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Freeing Postcolonial Studies from Registers of Alterity: Preliminary Considerations Towards a non-oppositional Para- colonial Praxis

Siddhartha Chakraborti

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4285-1199>

Corresponding Author: Siddhartha Chakraborti, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Faculty of Arts, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh 202002, Uttar Pradesh, India, siddharthachakraborti@gmail.com

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Abstract

Aims: *This paper traces the development of the terms related to postcolonialism in literature departments, taking up the proliferation of the term 'Global South' as an alternative to Third World as its starting point.*

Methodology and Approaches: *The paper presents a detailed analysis of various ways in which we seek to interrogate the colonial influence and seek to represent the same in humanities through an assessment of the merits and meanings of various terms in currency. The paper posits that existing imaginaries are all built on oppositional binary frameworks that seek to 'other'.*

Outcome: *In contrast to such imaginaries that cause postcolonial studies to remain fixated, the paper argues for the need to create imaginaries that seek to assert while accepting the complexities and myriad influences of the past. The paper posits the term Paracolonial, presenting the existing manner in which the term has been hitherto used and suggests its suitability for creating a new approach towards the area, rooting this approach, taking inspiration from Buddhism, in an acceptance of co-dependent origination as a guiding principle for phenomena.*

Conclusion and Suggestions: *It is hoped that such an orientation will avoid the pitfalls of both an uncritical valorisation of the values of the coloniser while avoiding the othering inherent in cultural nationalism.*

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The term which has recently gained currency as an alternative to Third World and postcolonialism is "Global South". In particular, the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service) has been promoting the term through a series of conferences and workshops based out of the University of Tübingen over the last few years. Fittingly, the term Global South itself was popularised by Willy Brandt, the pro-American former German Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1971 (STWR, 2016). The idea for the brand commission was announced on January 14th, 1977, by Robert McNamara, the President of the World Bank and the one-time Secretary of Defence of the United States of America (CGN, 2010), under whom US involvement in the Vietnam War became a concrete fact. Brandt himself was extremely close to the US State Policy, and in the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, later popularly known as the Brandt Commission, there were no representatives from the Second World whatsoever. The Commission came up with two reports - the first, *North-South* (1980), and *Common Crisis* (1983), which defined a Global North-South divide which roughly encircles the world at the latitude of proximately thirty degrees north, dividing the United States and Mexico, climbing north to include China and Mongolia and separating Europe from Asia and Africa. The line circles around New Zealand and Australia, placing them in the Global North.

The essential difference between the Global North and Global South was seen in terms of development, with those in the Global South facing problems associated with poverty, which falls over into health, housing and education, patriarchal biases against women and a history of having been colonised. The report advocated that the reason behind the difference between the North and the South lay in the North's control of high-end technology, which led to its ability to create goods which could be sold for greater profits vis-a-vis the Global South, which depended on more labour intensive means of production that made it difficult for the governments to advance by building up surplus capital. The Brandt Report primarily advocated the transfer of technology and resources, ethical trade policies and restructuring of Third World debt to create a more

equitable world. However, the project did not take off as planned, with consecutive world recessions from the seventies to the end of the Cold War limiting funding. Suddenly, the breakup of the erstwhile Soviet Union and the faltering economies of the post-Soviet states made a second-world-shaped hole in the uniformity of the global north in Asia. In 2002, *The Brandt Equation: 21st Century Blueprint for the New Global Economy* was published by James Bernard Quilligan on behalf of the Brandt 21 Forum. The forum, active in this century, was created to continue the Brandt Commission and promote its unfinished work.

The term Global South, however, has its roots in the First World and began with the blessings of McNamara, one of the most hawkish administrators, to determine US military policies. In over thirty years of the existence of the initial report, little practically had been done to take up the undoubtedly valid points it raises and put them into practical implementation. Arif Dirlik, in his "Global South: Predicament and Promise" (2007), notes how- "The United Nations Development Program initiative of 2003, "Forging a Global South," has played an important part in drawing attention to the concept, as has interactivity amongst societies of the "South" establishing their own initiatives in pursuing developmental agenda" (Dirlik 2007: 13). Dirlik also points to the UNDP report of December 2004 which declares 19th December to be the United Nation's day for South-South cooperation. The United Nations began its technical assistance programme in 1949, and then the Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries Conference of 1978, Buenos Aires, shifted the onus of technical assistance from the Global North to the South to intensifying cooperation within the Global South. In other words, we can see a clear difference in the intentions of the Brandt Report, which promotes the transference of hegemonic skills and technology from the Global North to the Global South and the current tendency of the Global South to promote assistance amongst its constituent members. It almost seems as if the Global North is reluctant to continue in its willing empowerment of the Global South. Dirlik notes how initially:

The Third World... (was) conceived as a third path to modernity...by the societies of the South who participated in the Bandung Conference of

