INDIAN POLITICAL IMAGINATIONS:
A Critical Reassessment of Decolonization and Postcolonialism

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by

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Date: 20.07.2016

Certificate

This thesis titled ***"Indian Political Imaginations: A Critical Reassessment of Decolonization and Postcolonialism"*** submitted by **Siddhartha Chakraborti**, Centre for English Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree, diploma of any university or institution.

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Declaration by the Candidate

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INTRODUCTION

The beginning of any philosophical thesis, which this work purports to be, must at the very outset try and locate self-reflexively what it means by philosophy and beginning. The word philosophy originates from two Greek roots – philos, meaning friendly, beloved or friend; and sophy, which could mean skill, cleverness, learning and wisdom. The word 'sophist' which also gives rise to the word sophistry with all its negative connotations, is therefore embodied within the word philosophy itself. In the idea of philosophy, there pre-exists the possibility of rational correct and true learning as well as mere semantic jugglery. It can be both wisdom as well as mere cleverness. However, the idea of research, which is an intensive search, indicates that we need to look upon philosophy not as having two faces, as a coin does, with one being correct and the other not. The idea of searching can be traced to the French cerchier, which is in itself related to the Latin circus, meaning a circle or a ring, and originating from the PIE root *kirk- meaning to turn or bend. 'Researching' emphasises the circularity of thought that constantly interlinks, occupies spaces between other thoughts and lets other thoughts occupy itself in a ring, an arena, a performative space that serves to showcase, display and present the possibility of an *aletheia* – the term being used in its original classical Greek sense of a truth or disclosure in philosophy. Therefore, research in philosophy encloses both the correct and the incorrect in an impossibly indistinguishable and inseparable complex. That which is sophistry and that which is not, cannot be alchemically determined in totality. This makes for philosophy to be a never ending performance, a never ending progression of unveilings without certitude or an end. Innately philosophy is not only the postponement of complete knowledge; it is the acceptance of the impossibility of it. It is the acceptance of a deeper state of relation to knowledge, beyond knowing knowledge to loving it. Alan Badiou in his *In Praise of Love* (2009) says that '...love is...a "truth procedure", that is an experience whereby a certain kind of truth is constructed. This truth is quite simply the truth about Two: the truth that derives from difference' (Badiou 2012: 38). Philosophy, similarly, can be thought of as something emanating from the difference between sophistry and wisdom. It is a performance without an end.

It is to the journey into this endless that now must be given a beginning. To begin, implies an origin, a point of initiation which is convenient with the formatting of this thesis in linear text. It does begin, it must begin at this page, however, in many ways the journey has already begun. As Foucault puts it, we might have 'slipped imperceptibly into this (thesis)... freed from the obligation to begin... without having to stand outside it, pondering its particular, fearsome, and even devilish features' (Foucault 1972: 215). Originating in the PIE form *ghendhe/o, meaning to take, to grasp, to comprehend, to imply the word beginning in relation to philosophy represents a primitive nostalgia for grasping after a definite, solid certainty that true philosophy itself prevents. Beginnings being problematic, any attempt at prefacing is perhaps even more so. Preface means a saying before, the same as a foreword, which in reality is always an afterword, in being possible only after the entire thesis has already been written. As Derrida sums up, the difficulties of replacing the beginning with prefaces:

> ...recreates the intention-to-say after the fact, the text exists as something written - a past - which under the false appearance of a present, a hidden omnipotent author (in full mastery of his product) is presenting to the reader as his future. Here is what I wrote, then read, and what I am writing that you are going to read. After which you will again be able to take possession of this preface which in sum you have not yet begun to read, even though, once having read it, you will already have anticipated everything that follows and thus might just as well dispense with reading the rest. (Derrida 1981: 7)

What Derrida reveals in this explication of the disjunctions of authorial time inherent in the idea of the preface is the omnipresence of the author. What is central to philosophy is not the tracing of a beginning, but rather the outlining of authorial intrusions into the fabric, the matrix of existing philosophy. Therefore, this chapter will serve as an introduction. By introduction, meaning to lead in, from the Latin roots *intro*, meaning inside and *ducere*, meaning to lead, this chapter will propose a way into reading this thesis. It will lead the reader by narrating why this thesis was conceived, what this thesis interrogates, how it goes about doing it. It will outline how the thesis is structured. The Latin root ducere comes from the PIE *deuk which means to lead and is also the root of the word duke meaning a leader. By recounting the formative experiences that have

shaped this work, and providing an overview of it structure, the hope is that it will help the reader to more easily place the work in context.

At the outset then, I will attempt to lead from an origin, a beginning. The present thesis started out as the term paper which had been submitted as a part of the partial requirements of the course on postcolonialism to Dr. Mongia in the December of 2009. Entitled, "Contending with the Post of Colonialism: Extracting an Indian Strategy for Moving from 'Epicolonial' Concerns towards a 'Paracolonial' Praxis", the paper was structured as a preliminary foray towards thinking of improving the postcolonial project by incorporating the ideas of the founding fathers of India. Now, on looking back, besides noting the obvious over-ambition for a project the size of a term paper, I can already see how some of the basic ideas of the current thesis were already in place. The paper began by asking whether being suspicious of all things colonial made postcolonialism emancipative. The second concern it raised was whether postcolonial theory allowed for any sort of resistance to continuing neocolonial agendas of various dominant powers. These two queries remain central concerns even in this thesis. The paper continued by reading postcolonial theories to be rooted in colonialism and as such saw them to be 'epicolonial'. By this the paper argued that postcolonial theories were essentially liminal to the project of colonialism. They only served as a border or a covering to colonial thought. It would agree with Gyan Prakash who had declared "The Postcolonial Exists as an aftermath as an after - after being worked over by colonialism. Criticism formed in this process of the enunciation of discourses of domination occupies a space that is neither inside nor outside the history of western domination but in a tangential relation to it" (Prakash, 1990: 8).

At that time, I was still looking at postcolonialism as being problematic in refusing to provide an oppositional framework to colonialism. In some ways, postcolonialism being an extension of the norms of colonial modernity constantly linked back to colonialism, either as its extension, or as its end. The point was to think of ways to think beyond the coloniser-colonised binary. At the same time, the paper had argued that all structures that had been received from the West through colonial contact could not be simplistically rejected, a case in point being the idea of the right of people to chose their politics, something more immediately relevant in the then current context of the USA's drive for democracy in various Islamic countries which in itself was being

seen as a response to the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York. Although at that time, I did not think of it, one of the central directions this thesis took was towards exploring non-alterity as a strategy with the aim of seeking to resolve this anxiety of influence that postcolonialism often promotes by attempting to question the boundaries between the coloniser and the colonised. Secondly, while initially I had thought it important to locate colonisation squarely in the West, with the East largely being a victim, deeper study showed this to be an overtly simplistic reduction. Colonization has always been central to human history. Indeed we can find colonisation of lands and resources in the process of natural expansion for living space in the proud histories of all nations and peoples. The Aryans expanded their way through the Indian subcontinent just as the Phoenicians expanded across the Mediterranean. Even when we come to imperialism and the colonisation and subjugation of peoples, we can find instances from across the world including eastern cultures and nations. As an example, for a brief period, the Indian Chola dynasty occupied and ruled over substantial parts of South East Asia and maintained a strong maritime fleet apart from using these new acquisitions as a basis for trade. My thesis therefore argues that it would be perhaps incorrect to look upon colonialism either as a product of a particular mode of production or of a particular historical time or as exclusive to a particular geographical location. Such strategies have been used to isolate colonialism to the context of the modern period in order to sharpen resistance against the dominant hegemonies of capital that are widely perceived to lie in the West. The thesis instead argues that in today's world of growing ease of communication and of transfer of capital through digital means, capital and hegemonies have been dislocated. We live in a world of Multi National Companies and growing blurring of spatial divisions of rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed. Within advanced economies we can find enclaves of poverty and oppression, just as within backward economies we can find enclaves that parallel the development of the First World. Nonetheless, the thesis continues in the spirit of developing a reading that is resistive to hegemony and oppression.

During my MA coursework I had learnt that this general dissatisfaction with postcolonialism extended to a host of scholars including the likes of Ella Shohat, Arif Dirlik and Kwame Appiah amongst others. Moreover since I was personally struck by Dirlik's statement "...intellectuals who hail from ... the space India have played conspicuously prominent role in (the) formulation and dissemination ... of (the appeal

for) postcoloniality" (Dirlik, 1994: 328). Dirlik has clearly levelled an allegation that somehow there is a conspiracy amongst Indian scholars, especially those situated in the Western Academia to promote and popularise postcolonialism. This did not bear out with the presence of a long list of critics of postcolonialism who were undoubtedly Indian as well as had experience in the western academia, including P. Mongia. Moreover, there were Indian political thinkers who had ideas that refused to fall into the general trend of formulations that Dirlik had identified to be central to postcolonialism. It was in this context that I decided to focus my attention to the Indian subcontinent. The second section of my thesis therefore is a search for an approach towards a future praxis through the recognition, restoration and rereading of mainstream Indian political writers who had in some ways overseen the transfer of power from the British hands into the Indian subcontinent.

Deen Dayal Upadhyay, the ideologue of the Bharatiya Janata Party, in his essay on *Integral Humanism* (1965) had noted that there already was a vibrant discussion on what was to be done after the British Raj had ended. "So long as the country was under the yoke of the British rule, all the movements and policies in the country had one principle aim - to drive out the foreign rulers and achieve independence. But what would be the face of new Bharat after independence? These questions were precisely thought out... there were people who even at that time had considered these questions" (Upadhyay, 1965). Upadhyay goes on to discuss the role of Gandhi as well as Tilak in his subsequent analysis. However, if we look at the broad development of mainstream Indian politics, it would obviously not be enough to reduce them down to merely Gandhi and Tilak. For the purposes of my paper presentation at the conference, I had taken up Ambedkar too in order to explore the angle of social justice as well. However, even then the reading remained inadequate. There were so many political thinkers and activists in India who played a role in the years leading up to the transfer of power that it seemed to be a cursory and arbitrary selection. During the course of the charting out of the thesis, it quickly became apparent that there were at least four broad tendencies in the political articulations of Indian leaders imagining independence. Broadly we can categorise them as a left-Marxist imagination, a social justice oriented Ambedkarite imagination, an extra-national Gandhian imagination and a Hindu national Savarkarite imagination. The purpose of the thesis was not to turn out as a remodelled version of Ramachandra Guha's *Makers of Modern India* (2012), another compendium of the

political ideas of various Indian thinkers. The point was to try and extract a new way of imagining beyond postcolonialism through the reading of Indian political thinkers. This necessitated the creation of a vantage that could neatly divide the gamut of political imaginations so that they could be studied in respect to that central vantage. The solution came through a closer re-look at postcolonialism as a paradigm and questioning what it really meant to move beyond that. Postcolonialism, I realised, was essentially a response and a continuation of the politics of alterity. The colonialists saw in the colonised their cultural, religious and civilisational other. The colonised in return, developed their identity in response to such othering, ultimately asserting themselves through imagined collectives of the nation state. If the purpose was to move beyond the binaries of colonialism and postcolonialism, the central driving categorisation of political thoughts would have to be on the basis of their attitudes towards alterity.

For ease of classification, we can divide them into two groups. The first I shall refer to as imaginations of alterity-driven identity formation which we find in Ambedkerite thoughts, Savarkarite Hidutva, as well as Marxism – which derive their identities of the self as the other of Brahminism, Islamic rule and Capitalism respectively. The second groups together the extra national formulations of Gandhi, to which I add the imaginations of nationalism that were developed by Tagore. However, we have in this mix the very interesting person of M.N. Roy, who while starting out his politics from Marxism, eventually proposed the non-alterity framework of radical humanism. Therefore, we can break the tendencies of alterity and non-alterity between Savarkar and Ambedkar on the one hand, and Roy, Gandhi and Tagore on the other. Because the broader formulations of Marxism regarding colonialism would generally be covered in the other chapters, including the section on Roy and given the lack of any significant contribution towards a separate Indian school of Marxism, the study avoids taking up a separate figure in that area.

In my original paper, I had isolated the principle of ahimsa to be a defining feature of a paracolonial praxis, which can also be divided across the two categories of alterity and non-alterity driven political imaginations of being. The former puts a minimal emphasis on non-violence while the latter group promotes it as a matter of principle. Apart from non-alterity and non-violence, I had argued that there must be a central emphasis on relocating of agency from the coloniser to the colonised subject as a

precursor to empowering resistance through developing an optimistic outlook. A paracolonial approach should empower the colonised, morally making them free from being a postcolonial shadow of their erstwhile colonising power. At the same time it should recognise that many of the problems of an erstwhile colonised society can be rooted back to structures that had existed before colonial rule. Apart from going beyond the onset of colonisation to recognise the roots of its problems, an erstwhile colonised society must also be able to go beyond the official end of colonial rule in order to effectively combat neocolonial and neo-imperialist tendencies. Next a paracolonial praxis should refrain from creating binaries or the creation of identities through othering or the promotion of alterities, in order to ensure a free and frank dialogue across supposed binaries of east and west, coloniser and colonised etc.

