Critical collaboration

5 DECEMBER 2024



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Introduction UCOS







Space for sharing



Expertise and active participation



Safety in the group



Sensitive subjects

- Listen pause ask questions
- History and global structures, not a personal attack (!)



Repetition is key



Balance between being critical and trusting

based on scientific research



Ask questions during the session









On a scale of guinea pig, how are you feeling today?











Objective 1: To reflect

After this session, you can:



Analyse and recognize your own positionality, privileges and your blind spots.



Critically evaluate racism and power dynamics in your own organization.



Raise awareness of culture- and power-sensitive communications.





Objective 2: To inform

After this session, you can:



Analyze the impact of positionality and power.



Recognize the colonial legacy in development cooperation.



Explain intercultural concepts in practice.





Objective 3: To change

After this session, you can:



Apply intercultural skills in collaboration.



Design practical tools to assist students leaving for abroad guidance.



Develop action items to reduce power and ethnocentrism.



Implement intersectional thinking in project development.





Objective 4: To communicate

After this session, you can:



Actively participate in a dialogue about power and positionality.



Create a common language around inclusion and power.



Create a safer space for colleagues and students in international

mobility.



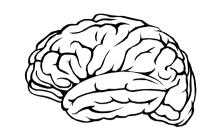
How UCOS does it



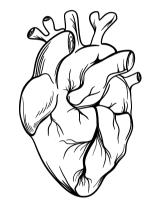




Thinking



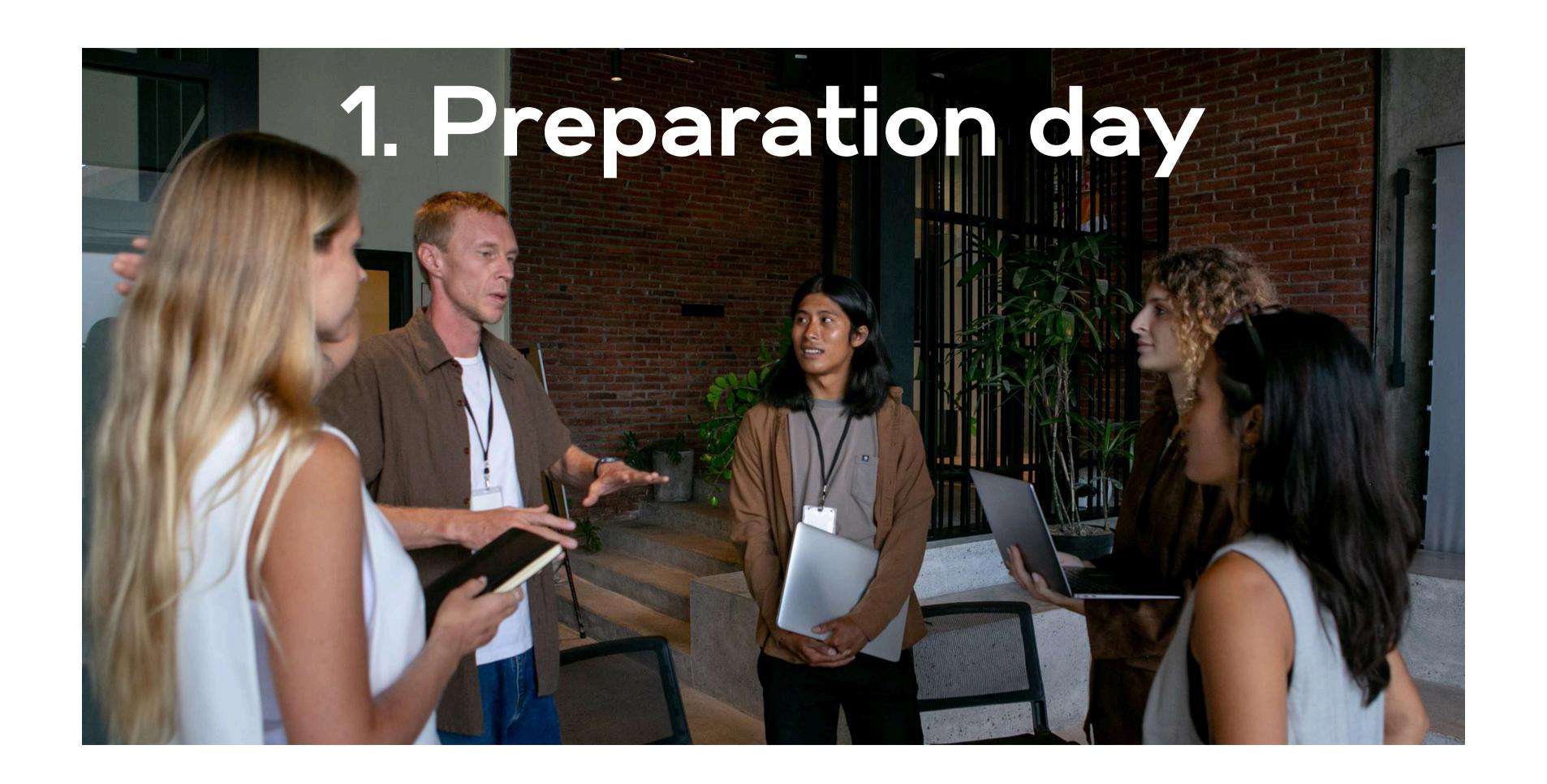
Feeling



Acting







Why do we need to earn about racism and power dynamics?





Objective: to critically reflect about power dynamics within your own organization



Belgian population has low knowledge of racism: 4,5/12



Racism -> inferiority complex in racialized people



Contributes to general education



Everyone carries unconscious biases with them



Only by knowing your history can you build a future (Teddy Roosevelt, Night at the museum)





Goals



Awareness at different levels

- Your position and privileges
- Impact of culture
- Impact of colonial past to the present



Discussing sensitive topics connection

- Racism
- Poverty and inequality

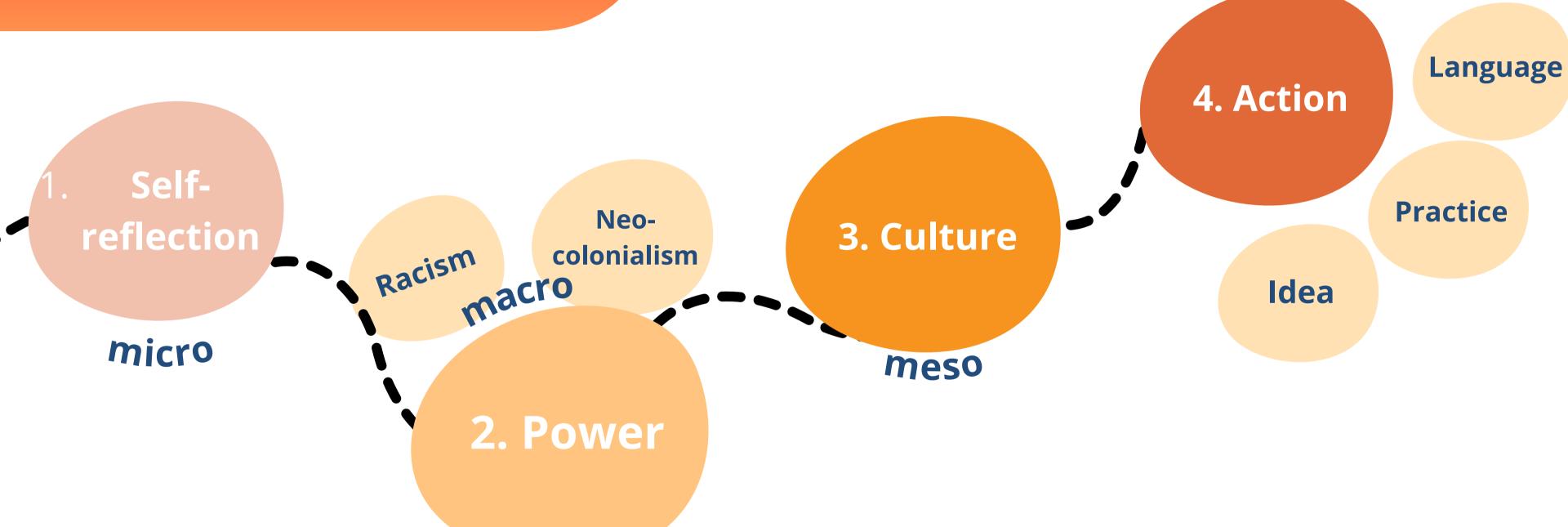


Broadening perspectives and offering tools

- Motivate them to 'do their own homework'
- No clear answers
- Knowledge in exchange and discussion



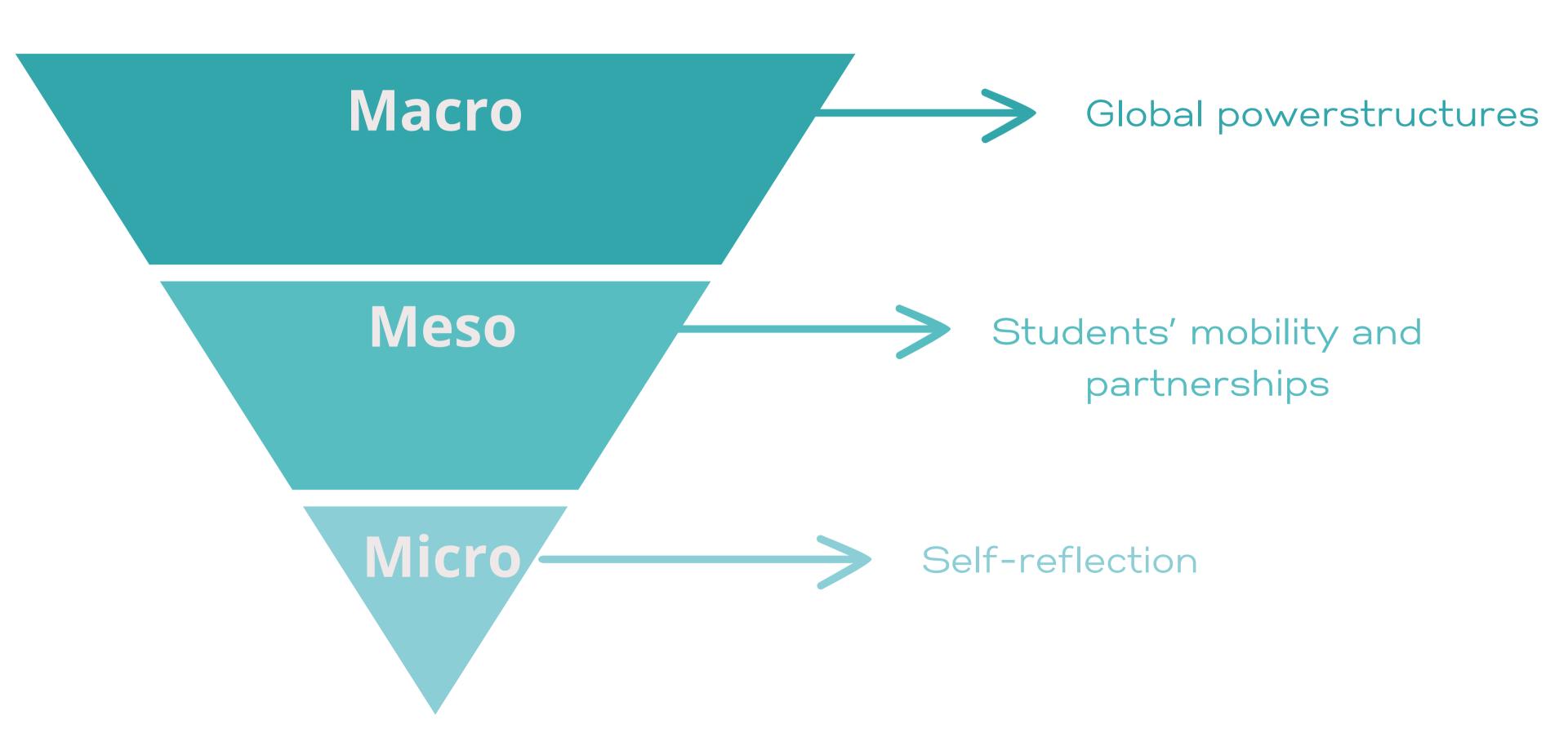
Process







Levels of influence





Pitfalls for students?









Reverse culture shock -> nobody talks about what they experienced



Emotional impact



Oversimplification of global issues



Long term impact?







Program





Arrival

To put in perspective



Observe - Describe - Interpret



Ask reflective questions:

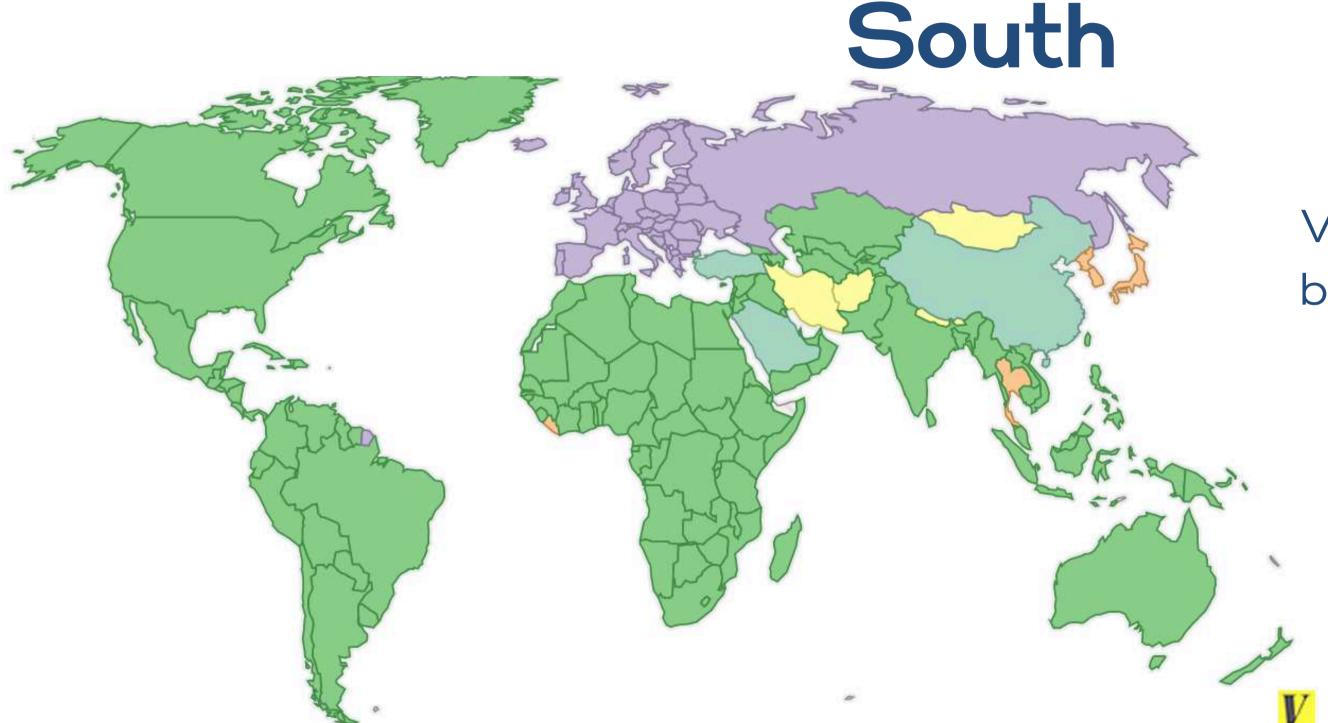
- First impressions
- To give a reference framework



How to put these impressions in the framework of global power structures



The Global North versus The Global



Why is it important to be aware of the global power structures?