1955 (Non-Aligned Movement)...it had also come to represent a revolutionary way out of the dilemmas presented by capitalism and actually-existing socialism. The South seemed poised at the edge of history. Only a decade later, the situation seemed to have transformed. The Brandt Commission...perceived an impending economic and environmental global crisis on the horizon, and saw increased succour for the South as one crucial way to avert catastrophe for humankind. The publication of the Brandt Commission Report in 1981 coincided with the beginnings of the Reagen/Thatcher revolution, the appearance of East/South-East Asian capitalism as a competitor to the "North" and the receding of socialism...The Brandt Commission's global neo-Keynesianism was stillborn in its rapid replacement in the course of the 1980s by neoliberal economic policies enforced by the US-dominated World Bank and the International Monetary Fund...The South had to seek development in the global capitalist economy. (Dirlik 2007: 14-15)

Dirlik succinctly points out how the initial impetus for the Global North to agree to re-approach with the Global South comes not from a moral-ethical standpoint as is widely promoted but rather due to the exigencies of global politics. The initial impetus for technology exchange after the Second World War came from the Soviet bloc's active involvement in Third World politics and can be seen as an extension of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. The Brandt Report itself seems to be a direct negation of the developing networks of the Non-Aligned Movement. Finally, the revival in the conception of the Global South, post-2011, can be seen as a continuation of anxieties that arose after the 9/11 attacks, the drive for democracy across the Arab world, the recent crisis of the ISIS in the Levant and a resurgent Russia under Putin flexing its muscles in Ukraine, Crimea and Syria. Dirlik's article clearly connects the Global South with anxieties about the resurgence of the People's Republic of China, a debate which is only relevant for this paper as it reveals continued anxieties of the First World in terms of its search for its Other.

Dorothy Figueira, in her rather dismissive analysis of the term "The Global South: Yet another Attempt to Engage the Other" (2007), places "the notion of the Global South...as the latest articulation of alterity, following in the wake of multiculturalism and postcolonialism" (Figueira, 2007: 144). It is interesting to note another scholar declaring the death of postcolonialism. More importantly, we have to understand what we mean by alterity. Figueira uses the term in the sense of otherness. In this respect, Jeffery Nealon, in his work on *Alterity Politics* (1998) distinguishes between identity politics and alterity politics - "if identity politics is an attempt to thematize the other in terms of its similarities with the self, I am interested here in constructing an ethical alterity politics that considers identity as beholden and responsive first and foremost to the other... it is in... imbrication of the theoretical and the social that gives force and definition to my sense of ethics... any interesting or useful ethics is precisely a politics of the other, a linkage of theoretical necessities with concrete response... it is only in such concrete ethical response that alterity and politics are imbricated" (Nealon, 1998: 31). Joshua Wexler, in the University of Chicago's *Theories of Media: Keywords Glossary* writes "the mediation of alterity or otherness in the world provides a space for thinking about the complexities of the self and other and the formation of identity." Alterity is also linked to Judeo-Christian eschatology. As Frans van Peperstraten, in his essay "Thinking Alterity - In One or Two? Nancy's Christianity, compared with Lyotard's Judaism" (2012), states: "From within one religion, another religion or the absence of religion is experienced as alterity. At the same time, religion is in itself a way of experiencing alterity, namely, the alterity usually indicated with the word God" (Peperstraten, 2012: 145). In this sense, it is the imagination of the complete other and a complete reconciliation and acceptance of that complete other through the praxis of faith that marks out the possibility of one's interaction and experience of alterity in a positive manner.

Against the above definitions that seek to reduce the otherness of the 'other' and allow for meaningful dialogue, there are also views of alterity as given by Castoriades in his *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (1997) as something that allows for the possibility of something new, rather than something to be

afraid of or to mould. As Castoriades puts it: "For what is given in and through history is not the determined sequence of the determined but the emergence of radical otherness immanent creation, non-trivial novelty" (Castoriades, 1997: 184). Therefore, when Figueira suspiciously notes: "I have deep reservations regarding the Global South as a viable model for reconceptualising notions of alterity. The reality is that before any theory of alterity can succeed... there needs to occur a decolonisation of the other" (Figueira, 2007: 144).

We need to keep in mind that the current condition is not one of alterity at all, even from the location of the First World which has its continued presence of colonisations whether they be in Indian reservations or the suppression of the immediate political questions of black identity in favour of 'world literatures' - a move which Figueira opposes throughout her article. Figueira describes herself as the head of a comparative literature department at the University of Georgia and with some pride notes that they cover courses from languages as diverse as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Zulu, Yoruba, Swahili, Vietnamese and Hindi. She privileges her department as "a department that truly has the potential to deal with the globe more responsibly than most comparative literature departments" (Figueira, 2007: 145). She notes how in implementing a mandate demanding courses in cultural diversity, while at the University level, it was agreed to take up literature from across the world in opposition to focusing on diversities within the United States. However, as she notes with a certain degree of unsubstantiated subjectivity "on the college level, however, cultural diversity was understood as multiculturalism and multiculturalism was defined as domestic. The level of discussion was not particularly sophisticated" (Figueira, 2007: 145).