The development of the thesis proper must be traced back to the final synopsis which shifted the focus more clearly in the direction of looking at postcolonialism itself as a social imaginary. Taking cue from Cornelius Castoriades (1997) as well as Roberto Unger (1987), the shift emphasises the central role that imagination plays in the creation of new structures for accessing society. After all, if the project involves looking for a new way of describing and looking at cultural productions from erstwhile colonised spaces, in some ways it must be an imaginative process. Therefore, amidst the multiplicity of political theorists, imagination remains central to my work. Taking off from Sartre's *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination* (2010) where he argues that what we imagine has a real role in our daily lives, and further, real in a sense that we imbue it with a certain reality, the thesis begins by emphasising that the common ideas of everyday political being for most people, including democracy, nation and sovereignty can be seen as imaginations promoted by society. For Melanie Klein (Hinshelwood, 2006), the 'phantasy' that children engage in provides a space where the imaginary and the real converge to produce very real effects, feelings and thoughts. Again, in the work of Lacan (1977) we find the importance of a mirror/other in the development of children towards the realization of the self. I would argue that these ideas of the development of children to adulthood through imagination parallel the development of the young Indian nation and its political imagination. In this I will be using the ideas of Castoriades, the Greek-French philosopher as set out in *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (1997), especially in how he sees societies to be essentially based on certain imaginations as to its origins and its basic principles. While

Castoriades looks at how imaginations (imaginaries) have impacted the way in which societies have developed from ancient times through the industrial revolution to the current capitalist imaginaries of today, I will try and apply the same ideas to see how the Indian nation emerges from colonialism towards its postcolonial presence. Sartre, it must be noted, imbued in the power of imagination the root of the freedom of humanity, to move beyond the shackles of what is and move towards a future. It is in this attempt to move ahead, that the necessity to revisit imaginations of Indian political thinkers who oversaw the transfer of power from British colonial rule becomes important.

The criticisms of postcolonialism have been around for a long time. One of the central criticisms is that as far as giving a new and interesting vantage is concerned, postcolonialism has stagnated. Indeed postcolonialism has already been described as seen by many to no longer accurately provide frame work for the reading of new literatures even from erstwhile colonised spaces. Others have pointed out that even in earlier literature, the themes and concerns often have little to do with colonial rule per se. Therefore it becomes all the more crucial to revisit postcolonialism in order to see both how it developed as a theoretical field and how it developed as practice in history, in order to re-access its impact and continued impact in the production of cultural artefacts. Going back to Dirlik's accusations, and also recognising the rich interaction of ideologies, movements and literatures that have been a part of the Indian subcontinent's experience with colonialism, the thesis was narrowed down to the Indian context to prevent it from becoming too large and unwieldy. Limiting the scope to the Indian subcontinent around the time of independence, one is left with directed space-time of engagement which nonetheless enfolds diverse complexities which potentially could retain a trans-national signification. Ranging from a plural engagement with colonialism, including attitudes against western imperial powers, Brahminical domination, Islamic intervention and reactions to capitalism – which often operated simultaneously – to an even more plural response to these hegemonies with varying degrees of successes and failures, the subcontinent offers a rich space for study. For the purpose of this thesis I find in the subcontinent not only relevant texts by political thinkers for reviewing the relevance of existing theory, but also popular literature and polity based on these thinkers. In this vibrant space, I can hope for potentially finding the diverse ingredients needed for either extracting or cooking up better approaches to

understand how societal imaginations developed and worked through and beyond postcolonialism.

The Indian political imagination has been a site of constant assertions, conflicts, organisation and reorganisation from before the departure of the British to today. It has its roots in an anti-colonial imagination which was at one time spearheaded by the Indian National Congress. Later we have the development of primordialist notions of nationalism which were developed by Savarkar and later on popularised by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) which saw the nation as developing from the Aryan invasion onwards and located the development of the Indian identity with the development of Hindu politics in Vedic India. The Nehruvian-Gandhian position as most clearly articulated in *The Discovery of India* (1946) presents India as separate from the nation which was established in 1947, which is in contrast to such primordialist assertions. Beyond the debate of the origin of Indian-ness, we have the Marxist internationalist positions that emphasise the role of imperialism and capitalism in the oppression of the Indian people. India has had a long tradition of Left politics with the Communist Party of India (Marxist) leading a left front that represents a substantial alternative force that has historically played a part in the formation of both the central and state governments in the country. The issue of social justice as spearheaded by B.R. Ambedkar gives us another tangible thread which again removes emphasis from the question of the nation to focus in the recognition and assertion of the traditionally untouchable caste. Ambedkarite movements have proliferated in the country and have most famously given the country its first woman Dalit chief minister in Mayawati, the leader of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in Uttar Pradesh. The BSP is a national level party in the country and represents the politics of social justice in contrast to the concerns of nationalism or an international class struggle.

My work extracts various imaginations of the Indian nation and how they have been impacted by colonialism and how they address concerns raised by postcolonialism. The focus will be on the imaginations of decolonization as a process outlined in such works, and also the imagination of the decolonized destination, the ethics and polity of the space to be, which is imagined to be, after decolonization. For the purpose of this work I will be looking at major works of some of the leading figures who have helped shape Indian political thought. Broadly, they can be categorised into two major

imaginations. One is based on alterity and othering including Savarkarite Hindutva and Ambedkar's anti-Hindu imaginations. The other is the one which emphasises the imaginations of non-alterity including Gandhi, Tagore and Roy's views of radical humanism as it developed towards the later part of his career. In this way, the thesis will hope to clearly show the creation of identity after interaction with colonialism produced not only imaginations of othering emphasising difference, but also imaginations of non-alterity and that such imaginations have had a definitive role in shaping our consciousness today. The representative works that will form the primary texts of this study will include Savarkar's *Hindutva* (1923), Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste* (1944), Roy's *Radical Democracy*, Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* (1938) and Tagore's *Nationalism* (1917).

The selection of works has been done keeping in mind the central importance of the works in the political imagination they inspire. The aim is to not read the texts as merely political tracts set in a particular historical context, but also as the imaginations of being, origins, histories and destinies. Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* (1938) is his central politico-philosophical treatise, containing the basic core imagination of his thoughts and something he never abandoned even in part all his life. Although Gandhi would go on to develop many of the ideas in his later life and works, the basic essence of his thoughts remains unchanged. More crucially, this work brings together an imagination of India, which is radically different in its strategies of imbuing its readership with a sense of empowerment in the face of western colonial technological and military supremacy. Indeed, echoes of his ideas can be found in many later thinkers who urge the same reliance on the inner moral strength and conviction of a right purpose, including the likes of Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela, or within India, Vinoba Bhave or Jayprakash Narayan. The world, however remembers Gandhi for his use of non-violence as a tool of immense power for the overthrow of totalitarian and violent regimes. The work explains this seemingly contradictory turn of tools, the use of ahimsa against violence, love against hatred, non-alterity in the face of othering. It lays out the path of the Satyagrahi – literally one who insists on the truth – another important concept in helping create an imagination of one who will work for the betterment of the people. The work therefore becomes important in placing three imaginations in front of a colonised people – the imagination of the history and civilisation of the Indian people, the imagination of a secular and peaceful past, and the imagination of a position of

power inherent within the people and accessible through a simple change in outlook. The work also redefines Swaraj, by placing the location of the 'raj' – or rule – not in the state, or in the nation, or in the people, but within each and every individual. This perhaps is as revolutionary an idea today as it was then and validates the importance of political imagination as a key to bringing change in the society. Gandhi's ideas of Swaraj and Satyagraha have profound implications for the decolonization project in how it re-imagines the source of colonial power as well as strategies to overcome the injustice of colonial rule. Gandhi's autobiography, *My Experiments with Truth* (1968) helps us to not only trace how this radically different imagination develops in his own life, but as the title itself suggests, provides a methodology - a constant experiment with truth. This, in itself, is the product of another radical imagination - that truth itself is not stable and needs to be constantly experimented on in order to arrive at a higher truth. This not only allows for a constant questioning of accepted knowledge, truths, in order to arrive at a higher level of knowledge, much like the Socratic imagination, it also forces on the thinker a lifetime of practice. The Gandhian must also be a practitioner of what he preaches and his preaching must be a result of living and questioning life. Gandhi's autobiography therefore becomes the space for working out and understanding Gandhian thought and imagination.

My survey of the Right wing imagination is centred on V.D. Savarkar's *Hindutva*, which is largely a rewriting of empirical history to provide a radical reimagining of Aryan history as a struggle to establish a Hindu nation. The reimagining of history away from facts and towards living myths and popular uncorroborated narratives of political convenience is a definite strategy in creating a national imagination on the part of the Right wing, a trend which has seen ratification in releases of works of fiction portraying Hindu myths and legends as definite histories in recent times. The textbook debates in the tenure of the BJP have shown a real political drive in rewriting history and creating national imaginations to be a real political strategy on the part of the Right. Decolonisation therefore becomes a process of renegotiating history. Savarkar's Hindutva is not to be equated with the practice of Hinduism, as he himself takes pains to differentiate the two terms. Hindutva is the political imagination of a Hinduised nation. Savarkar's strategy is to expand the idea of the Hindu to include Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists and other religions that are prevalent in the subcontinent, while excluding the Muslims, Christians, Parsees and others who are seen as outsiders. In his

definition of what the term Hindu means, Savarkar is careful to propose both birth and worldly life within the borders of the subcontinent, as well as a religious imagination confined within it to be essential to the definition of a Hindu. Within its folds, he imagines a unity across the various castes, creeds and religious differences existing within the subcontinent. Nonetheless, ultimately the entire basis of his Hindutva or Hindu nationalism stems from a deep anxiety primarily regarding the Muslims, but also extending to the Christians who are seen as potential traitors to the Hindu nation. Amongst the diatribe against Islam, Savarkar also includes a long section in which he speculates that historically the Buddhists have also acted as traitors to the Hindu nation, as they are, by training and philosophical bent, universalists rather than nationalists. Savarkar's idea of the nation therefore boils down to the creation of an imaginative 'Hindutva' identity that seeks to exclude Islam and Christianity, constructing a militant imagination of a Hindu state. Indeed the entire trajectory of nationalism as defined by Savarkar is designed to be built on the alterity that he ascribes between the internationalist approach of millitant Islam and Christianity, along with the pacific universality of Buddhism to some extent, as against the purely nationalist and militant Hindus, along with the Sikhs.

In Ambedkar, we find the assertion of a different social imagination – the Dalit imagination – which has also asserted itself today in art and literature including powerful and shocking poetry and autobiographies. Ambedkar's central text, *Annihilation of Caste* (1944), provides the backdrop to the national imagination of Savarkar, by positing not political emancipation, but rather a social reorganisation through an actualisation of social justice – an idea which, for Ambedkar, is alien to Hinduism. Through his immense study of Hinduism, constitutional law, history and experiences of real politics, Ambedkar outlines yet another radically different imagination of India, as a land of immense injustice, but also charts out a road though which it can emerge as a land of equality, freedom and brotherhood. Ambedkar's ideas of the origin of untouchables lying in a difference of religious and dietary practices has profound implications for the imagination of Dalit politics, which moves away from racial politics, towards the politics of legal and constitutional guarantees, and involves a Rawlesian theory of distributive justice. However, *Annihilation of Caste* (1944) shows a very different reengagement with western historiography. Unlike the Right wing which engages with history just to create imaginations of power, Ambedkar deals with history

in order to create powerful imaginations of justice. Ideas of state, social upliftment, reservation, respect and dignity enter the imagination of the nation through Ambedkar, while rejecting racism, inequality and injustice. By relocating the national imagination on the plight of the landless, oppressed untouchables, having no access to public wells and roads, Ambedkar exploded the myth of Indian Independence, and relocated attention to the inherent thraldoms of caste and exploitation which must be removed in order to truly decolonize the Indian mind. Moreover, Ambedkar's assertion that Dalits originated from beef eating Buddhists, and his own conversion to Buddhism marks out the difference in esteem that Ambedkar held the concept of religion in contrast to Savarkar. Nonetheless, for Ambedkar, the question of locating a way forward for the Dalits, and the nation lay in a rejection of Hinduism and its associated caste system. The revolutionary identity may not be national, or particularly political, but in his articulation of a way forward Ambedkar nonetheless demands an alterity from Hinduism, which is quite literally the reason behind the primary social problems of the subcontinent.

