Interview 7.2.1 - A1 Decolonization Interview I...

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**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

decolonization, decolonize, people, transformation, committee, terms, university, spaces, curriculum, institution, professor, question, policies, uct, change, students, faculty, department, imply, sciences

**SPEAKERS**

A1, Luqman Muraina

**Luqman Muraina** 00:02

introducing myself. So my name is Luqman Opeyemi Muraina. I'm from Nigeria. I'm on. I'm a MasterCard scholar, and I'm on my second year Master's of Arts programme in the Department of Sociology at University of Cape Town, the current research, which I'm currently conducting now is decolonization of higher education curriculum. So I'm looking at the spaces between researcher policy and practice in the University of Cape Town. So I'm going to ask you, or maybe you can just introduce yourself very briefly, because I've read a little about you on the internet.

**Interviewee** 00:47

Okay, so my name is \*\*\*. And I am based in the Michaelis School of Fine Art.

**Luqman Muraina** 01:02

Oh, nice. So let me just go on to start with the question. I understand that you are the \*\*\*\* of the transformation committee of the \*\*\*\* of, of the of the \*\*\*\*\*; hope I'm right? That's correct. Yes. Okay. So I'm going to ask what influenced your, your, your appointment into this portfolio.

**Interviewee** 01:26

Okay, so, transformation has been something in very close to my heart for a very long time I was appointed to UCT in 2014, which was a year before the Rhodes must fall protests, and the movement as it began. And so I joined, what was then I think, was called t**ransformed UCT and became the black academic caucus**. So since joining, have been doing a lot of work, you know, in the committee, and the executive of the black academic caucus, working on particular policies is changing, trying to change the policies of the university that are reinforcing inequality. And, and then, you know, I've joined several committees here and there within the the faculty, as well, you know, also trying to find, find ways to transform. And then I also joined, I was also part of the \*\*\*\* Committee, which was also geared towards changing the balance of artworks in the, in the, in the in the committee, sorry, in the collection in the UCT collection. **But also it was I think it was also by the, the questioning of the kind of visual artworks that were on campus, for example, starting with the sculpture of Cecile john Rhodes, but also other problematic artworks. So I've been part of that committee and trying to change the look and feel of the spaces that we use every day on campus**. Yeah, so I guess, I guess, take on the deputy \*\*\*\* was also part of the work that I've been doing for for some time.

**Luqman Muraina** 03:45

Nice. So you can see that your experience in these various decolonial committees, committees that are trying to decolonize artworks and other aspects of inequalities on campus influenced your appointment?

**Interviewee** 04:02

I yeah. I mean, it influenced my choice in taking up the appointment.

**Luqman Muraina** 04:08

Okay, - nice. Nice, laughs slightly. that is fine, thank you for the correction. So I'm going to ask, since you assume in this position, what would you say have been your highest achievement especially in terms of decolonization, in tandem with what students are requesting? Which surfaced in 2015/2016 protest Rhodes must fall protest.

**Interviewee** 04:39

So I think in the level of the department. I've been, I guess what I would say is one of the highest achievements would be that I, you know, I work towards trying to get funding for students and majority of my students have been black female students whom I've supervised and mentored, many of them were part of the Rhodes must fall movement. And many of them have passed and passed well, so you know, the credit, and some have passed with distinction. So I guess yeah, I guess that's something that really humbles me in terms of what's been achieved. So I created a started a research project called the \*\*\*\*\*\*, and \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\* resources continues to fund postgraduate students, for the Masters for the honours the masters and PhDs. We also now currently have a postdoc. So I think department level is one thing I can say his greatest achievement. And then the other one was starting and developing, or at least designing and conceptualising a new course, in 2018 2017 2018, which would focus on modern artwork in African continent. So you know, where I'm based, the discipline that we're teaching is mostly Eurocentric, so art history is seen as Eurocentric discipline. So I think it was really important to have a course that looks at the early independent decades, 1950s to 1980s. And, you know, so from the rise of new modern nation states, and then, of course, towards the 1980s, and the structural adjustment programmes. So it's a very nice course; we start with Senegal, we move on to Nigeria. And then we look at other Eastern African countries, we look at Ethiopia. But we also do you know, North Africa, like Egypt, we do South Africa. We do; I forgot, we also do the Congo, you know, so it's quite nice, sort of to get. Yeah, I think it was, it was something that was different. So I think it's something that I would see as an achievement in terms of curriculum change. At institutional level, I've been part of the collective protest at SBC/UCT (UC) where we wrote a draft for changing the way in which HODs are appointed, but also changing the way in which Senate is represented; remember at UCT salaries to be represented only by full professor and department, but because of the racial inequalities, the majority of Senate members were white and male. And so we the black academic caucus wrote a proposal to change the way in which Senate is composed. So now people who are at senior lecturer level and are black and female can be coopted onto Senate. But also every department now has a representative and that representative has to come has to be a member of the designated group. So I think that yeah, I think that was one of the major achievements of the black academic caucus, amongst other things, you know, so yeah, I think, but let me stop 50 like, I'm just carrying on. Okay.

**Luqman Muraina** 08:38

So let me let me go on to ask this question. What do you see to be the relationship and the differences between transformation, especially in the context of education in South Africa, and decolonization? Sorry, say that again? What do you think are the relationship and differences between transformation and decolonization in the context of higher education in South Africa?