The reason behind her angst is that at the local level students who were coming from a state which had a history of racial violence and segregation were more interested in studying local authors that represented Black American culture. This naturally put her department with its range of world literature taught in translation under threat. Of course, they were charged with being Eurocentric and racist. It is instructive to note the defence that is given:

I was operating on the premise...that the history of a people is reckoned through the internal logic of its own culture and that we must understand that logic in order to understand their achievement. I felt that this should be the task of multiculturalism - the task of any theory of pedagogy of alterity.... Pedagogies of alterity seek to manage the other within the American continuum without analysing non-Western reality. The Third World is studied in many American universities under the umbrella of multiculturalism...The practical reason for such packagings of alterity is obvious: it is easy. It does not involve learning about another culture or demand learning another language. (Figueira, 2007: 146-147)

Leaving aside the hint of elitism and superiority of knowledge, Figueira constantly keeps beating around the bush and extracting the various problems of alterity studies. Apart from the question of the location of the other, which obviously in today's world is completely dislocated and glocal, she takes up how terms like multiculturalism are used by administrators to pay lip-service to diversification. She blames it to be an ethos of free trade theorising for privileged academics (Figueira, 2007: 149). Noting the Global South to be a continuation of this alterity studies - after all the Global South is the other of the Global North, she asks the rhetorical question: "Can the Global South promise anything different?" (Figueira, 2007: 150).

However, in all of this, she does not find any way of emerging out of this alterity bind. Perhaps, her location in a position of privilege as an academician and the head of department in a First World campus, allows her to realise that alterity politics have their limits, something she painfully discovers when alterities other than those which she teaches about start asserting themselves and demanding space which had seemed sacrosanct. The discourse of the global and the local can no longer work today as even the local contains significant portions of the Global South that are marginalised, the underdeveloped and the poor, who are all clamouring for the limited resources that capitalism is willing to spare on higher academics, especially in the field of humanities. It is this location that

prevents her from seeing the paracolonial linkages that unite Black American, Native American as well as African Black and South Asian Indian literatures.

How best to understand the Global South in its glocal manifestation is perhaps the question that needs to be answered in order to further the project of paracolonialism. The Global South has hitherto been theorised from the vantage point of economics as spaces which are lagging behind in development indices. However, for every economy and economic mode of analysis there is an underlying polity and Brandt's exclusion of the Second World has helped narrow the field. Through its articulation of the Global South, capitalism silences its politics which remains deeply colonial. As a geographical space the dislocated and fragmented Global South can be understood, I propose, as the space where capital can intervene directly, with little or no challenge, with complete disregard to local sovereignty in order to initiate or continue exploitation of natural and human resources for profit. The Global South can best be understood as spaces of picaresque wanderings of the James Bond figure - as presented in movies and books including the Jason Bourne Series by Ludlum, Napoleon Solo and U.N.C.L.E. - representing between them, the quintessential postcolonial capitalist agent for continued intervention in spaces that extend across the erstwhile Third World but also large swathes of the Second as well as the untouched nooks and crannies of the First. From a vantage of the recent para-literatures that are manifest in the field of digital gaming, I would argue that they include spaces where the protagonist of first-person shooter games like *Tomb Raider III* (Core Design, 1998), *Hitman 2* (IO Interactive, 2002), *Prince of Persia* (Newell, 2010) etc. can roam free in order to intervene to save these very spaces from threats that usually originate within themselves.

In a continued narrative of colonialism, the Global North must constantly intervene in the Global South through policies, agencies and agents, in order to safeguard the globe from threats that occur due to inherent flaws in the Global South. Is this not the same as the White Man's Burden which involves a civilising mission into savage lands? Therefore, it is essential to move out of structures of alterity and towards structures that reveal the unity of continued colonial

interventions while allowing for unities and strategies for resistance that go beyond immediate identities and borders imposed by colonial thought.

Postcolonialism, on the other hand, has two distinct trajectories with different trends gaining strength with changes in international politics. Broadly, we can divide postcolonialism into two different groups following Simon During into "critical postcolonialism" and "reconciliatory postcolonialism" (During, 2000: 385). During feels that over time postcolonialism has shifted from being "reconciliatory rather than a critical, anti-colonialist category" (During, 2000: 386). During distinguishes between critical and reconciliatory postcolonialisms saying "that the former seeks radical alternatives to modernity based on non-Western traditions and lifeways, while the latter works to reconcile colonised people to colonialism" (During, 2000: 385). In some ways, During's angst can be seen as a continuation of the problems of a postcolonialism that has lost its political tooth with the completion of political decolonisation as well as the failure of Soviet socialism to provide alternatives. This difference can be located with the intervention of Said, Spivak and Bhabha amongst others, who together introduce the cultural turn into postcolonialism emphasising the breakdown of identities and structures that could have been unifying poles in the fight against the continued norms of neo-imperialism.