In M.N. Roy we find the gradual shifting from an alterity based paradigm, towards a non-alterity driven worldview of radical humanism. While Roy's early works are excellent examples of materialist readings of Indian society, which analyze how the colonizing drive is supported by capitalism as well as feudal landlordism in India apart from the imperialist designs of England, his later works move beyond simple binaries of oppressor and oppressed in order to argue for a world where freer exchanges of information through wide grassroots level democracy rather than dictatorships of the proletariat. The Left differs with Nehru-Gandhi in seeing capitalism as a menace to the Indian people, and socialism, if not communism, to be an ideal destination. Marxism brings to the Indian imagination the idea of an international class and class conflict, which not only exists in the fight against western capitalists, but also their Indian counterparts who in the final analysis will always use colonizing and neocolonising tactics to further their own interests. By making capitalism complicit with a global imperialist network, the Indian Left demands the dismantling of the market based economic system, proposes state ownership and equitable redistribution, apart from taking up the cause of the landless and the working class. The Left imagination has spawned a spectrum of literary and cultural initiatives, and its effects can be seen in authors, poets and playwrights down to today. The Left imagines the Indian nation to be

a product of an enmeshed global economic system, and proposes a radical alternative of a stateless and classless society through democratic as well as militant struggles after organizing the working and peasant class not only in India, but eventually across the world. Roy, while starting out from these positions, eventually realised that Marxism ultimately proposes a different imagined alterity, one based on economic considerations. Further, Marxist violence, concentrated under the commands of the party elite eventually destroyed democracy and people's participation in favour of the rule of nominated party loyalists even at the local level. Roy therefore moves from a Marxist paradigm which emphasises inconsumerable alterities between people on the basis of their relation to the modes of production, to emphasise participative democracy and non-alterity in his *New Humanism: A Manifesto* (1974).

However, the point is not so much to list out the ideas and innovations of different authors, as it is to try and identify the shaping imaginations of these thinkers. Conveniently, both the alterity driven, as well as the non alterity driven movements have their own distinct literatures, with established literary movements. This close alignment of literary texts with actual political movements and theoretical writings again allows for a uniquely interrelated study with a direct relevance for the study of literature, which would have been difficult had we chosen some other time-space for study. The work will culminate by trying to bring together the various imaginations that have come out of the cauldron of colonial India and meditate upon the nature and importance of imagination at times of crisis. My work will take up imagination as central to any radical process, 'radical' meaning not only correct interpretation and analysis, but also the transformative potential that is inherent in any society.

My objective is to attempt a modest review of postcolonialism not as a theory, but as an imagining. Linking the two ends of Plato's divided line, what postcolonialism is viewed as today needs to be interrogated in order to locate its usefulness for students and academicians. While a large part of the discourse of postcolonialism continually asserts itself as a theory without critically examining what that means, some sections look at it as an umbrella term for resistance, while still others as interesting structures for reading cultural artefacts from time-spaces seeking to move ahead from the colonial trauma. What is common is the locating of an erstwhile colonized space, and in some ways, creating the imagination of an apparently completely decolonized future. Theories

link circumstances and forces acting on them to determine what will happen. Postcolonialism however, is a set of imaginings which ponders on what ought to happen. Perhaps this may be equally applicable to other social theories as well.

Hume, the Scottish empiricist philosopher had cautioned against jumping from 'what is' conditions to 'what ought to be' conditions as inherently subjective, and likely to lead to incoherence and mistakes. This principle, also known as Hume's Guillotine, questions any knowledge of what ought to be as impossible for knowing, as all that we can know is what is. This, combined with the indefinite paralleling of knowledge as either relation of ideas or relation of concrete objects as set out in Hume's Fork, makes for a strong case that 'what ought to be' is merely speculation, without the possibility of complete verification. But what social theory in general and postcolonialism in particular do is that they break Hume's Guillotine by making a link between 'what is' and 'what ought to be'. The link lies in an underlying ethics which believes that colonialism is wrong and that decolonization is needed for the ultimate emancipation of an erstwhile colonial space. Here, questioning the nature of colonialism, the meaning of emancipation etc, are all taken for granted. In other words, postcolonialism is based on a certain world view or ideology and is aimed at creating a certain imagined world which it believes would be of greater benefit to the people. The central part of postcolonialism therefore is the imagination of a new world different from the existing one although it is really based in opposition to the exploitative structures of this world.

Moving away from the derogatory position that Plato accords to imagination, I would like to bring in the ideas of Unger, who invokes the need for a radical reimagining as a precursor to any radical restructuring. Unger, in his review of the current impasse in Left thinking, post the collapse of the Soviet Union, notes that somehow theory has become locked into stasis with no way of moving forward. Instead of providing radical emancipatory frameworks, Marxists have been relegated to one of two overarching positions. On the one hand, Marxists have turned to a sort of humanism through which they accept and perpetuate the structures of capitalism albeit through a more humanizing façade. Therefore, instead of challenging the idea of fixed salaries and accumulation of the wealth of surplus labour, they have been reduced to arguing merely for better wages or working conditions. On the other hand, other Marxists are caught waiting for a revolution which may never come. With the stasis in Marxism, we have the

likes of Fukuyama, predicting the end of history, and in general there is a strong view that there is no alternative (TINA) to capitalism as we know it today. Amidst this TINA factor, Unger resurrects the Keatsian idea of 'negative capability' and reposes faith in the esemplastic power of imagination. As far as I know, this refocusing on the radical quotient of imagination, which is the focus of my research, has not been attempted in the field of postcolonialism.

The study approaches postcolonialism not as a process derived from colonialism, or as a singular response to colonialism, but at the same time does not discount the effect that colonialism has had on it. This idea is developed from Unger, who sets out in his *Social Theory: Its Situation and Its Task* (1987) the assertion that classical social theory looks upon the world as made and imagined, and not as a mere product of underlying natural order. In itself, the approach distances itself from the two extreme approaches to social thought, first that of giving undue importance to a deeper structure as responsible for institutions, and second that of looking upon institutions as bodies which must be studied through a positivist outlook, i.e. as a function of some natural law which can be empirically derived. The understanding of Unger is that there is an immediate need to relocate approaches to theory to take into account institutions and the critic as dynamic subject-objects which have the potential to influence, remodel and reshape each other continuously, randomly and repetitively without necessarily being influenced overwhelmingly by deep structures or by other overarching natural processes. This is also why multiple responses are possible and valid in similar situations of power conflicts. The relook at imaginations of the post of colonial in colonial India, and those who have actually influenced literary and political praxes in the subcontinent is a move aimed at revealing the differences in postcolonialism as we perceive it today (through the writings of critics and theoreticians mostly after the 1980s) and how these imaginations have actually helped define and create India.

In a time and space in theory which is dominated by the TINA (There Is No Alternative) factor, it is necessary to review the basic assumptions we make when we approach structures critically. Historically, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the move in China away from Mao Zedong thought towards Socialism with Chinese Characteristics have been seen as the failure of Marxism, at least as it was dominantly interpreted in the 20th century. The unipolar dominance of the United States and

exploitative capital enshrined in works of arrogance like Fukuyama's essay on End of History, the surfacing of post-feminism and the acceptance of liberation of women through capitalism and associated cultural production, the comments of the likes of Appiah who says of postcolonialism that it is a condition of 'pessimism' and of a 'comprador intelligentsia' all point towards a general stasis in philosophy. One set of progressive theoreticians over the last two decades has largely had to take refuge behind some sort of a belief in a process (Historical Materialism) which will eventually lead to global revolution through accentuated growth of global capital and associated inequalities. Another set, whom the former would dismiss as reactionary, have been busy peddling a milder version of the very system they oppose by fighting for better wages, better work conditions etc. The latter group meanwhile comfortably shoots down the former as armchair intellectuals, divorced from ground realities.

With the possibility of a revolution as impossible as it has ever been, radical theory has lost a very important quotient, that is of imagination. This work is therefore aimed at extracting writings which have imagined theoretical turns which move beyond a simplistic binary development from colonialism to postcolonialism. This set of writings which exhibits the negative capability of being in doubts and uncertainties, of envisioning radically altered models of decolonisation as well as the nation space, I would argue, have had a lasting impression in the history of human thought. These have created altered imaginations which have given birth to new creative thoughts.

The methodology for this study will involve a close reading of the chosen texts, in order to note the source of colonial engagement and the sort of impact it has in them, and the sort of postcolonial response outlined in the texts. Again, the attempt will be to generate not a list of responses, but to try and identify the source of transformative principles (if any), and to try and see how imagination plays a role in creating new possibilities. I believe this sort of a study of texts will also provide some sort of an empirical basis to what is otherwise a rather normative study, but more importantly this sort of a study will help refocus theory on political imagination, and enhance the interactive development central to theory.

My first chapter begins with a discussion on the current continued relevance of a criticism of hegemonies. In particular, it notes how despite half a century of the

discourses of postcolonialism and decolonisation, there nonetheless is a continuation of hegemonies that mimic colonial modes of othering. It goes on to present a case for a need to relook the ideas of colonialism as imaginaries that precede political colonisation. In the context of India, it shows how India is imagined as an exotic destination ripe for intervention by foreign agents. The chapter proceeds through an etymological deconstruction of various terms associated with the discourse of postcolonialism. Starting with the word "India", it goes on to interrogate the roots of the terms "nation", "colony", "metropolis", "colonialism", "imperialism" etc. The emphasis is on treating them as social imaginaries. The chapter advances through a discussion on how imperialism is linked to imagination and looks at imperialism through various ideological frameworks. Starting with the views of Rosa Luxemburg, a Marxist, it takes up the views of philosophers ranging from classical historians to poststructuralist critics. After establishing imperialism as an imagination, the chapter looks upon the category of imagination itself. Taking up the views of Immanuel Kant, Rene Descartes, Walter Benjamin etc. the focus is on establishing imagination as a necessary category for the creation of new paradigms in philosophy and thought. Next, the Marxist concept of labour is linked with imagination in order to show that the two are interconnected. The idea of the nation as an imagined community is taken up next along with other theories of the creation of nations. This provides a link to the study of the concept of sovereignty. Looking upon sovereignty both in its Westphalian sense as well as monetary sovereignty, an attempt is made to ultimately root it in imagination. The chapter finally ends with an interrogation of the idea of democracy which is also treated as an imagination. In some ways, the survey of terms reveals that the ideas of modern polity coming from postcolonialism tend to be rooted in alterities. The chapter ends on the note that there is a need to move beyond existing imaginations of postcolonial polity and establishes the need for moving from alterity paradigms towards non-alterity paradigms.

My second chapter is an in-depth study of the current situation of postcolonial studies. The chapter can be divided into six parts which are designed to succinctly sum up a host of debates in the area of postcolonialism. It starts off with two narratives – the first leading to Mohammed Dabashi's declaration that postcolonialism has ended and the second establishing decolonisation to be a problematic enterprise. The third part of the chapter involves a detailed discussion of decolonization not as an end to colonisation

but merely a political transfer of power. The fourth part takes up postcolonialism as the cultural extension of the political claim of decolonization. It outlines how the term has been extensively critiqued. It notes the development of the term from its origins as "Commonwealth" through the concept of the "Third World" and into the more recently popularised term "Global South". It notes how all these are ultimately rooted in an imagination of alterity. The fifth part takes up the issue of terminology exploring the various ways in which postcolonialism has been represented in order to show them all to be problematic. The chapter ends in a final part that explores the root of paracolonialism, tracing out the previous usages of that term and proposing its revival in a new non-alterity setting inspired by Buddhism. Although addressing a diverse set of concerns, the chapters forms a closed loop beginning with Dabashi declaring an end to the alterities of postcolonialism in the modern world after the Arab Spring and ending with the proposal for a non-alterity based paracolonial paradigm.

My third chapter takes up the continuance of postcolonial politics based on alterities today. It starts with the issue of the invocation of sedition charges by successive governments in order to curb discontent, being one of the most recent vestiges of colonialism that has come to the forefront with the ongoing Student Spring across the country. Sedition laws are explored across the subcontinent to show their colonial heritage, especially in the case of India where the laws do not distinguish between the state and the government. Sedition being an attack on the sovereignty of the government, the chapter continues by differentiating between the colonial ideal of sovereignty lying in the person of the monarch and the democratic assertion that sovereignty lies with the people. The chapter continues by taking up the recent case of sedition launched by the Indian government against the Jawaharlal Nehru University Student's Union President who had raised the slogan for "azadi". The thesis continues by tracing out the origins of the slogan in the anti-colonial struggles of Indian freedom fighters. Associated slogans including "swaraj" and "inquilab" are taken up and seen for their impact in the independence movement. The idea of freedom, which is coming from a postcolonial assertion, is ultimately seen as negative freedom. With this my thesis enters into its close reading of texts by Indian political thinkers. In this context, the chapter continues by taking up Savarkar and Ambedkar who were operating within the limits of a negative conditional freedom. The chapter proceeds through a close reading of their works. The chapter ends on the need for articulating an unconditional freedom –

mukti, in contrast to the conditional freedoms that are pervading our political imaginations. The chapter ends on asserting unconditional freedom of the individual to be a part of the paracolonial praxis.