**Interviewee** 09:04

That's a very good question, because we often think of them as interchangeable. Sometimes we talk about the two as a fair one and the same thing, but they're not because no transformation can is a word that has to be taken. And I think, you know, it has its complexities. Transformation implies, you know, changes within a context that is volatile. But also, the problem with transformation is that it doesn't inherently specify a word, you know, or at least inherently imply social Justice, anti racism, anti sexism, so we can talk about transforming, but those things are necessarily implied in the word itself, right? Whereas when you begin to think about decolonial thought, it has to imply race, because we all understand that colonisation was something that, you know, was was a process that was instituted on the basis of race on the creation and construction of racial difference. And, but also the injustices, the violence, that it came with that came with imperialism. So, so I think, yeah, you know, for me, d**ecoloniality, is a much more, much more progressive term, in terms of what it actually specifies needs to be changed. Whereas transformation, you know, you can change from one system to another, but you might be changing, you know, from this to maybe to managerialism**, but you know, in which, in which case, you're not really might, it doesn't necessarily imply any kind of social justice or political, it requires for the institution to actually say, this is what we mean by transformation. Whereas I think the coloniality is, is, is a project that's much more clearer in terms of what the historical, the fundamental historical problem is.

**Luqman Muraina** 11:37

Nice. So I'm going to ask you, do you do you think that the Department of Higher Education and Training and the university management, I mean, the UCT management have favoured transformation over decolonization?

**Interviewee** 11:53

Yeah, you're asking a very tricky question; laughs. Um, Yes, I think so. I think so. And there is a reason for that. And maybe, if I put it this way, so that I don't get into trouble; laughs slightly. And I think, you know, often institutions would know, try to use terms that seem to be more, I don't know, I guess if I can say inclusive, and sometimes more neutral, right. So if you if you if you if you use, so for them to actually, I mean, I know that the UCT itself has very much used and coopted strategies that they've termed decolonial, but often, you know, institutions will talk about diversity, they'll talk about transformation. But they do that, because they obviously are serving a wider constituency. And, you know, so you, you, it's, I guess, if one is running a university, you don't want to be seen to be serving one constituency, and not another. And, you know, so I mean, I'm guessing this is what it may be. But I am aware that, you know, with with, with UCT, the word decolonization and decoloniality has sometimes featured but I think in in, in actual policy terms, it's more transformation that is favoured as a term, but that is because it gives itself to the different meanings one can place in terms of the you know, so you can, like I said, you know, transformation is unless if the university defines what they mean by it, it can be a very obscure word. **And so it allows them that kind of flexibility and sort of a sense, I guess, whether it's a false sense, a real sense, but a kind of sense of, of inclusivity**. Whereas, decoloniality, you know, I mean, I think decoloniality implies, rupture, it implies that, you know, we need to actually shake things from the ground. And so I imagine that, you know, if you are running the ministry or you're running an institution, it's a much more difficult thing to, to have to use to think about, you know, I wish, but I think it is an important thing, I think it is important to actually place decoloniality and decolonization centrally within the university policies and, and all of that, but I think I think, yeah, I guess what we've seen in the past is, is more the use of the word transformation, as a word that's that allows for much loose sort of understandings of antiracism and, you know, understandings of antisexism and so on.

**Luqman Muraina** 15:08

Thank you very much. You personally, would you advocate that? Because if the idea is that the University adopted transformation in order to be neutral and inclusive to all different parties that the university constitute, would this even allow us to have a background to properly decolonize? If that is what we need?

**Interviewee** 15:34

Sorry. I'm so sorry. I'm with this, the, the network isn't so great. So you're breaking up? Can I just ask you to ask again? The question?

**Luqman Muraina** 15:42

Okay, yeah, I'm going to do that. I'm sorry for my network. So I'm asking, if the University have offered to prioritise the adoption of transformation over decolonization because of no inclusivity of different parties that the university, you know, encompass and being neutral? Does this, you know, hiding under these inclusivity or neutralism, does it allow us a base, a foundation to even decolonize? If that is what we really need to change things from the background, as you have said that the decolonization is a rupture.

**Interviewee** 16:24

Yeah, so I mean, I so I think just maybe before I answer, I must just say that I am surmising. So this is me sort of saying it's the perception that I have in terms of the university's choice of and the reasons behind or the rationale behind the predominance of the use of the word transformation, as opposed to decoloniality. So I'm not saying that is the, the actual reason, I'm just saying, This is what I this is what my perception of it is, is so Okay, and then to get to the core of the question, you know, the thing about decolonizing an institution is that it actually requires, you know, it requires a structural change, so you can't decolonize on your own in your own corner. But you can do things that can provoke that change. Right. So So, because, yeah, so so it has to go right down to, to policy, you know, to hiring policies to policies that govern curricula to policies that govern, you know, how people are selected, how people are promoted, how people are recruited, it has to be a structural change. And so what we ending up now is, is, you know, it says, it's what I think would have been defined as one step forward, two steps backward. So you make the change, and the change is good, and it's accepted by many people. But very quickly, it's reversed again, you know, and that's, it's like, if one thinks about politics, really, it's a push and pull. Right, so, so a lot of so we might make a change here and make a change there. But because policies are constantly or can change every five years. You know, and, and people might, on one hand, **use the word decolonization and decoloniality. But they're not actually confronting the much more concrete changes, it just means that sometimes we're just changing on the surface, but not, you know, dealing with the depth of the problem. But also that we Yeah, we might be more we might be moving one step forward, two steps backward**, you know, so to doing the right thing, and then, because you have other people who disagree and out in opposition, it might be pushed back. Right. So, so it's a constant battle. Right. And I think we we actually have to understand the politics of decolonization in that ways, as a process. And not it's just, it's a series of actions. Rather than, you know, one thing that you can say, yes I've changed this Yes, I've changed that. Because it's so easy to lose it as well.

**Luqman Muraina** 19:33

Okay, thank you. So I'm going to ask these last follow up question. Do you think you would advocate that maybe the transformation committee should be changed to decolonization committee and maybe decolonization should be preferred over transformation or for you it is not necessary? What is important is actually to change and not really about favouring a name over the other. You shouldn't be about identity politics or the name of decolonization of our transformation. It should just be about doing that change and like, making people to do that change.

