



Royal
Geographical
Society
with IBG



RGS with IBG Lecture:

WHO AM I?

Exploring personal geographies

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Introduction:

- Iram Sammar
- Education Consultant
- Founder of Salaam Geographia
- Speaker and writer
- Geography Teacher
- PhD Student, King's College London, Department of Geography with Social Science and Public Policy

Contents



1. How can geography teachers connect with their students?
 - Personal geographies through 'Who am I?'.
• Geography Mentors and the Geography for All Project
• Impact it has already had on students and teachers.
2. How can you become an anti-racist educator?
 - Being heard, seen and included, as advocated by authors such as Aisha Thomas and Jeffrey Boakye.
• Decoloniality
3. Ecstatic Responsive Cognition (ERC)
 - More about my PhD research
• Pedagogical approach to engaging and impacting learners.

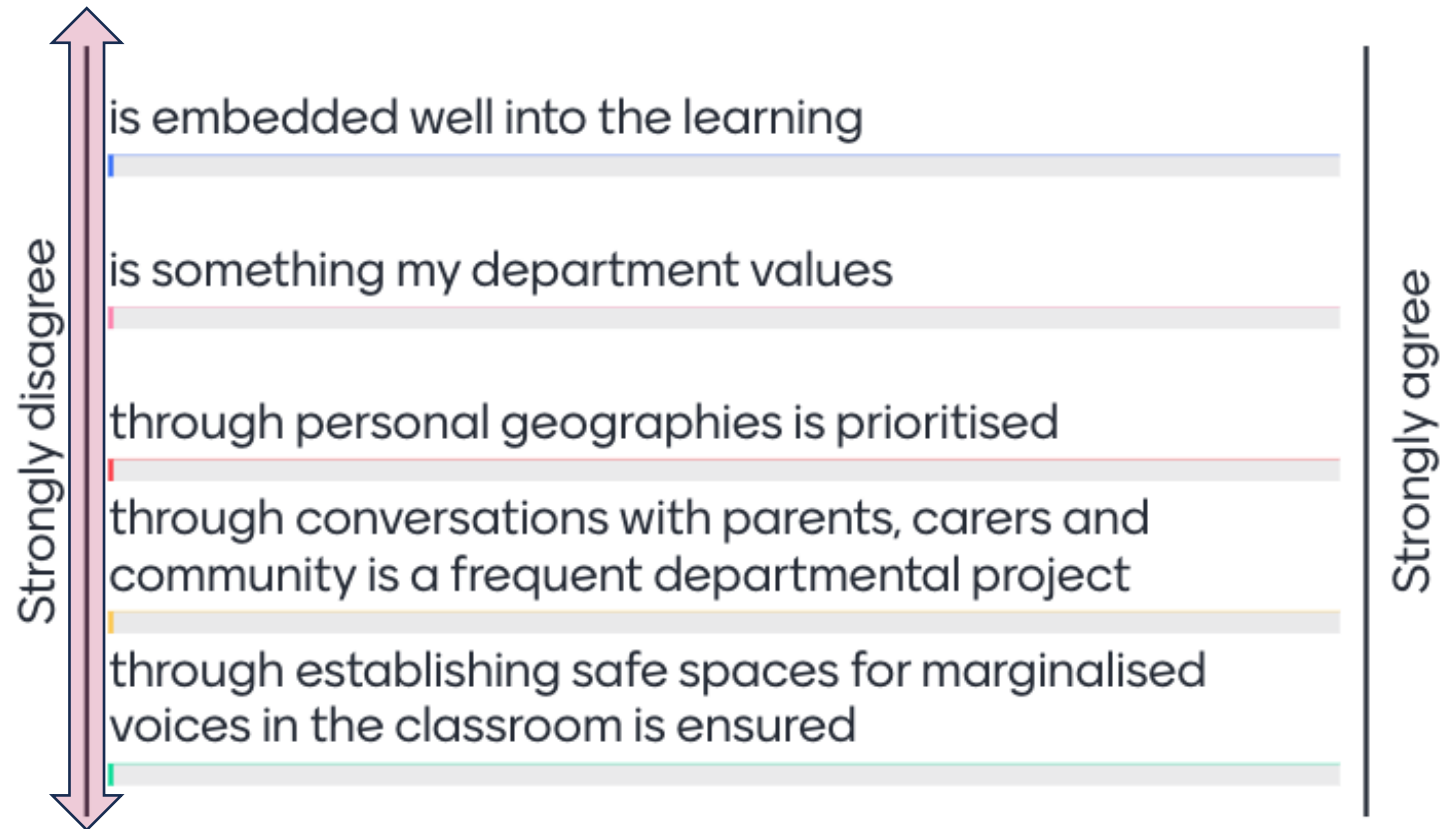
1. How can geography teachers connect with their students?

**What do you do in your
classrooms?**

How does your geography department operate?



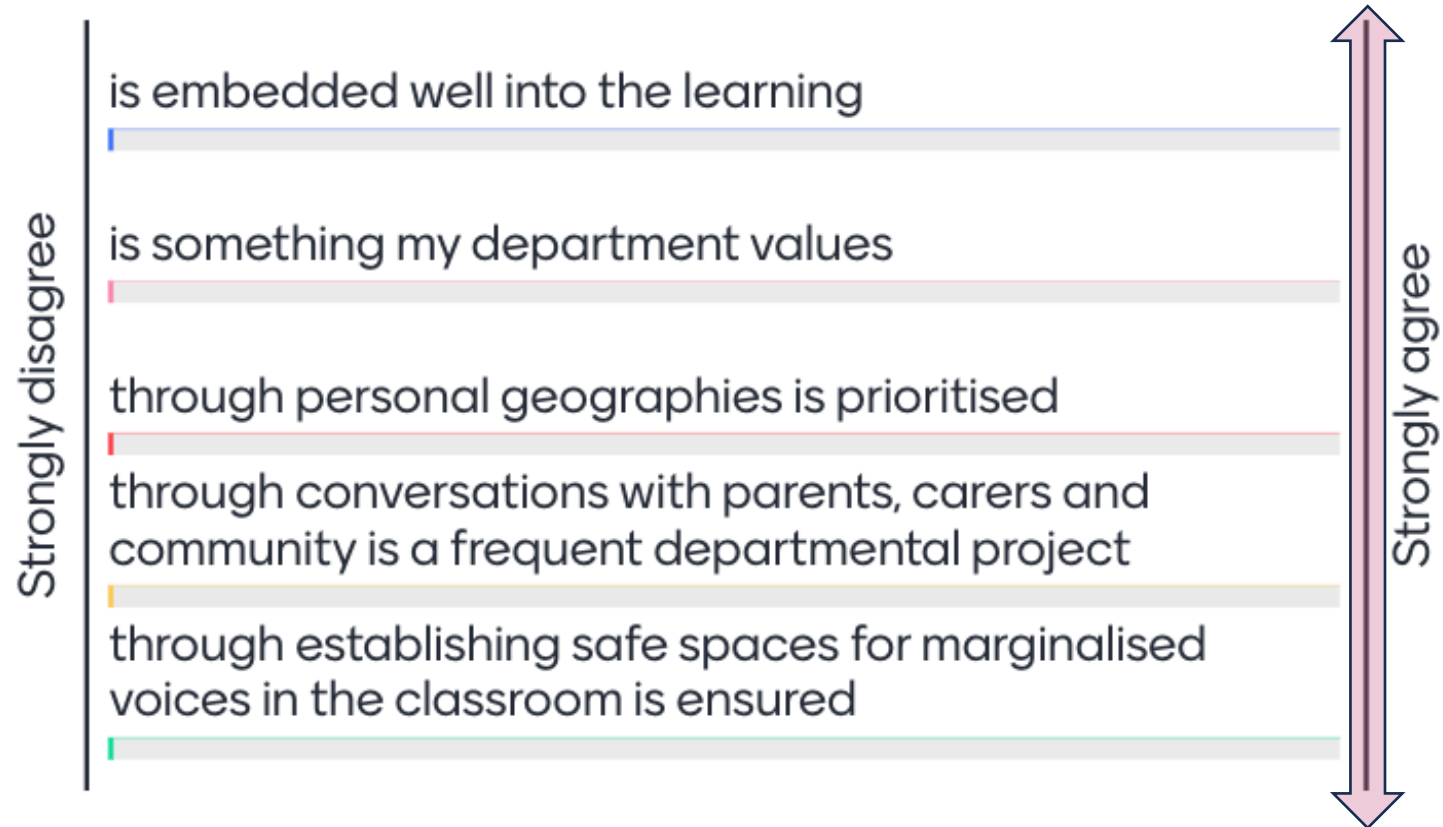
Getting to know students:



How does your geography department operate?



Getting to know students:





Personal Geographies

Who are you?

Where is home for you?

What connects you to the world?

What issues matter to you? Local to global?

Where have you visited?

Do you have a heritage, culture or identity that makes you feel belonging?

Where would you like to go?

Who am I?



What movies do I like?
Where are they made?

Who are my parents/ or carers?
Where have they been?
Do they identify with any ethnic
community(ies)/ religion?

Places I have visited?

Who are my neighbours? Do they
identify with any ethnic community(ies)/
religion?

Who are my role models?
Where are they based?



What clothes do I like wearing?
Where are they made?
Check the labels

What TV shows do I like? Where are
they based?

Who are my friends? Where have they
been? Do they identify with any ethnic
community(ies)/ religion?

What food do I like? What cultures do
they originate from?

Places I would like to go?

What music do I like?
Who are the artists/singers?
Where are they based?

Who am I?

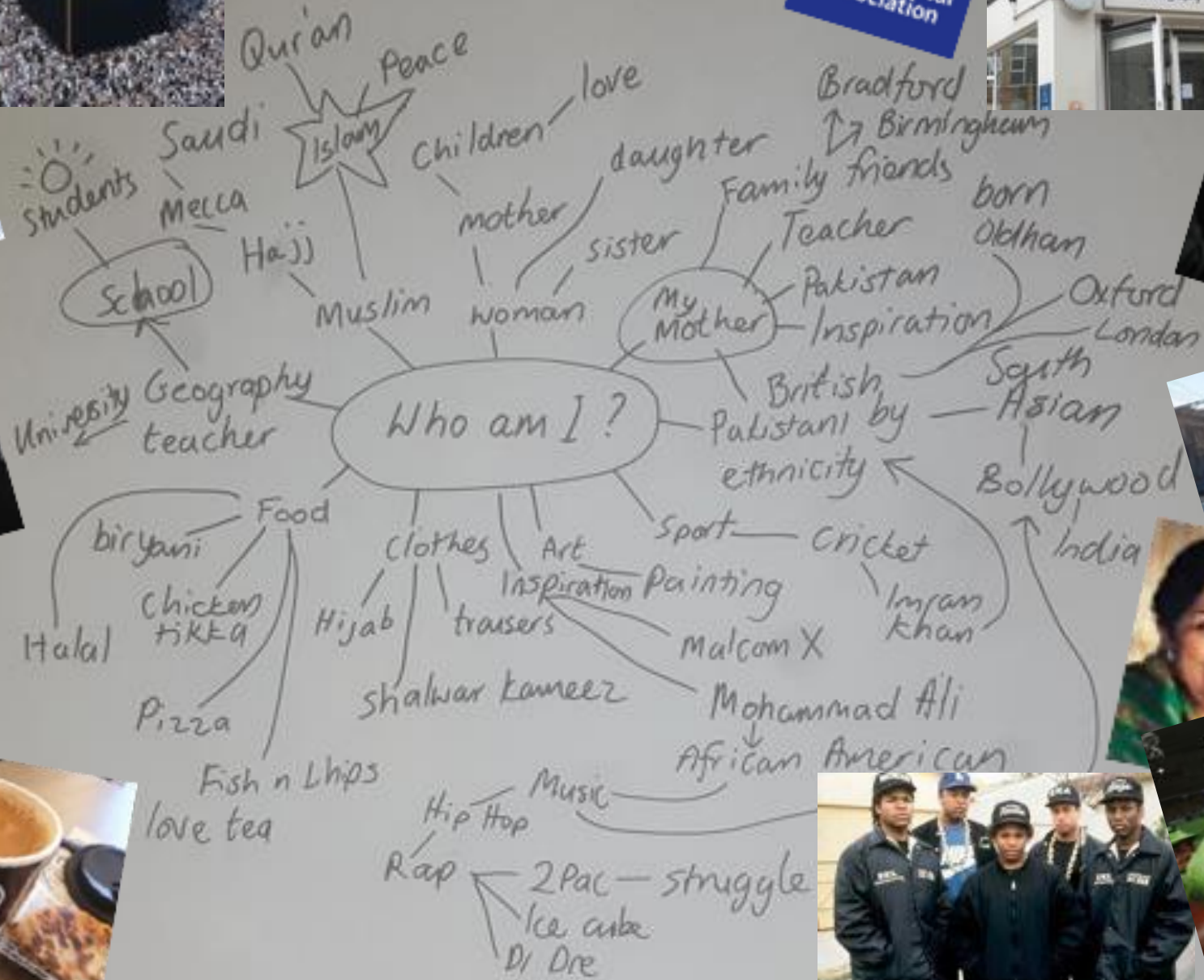







Figure 4: Tabulation for the Who am I? concept diagram

Who am I?				
Theme	Description	Personal connection	Geographical connection	Ideas for curriculum
Inspirational people 	Malcolm X: Muslim African American intellectual and icon Imran Khan: Pakistani cricketer and former Prime minister of Pakistan	Taught me about racism and civil rights movement Pakistan won the cricket world cup in 1992. Teachers began to connect with their Pakistani heritage students	Continents: Africa and North America LA, USA Continents: Europe and Pakistan He studied in Oxford university and likes hiking in Pakistan.	Race and racism Race relations US and UK African roots Muslim geographies Postcolonialism Partition British Empire and colonialism Decolonisation
Music influence  	Lata Mangeshkar: Indian Bollywood playback singer Hip Hop Music: Rap group with members: 2 Pac Shakur, Ice Cube and Dr Dre often rapped about racism and police brutality in the US against Black or African Americans	Watched Bollywood movies growing up and learnt about her life and struggles I grew up listening to Hip Hop in a multicultural part of Oxford, Cowley	Continent: Asian, India Continent: North America California, USA Mali, Africa	India and Pakistan relations Breaking stereotypes found on texts like Prisoners of Geography Introducing dialogues about race and racism Police brutality African roots
Food and drink 	Chai: a cup of tea Roti (Flat bread) Biryani	Deeper meanings through tracing their origins	Quintessential of Englishness Belonging South Asia	Postcolonialism Partition British Empire and colonialism Decolonisation
Culture and religion 	Ka'ba in Mecca: Pilgrimage of Islam	I performed the Hajj pilgrimage	Continent: Asia Middle East Muslim World	Belonging Inclusion and Diversity Multicultural Britain



5

Top tips