My final chapter takes up Indian political imaginations that are based on non-alterity through the works of Roy, Gandhi and Tagore. The chapter begins by taking up another central incident from the student spring – the suicide of Rohith Vemula. Through a close reading of his suicide note, it establishes the immediate urgency of establishing a politics of non-alterity. The thesis continues by briefly summing up the formulations of the Marxist and the Indian left on the colonial question before moving into Roy's ideas of radical humanism. The chapter shows that ultimately Roy moves beyond alterity politics imposed by the binaries of Marxism in order to demand the radical alterity of individual freedom. A close reading of Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* shows that non-alterity becomes the root of Gandhi's ahimsa or non-violence. Gandhi refuses to strengthen divisions in society or construct identities by othering different people. Gandhi's non-alterity allows him to imagine a world without interference of governments or the need for violence. Tagore in his essays on nationalism links up alterity to be the root of any militant collective imagination like the nation. The rise of nationalism becomes the primary reason for violence for Tagore especially in the context of the First World War. His warning to the Japanese people is prophetic in foreseeing the death and destruction that militant nationalism would lead it to in the course of the Second World War. This chapter thus shows that for Roy, Gandhi and Tagore, the most important part of their philosophy is seen to lie in their ability to rethink alterity in order to reveal its absence. Finally in the conclusion, I bring together the strands of these various arguments raised, in order to clearly outline the contours of a paracolonial praxis.

I hope that this work will provide for new ways of reading literatures from erstwhile colonised spaces besides allowing for a new way of looking at colonialism and reactions to the oppressive structures that it has engendered.

CHAPTER I

Imagining Colonialism, Postcolonialism and Decolonization: A Critical Review of Terms

Having a First World that is constantly trying to shake off the stigma of colonialism, it is strange to think of continued propagation of imaginations that are demeaning to the sovereignty of those who do not fall into the White Euro/Western centric models of civilization and culture. But I would like to assert the continued relevance of Edward Said's idea in *Orientalism* (1978) regarding the continued need for western influence in the exotic East at a time when postcolonialism has moved from outright resistance of western modes towards more nuanced problematics and also at a time when colonialism has been openly condemned and dumped into the dustbin of history-

> ...an idea that will acquire an almost unbearable, next to mindless authority in European writing: the theme of Europe teaching the Orient the meaning of liberty, which is an idea that Chateaubriand and everyone after him believed that Orientals, and especially Muslims, knew nothing about. Of liberty, they know nothing; of propriety, they have none: force is their God. When they go for long periods without seeing conquerors who do heavenly justice, they have the air of soldiers without a leader, citizens without legislators, and a family without a father. (Said, 1978: 83)

This idea that those of non-western, non-Eurocentric, non-Judeo-Christian cultures are essentially in need of western intervention in order to allow for their full and correct development can be traced across all dominant cultural productions. From comics like Tintin (*Cigars of Pharoah* and *Tintin in Tibet*) (Herge, 2003) to computer games like *Hit Man 2* (IO, 2002), *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* (Ubisoft, 2003), *Call of Duty Black Ops II* (Treyarch, 2012), dominant western imaginations regarding the erstwhile colonized world continue to carry the spectres of colonialism. However, it is not as if this continued paternalistic attitude of reforming and beneficial intervention does not

have parallels in the real world as well. Politically, we have seen the imposed drive for democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq, the strange overthrowing of a democratically elected Islamic government in Egypt, the attempted interventions in Syria, the continued interventions in Iran in recent months that somehow reassert an interventionist role for erstwhile colonizing, and neocolonizing powers today and tomorrow. There is a strong sentiment that the entire project of postcolonialism has failed to address the continued neoimperialist attacks that have been going on, accompanied by the cultural dominance and imposed cultural uniformities as promoted through Coca Cola colonization. Whether it is Kwame Appiah who accuses "Postcoloniality (to be) the condition of what we might ungenerously call a comprador intelligentsia: of a relatively small, Western-styled, Western-trained group of writers and thinkers who mediate the trade in cultural commodities of world capitalism at the periphery" (Appiah, 1996: 62), or Arif Dirlik, who says it is a "diversion of attention from contemporary problems of social, political, and cultural domination" (Dirlik, 1996: 296) or Ella Shohat, who finds it to be "the consecration of hegemony" (Shohat, 1992: 100); the almost total silence on the part of the erstwhile colonized nations towards continued aggressions, real and/or virtual, always sharply political and hegemonic, confirm only the need for continued challenges from the margins to the centre.

Since my thesis is a review of Indian political thinkers who theorised the major political directions of the Indian people post colonialism, it is particularly concerned with how colonialism develops in the context of India. In this I look upon colonialism to be a product of a certain imagination. Before the actual political colonisation could even begin, there existed an imagination that promoted and catalysed colonialism into the form that it took in the last three centuries of the last millennia. Therefore, while tracing out the Indian political thinking that emerged as a response to colonialism, it will be important to first sketch the imaginative thinking that served as the precursor to colonialism. This chapter intends to begin by outlining how India has always been imagined as a destination ripe for foreign intervention. It will then trace a short history of the western imaginings of India which are independent of what India really was, where India is never seen as a sovereign nation but rather as a location for the exploitation of the western outsider.

The name "India" itself comes from the name of the river Sindhu or Indus (Monier- Williams, 1898: 12-17). The ancient Persians used the term "Hindu" to refer to the people who lived by that river. The Greeks used the word "Indoi" to refer to the same people. The word Sindhu is conjectured to come from a combination of Sim, meaning "it" or "place" and -"dhu" meaning trembling or shaking in Sanskrit referring perhaps to the forceful flow of the mighty river. Even etymologically, the word India refers to a geographical space - the land of the river Sindhu, a destination or a location linked to fertility, trade and wealth associated with any great river valley civilization.

India has always been imagined as an exotic destination - a land of wonders and riches demanding intervention, exploration and exploitation. In Ctesias' *Indika* (Nichols, 2011), written in the fifth century BC, we have far-fetched accounts of one legged tribes of brown Indians. Ctesias was an ancient Greek doctor whose accounts were so fantastic that even other Greek writers dismissed his stories, amongst which include tales of dogs the size of lions, pygmies and unicorns. As the court physician to the Persian king Artaxerxes II, Ctesias had never been to India, but his fantastic tales helped stir up the imagination of Alexander, who saw in India a fabled land of riches. Megasthenes' *Indica* (McCrindle, 1877), written at the end of the third century BC, is perhaps more widely known in India, as he actually came as the ambassador to the court of King Bimbisara, but his accounts too were largely fantastic in portraying a land of unimaginable power, riches and magic. Such representations of the desirable exotic are paralleled by narratives of the relative military inferiority of India. Arrian, the Greek historian of the first century, notes a strange "fact", where he asserts that the Indians had only been free (presumably of Persian rule) twice in their history until the time of Chandragupta Maurya. This obviously fallacious commentary propagated by a "historian", shows how history has been "constructed" by the West even in antiquity - especially when it comes to the Orient. By depicting the Indians to be an eternally subjugated "slave race", they allow for the construction of the "master race" of western rulers. Arrian claimed to have got this and other such information that depicted the Indians as weak, non-sovereign, exotic people, and India as a land of fantastic wealth and riches, from the accounts of Megasthenes-

> From Dionysus (mythical) to Sandracottus (fourth century BC) the Indians reckoned 153 kings, and 6,042 years. During all these years they

> only twice asserted their freedom; the first time they enjoyed it for 300 years, and the second for 120. They say that Dionysus was earlier than Heracles by fifteen generations, and that no other ever invaded India for war, not even Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, though he marched against the Scythians, and in other matters was the most meddlesome of the kings of Asia. However they admit that Alexander came and overcame in battle all the nations whom he visited, and that he would have conquered them all if his army had been willing. But none of the Indians ever marched out of their own country for war, being actuated by a respect for justice. (Arrian, 1893)

Together, this exoticisation and depictions of servility combined to provide for a fertile imagination, promoting continued intervention and aggression by the West down the ages.

Fahien's (fifth century) *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms, Being an Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-Xian of his Travels in India and Ceylon in Search of the Buddhist Books of Discipline* (Trans. Legge, James 1886) and Huen Tsang's (646 AD) *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* (Trans. Li, Rongxi 1995) are very different from the western accounts. My intention in introducing these two 'eastern' accounts here is to show that it is possible to have a very different approach towards portraying India. Perhaps that they came as pilgrims first, seeking knowledge, as is clearly observable in the texts which they left behind with detailed accounts of the condition of Buddhism, informs their narrative marking it as radically different. This might not indicate that the fantastic is absent from their accounts, but by contrasting the temperament of the travellers who are seeking knowledge, or who have come with a motive of pilgrimage on the one hand with those who are seeking a profit motive or a mechanism for intrusive engagement on the other, one might discover an interesting point of departure. Another contrast can be found between the accounts of Ibn Batuta, the fourteenth century traveller who in his *Rahilla* (1354) again exoticized not only the riches of the ruler, Mohammad bin Tughlaq, but went far in providing tales of lands of rich forts and exotic women; and the accounts of Alberuni, who in *Tarikh-i-Hind* (Sachau,1910), written in the early eleventh century, roots himself in a quest for knowledge, an attempt at engaging with Indian scholars on the merit of argument and presenting facts. A recent work on travel, *Acts of Faith: Journeys into Sacred India*

(2012) by Makarand Paranjape, takes up the varying attitudes of travel within India and describes how one can locate, even in western narratives of travel, the realization of this deeper purpose sometimes. He describes the case of Paul Brunton, who in his 1934 book *A Search in Secret India* describes his adventures, commenting on how during the process of his trav(ai/e)ls, his encounter with Raman Maharishi led him to a deeper realization:

> I realize unexpectedly that I have become a pilgrim without a God, a wanderer from city to city and from village to village seeking a place where the mind may find rest, but finding none… Travel, at this point, takes on a totally different dimension, resembling the age old metaphor of the round of lives that we go through, travelling from birth to death. This is no longer the travel of a European adventurer visiting distant shores in search of conquest or wonder, but the travel of a soul from life to life, in search of everlasting peace or freedom from process. (Paranjape, 2012: 91)

In the long train of travellers who have visited and written about the country we can find sensitive and accurate portrayals as well. However, such realisations are the aberration and not the norm, especially when one looks at the western representations of India. The intervention of the European powers, first commercially and then politically can be seen as a natural extension to the predominant production of literature which saw India primarily as a destination of riches to be traded with or looted. The famous travelogue of Marco Polo that inspired Christopher Columbus (his personal copy of Marco Polo's narrative is conserved at the Capitular and Columbus Library of Sevilla) to find the sea route to the fabled riches of the east covers parts of India in book III (Penzner, 1937). While Columbus eventually went on to discover the North American continent, the descriptions of Marco Polo, it must be remembered had initially inspired him to find an overseas trade route to India. Jordanus Catalani, a Roman Catholic bishop in his *Mirabilia* (Yule, 1863) written in the 1330s continues by listing a set of "Marvels" available across India, including spices, precious metals and animals for potential trade, besides noting the ease with which it was possible to proselytise and convert the local inhabitants. The fantastic riches of Vijaynagara as described by the Venetian Nicolo Conti in *De Varietaete Fortunae* (1444) or the accounts of the Englishman Ralph Fitch

(early seventeenth century) only further whetted the appetites of the Europeans, and the first trading and political engagements of Europe began in earnest by the seventeenth century, leading ultimately to the British colonisation of India. Therefore, we can see how even before the Indian nation had ever been established, India existed as an imagined destination.

The word "nation" derives from the Latin *natio* (Harper, 2015) signifying birth. However, by the eighteenth century and even today, the word carries with it an extended meaning of a set boundary whose people enjoy some sovereignty. The word "destination" derives from the Latin 'destinetio' which interestingly signifies fulfilling one's destiny, an archaic meaning in English including being appointed (to a post). In some ways, I argue that the intervention of the train of writers like Ctesias, Megasthenes, Batuta, Conti, Fitch and others, through constant exoticisation, helped pave the way for a radical change in how we imagine India. Having sidestepped its reality, its people and their aspirations, by denying the birth, birth right and natural rights of the living people and harping on the exotic commodity value of the destination, the seeds of imperial ambition and colonialism were laid. The destiny of the traveller clearly lay in travelling to India to seek and make fortunes, but also more importantly lay in their needed intervention to provide the nation itself with a destiny, an identity which would reflect all the benefits of the traveller's own culture. The latter travellers to India therefore saw themselves as the agents of change, not merely as tourists. Travellers were not pilgrims or students in search of wisdom or peace through interaction, but agents (of various East India Companies) of change. The role of the western agent was repeatedly justified as moral, even though clearly behind all the protestations of justice, Christian correctness and the mission of the upliftment of a population stagnated in superstition and the past; there were enterprises of commercial gains, often through great violence. This destiny of the West, in many ways, removed from Indians their sovereignty, while also introducing them to an exploitative capitalist system protected by imperialism, as well as imaginations of a democracy to come, while tying it down primarily as a colony of the British for almost two hundred years.

The word colony originates from the Proto Indo-European (PIE) *kwel, the same word root as that of the wheel, indicating travel, turning or movement. The word eventually came to refer to a farmer or a herdsman, as in the Latin colo- which was the

root of colonus, meaning a farmer or a turner of soil, which also gave rise to the Latin verb colere, meaning cultivate (Pokorny, 2007: 1054, 1800). The original idea of a settler farmer or one who is engaging directly with the resources of a newly occupied space is therefore, inherent even in the etymological root of the word colony, but so is the idea of travel and of exploring unknown locations for profit.