David Murphy in his essay on "Materialist Formulation" (2007) criticises this cultural turn as "focusing on textualist issues instead of historical issues," conceptualising the migrant as an "archetype of a postcolonial identity that prioritises notions of hybridity, ambivalence and in-betweenness" and the spatiotemporal ambiguity of postcolonialism that "celebrates the contemporary world as an emancipatory space for the free flow of culture and borderless-ness" (Murphy, 2007: 183). Instead of looking at the continued histories of intervention, recognising that a large part of hybridity involves the elite and that globalisation is also the biggest proponent of multinational capital and its dominance, critiques of the cultural turn propose a going back to a more materialist reading. Dirlik in his essay "The Postcolonial Aura" (1994) argues that "postcoloniality is the condition of global capitalism" (Dirlik 1994: 356) and that instead of

decolonisation, today we have "a global capitalist network" (Dirlik 1994: 349). According to Dirlik, postcolonialism functions by asserting breaks and fragments and making it impossible for resistance to develop by "throwing the cover of culture over material relationships" (Dirlik 1994: 347). By creating an uncertain unstable world in its portrayal of our times today and by constantly fragmenting identities that deny long-lasting unity while all the while privileging discourse over action, Dirlik argues against this form of postcolonialism which "is designed to avoid making sense of the current crisis and, in the process, to cover up the origins of postcolonial intellectuals in a global capitalism of which they are not so many victims as beneficiaries" (Dirlik 1994: 353).

However, most of the critics asserting a resistive practice involves a return back to nationalism. Ahmad, for example, notes how all this is part of a wider postmodernist project which he dubs "apocalyptic anti-Marxism" (Ahmad 1995: 10). Among the usual criticism of the terms hybridity, ambivalence and contingency, Ahmad criticises "the theme of the collapse of the nation-state as a horizon of politics" (Ahmad 1995: 11). Zizek, in his "Afterword" to Lenin's *Revolution at the Gates: A Selection of Writings from February to October 1917*, talks about postcolonial studies as "one of the hottest topics in... radical... academia" (Zizek, 2002: 171). His criticism is that "postcolonial studies tend to translate it into the multiculturalist problematic of the colonised minorities' 'right to narrate' their victimising experience, of the power mechanisms which repress otherness, so that, at the end of the day, we learn that the root of postcolonial exploitation is our intolerance towards the other, and furthermore that this intolerance itself is rooted in our intolerance towards the "stranger in ourselves", in our inability to confirm what we have repressed in and of ourselves - the politico-economic struggle is thus imperceptibly transformed into a pseudo psychoanalytic drama of the subject unable to confront its inner traumas" (Zizek, 2002: 171). Zizek is critical of postcolonialism presenting itself as a cultural psychological problem concerned with how one approaches the confrontation with the other. For Zizek, this divorces theory from the reality of ongoing economic exploitation and direct physical violence that marks out predatory

capitalism that is no less rampant in our society than it was in colonial times. Zizek is ultimately opining that the movement away from the politico-economic struggle is linked with the scholars propounding postcolonialism looking on finding "a secure tenured position as their ultimate professional goal" (Zizek, 2002: 172) within the American or at least the largely Western capitalist world. The arguments mimic Shohat's "Notes on the Post Colonial" which is not particularly encouraging considering that Zizek is writing a decade after Shohat. It seems that there, still, is no alternative way forward beyond arguments for resistive or cultural turns.

Perhaps, the most direct call for a return to an alterity framework lies in Abdul Jan Mohamed's "The Economy of Manichean Allegory" (1985). Criticising Bhabha's take on Fanon in his introduction to *The Wretched of the Earth*, Mohamed asserts the actuality of the Manichean binary in the colonial imagination. He argues- "As we have seen, colonialist fiction is generated predominantly by the ideological machinery of the Manichean allegory. Yet the relation between imperial ideology and fiction is not unidirectional: the ideology does not simply determine the fiction. Rather, through a process of symbiosis, the fiction forms the ideology by articulating and justifying the position and aims of the colonialist" (JanMohamed, 1985: 83). As Benita Parry in her book *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique* (2004), argues, the condition of the majority of the colonised during colonisation "condemn(ed) the colonised... to a condition of passive consent... a necessary reminder that colonialism was a protean phenomenon and its discursive violence inseparable from material and institutional force" (Parry, 2004: 28). This turn back towards a materialist critique has its problems. For example, the entire school of subaltern studies with its emphasis on unearthing histories of marginalised people and Spivak's rejoinder questioning whether those whose voices can come out, can at all be called subaltern, arguing for a return to deconstructive strategies in order to reveal subaltern voices from within the spaces and margins of such narratives. The paralysis in postcolonial theory is clear if it is looked at as the irresolvability of the differences between the reconciliatory and resistive postcolonialism, which is

