There's a lot of debates over the problem of rote memorizing within the Indian system of education at large, not just higher education.

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00:32:38.020 --> 00:32:52.279

Mousumi Mukherjee: And Tegork traces this problem with directly with the language and not just language, but also the disconnect between the literary text and the social text.

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00:32:52.400 --> 00:32:53.550

and

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00:32:56.150 --> 00:33:21.390

Mousumi Mukherjee: which which is what was encouraging students and learners to not memorize grammar rules, sentence structures, and rather than focusing more on critical thinking and understanding, which is what study of humanities and literature is supposed to help, generate and help nurture. Among students! These abilities.

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00:33:21.390 --> 00:33:41.789

Mousumi Mukherjee: So this is this is what as as I just shared with you, you know something. What? intellectuals and philosophers and thinkers within the context have been thinking for a long time. you know. And it's not just about there are other others who have also written

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00:33:44.350 --> 00:34:01.129

Mousumi Mukherjee: and thought about it in a similar vein. But despite this, Ventigo actually established his own university, Vishwabarathi, or literally, if I would translate it into English from Bengali. It would mean a world-minded Indian University

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00:34:01.660 --> 00:34:14.619

Mousumi Mukherjee: right? The the name of the University itself! And this is a quote, as you can see, I have taken from the Bishop Harathy prospectus of 1927.

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00:34:15.170 --> 00:34:27.909

Mousumi Mukherjee: Okay, as early as that. And and toor was thinking very much in global terms over here, and this is exactly what they write.

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00:34:30.480 --> 00:34:56.830

Mousumi Mukherjee: In the bishopathy prospectors, college students are expected to become familiar with the working of the existing institutions and new movements inaugurated in different countries of the world for the maluration of the social conditions of the masses. They are also required to undertake study of international organizations, so that their outlook may become better and shasted to the needs of peace.

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00:34:56.870 --> 00:35:02.149

Mousumi Mukherjee: So, despite the fact that you know.

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00:35:04.700 --> 00:35:08.780

Mousumi Mukherjee: there was a rising Nationalist movement within

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00:35:08.780 --> 00:35:36.240

Mousumi Mukherjee: the Indian subcontinent at the time, against British colonial rule. The vision of the University as, and and also the university curriculum, was very, very international. In fact, if you look into the detail, and if you study the curriculum documents, all these historical archival documents, you will find that the the student

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00:35:38.750 --> 00:35:55.660

Mousumi Mukherjee: students were studying multiple languages both Indian and over foreign languages, and they were also studying English quite interestingly. Tegore even hired some European teachers which includes German teachers of English

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00:35:55.660 --> 00:36:16.339

Mousumi Mukherjee: as second language. A as many of you know, you know there were. It's a lot of exodus of Jews from Nazi, Germany during those times. So some of those teachers came to India to divorce Bishoparathi to teach English and to go thought that a German

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00:36:18.990 --> 00:36:39.669

Mousumi Mukherjee: English teacher would be able to understand the problems of Indian students better, because they also learned English as a second language. And the way. Or also they. They do this intercultural learning of not just language, or but also the literature, the culture and society. It would also help in the intercultural learning of Indian students also.

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00:36:40.100 --> 00:36:52.399

Mousumi Mukherjee: So so see so Vishubar. These curriculum, born out of divorce, own something I have argued about rooted cosmopolitanism,

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00:36:55.030 --> 00:37:26.119

Mousumi Mukherjee: ideas bridge to the divide between internationalization and social responsibility of higher education. A a. And and was one of, as I have argued, was one of the early twentieth century manifestation of global citizenship education. If you think in terms of the core components of global citizenship education in terms of cognitive, social, emotional and behavioral learning, because a a real hands-on learning, and praxis was also something rooted in

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00:37:29.180 --> 00:37:46.560

Mousumi Mukherjee: the curriculum in terms of rural reconstruction and social responsibility as important engagements for the students at Bishoparath University in Chandini, and they need to learn about international organizations to become harbingers of international cooperation and peace.

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00:37:46.900 --> 00:38:00.790

Mousumi Mukherjee: So Tagore is often why I'm spending so much time on Tagore's ideas. Because Tagore is often seen as his ideas on

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00:38:03.220 --> 00:38:19.330

Mousumi Mukherjee: education as examples of decolonial thinking within within this context within this post, colonial, Indian context and of integrals. Ideas are also put forward in that context. So I'm

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00:38:19.370 --> 00:38:25.310

Mousumi Mukherjee: how did Tagore envision decolonization?

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00:38:25.620 --> 00:38:34.779

Mousumi Mukherjee: This is something I personally am thinking and deliberating on for a long time through my own research

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00:38:37.400 --> 00:39:01.319

Mousumi Mukherjee: at at Bishoparathi and some other places, including University of Illinois, Urbana, champaign, vertebra, spent significant amount of time and sent his own son and his students do high studies there. As you can see, the study of English and English literature in India, has led to a lot of very interesting creative

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00:39:01.320 --> 00:39:18.950

Mousumi Mukherjee: reinterpretation of english literature in the form of popular. Bollywood movies. And these are posters from a couple of recent interpretations. And they have been actually multiple reinterpretations

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00:39:21.740 --> 00:39:47.700

Mousumi Mukherjee: of the stories from Shakespeare, including, you know even Victorian authors. Which includes several versions of Pride and Prejudice and several other literary works! Into popular art forms, whether theater or movies within the larger Indian context. And these are the posters of 2 recent reinterpretations of the famous 2 famous

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00:39:47.700 --> 00:39:53.170

plays of Shakespeare, Othello, and Macbeth. and

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00:39:55.740 --> 00:40:00.469

Mousumi Mukherjee: so, and and at the same time

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00:40:00.660 --> 00:40:16.850

Mousumi Mukherjee: there has been a lot of not just public discourse, and also debates within academia and within academic circles, but certain. Policy mandates also. To indigenize

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00:40:16.850 --> 00:40:35.239

Mousumi Mukherjee: the curriculum. And within this context. This is something I want to particularly highlight in my presentation today. This is what is the case. Study that that I have been doing for this particular.

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00:40:37.920 --> 00:40:52.579

Mousumi Mukherjee: the paper and presentation is a controversy that happened recently with regards to the the removal of certain texts from English literature, curriculum by Indian authors.