PERSONAL GEOGRAPHIES



- ### 1

Create some themes

Try to keep the discussion on the topic.
- ### 2

Encourage connections

All ideas are possible.
- ### 3

Listen and learn

Do not criticize or make assumptions about ideas.
- ### 4

Enjoy the interaction

Spend time talking about the different ideas. Allow students to share ideas.
- ### 5

Make connections

Engage with the outcomes. Let students express their ideas in creative ways.



Shanique Harris

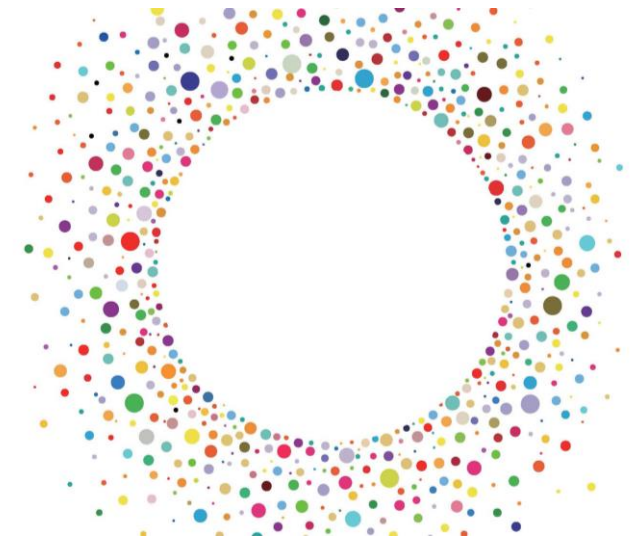
Shanique Harris

Project Coordinator: Geography for All

The Geography for all project works with colleagues and organisations across the geographical community.

It helps address equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the subject, with a focus on under-representation by income and ethnicity through collaboration.

Salaam Geographia provided training and development for mentors with the "Who am I?" project.

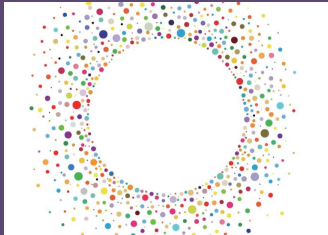


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Responses from the *Who am I?* training session



How did you find the session?

What impacted me the most?	What would I like to know more about?
<p>Hearing about experiences teachers' own experiences that have happened to understand real experiences.</p> <p>- taking time out for the who am I session, helped to really understand & analyse myself in a way I haven't done before.</p>	<p>- I would like to know more about what can actually be done to de-colonise & de-racialise the curriculum</p>

How did you find the session?

What impacted me the most?	What would I like to know more about?
<p>Listening to people's personal experiences with race in education as well as people's backgrounds + how this impacted their lives</p>	<p>How the system of education as a whole can discourage students from geography and how changes can be made at a policy / government level.</p>

Geography for all

How did you find the session?

What impacted me the most?	What would I like to know more about?
<p>• The simple question "Who Am I" This exercise made me more aware of myself and what I can offer through things such as my interests or hobbies or simply things I like to do and that I look up to.</p>	<p>• Anti Racism → A topic I had not been aware of until this session</p>

Who am I?



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How did you find the session?



What impacted me the most?

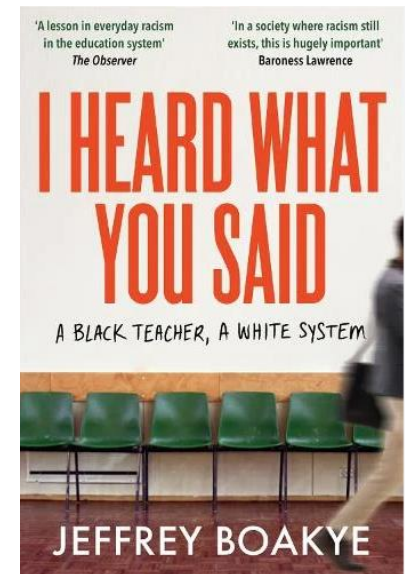
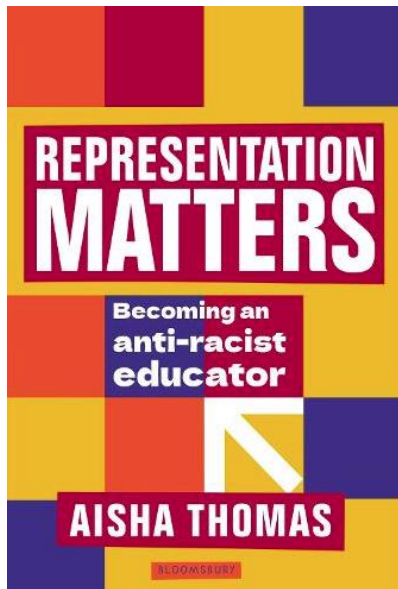
◦ The simple question "Who Am I"
This exercise made me more aware of myself and what I can offer through things such as my interests or hobbies or simply things I like to do and those I look up to.

What would I like to know more

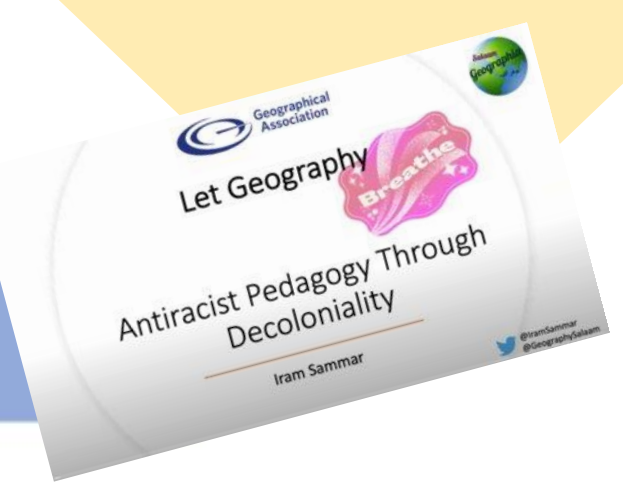
◦ Anti Racism → A topic I had not been aware of until this session

2. How can you become an anti-racist educator?

What is
your pedagogical
approach?