Question

 What were the first impressions of the culture of your host country?

 How do you think that your positionality has influenced these impressions upon arrival?





During their stay

What did you experience?



Cultural context and culture shock



Intercultural competences

Interactive games

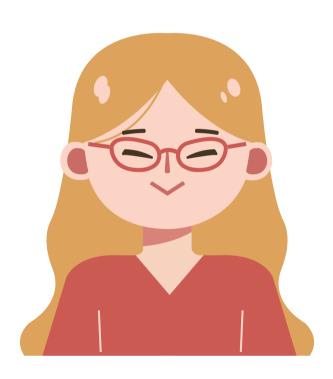


Global framework: poverty and inequality







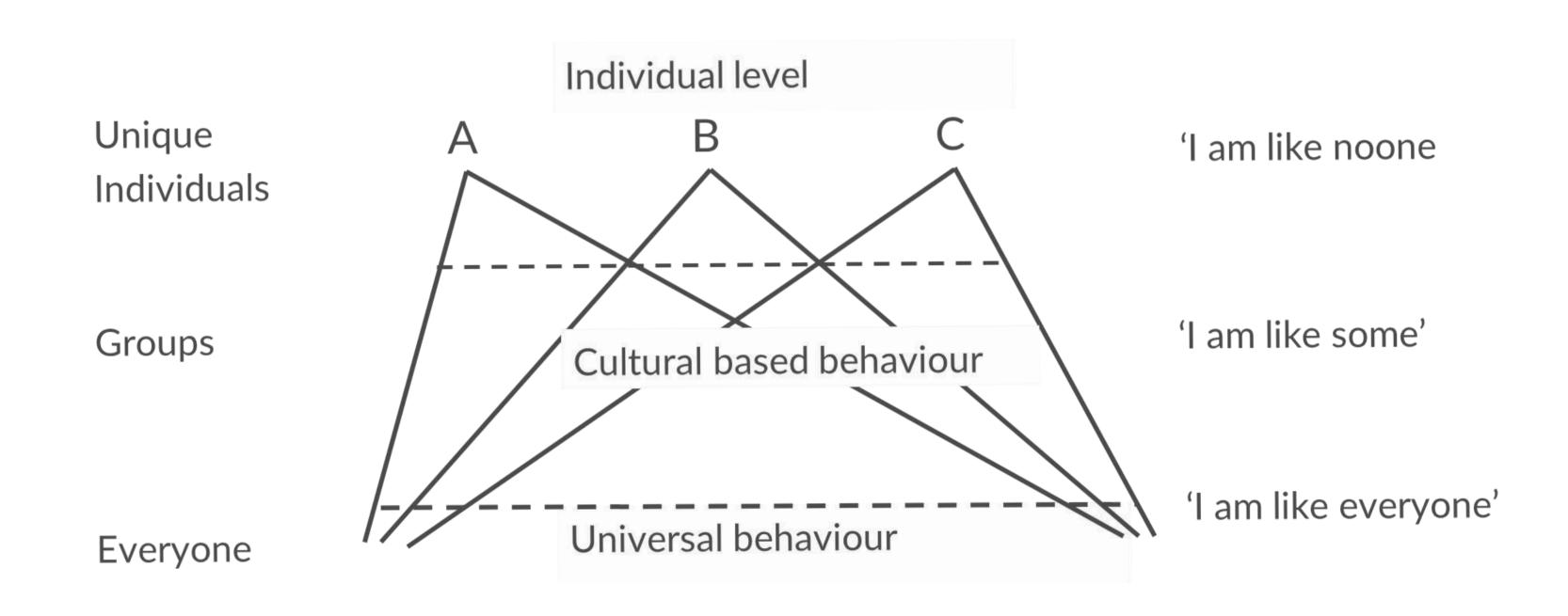


culture = an explanatory factor, not the explanatory factor

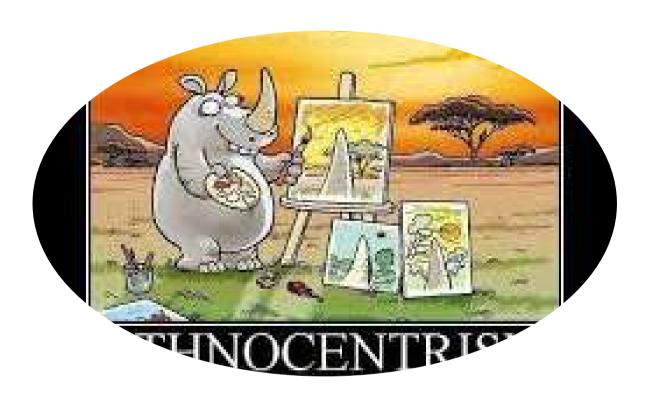




Understanding human behavior?



Clashing frames of reference







etnocentrism

cultural relativism

active pluralism

Process of your experience



Leave to host country

return from host country

Culture shock: Olberg (1960)

CULTURE SHOCK is precipitated by the anxiety that results from **losing** all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse. These signs or cues include the thousand and one ways in which we orient ourselves to the situations of daily life (Olberg, 1960, p.179)

4 stadia:

- Honeymoon stage
- Frustration
- Adaptation
- Acceptance
- (Reversed culture shock)



Intercultural experiences



Investment in internationalization



Added value for career --> intercultural competencies

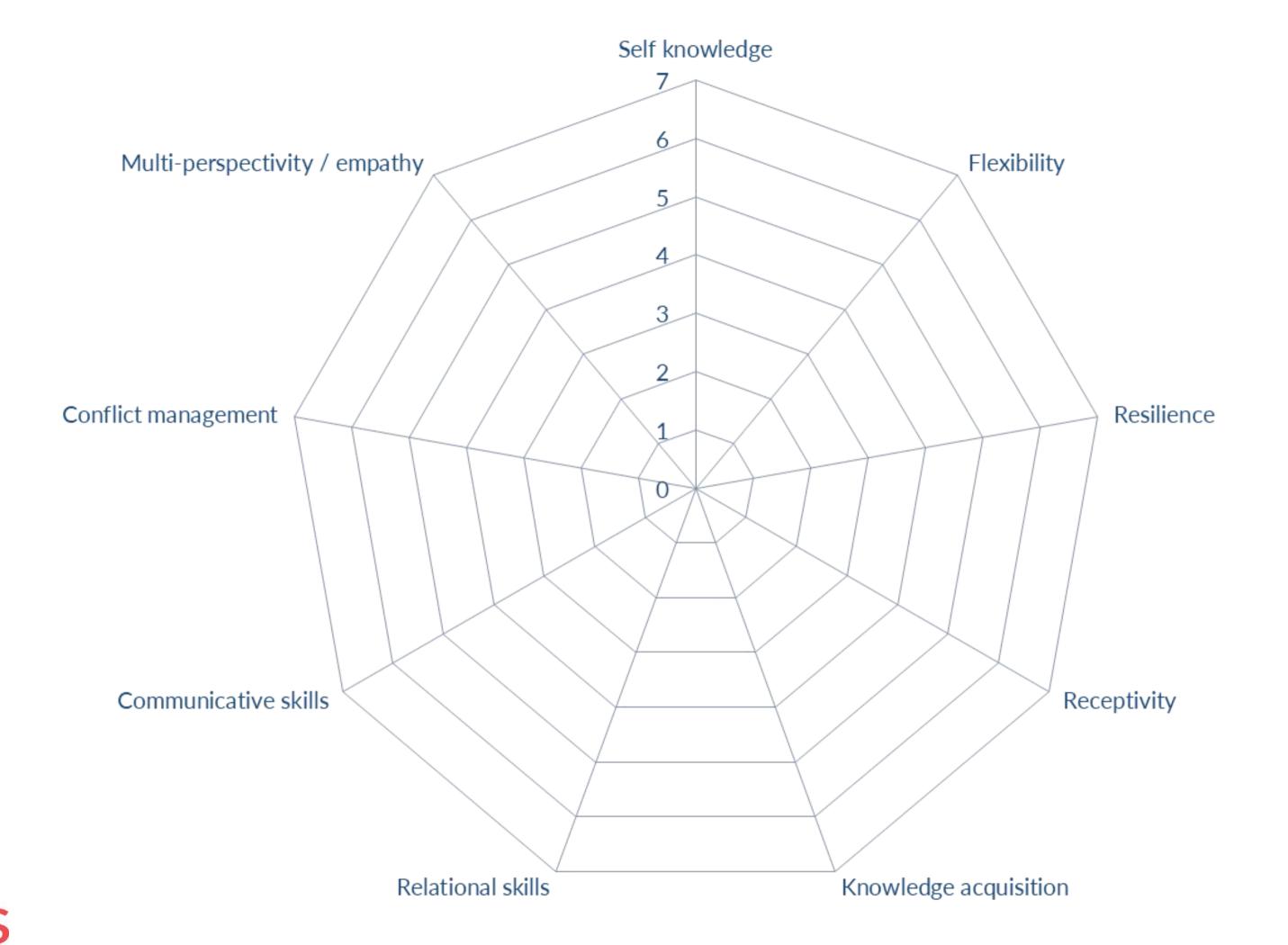
- But few studies/measures
- Change in student attitudes and behavior? (Boonen et al. 2018)



Framework intercultural competencies --> self-reflection

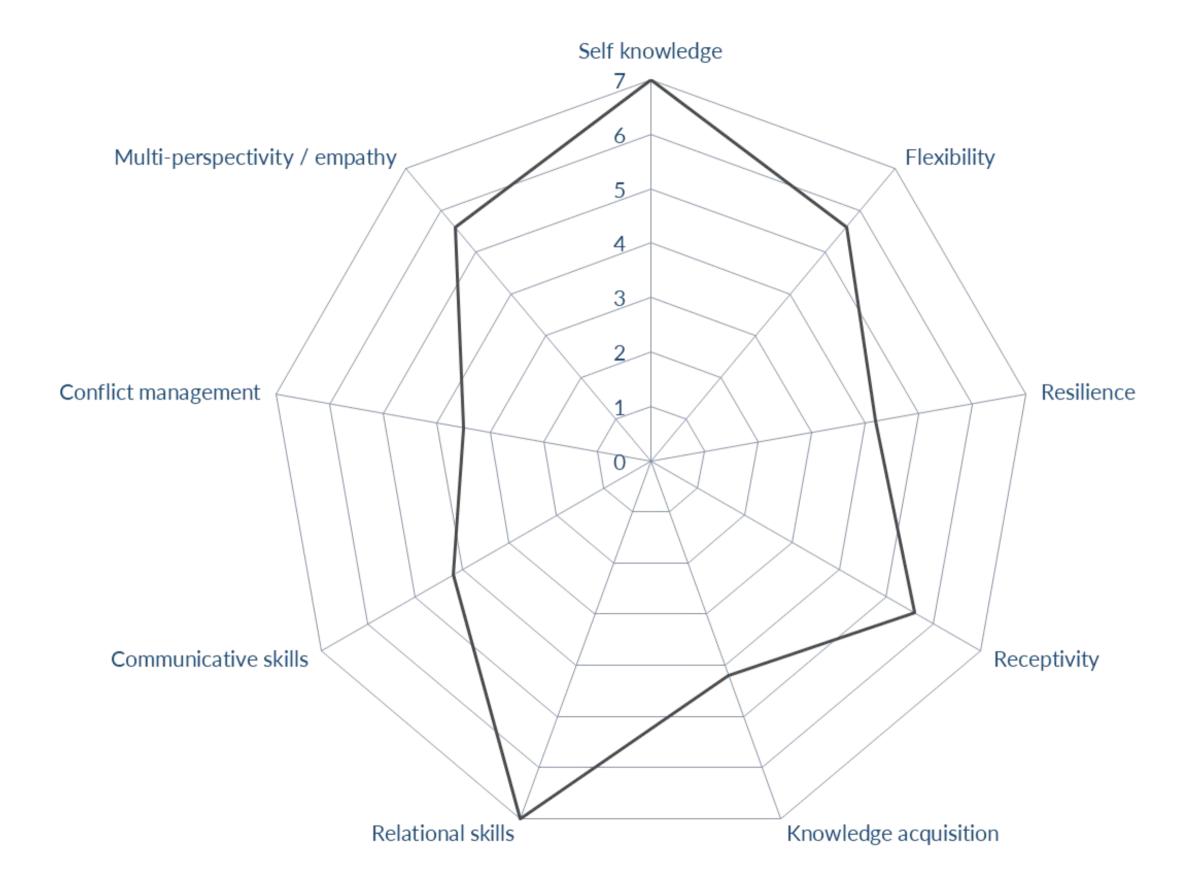
uit: Boonen, J., Hoefnagels, A., & Pluymaekers, M. (2018). De ontwikkeling van interculturele competenties tijdens een studieverblijf in het buitenland: het belang van culturele afstand. Tijdschrift voor Hoger Onderwijs, 36(2), 38-59.















Poverty and inequality



Feeling of safety during the stay



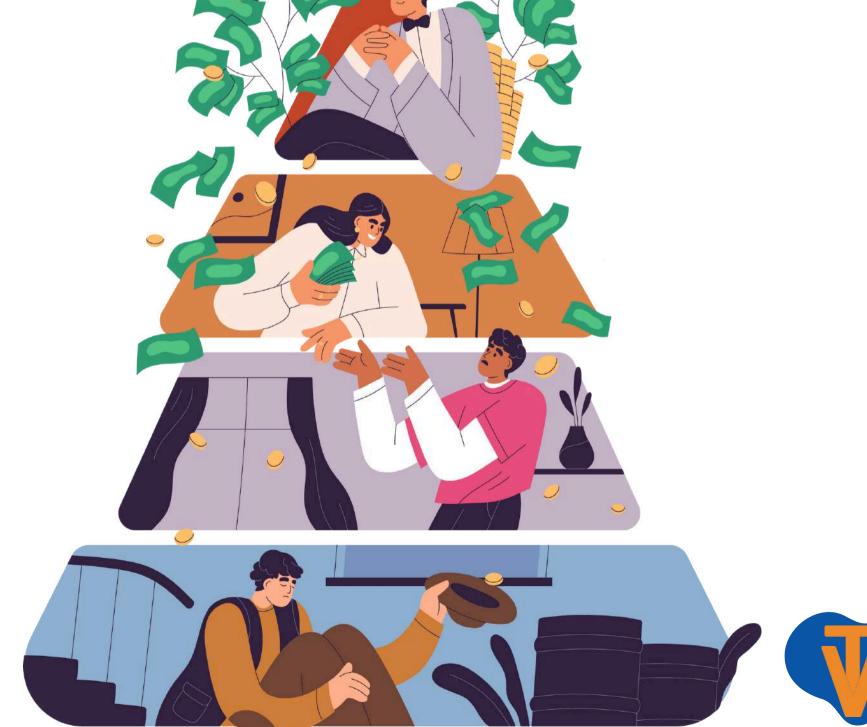
Connection with local people

Confrontation with poverty



a.experience

b.perception of poverty





Return



Focus on the societal impact in the host country

o focus on the personal impact of the exchange



What would they do differently?