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00:40:52.800 --> 00:41:09.460

Mousumi Mukherjee: Once again. This. This really makes the la the landscape of curriculum, default, decolonization, particular English literature, curriculum, decolonization and reform quite messy within the larger in

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00:41:11.990 --> 00:41:41.750

Mousumi Mukherjee: in context. Because, these authors that. And the text that have been and they have been a lot of debates over. Why, they have been removed from the syllabus. But the thing, the the thing that we need to consider seriously about. And this is this is something many of us in this webinar room are probably aware of

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00:41:41.810 --> 00:41:43.290

is how

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00:41:46.280 --> 00:41:59.290

Mousumi Mukherjee: ideology plays into what gets into our curriculum. Right? So if you think in terms of someone like to go, or even when he was you know. you know

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00:41:59.540 --> 00:42:27.749

Mousumi Mukherjee: someone he was writing songs. To to literally steer the the Nationalist Freedom movement. He was somebody who was very much thinking in terms of freedom and emancipation. In and anti-colonization. But at the same time he had a vision of education, and and his curriculum, also designed, was very much

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00:42:30.270 --> 00:42:53.149

Mousumi Mukherjee: all all inclusive. Whereas right now. If you look at the way curriculum decolonization is happening in post-colonial India. When territorially we have become sovereign nation the often teri curriculum. Decolonization is happening in a very uneven terrain.

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00:42:53.150 --> 00:43:01.810

Mousumi Mukherjee: and whose voices are getting heard? Who are the authors who are being

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00:43:04.530 --> 00:43:18.190

Mousumi Mukherjee: included, and who are being excluded, whose voices are getting highlighted and whose voices are getting subdued. This has become a great contested terrain, frankly speaking.

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00:43:18.810 --> 00:43:35.990

Mousumi Mukherjee: and one of the major issue over here. And in fact, that's really the major issue over here is the problematic of curriculum duty colonization in the Indian context. And first

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00:43:38.510 --> 00:44:01.510

Mousumi Mukherjee: first of all, the question that I would like to raise is whether, in the con in the current context, we can really actually decolonize in that way or not. In a sense, the way decolonization has happened in many other parts of the world or in decolonization, is happening in many other parts of the world. A first.

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00:44:01.510 --> 00:44:10.099

Mousumi Mukherjee: if you look into the modern Indian post, Colonial Indian constitution where English, except

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00:44:12.580 --> 00:44:25.779

Mousumi Mukherjee: elv, has not been included as one of the Indian languages. so unlike in many other countries in India, English is in post-colonial India, in English, has been pretty much embraced

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00:44:25.880 --> 00:44:27.700

Mousumi Mukherjee: as an Indian language.

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00:44:27.980 --> 00:44:48.250

Mousumi Mukherjee: Okay? And there is a significant mass in population. That is very much. well! Versed in also English literary studies. There is a strong literary tradition. And Indian writing in English, has become almost globally

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00:44:50.840 --> 00:45:14.070

Mousumi Mukherjee: very, very renowned. There are several authors who have won. pulitzer prize and different global recognitions. Commonwealth writers prize different other global recognitions in terms of their writing in English in terms of their quality of their work, not just language, but also literary texts that they have produced, and whereby

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00:45:14.070 --> 00:45:22.330

Mousumi Mukherjee: the kind of disconnect that Togore was talking about in his early essay with regards to

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00:45:24.870 --> 00:45:34.490

Mousumi Mukherjee: the disconnect between the social text and the literary text, has been to great extent bridge by these inter Indian writers in English right

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00:45:34.890 --> 00:45:47.359

and in terms of language learning also a lot of developments that have happened over the years you know that really, scenario has changed over the Times.

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00:45:47.490 --> 00:46:06.460

Mousumi Mukherjee: and oftentimes we need to also keep this in mind, particularly in that 1892 essay, shikarfi Tagore was specifically referring to the problematic of the curriculum, and also language of in

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00:46:09.090 --> 00:46:24.519

Mousumi Mukherjee: instruction within the context of school education. Not necessarily higher education, right? And that's the reason when he set up his own university. Bishoparathi the the frame O was very much international.

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00:46:24.720 --> 00:46:40.630

Mousumi Mukherjee: No! And and their learning of multiple languages and literature was integral. Part, including English, was integral, part of the curriculum and inter cultural learning and international understanding.

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00:46:43.140 --> 00:46:50.139

Mousumi Mukherjee: Standing in peace. The mission, the with which he set up the university. Shanthi Nigan means an abode of peace.

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00:46:50.290 --> 00:46:54.159

the name of the place itself, where the university was was set up.

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00:46:54.510 --> 00:47:10.510

Mousumi Mukherjee: so the problematic of curriculum decolonization. Now, if you look at in the in the current, Indian context, is primarily with regards to whose writings and voices gets included, and who gets excluded.

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00:47:10.640 --> 00:47:18.640

Mousumi Mukherjee: And this this, this these 3 women, unfortunately, lately. And

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00:47:21.250 --> 00:47:36.570

Mousumi Mukherjee: this, this is an incident that has been much reported in the newspapers, or, if you can see, I've taken some newspaper clippings over here from different news portals their writing Scott, removed from Delhi University's curriculum.

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00:47:36.610 --> 00:47:48.879

Mousumi Mukherjee: and there has been a lot of debates and discussions with regards to the ideology that is driving this kind of expulsion. Now, what were they writing about.

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00:47:48.950 --> 00:47:58.949

Mousumi Mukherjee: What were these 3 women writing about? What was, what is the content of their writing that the

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00:48:01.460 --> 00:48:09.940

Mousumi Mukherjee: the the curriculum committee members, or Board of Studies members they want to, you know, they're not comfortable with.

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00:48:09.940 --> 00:48:34.720

Mousumi Mukherjee: Now, this is where once again, you know, the the are thinking in terms of how decolonization is being imagined by different social groups. If we think in terms of ideology

and curriculum, and in terms of ideology as something that is how people within a certain social group

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00:48:35.280 --> 00:48:51.149

Mousumi Mukherjee: they look at the world, their their their world view. So I would like all of you to just reflect a little bit on these texts. Some

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00:48:53.640 --> 00:49:11.309

Mousumi Mukherjee: some of you might have read, and some of you might know about. these texts down the the first one which in question is a text that was written once again in Bengali, a a short story by a famous Bengali author, Mashwaitavi.

