Chapter 1

Introduction: How We Teach Africa Matters

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This edited volume contributes to pedagogical and conceptual discussion on the educational rethinking and resources needed for breaking myths about Africa in Political Science, International Relations, and Development Studies. Many Political Science education scholars explore and prescribe student-centred teaching and learning methods for achieving various transformative goals, including critical thinking and analysis (Mulcare & Shwedel, 2017), civic engagement (Latimer & Hempson, 2012), and deliberative democracy practice (Bogaards & Deutsch, 2015). In African Political Science education specifically, pedagogic scholarship incorporates efforts towards supporting students in adopting decolonial conceptions of Africa and development (Abdi et al., 2006; Msila, 2020). Active student-centred education practitioners challenge traditional pedagogic models in Political Science education literature by including simulations (Wedig, 2010), discussions (Trudeau, 2005), debates (Abernathy & Forestal, 2021), case- and problem-based learning (Krain, 2010; 2016). These active teaching methods are more effective than traditional teacher-centred, lecture-based models for engaging and helping students move from lower order education goals of remembering and understanding concepts to higher-order goals of applying, analysing, evaluating, and creating knowledge (Bloom et al., 1956; Krathwohl et al., 1964).

Misconceptions of Africa as a homogenous uncivilised entity or 'country' afflicted with poverty, contagious illnesses, crime, dictatorship, corruption, violence, harsh weather, droughts, and starvation, have long dominated mindsets in journalistic and academic circles, especially in the West (Buck, 1973; Randolph & DeMulder, 2008; Faloyin, 2022), using (neo) colonial exploitation of Africa (Rodney, 1972). Existing Political Science education literature focusing on the teaching of African politics is audibly silent on addressing preconceived notions and misconceptions that students may have when they enter higher education programmes. Yet, as asserted in cognitive theory of belief perseverance (Savion, 2009), misconceptions potentially embolden human dispositions to resist new ideas, thereby hindering deep conceptual learning and higher-order education. In this edited volume we understand misconception as inaccurate or incomplete ideas of a concept, process, person, people, or place, that often resist (and even persist despite) formal higher education. Theories and conceptual frameworks taught in the classroom that challenge misconceptions, including critical or decolonial approaches to the study of African subjects, can often be resisted, misinterpreted, downplayed as insignificant, or at best, accepted as valid only within the boundaries of classrooms (Savion, 2009).

Even in the best-case situation, students might not be able to apply what they learn in class to their everyday lives if teachers do not use active methods that enhance knowledge retention and stir sensitivities towards transformative actions in society. Little wonder that many students graduate from their academic programmes and enter into the world of practice with many of the same stereotypes held prior to entering the university (Gardner, 1991). In the 'real world' requiring the application of learned knowledge (for instance in formulating and implementing foreign policies in the area of international relations and diplomacy), there is a risk of graduates reverting to and drawing on long-held, colonialist and racist misconceptions of Africa to sustain neo-colonial exploitative relations. This is consistent with Goldsmith's (2006:263) observation that students who fail to properly assimilate and accommodate

concepts taught in formal education settings usually relapse to their preconceptions and misconceptions when faced with theory application challenges. Uncorrected misconceptions hinder students' transition from 'novice' to 'expert', from 'surface' to 'deep' learning, and from concept memorisation to concept application (Engelmann & Huntoon, 2011:465). This edited volume seeks to answer the following questions: In what form, and why, do misconceptions of Africa persist? How can teachers avoid perpetuating or reinforcing Eurocentric visions often at the origin of how the continent is perceived and conceptualised?

We principally aim to explore and share epistemic reflections on student-centred teaching and learning resources that are critical for a more nuanced understanding of African politics, development, and international relations. This is important, because misconceptions have the potential to hinder deep conceptual learning in the classroom and transformative action outside of it. Confronting misconceptions is an important challenge for teachers, students, curriculum designers, academic managers, and policymakers. This is an anti-misconception pedagogic experience sharing project, potentially inspiring wider adoption and adaptation, and by extension, contributing towards transformations of global education that is currently compromised by long-established Eurocentric influences and academic imperialism.