also the same as the differences between cultural and materialist postcolonialisms, and modern (decolonisation) and postmodern postcolonialisms. However, we have already charted out that these supposed differences have their mirroring in the immediate historical urgency that was once given to decolonisation and that which is absent today. In other words, we need to evolve an understanding of postcolonialism that goes beyond the centrality of political decolonisation without lapsing into the fragmentary tendencies of postmodernity. This is supported by Stuart Hall, who in his essay "When was the "Post-Colonial"? Thinking at the Limit" (1996), argues that while postcolonialism has contended with issues of globalisation and continued hegemonies, the central problem lies in postcolonial intellectuals being overtly captivated by the historical period of colonialism. He advocates the need for exploring the ideas of postcolonialism in other contemporary contexts and calls for a critical reassessment of postcolonialism "as a genuine theoretical need" (Hall, 1996: 258). Again, Ania Loomba, reminds us that "capitalism, as it was theorised by traditional Marxism" alone cannot be an adequate model for explaining the complexities of colonialism (Loomba, 2005: 249).

The term postcolonial has also come under question as a term, in the pure sense of its direct meaning, especially in its inability to capture the current condition of being or the ontological state of current times. Apart from postcolonial and post-colonial, which are the two most common ways of writing the word, earlier we also had (post)colonial apart from the less common colonial/postcolonial. Whereas written with a hyphen, the term naturally puts emphasis on the post almost as if colonialism is over, written together it seems to emphasise the discourse rather than any particular time frame that is precolonial, colonial, or postcolonial. With the bracket, the ambiguity of the post, as in colonialism over (?), is made more apparent while the "/" seems to unite the oppositional ideas together as if there is no way of separating them at all. The various orthographies of the term may be celebrated as a part of the diversity inspired by it as Chadwick Allen did in his review of Leela Gandhi's *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (1998). In an essay titled "Who put the "Post" in

Postcolonial" (1998), Allen says: "This flexibility of forms indicates many individual critics' sensitivity to the all-too-probable disconnect between the Western academy's generalising theories of postcolonial literary and cultural production and the economic, political, social, and psychological realities of specific colonialisms all over the globe - those safely historical, those distressingly resurgent, or those simply ongoing" (Allen, 1998: 144). Apart from these, we have additional prefixed forms neocolonialism, internal colonialism and finally paracolonialism, terms which get rid of the business of post in order to highlight immediate continuities, the location of colonial norms within legitimate sovereignties and perhaps the most interesting deviation which seems to look on colonialism as only one of the factors behind the current condition. While it may seem to be a trivial matter of nomenclature, the abundance of musings on the matter, along with the diversity of terms that one encounters, indicate that the question of orthography has with it ideological biases of how we intend to deploy the term itself.

(Post)colonial, interestingly begins with the tantalising promise of post-ing, with the brackets highlighting its ephemeral quality. Interestingly, parentheses are used to include text that does not distort the overall grammar of the entire sentence, and therefore, what is highlighted by the use of the term in this manner is how there is a grammatical continuity in the usage. In other words, whatever is written about the post, as well as about the colonial would work. To give a simple example, in the sentence, '(Post)colonialism indicates a movement criticising values imposed by the invading forces', because of the ambiguity of the actual post, the demarcations between time frames of colonial and post-colonial breaks down. While this can be used to question the idea of any post of colonialism, or the assertion of continued neocolonial forces, it nonetheless has the disadvantage of being tied down to the colonial moment. What is less heartening being the ironic suggestion that the post is likely to be forever deferred, an impossible attainment which can only be indicated and not realized. The use of parenthesis becomes a comment on the spectral nature of the term which with its delinking from any event or marker of the post-ing makes for a

constant reassertion of the fluidity of events within the central encounter of colonialism. As a state of being, this orthography nonetheless through its placing of the 'post' makes for almost a constant haunting of resistance as a central feature of colonialism itself.