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00:49:11.480 --> 00:49:25.269

Mousumi Mukherjee: and something which was very much a part of Bengali literary canon for a while up until the time when Guy Tree Spiebeck, who is globally known around the world.

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00:49:27.790 --> 00:49:34.329

Mousumi Mukherjee: the world as a renowned critical scholar, a feminist thinker, translated it into English.

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00:49:34.470 --> 00:49:48.700

Mousumi Mukherjee: and the story was part of a collection of stories that Spivak translated and was included in this volume called The Breast Stories, with a introduction by Spivak herself.

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00:49:48.790 --> 00:49:59.370

Mousumi Mukherjee: and this story by Mashwata Devi, called Dropadina, drooped. He was a very powerful character

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00:50:01.890 --> 00:50:07.250

Mousumi Mukherjee: character, woman of a character from the ancient Indian epic Mahabaratha.

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00:50:07.490 --> 00:50:33.510

Mousumi Mukherjee: and this story actually is a story of a similarly powerful woman from the indigenous tribal community of India. Now India. Now for Western audience, those of you who might be in this room, you might wonder what what is meant by indigenous tribal now, within India there

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00:50:36.100 --> 00:50:55.499

Mousumi Mukherjee: are various indigenous tribal groups, those who are outside of the mainstream Indian. They pretty much live outside of the mainstream Indian Caste Society, as it is known as, and these tribal indigenous groups have been living in this part of the world for several thousands of years.

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00:50:55.500 --> 00:51:07.090

Mousumi Mukherjee: very much like the Australian aboriginal community, or Ishi Pacific Islander community, or maybe the native Indian community within the North American context.

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00:51:10.640 --> 00:51:23.520

Mousumi Mukherjee: So these this particular story is about this. Tribal! Woman! Dokti, who gets really abused by those who are responsible for law enforcement.

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00:51:23.520 --> 00:51:41.769

Mousumi Mukherjee: and the story is striking all the more because ma! Very much like the epic character. She is a strong woman, and she is not subdued by any kind of abuse, and she really strikes back

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00:51:42.050 --> 00:51:47.790

Mousumi Mukherjee: just as property really excites her husband's

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00:51:50.370 --> 00:52:01.120

Mousumi Mukherjee: and the Pandavas to wage a war against the the Corbus in the in the battle of Urugusha and Mahbarata. Here the tribal woman do. Abdi herself.

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00:52:01.280 --> 00:52:13.829

Mousumi Mukherjee: Stands for for her own. You know rights! And literally, rather than feeling ashamed of being abused and humiliated, she literally walks

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00:52:13.830 --> 00:52:36.000

Mousumi Mukherjee: stark naked, without any shame in front of the law enforcement officers, almost like the goddess Kali, who is considered to be a very symbolic feminist figure within this part of the world as somebody who is a symbolic of the destructive forces in

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00:52:38.550 --> 00:53:03.480

Mousumi Mukherjee: this in this earth. So that's the story of property written by Mashwedade, whereby this marginalized woman coming from marginalized background rather than getting subdued by abuse. She literally stands up on her feet, and, like Goddess Kali, walks in a a very powerful manner, and which is something terrify. Everybody gets

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00:53:03.480 --> 00:53:12.059

Mousumi Mukherjee: terrified seeing her in that kind of, you know, because obviously, whenever there is some abuse, people think

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00:53:14.700 --> 00:53:29.750

Mousumi Mukherjee: that if the other side is affected by it, that's the victory of the abuser. But here she is absolutely unaffected. That's her! That's her demeanor with which she you know herself approaches her abusers.

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00:53:30.060 --> 00:53:38.109

Mousumi Mukherjee: The second, of course, is the other text that got purged literally from the curriculum. With this another.

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00:53:38.270 --> 00:53:54.389

Mousumi Mukherjee: Now, in this case, Mashwitha Devi! Though the story is about to Dropdi, who comes from a tribal, indigenous background, Mashwitha Devi hums herself, and so her translator gaitering. Chakrabarti Spivak, comes from the mainstream, indigenous

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00:53:56.880 --> 00:54:09.579

Mousumi Mukherjee: in Hindu society, right? But this is an author herself coming from a a that dalit marginalized background. A Tamil author. Tamil, is a South Indian language.

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00:54:09.610 --> 00:54:26.229

Mousumi Mukherjee: and this is a quote from her, as you can see, and she is of a Christian convert many of these Dalit authors within the larger Indian context and the Dalit population where some of the early Christian converts, when Christianity came to India.

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00:54:26.410 --> 00:54:32.400

Mousumi Mukherjee: and she literally said, I don't think anyone other than a dalit can express

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00:54:35.090 --> 00:54:39.230

Mousumi Mukherjee: exposed the Braminical lies and insults heaped upon Dalet's.

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00:54:39.240 --> 00:55:06.600

Mousumi Mukherjee: Others, too, can write about Dalet's, but it should always be done, remembering the respectability that has been denied to us, and we so rightly deserve. There are some writers who think that only the upper caste can help Dalits. Why do they have to denigrate us if they are unable to contribute to our cause? So she is literally someone who can literally talk back at someone like much or even

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00:55:09.080 --> 00:55:16.780

Mousumi Mukherjee: right. Please be back that you don't need to write for us. We can write about our stories and experiences.

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00:55:16.810 --> 00:55:20.480

Mousumi Mukherjee: And the third text that got very much

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00:55:20.520 --> 00:55:40.719

Mousumi Mukherjee: into trouble is actually written by this other powerful lady from south of India from Kerala, who is also a poet, and she writes, of course, in Tamil, and and

205

00:55:43.280 --> 00:56:08.460

Mousumi Mukherjee: the she writes, from a very eco feminist approach, celebrating female body, and openly talks about struggles and experiences of intersection, intersectional operation for being a Dalit woman rather within the within the larger larger context. So these were the texts that got purged out of the curriculum. But why? The question is, why?

206

00:56:09.080 --> 00:56:10.020

Mousumi Mukherjee: Okay?