University's partnerships







The role of students

F OORLOG ISRAËL-HAMAS

'Vlaamse universiteiten moeten alle academische banden met Israël verbreken'



Eind oktober werd in Brussel betoogd tegen het geweld van Israël in Gaza. — © Kristof Vadino

Het is stil aan de top van de twee grootste Vlaamse universiteiten over de oorlog in Gaza. De druk op de rectoren stijgt om een standpunt in te nemen. 'Door samen te werken met een extreemrechts apartheidsregime, geven we een fout signaal.'

Klaas Maenhout







bron: VETO

ANALYSE ISRAËL

Samenwerking KU Leuven met Israëlische partners verwant aan wapenindustrie oogst kritiek



Op dit moment zijn er zo'n dertig onderzoeksprojecten waarvoor de KU Leuven samenwerkt met Israëlische instellingen 🥲 Freya Caris

De KU Leuven werkt op diverse manieren samen met Israëlische universiteiten. Die partners zijn nauw verbonden met het Israëlisch leger en de wapenindustrie. De vraag om een boycot neemt vanuit verschillende hoeken toe.

Astrid Dewaele | Thor Deyaert | Simon Tibo

Nieuws Oorlog Israël-Hamas

Meer dan 700 Vlaamse academici roepen in open brief op tot boycot van Israël



In de brief drukken ruim 700 medewerkers en studenten van de vijf Vlaamse universiteiten, onder wie 67 professoren, hun bezorgdheid uit over de 'humanitaire crisis en de genocidale oorlog in Gaza'. Beeld AP

bron: <u>De Morgen</u>

Objective 1: To reflect



Objective 1: To reflect

After this session, you can:



Analyse and recognize your own positionality, privileges and your blind spots.



Critically evaluate racism and power dynamics in your own organization.