“I can’t breathe” Do you remember these words?



Who was George Floyd?

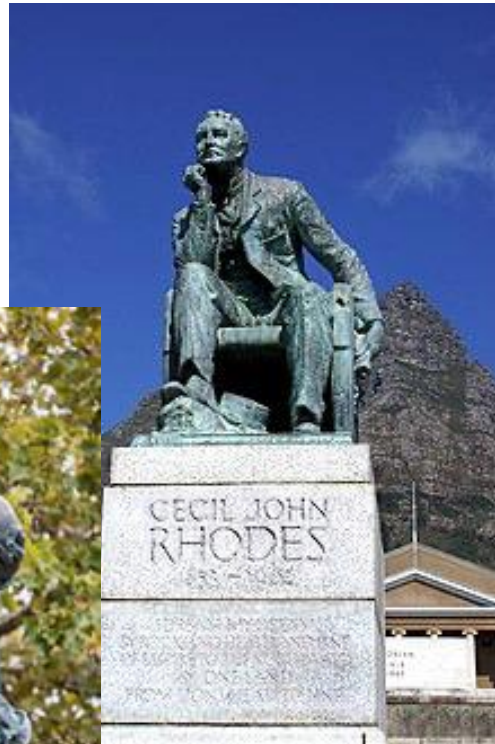
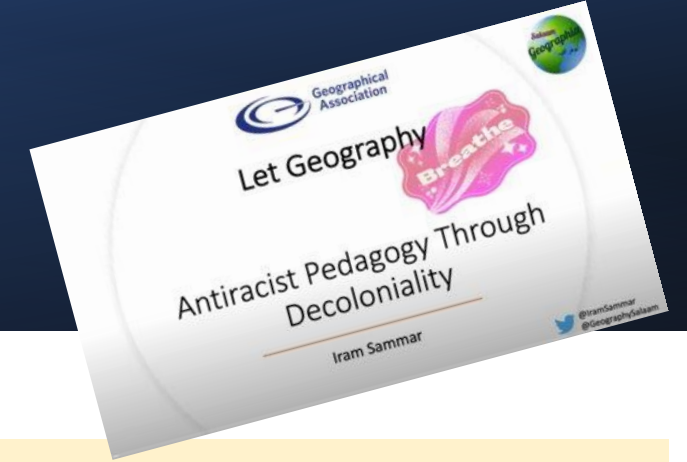
What’s the relevance of his story?



- Who is Derek Chauvin?
- What do we mean by police brutality?
- What has this case got to do with race?
- What similar cases are happening in the UK?
- What happened to Child Q?
- Who was Chris Kaba?

Why do some stories never make it into our textbooks or geography curriculum?




Let's look at geography and history together...



"Miss, what do statues have to do with geography?"

- Who were these people?
- Why are they controversial and to who?
- Why are students not learning about their legacies in geography?

Why is it important to know these names?

Who am I?	What is my historical link to geography?	Why am I linked to racism?
<p>Cecil John Rhodes</p> 	<p>(5 July 1853 – 26 March 1902) was a British mining magnate and politician in southern Africa who served as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony from 1890 to 1896.</p> <p>He and his British South Africa Company founded the southern African territory of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe and Zambia), which the company named after him in 1895.</p>	<p>Often acknowledged by historians as a British supremacist, Rhodes believed that natives of the Cape existed in a state of barbarism. With the strengthening of international movements against racism, such as Rhodes Must Fall and Black Lives Matter, Rhodes' legacy is a matter of debate to this day.</p>
<p>Christopher Columbus</p> 	<p>Christopher Columbus (25 August and 31 October 1451 – 20 May 1506) an Italian explorer and navigator from the Republic of Genoa who completed four Spanish-based voyages across the Atlantic Ocean sponsored by the Catholic Monarchs, opening the way for the widespread European exploration and European colonization of the Americas. His expeditions were the first known European contact with the Caribbean and Central and South America.</p>	<p>Columbus's expeditions inaugurated a period of exploration, conquest, and colonization that lasted for centuries, thus bringing the Americas into the European sphere of influence.</p> <p>The transfer of commodities, ideas, and people between the Old World and New World that followed his first voyage are known as the Columbian exchange.</p>
<p>Edward Colston</p> 	<p>Edward Colston (2 November 1636 – 11 October 1721) was an English merchant, slave trader, philanthropist, and Tory Member of Parliament.</p> <p>By 1680, he became involved in the slave trade as a senior executive of the Royal African Company, which held a monopoly on the English trade in African slaves.</p>	<p>He was deputy governor of the company in 1689–90. In 2020, at the sight of the toppling of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol, a member of the organisational team for the event "was adamant that Colston's charitable deeds in no way made up for the transportation of thousands of Africans into slavery. 'The statue was glorifying the acts of a slave trader. He gave some money to schools and good causes but it was blood money', she said".</p>

Geography and Racism

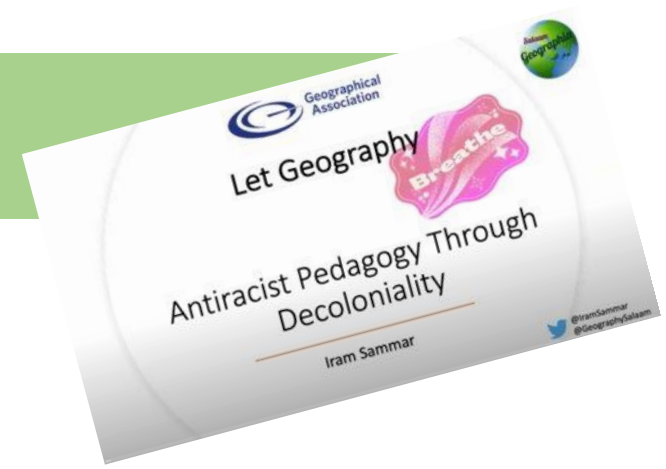
- Who was Halford Mackinder?
- What's his connection to the Geographical association?
- So what if he is male, dead and white?



If I ruled the world?