207

00:56:10.330 --> 00:56:18.820

But this is also something that happened in one particular university, whereas if you look at the larger industry

208

00:56:21.390 --> 00:56:24.969

Mousumi Mukherjee: in context, there are other universities where these texts are being read

209

00:56:25.230 --> 00:56:54.930

Mousumi Mukherjee: and these authors are still part of the curriculum. So this is the reason you know something which my doctoral scholar, wonderful scholar, Shanni Chatterjee, who is analyzing now the curricular reform that has been happening. And she is somehow analyzing it. Almost. It's like a messy kind of terrain in within which these curricular reform is happening. And can we really.

210

00:56:57.480 --> 00:57:08.679

Mousumi Mukherjee: if we look at the literature on decolonization, can we really label the reforms that is happening within the larger Indian context as decolonization of curriculum.

211

00:57:08.680 --> 00:57:29.140

Mousumi Mukherjee: And if decolonization is happening also, what is the social, imaginary that is driving this kind of decolonization in certain institutions? Visa? These other institutions where the social, a very different kind of social, imaginary, is driving, how decolonization of curriculum

212

00:57:31.590 --> 00:57:44.949

Mousumi Mukherjee: them is happening in terms of inclusion, of not just Indian authors from different backgrounds, but also Australian, Caribbean, American literatures in English from different parts of the world.

213

00:57:45.630 --> 00:57:48.960

So with this I would like to hold.

214

00:57:49.100 --> 00:58:03.249

Mousumi Mukherjee: and and I hope that in the future with my wonderful doctoral student we are able to share more along with. once she's done with her thesis share with you

215

00:58:05.730 --> 00:58:20.300

Mousumi Mukherjee: more with regards to the the processes that is driving and imaginative is the different social imaginaries that is driving the kind of curricular reform that is happening within larger post. Colonial Indian contexts. Thank you.

216

00:58:23.730 --> 00:58:25.190

David Mills: Great, great.

217

00:58:25.360 --> 00:58:51.069

David Mills: Thank you very much. It's really important and worrying development. And I think it's really helpful to have have one particular case study from which to start, and then obviously to to take to, to understand the bigger landscape. So I'd really welcome anyone who wants to post a question or ask it or or add a comment in the chat. But I'm gonna start by

218

00:58:51.350 --> 00:58:53.019

David Mills: but by just asking you.

219

00:58:53.070 --> 00:59:01.520

David Mills: have you spoken to the oversight committee? Because it seems as if there was a committee of academics? Perhaps not just from the faculty of English.

220

00:59:01.730 --> 00:59:06.729

David Mills: who was, I assume, delegated by the University Council to review the Literature

221

00:59:06.970 --> 00:59:31.559

David Mills: new Committee. Is it? Is it a committee that's worrying about the national reforms, the Nep reforms. What that might mean for I mean, I guess the question one is, you know, people proactively feeling they ought to censor that curricular, or is this driven by a couple of individuals on that committee who have very strong views about?

222

00:59:31.680 --> 00:59:36.829

David Mills: You know it? It seems as if from looking at online as if they were objecting to

223

00:59:36.990 --> 00:59:49.510

David Mills: gruesome sort of representations of. And then, obviously, the army being portrayed in a negative light, because, of course, that that was that. That was the atrocity was being committed.

224

00:59:49.760 --> 01:00:02.929

David Mills: It's not as if that's new in literature to have sort of you know, literature needs to address the most difficult issue. So so what? Why, now? And and what's driving this

225

01:00:05.200 --> 01:00:26.920

Mousumi Mukherjee: right well, the the Ugc curriculum Reform Committee will actually predates the current development with regards to NEP. 2020. And O. Also, you know this controversy that happened recently with regards to these 3 techs and this particular university.

226

01:00:30.380 --> 01:00:44.959

Mousumi Mukherjee: And and so they they actually predate. And my doctoral scholar, as I mentioned, Shani chatted. She has actually interviewed several of these stakeholders who were part of the curriculum Ugc curriculum reform Committee.

227

01:00:45.220 --> 01:01:01.999

Mousumi Mukherjee: and also the Board of Studies, members of different Universities, not all across India, as I said. You know, it's a very diverse context, and I can see she's here in the room. Shiny, chantage shiny.

228

01:01:02.010 --> 01:01:13.620

David Mills: Would you like to unmute and speak a little in the room? I did ask. I did ask her already if she would, so I'm really pleased. You can speak, son.

229

01:01:14.050 --> 01:01:22.499

Sayani Chatterjee: Am I audible? Yes, you are audible. Go ahead! Yes, hello, everyone. Firstly. I mean, quite

230

01:01:22.870 --> 01:01:50.230

Sayani Chatterjee: thought provoking presentation. And as my professor was talking about the ramifications of the concept of decolonization, and how you know, in a specific way with regards to a particular University in the larger post. Colonial context of India. The various kind of you know, if I may say extra academic forces have kind of led to these exclusion and exclusion of certain texts.

231

01:01:50.320 --> 01:02:07.599

Sayani Chatterjee: Well, this is interesting a couple of you know, faculty members from this particular university whom I had at the fortune to speak with had to say that. You know, just to give you a bit of a background that when

232

01:02:07.600 --> 01:02:32.440

Sayani Chatterjee: there was this point of time when there was a lot of diversity in the way texts were chosen to be in, included in the English curriculum. And there was a lot of democratic interest as well wearing teachers at the college level had, you know, a fair amount of, say, a fair amount of opinion, a fair amount of, you know, kind of insights that they provided.

233

01:02:32.550 --> 01:02:46.109

Sayani Chatterjee: but after a point of time, I think by and by, you know, with ideological forces at work. It became of it became the monopoly of a particular sector.

234

01:02:46.720 --> 01:03:08.650

Sayani Chatterjee: And precisely this sector where people who were noting any way to quote them, involved with the intellectual rigor that especially goes in when curriculum is being designed, and what also the convener of the Ugc. Of the University Grants Commission in India. They fix body talks about is that

235

01:03:08.920 --> 01:03:24.200

Sayani Chatterjee: if you are talking about designing of curriculum, there are a lot of issues that come into play. and to be able to balance all these issues and also have the consensus of the entire body of academic cohort is

236

01:03:24.230 --> 01:03:35.180

Sayani Chatterjee: a daunting task. Well, this part of India, you know, the northern part of India have had its own. You know, ideological battles that they're still fighting and negotiating with

237

01:03:35.340 --> 01:04:00.160

Sayani Chatterjee: the southern part of India has had, quite, you know, a fair amount of Progressive has displayed, as you know. Of course I couldn't talk to them personally, but what I've gathered from other people across academia. They had to say that like from the 19 eighties, seventies, eighties. There was quite a fair amount of, you know, tradition of Indian literature, and

238

01:04:00.160 --> 01:04:15.410

Sayani Chatterjee: also other literature in English outside that, you know, strict British Anglo-centric canon that had come in starting from under Mali University, and you know the writers workshop in India, which were the first ones to bring in academic writing. In Indian English.