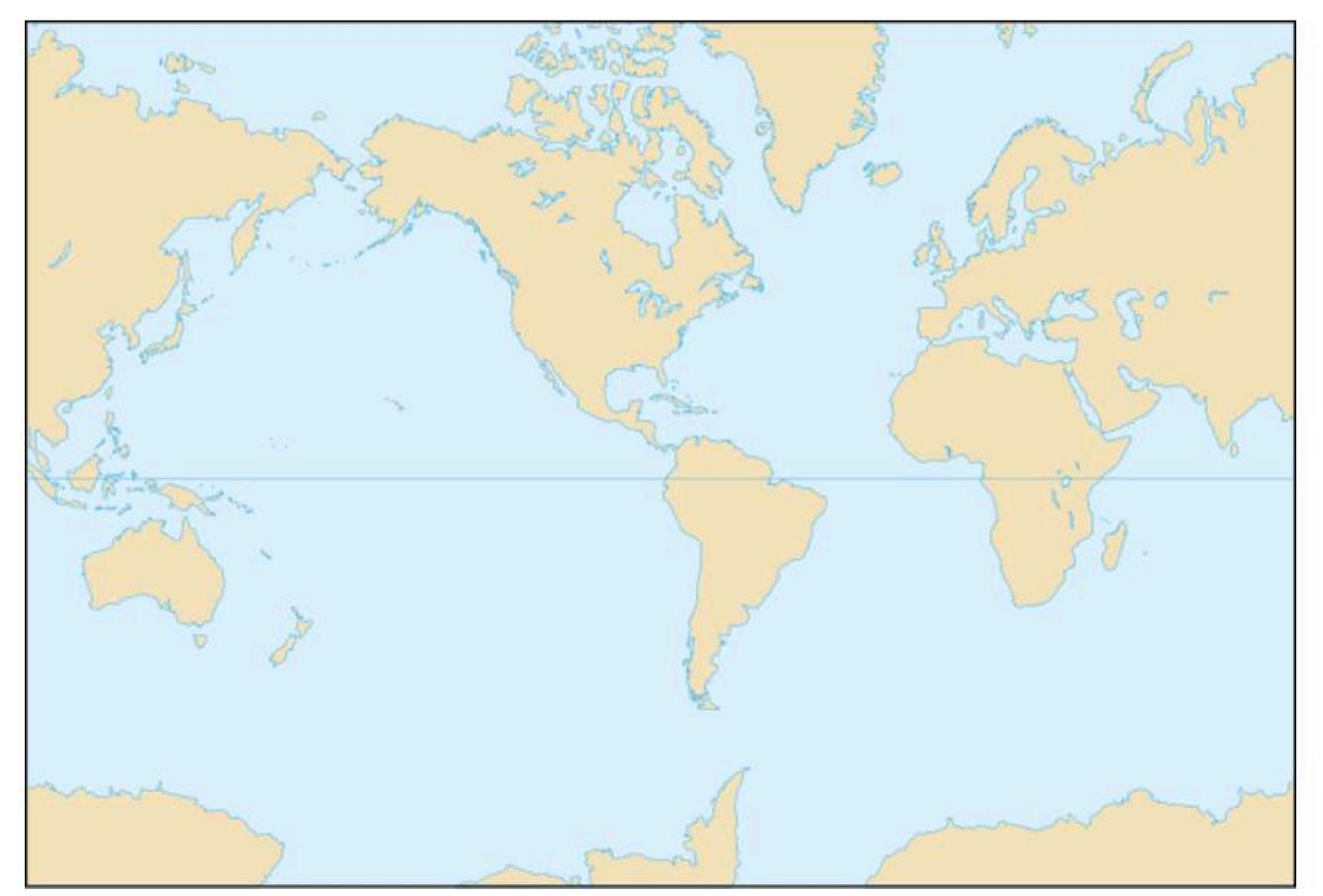




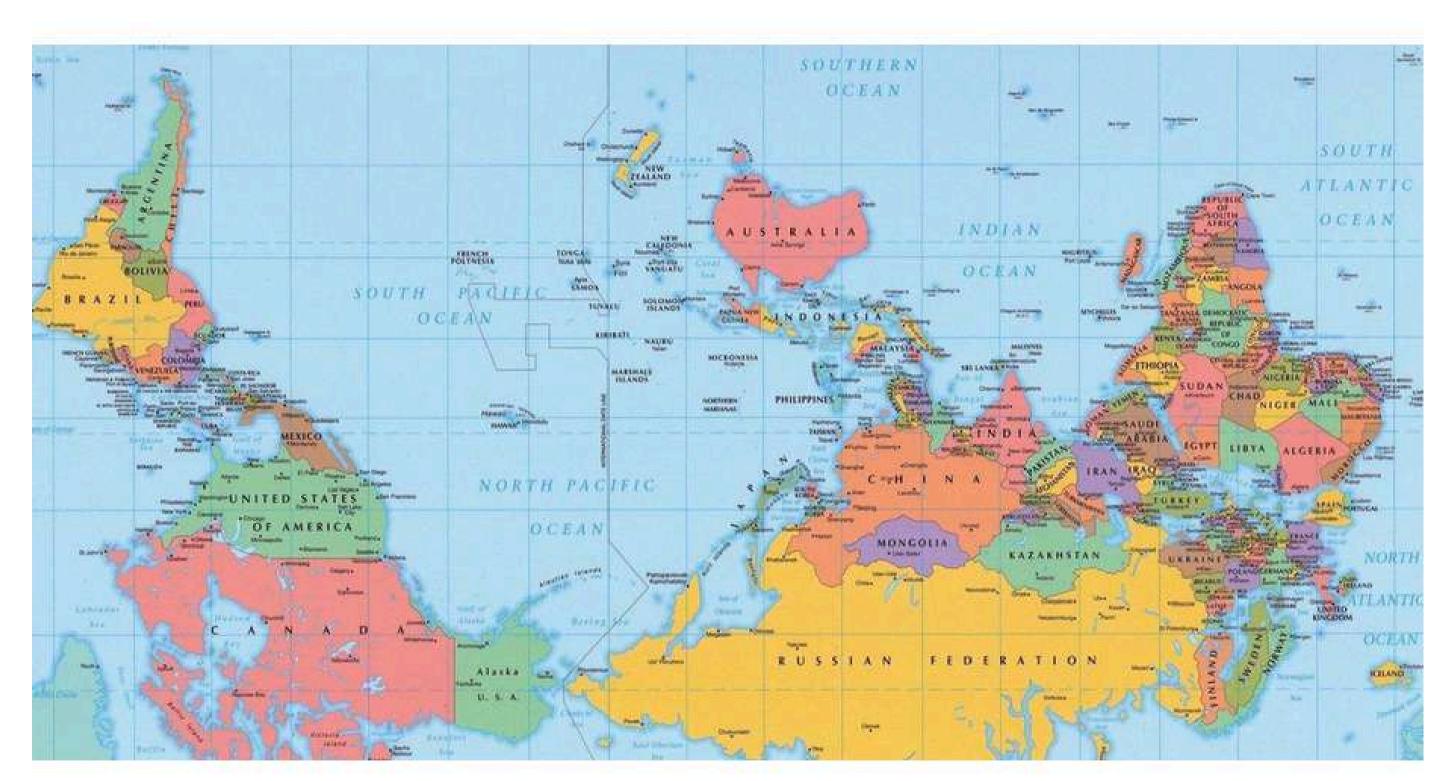




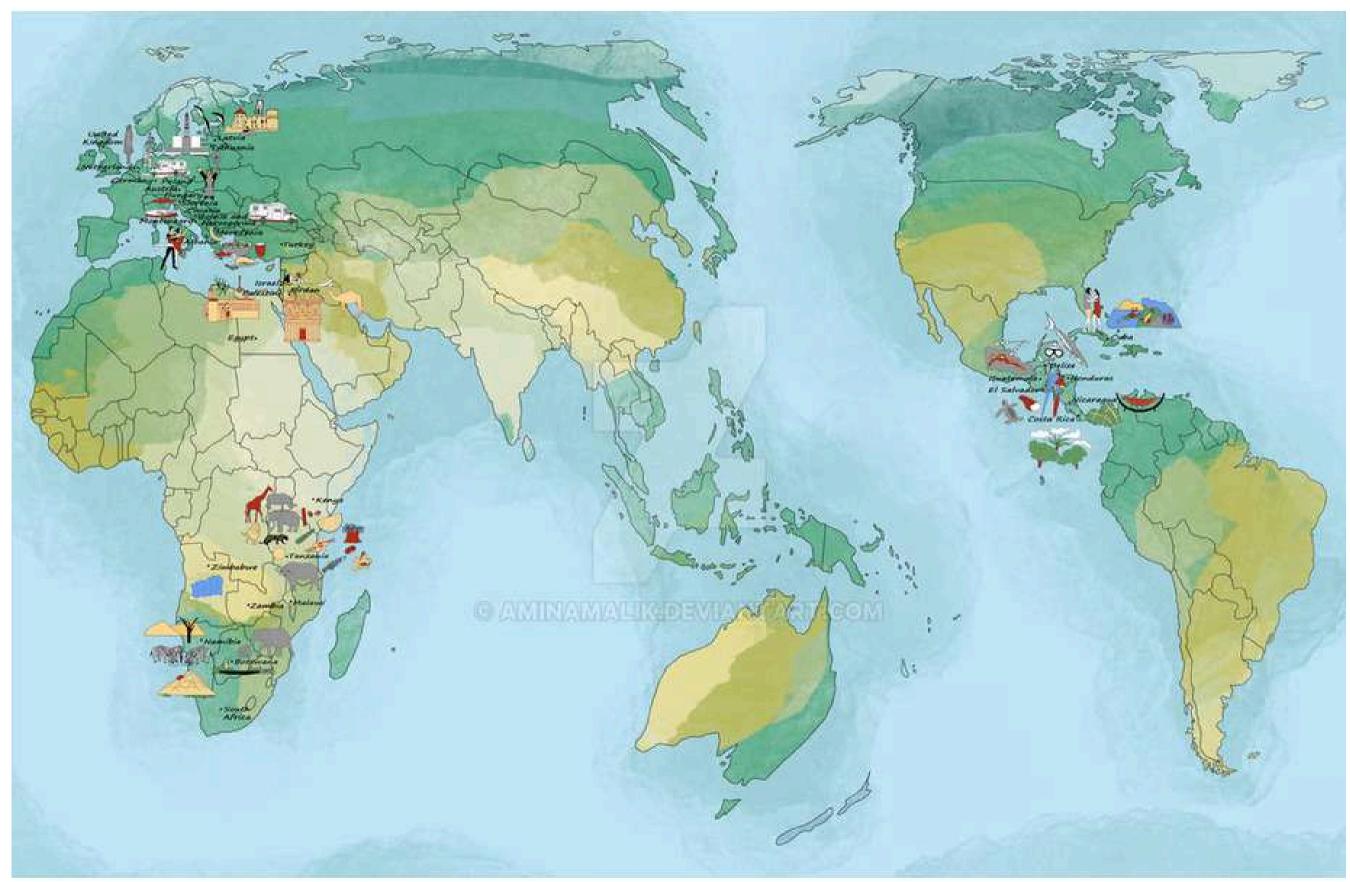




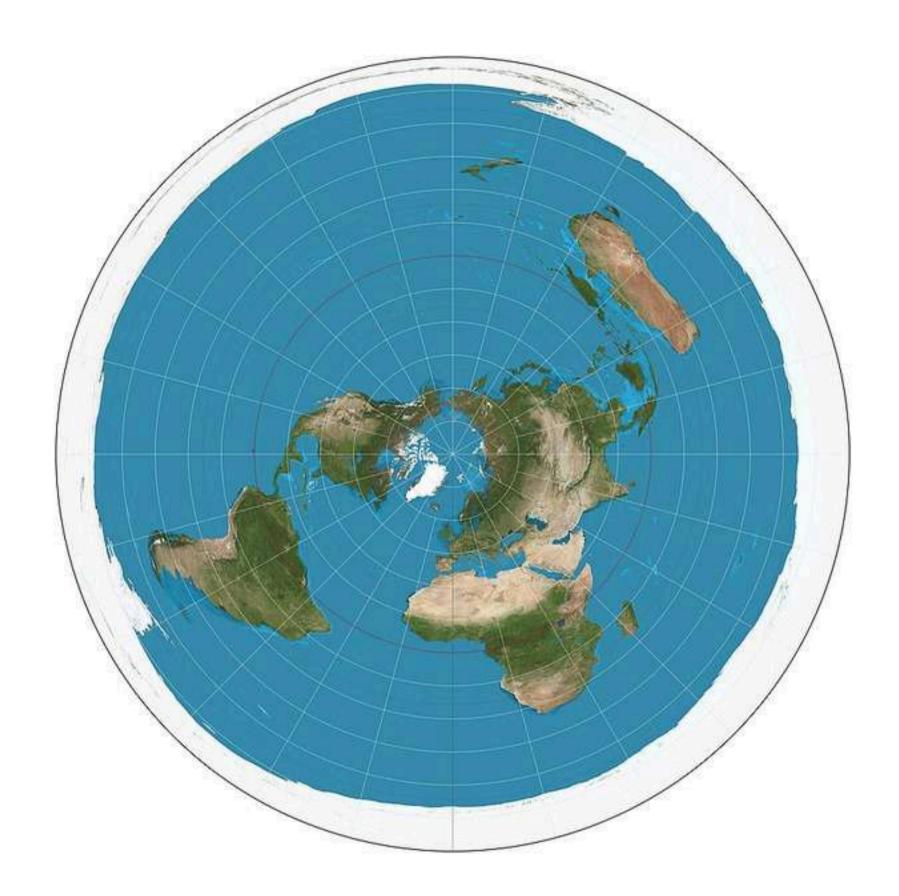










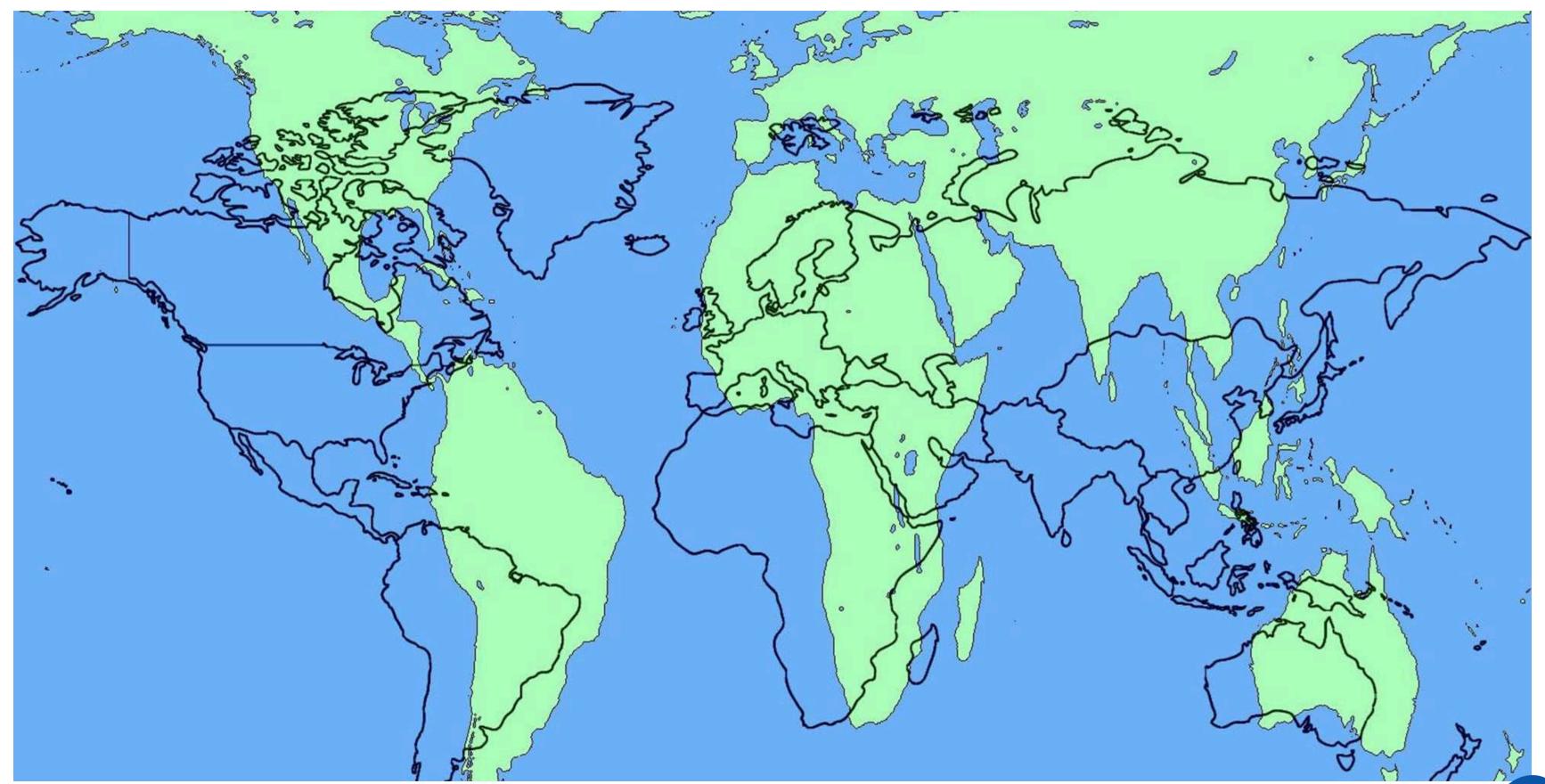














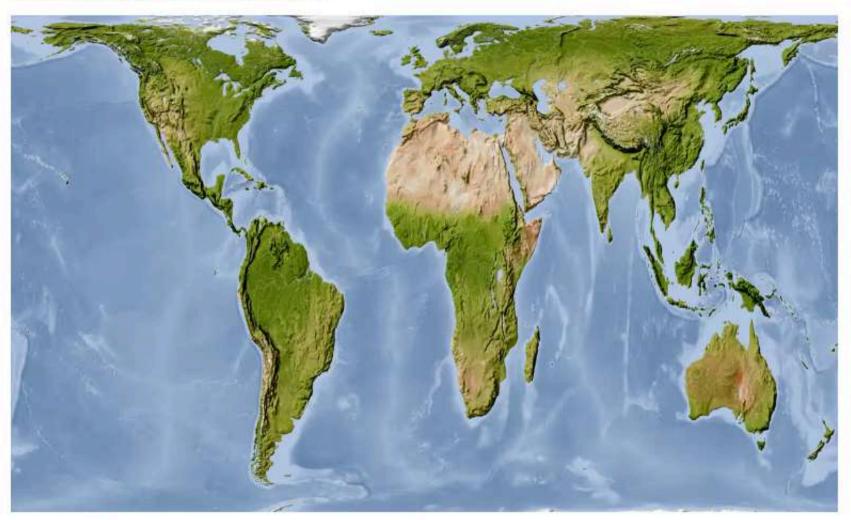
Explore: https://www.thetruesize.com

Eurocentrism and power

'(...) the Mercator projection had "fostered European imperialist attitudes for centuries", creating an "ethical bias" for "western civilization" against the developing world.'

Boston public schools map switch aims to amend 500 years of distortion

A district will drop the Mercator projection, which physically diminished Africa and South America, for the Peters, which cut the developed world down to size

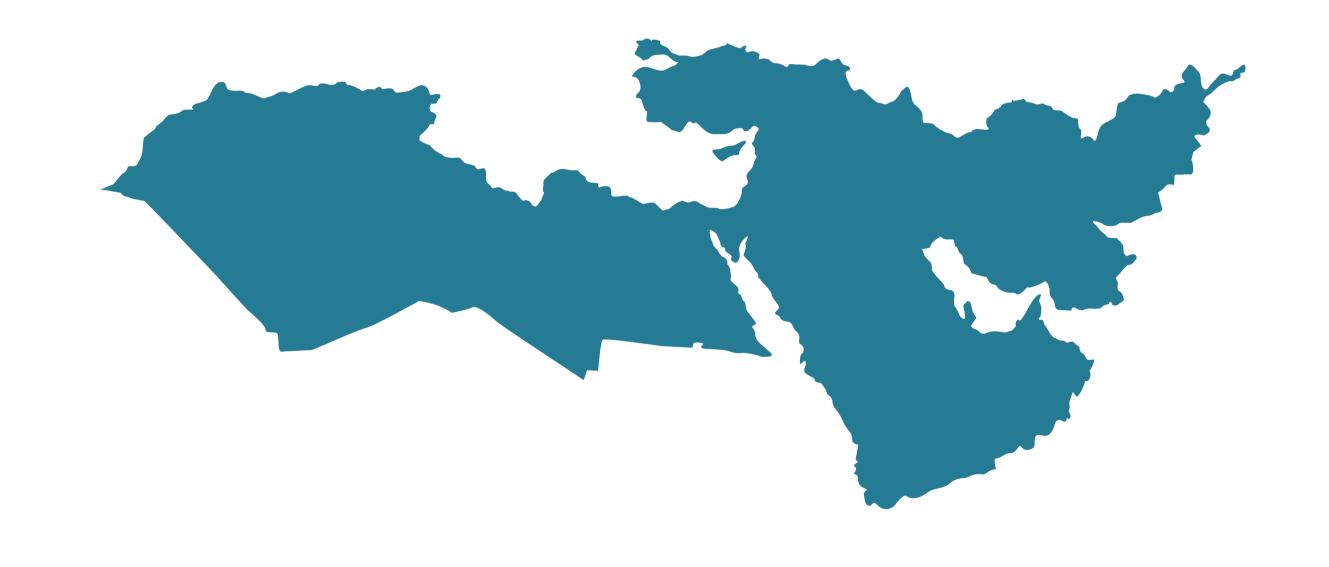


The Gall-Peters projection, which shows land masses in their correct proportions by area, puts the relative sizes of Africa and North America in perspective. Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo











Question Can you list examples of Eurocentrism (personal, educational, worldview, etc.)?



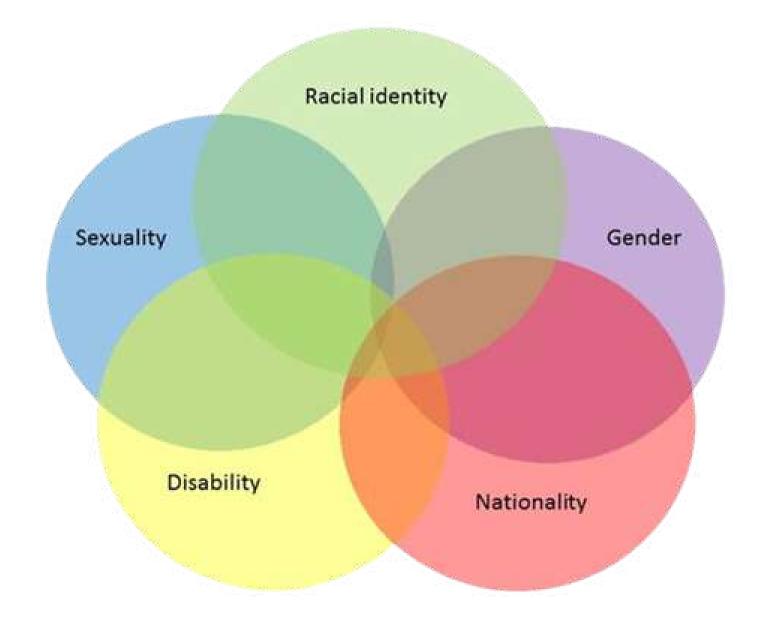


Positionality

What?

 Your position in society in a particular sociopolitical context





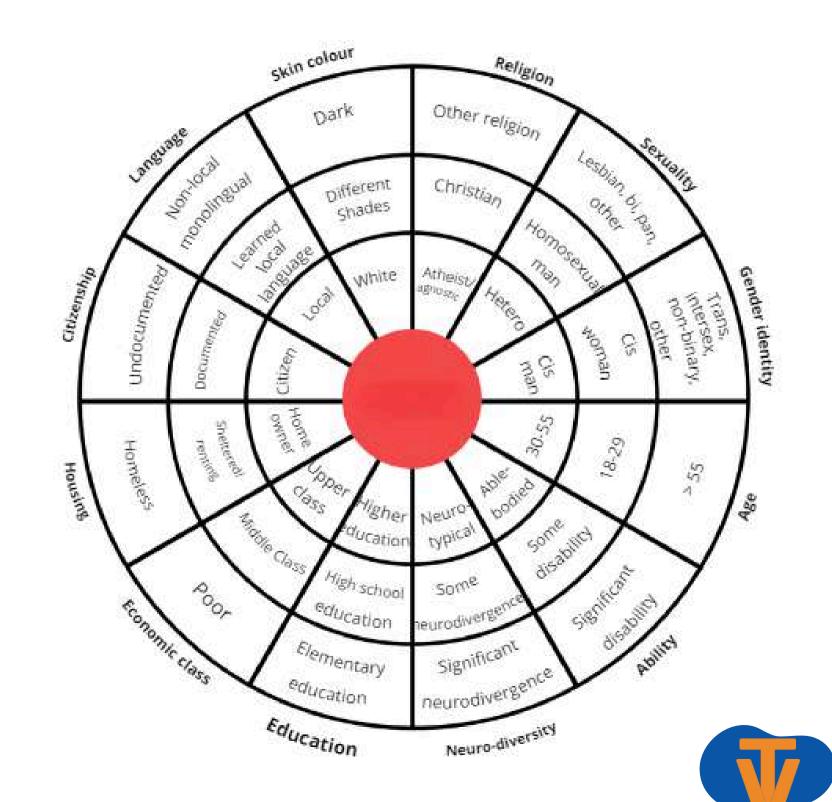
Starting point?

 Your identity facets define and color your view of the world

The wheel of power

- Multiple identity
- Discuss briefly with 2-3
 - What does your wheel look like?
 - What does the others' wheel look like? Compare. Does anything stand out?
- What is your conclusion?
- power wheel spectrum (!)

*cis: your gender identity matches your biological sex







Positionality = your view of the world



blind spots



Question

What do you think could be your blind spots in your work?