Harms of the colonial past



Professor Patricia Daley:

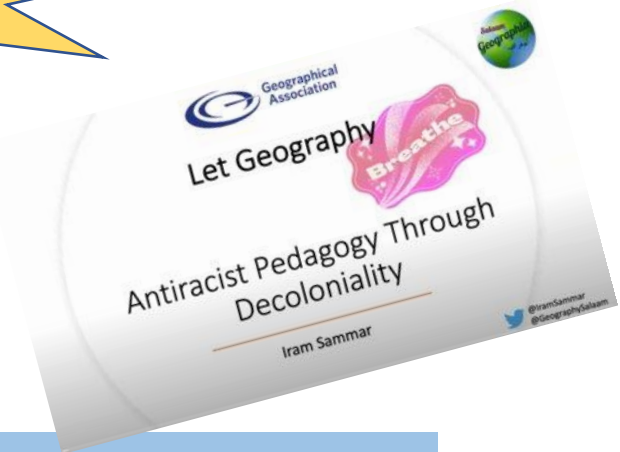
In 1995, on a trip to Bulawayo, I visited Rhodes' grave in the Matopos, because I wanted to see the place he chose as his burial ground. There he lay on an elevated site – a classic 'lord of all he surveyed' location, in life and death a colonial oppressor. Rhodes' desire to dominate in the afterlife can be blocked by the removal of the gaze of his statue from its perch on Oxford's High Street, and his continued haunting of our everyday spaces and minds can be excised by addressing the unrepaired harms of the colonial past.

What are the geography scholars saying?

*“Focusing on UK-based universities...why and the white in the question **“Why is our geography curriculum so white?”** It is argued that the answer is coloniality-induced institutional racism.”*

Esson (2018)

Academic
geography



School geography

“School geography in England has been largely silent on issues around race, which stands in contrast to important strands of thought in the discipline.”

Puttick and Murrey (2020)

What kind of racist messages are evident in geography textbook?

Fast forward to today...

Case Study: Somalia

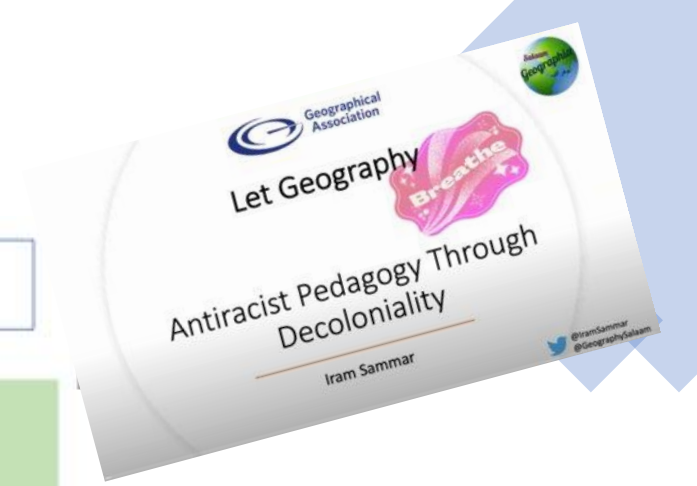


Figure 9: People collecting firewood in Somalia's semi-desert

"Miss, ma country ain't no LIDC".

Sauda



Figure 10: Violence on the streets of Mogadishu

Quote from blog: Unorthodox Geography Teacher

<https://salaamgeographia.com/blog/>

What kind of racist messages are evident in geography textbook?



Case study: United Kingdom



Figure 22: Cooking a traditional balti dish

Ethnic food in the UK

While roast dinners may still be the most popular food in the UK, many people choose to enjoy a range of foods from different ethnic backgrounds. Consider pizzas, spaghetti and pasta from Italy, chicken tikka masala from India, kebabs from the Middle East and spring rolls from China. When did you last have an Indian or Chinese meal? What did you eat?



Figure 23: Shops in the Balti Triangle, Birmingham

“Nah, Miss is that all we have? Food and clothes shops?”

Sameer

How do we teach about race or ethnicity?

In contrast: Positive images of “whiteness”

“So Miss, why can’t there be positive pictures of people like us?” **Abdi**

“...because it ain’t written by people like us bro!” **Reema**



Figure 13: The UK's media exports

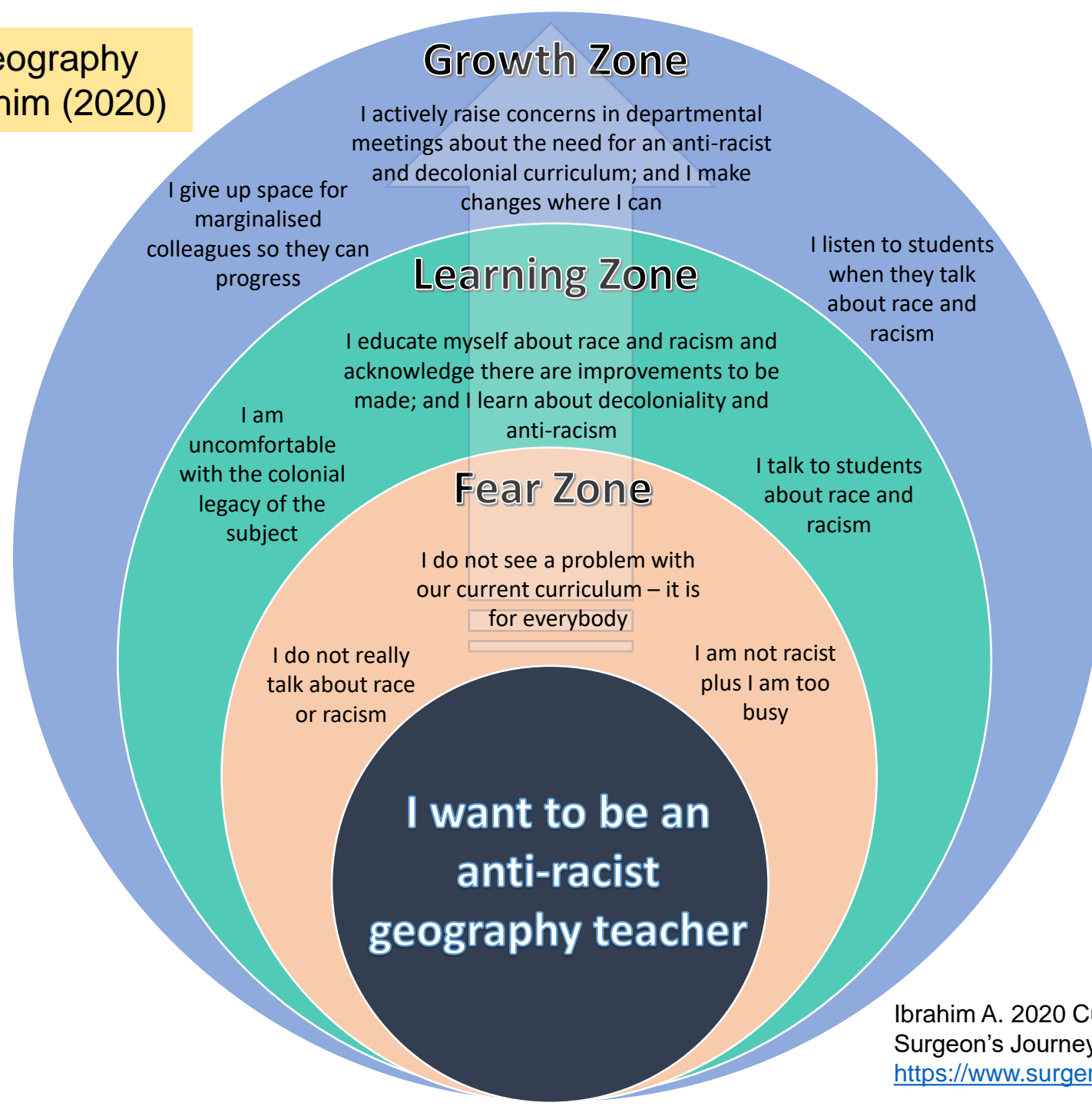


Figure 17: British actor Eddie Redmayne won the Oscar for best performance in 2015