This introduction is structured as follows: first, we discuss the challenges of managing the tension between global awareness and contextual knowledge in global education in the twenty-first century. Second, we situate our contribution within existing educational debates on decolonising how we teach and learn about Africa, and the need for student-centred pedagogic approaches. We claim that to contrast the persistence of Africa-related misconception, understanding the sources of beliefs perseverance and methods for conceptual change are key for belief modification. Third we define how student-centred methodologies are better suited to address the problem of belief perseverance. The fourth part of the book highlights how chapters in this edited volume address the three

general questions at the base of our investigation, i.e. root causes behind contemporary misconceptions of Africa (Part I), actionable pedagogic strategies (Part II), and the interplay between anti-misconception pedagogic strategies and broader policy instruments.

Background: the globalisation of twenty-first century higher education

We live in a highly globalised and interconnected world. Higher education in the twenty-first century is even more globalised in terms of contents, participation, and the goals that it aims to achieve. Many countries, universities, and organisations promote global education programmes, seeking to produce 'global citizens' with intercultural sensitivities and competencies. However, global citizenship has also become somehow a "floating signifier" (Mannion et al., 2014), and teachers are often left wondering how to make sense of the 'global' in specific national contexts. One of the dangers of the cosmopolitan call for global education is the parallel commodification of higher institution values, and the use of idealised images of transformative globalisation that are instead often (even unconsciously) driven by "investments in ignorance, or idealized images of transformation of the individuals, the society and the economy" (Lapping, 2020). One of the key tensions at the centre of our contribution is indeed the relationship between global awareness and contextual knowledge – a tension often crossing other dichotomising relations amongst universality and particularity, globality and locality - and that concerns trends towards homogenising and relativising knowledge, given the delicate balance between knowledge of specific context and globality that is often required in those programmes. One of the challenges embedded with global education systems is indeed the capacity to dismantle superficial knowledge, or what Savion problematises as belief perseverance, i.e. "the naïve theories we generate to make sense of the world" (Savion, 2009:81).

While there is a prolific discussion on the potential and pitfalls of global education (see Lapayese, 2003) there is still limited education research with respect to pedagogic practices and strategies for educating students about countries or regions of the world to which they may have little to no lived or learned exposure. Worse, some students have misconceptions or stereotypes about regions unfamiliar to them, based on informal education, including from family, friends, neighbourhoods, and the media. Africa and its peoples and cultures are amongst the most stereotyped. Several studies, particularly in Western circles (Buck, 1973; Kitchen, 1982; Osunde et al., 1996; Lundy & Negash, 2013; Knight et al., 2022), have identified various Africa-related misconceptions, with recurring scholarly attention even in the twenty-first century illuminating the problem's persistence. However, mischaracterisations of Africa are also present in non-Western circles and variations in learning cultures can impose peculiar challenges for redressing them.

The need for this project emerged from continuous conversations between the editors of this volume, based on reflection on our own teaching experience. We separately taught, managed, and constantly reformed both disciplinary (International Political Economy, Contemporary International Relations) and area studies (International Politics of Development in Africa) modules in a Bachelor of Arts programme in International Relations in a China-based transnational university, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University. We both noticed that some of our students join our disciplinary and areas-focused modules with misconceptions of Africa, notably the infamous 'Africa is a country' stereotype which underlies unsubstantiated Africa-wide generalisations. In this edited volume we refer to some persistent misconceptions, i.e. the idea that we can talk and know Africa conflating a country with a whole continent; the idea that Africa's history begins with colonial 'discoverers'; the possibility of representing the whole continent under the infamous categories of tyranny, corruption, hunger, poverty and war, etc.

There is not a pedagogical book on the topic of misconceptions about Africa with input from authors from

around the world, and even though there is a prolific discussion on the necessity of decolonising the curriculum and the university, still hidden misconceptions can get in the way of critical decolonial learning and, by extension, of transformative behaviour. This edited collection is based on our conviction that instructors of courses on Africa and International Relations are crucial towards tackling the problem of stereotypes and negative misperceptions about Africa. How we teach Africa matters for overcoming this problem. The challenge of teaching in a transnational context moved us to question why and how inaccurate notions and assumption about Africa persist, and potential pedagogic ways forward. We hope the pedagogic ideas and strategies shared in this edited volume can influence a normative shift towards more respectful engagement of foreign powers in Africa by teaching the future generation of analysts and decision-makers in ways that confront and correct age-old colonial stereotypes underlying unjust exploitation of Africa, its peoples, resources and values.

Teaching Africa in between Eurocentrism, decolonial approaches and conceptual change

There is prolific literature and discussion in the field of Humanities and Social Science on the macro-cosmos of existing misconceptions, and in particular on Eurocentrism's capacity to limit knowledge about Africa. Ake (1982:xiii) understood "mainstream Western Social Science scholarship on Africa" as "imperialism in the guise of scientific knowledge". For Quijano (2000), colonialism has not only shaped political and economic structures but also deeply impacted knowledge production and dissemination with the establishment of a global system of power that perpetuates social hierarchies and reinforces the dominance of Western epistemologies. Coloniality of knowledge involves in parallel the imposition of Eurocentric perspectives as the norm and the marginalisation or exclusion of other forms of knowledge, and the devaluation and erasure of Indigenous, African, and non-Western knowledge systems. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986), for instance explores how colonialism has impacted not only the production and dissemination

of knowledge but also the languages in which knowledge is expressed.

Calls for decolonising knowledge production in academia have intensified in recent years. For Thiong'o (1986), decolonising is fundamentally about dismantling the linguistic hierarchies that support the coloniality of knowledge. For Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012), decolonising knowledge is about reclaiming African subjectivity. For Mpofu (2013:105), disrupting coloniality of knowledge is intrinsically connected to a project of resistance that is as 'sweaty' and 'bloody' as a liberation project aiming at disrupting coloniality of being and power. Decolonising knowledge implies rejecting the centrality of Western theories as exclusive instruments of knowledge (Pillay, 2018), to carve out a new space for epistemic justice (Zondi, 2018) by rethinking and recentring the role of alternative epistemes in research and teaching experience. These calls share the necessity of redeeming the persistent coloniality of knowledge embedded in the structure of higher education curricula and teaching practices towards a more nuanced understanding of the complexity of African realities. However, they often miss more precise pedagogic articulations on how to address pre-existing conceptions.

On the other hand, limited literature on the micro-cosmos of misconceptions, their adverse impact on learning, and pedagogic counter-tools are mostly confined to the natural sciences, including Biology (Nazario et al., 2002), Physics (Sokoloff & Thornton, 1997), Astronomy and Space Science (Zeilik & Bisard, 2000), Chemistry (Kerr & Walz, 2007), Mathematics (Scheuermann & van Garderen, 2008), and Geoscience (Engelmann & Huntoon, 2011). Instruction designs targeting misconceptions in the natural sciences commonly emphasise the use of 'discrepant events' to uncover misconceptions, trigger a cognitive disequilibrium, and puzzle students to assimilate and accommodate alternative conceptions. A discrepant event is a demonstration performed, usually by the teacher, in front of students, to produce an unexpected outcome about a phenomenon, an outcome different from one connected to a misconception. However, in the social

sciences dealing with human relations, getting students to adopt and accommodate conceptual change (e.g., from Eurocentricism to Afrocentrism in learning about Africa) is challenged by cognitive proclivities to conveniently resist, misinterpret, and downplay new conceptions which are inconsistent with long-held preconceptions and misconceptions. This challenge is emphasised in cognitive theory of belief persistence but is overlooked in education-related books prescribing decolonised perspectives in Africa education broadly (Dei, 2012; Msila, 2020) and Africa development education specifically (Abdi et al., 2006; Abdi & Guo, 2008).

Most of the extant Africa-related education books typically disseminate researched content and/or lived experiences to counter myths about Africa in Western societies, such as the 'Africa is a country' stereotype (e.g., Adesanmi, 2011; Faloyin, 2022; Knight et al., 2022). These books report realities and experiences from various countries while discussing similarities and contradictions to showcase diversity in Africa. The recent dates of some these publications bear testament to the persistence of stereotypes as a challenge worth overcoming. Lundy and Negash's (2013) edited volume, *Teaching Africa: A Guide for the 21st-Century Classroom*, already seeks to improve ways in which Africa is taught while bridging the gap between perceptions and realities about Africa in American higher education circles. However, here disciplinary focus is largely on History and Arts, and also contextually restricted to US higher education circles; such a limited geographical scope of the book is understandable given age-old misconceptions of Africa in US classrooms. Other contributions discuss and delineate indigenous perspectives and cultural values worth adopting for 'decolonising' higher education in/on Africa (see Dei, 2012; Msila, 2020). Contributions on decolonising Africa education typically criticise conventional prevalence of Eurocentric theories and episteme in Africa scholarship as undermining cognitive equity and imposing foreign (Western) models of modernisation which are not only incongruent with the diverse ethnic composition and cultural values of African countries but contribute to neo-colonial exploitation. Accordingly, for

epistemic freedom, cognitive justice, and sustainable African development, decolonial education on Africa call for decentring Eurocentrism and integrating or even centring Afrocentric perspectives in teaching and learning on Africa. However, cognitive inclinations to oppose, misinterpret, and belittle new conceptions which rival long-held preconceptions and misconceptions of students poses a challenge to adoption and accommodation of conceptual change from Eurocentrism to Afrocentrism in learning about Africa.

Still, we have a limited global engagement in the field of Political Science and Development, between pedagogic strategies and ontological investigations into the root of misconceptions about Africa. Existing educational contributions about contemporary teaching of African subjects often do not explore why stereotypes of Africa persist. At the same time, contributions focusing on the causes of the epistemic fallacy rarely focus on pragmatic and pedagogic strategies, and do not discuss how for instance teaching materials can be integrated in higher education delivery designs. Our edited volume addresses these shortcomings: first, we focus on the teaching of Africa-related content in Political Science and Development education backgrounds. The contentious nature of topics in Political and Social Science education (i.e., governance, inequality, and conflicts) is accompanied by heightened risks of student resistance and even rebellion if instruction designs are teacher-centred and interpreted as merely transmitting the teacher's opinions instead of engaging students to 'see' the dysfunctionality of their misconceptions for evidence-based conceptual change. Empirical evaluations of effectiveness of proposed teaching designs are generally not provided and there is a dearth of actionable tips for adapting the designs to rectify misconceptions of Africa and for overcoming related challenges. We readdress this shortcoming, by incorporating empirical evaluative evidence to support specific pedagogic strategies. Second, we recognise how in a highly globalised higher education context it is vital to tackle the problem of misconceptions globally. Our edited volume integrates specific pedagogic contributions from all over the world and

incorporates insight for customising pedagogic interventions to linguistic and learning culture peculiarities of different contexts. By incorporating cognitive theory-informed reflections for overcoming the challenge of misconceptions to conceptual change, this edited volume illustrates possible tangible pathways for navigating the turn towards decolonial teaching and learning.

The role of student-centred methods

Existing literature in Political Science and Development education articulates active student-centred teaching methods for critical and creative learning (e.g., Trudeau, 2005; Krain, 2010; Wedig, 2010; Abernathy & Forestal, 2021) while overlooking measures for correcting misconceptions, despite their obstructive potential. In contrast, the difficulty of misconceptions in learning has gained more attention in the natural sciences, ostensibly because of the preponderance of accepted Physical Science theories or laws for which there is overwhelming universal evidence, constraining alternative viewpoints as explicit misconceptions. Variations across human cultures and societies limit possibilities for making sweeping empirical generalisations in the social sciences, rendering both knowledge production and consumption processes to be more interpretative and hence vulnerable to misinterpretations and misconceptions. Moreover, the concepts we study and teach in Political Science (i.e., corruption, sovereignty, governance, legitimacy, autocracy, and democracy, just to mention a few) are highly abstract, posing adaptability challenges for in-class demonstrations.

Discrepant events, which can also be described as discrepant science events (Freeman, 2000), conceptual change teaching (Zeilik & Bisard, 2000; Limón, 2001), and interactive lecture demonstrations (Sokoloff & Thornton, 1997) are essentially teacher-centred. Longfield (2009) discusses the possibility of adopting 'discrepant teaching events' beyond the natural sciences and recounts an illustrative practical adaptation to a course in History. Though no specific illumination is provided for the social sciences, some scholars have reported

lecture-focused attempts to confront specific misconceptions about the Middle East (Çavdar et al., 2019), albeit with only limited success. Thus, if care is not taken to involve students as much as possible while adapting and practicing 'discrepant teaching events' in the social sciences, traditional teacher-centred classroom dynamics may be paradoxically reinforced, especially in courses dealing with controversial issues such as inequalities. Maintaining a predominantly lecture-based, teacher-centred approach in Political and Social Science education can be counter-productive for a number of reasons: i) students may (mis)interpret misconception-targeted lectures as attempts by teachers to impose their world views on students, risking resistance and student-teacher confrontations in the classroom; ii) students may not have sufficient opportunities to orally participate and voice any specific deeply-entrenched misconceptions (Tusmith & Reddy, 2002); iii) misconception-targeted instruction leaves the burden of identifying and challenging students' myths and stereotypes solely with the teacher who may misjudge students' prior knowledge and learning motivation, causing frustration and apathy amongst students (Goldsmith, 2006:266; Savion, 2009:89); and iv) the teacher-centred lectures may serve as conduits for transmitting (and reinforcing) misconceptions from teachers to students (Haddad & Lieberman, 2002).

Given the potential limitations of teacher-centred performances in dealing with Eurocentrism misconceptions in Social Science classrooms, conceptual change education theorists, including Goldsmith (2006:266-276), Savion (2009:89), and Longfield (2009:269), prescribe student-centred, hands-on or minds-on activities which engage students as collaborative partners of teachers in uncovering and countering inaccurate beliefs and perceptions that have the potential to persevere. Belief perseverance is defined as the persistence of original basic beliefs that stick with us because "they 'fit' with the relevant pet theory, and they persevere due to being well situated in the set of naïve misconceptions to the point of creating an economical or equilibrium havoc upon removal" (Savion, 2009:89). Understanding the sources and the

necessary functions of pet theories and our cognitive principles are prerequisites for successful belief modification. There is, however, a dearth of practical illuminations of student-centred pedagogic models for dealing with misconceptions, especially with respect to persistent stereotypes. In Political Science and Development education, only one region, the Middle East, has been targeted in extremely few student-centred, anti-misconception pedagogic models (Baylouny, 2009; Caplan et al., 2012; Abboud, 2015). These studies report the use of simulations and peer-learning activities to teach-back mischaracterisations of the Middle East in Western institutions. One pedagogic research (Çavdar et al., 2019), drawing on data from a US institution, highlights possible influences of events in the twenty-first century, notably the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US and the emergence of terrorist group, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), in deepening biases. Although Çavdar et al. (2019) report success in uncovering students' stereotypes, the study also highlights limitations of teacher-centred anti-misconception pedagogic models by noting that students still maintained a high degree of bias about the Middle East for certain topics even after 'targeted lecture' interventions.

Turning attention to stereotypes of Africa, which persist despite several positive transformations since the second half of the twentieth century, this edited volume compiles pedagogic experiences, strategies, indigenous African knowledges, ideas, and tips for advancing better conceptualisations of the continent. Common misconceptions about Africa portray the continent as a monolithic block of uncivilised jungle dwellers plagued with malnutrition, diseases, crime, conflicts, and political oppression. Such grossly inaccurate and negative misperceptions support racist justification for and actual exploitation of Africa, including through past slave trades and (neo)colonialism, as articulated in Rodney's (1972) classic on *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Misconceptions about Africa also fuel racial prejudices and a 'clash of civilisations'. This is evident in the violent anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa in the early 1990s; Afro-Brazilian anti-racism movements leading to a law mandating the teaching of African cultures and history

in Brazil's public schools in 2003; the anger of Guangzhou's African immigrant communities against what they perceived as anti-black racism in the city's coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) containment regime in 2020; and the 'Black Lives Matter' movement in the Unites States of America (USA).

While misconceptions underlie biases in human relations and threaten harmonious co-existence, persistence of Africa-related stereotypes in the twenty-first century is puzzling given the following transformations: remarkable growth in the economic performance of several African countries since independence from colonial rule; unprecedented levels of integration of African countries in the global economy and global value chains; inclusion of Africa(ns) in global governance institutions; global reach of broadcast media, social media and in-Africa casting of Africa-related scenes and characters in movies; surge in innovative technologies, especially in communication, making the world more interconnected; the globalisation of higher education accompanied by increased staff and student exchanges, greater integration of content on Africa in curricula; academic movements in Africa to decentre Eurocentric colonial perspectives in teaching Africa; and pedagogic reform calls to jettison traditional passive 'teacher-centred' pedagogies for critical active 'student-centred' ones.

Structure of the Book

The book questions the perseverance of misconception about Africa, bringing together scholars from various countries, across different continents, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Ireland, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and USA. This variety of contributions enables us to contribute to the conversation on transnational education from a truly global perspective, taking stock of the main challenges emerging in managing diversity and knowledge of the world in specific local and national contexts. We have organised the book into three main parts. Part I advances theoretical reflections on the root causes behind contemporary misconceptions of Africa. Because (neo-) colonial exploitation thrives on racist ideological justifications which mischaracterise and denigrate colonial subjectivities, the first

part of the book analyses the role of intellectual imperialism (Chapter 2) and the disciplinary power of Eurocentrism (Chapter 3) in shaping how we know Africa today.

In Chapter 2, Tarabinah examines the significance of Western episteme and academic imperialism during colonial and postcolonial times, as well as the function of colonial pedagogy, modernisation theories, and neoliberal policies and ideologies in perpetuating a distorted perspective of Africa's development. The chapter also critically positions issues of decolonising the curriculum within a wider emancipation project as Africa's development lies in overcoming academic imperialism and decolonising the academic space.

In Chapter 3, Ye investigates how Eurocentrism sustains and wields dominance in the field of Development Studies. The chapter examines numerous academic programmes linked with major Development studies institutes in the United Kingdom (UK) and Ethiopia to trace the discipline's history. In the UK, development studies is strongly linked to the process of decolonisation and the requirement for aid agencies and international organisations to handle development projects in post-colonial contexts. In contrast, development studies in Ethiopia emerge as a national effort driven by economic growth incentives, but not without geopolitical pressures and international aid needs.

Puplampu and Odoom assert theoretical arguments in Chapter 4 for decolonising knowledge production and teaching of Africa if misperceptions of the continent are to be surmounted. As China has emerged as a major actor in Africa's development sector, this chapter focuses on knowledge production in the context of China-Africa relations, emphasising the importance of knowledge producers' positionality and agency in teaching and supporting learning about Africa. However, decolonising African knowledge production in connection with China presents various problems, including unequal power relations in institutional finance, design, and administration. After examining these obstacles, the chapter presents corrective measures, emphasising interdisciplinarity and public-private

collaborations between academic institutions as the way ahead for strengthening knowledge production and teaching of Africa in connection with China.

Part II, which consists of four chapters, shares indigenous knowledge from African elders (Chapter 8) and actionable pedagogic strategies (Chapters 5–7) for teaching and supporting nuanced learning of Africa. Inaccurate conceptions and stereotypes of Africa are not exclusive to a single discipline, and consistent with Chapter 4's call for multidisciplinarity and decoloniality, Part II draws on empirical data from different modules (albeit all broadly related to Political and Social Science) as well as the experiences of colleagues in various disciplines and continents with diverse classroom cultures.