Colonial/ Postcolonial seems to lock, presumably, oppositional states of being into an inseparable complex rather like the obverse faces of the same coin. This is almost like an existential embrace, rather like two equally matched combatants doomed to an eternal unity - like the warriors Hogni and Heoden (Malone, 1964) and their armies from the Scandinavian legend about the battle of the Heodenings. Just like every night Hildir stays back in the battlefield reanimating all the dead soldiers so that they can fight again, this orthography keeps alive the colonial in the postcolonial, in an eternal, constant presence. The use of the slash here can be seen as an extension of the inclusive or function, indicating the possibility of either one of the terms or both of the terms simultaneously, a sense which is to be found in Barthes' usage of *S/Z* (1974) in his discussion of Balzac's *Sarrasine*. Just like in the story, where the oppositional logics collapse, especially around the gender of Zambinella, who is revealed to be a castrato, Colonial/Postcolonial merges oppositions in order to capture the hybridity of our being today, which is somewhat beyond, but ultimately still a part of the colonial interaction. But this can also be criticised as non-positional. This is particularly helpful in usages which avoid having to take a position on naming disputes by including both, or all of the terms, that are causing the dispute, as in the inclusion of competing ethnonyms separated by slashes, i.e. Assyrian/Syrianer, or the more common usages of 'he/she' or 's/he' indicating gender neutrality or ambivalence.

Again, the most usual use of the slash in separating oppositional terms is in the sense of 'or' or exclusivity depending on situations as in the usage of 'yes/no' or 'true/false'. It is almost as if it is up to the reader to decide which term is of primacy - colonial or postcolonial? In this sense, in lapsing back to an either-or binary, the usage only seems to further obscure the state of being today. The other thought that comes up from common mathematical usage is the idea of

division, giving a quotient and a remainder. What do we get on dividing colonialism by postcolonialism? Should it be the task of theory to study the forces that cancel each other out and ponder of the remainder of our being that results today? Perhaps the most interesting usage of the slash, in order to indicate routes or stages of a journey, as in "Delhi/Aligarh/Allahabad/Calcutta...", most commonly used in Railways and other stagecoach journeys would suggest postcolonialism to be a natural development from colonialism, rather like a journey, only through time. But then, perhaps it would be better to include precolonial/colonial/postcolonial in order to include all the shaping influences that go into our being today.

Post-colonial with the hyphen is probably one of the most common orthographic usages, which has also been attacked to a large extent. The hyphen is used to indicate the addition of a new prefix, as in 'post' of 'colonial', or after colonial. However, the prefix post- itself has an ambiguous meaning. On the one hand, it can be rooted back to the PIE *apo- meaning 'off, away', as in away with colonialism, or from its Latin usage of post- as behind, or after. At the same time, post- can also mean placing or situation from PIE *po-sinere, which gives us the Middle French usage of 'poste', meaning the place where one is stationed, which continues in English as in the 'application for a post'. In this sense, it would almost indicate the situating, the official posting of the colonial onto our being. Finally, post can also mean an upright column from Old French, Latin, and PIE *pro- 'before, forward' + *sta- 'stand, make firm'. In this sense, the post becomes a marker, a column erected to constantly remind one of colonial rule, a constant recentering of history towards the colonial period, with our beings as constructions built on it. The hyphen becomes like a bridge, connecting our present being as a post constantly with the colonial. The hyphen is primarily being used to indicate a stable word compound. Take for instance- 'The post-colonial practice' and 'the post colonial practice'. The purpose of the hyphen can therefore be largely fulfilled by simply writing the words together, without a space, and this gives us the most popular orthography today of postcolonial, indicating an entire discourse and not only a state of being. The terms

neocolonialism and internal-colonialism, in themselves, refer to more particular situations rather than our state of being in totality. While neocolonialism is indeed a part of the lived existence of the world, it cannot be universal, while internal-colonialism will only apply to particular subjugated peoples.

This brings us to the term paracolonial. Used first by Gerald Vizenor to talk about the condition of Native Americans in the United States, the term was taken up by Stephanie Newall to discuss the condition of the developing western-educated native circuits in Western Africa. Separately, Stephan Goudie uses the term to refer to the interactions of the USA with the various Caribbean islands. By para- from the PIE root *per- the sense being added is not one of going beyond, but rather of being alongside or through. Through this formulation what is being emphasised is that there are forces that have moved along with colonialism, which nonetheless is important, from precolonial and colonial times into making and informing our being today. The most important function of this formulation is the breakdown of any posting at any point in colonial history and the acknowledgement that there are historical forces that shape our present that go beyond colonialism.