How to be an anti-racist geography teacher adapted from Ibrahim (2020)



How to be an anti-racist geography teacher adapted from Ibrahim (2020)



REPRESENTATION MATTERS

Becoming an
**anti-racist
educator**

AISHA THOMAS

BLOOMSBURY

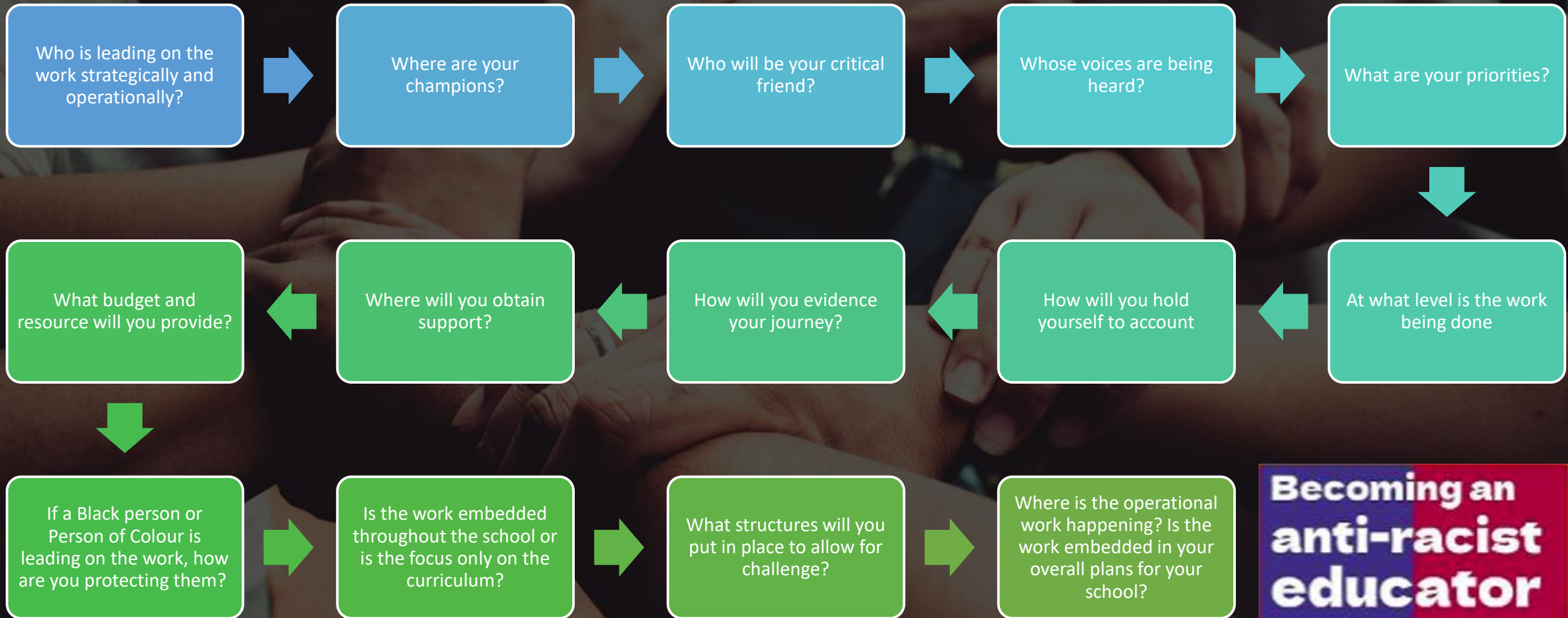
Representation Matters

As educators, we have three aspects to our selves that each interact with one another throughout our lives and professional careers:

1. The person you are at home.
2. The person you are at work.
3. The person you are expected to be in education.

Thomas, Aisha. Representation Matters (p. 11).
Bloomsbury Publishing

We are healing: Strategies to help



'A lesson in everyday racism
in the education system'
The Observer

'In a society where
exists, this is hugely
Baroness Lawren

I HEARD WHAT YOU SAID

A BLACK TEACHER, A WHITE SYSTEM

JEFFREY BOAKYE

Allegories from the classroom

Then I explain how...the woman who accused young Emmett of crimes against white supremacy admitted that her claims were untrue. A few gasps. I tell them it's still happening.

'Like George Floyd, sir?' one voice asks.

Yes, I reply, like George Floyd, whose death is one in a far-reaching series of black American deaths at the hands of white American police. I tell them this, and I tell them that I know they've spent the summer seeing the world realise that Black Lives Matter in the wake of George Floyd's death – a generation of young people for whom anti-racism has become a social media event.

Boakye, Jeffrey. *I Heard What You Said: A Black Teacher, A White System* (p. 305). Pan Macmillan.

Three key themes: Anti-racist learning and teaching



James Esson and Angela Last:

- (1) Recognise each other's humanity
- (2) Say the unsayable
- (3) Experiment with (y)our history.

An **anti-racist** approach to learning and teaching in British Geography has the potential to equip staff and students with the tools to help make our discipline, and wider society, more **equitable** and **just**.

**Anti-racism can be applied to
school geography**

3. Ecstatic Responsive Cognition (ERC)

Do your students enjoy the
learning?