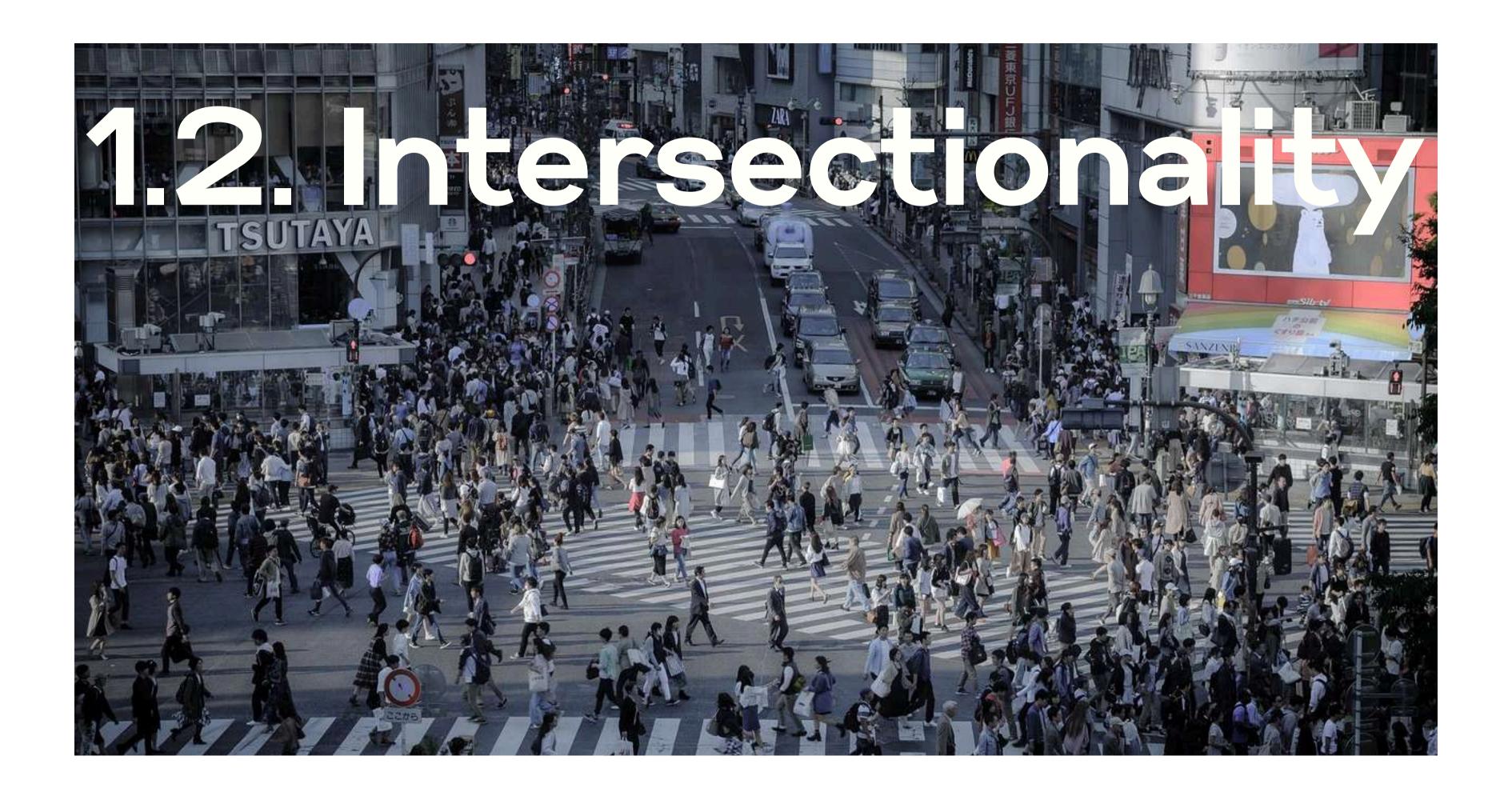






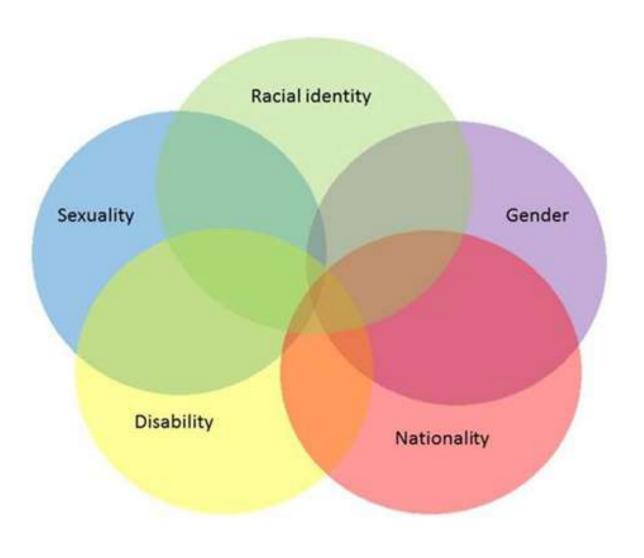
"We do not see things as they are we see things as we are"

Anaïs Nin - Seduction of the minotaur



Racism Seksism Classicism









Intersectionality



Kimberley Crenshaw

- = Social inequality occurs along multiple axes, intersecting
 - analytic lens for "race + x"
- Term coined by Kimberley Crenshaw in 1989
- Case: De Graffenreid v. General Motors
 - Discrimination against black women
 - Discrimination and oppression based on multiple factors

Question

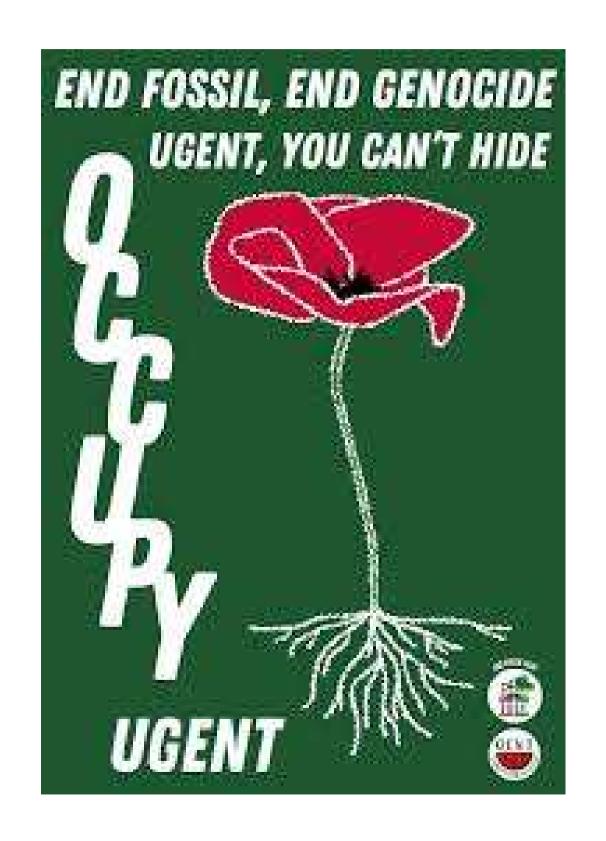
Can you recall examples of intersectional activism?





Intersectional partnerships







Key take-aways

- Regular check-ins with students
 - o How are they feeling?
 - How did their perspective on privileges and position change?
- Every student has a different experience





Objective 2. Power structures

Objective 2: To inform

After this session, you can:



Analyze the impact of positionality and power.



Recognize the colonial legacy in development cooperation.

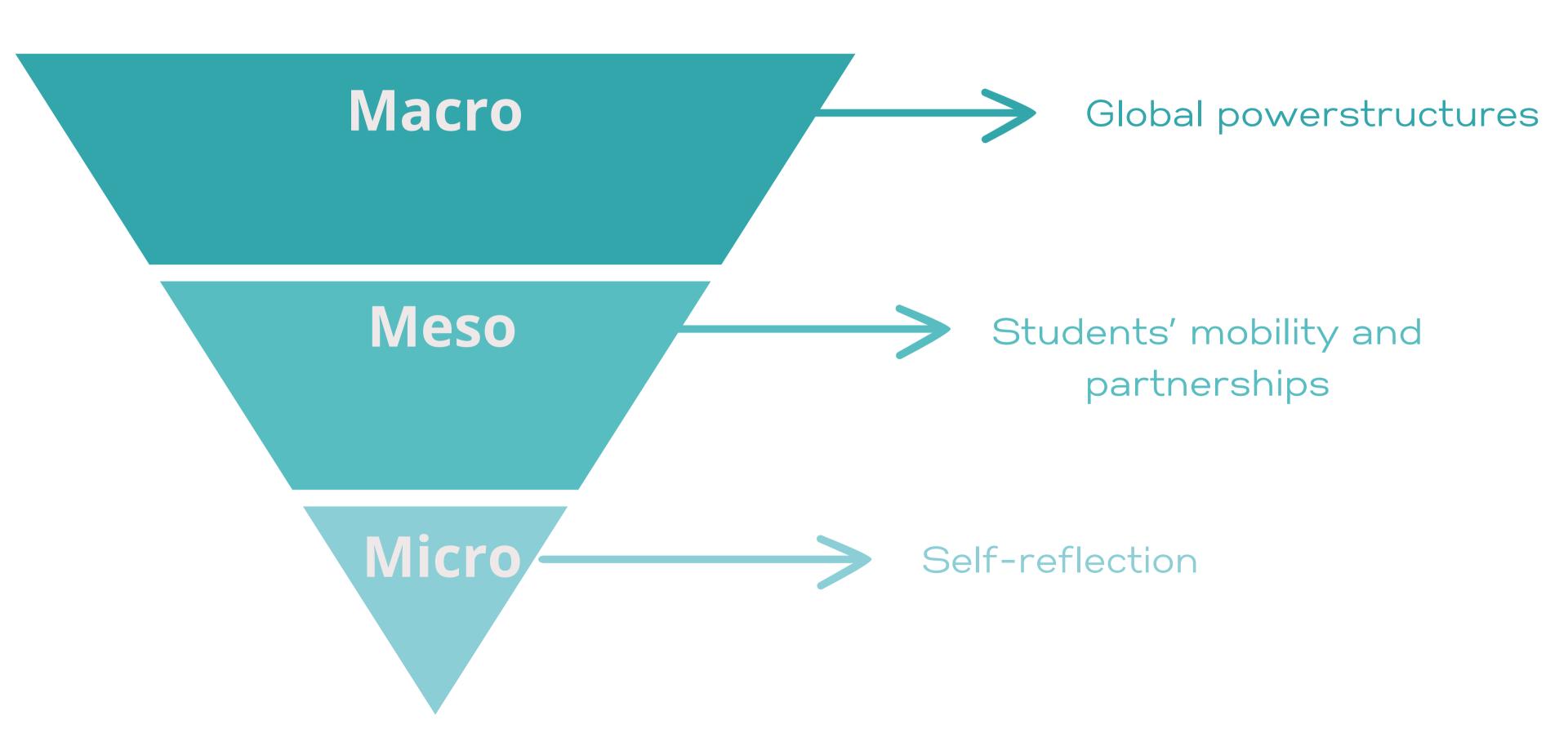


Explain intercultural concepts in practice.





Levels of influence



Question

Can you think of an example of different forms of racism?







Forms of racism

Subtle, often wellintentioned

prejudices, statements and words intended to hurt

physical violence and discrimination (punishable)



Pop-Quiz

Which countries did Belgium colonize?





Pop-Quiz

What does the date 1492 symbolize?





Pop-Quiz

What was the slave trade called between Africa, the Americas and Europa?





History of colonialism

The beginning of European expansion



1492: Christopher Columbus and the "discovery" of America

- symbolic date: Columbus Day
- beginning of European expansion



In search of raw materials and prestige



Silver and gold --> cotton and sugar in the New World

- need for cheap labor --> 'Transatlantic slave trade
- how: white supremacy and "civilizing mission"

Meer weten? The History of Racism - BBC documentary op youtube

History of colonialism

Colonisation of Africa, Asia and Oceania (18th-20th century)





Second phase of colonization



Expansion of influence:

European powers expanded their trading posts and controlled areas such as India, Indonesia, Australia and the Pacific Ocean



Berlin Conference (1884-1885): 'Scramble for Africa'



Racist theories: In Europe, racist theories emphasized the superiority of Europeans, which coincided with colonial expansion.







History of colonialism

The purpose of propaganda and pseudo-science



Need for legiti classification

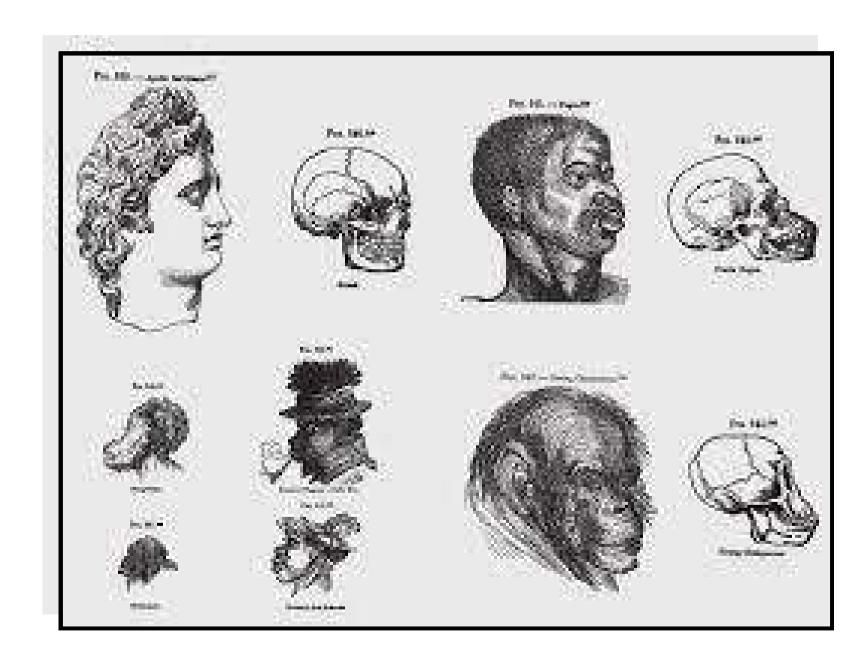
- The purpose of propaganda and pseudo-science
- Social darwinism
- Civilized vs primitive



NO biological ground for 'different' human races (!)



Race as a social construct







Tintin in Africa















Social darwinism 19th-20th century





Pop-Quiz

Can you think of examples of dehumanization?







Dehumanization -

The role of propaganda

- The use of language in the media
 - Israeli's are killed (active)
 - Palestinians die (passive)
 - Conflict? War?
 - Antisemitism <> antizionism



Explosion Gazans Say Was Airstrike Leaves Many Casualties in Dense Neighborhood

14,9K Vind-ik-leuks

417 Bladwijzers

Dozens were taken to nearby Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, where a photographer for The New York Times saw the injured crowding the hallways and the lifeless being prepared for burial.