Constituting the core of this edited volume, the chapters in Part II share evidence-based, student-centred pedagogies and strategies for teaching content on Africa while confronting misconceptions and negative misrepresentations of Africa. Drawing on the teaching experiences of Barure and Okonkwo in South Africa and Nigeria respectively, as well as Freirean pedagogic reflections, Chapter 5 discusses the potential of flipped classrooms for addressing stereotypes about Africa. When applied to African studies, the flipped classroom model provides opportunities for students to critically analyse depictions of Africa in African literature and in contemporary issues. The African mirror methods and the African-Author-Philosophy approach, in particular, assist students in personally identifying with African literature while also offering a wider learning opportunity in which they may actively comprehend the complexity of African societies and cultures. Pre-class media assignments are crucial for challenging prevalent narratives and preconceptions. This chapter discusses how these tactics can help to strike a delicate balance between understanding of African uniqueness and global awareness, while also supporting a decolonial worldview.

In non-African contexts, there is an increased likelihood of teaching students with misconceptions and preconceptions which mischaracterise Africa, as many students may have

limited or no lived experiences in Africa and nearly no prior formal education on Africa. Focusing on an undergraduate module in a European university, D'Arcy explores in Chapter 6 how role plays and world-building experiments can be used to challenge negative preconceptions of African politics, in particular, by putting misconceptions in the spotlight, allowing students to become more emotionally involved and connected to otherwise distant and abstract realities. The chapter includes reflections on how these pedagogic strategies effectively provide students with a decentring experience for confronting misconceptions. However, to be successful they also require a classroom context of trust, and an instructor constantly involved in self-reflection about misconceptions pedagogies.

In Chapter 7, continuing the focus on misconception-targeted teaching and learning, Che draws on cognitive theory of belief perseverance and selected Freirean principles of dialogic partnership to develop a pedagogic model which engages students as 'country specialists' to specifically counter the infamous 'Africa is a country' stereotype. The chapter reports the model's practical application and effectiveness in an Africa-focused module in an undergraduate International Relations programme in a China-based transnational university. This pedagogic model contributes to correcting the 'Africa is a country' inaccuracy by triggering curiosity about Africa's diversity through preconception tests at the start of the semester, inspiring rational evaluations of cognitive biases, while also regularly exposing students to multiple information sources. However, adaptation of the model necessitates instructor inquisitiveness, transparency, and resourcefulness.

In Chapter 8, Dei and Adjei explore how African Elders Critical Teachings (*ElderCrits*) can be used as critical thinking pedagogical tools to cultivate an indigenous understanding of Africa whilst undermining misperceptions about the continent, its people, and cultures. To decolonise learning on Africa, it is important to consider not only questions of how we teach but also what we teach. Consistent with the decolonial logic of teaching African indigenous knowledges, the chapter illuminates the potential of *ElderCrits* for advancing knowledge

about Africa from Africans. Data relating to indigenous African knowledges is collected amongst Indigenous African Elders, leading scholars, and educational practitioners from Canada and Ghana currently engaged in transformative educational work. While the introduction of *ElderCrits* into African curriculum faces opposition from Eurocentric educationists, the chapter posits a variety of benefits that result from integrating African elders' indigenous knowledge as an epistemic gift for decolonial teaching on Africa.

Part III highlights the value of accompanying anti-misconception pedagogic strategies and African indigenous knowledges explored in the book with broader policy instruments which have the potential of centring Africa and African perspectives. These African-centring instruments specifically involve education regulation mandating courses on Africa as is the case in Brazil (Chapter 9), promoting African-centred publishing (Chapter 10), integrating African-authored publications (Chapters 11–12), and philosophies such as *Ubuntu* (Chapter 13) in teaching. Chapters in this final part of the book highlight the importance of policy instruments which can help to centre Africa and African indigenous knowledges with a transformative objective of tackling prejudices faced by Africans and black people around the world.