20:12

Yeah, yeah. So I mean, it's, it's an interesting thing to say, you know, so, you know, changing, should we change the name of transformation committees? No, because I mean, transmission committees didn't, weren't always there. You know, and I think in some instances, some faculties have committees that they call the, I think we call them EE and transformation. And so you know, so, and I mean, for some people, **they've always felt that there shouldn't be transformation committees, because transformation is the word is something that's supposed to be done by everyone**. It's not something that you relegate to managerial system. But I think it's become, I think it's important actually, to have the transformation committees, because you have people who are then tasked with looking, you know, looking after the project, of making change, but I think the point that you're raising is important, so why can't we call them the decolonial ummmm (INJ -committees)? And, yeah, so I, you know, I think, because they are, yeah, you I think you're quite right, I can't see why not? I can't see why we can't change them. Now, obviously, when they were put together, you know, when you the first time, you know, they when they thought, well, maybe each faculty needs to have a transformation committee, and each unit needs to have a transformation committee. I think **I guess at the time, people might have been afraid to call it decolonial committee**. So we kind of, you know, we kind of just, I mean, I've just started \*\*\*\* the transformation committee position since last year, and, you know, obviously found it as as transformation committees. So, I mean, I guess, I guess you're right, they I can't see a reason why we can't call them decolonial committees. And I guess the terms of reference, would have to be really specific in terms of the social justice objectives that are much better and more clearly and explicitly aligned to decolonizing. Yeah, yeah. But I guess that's, that's the reason why I was saying that the changes are structural. So you know, we can call ourselves in the humanities a decolonial comment. It would be very radical thing to do. But there'll be many other transformation committees, from other faculties. So how do we make sure that the change happens centrally? So that we all change, and we all become a decolonial committee? Yeah.

**Luqman Muraina** 23:14

Thank you. Okay. Thank you. So I'm going to add also did this transformation committee, like looking at the history of transformaation committee, when did it started? Was if provoked by the Rhodes Must Fall movements, or it has been existing since?.

**Interviewee** 23:32

You know, I mean, because I joined on UCT, only in 2014. I don't have the institutional memory in terms of what happened prior to that. But in my understanding, I think, yes, it was provoked, or at least, the way that I've always thought of it is that it was provoked by the Rhodes must fall.

**Luqman Muraina** 23:55

Okay. Okay, that's fine. So going on. I'm going to ask this question. So in terms of the humanities committee, the humanities tranformation committee, what are your present activities on decolonization?

**Interviewee** 24:16

Okay, so we are currently working on so we are tasked with a number of things. One of the key things is to make sure that we have employment equity reps on every selection committee, the employment equity reps are the people who will sit on every committee to make sure that a committee appoints a member of the designated group as according to the employment equity legislation. So we you Now, of course, we're having to carry out what has what the university has just released their new employment equity policy, and the practice note. And so I think a lot of the work recently has really been focused on that, and retraining, employment equity reps. To carry out that work. We are also responsible **for setting the transformation plan and the targets. This year, we also have to do that the targets are set every five years**. And this is the year when we have to set again, the targets for the next five years. And those targets determine the demographic balances in the university or at least if we say, you know, in five years time, we want to have changed the demography of the university, so that at least it reflects the demography of the country or of the province, and also that we don't have the sort of clear inequalities that we currently have. So that's, that's that's one thing. And then we also carry out a series of public events. This year, of course, I think there's we've had some delays. But last year, we held a roundtable on multilingual curriculum, and how we, you know, how we can reinforce multilingualism within courses, because there's a anglocentric approach to education. Right, so And the thing is, there's so much knowledge (Sounds break). So how do we then get to think about multilingualism? Not just in the university, but within courses as well. So we held that Roundtable. And we also held the WhatsApp discussions, contribution contributions that were made by both staff and students, and were posted online. So that's, that's part of, That's part of what we do is to run the forum and to hold the discussions. This year, we are planning to have a film screening, a discussion and a public lecture. Yeah, so there are quite a few things I think that we, as a transmission committee are trying to work with. I mean, we saw other things are ad hoc. So for example, last year was the first time that we had to nominate departmental reps for Senate. And we did that work. And, you know, in to ensure that we have, at least a majority of members of designated groups are then nominated as senate reps for each department. We advise the dean as well on on various and related trends or trends, or at least issues related to social justice in the in the faculty.

**Luqman Muraina** 28:23

Okay, thank you. I want to ask, Are you currently doing anything on curriculum? Sorry, say that again? Is the committee presently doing anything on curriculum?

**Interviewee** 28:34

And no, because **there is a committee to on teaching and learning that is, is is exists. And there's a deputy Dean for Undergraduate** who is handling who I think that would fall under his portfolio,

**Luqman Muraina** 28:54

Deputy Dean for \*\*\*\* within the Faculty of Humanities.

**Interviewee** 28:59

So the deputy Dean for Undergraduate Studies

**Luqman Muraina** 29:02

ooookay. Actually, I think I had that there was a 2000. And there was a presentation in 2019. By all departments in the faculty, we are the presented what they are doing on curriculum change and review.

**Interviewee** 29:20

Yes, yes. So you remember there was the curriculum change working group that was put together and they they wrote a very good report and recommend some set of recommendations. So I think yeah, it may well have been that And I think we, you know, people were responding to that document. And yeah, I mean, I think that document has been really, really useful in terms of understanding the decolonial approach to curriculum change. Did that fall under your your portfolio? it was institution wide when it was put together so it was it was co-chaired by Professor Elelwani Ramogondo. And theee, INJ - I think Professor Yakubu, the late professor Yaqubu, is it Yakubu, is part of that committee, and even Dr. Kasturi;) Kasturi!. That's it. Dr Kasturi, that's exactly it. So it is cochaired by Dr. Kasturi & Prof Ramogondo.