8.026 Reposts



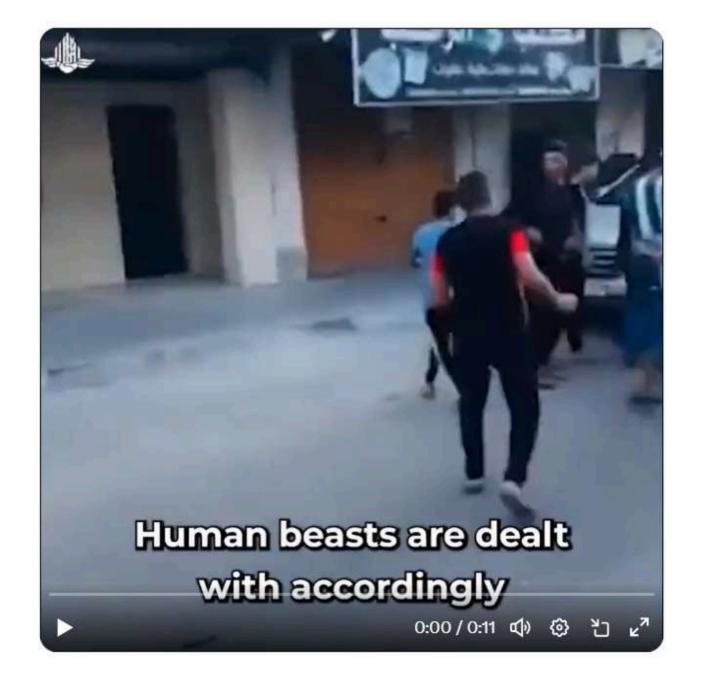
356 Geciteerd





The role of propaganda

-> Which purpose does it fulfill?





Besides Palestinians, who else was called "human animals"?

Native Americans
Enslaved Africans
Indigenous Canadians
Aborigines
Algerians
Jews circa WW2
Black South Africans
Afghans
Tutsis
Bosnian Muslims
Rohingya Muslims
and more...

Genocidal rhetoric is rooted in Racial dehumanisation

"Slavery was not born of racism: rather, racism was the consequence of slavery"

Eric Williams - Capitalism and Slavery (1944, p.10).





Racism

- What is racism according to you?
- Racism # ethnic discrimination
- Racism # xenofobia
 - white racism # black/POC bias
 - neither starts from the same position of power





Racisme = prejudice + power











Racism & POWER & exclusion

Different forms of racism?(culture-coded)



- Race' coded as 'culture' or 'religion'
 - More enduring? More difficult to refute with exact science (i.e. biology, genetics)





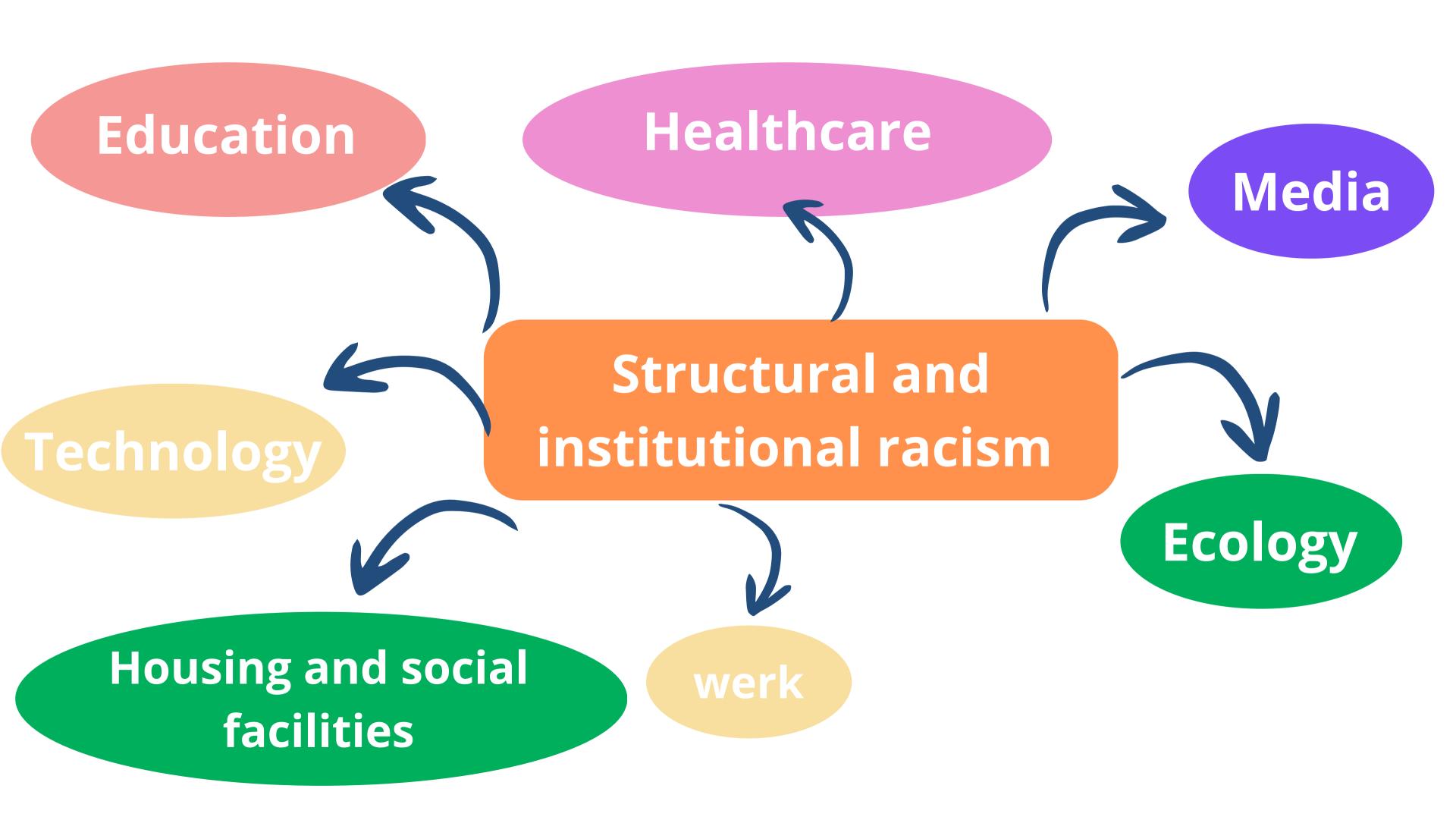
The levels of racism

structural

institutional

interpersonal

individual/ internalized



Question

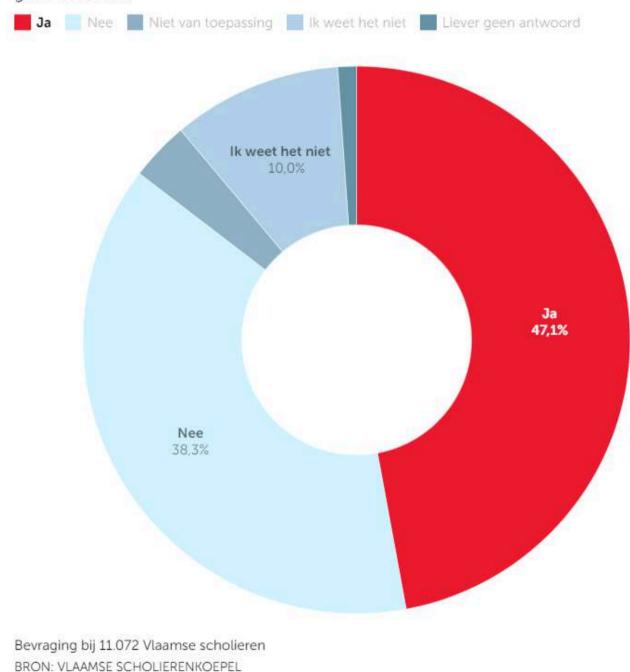
In what ways do you think that racism manifests in education and international collaboration?

Institutional racism - education

Eén op de vijf Vlaamse leerlingen in het secundair onderwijs was al eens slachtoffer van racisme op school. Eén op twee was er getuige van. Dat blijkt uit een bevraging van de Vlaamse Scholierenkoepel.

Bijna 1 op de 2 scholieren (47%) zegt dat die in het middelbaar ooit al getuige is geweest van racisme op school

38% is nog nooit getuige geweest van racisme op de middelbare school. Op 4% van de bevraagde scholieren is deze vraag niet van toepassing. 10% weet het niet en 1% geeft liever geen antwoord.



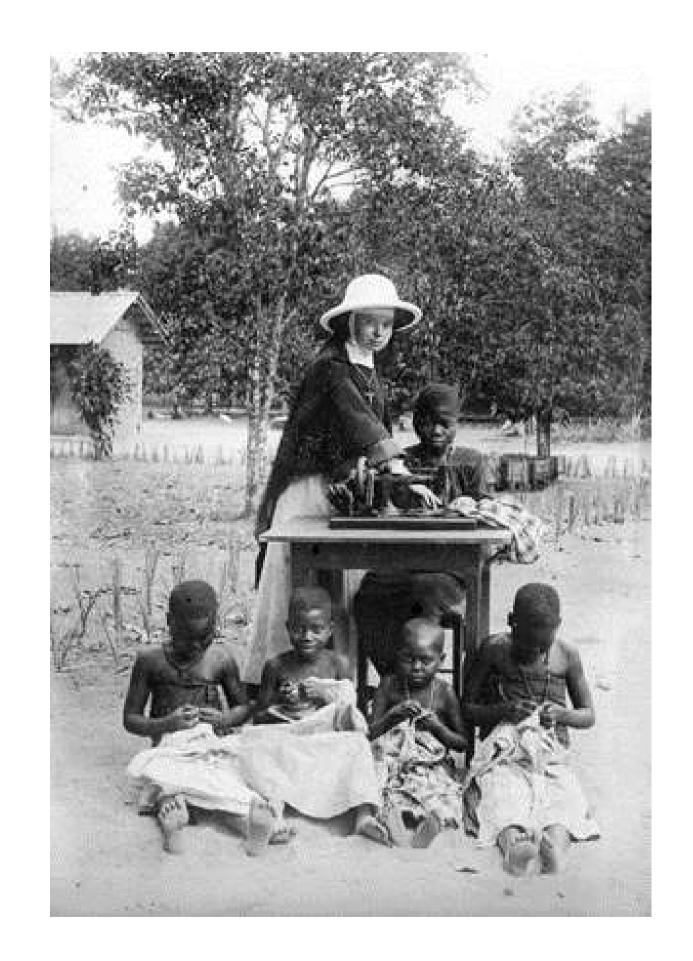
Source: Vlaamse scholierenkoepel rapport (2023) and <u>De Morgen</u>

Statement

"International exchange programs are made with good intentions, so it's not racism."

Good intentions





PLEASE SUPPORT THUSE CARDONS AT WWW.PATREON.COM/BARRY



Statement

"I don't see color, for me everyone is equal."

Statement

"Students benefit more than the local communities they visit."

Key take-aways

- Racism exists in every structure
 - How does that translate in your partnership?
 - How does it influence the experience of the student?
- No colour-blindness in student guidance
- The context of the partner country/institution





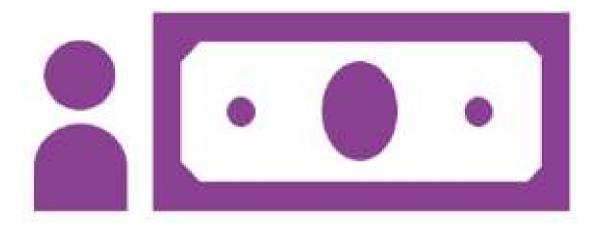




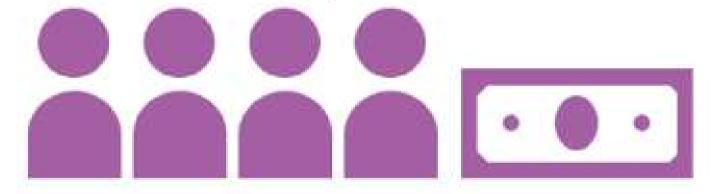




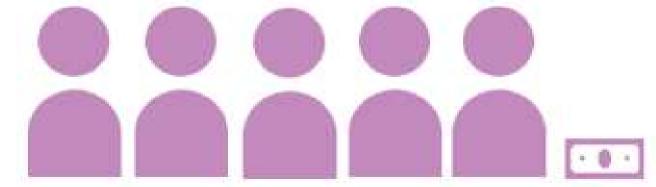
The richest 10% of people own 76% of wealth.



The middle 40% of people own 22% of wealth.



The poorest 50% of people own 2% of wealth.





Question Where do you belong?





a net worth of 85,000 euros
makes you richer than 90
percent of the world's
population





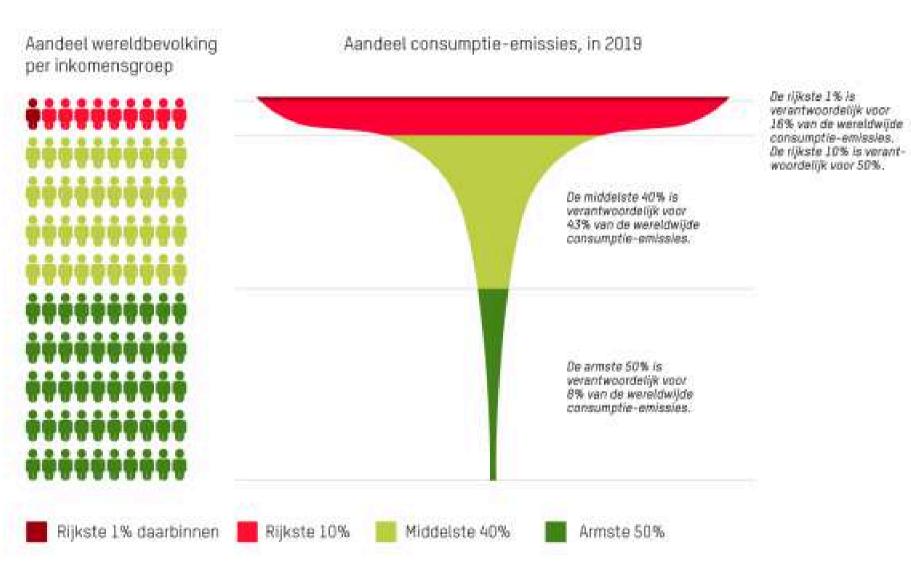
Rich countries drained \$152tn from the global South since 1960

Imperialism never ended, it just changed form.