Vizenor initially did not define his 'paracolonial' very clearly, apart from noting that it is part of a reading strategy that "uncovers traces of tribal survivance, trickster discourse, and the remnants of intransitive shadows" (Vizenor 1992: 7). He goes on to link the term with "cold simulations of tribal cultures... pretensions that precede a tribal referent" (Vizenor 1992: 7). Apart from the term paracolonial, Vizenor is also credited with evolving other neologisms- 'survivance', a hybrid of survival and resistance, 'manifest manners' taken from the idea of manifest destiny, as the totalising of White Western modes of being and thought, 'transmotion', travels by a marginalised group as an assertion of sovereignty, 'fugitive poses' or the false identities created by marginalised groups that pander to colonial tastes, that nonetheless become the identities of the marginal group. One of the central ideas of paracolonialism that Vizenor deploys is the need for creating new terms and ideas for imagining our world, a role he describes as 'wordmaker'. By paracolonial as a state of being,

Vizenor is talking about how through mimicry and acceptance of colonial norms and colonially created identities, which in themselves have little independent historical truth, the colonised subject becomes a simulacral referent of an absent identity that never existed. In order to bring back the original identity, Vizenor declares impossible any direct return to any original precolonial culture and instead reposes faith in a new imaginative reconstruction aimed at survivance. Later Vizenor in his work *Manifest Manners* (1994) describes paracolonial as "a colonialism beyond colonialism, multiple, contradictory, and with all the attendant complications of internal, neo- and post-colonialism" (Vizenor 1994: 77). In placing a new imaginative power as the central role of a critic, Vizenor provides us with the first hint towards evolving a Paracolonial Praxis.

Newell, in contrast, uses the term paracolonial to talk about structures of adaptation and borrowings from the West that helped contribute towards anticolonial movements in the study of West Africa. For Newell, the postcolonial determination that all colonial interactions were necessarily problematic and against the interests of the colonised, needs to be revisited. She notes how British colonialism encouraged many literary, educational, linguistic, political, commercial, journalistic, and religious linkages and networks that emerged in Western Africa during the late 19th century. She particularly notes the importance of the English language in becoming an important tool in providing natives from varying languages to unite in thinking about a common government education and trade. In particular, she notes the importance of newspapers in English and their role in creating a national imagination. She remarks:

The neologism 'paracolonial' aptly describes these new social relationships and cultural forms which developed in response to the British presence and the spread of the English language in West Africa. The prefix para- contains an ambiguity which is ideal for describing cultural flows in colonial West Africa, for it signifies beside and also beyond. The shift to paracolonial allows us to discard the centre-periphery model and instead to analyse in historical and sociological detail the local cultural productivity which undoubtedly took place over the generations,

alongside and beyond the British presence in the region, as a consequence of the British presence but not as its direct product. The term is thus immensely useful if one wishes simultaneously to acknowledge the effects of colonialism and also to displace the Eurocentric and deterministic periodization of culture and history in the colonies as being 'pre'-colonial, colonial and 'post'-colonial. (Newell, 2001: 350)

In her allowance for positive imaginings through and because of colonialism, we can locate the second idea ambivalence towards the coloniser, as important for paracolonialism. In his book on *Creole America* (2006), Sean Goudie uses the term paracolonial to describe the USA's interventions in the Caribbean to further its own politics. He notes how US corporations would sponsor dictators or otherwise try to influence policies in the area for profit while denying the people of these areas the right to determine their sovereignty. The term 'banana republic' comes from this constant intervention of the US in the Caribbean. Goudie defines his usage of the term as "'alongside', 'near or beside', 'resembling', or 'subsidiary' to...European colonialism in the western hemisphere during the early decades of its existence" (Goudie, 2006: 11-12).

The second part of Goudie's project is to locate how this paracolonial situation can be equated with a "Creole complex" (Goudie, 2006: 8) that prevented the US whose people are themselves a product of inter-breeding and hybridisation from identifying with the inhabitants of the Caribbean who were also products of inter-breeding and hybridisation. Locating colonial-like interventions without direct colonialism that the USA imposed in the Caribbean, we can find that neocolonial and neoimperialist modes coexisted alongside and with classical colonial rule exemplified by the British imperialist system. In locating the structures of neoimperialism and neocolonialism - both oppressive practices and in appealing for resistance to them while again arguing against alterities of the Creole and the other, Goudie provides the third key towards evolving paracolonial praxis.

Finally, I would like to refer to the doctoral thesis of Ali Usman Saleem entitled *Paracolonialism: A Case of Post-1998 Anglophone Pakistani Fiction*,

submitted at the University of Bedfordshire in 2014. In the abstract, Saleem argues that:

...the textual analysis of (Pakistani) fiction indicates a shift from traditional postcolonial literature. Instead of contextualizing their work in the colonial experience of the British Raj or its aftermath, these writers dissociate themselves from it and use this dissociation as a narrative strategy to hold the political and military leadership accountable for the socio-political chaos in Pakistan... this characteristic of Anglophone Pakistani fiction indicates the emergence of a new phase, 'Paracolonialism' or 'Paracolonial fiction' which rejects the influence of colonialism on the socio-economic and political crisis of Third World countries and deconstructs various factors which led to their post-independence unstable economy and social fragmentation. (Saleem, 2014: Abstract)