In history, we find the idea of colony formation from the beginning of civilization itself, especially in the West. For example, the Egyptians setup colonies in Southern Canaan even before the first dynasty (Porat, 1992: 433-440). The Phoenicians created colonies including Carthage, as well as Carthago Nova in Spain. The word Carthage literally means new town coming from the Phoenician root Kart-Hadasht (Ring, 1994: 177). The most prolific colonialists of the ancient western world were the Greeks who set up colonies ranging from Ionia and Thrace (Hornblower, 2003: 1515), apart from the colonies circling the Black Sea, the coast of modern Turkey, the northern coast of Africa, as well as southern Gaul, Spain, Sicily and Italy (Hammond, 1959: 109). The Greeks referred to their colonies as either apoikia, referring to those colonies which were city-states in their own right and enjoyed relative freedom from their mother states, or as emporion, which were trading outposts or colonies that were directly controlled from the mother city-state. The town of Empuries, established at Catalonia, Spain, is an example of such Greek dependent colonies. The word emporion itself is linked to the PIE *par-a (Harper, 2015) which is the root of the words empire, imperial etc. which comes from the root meaning produce, prepare, make ready etc. The Greek colonies were usually setup by people fleeing wars, the most famous literary example being the setting up of Rome by the descendants of Aeneus who had fled the ruins of Troy, as set out in Virgil's *Aeneid* (1971). However, colonies were also setup in order to provide land for surplus population or as a reward to soldiers. Alexander, in his campaigns into Asia, set up many such colonies starting from the modern city of Alexandria in Egypt to Alexandria Bucephalous on the banks of the Jhelum river in modern day Pakistan (Lendering, 2007).

The mother city was referred to as the metropolis which comes from the PIE *matr (meaning mother) (Pokorny, 2007: 1542) and PIE *pali (meaning soil). The metropolis usually maintained a relation of affection and support, which was cemented through cultural and religious ties. The colonies would usually adopt the constitution of

the mother state as well as its primary religious factors apart from preserving a holy fire brought from the original metropolis in a special place in order to remind themselves of their common ties. The colonies would send athletes for votive games, rather in the spirit of the Commonwealth Games today, participate in various alliances as well as pay tributes from time to time. The Athenians set up special colonies called cleruchy which were different from other colonies in that the settler of the cleruchy, also known as the cleruch, would retain their Athenian citizenship and the community would remain politically dependent on Athens. The first such cleruchy was Salamis, but others were established in regions ranging from Thracian Chersonese (modern Gallipoli), Chalcis and Samos (off the coast of Turkey). This form of colony is probably the earliest progenitor of the modern colonial form which has behind it, both military and economic reasons and combines political dependency on a mother-state. What is of note is that the Peloponnesian Wars began because of a dispute between Corinth and her colony of Corcyra (Corfu). Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian Wars* written in 431 BC, described how the assertion of Corcyra against its metropolis Corinth and the Athenian siding with the colony became the direct precipitation which led to the conflict that engulfed the entire of the Greek civilisation and its colonies. As compared by Kagan in his *On the Origins of War* that came out in 1996, parallels of the colonial origins of the Peloponnesian Wars can be found to have resonances with the First World War, where the Allied Forces mobilised in support of Serbia, an erstwhile colony of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The Romans continued with the Athenian system of military colonies and trading posts. The term colony itself comes into English from the Latin *colonia*. The Roman historian Livy (Moore, 1919: Book I p. 11) notes that the first colonies of Rome were established about 752 BC at Antemnae and Crustumerium (both north of Rome). Other colonies were setup as the empire expanded in a manner similar to the Athenian system of cleruchy (Sherwin-White 1973: 86), where soldiers would be settled into towns in order to provide for loyal garrisons and centres for trading and control over land revenue. The leading colonists were treated as patrons and had great prestige in the new colony. Later on after the Marian reforms, retired Roman soldiers were also given lands in colonies as a further means of strengthening Roman rule. Many cities, including Belgrade (Serbia), Narbonne (France), Colchester, York (both in UK) and Merida (Spain), began as Roman colonies and military garrisons (Bunsen, 1994). Like the

Athenian colonies, in the Roman settlements too citizens retained their Roman original citizenship (Peck, 1898). Further, the colonies were dictated in their policies centrally from Rome. The imagination of what a colony was and its relation to the metropolis, the motherland, was therefore set in the western civilisation from antiquity.

The Roman Empire itself fell to the repeated waves of the Goths and the Vandals, migratory people who had themselves settled into vast regions of the erstwhile Roman Empire from the East. During the middle ages the Goths, the Vandals and the Huns established their own colonies all over Western Europe. Other tribes like the Franks settled in areas of modern France and the Angles, Saxons and Jutes settled in England. However, the major colonising force of the middle ages was the Vikings who established their colonies all over the Scandinavian region and also reached Iceland and Newfoundland in North America. For some time, a large part of England, known as Danelaw, was a settler colony of Danish Vikings who were ruled under Canute. Settlement colonies were also setup by the Persians during the Sassanid Empire in Yemen and Oman. The Chola Dynasty in India set up dependencies in south-east Asia in order to dominate trade in the area. What must be emphasised is that colonisation was/is not uniquely European a phenomenon, although our idea of colonies and colonialism in that sense majorly comes from a western Eurocentric tradition.

Therefore, one can find a way to distinguish between the Dependencies, where relatively fewer members of the mother state actually settled in the new space, relying instead on the indigenous natives for the extraction of resources; and the Settler Colonies (Lorenzo, 2010), where the influx of the settlers led to the physical displacement and destruction of the indigenous society. These two models of colonial contact were mirrored in the modern world as well. In spaces like the Americas and Australia, the indigenous people and their culture was largely destroyed by huge incoming migrations of settlers who carried with them the culture and civilisation of their mother states, in both these cases being largely British or white Anglo-Saxon Protestant. However, in other spaces like that of India, a very small number of settlers merely formed the elite ruling class, interfering with the native culture but also accommodating and allowing for a continuance of the native civilisation. The 1921 British Census places the number of Britishers in India to be 165,485. P.K. Nigam notes

"A small number of Englishmen (about two lacs) ruled India, a vast country with a population of 400 million" (Nigam, 2009).

This can be contrasted with the idea of permanent migratory settlements which are nonetheless equally destructive to the indigenous populations. However, in this case there are no links to any 'mother land' either through any continued cultural, religious, political or economic ties. For example, preceding the fall of the Roman Empire, a host of migratory tribes including the Vandals, the Goths, the Huns and others migrated from their traditional homelands into the spaces controlled by the Roman Empire. Although they settled in a violent displacement of indigenous people, they went on to form their own kingdoms which were not linked to any mother kingdom rooted in their traditional homelands. For example, the Visigoths founded a kingdom in Spain that lasted until the Moorish invasion (Merrils, 2014). Similarly, the Saxons founded their own kingdom in England which did not owe any allegiance to their Germanic homelands (Hunter-Blair, 1966).

Therefore, it is important to note that at its very root, colonialism is not merely the occupation of the land of a different people or of an unclaimed land. It is not merely the extraction of resources or the reforming of locations for the benefit of the settler people. It is not indicated only by the subjugation, oppression or violence towards indigenous people or spaces. What defines colonialism is an imagination, a link between where the settlers were and where the settlers are now - which may encompass political, religious, cultural and linguistic ties, but is defined by a real link with the mother state which supports and helps extend the hegemony of the settlers to its own benefit. In this regard, reviewing a few definitions of colonialism will not be out of place.

The Oxford Dictionary notes it to be the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers and exploiting it economically. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines colonialism as controlled by one power over a dependent area or people or a policy advocating or based on such control. Margaret Kohn in her essay "Ethics and World Politics" (2010) notes that colonialism is a broad concept that refers to the project of European political domination from the sixteenth to the twentieth century that ended with the National Liberation Movements of the 1960s (Kohn, 2010). One of the handier definitions comes from

Jurgen Osterhammel's *Colonialism* (2005) where the term is defined as a relationship between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and a minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonised people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis. Rejecting cultural compromises with the colonised population, the colonisers are convinced of their own superiority and their ordained mandate to rule (Osterhammel, 2005: 16). The Collins Dictionary defines it as the policy and practice of a power in extending control over a weaker section of people or areas. It goes on to note that colonialism involves the use of colonial resources to increase the power and wealth of the mother nation. It also notes it to be synonymous with imperialism. The relationship between imperialism and colonialism shall be the subject of the next section of this chapter.

Imperialism has been understood broadly through two different axes. The first, takes off from Lenin's Marxist analysis looking on it as a forced imposition because of the exploitative nature of capitalism as outlined in his pamphlet on *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917). The second revolves around Said's attempts at giving it a cultural turn which emphasises that imperialism extends more through how it rewrites the native culture, society and modes of thinking as outlined in his *Orientalism* (1978) and his later work *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). However, imperialism in itself has been connected with colonisation time and again. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as a policy of extending a country's power and influence through colonisation, use of military force or other means. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines imperialism as the policy or practice by which a country increases its power by gaining control over other areas of the world. In the recent *Key Concepts in Political Geography* (2009), Mary Gilmartin notes that:

> Colonialism and imperialism were highly profitable activities...Often the terms colonialism and imperialism are used interchangeably. Certainly it is possible to see considerable overlap in their meanings. Both colonialism and imperialism involve the subjugation of one group of people by another and both process stretch over space and time, with striking geographical and historical reach. (Gilmartin, 2009: 116)

In linking in the profit motive, Gilmartin reminds us of the invisible hand of the market that is ever present behind the scenes. The primacy of economic factors in the practice of imperialism is one important direction for coming to terms with what otherwise involved a very diverse set of political and cultural practices. The historian, Robert Young, in his *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (2001) suggests that colonialism was the practice whereas imperialism was the concept. He suggests that the former involved an empire under a single authority that was developed for settlement or commercial purposes, while the latter operated from the centre, was a state policy and was developed for ideological as well as financial reasons.

Lenin suggests that imperialism was the highest form of capitalism and that it developed through colonialism. The stage of imperialism could be distinguished through the feature of monopoly capitalism. He gives a five part definition in his study of *Imperialism*:

> (1) the concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life; (2) the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this "finance capital", of a financial oligarchy; (3) the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; (4) the formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves, and (5) the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed. (Lenin, 1917: chVII)

For Lenin, in opposition to Karl Kautsky (1914), as he himself takes up in his text, imperialism was not a policy of advanced capitalist nations, but a stage – the highest stage of advanced capitalism. Furthermore he links this to the idea of unstable finance capital, which is the paper (and now digital) money in speculations that is a part of world finance. With speculated capital financing capitalism, the possibilities of investing in high risk, high return projects becomes possible as even if the project fails, the money lost was itself a product of speculation. The loss can be conveniently shifted back onto the colonised people, who obviously don't have the power to do anything about it. He also cautions against laying an overemphasis on the nation as a category

perpetrating imperialism, arguing that any advanced capitalist must engage in imperialism in order to sustain the contradictions inherent in the capitalist system, by displacing the exploited to a periphery. Finally, Lenin discards Kautsky's formulation that eventually there would come a stage of cooperative "ultra-imperialism", exposing correctly how faults within capitalism would prevent such a turn. The root of capitalism lies in the idea of competition and not cooperation, although there may be strategic alliances for profit. The competitive nature of capitalism ensured that European nations vied against each other in order to ensure the best for their national bourgeoisie, colonising practically the whole known world by the beginning of the twentieth century.

Lenin's ideas, for the first time pinned imperialism to be grounded in the advanced capitalist mode of production, differentiating it from all other empires which had been a part of human history. This is of importance because in the context of today's political imagination, being labelled postcolonial cannot mean merely the shared historical experience of foreign political rule and economic exploitation. That has been within the experience of practically every nation or people and perhaps continues to be the case even today. Nations long associated with colonialism, like England have been in their past colonies of the Romans. Does this mean that every nation is postcolonial? Lenin reminds us that it is important to place imperialism within its historical context and in the context of the wider situation of worker's struggles globally. "The rentier state (imperialist countries extracting resources from colonies as its principle source of earning) is a state of *parasitic, decaying capitalism*, and this circumstance *cannot fail to influence all the socio-political conditions of the countries concerned*" (Lenin, 1917: chVIII, emphasis added). In other words, the economics of colonialism will impact the human relations production creating awareness and attitudes towards imperialist exploitations that are bound to weaken imperialism, even though it does not realise it. That imperialism creates the mechanisms of its own downfalls is a constant refrain in Marxist analysis, exemplified by statements like "imperialism, it follows that we must define it as capitalism in transition, or, more precisely, as moribund capitalism" (Lenin, 1917: chX). Lenin helps place the issue of colonialism in the present as a part of an exploitative system that needs to be challenged and overcome. This makes the issue of not one of the past and its perceived manifestations, histories and continued impacts, but of the present, immediacies and continued resistances. Marxist attitudes to imperialism

underline the importance of the overcoming of imperialism and definitions with that end in mind.