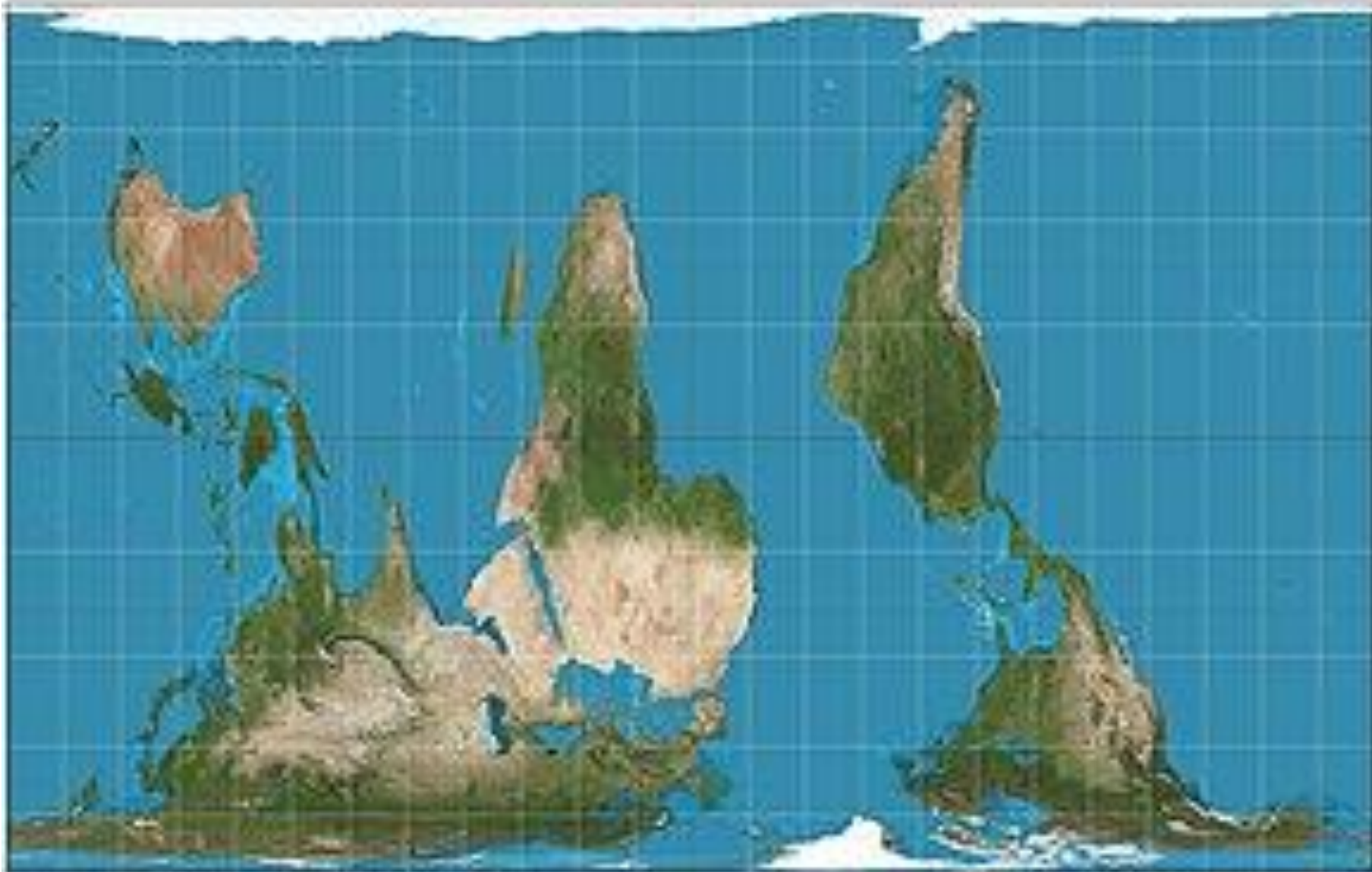
Think about the maps teachers use?



Mercator Map

Peter's Projection Map

Think about the maps teachers use?



Why do teachers use upside down maps?

The Global North ...



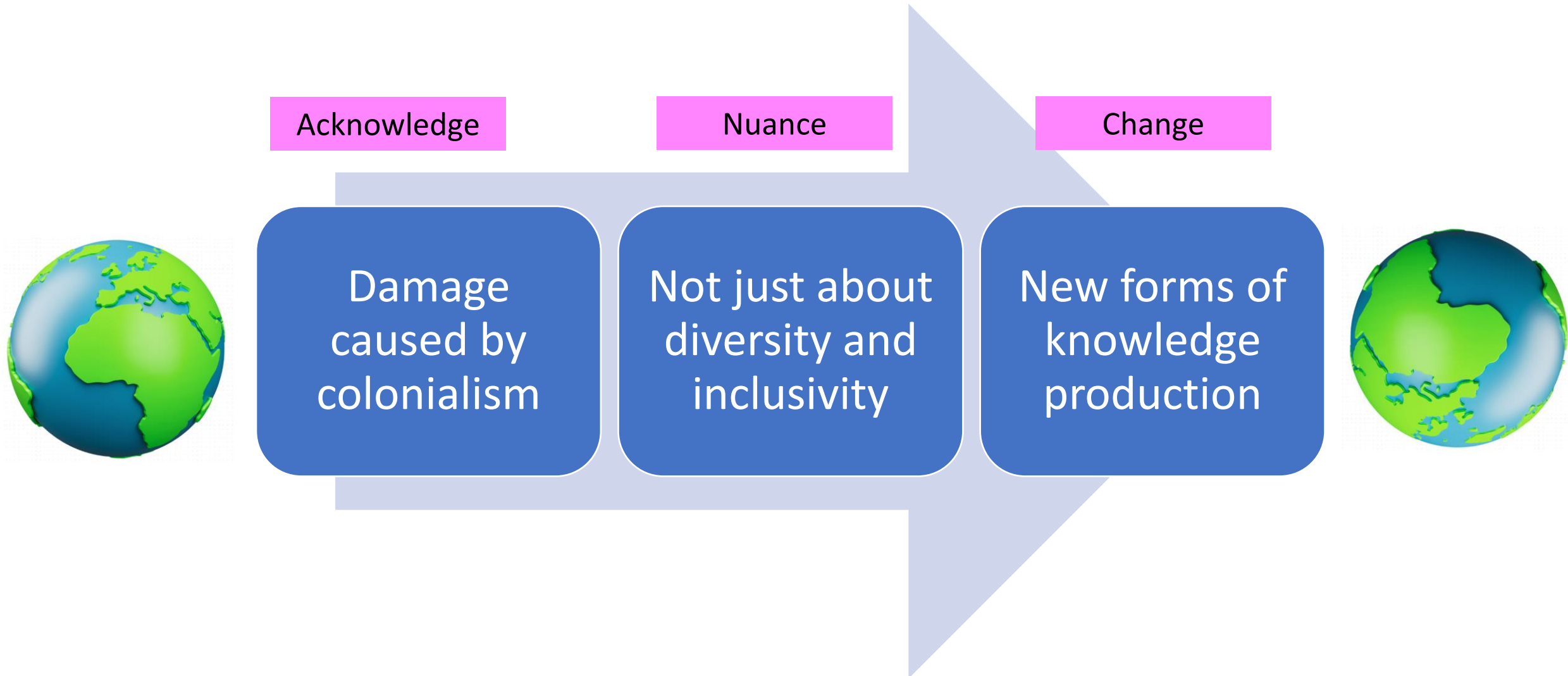
The Global South becomes...

Again, this is not new to decolonial thinkers!