239

01:04:15.410 --> 01:04:33.319

Sayani Chatterjee: So it's quite a diverse context to say that, okay, decolonization has this particular meaning in India would be kind of a reductive way of approaching the concept of decolonization, which is panned out in a very complex, complicated manner. And I think that's what makes this study all the more interesting.

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01:04:33.730 --> 01:04:37.339

Sayani Chatterjee: So that's what I have to say. Thank you so much.

241

01:04:38.150 --> 01:04:39.490

Thank you, Shannon.

242

01:04:40.050 --> 01:04:52.010

David Mills: At least, thank you, Shane, but that's very helpful. We're getting a couple of comments in the chat that also would add to this conversation. So I'll ask them to come forward. Perhaps. Keshe, do you want to? Make your comment about this particular case?

243

01:04:54.980 --> 01:04:58.410

David Mills: Yeah, am I audible? Clearly, that's great.

244

01:04:58.670 --> 01:05:14.209

Keshav Bansal: Yeah. So I was just mentioning, I used to be a student at this particular department so interestingly in this particular case. When these texts were removed from the syllabus the oversight committee didn't have any members from the English department itself.

245

01:05:14.580 --> 01:05:26.229

Keshav Bansal: The members largely consisted of people from Sanskrit Department, from Hindi Department, and people who were supposedly eminent personalities and non academics, so to speak.

246

01:05:26.280 --> 01:05:31.629

Keshav Bansal: so the whole process was a sham. When these texts was removed, were removed.

247

01:05:31.640 --> 01:05:55.760

Keshav Bansal: and on top of that the the burring trend has continued. Recently the this particular university, Dali University has removed the Iqbal from political science syllabus, and they say that we don't want somebody who was responsible for India's partition in our syllabus, I mean there it's debatable whether he was responsible or not.

248

01:05:55.760 --> 01:06:07.110

Keshav Bansal: And similarly, there was oh, there were also attempts to remove from philosophy and sociology level system respectively. So the worrying trend that

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01:06:07.180 --> 01:06:10.039

Keshav Bansal: Started with the English department

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01:06:10.170 --> 01:06:14.539

Keshav Bansal: is continuing the with respect to other departments as well.

251

01:06:16.350 --> 01:06:26.210

David Mills: But thank you very much. Kishv, that that's really interesting. I mean, perhaps you, or or or Siani, or Umusu could answer for this question for me, then. So how is it that the English Department didn't have

252

01:06:26.420 --> 01:06:35.719

David Mills: anyone on the oversight committee? And because by not having anyone, then you have no control of your curriculum top down appointed committee.

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01:06:35.980 --> 01:06:38.969

Mousumi Mukherjee: Yeah, this is this has been actually a

254

01:06:41.480 --> 01:07:00.830

Mousumi Mukherjee: a problem even it. Th, this problem predates actually, even this controversy. And and unfortunately, that's that's how it has been for most of the you know, bigger universities in India, including, you know, Calcutta, Bombay Madras Universities, which were set up during British India so often. These.

255

01:07:00.830 --> 01:07:13.050

Mousumi Mukherjee: the University Senate. You know, people sit who are part of the University Senate. They design the curriculum. They they decide on what is the the

256

01:07:15.600 --> 01:07:30.930

Mousumi Mukherjee: particular content and everything what is going to be. And and often, as Casey just mentioned. You know. Often these people are actually far removed from the

classroom realities, and often they are not even part of specific disciplinary, academic backgrounds.

257

01:07:30.950 --> 01:07:46.040

Mousumi Mukherjee: And so this is this is actually the larger problem of you know, the the higher education and context within India. In terms of you know, the way curriculum is designed, and and

258

01:07:46.040 --> 01:08:03.370

who are the ones who are part of these various, you know, curriculum development committees and and Bu, who who are the Board of Studies members. And this is la larger, structural pro problem. I think more so particularly of these older institutions.

259

01:08:03.370 --> 01:08:15.200

Mousumi Mukherjee: Things are changing, of course, very fast, as as I mentioned. With the with a lot of new universities coming up with a very, very different kind of structure altogether.

260

01:08:15.200 --> 01:08:28.889

Mousumi Mukherjee: But the this has been a problem which predates any P which predates all these recent controversy, and that this is one of the big reason. Even in many universities, curriculum didn't change

261

01:08:30.160 --> 01:08:31.650

David Mills: interesting. Thank you.

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01:08:31.920 --> 01:08:34.580

Mousumi Mukherjee: Yes, for 30, 40 years.

263

01:08:34.870 --> 01:08:57.400

David Mills: So what you're saying here, then, is that it's about the structure of governance within the institution, and the way in which academic freedom has been institutionalized in this very bureaucratic way that actually removes autonomy from departments and and sit in a higher bureaucratic

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01:08:57.850 --> 01:09:00.600

Mousumi Mukherjee: process. I mean.

265

01:09:00.700 --> 01:09:10.350

David Mills: that's very interesting. So that pro perhaps responds to I mean, chris Sanji asked the question of How does this link to Modu's reforms, Chris, you wanna add, do you want to elaborate on that at all?

266

01:09:13.760 --> 01:09:21.119

C Sanger: Not really, because I don't know no thoughts about it. But other people in the chat have have elaborated on it.

267

01:09:21.430 --> 01:09:40.320

David Mills: Sure, sure, yes, I mean so. So. So let's come, then to come, and some of the other questions in the chat. Should we? Should we go to Shimita? Hujd, you asked about Castism, which is a sort of another angle on this as well, isn't it? Attitudes to cast? Which I guess also links to Jared's comments. But

268

01:09:41.180 --> 01:09:43.049

David Mills: okay, Sir Richard, do you want to come in.