It is not a small matter that Ashcroft et al. (1989) actually included many "neocolonising" (Nkrumah, 1965) powers today, including the United States of America (USA) and Australia under the label of "postcolonial". This actually creates a perceived link between centres and the proponents of capitalism, and the marginal world of the erstwhile colonised and exploited. There can almost be a suggestion that nations can develop from the postcolonial to become global leaders, as long as they follow certain models. While showing itself to be a historical linkage, based on empirical facts, such clubbing is in reality pernicious and ahistorical in a very different way. As noted by Dirlik, "Taking the term literally as postcolonial, some practitioners of postcolonial criticism describe former settler colonies—such as the United States and Australia—as postcolonial, regardless of their status as First World societies and colonizers themselves of their indigenous populations" (Dirlik, 1994: 336). Perhaps what Dirlik is suggesting is the need to appropriate the idea of postcolonialism exclusively for spaces that no matter what their own history have not practiced oppression or promoted colonial othering. So far as Dirlik is concerned, we need to remember those pages of history, where both the United States and Australia stand indicted for conducting full scale genocidal campaigns against the indigenous people of their respective continents rather than look upon their past as colonies of the British. However, the past itself seems to be an unreliable construct with colonial dominations being present across the world. Colonial domination and revolts are not exclusive to certain spaces, rather they seem to pervade across binaries of the west and the rest, north and the south etc. Perhaps we need to develop ideas not of past dominations, but rather link how systems of dominations have evolved to create modes of economic and political dominance today.

Lenin's ideas regarding imperialism as a result of the global capitalist need to extract resources has been expanded into today's postcolonial context through the Dependency Theory, which looks on a bipartition of the world as core and peripheral states, with resources moving from the periphery to the core, in a manner similar to the colony and metropol. F.H. Cardoso in his book *Development Under Fire* (1979) draws up the salient features in the theory as-

1. there is a financial and technological penetration by the developed capitalist centers of the countries of the periphery and semi-periphery
2. this produces an unbalanced economic structure both within the peripheral societies and between them and the centers.
3. this leads to limitations on self-sustained growth in the periphery
4. this favours the appearance of specific patterns of class relations, and
5. these require modifications in the role of the state to guarantee both the functioning of the economy and the political articulation of a society, which contains, within itself, foci of inarticulateness and structural imbalance. (Cardoso, 1979: 44)

One may see the continued influence of Leninist thought on the further development of the World Systems Theory of Immanuel Wallerstein (2004) where there is a third division of "semiperipheral" states in addition to the core and periphery and the ideas of core and periphery are dislocated across the world, with the exploited and the exploiter being in all three zones. Unlike the Dependency Theory, where the world can be geographically divided clearly into exploiting and exploited, the World Systems recognises the dispersed, globalised nature of exploitation. I am including this only to argue that there is a need to take up the economics of hegemonies even in our world where the fall of the Soviet style socialism has largely been equated with the failure of Marxism, and Marxist thought. That the core-periphery models have an academic sanction and are continued to be used to describe the world by eminent scholars and thinkers, forces any reappraisal of postcolonialism to question the linking of advanced capitalist economies with the label of postcolonialism.

Rosa Luxemburg in her study *The Accumulation of Capital* (1913) says in her third section-

> Imperialism is the political expression of accumulation of capital in its competitive struggle for what remains still open of the non-capitalist environment... the immense masses of capital accumulated in the old countries… seek an outlet for their surplus products and strive to capitalise their surplus value, and the rapid change over to capitalism of the pre-capitalist civilisations... (Luxemburg, ch 31)

While Luxemburg is talking about the world at the beginning of the last century, we can still see the exact replication of the same system in today's world, with the addition perhaps of a new set of semi-industrialised nations which push their goods into even more backward markets. However, with the development of the boom in communications technology and the gradual shifting of actual manufacturing into the East, with the West largely becoming a centre for regulation of finance capital and senior management of dislocated multinational capital, the world has also moved on ahead- but the controls of the economy still follow predictable patterns. The emergence of the oil producing gulf countries and the growing role the access to natural resources similarly while allowing for some collective control on global oil prices, has nonetheless led to intense factionalism between Saudi Arabia and Iran over the area, with the subsequent rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, Kurdish demands for statehood and the involvement of both Russia and the NATO. Although the world has changed, somehow many of the basic formulations of Marxist scholars still carry weight. She goes on to analyse that the imperialist expansion was based on creating spheres of influence across the world which were controlled by national bourgeoisie. Free trade was propagated within these zones, although the domestic markets in the advanced countries were protected through protective tariffs, a condition that continues today. The colonies were exploited through the extraction of resources at prices which were completely decided by the mother country, something referred to as the colonial commodity FIAT. This exploitation was therefore, enforced through a heavy militarisation. As Luxemburg observes-

> Bourgeois liberal theory takes into account only the former aspect: the realm of 'peaceful competition', the marvels of technology and pure commodity exchange; it separates it strictly from the other aspect: the realm of capital's blustering violence which is regarded as more or less incidental to foreign policy and quite independent of the economic sphere of capital. (Luxemburg Ch 31)

Luxemburg, therefore, clearly outlines the direct link between the colonial enterprise and violence, while showing that the claims of imperialism to be a moral system which uplift the economic production of less advanced non-capitalist civilisation in reality further divides the world into haves and have-nots. This process is not backed

by any real free trade but rather systems of economic exploitation backed by direct military force. Rather than creating a space for equal competition, innovation and healthy respect of mutual cultures, imperialism is doomed to further a cycle of violence which has the potential of undoing itself. As she sums up-

> Capital increasingly employs militarism for implementing a foreign and colonial policy to get hold of the means of production and labour power of non-capitalist countries and societies… the accumulation of capital is raised to the highest power, by robbing the one of their productive forces and by depressing the other's standard of living ... The more ruthlessly capital sets about the destruction of non-capitalist strata, at home and in the outside world, the more it lowers the standard of living for the workers as a whole… (Luxemburg, Ch 31)

Therefore, in the Marxist understanding there is a linking of the economic dominance of the imperialist powers with the military dominance which goes on to create sharper divisions which must prove untenable in the long run. Indeed the political decolonization of most of the world by the 1960s proves that capitalism has had to rework itself into a neo-imperialist framework and move away from direct political intervention to other less obviously intrusive forms of domination. Nonetheless, the continued direct military interventions of advanced economies in developing countries, most recently under the guise of advancing democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq, now rapidly encompassing the wider Levant, show that direct military intervention continues to aid capitalists who enter the market in order to "rebuild" economies. However, largely more subtle interventions have become possible with the development of a globalised and connected world, where direct military intervention can be avoided in favour of supporting various local regimes which can make way for preferred trading partners.

In some ways, imperialism can be seen to have a continued teleological category. As Gilmartin (2009) notes, there were three broad waves of colonial and imperial expansions connected with three different areas. The first targeted the Americas as well as the Caribbean and can be seen as the result of the crisis of resources during the late period of European feudalism "with European powers in search of new sources of revenue" (Gilmartin, 2009: 116). The second wave concentrated on Asia and can be

associated with the development of mercantile capitalism and the development of manufacturing in Europe with the industrial revolution. The third wave, which is described as new imperialism, focused on Africa, which consolidated European capitalism through the provision of raw materials and new markets. These ideas are echoed by Young (2001) and Nicholas Thomas (1994). To this we can perhaps, add the category of neo-imperialism that extends even today through the indirect manipulations that are possible in today's globalised world. As Said notes: "in our times, direct colonialism has largely ended; imperialism, lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere as well as specific political, ideological, economic and social practices" (Said, 2014: 9). To this cultural understanding of continued imperialism we can add Kwame Nkrumah's 1965 article on neo-colonialism, where he explains its politico-economic context: "The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside" (Nkrumah, 1965).

Said (2014) wrote that imperialism involves the practice, theory and attitudes of the mother state towards its distant ruled territories. His re-examination allows imperialism a literary turn, and it is from here that we can enter the domain of imagination which is central to my thesis- "The main battle in imperialism is over land, of course; but when it came to who owned the land, who had the right to settle and work on it, who kept it going, who won it back, and who now plans its future--*these issues were reflected, contested, and even for a time decided in narrative*" (emphasis added) (Said, 2014: xiii). Because of Said, "the history of imperialism and its culture can now be studied as neither monolithic nor reductively compartmentalized, separate, distinct" (Said, 2014: xx). In other words, we must look for the roots of imperialism within imaginations put forward by narratives in the cultural and writing practices of the West. Further, echoing the Marxist claims that the seeds of the downfall of imperialism lie within itself, Said notes: "though imperialism implacably advanced during the nineteenth and twentieth century resistance to it also advanced. Methodologically then I try to show the two forces together. Western imperialism and Third World nationalism feed off each other, but even at their worst they are neither monolithic nor deterministic. Besides, culture is not monolithic either, and is not the exclusive property of East or West…" (Said, 2014: xxiv). Indeed, Said's cultural turn suggests that it is within the

cultural resistance as extractable from alternative national imaginations that we can effectively attack imperialism, which is itself a narrative, a culture and essentially an imagination. The imperial imagination further imagines the Orient in order to allow its own political enactment. Said himself returns to the imaginative geographies that went into the creation of the Orient as a largely homogenised space in his *Orientalism* (1978) in chapter II, "Imaginative Geography and Its Representations: Orientalizing the Oriental". He thinks of the Orient as created primarily as an imagined space-

> It is perfectly possible to argue that some distinctive objects are made by the mind, and that these objects, while appearing to exist objectively, have only a fictional reality. A group of people living on a few acres of land will set up boundaries between their land and its immediate surroundings and the territory beyond, which they call "the land of the barbarians." In other words, this universal practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is "ours" and an unfamiliar space beyond "ours" which is "theirs" is a way of making geographical distinctions that can be entirely arbitrary. I use the word "arbitrary" here because imaginative geography of the "our land—barbarian land" variety does not require that the barbarians acknowledge the distinction. It is enough for "us" to set up these boundaries in our own minds; "they" become "they" accordingly, and both their territory and their mentality are designated as different from "ours."… All kinds of suppositions, associations, and fictions appear to crowd the un-familiar space outside one's own. (Said, 1978: 44)

It is therefore through a re-examination of these "fictions", these "imaginations" of our "minds", that we can uncover the real face of the colonial-imperial drive, and the variegated resistance to that must also be found in imaginative rethinking. Imperialism has also been connected to be based on imaginations, even in today's postcolonial world, by other scholars. Vesna Goldsworthy in her book *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (1998) argues that the British largely created an imagined Balkans, which they could then play around with politically.

> Faced with the economic power of the Western industries of the imagination, indigenous Balkan produce had as much chance of competing as the cotton industry in India when its markets were flooded with British manufactures. British 'narrative colonization' of the Balkans began early in the nineteenth century with Byron as its Columbus; it continues still. (Goldsworthy, 1998: x)

The argument is that the literary re-imaginings of the West, which poured forth in copious volumes of texts espousing romantic liberalism, only served to further solidify the image of the Balkans in a particular way. In the face of such forceful literary production and dissemination, it was impossible for the Balkans, being technologically inferior, to produce any counter image. The Balkans were therefore recreated as something very different, and in the "this 'textual colonization'… provided the industries of the imagination with easy, unchallenged access to raw material" (Goldsworthy, 1998: x). By raw material of course, one must also include the real raw materials of industrial resources, the real raw material of people for cannon fodder in the political games of the concert of Europe, first containing Turkey, and later Soviet expansionism, apart from the imaginative production of the land of vampires and superstition which must be exorcised by the West and brought into being. The central ploy is uncannily recognisable with first, the Balkans being shown as threatened by some insider vampire figure that demands the intervention of the West. The Balkans can never be sovereign, until the western Van Helsing intervenes, exorcises its demons and restores order. Again, one may extend the argument that the imaginative intrusion through narratives is only the precursor to the concrete political reshaping that capitalism demands. The non-capitalist spaces are not to be exorcised off its vampires, as much as it is to be made fit to be haunted by capitalism.

Maria Todorova, in her *Imagining the Balkans* (1997) makes the more political argument that the Balkans have been imagined as distinct from what it really was, in order to justify the continued intervention of imperial powers (including the Turks) in its politics. As she puts it, "in Imagining the Balkans… a specific discourse, "balkanism," moulds attitudes and actions toward the Balkans and could be treated as the most persistent form or "mental map" in which information about the Balkans is placed, most notably in journalistic, political, and literary output" (Todorova, 1997: 192). In other

words, the imaginary outputs of the West inform all discourses of the Balkans, even when they relate to matters that are not related to literary fiction. Balkan politics is not only about the real politics of the region, but also the perception of the region as perceived due to the huge imaginative output that makes us pre-read and re-read the Balkans as a text without any original referent. The Balkans, and other imperial and neo-colonial interventions demand the creation of simulated identities and threats that demand western intervention. There does not need to be any vampires in reality - only in the imagination so that interventions and rebuilding can be justified as moral and necessary. There does not need to be weapons of mass destruction in reality - only in the imagination, for what is in the imagination is far more creative, potent and intrusive than any real.