**Luqman Muraina** 30:41

Okay. Well, I understand the CCWG your work, you know, their constitution in 2016, the curriculum change framework that was published in 2017/18 and the responses that was provided institution wide and even a 9 page document that was further approved by the teaching and learning committee of the senate committee in the institution. But my concern, because when I interviewed Professor \*\*\*, you know, she was like, there was a, there was a presentation from all departments in the faculty to the transformation committee where they presented, what they are doing on curriculum change. In 2019, the presentation was made in 2019 by all departments.

**Interviewee** 31:37

Oh, yeah, it was before I was before my time. So as before I \*\*\* the transformation committee.

**Luqman Muraina** 31:44

Ooookay. Do you use to be a part of the conservation committee. No, no, not before I joined as chair. Okay. Nice. Nice. And if you're not aware of that presentation, or maybe you're currently working on it. A presentation on curriculum change? Yes. Nooooo; that all departments presented? Yes. That was what Professor \*\*\*\*\* mentioned to me. Maybe it was at the time, because she was chairing the transformation committee at that time. Oookay. Yeah. may well have been under when she was still chairing, okay, she used to \*\*\*\* the transformation committee before you came? That's correct. Yeah. But she then was also acting, she then had to step into the \*\*\*\* position. And so in her place, **\*\*\*\*, stepped in as transformation as acting transformation \*\*\*\*. Oooky, because I actually asked if I can access those presentations, what each department are doing on on our curriculum change in their various departments. And she mentioned that I should talk to you**. And I don't know if you can facilitate me gaining access to that representation, if it is in the form of a document, or maybe you know, virtual events or maybe a physical event that because that was before COVID. Maybe you have to send an email copy me copy the dean and Professor \*\*\*\*\*, who you mentioned occupied that transformation committee before you came in? Yeah,

**Interviewee** 33:50

I think I think maybe \*\*\*\* might be in a better position to give the documentation because it was just before It was before my time. Unless, of course if it's something that we can find in the records. And let me check the records. And if not, I think it would be best to to email \*\*\*. Okay. Then now, let's continue the interview. I'm sure I would. I would, I would carry you along like you would carry me along in the stage like maybe just copy me in the emails to \*\*\*\* and all of these guys. Go ahead because I mean, I'm, if I'm going to slow you down, because I might be trying to just, you know, get through the mountain work for this week. So it might take me a while before I do. So I think go ahead and just email her. what's what's the name, \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**Luqman Muraina** 35:23

Okay, that's fine. Would you allow me to copy you in the email i will send to her, not a problem? Okay, then definitely Let's move on. But currently the transformation committee is not doing anything on curriculum, especially decolonizing curriculum,

**Interviewee** 35:46

apart from the talk that we had the roundtable that we had, and I think we're going to put the recording and the transcription of it online, apart from that, no, but also because we don't have the capacity to do that. But also, there are committees that are focused particularly on curriculum issues,

**Luqman Muraina** 36:10

which is the the teaching and learning committee within the faculty and also institution wide, right.

**Interviewee** 36:18

Yeah. Teaching and Learning committee and all the other related ones like the UEC and GRAPPO. UEC??? What is UEC, I'm sorry. So the its undergraduate Undergraduate Education Committee, I think there's and then there's GRAPRO (Graduate Programme Committee), but that's how so if you wanted to change things, specific things within courses, if you wanted to change the, you know, the curriculum, you would have to put all of those things to the UEC committee. So those are the related committees in terms of teaching and learning.

**Luqman Muraina** 37:04

Yeah, okay. The UEC Undergraduate Education Committee, do they system, the faculty or is it a centralised committee? No, it's a faculty committee. faculty committee! what do you call the other one grappo?

**Interviewee** 37:19

The other one is grab Pro. So GRAERO g r A, E, R o, P

**Luqman Muraina** 37:27

are Oh, please, we can I mail, in the faculty that can, you know, provide access to people that occupy these spaces? Can I mail \*\*\*\* as well? No, I think in that case, the best person to male would be a \*\*\*\*\*\*\* Okay. Thank you. So they are the chair of that committee?.

**Interviewee** 38:12

But no, so he chairs, UBC. And then the GRAPPRO is chaired by \*\*\*\*\*.

**Luqman Muraina** 38:21

Don't let me stress you to do that I'm sure I will get my way if I get in touch to Professor \*\*\*\*\*\*. Okay. All right. Okay, Let me go on with the interview. You have supplied me with so much information, especially on other people to contact. Thank you so much for that

**Interviewee** 38:41

Not a problem.

**Luqman Muraina 38:47**

**So do you think i**n terms of decolonization, do you think we need a faculty policy? A policy on decolonization maybe from the faculty to a centralised university policy?

**Interviewee** 39:04

Yeah, we probably do. And I think, you know, **the thing with the thing that will make it difficult is because the various aspects of decolonizing are embedded in separate committees**. So I think the trick would be how do we bring all of that together and remember decolonizing impacts on research impacts on teaching impacts on all the other things in almost everything. So, you know, how do we then come up with one thing that aligns all of that? So generally, what faculties do is to not necessarily themselves come up with a policy is that they rely on the institution to weave in the vision of decolonization within the university wide policies. Because obviously, we also have to function as part of the institution. So we often don't nest we won't generally go necessarily created an internal one. But I think we rely on the university wide policies. And to put a policy together, it has to go through Senate, it has to go through so many groups. So by the time it gets there, you know, the question would be, why, you know, why is it not? Yeah, you know, I mean, we have, I mean, the policies that they in the various little committees were necessary, but generally, we rely on university wide policies. INJ - Okay. Thank you very much). **So what we do have is a faculty plan**. And so decolonization would be interwoven in the faculty plan. Okay, for faculty plan... Yeah. So it just sets out how are we going to change various things, you know, when at least within the next five years?