269

01:09:43.350 --> 01:09:58.809

Smriti Ahuja: Oh, thanks, David. Thank you, Professor Mukherjee. Doctor Mukherjee, really for a wonderful presentation. Thanks. Shiny! Thank you for adding insights to that. It appeared to me, from what I heard, that the a like, I said, that's my interpretation

270

01:09:58.900 --> 01:10:11.770

Smriti Ahuja: that with the huge resurgence of nationalism, it seems to contradict the unwillingness to decolise seems to contradict what's happening currently in India.

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01:10:11.860 --> 01:10:13.790

So

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01:10:15.070 --> 01:10:19.400

Smriti Ahuja: visibly. In the last of 3 4 years.

273

01:10:19.430 --> 01:10:23.709

There has been a fair amount of movement in terms of

274

01:10:23.820 --> 01:10:38.990

Smriti Ahuja: removing symbols of Imperialism in the country, and similarly, any, and that Imperialism goes beyond the British. It sort of feeds into the mus, the Islamic imperialism as well.

275

01:10:38.990 --> 01:10:58.759

Smriti Ahuja: So if I look at that discourse the fact that in you know not, we are trying to remove certain kind of literary figures from the Indian context. It seems to contradict it. Unless it's a religious and a caste issue, which is why, to my mind, this doesn't seem to be so much of a

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01:10:58.790 --> 01:11:03.860

Smriti Ahuja: decolonialization issue as it seems to be a religious and a caste issue.

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01:11:05.810 --> 01:11:11.719

David Mills: That's a great question. That's that's that's a really great comment.

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01:11:11.780 --> 01:11:21.919

And and that's that's the reason we are even questioning now when when shiny is started working. When I also

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01:11:24.520 --> 01:11:35.039

Mousumi Mukherjee: started thinking about this project even before Shannon started working, we were thinking in terms of decolonial reform. Now we are even questioning. Can we really call it decolonial also?

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01:11:35.090 --> 01:11:46.049

Mousumi Mukherjee: With regards to the kind of curricular reform that is taking place. But there is no doubt about the fact that there is a rising discourse

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01:11:46.180 --> 01:11:53.019

Mousumi Mukherjee: on decolonization. In fact, there have been some texts, also written

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01:11:53.400 --> 01:11:56.090

Mousumi Mukherjee: essays and articles of

283

01:11:58.560 --> 01:12:18.359

Mousumi Mukherjee: on the topic, and also, if you look at even any P, there's a big focus on also indigenization. and like like the prior to national education policies back in 80 s. And 90. The sixties and eighties there. There is a strong focus also on indigenization

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01:12:18.510 --> 01:12:21.319

Mousumi Mukherjee: as of the curriculum.

285

01:12:21.510 --> 01:12:28.430

and not just in terms of language, but also in terms of the content of the curriculum.

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01:12:28.450 --> 01:12:36.060

Mousumi Mukherjee: But here, once again, what I personally have been

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01:12:38.880 --> 01:12:41.090

Mousumi Mukherjee: reflecting on in terms of

288

01:12:41.110 --> 01:13:08.680

Mousumi Mukherjee: how a a. This decolonization is happening is very much also dependent on the social imaginary of all these people, the stakeholders who are involved in which includes the these members of these certain committees who are put in charge to do the curriculum work and the kind of social imaginary that is driving the kind of changes that they are making.

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01:13:08.690 --> 01:13:10.280

Yeah, it could

290

01:13:12.910 --> 01:13:26.159

Mousumi Mukherjee: be even argued. Some people can even argue that it it is. And Orientalists in its own way, in seeking to portray a very ideal kind of image of India.

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01:13:26.160 --> 01:13:50.979

Mousumi Mukherjee: Even if women authors are getting included which women or women authors are getting included. Even if dalit authors are getting ready included. Who are the ones who get who are getting included? What kind of story they're telling about India and Indian society. it's very, very important, you know, and I think that's one of the big reason.

292

01:13:50.980 --> 01:13:58.390

Mousumi Mukherjee: and you know. But probably these 3 texts fell under the axe

293

01:14:00.780 --> 01:14:21.770

Mousumi Mukherjee: in terms of the kind of a story they were telling was not not at all flattering. About the the post, you know de Colonial or post Colonial India the shining image in a imaginary of what India is what India was.

294

01:14:21.770 --> 01:14:32.569

It kind of contradicts. So even if Delhi daughters are included, even if women authors are included, I think it's very, very important

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01:14:35.210 --> 01:14:47.559

Mousumi Mukherjee: what story the texts are telling us. I think that's that's the imaginary that is probably driving the curriculum. I can see a few hands already raised. Please go ahead. We would like to hear from you.

296

01:14:47.720 --> 01:15:09.850

David Mills: Yes, no, no, I mean, you're you're right, that the very politics of indigenization becomes complicated. It what it does is it opens up everything for potential political content, doesn't it? And this assumption that somehow does the right representation become, which is very naive in in in terms of literary terms, you know. How could one have a proper representation? So, Sandy, did you wanna come in first before I invite him, Amita?

297

01:15:09.910 --> 01:15:30.600

Sayani Chatterjee: I just had one comment it's like fairly simple one, I think. To address Ma'am Smithy, who just question whether the issue is more about Castism and religion. What my reading so far is, you know, kind of what I have come to understand or perceive. It's something that I personally feel that.

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01:15:30.740 --> 01:15:32.460

Sayani Chatterjee: You know.

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01:15:32.490 --> 01:15:52.279

Sayani Chatterjee: in the complex context of post colonial India, multilingual, you know, sociopolitical socio cultural context. We are always running the risk of the concept of decolonization, which appears to be very lucrative in present times, to be cooped it into something else.

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01:15:52.480 --> 01:16:00.629

Sayani Chatterjee: to to be borrowed, and to be used for certain particular, very specific ideological purposes.

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01:16:00.670 --> 01:16:15.390

Sayani Chatterjee: So by and by it becomes, it holds as completely different meaning from what it started out with. I mean at a very basic level. It is something that makes you think critical. That makes you question

302

01:16:15.470 --> 01:16:29.100

Sayani Chatterjee: very basic rudimentary levels of hegemony of. You know, social, economic, political control that we have seen and we have been conditioned to believe as being normative. So

303

01:16:29.280 --> 01:16:56.679

Sayani Chatterjee: maybe we are at a very, you know we are at a at the kind of standard at standing at the edge where we are. You know, in a very perilous situation where the the Co. Option cooptation of something that started out as a way of critical thinking of progressive thinking might be, you know. Take take the guys of something else. So that's what I wanted to kind of, you know. Comment on something that I've been thinking about of late.

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01:16:56.890 --> 01:16:58.630

Sayani Chatterjee: That's thank you.

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01:16:59.310 --> 01:17:03.830

David Mills: that's great. Yes, it opens up all sorts of risks. Let me go on quickly, because we do have

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01:17:04.020 --> 01:17:06.480

David Mills: lots of questions. Now, Amita, do you want to come first.

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01:17:06.700 --> 01:17:31.639

Amita Nijhawan: Sure. Thank you. What a great presentation! Thank you. I in the UK context. Decolonization, you know, seems like one thing. And then, when you look at other contexts in other countries, I think it's really fascinating now. How it works. I was I was at a talk recently delivered by Dr. Anna Bernard, who? Who has written a book called Decolonization

308

01:17:31.640 --> 01:17:38.880

Literature recently. And we got into this discussion. You know about this question of

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01:17:40.080 --> 01:18:05.339

Amita Nijhawan: English literature. Right? What does that mean anymore? And and I was. And I was saying to her, you know, it's it's interesting, because back in the early 19 hundreds. My my granddad in in India, you know, did a degree in English literature. And it's so pervasive. It's such a worldwide kind of a known subject, and it's one of the hardest subjects to decolon to

310

01:18:05.340 --> 01:18:34.059

Amita Nijhawan: do, to do decolonization in, because many times in many other disciplines. People kind of see the the way forward with decolon decolonizing. But with English literature especially, there's this idea that there's a canon, and it it, you know it can't be broken. And it it's it's sanctified in some way. So I think we were talking around this idea that surely this kind of hegemony of, you know, English literature as one department and comparative literature

311

01:18:34.060 --> 01:18:43.589

Amita Nijhawan: Mit, Ctl and or translation studies being another department, are problematic in itself, and maybe we need to actually have departments that are now known as literature and can can include anything.

312

01:18:43.790 --> 01:18:59.680

Amita Nijhawan: I'll finish with saying that it's also connected to how the publishing industry sees literature, and what is considered serious literature versus commercial literature, and how much? How much people from

313

01:19:00.000 --> 01:19:18.000

Amita Nijhawan: former colonies are still only allowed certain spaces in the publishing industry, which are technically usually kind of literary literary kind of spaces rather than commercial spaces. So it's all. I think it's all kind of connected, and and not to mention also that in the UK.

314

01:19:18.000 --> 01:19:39.229

Amita Nijhawan: Not completely different from what Moshmi was saying, you know, we've had arts and humanities, departments disappearing because of funding. You know, fund the funding situation and the way the government looks at the arts. So there is a lot of you know, there are parallels in in in the things that you're saying. But yeah, I just, I just thought, you know, is this, is there any question of this

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01:19:39.650 --> 01:19:46.520

Amita Nijhawan: literature rather than English literature. You know. How do we break that hegemony? That that we've lived with for such a long time?

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01:19:49.750 --> 01:19:51.840

Mousumi Mukherjee: Is this another question.

317

01:19:52.130 --> 01:20:02.809

David Mills: Yes, no. I'm gonna take a few more questions. I can take another question or comment and respond, yeah, I'll take a couple more questions, Ron. You had your hand up for a while, do you wanna come in?

318

01:20:02.810 --> 01:20:23.870

Ron Cambridge: Hi, thank you. Hi! I'm not sure if it's so much a question, and I'm and I'm aware of the time as well. I wanna start the same. But thank you. That was very insightful. I don't come from from a literature background. But I think the same sort of narrative exists not just with literature, but many other subjects. In fact, I'm from the business department.

319

01:20:23.870 --> 01:20:43.270

Ron Cambridge: I've carried out a research in in 7 different countries, and of franchise courses of of Uk education. So Uk degrees being offered abroad and 2 points that I wanna make about the the colonizing and decolonizing

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01:20:43.270 --> 01:21:06.909

Ron Cambridge: you you talked about the contradiction but also the paradox. So there is this notion of the prestige of the old colonial view? You know, if it's British, it must be good. But also there is this struggle, some resentment, and and wish for local identity, and that happening at the same time. And you see, this paradox exists

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01:21:06.910 --> 01:21:27.610

Ron Cambridge: not just in in literature, but also in in any other academic textbook. But I also want to talk about the notion of the colonizing that exists in the Uk. And when it comes to a franchise. Franchise courses cause there's a lot of courses that being taught, including literature being taught abroad.

322

01:21:27.850 --> 01:21:28.850

Ron Cambridge: and

323

01:21:29.630 --> 01:21:51.390

Ron Cambridge: there is this notion of wanting to bring Co decolonization to the ex colonies, and I always find this paradoxical because we seem to be colonizing with decolonizing. You have to decolonize now. We will teach you the right way, and it sounds immensely colonizing to me. From where I stand.

324

01:21:51.400 --> 01:22:00.449

Ron Cambridge: albeit with good intention. So I think these are notions that we need to reflect on and discuss. But this particular

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01:22:00.510 --> 01:22:06.500

Ron Cambridge: presentation and the stories really really touched me. And I've learnt a lot. Thank you.

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01:22:08.820 --> 01:22:20.369

David Mills: Great, thank you. Yes, and I think that's a really good point. It's it's how theories and fashions travel. Have we got time for one more quick question. And, Gary, do you want to come in and on that? On that theme?

327

01:22:30.270 --> 01:22:32.319

David Mills: I wonder whether Gary Canner's left?

328

01:22:34.700 --> 01:22:37.409

Mousumi Mukherjee: Exactly. Yeah. He might have left the room.

329

01:22:37.450 --> 01:23:02.019

Mousumi Mukherjee: Let me quickly respond. Okay, so I'll I'll I'll looking at the time. I'll I'll just quickly respond to the the point that amita raised with regards to you know, a a frankly speaking, there, there is no one way to decorate.

330

01:23:02.140 --> 01:23:14.069

Mousumi Mukherjee: and, as we all know, you know. There, you know, drawing on Walter Mignolo's work on global design and local histories. Local histories always plays out

331

01:23:17.230 --> 01:23:41.730

Mousumi Mukherjee: plays a big role in the way global designs they actually unfold in in various local histories. And these, even if you look at decolonization itself as a global design. you know, if you look at the literature on decolonization, the way decolonization is being theorized. And the way it is happening within the North American context.