Saleem looks upon paracolonialism as a space for reading literature from erstwhile colonised nations that are functioning as "a critique of the current political, cultural and financial instability of a Third World postcolonial country while contextualizing itself in the theoretical paradigms of modernism, postmodernism and most importantly postcolonialism" (Saleem, 2014: 21). For him "paracolonialism has emerged as a reaction to a post-independence postcolonial narrative and its inability to completely rationalize the crumbling and unstable socio-political and financial state of many of the postcolonial nations" (Saleem, 2014: 21). This is exactly the situation that Dabashi is proclaiming in his work on the *Arab Spring: the End of Postcolonialism* (2012). Saleem goes on to identify how in modern Pakistani literature there is "the contradictory rejection and acceptance of the colonial baggage" (Saleem, 2014: 21) which is an indication of dissolving alterity in a land where the use of the colonial language is used "to respond to the larger Western readership to deconstruct the international political crisis Pakistan is a part of and furnish the world with the stories emerging from these othered lands" (Saleem, 2014: 22). Therefore, Saleem notes the potential of paracolonial readings to transcend alterities and reduce tensions

that inevitably come up when one is confronted with the other by narrativizing across cultural boundaries. The paracolonial praxis is therefore to support a certain kind of critical reading of literary texts from erstwhile colonised spaces that allow for a resistive reading to oppressive structures without falling prey to the traps of alterity.

In some ways, what all of them are arguing for is a lessening of emphasis on alterities while at the same time recognizing structures of oppression that obviously include the colonising but also go beyond to include other structures that are paracolonial. In order to transcend this debate and provide meaningful praxis for theory, I propose that the world has evolved into a glocal village with extremely efficient and fast communication and transportation, existing simultaneously with complete information blackouts and paralysis of movements. It has evolved into a universal victory of the norms of liberal democracy which nonetheless hide within themselves totalitarian practices and the silencing of minorities apart from its tacit support for continued dictatorships (Egypt, Syria etc.) and various electoral malpractices. It has evolved into a world that supports brazen military interventions (Iraq, Levant, Libya etc.) as well as protestations of global peace and disarmament. It has evolved into a strange mixture of centralising powers and sovereignty going hand-in-hand with paradiplomatic autonomies being extended simultaneously. It has evolved into a world where marginal identity assertions are recognised, allowed to be asserted and then deflated in a return towards the status quo rather reminiscent of the colonial policies of divide and rule. It is a world of seeming contradictions and differences that reduce resistance into absurdity. The paralysis caused by the inherent immobile contradictions that make up today's world causes suffering. Within the spaces that are created between these oppositional forces, we can find the continued oppression of wage labourers who have largely been contractualised and deemed replaceable in an ever-growing pool of unemployment, the continuance of structured violence on women, both through direct acts such as armed violence, rapes etc. as well as differential treatment at workplaces and homes under the continued norms of patriarchy operating through communal,

caste-based and racial lines. We find the continued displacement of entire populations in search of better livelihoods, freeing from violence or corporate loot. We find the oppression of the marginalised - who may be located at the very centres of power as well as those who are completely divorced from it. Suffering through poverty, lack of effective assertion, the removal of choices, and false promises are the hallmarks of today's age.

To make sense of these seemingly irreconcilable contradictions, I would like to take up the idea of *pratityasamutpada* (Pearcey, 2008) or dependent origination. Taken from Buddhism, this idea of dependent origination provides a simple framework for recognising that manifestations of differences are ultimately rooted in looking at phenomena as things in themselves. This is an erroneous understanding as all phenomena exist in relation to other phenomena. Once one recognises that things do not exist as independent phenomena in themselves, it is possible to go beyond and realise an end to suffering. Therefore, we need to stop thinking of our current being as predicated between choices of colonial thought and decolonisation of the mind, or continued colonial modes of oppression and political decolonisation. Instead, we need to realise that both originate in a dependent manner from within, revealing the inconsistencies within our world dominated by global, unchallenged capitalism. Instead of getting arrested in paralysis, at the manifestations of these contradictions, we need to look upon these contradictions as creating confrontations with alterities as the possibility of imagining *radical alterities* - a completely new way of seeing and living in our world, and that too, through a denial of alterities in order to locate the roots of the dependant origination that is leading to the seeming alterities in the first place, and uncover the possibility of Radical Alterity, a completely different way of being, on the other without having to take recourse to either the Stockholm acceptance of the influence of the coloniser or the otheringg native to cultural nationalism.

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Siddhartha Chakraborti

Dr. Siddhartha Chakraborti is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University. He earned his BA from Presidency College, Kolkata, and completed his MA and PhD at Jawaharlal Nehru University. He teaches Subaltern Studies and Digital Literature and has multiple publications, besides being funded by many agencies, including the UGC, DAAD, UKIERI and the GIAN. He is the Aligarh ELT@I chapter secretary and a life member of IACLALS, IASA and DHARTI.