**Luqman Muraina** 41:07

Okay. is it the same thing as the target? You talked, you mentioned initially about the transformation committee, the target of demography,

**Interviewee** 41:15

It include that but there's, you know, there's much more than targets because, you know, decolonisation is not just about numbers, it's also about the experience, the lived experiences. of, you know, how to change the lived experiences of race, racism, sexism, ableism. You know, so it's, yeah, it has. So it would be woven into a much more sort of substantive plan, and the targets would be part of that. Okay. Who can I mail to get the faculty plans?. We working on that. We're currently drafting the the current one to submit to the institution. Okay, okay. Then don't let me stress it. Maybe I will just try to follow up. currently busy with what do you say? Sorry. repeat yourself. I couldn't hear that your last word. That's what we're currently busy with. Oh, okay. Even within the transformation commuters. Yes, that's what the transformation committee is trying to finalise and because we have to submit the plan to the forum, the transformation forum.

**Luqman Muraina** 42:39

Okay. Okay. I understand university wide. Oh, okay. That's fine. Thank you. Okay. Again, you know, decolonization, you mentioned that it is not a single activity. It, you know, we can't say this is decolonization. But then decolonization have to appear in different spaces, different policies. Do you think that decolonization is, you know, appearing in AI, as it is appearing? Like, to a great extent in these spaces? Do you think that it is being repeatedly mentioned in the policies do you think that it is appearing in the activities? Aside from the activities, maybe in terms of workshops, and all of that, you know, does those decolonization define actions in these many spaces you mentioned?

**Interviewee** 43:37

Yeah, yeah. I mean, I think people are conscientized eyes now, you know. So it appears, you know, in, in the way that people will talk and write about, you know, new courses that they're proposing and the kinds of talks that are being run and held and facilitated. And, you know, but yeah, I mean, I think it and I think that those changes are important. It's just obviously, one wishes that there was a much more concrete institution wide. Yeah, but change, I guess, if I can put it that way.

**Luqman Muraina** 44:26

Okay. Okay. Okay. What do you think it is appearing enough? Do you think small still needs to be done to actually decolonize? You know, the University generally?

**Interviewee** 44:39

Yeah. I mean, I don't think I mean, I think there was a time when it appeared. You know, a lot of times because obviously, we, you know, a lot of people were going through the motions of understanding the change that needs to be that needs to be that we need to see But I think also, people are now beginning to kind of shy not necessarily shy away from and again, I'm just surmising I'm talking in very broad strokes. You know, because now it's like, if one can call it **decolonial fatigue where, you know, there's, there's, there's a lot of interest and understanding, and there's a lot of momentum around a particular movement, and then suddenly, that starts to slow down**. So people might begin to use different words and different terms, to think around social justice. Because it seems as if decoloniality, is now washed of the depth of meaning, because sometimes you see it because people are just, it's becoming fashionable, you know? And so and also, you know, so everywhere else outside even outside of the institution, you don't know whether people are just, you know, they do a talk. And it's decolonial, and it's actually called that and the word you see it. So I think maybe there might be might have been a time when people thought we see it too much rather than too little. And, but also one, one, wondered whether it was meaningful, or at least used in a meaningful way, you know, so there may have been people who felt that sometimes the word comes up, but the way it's used, it's not, it's not used in a meaningful way. And so they try and find other means of saying, Well, how do we hone in to the specific issues? How do we do so? I think it might be Yeah, I think it might I yeah. And again, I mean, it's I stand to be corrected, but I **think it might have been an issue of seeing it too much. And not always in meaningful, in it's meaningful uses**. And then having people now shift away from it. Also, now, we might say, maybe we see it a lot less than we used to, because it just sort of seems to come up even in places where you don't know, it doesn't make sense, you know, that. You know, it just becomes an optic idea, in principle, a political principle for in some of the ways in which we've seen it being used. Hmm. But I'm talking it from very broad strokes, you know?

**Luqman Muraina** 47:42

Sure. Sure. Sure. Sure. I understand, I understand. So, Prof. i'm going to ask this question. Do you think there is a possibility of decolonizing our curriculum in terms of what we teach our students, the long term lessons, the takeaway from it? Yeah.

**Interviewee** 48:06

Yeah, but it's a long way of, I think. Because at the end of the day, we are fulfilling, you know, it's, it's more and more shift towards the sort of ...... (bad sound) you're breaking Prof is, yeah, there's a bit of a noise. So I'm saying it's a long way off, because, you know, I think there may be changes that are made within courses, you know, that get students to think differently. **But I think the entire system makes it very difficult to make radical changes**, you know, so if you're going to do an interdisciplinary because I think there would be other part of it, but then if we're going to be changing the curriculum, we need to stop thinking of disciplines in silos, because our lives as indigenous people are not not lived in silos that this is science, this is humanities this is this. So how do we, how do we integrate those knowledges. And but then if you think about the way the institution functions, administratively, logistically, it becomes very difficult to put together something that's truly interdisciplinary and sustain it. **And then also the way that the expectation as well is that you are producing students so that they, you know, go out into the world and work. And so it's almost as if one is part of this factory, of just producing students and the decolonial project is asking us to create human beings who are radically different in terms of their outlook on life and justice. And, but because universities are themselves, you know, they becoming more corporatized. And students are like, you know, seen as customers and, you know, and there's more of us kind of managerialism, it becomes really difficult to realise the more sort of meaningful process of decolonizing the curriculum. So the changes that one can make changes that, you know, are confined to maybe once course, or confined to, you know, one's own sort of departmental curriculum**. But I think logistically, you know, what, it really what the decoloniality really is asking us to do, is a much more difficult thing to achieve, in terms of the logistics that it requires in terms of how, in fact, the very structure of the university should be reimagined. You know, so we can change the content. But if we're still sitting in a lecture theatre, where there's one person who's speaking to who's talking at, you know, we're not changing spaces, and we're not changing any other thing, you know, how we assess and all of this, it sort of becomes very, very difficult to actually make the radical changes. So changes can be small in terms of content, but I think the logistics and the admin of, of, of carrying out a decolonial curriculum require a much more complex and, you know, much more a large scale reimagining of what universities do (L.P.)Are you still there?