Outside the Balkans, in the German context, the introduction to *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and Its Legacy* (1998), the editors note- "Despite or because of the absence of state-sponsored colonial activity, stories of imaginary enterprises proliferated, especially tales of racial conflict and ideal race relations, set in actual or fictitious countries, in which "German" protagonists were able to exhibit the qualities that marked the superiority of the German colonizer" (Friedrichsmeyer et al, 1998: 20). This is of some interest, as they themselves note that Germany had never been a major colonising power anyway, but that the profound literary output that valorised colonialism would go on to form lasting attitudes amongst the German people. That a primarily non-colonial player would produce imaginations extolling the virtues of colonialism shows how intrinsically linked imagination is to the project of colonialism and imperialism. Even when colonialism is not present in real politics, it is likely to be present in the aspirational psyche of the nation's bourgeoisie, which not only demands and commends "enterprises", but cloaks aggressive military intervention with ideas of superiority of the national type.

Closer to the project of this thesis, Theodore Koditschek's *Liberalism, Imperialism, and the Historical Imagination* (2011), notes how the imaginative constructions of Indian history and culture by the West paved the way for British policies during colonial rule and John Marriot's *The Other Empire* (2003) clearly points out "Prior to the establishment of the Raj, connections between India and England were evident in travel writings and imaginative literature… travelogues entered into the

expansive domain of poetry and drama" (Marriot, 2003: 2). Through these works, we can therefore develop a clear link between imperialism and imagination, with the creation of an imagination in some ways proceeding and informing imperialism.

Within a range of meanings and applications the term "imagination" has been defined as "the faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses" by the Oxford English Dictionary. Imagination can be rooted back to the PIE *-iem, (Rolandi, 2015) through the Latin "imago" both of which refer to similarity, holding (together), copying, likeness and resemblance. The Sanskrit word "yama", meaning twin, has the same root, also adding the sense of "twin-ning". The "imago" is also the last mature adult stage in the development of insects that undergo metamorphosis (Carpenter, 1913), and is characterised by the attainment of sexual maturity, as well as the development of wings and the ability of flight. Kant's image of the flying dove, representing metaphysics in section III of his *The Critique of Pure Reason* (1787), perhaps places this idea of constant attaining after maturity and development, together with flight in the field of thought in the tightest context-

> …this circumstance is easily overlooked, because the said intuition can itself be given a priori, and therefore is hardly to be distinguished from a mere pure conception. Deceived by such a proof of the power of reason, we can perceive no limits to the extension of our knowledge. The light dove cleaving in free flight the thin air, whose resistance it feels, might imagine that her movements would be far more free and rapid in airless space... It is, indeed, the common fate of human reason in speculation, to finish the imposing edifice of thought as rapidly as possible, and then for the first time to begin to examine whether the foundation is a solid one or no. (Kant, 1787: Introduction III)

Kant's work is of course an inquiry into the nature of the synthetic a priori, and his cautionary note on the nature of imagination presents the possible pitfalls of such conceptions. The inherent synthetic nature of most a priori statements, especially both in the realm of sciences and metaphysics reveals perhaps that the underlying principle of thought is not purely analytical or rational, and nor is it empirical or derived from observations. The world is therefore thought of often through imaginative constructs,

which are synthetic as well as a priori. As John Sallis in his *Delimitations: Phenomenology and the End of Metaphysics* (1986) asks "Does the dove ascend on the wings of imagination?" (Sallis 1986: 2) and he notes the strained, yet undeniable relation between imagination and philosophy, or thought in general. There seems to be a sort of a cautionary note which has been taken up down the ages in regards to imagination, as a way of creating new ways of thinking. As Shakespeare describes the potency, and pitfalls of imagination "The lunatic, the lover and the poet, Are of imagination all compact…" (Shakespeare, 2004: 52) it is all too obvious how the linking of the lunatic, the lover and the poet hardly make for an instrument of much reliable use in serious thought. The same note of caution against imagination can be traced in Rene Descartes who in his *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1960) differentiates between intellection and imagination, discarding the latter for the former as the correct way to proceed towards knowledge.

One can, however, argue, following Sallis, that both are actually types of imagination. In itself, this supposed differentiation is much older, with Plato, in his elucidation of the philosophy of Socrates asserting the need for eikastatic imagination in order to uncover the ideal. This can be paired with his rejection of the phantastic imagination, which he looks upon as the source of false consciousness. When Socrates is describing the parable of the caves as given in Plato's *Republic*, Book VII (Plato, 350BC: Book VII), I would argue that the allegory itself is primarily an imagination of a certain situation. Further, it is a call for philosophy to work in the realm of certain imaginative universals, which is referred to as the world of the ideal "eikos". The journey from the realm of phantasy to the realm of the eikastic in itself is through interactions with images - starting with the images of the figures on the cave wall and ending with the reflections of the outside world on the water. It is the imaginary which mediates and initiates one into real and into knowledge, and it is also the imaginary which provides all the sources of false consciousness. Sallis sums this dual ambivalence by stating the dynamics that governs the relation between imagination and metaphysics in the Platonic texts- "Imagination both empowers and inhibits the metaphysical drive to presence, and metaphysics must, accordingly, both appropriate and take distance from imagination" (Sallis 1986: 7). Even Walter Benjamin in his essay on "Imaginations" (1996) notes that while "imagination" does not produce anything new, "prophetic vision" does. He distinguishes one from the other by commenting that while imagination

looks to the past, prophetic visions can let one "perceive the forms of the future" (Benjamin, 1996: 281) Therefore, there is a central and important place for imagination in the making of how we choose to perceive our world.

Going back to the root meaning, Karl Marx thought of imagination as the space that forever precedes and possibly exceeds human material labour. Every labour becomes the copy or twin of its imagined that pre-exists the possibility of labour itself. Marx, in his "The Labour-Process and the Process of Producing Surplus-Value" (1887), himself distinguished between human labour and all other types of labour noting that what is central to human labour is indeed, imagination-

> A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. (Marx, 1887)

This novel approach links labour to the matter of imagination, only providing in imagination a space that cannot be appropriated by capital. Capital can buy only the product of imagination as labour, but the imaginative potential itself cannot be quantified and commodified in the manner in which labour can. In being this excess that lies beyond the appropriation of capital, imagination is always potentially revolutionary. In his *Wage Labour and Capital* (1847) Marx observes, "Capital therefore presupposes wage-labour; wage-labour presupposes capital. They condition each other; each brings the other into existence" (Marx, 1847). One could perhaps add, linking his observation on imagination that labour presupposes imagination, only imagination does not necessarily presuppose "wage-labour" that can be appropriated by capital, although imagination itself is part of intellectual labour. This is important because certain imaginations may very well be the key out of the trap of labour as commodified by capitalism, and as such out of the system of capitalism itself, that monitors and regulates the dominant mode of being of our world.

Moreover, labour itself has an imagination – labour "not only effects a change of form in the material on which (the labourer) works, but he also realizes a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi, and to which he must subordinate his will" (Marx, 1887). In other words, the act of labour carries within it an imagination of being a labourer, a maker, former, shaper or poet which gives the labourer the impetus to perform the labour. Human labour, at least, as far as Marx is concerned, is supposed to be a satisfying task, which gives the labourer a sense of achievement, a feeling of having asserted himself or herself into being through the fulfilment of the labour. Imagination, through labour not only shapes the product of the labour and brings it into existence; it also shapes the labourer, as an individual who "realizes a purpose of his own". Therefore, as human beings imagine how to use their labour to make products, they also imagine themselves as labourers who have created the product, along with all the associated imaginations that link the product to the labourer. It is when capitalism alienates the labourer from his product that the seeds of discontent are sown in the fabric of the imagination of the proletariat.

The category of the international proletariat too is therefore an imagined community, linked not through the material position of the individual proletariat in a sense of relationship with property i.e. they do not own the means of production. Rather it is in the imagination of being alienated from the product of their labours i.e. they cannot own the product they have created themselves that causes a feeling of a common kinship. In practice, this is a much more abstract sensibility than even the category of the nation, which was jarringly proved during the First World War and subsequently in many conflicts around the world where workers fought workers in trenches in the name of motherlands and fatherlands. No matter what the proletariat owns, no matter what the proletariat earns, no matter what other links they have with their immediate surroundings, they must conceive of their proletarian status through the abstract idea of their displaced relation to "means of production". At least the nation, even if we see it as an imagined community, provides the paraphernalia of national membership, in the form of official documents, education systems, legal systems and punitive systems, which are rather more palpable. The emancipative principle which nonetheless is present in Marxism, despite its inability to formulate a global community, in its viewing the labourers as imaginative creators who rebel against the derecognition and destruction of their imaginative creative potential. The labourer therefore is viewed to be caught in a

situation where imagination provides not only his labour, but also the possible ways out of the dominance of capitalism and the freeing of his labour. The labourer is therefore, potentially also a philosopher, a thinker and a creator. We find that labour as a concept is spacious enough to incorporate philosophy itself, or as Marx would place it, Intellectual Labour. However, Marx is really hinting towards a very different conception of the relation between imagination and labour. Instead of thinking of them as separate entities, we must look on them as conjoined twins, mirror images without any original. Indeed, Marxism tends to do away with binaries between intellectual or mental labour and physical labour, theory and practice; instead affirming the idea of praxis. Marx clearly roots the creation of this distinction with the idea of division of labour, which for him marks the beginning of societal hierarchy. He notes- "Division of labour only becomes truly such from the moment when a division of material and mental labour appears" (Marx, 1845). As such, it is perhaps necessary to look on imagination as a generative process that is irreconcilably linked to labour. In other words, we need to assert the idea of the imagination-labour praxis.

The word labour itself can be traced back to the PIE root *leh$_2$b-, which means to 'hang loosely' (De Vaan, 2008). Considering the huge impact of the Latin derivative *laborare*, which means to work or toil, it is strange to think that the word originates not from notions of a forced effortful task, but from a sense more akin to lounging about. Etymologically labour does not refer to a purpose, a job, an office or a productive end, but rather is a description of a process for creating or making, which is relaxed and unhurried. The original sense actually is the image of a person in the throes of an imaginative fit. Imagining itself therefore is a process of labour that produces or generates. At the same time, we must remember that the product of human labour has already been created in the imagination of the labourer first. The other idea linked to imagination and labour is the idea of making or generating. Aristotle and Plato in their works set out three types of making. The first, relegated to the physical world of nature is referred to as *physis*. This would include the makings of the natural and the cosmic worlds. Next we have the idea of *poesis*, which is human making involving creative thought. Lastly, we have the idea of *technae*, which refers to crafting through some process or machinery. In our modern world of natural, cultural and mechanical production, it would be important to place imagination not only in relation to *poesis* or cultural production, but also in how we ideate about *physis* or nature and *technae* or

mechanisation. The ideology of production in the final analysis must be seen to be an imagination, or *poesis*. However, Martin Heidegger, in an interesting turn, shows all three forms to be ultimately linked to poesis, or imaginative creation. Heidegger brings together the three Aristotlean conceptions of making into the single frame of *poesis*-

> Plato tells us what this bringing is in a sentence from the Symposium (205b) "Every occasion for whatever passes over and goes forward into presencing from that which is not presencing is poiesis, is bringing-forth [Her-vor-bringen]." It is of utmost importance that we think bringing-forth in its full scope and at the same time in the sense in which the Greeks thought it. Not only handcraft manufacture, not only artistic and poetical bringing into appearance and concrete imagery, is a bringing-forth, poiesis. Physis also, the arising of something from out of itself, is a bringing-forth, poiesis. Physis is indeed poiesis in the highest sense. For what presences by means of physis has the bursting open belonging to bringing-forth, e.g., the bursting of a blossom into bloom, in itself (en heautoi). In contrast, what is brought forth by the artisan or the artist, e.g., the silver chalice, has the bursting open belonging to bringing forth not in itself, but in another (en alloi), in the craftsman or artist...One is that techne is the name not only for the activities and skills of the craftsman, but also for the arts of the mind and the fine arts. Techne belongs to bringing-forth, to poiesis; it is something poietic. (Heidegger, 1977: 10-13)

What is to be noted beyond the bringing together and interlinking of physis and technis into the category of poesis or creative production, is how Heidegger gives to human poesis an added ability - what is being brought forth, what is being unveiled is not the thing in itself only - it is the thing in itself in the context of the artist. The imagination of creative production is to be found in nature and technology, but what makes it of relevance to humans is the ability to place themselves in the act of unveiling or *aletheia*, as the creator, the maker or the poet. It is through this bringing forth, manifestation or as Heidegger would put it, through the *aletheia* or revelation that all forms of making ultimately become truth functions, and as such important for human beings. The purpose of human labour, the purpose of human imagination is therefore to unveil the truth by

unleashing the creative potential that helps us go beyond our everyday existence. In using this idea of truth, as something new, something that unveils, something that forms a break with the everyday, Alain Badiou says, "A truth is solely constituted by rupturing with the order which supports it, never as an effect of that order" (Badiou, 2005: xii). Therefore, at the risk of sounding romantic, it would not be out of place to regard the possibility of the truth as the new in imagination.