bron: AlJazeera

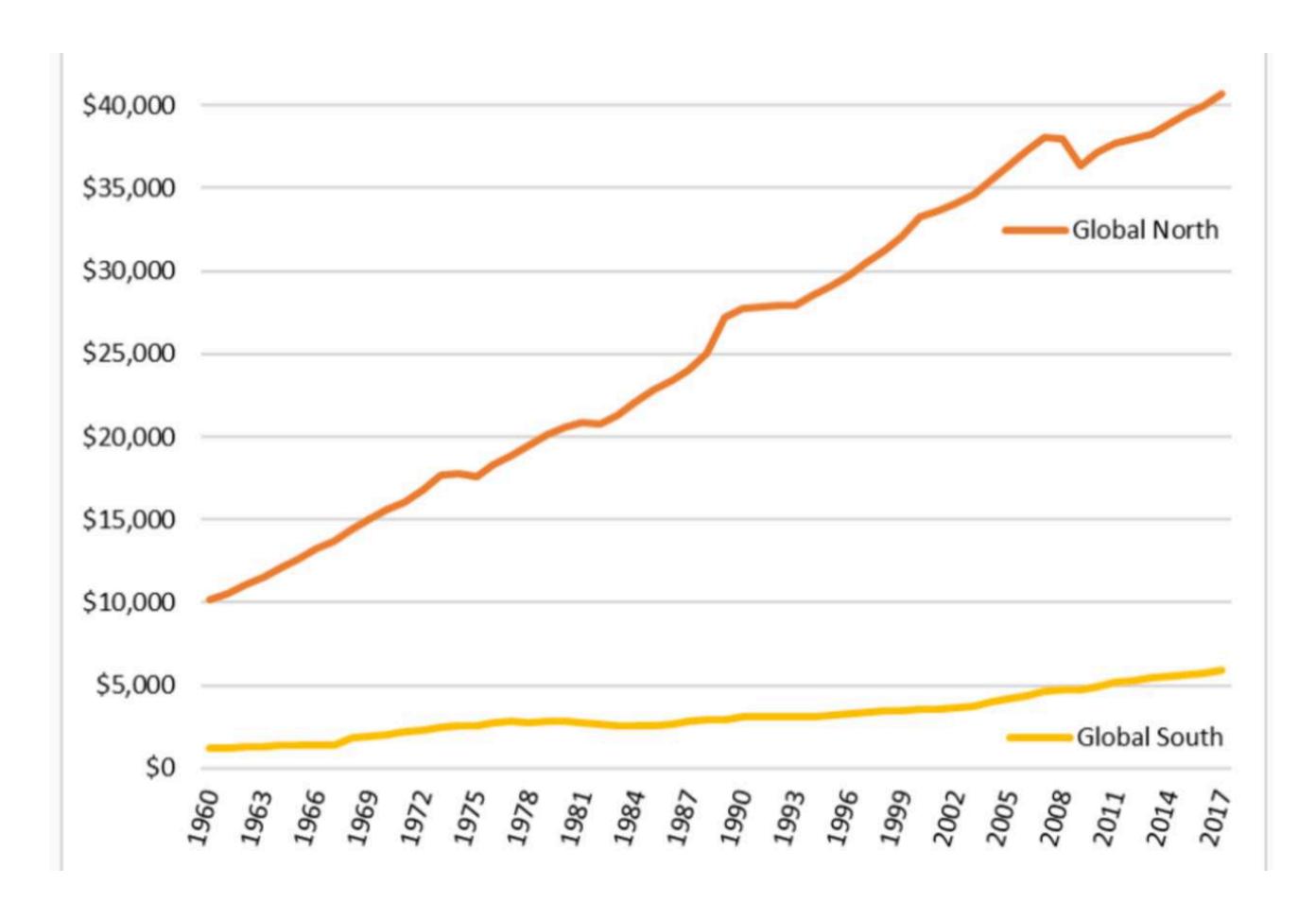
UNIVERSITAIR CENTRUM VOOR

CONSUMPTIE-EMISSIES PER INKOMENSGROEP IN 2019 (WERELD)



Figuur 2. De consumptie door de rijkste 10% van de wereld veroorzaakt de helft van alle wereldwijde CO₂. De armste 50% van de wereld veroorzaakt slechts 8% van de wereldwijde emissies. Bron: Oxfam, SFL³⁴

bron: Oxfam 2023



Hickel, J. (2023, 15 januari). How not to measure inequality. Geraadpleegd op 19 augustus 2024,

The role of neocolonialism





Question

 Why do we organize international "exchange" programs to the Global South?

What is the added value of internationalization for EHB?

What is the added value of your stay for the host country?





Global South Exchanges

- Brings people together from different contexts
- Strengthens global partnerships and awareness
- Unique learning contexts
- Personal growth



- Assymetric power relations between partners
- Western desire for help?
 --> White Saviors
- Attitudes of superiority
 - Western models of knowledge

Starting points

Departure to the "Global South" is problematic

- <u>EU-objective 2030: 23% international experience</u>
- Colonial inheritance

Unequal power structures

- Unequal distribution of benefits
- Reinforcement of stereotypes
- Which students are allowed on internships?



Exchange

Visumvrijstellingen met een Belgisch paspoort











Met een Belgisch paspoort kunt u 183 landen vrij binnen (en 7 andere weetjes over het bordeaux boekje)

Met een Belgisch paspoort kunt u momenteel vrij en zonder visum naar 183 landen reizen. Dat blijkt uit de jongste editie van de zogenoemde Henley Passport Index. Ons land staat daarmee op een 6e plek op de wereldranglijst.





Key take-aways

- Long-term impact of the partnership/ internationalization project
 - How does it benefit the partner country?
- The neocolonial context of internationalization





Objective 3: Student mobility and internationalization



Objective 3: To change

After this session, you can:



Apply intercultural skills in collaboration.



Design practical tools to assist students leaving for abroad guidance.



Develop action items to reduce power and ethnocentrism.

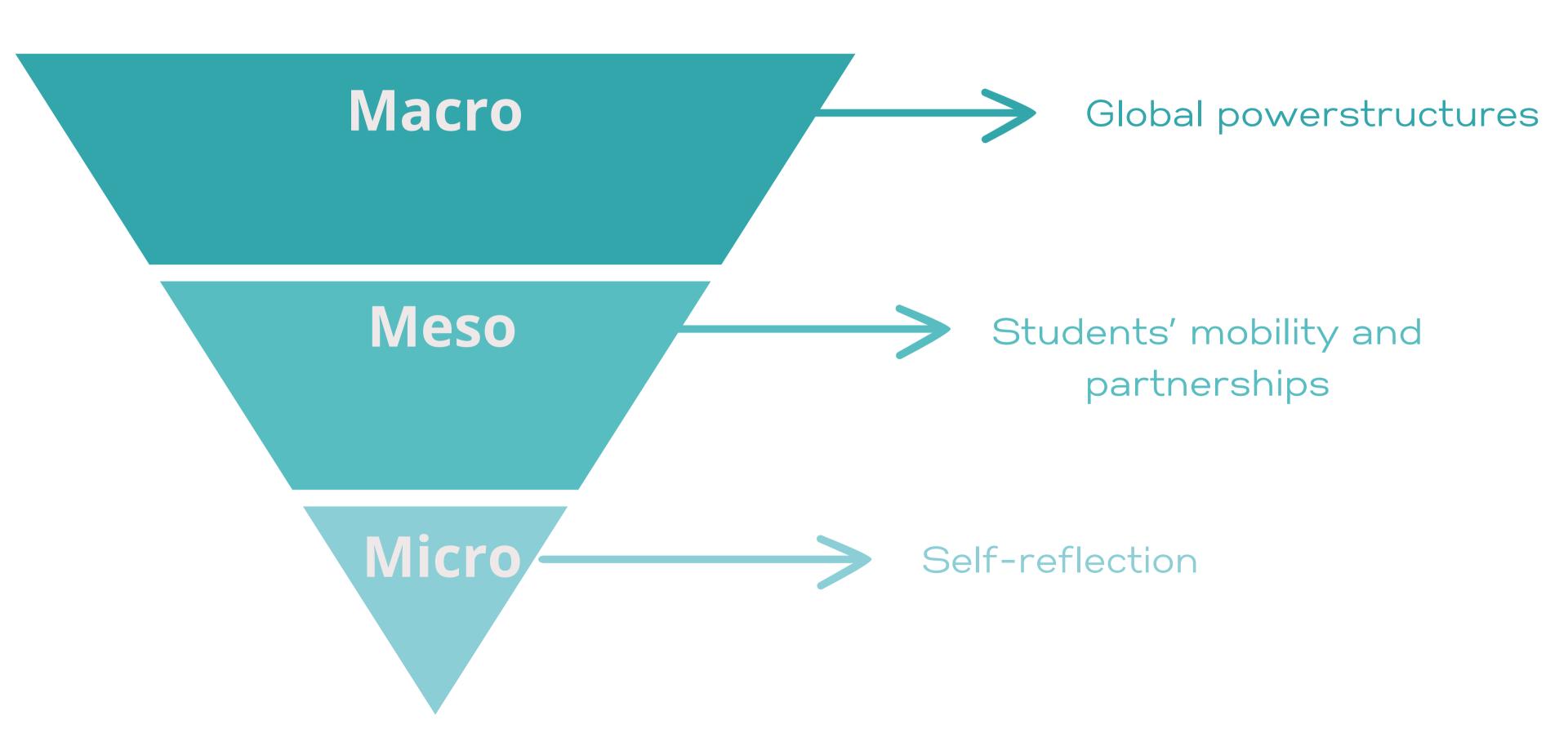


Implement intersectional thinking in project development.





Levels of influence



MEANINGFUL NORTH-SOUTH STUDENT MOBILITY

A resource guide



RELEVANTE STAGES VOOR HET GLOBALE ZUIDEN

Op weg naar een visie voor de 21e eeuw



Case 1

You are a student counselor supporting a group of Belgian students participating in a joint environmental sustainability project with a Vietnamese university. The project focuses on promoting recycling within local Vietnamese communities through co-created, culturally relevant solutions.

During your guidance, Belgian students express frustration because their technology-heavy solutions are not embraced by the Vietnamese team, who emphasize affordable, locally appropriate methods. The Belgian students feel their expertise is undervalued, while the Vietnamese team perceives an imbalance in decision-making.

Case 2

You are supporting a Belgian student studying in Uganda who is experiencing culture shock. They are upset after seeing a goat tied up without food or water, only to learn it is part of preparations for a traditional celebration. The student struggles to understand or feel at ease in this context.

Case 3

As a student counselor, you are contacted by James, a Black student interning in Ecuador. James shares that he has faced discriminatory remarks from peers and has been excluded from social activities. He feels isolated and questions whether to continue the internship. You are faced with the difficult task to:

- 1. Provide comfort and validate James's concerns, while guiding him through this difficult experience.
- 2. Maintain a professional partnership with the host institute, ensuring your approach doesn't undermine James's experiences.
- 3. Address the discrimination diplomatically, fostering dialogue to create a more inclusive environment.

How will you approach this situation?

Objective

Transcending the understanding of cultures

- Transcending the understanding of cultures
- Being aware of your positionality
- You will not always understand everything, cannot and therefore are not meant to
- Defer judgment:
 - Observe Describe Interpret
- Always with respect and acceptance, even if you do not fully understand

Key take-aways

Student guidance is more than just a check-in.

 How to create a meaningful and impactful connection with students and partner country.

How to put experiences in context.





Objective 4: To create dialogue



Objective 4: To communicate

After this session, you can:



Actively participate in a dialogue about power and positionality.



Create a common language around inclusion and power.



Create a safer space for colleagues and students in international

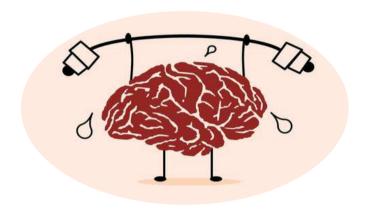
mobility.





Language

= Conscious handling of words/images. Try to avoid words/images with colonial undertones that were used to marginalize populations.



= Examining and challenging your way of thinking and preconceptions. Rediscover and revalue local knowledge.

Idea



Practice

= Recognize and modify unconsciously harmful behaviors. Ensuring that actions and interventions are inclusive and empowering, led by local voices.





Statement

"I am allowed to criticize the work of my colleagues."





Statement

"I am allowed to criticize the culture of the partner country."





Practice

How to:



Promote dignity



Continue to learn and reflect



Question your intention(s)



Use regular check-ins

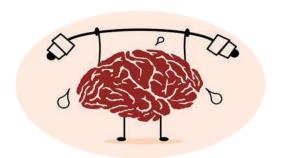


Buddy System with Racial Considerations
 Get involved in activist initiatives





Idea





Acknowledge colonial history and its impact on the present



Listen actively and open yourself to vulnerability



Practice solidarity, not 'salvation'