Decolonising is a process



Adapted from Daley et al (2018)



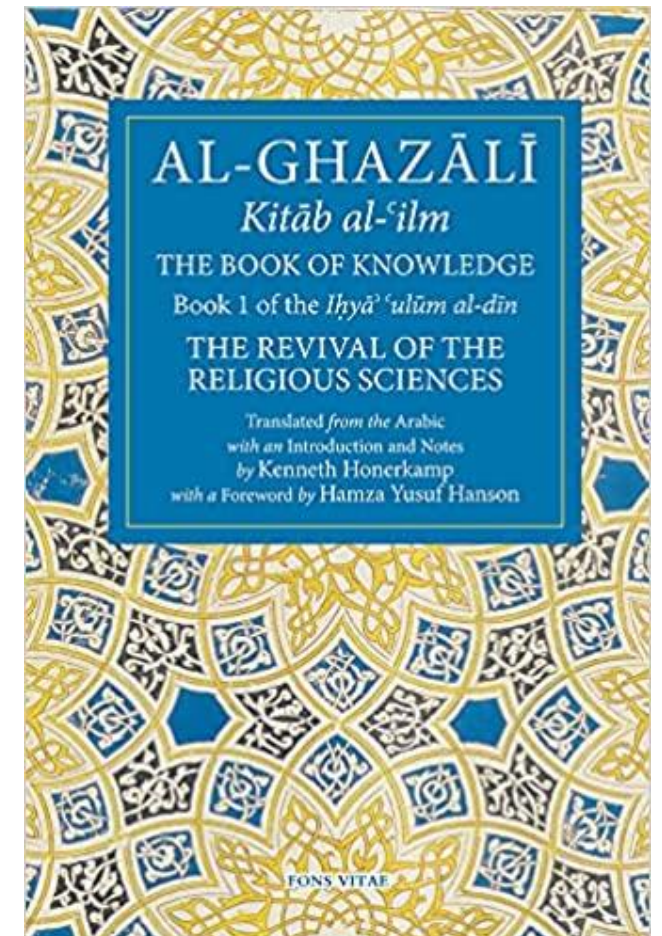
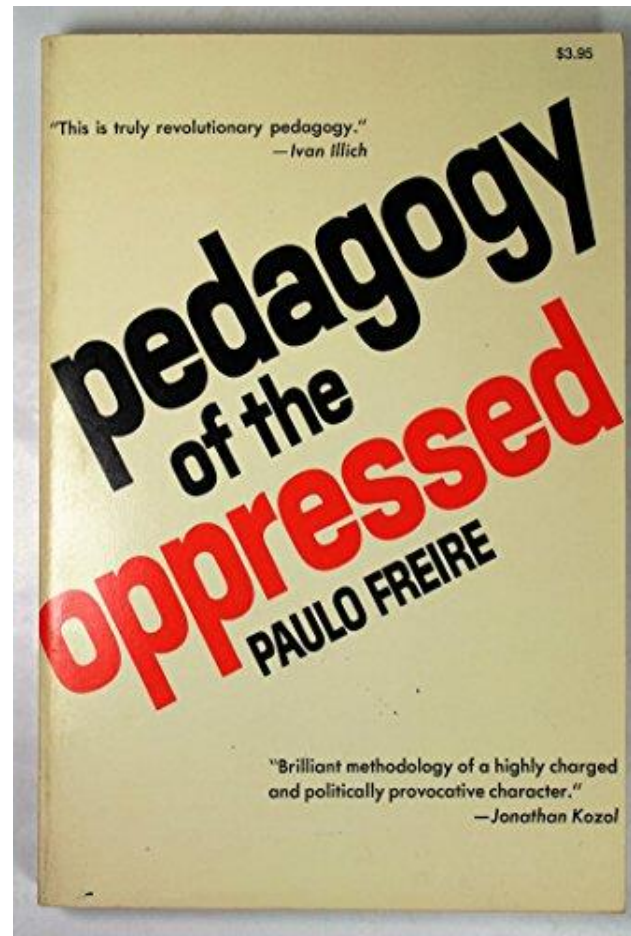
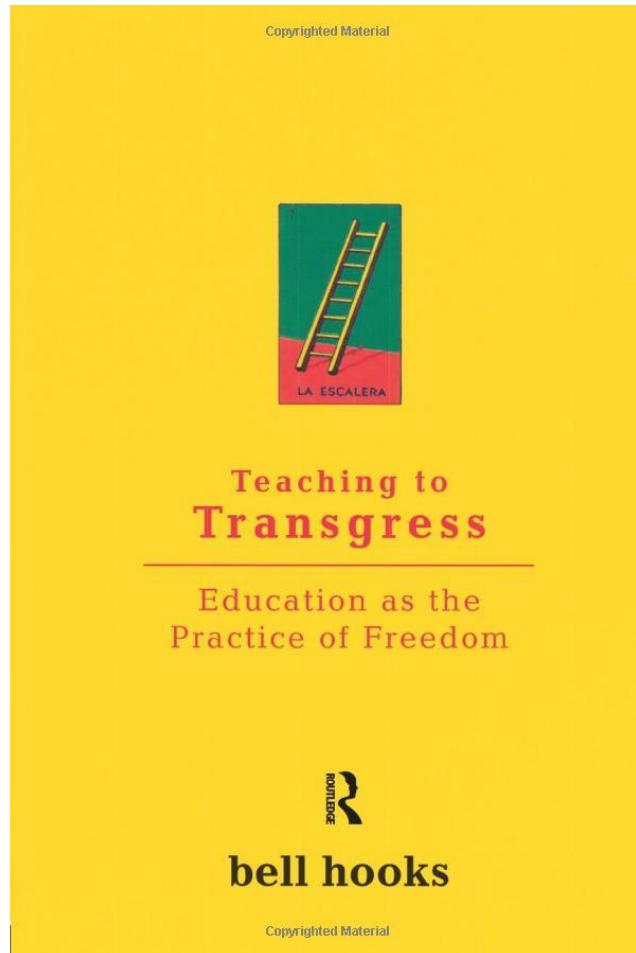
Hidden histories of maps



No way Miss,
we have a
history too?

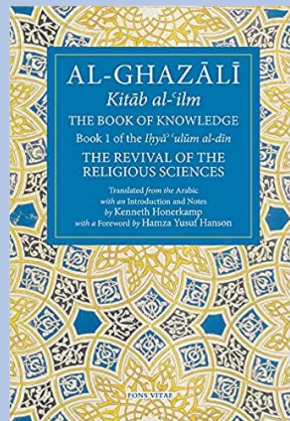
- Who was Al-Idrisi?
- Why is his map upside down?
- Can you identify Africa? What about Europe?

Pedagogy books



Ecstatic Responsive Cognition

What happens when Critical Muslim Geographies meets mainstream geographical learning?



Taken from Ghazali's idea that the learner should be in a state of happiness.

Only then will the learner respond to the teacher and what knowledge is being transmitted.

Learning will be absorbed and retained due to the ecstatic experience which includes learner's own histories and geographies.



Ecstatic

Responsive

Cognition



Who are you?

Make a promise



Revisiting Next Year: Getting to know students:

