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The Linguistics of Literature in Education: African Literature in African Universities

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Abstract

Teaching African Literature - the English text - would seem to be a replicable skill across continents and countries. Experience shows that understanding texts depends less on the lecturer's skills and more on student perceptions. Since the inventions of the Gutenberg Press and subsequently of "Oral Man" the story of Africa has been the story *about* Africa. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) speaks of deliberate attempts "to destroy every last remnant of alternative ways of knowing and living, to obliterate collective identities and memories and to impose a new order" on the colonized. Education has been one of the chief instruments in this process, systematically alienating students from their cultural roots. Today as African writers learn to tell the story of Africa, African students are less able to relate to these literary texts than for example students in a German university. Even though texts reflect their own culture, they resist the "other ways of knowing" Tuhiwai Smith speaks about and force internalized perceptions of their own selves on to narrative texts. Careful linguistic analysis provides students with the opportunity to re-connect with the cultural values a foreign-based education system has attempted to abolish from their cultural memory. The tools provided by critical discourse analysis are invaluable in helping students understand differences in approach in literature; they become a means for students to hear the extent of cultural and personal alienation from their own selves, and to re-connect. This paper explores what happens when students are almost totally alienated from the culture as reflected in their own literature written in the colonizer's language. It seeks an approach that makes fruitful learning possible as African students study the works of South African novelist Zakes Mda; Zanzibari novelist Abdulrazak Gurnah and Malian filmmaker Cheik Oumar Sissoko.

Keywords: Tuhiwai-Smith; Mda; Gurnah; Sissoko; de-colonization; African Literature; colonial education; Africa's story

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1. Introduction

“Preserving” cultures; retaining African cultural identities; not “losing” traditions - are all watchwords amongst students in African universities. To determine the relevance of old traditions many research tribal customs - circumcision; children’s games; dances; clothing. They search for their identity; debate the role of women and of family structures. Parliamentary debates center on cultural appropriateness as a recent example in Kenya argues whether a man is legally bound to inform his first wife that he is marrying a second. Such scenarios suggest that modern authors and filmmakers at least partly conform to Frantz Fanon’s (1961) third phase of cultural liberation when intellectuals, also those educated in Western educational institutions, seek new closeness to the people from whom they originate (pp.145-180). Yet in universities the understanding even of students who obsessively cling to tribal traditions speaks of cultural identity alienation which permeates all spheres of life.

Recently, at a Christmas Mass the priest read the long account of Jesus’ genealogy in Matthew’s Gospel. The congregation listened attentively. When the priest began his homily with a recitation of his own genealogy, the congregation - seminarians in a Carmelite Seminary of which the homilist is the Superior - shuffled nervously. As the homilist continued, they started laughing; it seemed only respect for his position as Prior prevented them from booing him off the pulpit. When he spoke of his father telling him before his death: “I will remember you” - i.e. the dying man said he would in the future remember his son - near pandemonium broke out. Hardly anyone could relate this approach to death to Christian understandings of Resurrection and eternal life.

At the Kenya School of Law in Nairobi aspiring lawyers discussed justice regarding land ownership. They spoke easily of Roman Dutch law; of French law, of other justice systems. Curious, I asked them how they related their own justice systems to what they were learning. I was met with blank stares. None had heard of African Socialism, nor of its approach to land ownership where land belongs to the people and is given them in trust by the ancestors to be handed on to the descendants; where what is grown on the land belongs to the person who works the land, and can be sold, unlike the land itself which can never be for sale. Despite their pride that Bishop Tutu received the Nobel Peace Prize, they did not question the retributive justice Kenya ascribes to, nor did they ask whether reconciliatory justice espoused by Tutu and Mandela as well as by Truth and Reconciliation Commissions throughout Africa, and by modern African writers could offer new possibilities for peace. Unable to move beyond perceptions of unfairness, they grumbled that only Africans, in this case their own President and vice-President and not leaders of other nations were at the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

In a literature class a student threw Zakes Mda’s *Ways of Dying* across the room: she did not want to read it; there was no main protagonist; no clear beginning, middle and end. Mda’s *Heart of Redness* is even worse as far as she was concerned; he does not understand history as a post-colonial phenomenon, but focuses on the period before Western Colonialism and on divisive issues which because of the coming of *apartheid* rule have never been resolved and need to be dealt with if there is to be peace. In Gurnah’s works the coming of the Europeans is similarly not the central historical event it is in Western history books. And this really troubles students who have grown up within a Western education system left them by the departing British fifty years ago, and never updated since. Abdulrazak Gurnah’s *Desertion* (2005) and *Paradise* (2001) consequently seem impenetrable to many. This is not only because the history of Africa - the straight lines that determine borders of artificially created countries; the looting of the continent during the first Scramble for Africa; modern neo-colonialism - is practically unknown to them.