In Chapter 9, Aguilar showcases the importance of using education-regulating laws at the national level to promote transformative teaching while confronting anti-black racism. Illustrating why and how laws are relevant for promoting African literacy and intercultural sensitivities, this chapter explores how Brazil's promulgation of a law mandating teaching of African history and Afro-Brazilian culture (Law 10.639/03) has impacted Africa-related education. For enhanced anti-misconception and anti-racism outcomes, the chapter avers that this law's implementation needs to pay attention to political and social demands, with prominent participation from the Black Movement.

Countering misconceptions of Africa for transformative decolonial learning necessitates also problematising the

predominance of non-African authored texts used in teaching and supporting learning on Africa. Ideas taught and learned in classrooms are conventionally conveyed and conserved through published texts. In Chapter 10, Mugumbate, Renzaho, and Mabvurira argue that encouraging more Africans to publish on Africa is imperative for dispelling distortions and misconceptions. Hence, the chapter calls for decolonising the publication industry, accompanying anti-misconception pedagogic strategies for teaching Africa with texts published by Africans. However, to increase the volume of publications on Africa by Africans, certain challenges including limited funding and publishing infrastructure must be overcome.

In Chapter 11, Venancio illustrates the utility of African-authored books as anti-misconception pedagogic resources in teaching Africa. This chapter reveals how incorporating Lusophone African authored works in a module on Race, African Diaspora and International Relations can contribute towards correcting the misconception in a Brazilian higher education context that Portuguese colonialism in Africa was less harmful than the prevalent French and British colonial systems of assimilation and indirect rule. Decentring Portuguese narratives while centring African perspectives on colonialism, Venancio uses publications authored by intellectuals from Lusophone Africa to support teaching and learning in the module. By exposing students to African experiences, recounted by Africans in African-authored texts, students in the University of Brasília are brought closer to the realities of racial segregation, inequality, and brutality which are whitewashed in Portuguese postcolonial ideology.

Further illustrating the potential of African-authored works for challenging preconceptions, Brown comparatively discusses in Chapter 12 experiences of teaching about post-colonial Africa through the use of two differently-situated pieces of writing: one, an academic article by a white male American political scientist; the other, a fictional novel by a black Zimbabwean female author. While the former often leads students to position themselves as little more than self-satisfied lookouts for bias amongst their compatriots, the latter

moves students towards a decolonial understanding of Africa, learning from Africans about Africa, enabling students to also learn about themselves. The chapter highlights the pertinence of incorporating indigenous African texts in curricula on Africa in non-African contexts for purposes of inspiring students to move beyond merely condemning colonial exploitation and stereotypical depictions of Africa to actively participating in Africa-empowerment movements.

In Chapter 13, Mtengwane and Metula illuminate the importance of centring an indigenous (South) African philosophy, *Ubuntu*, in teaching and supporting learning in Community Development. *Ubuntu* advocates for collective responsibility in improving the human condition. Conventional Western-centric modernisation approaches to the study and practice of community development overlook indigenous African customs/principles/values. This chapter analyses the literature on the *Ubuntu* philosophy and community development to gain insights into the extent to which this philosophy can foster Afrocentric active learning, collectivism, participation, and collaboration in student engagement while challenging misperceptions and derogatory depictions of African communities.

Concluding the edited volume, in Chapter 14, TIANDEM-ADAMOU explores the utility of engaging African teachers in higher education classrooms around the world. The chapter's specific contextual focus, as with some other chapters in the book, is China, justified by the latter's status as the leading bilateral economic and development partner of many African states. While illuminating the relevance of African teachers for promoting intercultural sensitivity, the chapter examines challenges and transformative contributions of especially African English teachers in English medium universities in China. The journey to decolonising knowledge and overcoming misperceptions about Africa is twisty and long, but having Africans in driving seats as teachers is pertinent for reaching transformative education on Africa.

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