**Luqman Muraina** 51:55

Yes, I'm very sorry, I actually muted when there was a little noise in my background. So following up on your comment that our lives are not linked in silos, you know, trying to differentiate disciplines and all of that, because some have actually said that it is almost impossible to decolonize STEM knowledge, do you share the same idea? Do you think, okay, if you do not share the same idea? Is it more difficult to decolonize in STEM than in humanities?

**Interviewee** 52:29

I don't see why it's difficult to decolonize in STEM than. You know, I mean, I've heard the, the arguments that, you know, because STEM is based on objective knowledge. It's not as subjective as humanities, it's, you know, that there's nothing that attains to, or at least gives itself away for colonising. I think that's nonsense, because the very reason we have STEM is is because we're trying to we, it's because we're working on is because we're doing things, and we're doing things with people. So you know, if you're in geology, you're working with minerals, you need labour, you need to use you still need to think about the people who are going to be involved as labour. So your miners and all of this, if you are doing Yeah, I mean, I'm struggling to find the examples. But even if you're someone who's done, you know, if you're going to be doing chemistry, I suppose in the meantime, you need to understand the gas emission, sorry, I'm not in the sciences. So I might be getting totally wrong, you need to understand the impact it's going to have on people so even stem needs to be people centred. **And it's very problematic to imply that STEM can't be decolonized because it has very little to it. All of it has to do with people**, maths!. If you're studying maths, you're not just putting together numbers, you putting together numbers because they have an impact on people, on everyday lives. The machine, the robotics that we create, they have an impact on how many people can be employed, or unemployed, you know, or, you know, what is the change in terms of the quality of life; i**t needs to be decolonized it just doesn't make sense because then impact on people, impacts on everyday life**. Every mechanical thing that's created is created in order to change the quality of life. **So if you're not decolonizing, and if you're not thinking about how it impacts on different races, on different social classes, you know socioeconomic classes** If you're not, you know, then I might, there's no point in actually doing anything in STEM it's it has to be people centred, everY, all those knowledges that are created have to do with an impact on people.

**Luqman Muraina** 53:21

Thank you very much. So basically, it has to change in terms of how it interacts with people. But those decolonization allow us to look at the background, like the foundations of how chemicals are mixed. does it allow us to do that, like the knowledge just have to be the same in STEM, but then we have to revisit how you relate with the society? And then definitely the people? Yes, I mean, yeah, sorry, I missed the first bit. You know, the argument has been that when we talk about decolonization, we can actually do that in humanities, because, you know, we can bring in all the African scholars, you know, in terms of Fine Arts, like concentrates on indigenous art, both in terms of STEM two plus two would always be two, when you the law of gravity will always be gravity, you know, there is this argument of objectivity, objectivity and universalism in science and stem.

**Interviewee** 55:43

Yeah, I mean, but those laws apply to people. Yes! INJ. So, I mean, of course, yeah. When we can say, you know, there's nothing that can be disputed about the law of gravity. Sure. There's nothing that can be disputed about the law of gravity, gravity, but where do we apply it? We apply it, you know, in building and constructing the aeroplanes, we applied in constructing satellites that fly off to space? Where do we apply the scientific laws? And so how, and how do we apply them? So, you know, what is the quest for space? For I mean, again, I don't want to get into this, because I'm obviously not a scientist. You know, so the thing is the there's a law that Sure, we can't dispute that law, because it is a natural law, but it is applied it so and so in the process of it being applied, we have to understand how it would impact on particular reasons. Now, for example, let's take something like I don't know, maybe biological sciences or ecology or something like that. We do know that black people have been placed in areas that are ecologically fragile, and where they are dumped on. So of course, that causes a lot of health problems for people. People are ending up living in industrial waste. Now, here are a number of Sciences, Biological Sciences, there's chemistry because all of those chemicals that people that are in the soil where they have to grow the food and everything. They are now having to ingest all of that. There's so there's a number of Sciences there, you know, where laws are applied, but they impact negatively on people. **So you can't have a scientist who doesn't understand the history of colonisation and how its impacted on people. And in fact, colonisation itself depended on scientific proving our sort of false scientific proving of like, of the inferiority of the sciences are very much implicated in the process of colonisation. And so they obviously, live very central in the process of decolonization**. You know, so if you think about, for example, the colonisation of the the, the American Indians, you know, it's the way in which the bison were killed that change the diet of the indigenous people and change the health of their bodies changes, you know, it changes everything they can, you know, it's I mean, I think it just doesn't make sense to say, you know, the sciences can't can't be decolonized because they're so objective. They're not, they are not it has to do with the way that those laws are applied the laws themselves fine, but it has to do with the way that they are applied.

**Luqman Muraina** 59:27

Thank you very much, perfectly. This is 11;02 I don't know if you want to carry on for a few for a few more minutes. Yeah, let me just check if I'm not late for anything. Okay. I know we can carry on. Okay, thank you very much. I really appreciate your your response on on the on the sciences and how the space still holds opportunity for us to decolonize it. So going on I'm going to ask this question now. So for you personally, what do you think is the importance of the mind? The person in decolonization? The importance, the importance of the mind, the mind, the person, the person doing decolonisation?

**Interviewee** 1:00:24

So, I'm struggling to understand the question. So when you say the mind, do you mean? How important are the ideas that a person takes on? Or do you mean? how important it is to develop the mind for decolonization? Just sort of

**Luqman Muraina** 1:00:49

exactly the way you interpret it.

**Interviewee** 1:00:52

*Okay, yeah, I mean, you know, the one thing that has been raised, I mean, you'll, you'll notice that, as you know, when, as conversations around decolonization, and decoloniality, were happening, a lot of people talked about the body, people talked about pain, you know, feelings, sentiment. And, yeah, you know, people talk to people, we're always talking about black bodies, you know, women bodies, queer bodies, you know, and sort of shifted the focus on the mind, you know, to kind of move away from the sort of emphasis on the mind when our lives are scripted, on the basis of how our bodies look. So, it's very interesting that you should ask that question, because I think there was, there's this, on one hand, that yes, of course, we do need to, we do have a lot of teaching to do. So it does mean that we have to develop people to think a different to think differently. But you're with the colonial decolonial conversations, you'll remember that people were saying, thinking is not just something that we do with our minds, it's also something we do with our bodies. You know, so there's, there's, there's the kind of importance of understanding how we attain sensual knowledge as well. So, we know, we know things, not just in our minds, but we know things because we feel them. We experienced them on our bodies. So race, sexism, all of those things, compacted and inscribed on our bodies. So I think there's a Yeah, there's an importance in sort of thinking around that kind of dialogue. You know, in kind of, when we sort of say the mind, yes, the mind does need to be developed, developed, because, you know, from when people start first year, the school system would not have taught them to think differently, would not have not necessarily would have taught them to think politically. You know, some, of course, they come in first year already being schooled in that sense, you know, in already understanding that having that in their minds, but in many cases, people only become very politicised in the university here. So yes, there's the work that needs to be done in terms of developing minds. But I think also, there's a there's a whole other dialogue around thinking as something that we do collectively, but thinking as something that we do also with our bodies. Yeah, and it's and it's also refuting Eurocentric knowledge and the emphasis on the mind.*

**Luqman Muraina** 1:04:22

Okay, thank you. So, Prof. I'm going to ask this question. Do you think that there are gaps between research on decolonization and what is currently happening in practice? in research? yeah, you know, there are people that you know, conduct research and decolonization inclusive of Prof \*\*\*\*\*. She has a paper on decolonization of African Studies. You know, many people conduct research on decolonization element like, so many of them. One of them is I'm sure you know, Professor, this professor, Professor in anthropology. Yeah, who wrote a book on Rhodes Must Fall. Professor \*\*\*\* yeah. So he is a decolonization scholar. And you know, this kind of even Professor \*\*\*\* of CHED. Professor \*\*\*\* there are many of them around. So do you think that they are what they say in their research in their recommendations, their findings? Do you think that there is a gap between what they say, and the rate at which decolonization is happening?

**Interviewee** 1:05:39

Now, I think their findings are valid, and very important. And, and, but what I think is, is, is an issues the way that research itself has become strange machine, you know, because we, as academics, we have to publish in journals, peer reviewed journals in order to publish it, you know, that to places where we're publishing, is it does don't necessarily make that knowledge accessible. So who are we writing it for? If we just writing it for ourselves, so that other scholars can read about decolonization? Or is it a journal article that's going to be read by the average person on the street? Because the subscription to the journal is so expensive? So is decolonization something that's limited to university professors and students talking amongst themselves? Or is it something that involves, you know, many, many other communities outside of it's outside of the institution? And so, and how to how do we make those changes then visible? So I think, I think it's not necessarily that question around their findings, because I think all of those papers are very important papers. And **I just think it's a problem with the system itself, and how it limits access to that knowledge**. And because as a professor, in order to show that we can profess, you have to show that you can publish in peer reviewed journals, and all of these places, you know, that are inaccessible? But how do we make those knowledges more accessible? So does decolonization matter too the woman who's going to wake up in the morning and go to her job as a domestic worker? Yes, it matters. But does she wake up and say, today, my main aim is to decolonize. Is she going to wake up and say, I have just read an article in this journal about decolonization? You know, she can't, because the journal is so expensive. So, who are we doing it for? You know, and I think that's going to be big question for universities, universities themselves have to change. But I think the whole publishing research and publishing system has to change. Because we're just talking to ourselves, we go to conferences, we're talking to each other as professors and as students and, you know, we're talking to ourselves. Hmm, thank you, - InNJ) it has to do, to stretch out outside of that, you know; smiles Yeah

**Luqman Muraina** 1:08:41

Okay. So I'm going to ask you this question. For you personally. It seems to be because the way we started, it seems the BAC that is the, that is the sorry, the caucus the black academic caucus. more space for you to decolonize down transformation committee. Is that true? Because when you started when you you know, you know, you really held on to what you have achieved in those spaces, in terms of decolonization than opportunity given to you by transformation committee.