Focus on the agency of your partner/ or student



Work together for collective responsibility

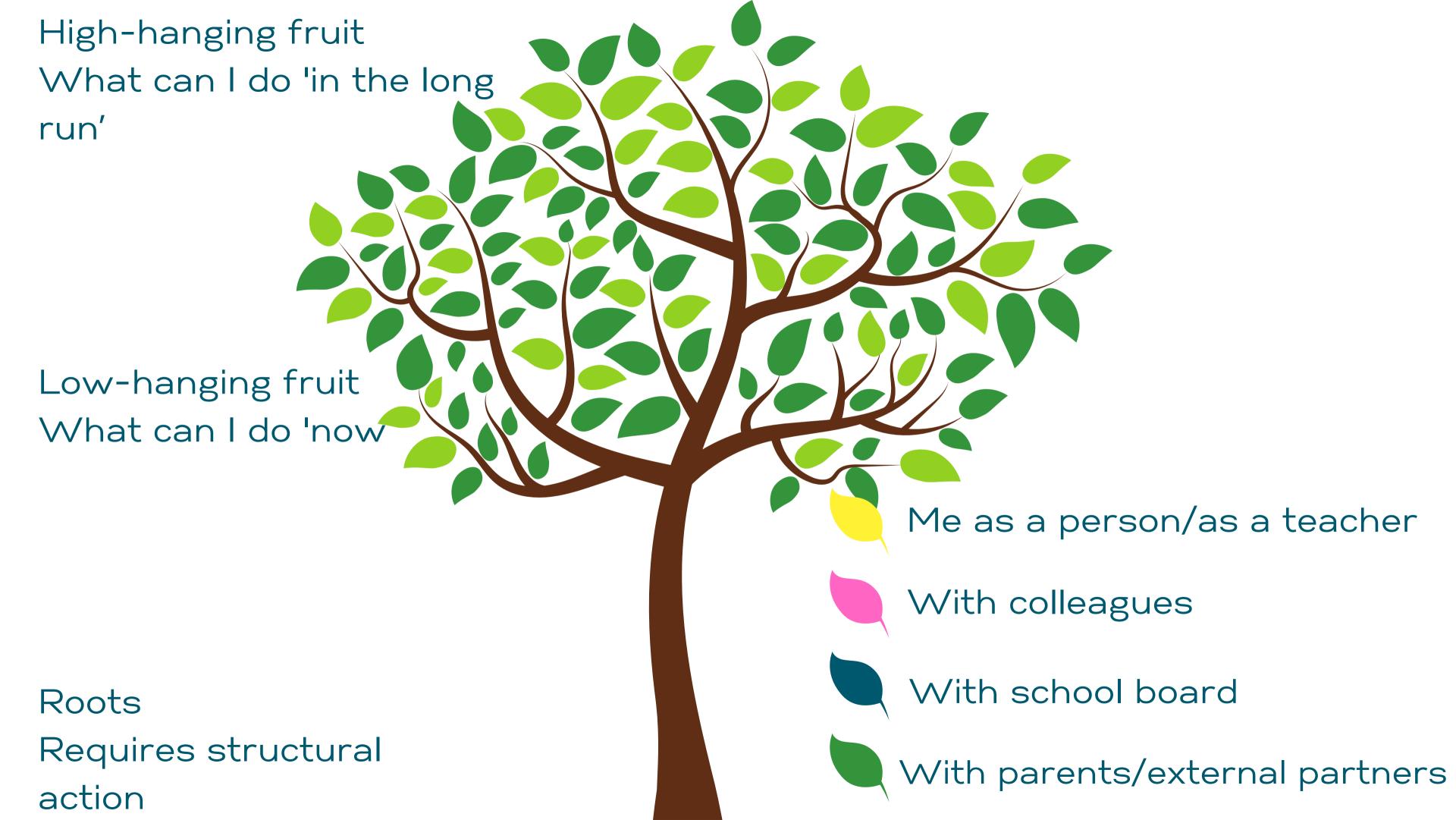


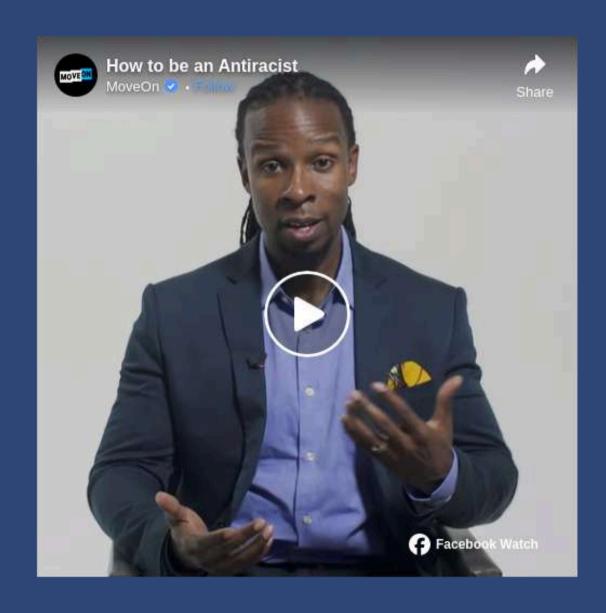
Question

How can you promote just and more equal practices in student mobility?







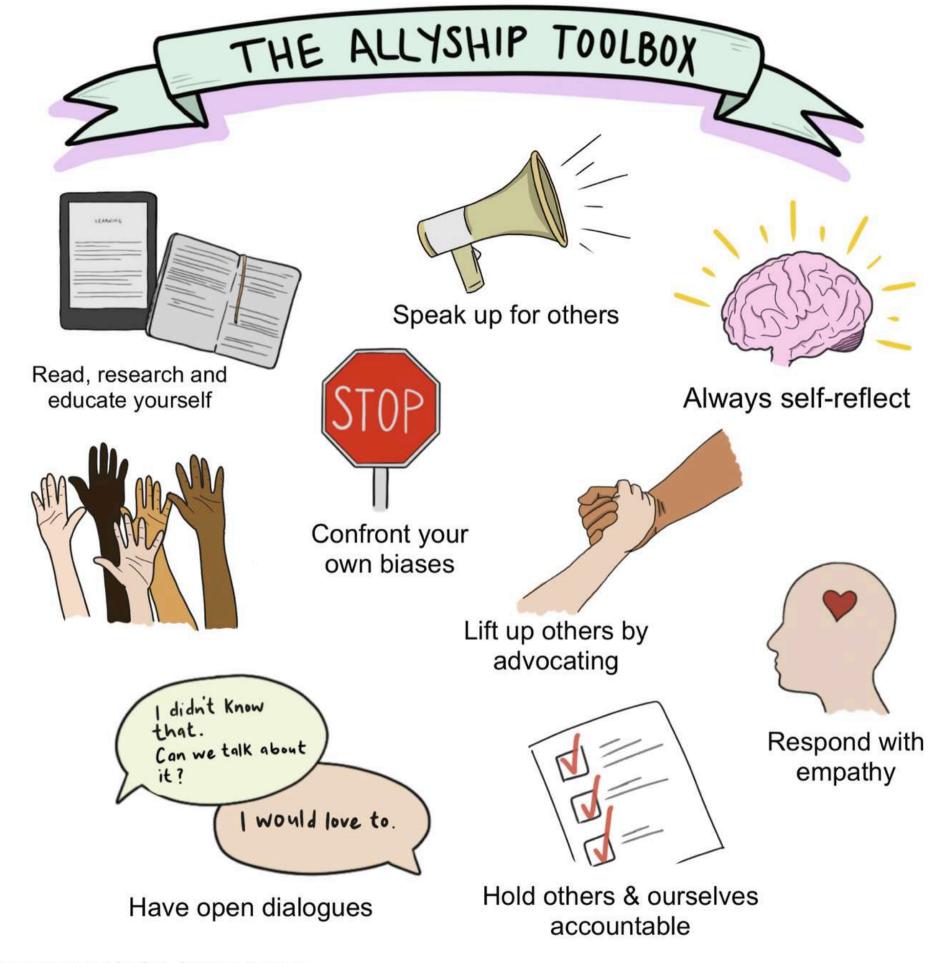




How to be an Antiracist











Language



- ?
- Ask questions, not assumptions
 - Connection



Challenge neutrality

- Avoid labeling Western frameworks as "universal" or "standard."
- Highlight diverse intellectual traditions and local knowledge.



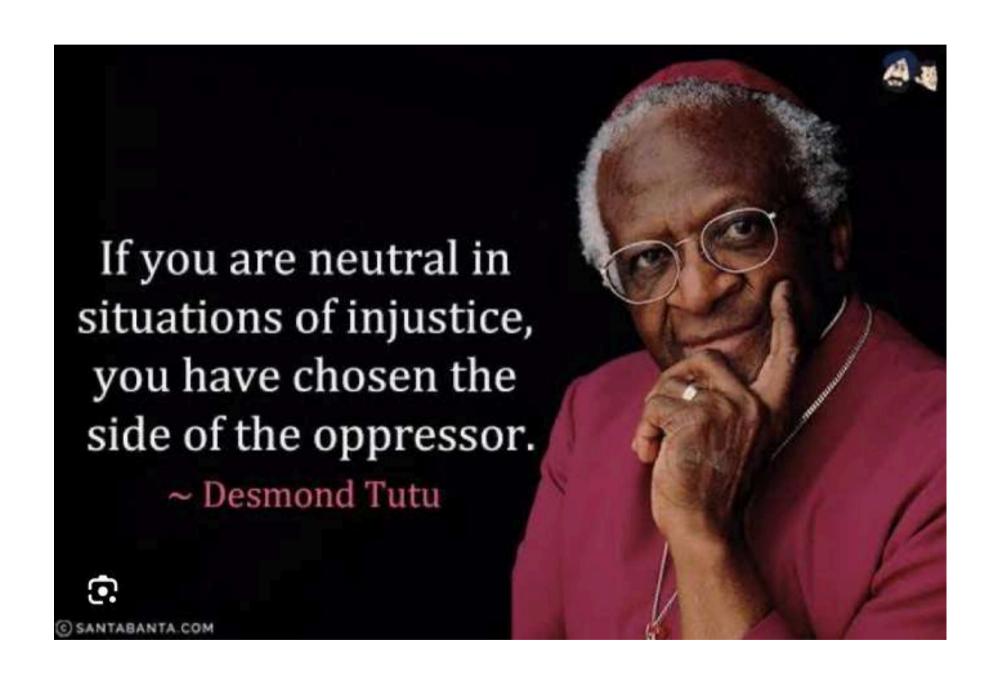
Facilitate feedback





Toward justice







Toward anti-racism

- Learn more about your own privileges
- Check the language you use in conversations
- Look critically at media channels
- Which people do you follow on social media?
- Who is speaking up and how?
- Talk to friends and family about this without attacking people
- Connecting communication
- Make choices: where do you put your energy?
- Speak out!



Key take-aways

- The need to be anti-racist in an international partnership.
- To be open-minded in a discussion.
- How to create an equal and just partnership.
- How to learn from each other.





Toos

- HEADS UP Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures
- The Sherwood Way Decolonizing NGO's
- <u>The Pledge for Change 2030</u> re-imagines the role of INGOs in the global humanitarian and development aid system.



Conclusion

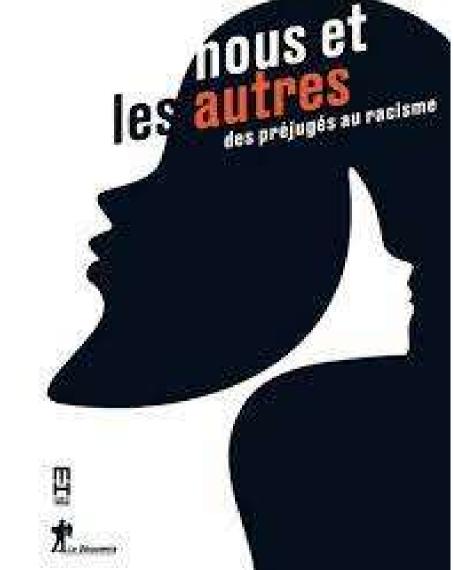
- Awareness of your own position in society → frame of reference
- Awareness of valuable encounters

Sensitive topics: racism and poverty

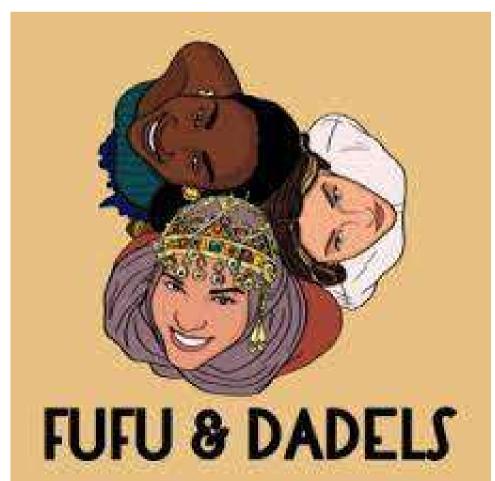
Growth can only be achieved by getting out of your comfort

















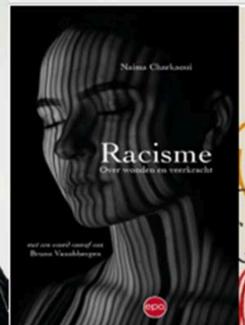
Books

withuiswerk.nl



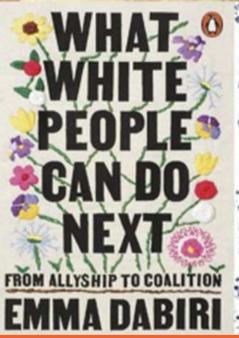


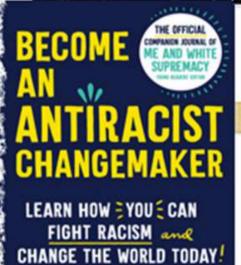


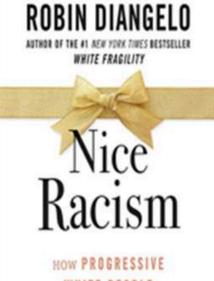




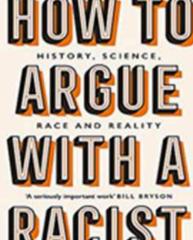








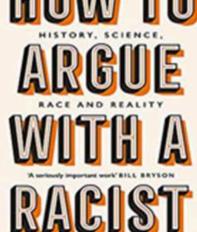
WHITE PEOPLE PERPETUATE RACIAL HARM

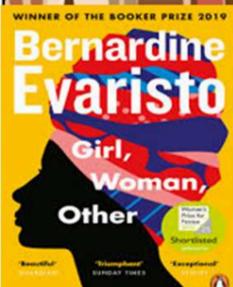








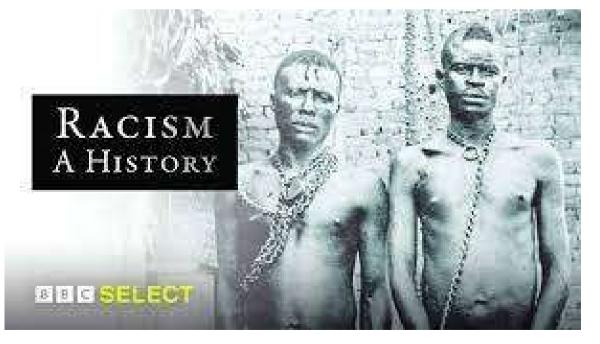




Shows and documentaries





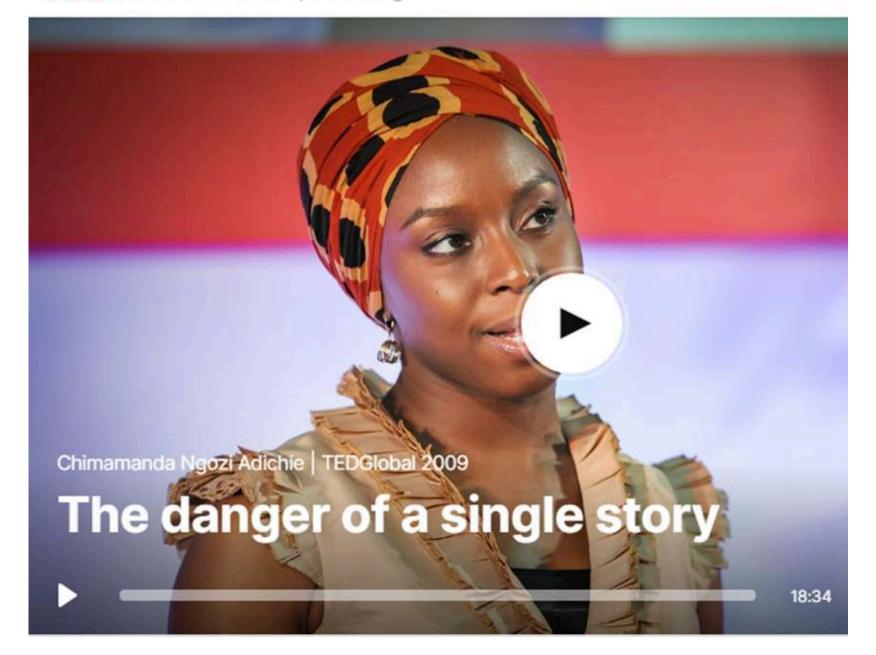






TED Talks

TED Ideas worth spreading







White Men: Time to Discover Your Cultural Blind Spots | Michael Welp TEDxBend

"I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."



~ Maya Angelou

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