332

01:23:41.730 --> 01:23:48.399

Mousumi Mukherjee: in, in the, in the context, in the UK versus in Africa or

333

01:23:48.430 --> 01:24:06.570

Mousumi Mukherjee: Latin America versus what is happening? Be within the South Asian context in India is very, very different. And and of course, as I have tried to highlight, and that's something. What my doctor to and doctoral scholars also finding through her study. It

334

01:24:09.140 --> 01:24:14.480

Mousumi Mukherjee: is since the Indian context itself is internally so diverse

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01:24:14.530 --> 01:24:38.790

Mousumi Mukherjee: the way curriculum has been happening you know, it's not only driven by this Ugc curriculum reform committee at a central level. In fact, even in. And this is also part of the problem of implementation challenge of any kind of national policy mandate within such a large diverse context like India. So even the way decolonization

336

01:24:38.990 --> 01:24:40.680

Mousumi Mukherjee: is actual

337

01:24:43.160 --> 01:25:08.899

Mousumi Mukherjee: happening and playing out in different parts of India is is very, very different. The way it is happening in the North versus the way it is happening in the South as

Shiny was trying to mention, and even within North and South, the way it is happening in Central Universities versus some of the affiliated colleges or in the State universities. Or is some of the newer universities like our university, where we are located, where

338

01:25:08.900 --> 01:25:14.780

Mousumi Mukherjee: we have much more faculty, has much more autonomy the.

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01:25:17.340 --> 01:25:43.179

Mousumi Mukherjee: The. The the academic teams are very much involved in curriculum development along with faculty members and academic experts. So it's a very, very different kind of space here. Within the the higher education landscape itself. Which is very, very uneven and and diff depending on the the existing structure of the university.

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01:25:43.390 --> 01:25:48.810

Mousumi Mukherjee: The way the curriculum reform is happening is also very, very different.

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01:25:51.510 --> 01:26:01.720

Mousumi Mukherjee: But in in different parts of India. That's that would be my comment. To sum up what we have been trying to discuss with all of you over here today.

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01:26:03.150 --> 01:26:15.589

David Mills: Good, thank you very much for Zoom. Yes, I think we're recognizing the like limits of this term. And yes, yes, it's important. Thank you all very much for coming. It's been a really important discussion. Assuming you've opened up

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01:26:15.690 --> 01:26:18.749

David Mills: did you have any last comments signing?

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01:26:19.990 --> 01:26:20.960

Mousumi Mukherjee: Go ahead.

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01:26:21.110 --> 01:26:44.089

Sayani Chatterjee: Yeah. I just wanted to mention one last thing which you know, I think. Amitamams commander, kind of a query led me to think about so, according I mean, as far as naming the departments of English, as you know, English as teaching English language and literature. And why not? Just maybe, departments of literature?

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01:26:44.150 --> 01:26:49.210

Sayani Chatterjee: For I think, when we think about how the

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01:26:49.250 --> 01:26:52.779

Sayani Chatterjee: institutionalization of English began in India.

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01:26:52.910 --> 01:26:57.859

Sayani Chatterjee: the students who had primarily taken up this subject

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01:26:57.860 --> 01:27:20.850

Sayani Chatterjee: wanted to learn the language. That was the initial, you know, like the reason why they had to take up. They were, most of them. The literature tells us we're not really bothered about the literary aspect of it. It was, primarily, maybe, for instrumental purposes. And as also the convener of the Udc Curriculum Committee agrees that we still have this. You know.

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01:27:20.850 --> 01:27:29.469

Sayani Chatterjee: a group of people who come into this discipline to study English owners, and then and then thereafter also do. Their major

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01:27:29.550 --> 01:27:32.129

are looking at school jobs.

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01:27:32.610 --> 01:27:48.720

Sayani Chatterjee: So at you know. And specifically, when we comes to taking up school jobs in India, I'm told that that in that title of being of graduating in English languages and literature is very important till now, so things

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01:27:48.720 --> 01:28:10.090

Sayani Chatterjee: still are viewed through that kind of a colonial lens. We have come very far away from political independence, from, you know, from being territorially you know, the masters of our own land, but in some ways we still are, you know, pulling, still pulling the chains of you know. Kind of the colonial yoke, if I may say so

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01:28:10.090 --> 01:28:21.879

that could be one of the reasons why we still haven't been able to shed off the tag of English languages and literature. We still look back at our colonial past with a sense of nostalgia.

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01:28:22.370 --> 01:28:28.710

Sayani Chatterjee: So yeah, one of the ways, maybe in the future. Sometime we might be able to overhaul.

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01:28:28.900 --> 01:28:32.819

Sayani Chatterjee: have a complete overhaul of this entire idea of, you know, a strict

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01:28:32.870 --> 01:28:58.710

Sayani Chatterjee: Department of English languages and literature. Some of the universities have been trying to do that, for example, you need each other for University, which has broken away from its department of English languages and literature, and has led to, you know, the creation of many sister departments, starting with the school of cultural text and records digital humanities which have faculties right from the you know, English department teaching there in those specific schools as well.

358

01:29:00.060 --> 01:29:02.700

Sayani Chatterjee: So that was my commit.

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01:29:02.950 --> 01:29:16.819

David Mills: That that's great, Shannon. And I think that's a really helpful way to end, which is that these are intellectual questions. But these are always institutional questions as well. And and it's to do with the university's relationship. So the labor market and and 2 largest societal demands.

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01:29:16.830 --> 01:29:22.709

David Mills: Thank you both very much. It's been a really interesting conversation. Thank you all for your questions and comments. Today.

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01:29:22.790 --> 01:29:49.940

David Mills: We couldn't get to everyone, but you could see in the chat that people were bringing up really important further topics to sort of carry on this conversation. I hope we'll hear again, Shannon, from from you, and some future point as this research unfolds. Thank you all for coming, and do come back for our next coming up on academic freedom on the seventh of March. So fascism, free speech, and freedom.

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01:29:50.090 --> 01:29:51.790

David Mills: then you bye bye.

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01:29:52.530 --> 01:29:53.930

Thank you. Bye-bye.

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01:29:54.650 --> 01:29:55.760

Sayani Chatterjee: Thank you.