**Interviewee** 1:09:17

Yeah, yeah. No, I because I mean, I think because, you know, when you movement, as very clear, has a very clear agenda. And has people who are passionate, you know, can make really big impacts in a very short space of time, which is much more difficult when you are a within an institutional system. So, you know, **in a transmission committee, things have to kind of go from being approved and consented by and going to another place for another approval and going so there's a whole lot of admin that comes with it. That slows it down. Hmm. If you're in a movement, you find strategies, and you have the freedom to, to engage with different strategies to achieve something. And also, you're working collectively with people who are there because they're there for a purpose**. Not because, you know, they, their head of department asked them to be there, which is what transformation committees generally, sometimes, you know, people are there because oh, well, you know, my head of department asked me to be here and doing it, because I can at least say I've served on one or some other committee. So it's not necessarily always people are passionate. Whereas if you're in a movement, the people who come and join a movement are very passionate about, you know, so it's different spaces, it's different, I guess, that's where the criticism against transformation committees is also arising from people are saying it's kind of, you know, they're not necessarily as impactful. But also, it's very hard for them to be impactful because they, I have limited resources. It's in it's also work we do over and above, you know, the, the work that we, yeah, it's co teaching and all of this, it's, it's, it's, it's extra, so sometimes in you know, people in the communities and not so involved or not, so, you know, rooted; smiles. Yeah, but sometimes, yeah, you do get really amazing people as well, but it won't be everyone.

**Luqman Muraina** 1:11:31

Sure. sure sure. As you have said, like people come by because of different purpose. Okay, I think I'm just going to ask the last question now, which is that I want to return to the question on the mind and decolonization. You know, some people they kind of see decolonization as a project. For some people alone. Maybe it's a project for, you know, male bodies, or maybe black bodies or white bodies? Do you think do you see it that way? Or it's a it must be like, a societal project?

**Interviewee** 1:12:08

That I think definitely societal project? You know, because there's no white person unless there's a black person. Smiles wildly. INJ - Definitely!). Guys, why would you call yourself white? You know, like, you know, so. So you can't see, we can't, we can't change, you know, we keep, like, if we want to change something concrete about racism, it has to begin with, you know, it has to involve white bodies, black bodies, I mean, I don't like to necessarily talk about bodies, let me say, you know, everybody it has to include, and not necessarily include everybody, it's just people have to understand what it is they doing wrong. So we may be saying these are experiences of racism. But also, if people don't understand that, actually, you're perpetuating the racism, then we're not achieving anything, you know. So it has to be societal, I think we can treat it as, like the one one issue politics, you know, like, oh, we're only looking at sexism. They're very much intertwined. And this is why intersectionality became key theory in the revival of decolonial politics in South Africa.

**Luqman Muraina** 1:13:28

So So, you know, for those people who hear the idea that it's a project for some people, how can we bring them? How can we make them involved in these societal project? In this very important societal project?

**Interviewee** 1:13:44

Yeah, it's a difficult question. I guess it's Yeah, I guess it's, it's, it must begin with conscientizing people, you know, to get them involved. And so that, you know, because I think at UCT, **when it started, people thought decolonization was a was a way of accusing white people of something, you know, and, you know, so they felt very attacked every time we said decolonial, they felt like it was an attack against them**. So and actually they will realise that colonisation affected everybody negatively. And so even if you live in with the, you know, privilege and all of this, there, there are many things to your own sense of humanity that have been eroded. And until people understand that, you know, they must stay they need to come to the party. So, I think, yeah, I think it's conscientizing people to understand that. It's not our problem only it's everybody's problem. And it's a problem that's making our society worse, worse, worse. Place. So, yeah, in order to change that society, everyone must come to the party, but you have to conscientizs them to understand why it is negative for them to.

**Luqman Muraina** 1:15:14

Okay. Okay, actually, that was my, what I conceived by asking initially, what is the importance of the mind in the decolonization project? Because for me, you cannot tell a lecturer to to decolonize their class, their course contains the pedagogy their way of assessment, either to humanize it without themmm, not, you know, having any idea? Not? Maybe the theoretical idea? No, but without them not having an idea of decolonization and what it means? INJ - that's correct? Yeah, exactly) That, okay. Proof you have really, I really appreciate your time. And then your willingness. And enthutiasism to, you know, provide really lengthy responses. Let me put it that way. Very sufficient responses to my, to my questions. I really appreciate it so much. And then maybe I would just go with one question. It is a follow up, because you mentioned something initially, which is that do you think that decolonization, us come to rely only in educational spaces? Do you think it is also popular in other sectors? Politics, the business? mining? What can you see regarding that?

**Interviewee** 1:16:38

No, I don't think so. I don't think so. I don't think in corporate it matters at all. Yeah, I think in some spaces, it's not it's not even. Yeah, I think in corporate spaces in the private sector. It's it's a very minimal thing. I mean, people might talk about needing to transform, but I, you know, many big corporations haven't and I don't think it matters at all. In some of those spaces.

**Luqman Muraina** 1:17:14

decolonizing decolonization doesn't matter in those spaces?

**Interviewee** 1:17:18

I don't think so. I don't think it does. Again, I'm very broad strokes, but I don't think Yeah, I don't think everyone is carrying out with the same passion as we are in the university.

**Luqman Muraina** 1:17:31

Okay, we also need it in those species as well, in some form, just that it is it is not happening yet.

**Interviewee** 1:17:39

We we definitely need it. We definitely needed but it's not happening yet. It's not happening. Because the socio economic imbalances in those with wealth, those with power. You know, if they don't see it as something that is urgent, and important, then, you know, then it's it's it's a difficult battle to fight.

**Luqman Muraina** 1:18:08

Ah, ha, ha ha, Prof. Thank you so much. Thank you so much. I don't know if you want to ask me any question at this moment. Ahh no no no, I'm okay. Thank you. Okay, I would request to open my video. So you can see me in case you meet me in school, I can introduce myself to you face to face. \*\*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*\* Okay, thank you so much. Okay. Have a beautiful day and week ahead. Bye, bye. Yeah. **This is a really engaging interview, Prof was really, he or she was all over the place, you know, very prepared to response to provide response to my questions and it's really amazing**, like, thank I thank her so much.