What irritates these literature students is that they now hear a story told from the perspective of African writers and they do not understand it. Here history is not linear but cyclical; is not related to

specific dates but to events and to the people implementing official policies; is understood in terms of the *sasa* and the *zamani* - time which cannot be measured numerically; which belongs to the community, not only to the individual; which binds individuals to their environment; which moves “backwards” from the immediate experience, from the NOW, to the period beyond which nothing can go (Mbiti, 1969). The question for every teacher of African literature is; what approach should one use to enable students' to once again access “collective identities and memories” which have been almost totally obliterated as a foreign order has been imposed? (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2012).

2. Decolonizing Literature

In *Moving the Center: The Struggle for Cultural Freedoms* (1993) Ngugi wa Thiong'o speaks of moving the center especially “in the field of languages, literature, cultural studies and in the general organization of literature departments in universities around the globe” away from the dominant Eurocentrism which “is most dangerous to the self-confidence of Third World peoples when it becomes internalized in their intellectual conception of the universe” (p. xvii).

Linda Tuhiwai-Smith sees research justice and the decolonization of research as an imperative if indigenous people are to regain ownership over both taught and learned knowledge; over the manner in which research is conducted. She speaks of research being wielded as an instrument of “absolute uselessness” to the indigenous; and “absolute usefulness” to those who conduct the research. She speaks of the right of indigenous communities to shape research questions and to “re-right” history. This only happens when they learn to “shift the gaze”; to change perspectives; to look at themselves with new eyes; “to turn research around from being a negative, [...] from being an abusive power” (#INQ13: 29:10-33:20). She speaks of the need to move beyond the “common sense [knowledge] of society” (54:29) found in text books, beyond merely documenting the truth, no matter whose truth it is (54:51) to asking what it means to know and be; to identify how “who we are [is] defined by what we know”; and to determine who it is that tells us all this (59:08). She points out that “every person in a community has knowledge” (1:02:04). In the second half of *Decolonizing the Mind* (2012) she documents the manner in which communities access and disseminate the “alternative ways of knowing” (p. 72) whose validity Western education has denied (p. 185). Literature creates knowledge; stories told *about* those who were colonized have been as abusive as research has been. Thus, what Tuhiwai Smith says of research is also applicable here.

2.1. Africa tells its own story

“If you don't like someone's story, write your own,” says Achebe. And that is precisely what modern African writers attempt to do. Thus Gurnah tells us that in “the story of our times [...] the narrative has slipped out of the hands of those who had control of it before”; those telling the story are learning to understand their own world in the creation of renewed and refashioned narratives, those who once believed they owned the rights to the story and the manner and content of its telling are forced to listen (*Post-colonial waters* 30:25-50). Gurnah claims that this has “unsettle[d] previous understandings” of knowledge (Nasta, 2004, p. 353).

What has come as a complete surprise is that while these stories reflect a worldview foreign to European audiences, they are often even more foreign to audiences in African Universities. The blatant anger of students reading texts about slavery and colonization is openly expressed. Yet, these students cannot move beyond their anger to recognize the real harm inflicted on their identity. The “shifting of the gaze”; the need for formerly colonized nations to re-assess how they feel about themselves. The ability to see oneself within the space one occupies that Tuhiwai Smith speaks about remains almost out of reach for many African literature students.



Figure 1. Achebe: The Congo King on his ivory throne
© Paasche (2014) Taken at the National Archives, Kenya.

Achebe (2009) speaks of Africans' "lapsed memory," of their having to learn to spell their "proper name" (p. 54). In his essay "Africa's Tarnished Name" he models the approach he proposes as he counters European understandings of history. He contradicts Joseph Conrad's perception of himself in *Heart of Darkness* as the "first of men" wandering on "a prehistoric earth" with his own well-researched African narrative vis-à-vis European perceptions. When literature students read Achebe's essays, they are excited to learn about their history which pre-dated the advent of colonialism and a former African king's criticism of Portuguese justice systems. They attempt to analyze what Achebe implies when he speaks of "the Mweni-Congo, seated on an ivory throne surrounded by his courtiers" (p.83) - a concept perhaps inspired by a visit to Kenya and the discovery of African Ivory carvings (cf. Figure 1). They recognize the trappings of authority and of a well-developed culture, yet none are prepared for the sense of awe when faced with one of the artefacts found in Kenya's National Archives, a building in front of which they catch their bus to the university, yet none have been inside either as students or as teachers. Intricate carvings, very different to those found in Chinese ivory art fascinate them. The sense of pride in a culture at least as old as that of Europe is palpable. Yet, three hundred years of educational conditioning still denies them access to the story of Africa as told by Africans. The comment made by one of Gurnah's (2001) characters in *By the Sea* (2001) is painfully true of today's students: "It was as if they had remade us, and in ways that we no longer had any recourse but to accept" (p. 18). Despite education, or maybe because of it, many Africans remain functionally illiterate with regard to their own culture when they are working within the language imposed on them by the former colonizer - one they have now internalized as the only medium within the education system.

As students are introduced to modern African filmic and written texts, they need to learn to separate themselves from the liberal humanist approach which has conditioned their understanding of narrative. The differences in outwardly similar genres must be identified - generally and specifically. And so for example:

- Modern African narrative is not chronologically linear with a clear beginning, middle and end, but begins *in media res*. It is cyclical. The story of yesterday becomes the story of today and the lesson of the “now.” Events move cyclically back to yesterday’s beginning to make a new beginning possible today. This is for example central to Zakes Mda’s works. In *The Heart of Redness* (2000) the post-*apartheid* community in its interaction with one another relives events which occurred in the 19th century but were never resolved. And while *Ways of Dying* (1995) depicts conflicts which occurred immediately after the demise of *apartheid*, the latter is not the main issue. White people play no role in either narrative. Important is the need to re-assess conflicts ascribed to anxieties and superstitions hidden in the cultural subconscious and not necessarily associated with *apartheid*.
- In the African narrative individuals always remain parts of the society. Unlike in Western liberal humanist tradition they are not in conflict with their societies. Their conflict cannot be separated from that of a society in conflict with itself. Thus each member, even the least, is important. *Ways of Dying* typifies this departure from the tradition inherited by African education. Here the main characters who attempt to live Mandela’s dream of a Rainbow Nation are two slum dwellers. Insignificant as they are, they live the dream of the new South Africa and the resolution that occurs within their communities is presented as a model for Mandela’s Rainbow Nation.
- Perhaps one of the most important characteristic of modern African writing is the return of the ancestors - the living dead. Banished by Christianity and by the introduction of rationalism, they now return. Modern literary artists re-assess their function as they return to the society which according to the Oral Literary Tradition they have never left. Their presence signals their acknowledgement that today’s dilemmas are rooted in decisions they once made and though no longer amongst the living, they too carry responsibility for the society’s future. In their return they demonstrate the reconciliatory nature of justice that African Socialism in its understanding of *Ubuntu* demands - something so powerfully demonstrated in South Africa’s *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. Thus in Cheik Oumar Sissoko’s (1999) *La Genese* the Biblical figure of Jacob is portrayed as an African patriarch who realizes that Isaac and Rebecca, the ancestors he venerates, are as much part of the conflict into which his and the other societies around him have been hurled as he is. Despite genocides and betrayals and corruption, all so prevalent in African nations today, the society seeks reconciliation not as a gift from a God outside the community, but from one another. At the moment when all seems lost the ancestors appear to force Jacob to take responsibility for his actions. It is they, not God, who bestow on him the name “Israel,” and it is the community which ratifies the new name. As the story of Israel and his children is not merely a lesson from the past, but is the story of today’s Africa, its ending is left to the imagination of the audience who in this way “owns” the narrative. It is the community which will decide whether reconciliation between the brothers takes place.

Telling students about these differences in understandings of life and culture does not help shift the gaze however. Only a new cultural *experience* will grant access to the cultural memory which in most African communities has been all but obliterated. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have pointed out, our experience and the sense we make of this experience is neither abstract nor disembodied; reason has an experiential, bodily basis; the imaginative aspects of reason are central to our understanding of the world. The challenge for teachers of African Literature at African Universities is thus to begin a process which will, hopefully, result in "having experiences that can form the basis of alternative metaphors" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

3. Bridging the divide

Both Ngugi and Tuhiwai Smith talk of and to a world they believe is waiting for permission to access and share their knowledge. They presume it is possible for non-Western formerly colonized communities to shift their gaze, to document and eventually internalize and live the ways of knowing

from which they have been alienated. The reality however, is that education systems have been remarkably successful in alienating whole populations from their very selves - and this despite the conscious preservation of traditional culture. Ngugi's insistence that a culture is carried by a language, and that a return to the traditional languages would make cultural affiliation possible, ignores the reality that whole generations have been alienated from cultural concepts which now only nominally define them. It also ignores the all-pervasive presence of English and French as the *lingua franca* of almost all African countries - a fact that cannot be reversed, and the reality that European education systems dominate all African countries. Neither they nor even Achebe (2009) seem to acknowledge the deep divide in the lives of modern African - in this case Kenyan students - who are unable to bring together the traditional world some live at least part of the time, and the world dominated by Western education they inhabit most of the time.

Yes, modern African authors and filmmakers are now telling their own story, and have more or less successfully bridged the divide between the stories imposed on Africans, and their own cultural perceptions. Yet they are generally not understood by their own people who have learned and internalized Western literary structures. Students must learn to reconnect both with themselves and with the text; to move beyond the guilty sense of cultural recognition (you are "backward" or "uncultured" or "uncivilized" if you think like that) to a space where they can come home to themselves; where they can access their own centers even though for now the primary center within which they function personally and academically remains a foreign one.

3.1. Sheik Oumar Sissoko: *La Genèse* - Discovering cultural understanding

La Genese, loosely based on the Biblical story of Jacob and Esau, and of Dinah, daughter of Jacob, and Shechem, son of Hamor, explores issues facing Africa's people, the most important of which is encapsulated in Esau's challenge of God: "Must we [...] forever [...] as brothers be condemned to hate one another?" Students - even those who come from an Oral Literary Tradition - do not find it easy to follow the precepts of this tradition and let the Scriptural story they have learned become their own, not just a lesson to learn. The first step in understanding the film thus involves what Tuhiwai Smith calls changing the focus of the gaze - an action which goes beyond moving the center as understood by Ngugi. It involves engaging the students' sense of self, reminding them that stories are no longer *about* them but *for* them and require their input. Students have to be taught that it is not the text that comes towards them to judge them, but they have to move towards the text and assess it.

Biblical family relationships are confusing at the best of times, so one approach is to ask students to draw a family tree based on facts given in the Scriptures. In the figures they draw German students see Abraham and Sarah to whom he is married and Hagar who also bears him a son at the top of the pyramid and all descendants follow from the top down. Wives are identified by two wedding rings; a "+" sign indicates women "given" for procreative purposes. The family tree drawn conflicts severely with ones depicting traditional Western families. It cannot accommodate the inter-relatedness of Biblical familial relationships. Interestingly, in Louise Erdrich's (1988) novel *Tracks*, which portrays Native-American culture, broken lines indicate traditional marriages whereas unbroken lines reflect marriages formed in the Western "Christian" tradition, yet Erdrich too, uses the top-down Western model.

In a non-academic setting with African religious Sisters preparing for their final profession, Abraham and Sarah are depicted as the stem of the tree. From them comes Isaac and then the tree branches. But all remain connected to the central stem which is Abraham and Sarah. Here, in the African model there is room for polygamy. All women, even those given for procreative purposes, have a branch which further divides. The African tree model runs into trouble when different offshoots unite - but otherwise it is in line with the pictorial image. Interestingly, as drawn by the Sisters, this very literal

family tree model leaves no space for Ismael! When asked the reason, the Sisters responded that the story was about Jacob and Esau. Ismael was not important here so they didn't have to place him: he was the stem of another tree. As for Ismael's relationship to Abraham - well - didn't seeds fall some distance away from the parent tree? The total absence of Ismael in this model can however probably be ascribed to the fact that colonial Christianity, still the norm today, forbids recognition of Ismael, who most Christians in Africa believe is a Muslim and so cannot truly belong to the family tree of God's chosen people.

Once pictorial perceptions of the written text are brought to consciousness it is easier to approach the written and the filmic text.

3.2. *Gurnah: Desertion - approaching the text*

Ever since the tectonic shifts occasioned by the discovery of Gutenberg's Printing Press, Oral man, i.e. so-called indigenous people of the British or other colonial Empires who could not read, have been taught to let the text come to them. If they did not understand, they were judged inadequate. Often they believed it was because they did not understand English well enough. Yet, the problem was and still is that they do not have the tools to assess a text from the space in which they stand as individuals and as a society; they do not know how to bring together the written and the spoken text; how to align the written and the visual-pictorial image it portrays. Consequently Africa's story, even when told by one of their own, remains "just an orderly accumulation of the real knowledge [the British] brought [...], in books they made available [...] in a language they taught" (Gurnah, 2001). Shifting the gaze involves giving students the tools to look at a text from "the outside," regardless of the language of the text. A practical experience is needed to begin this process.

In *Desertion* (2005) Gurnah meditates on philosophies behind maps he as a colonial subject encountered:

... when the world was as full of ironies [...] and almost all of Africa was ruled by Europeans in one way or another [...]. A British map of Africa in the 1950s would have shown four predominant colours: red shading to pink for the British-ruled territories, dark green for the French, purple for the Portuguese and brown for the Belgian (p.148).

Gurnah goes on to meditate on the colors of maps he believes are "a code for a world-view." The humor of the whole meditation is totally lost on students. Not only are they unfamiliar with their own history, the picture Gurnah paints does not conform to the one they have been taught. And then they are handicapped by their inability to bring together the written word and the image it conjures up. This handicap must be addressed first.

When students are then presented with a blank map of Africa and a packet of coloring pencils and are asked to draw what Gurnah sees, total incomprehension fills the class. It takes them relatively long to start. Usually, once they very hesitantly pick up their coloring pencils, they are able to color in at least their own country. As students at the university where I teach come from either Anglophone or Francophone countries, patches of red and green appear on the various maps. It is at this point that some kind of conversation begins and other African countries follow - usually only after consultation with classmates who come from these countries: "You Naijas - were you a British colony?" "Why do you think we spika de English so well?" They learn about Ghana and South Africa. Other former British colonies are not as easily identified. They discover Uganda was never a colony but a protectorate, but do not understand why Gurnah says red, "a gesture to the English national banner, [...] represented the willingness to sacrifice in the name of duty, and all the blood spilt in the name of the Empire. Even South Africa [...] red shading to pink [...] a dominion like Canada, Australia and New Zealand, places where Europeans had travelled half the world to find [...] peace and prosperity" (pp. 148-149). Slowly they learn that their African history is not unique, that others too have been colonized and choose no longer to see themselves as victims.

Identifying the former French colonies is only possible if they have French-speaking classmates. As they color their map they are continually forced to return to the text. Only reference to a map portraying physical features allows them to understand the bitter irony of Gurnah's words when he says the maps' "dark green was a joke at the expense of the French, to suggest Elysian pastures when most of the territory they ruled was a desert or semi-desert or equatorial forest, so much useless territory won with arms and a grandiose hubris" (p. 149).

As they identify the Portuguese colonies where "purple [represents][...] the anxious self-regard of the Portuguese [...] obsession with royalty and religion and symbolisms of empire [...] they had been plundering these lands with barefoot brutality, slashing and burning, and transporting millions of the inhabitants to the slave plantations in Brazil" (p. 149) I decide not to ask them what Gurnah means by "the obsession with royalty and religion!" This is not the moment to guide them to question the religion into which they have been colonized.

The big "Aha!" moment usually comes when they color the former Belgian Congo where Gurnah says "brown [represents][...] the stolid and cynical efficiency of the Belgians [...] whose gift to the people they ruled turned out to bear no comparison to any of the other Great Powers of that mean-spirited era. Their legacy to the Congo and Rwanda will keep the rivers and lakes of those places muddied for a while to come yet" (p. 149).

"This is awesome! Have you seen how big the Congo is!" At this point they grasp Africa's tragedy; its partitioning into never-to-be-reunited pieces, each alienated from the other through imposed history and colonial language. Coloring the former Belgian colony always leads to discussions of the implications of a personal fiefdom envisioned by King Leopold of Belgium and the meteoric rise of Dunlop tires made from rubber tapped in a country known today as "the broken heart of Africa;" a country with at least ten million dead, the center of Africa's World War.

As they meditate on the map before them, they learn that in the African Oral Literary Tradition their continent's history is not understood in terms of dates, but either as a specific period; or in relation to the consequences of certain events. And that this is how Gurnah attempts to depict it. As their pencils move across the map they discover the straight lines that form country borders in Africa and they begin to understand why Gurnah refuses to acknowledge artificially-created countries; why he says one should not speak of the "East Coast of Africa;" but of the west coast of the Indian Ocean Archipelago (cf.: *In Post-Colonial Waters*: 2013). Once given permission to "shift their gaze," to read their own culture in the printed word, to no longer allow texts to approach them, but to change direction and move towards the texts, students almost miraculously provide insights to which the readers who once told the story *about* Africa and who Gurnah says are now forced to listen, have no access.

Thus, in *Desertion* Fredrick, the colonial governor personifying the British Empire sees as his "responsibility to the natives to keep an eye on them and guide them slowly into obedience and orderly labour" (p. 84). given this picture of indigenous Africans, it is no wonder he is amazed how "two devoted Zanzibaris [...] had carried the embalmed body of [...] Dr. Livingstone thousands of miles from the great lakes to the coast in Bagamoyo" (p. 38). He interprets what he sees as their "grand symbolic gesture" when they buried Livingstone's heart in the place where he died as a sign of African peoples' admiration of his fellow Westerner. No other interpretation seems to cross his mind.

Yet, as students now no longer seek historical dates, they recognize Gurnah's skillful weaving in of Bagamoyo's history as the center of the Arab slave trade and later Germany's East African capital. They are able to explain that burying the heart was a practical not a symbolic act; it should not be interpreted as meaning they wanted Livingstone's heart to remain forever in Africa. An un-disemboweled body carried long distances through East Africa's equatorial heat will rot. Similarly, bringing it to Bagamoyo was probably not out of personal loyalty, but because African cultures generally forbid burial away from home. Their taking him to Bagamoyo was most likely to ensure that

his spirit, now one of the living dead, would not bother them, but would return to Livingstone's place of origin. These insights are only available to readers in contact with Eastern African cultures. The irony of Frederick's interpretation remains totally lost on non-African / Western readers now in the same position once accorded colonized readers who had no access to cultural landscapes reflected in stories they were given - whether situated in Europe or in Africa.

4. Conclusion

In *Moving the Center* (1993) Ngugi says Conrad, Cary and Kipling "could never have shifted the vision because they were themselves bound by the European center of their upbringing and experience" (p. 4). Is the same true of today's young people and their educators who know no other educational system than the one the British and other colonizers left behind; a system faithfully passed down through generations and "preserved" to the point of fossilization? Year after year as curricula are re-worked structures remain. Do these products of particular systems even have the tools to deconstruct what the system has forced them to internalize, and find a new way?

The process which permits students to re-connect with their cultural subconscious, to come home to themselves, goes beyond the need for Africans to tell their own story. It also goes beyond Tuhiwai Smith's insistence that every community has innate knowledge and must be given the right not only to share this knowledge, but co-determine for whose benefit that knowledge will be utilized.

Kenya's educational model was recently expounded on in a university workshop on curriculum design and review: "Our students are living raw materials, at the university they are processed (by us); they are our products when they leave the university." (Workshop attended at Catholic University of Eastern Africa). Exams make up the bulk of the learning experience; great emphasis is placed on "marking schemes," rote learning is the order of the day. With such an approach to education, teaching becomes "telling them." There is no time for students to discover and so to question and truly learn. Yet, it is only this questioning, this wish to find out what they don't know, to discover where others have misrepresented reality, that will enable them to shift their gaze. It is this self-discovery combined with careful linguistic analysis of literary texts that will make it possible for students to move outside the emotional political-historical debate that brings with it so much baggage that the extent of cultural alienation is hardly noticed.

Despite Tuhiwai-Smith's (2012) focus on the third developmental phase identified by Fanon when intellectuals "realign themselves with the people [...] to produce a revolutionary and national literature" (p. 73), she yet speaks of the intertwining of the various academic traditions, of the impossibility of separating what through several generations has grown together (#QN13:41:52). Today the linguistic tradition, rooted in Western Academia, has the opportunity to contribute towards reversing the effects of a process which sought "to obliterate collective identities and memories." This however, can only occur when educators and students alike are willing to shift their vision and consciously decide no longer to be bound by their present Eurocentric upbringing and experience.

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