This return to the imaginative creative potential is summed up by Roberto Unger in his central theses that "the world is made and imagined" (Keliher, 2012). Of course, Unger is differentiating between material making and imaginative making, or in a more Marxist sense, he is differentiating between the mental makings that necessarily precedes any physical making. The importance of imagination in his philosophy is necessary to assert the possibility of a negative capability in order to challenge the formative contexts of our society, so that we can move from a world where we view existing structures as false necessities without alternatives, towards an empowered democracy. The idea behind this thesis is to similarly challenge established ways of thinking and seeing how it may be possible to move beyond, or predict directions of societal change.

While the project of imperialism and colonisation were furthered by an imagination which made it necessary and a requirement, whether through imagining the world as a closed network for resources or as a moral duty on the part of the technologically superior West to bring to the primitive East and South the benefits of western thoughts, the response to this also came through an imagination, although in itself the imagination was neither new nor a challenge to the imagination of imperialism. The principal mode of response to colonising imaginations was through the political assertion of a Nation and the related imaginations of Nationalism as argued by Azar Gat (2013) – "Irrespective of whether they were ruled by their own elite or by foreign conquerors, people in many pre-modern state societies lacked individual freedom. Thus, the purpose of their struggle and sacrifices against foreign rules could only be collective freedom that is national independence" (Gat 2013: 13-14). Benedict Anderson famously defined the nation itself to be "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (Anderson, 2006: 6).

The word nation comes from PIE root *gene- which means to produce or give birth. The word developed in old Latin as gnasci which in itself led to nasci which meant to be born and ultimately gave rise to the form natio (Harper, 2015). The word itself could refer to a host of meanings ranging from birth, origin, breed, stock, race or tribe. Ernest Gellner in his book *Nations and Nationalism* (1983) argues that nations are a modern phenomenon which arises with the development of industrialisation- "We do not properly understand the range of options available to industrial society, and perhaps we never shall; but we understand some of its essential concomitants. The kind of cultural hegemony demanded by nationalism is one of them, and we had better make our peace with it" (Gellner 1983: 39). Gellner reverses traditional ideas of nationalism as an imposition based on unities, especially linguistic, as argued by the likes of Elie Kedourie, who in his *Nationalism* (1960) states that "The test, then, by which a nation is known to exist, is that of language. A group speaking the same language is known as a nation, and a nation ought to constitute a state. It is not merely that a group of people speaking a certain language may claim the right to preserve its language; rather, such a group, which is a nation, will cease to be one if it is not constituted into a state" (Kedourie 1960: 68). Gellner instead argues that "it is not the case, that nationalism imposes homogeneity; it is rather that a homogeneity imposed by objective, inescapable, imperative eventually appears on the surface in the form of nationalism" (Gellner 1983: 39). While Kedourie seems to suggest that the nation as a form is almost an essential need for the saving of linguistic identities and through it perhaps the entire identity of a people, with the state providing the necessary protective structure, Gellner seems to regard the structure of nationalism itself to be a constrictive hegemony that is as problematic as it is necessary. This binary of essential attitudes, either enthusiastic support for a collective or a criticism of its inherent uniform levelling, seem to be the situation of theory regarding nationalism in general. An important part of my thesis will therefore involve the extraction of alternative imaginations to the idea of nationalism from the writing of Indian political thinkers, trying to see if a third way, beyond the imaginations of a bourgeoisie nationalism and cultural nationalism is at all possible, or whether we need to review it to ensure its place in a continuingly globalising world.

However, it is not as if all modern scholars look upon nationalism as a modern post-industrial phenomenon only. The primordialist perspective of nations has actually enjoyed quite a resurgence recently, placing nations and nationalism in the

subconsciousness of people tracing back to a far history which in itself is maybe imaginary (Motyl 2001: 273). Gat argues that Egypt was among the first nations of the world (Gat 2013: 85-87) noting the roots of nationalism to lie in the creation of a definite ethnicity- "People knew very well that foreigners were foreigners and they resented them as such, especially if Egyptian identity was under threat... A sense of distinctive Egyptian national identity – a congruence of a people and culture and its political implications survived" (Gat 2013: 88-89). Similarly, Steven Grosby argues that Israel existed as a nation with "an image of a bounded territory" (Grosby 2002: 24). He uses the Old Testament to argue that "ancient Israel (was) a nation. Different positions had been held by various scholars of the Old Testament as to when ancient Israel became a nation... that collectivity which is referred to in the Old Testament as "all Israel," *Kol Yisrael* (Beut 13:11;21:21;Josh 7:25;1 Sam 3:20;2 Sam 3:12;17:11;1 Kgs 1:20)" (Gat 2013: 13). As Gat himself notes, this contrasts with the belief "that nationality is exclusively a modern phenomenon" (Gat 2013: 13), as has been propagated by the likes of Gellner (1983). Similarly, Edward Cohen argues in his *Athenian Nation* (2000) that ancient Athens met all the modern definitions of nationhood, an opinion shared by Aviel Roshwald in his *The Endurance of Nationalism: Ancient Roots and Modern Dilemmas* (2006). Even in studies of the medieval ages, aspects of modern nationalism has been traced by Susan Reynolds, who also notes in her introduction to *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe 900-1300* (1997) that often imaginary mythical histories like Tacitus' *Germania* "gave a new vigour and a new twist (to) communities of descent and custom...the communal theme" (Reynolds 1997: xviii). Similarly, Adrian Hastings argues that under King Alfred the English nation as a counter to the Danish invasions was imagined into being through the creation of "a vernacular literature for his people" through "sitting down himself to translate Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* into English" (Hastings 1997: 39).

What is of importance for this thesis is that those thinkers, who argue for nationalism to be a pre-modern phenomenon, nonetheless root nationalism as an imagination and the constituents of the nation to be the part of a same imagined ethnic, linguistic or historical identity. The term nation was first used in early medieval universities to describe students coming from different parts of Europe and who expected to be governed by their own laws. As Kedourie says:

> The term applied particularly to a community of foreigners. Medieval universities were, it is well known, divided into 'nations': the University of Paris had four nations: *l'honorable nation de France*, *la fidèle nation de Picardie*, *la vénérable nation de Normandie*, and *la constante nation de Germanie*; these distinctions in use within the university, indicated places of provenance, but in no way corresponded either to modern geographical divisions, or indeed to what is now understood by 'nations'. Thus the *nation de France* referred to speakers of Romance languages including Italians and Spaniards; *nation de Picardie* referred to the Dutch, that of *Normandie* to those originating from North-Eastern Europe and that of *Germanie* to Englishmen as well as to Germans proper. By extension, the word came to be used as a collective noun. A nation came to be understood as that body of persons who could claim to represent, or to elect representatives for, a particular territory at councils, diets, or estates. Church Councils were divided into nations; the Estates General of France meeting in 1484 comprised six nations (etc). (Kedourie, 1960: 13-14)

The use of the word "nation" from the very outset indicated imagined communities without any common cultural, linguistic or mythological linkage. The only real linkage was that separate nations voted together. The nation therefore constituted a body of people united into a single electoral college. The idea of nativity into a community can therefore be safely set aside as a criteria for nationhood, to be replaced by the idea of electing for a community. The use of the term nation, if not the imagination of various nations, can therefore be seen to be linked to democratic participation. Indeed, the universities would have their own elections, electing important members of the student, academic and other university bodies, but even beyond in the polity of the medieval states the idea of nations voting together on various issues seems established. The linking of the nation with electoral participation forms the next important link in our study, keeping in mind Anderson's statement that the nation is imagined as "sovereign" and "limited".

The word sovereign arises from the PIE root *uper, from which we get the latin *super* meaning "over", which was rendered as *soverain* in old French, meaning highest.

It is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as "The authority of a state to govern itself or another state". What is central to the political idea of sovereignty is essentially the ability to control and the recognition and respect of this ability. The major dimensions of sovereignty can be summed up in the formulations of Stephen Krasner, who in his work *Problematic Sovereignty* (2001) defines-

> The term sovereignty has been commonly used in at least four different ways: domestic sovereignty, referring to the organisation of public authority within a state and to the level of effective control exercised by those holding authority; interdependence sovereignty, referring to the ability of public authorities to control transborder movements; international legal sovereignty, referring to the mutual recognition of states; and Westphalian sovereignty, referring to the exclusion of external actors from domestic authority configurations. (Krasner 2001: 6-7)

At the outset, let us note that the idea of sovereignty presupposes limitations. It presupposes domains of sovereignty, with the borders themselves being points for the exercising of sovereignty. Down the ages, states have not always been sovereign in all four respects. Indeed these four aspects are not intrinsically linked and nor have they always been historically demanded. The idea of sovereignty as we understand it today, however, includes all four of these aspects, the roots of which can be traced to the peace of Westphalia signed in 1648. The Treaty marked the end of the Thirty Years War through which the major European powers agreed to respect the right of political self-determination of each individual state, recognise the legal equality between all the states and accept the autonomy of individual states in their own internal matters (Croxton 1999: 569-591). This would be an important political turn from the medieval feudal system which ultimately gave the Holy Roman Empire and the Holy See the power to intervene in the matters of all states. The origins of the idea of sovereignty lie in the demarcation of individual states, the acceptance of notions of limits to the exercising of all sovereignties. To be able to have an imagination of sovereignty presupposes a limit to that power, and the mutual recognition of such power not only strengthens the notion, it is a prerequisite for the exercising of it. In some ways, the principle of collective mutual recognition, respect and acceptance would go on to inform the congresses of

Vienna and other groupings of nation down to our modern system of the United Nations. Thomas Biersteker and Cyntia Weber, in their work "State Sovereignty as Social Construct" (1996) note that throughout the course of history, the meaning of sovereignty has undergone important change and transformation - from the location of the source of its legitimacy (in God, in the monarch or in the people) - to the scope of activities claimed under its protection (Biersteker et al, 1996: 14). F.H. Hinsley in his work on *Sovereignty* (1966) provides a tracing of the idea of sovereignty from the ancient world till modern times, noting how initially all sovereignty rested with the emperor, but over time the idea that the source of sovereignty lay with the people became predominant, even in ancient Rome. He notes how Ulpian, the Roman jurist of the third century, could lay the principle "what has pleased the prince has the force of law" while in Justinian's sixth century compilation of Roman law, we get the principle "the power of the ruler had its rightful origin in the will of the people" (Hinsley, 1966: 42-43).

Associated with these ideas of the right to control politics, policies and legal structures in an autonomous manner, limited by geographies embodied in nations, we must also add the idea of monetary sovereignty. In its most simple articulation, monetary sovereignty encompasses the right of any nation to print tokens of exchange, which we call money, control its circulation and its quantity; revise its qualitative manifestations in order to prevent forgery or duplication and to assign it value in terms of trading it with goods. Claus D. Zimmermann in his article on "The Concept of Monetary Sovereignty Revisited" (2013), however, notes that in the modern world "monetary sovereignty has become increasingly eroded, that it can be accepted only as a figure of speech and even stronger, that it should be regarded as no more than a myth (Zimmermann, 2013: 798). This erosion in the idea of monetary sovereignty is largely attributed by Zimmermann on the regulations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which create severe controls over how a state goes about creating money. While on the one hand, this can be seen as an extension of the original Westphalian idea of sovereignty which implies mutual check and balances and an international system that supports individual members, the idea of monetary sovereignty is removed from such an understanding in being essentially non-democratic, in being technical and beyond the understanding of the people who constitute democratic modules in individual states. Therefore, monetary sovereignty - or rather the lack of monetary sovereignty goes far in deflating the idea that sovereignties are linked with any "will of the people". As we shall

see, sovereignty in general, while operating under the guise of deriving its authority from some abstract notion of the "general will", in reality is usually practiced through models of elite exclusion.

The shift in placing sovereignty with the will of the people comes about conclusively with the writing of Jean Jacques Rousseau and his *The Social Contract* (1762) where he defines sovereignty to be "inalienable", as for him it is "the exercise of the general will" (Rousseau 1762: 18). He also defines sovereignty to be "indivisible" (19). Most importantly, Rousseau locates sovereignty to lie in the "general will" of the people. With the success of the French Revolution and the adoption of Rousseau's ideas, the expression of this popular sovereignty has largely been seen possible only through democracy. As Christopher Morris begins his essay "The Very Idea of Popular Sovereignty: "We the People" Reconsidered""- "The sovereignty of the people, it is widely said, is the foundation of modern democracy" (Morris 2000: 1). In the essay, Morris argues that "doctrine that the people are or ought to be sovereign is misleading...and is conducive to a misunderstanding of the nature of politics". He suggests that we might even need to "dispense with (our understandings of) popular sovereignty" (Morris 2000: 1). Edmund Morgan adds to this saying-

> ...the sovereignty of the people is a much more complicated, one might say fictional, fiction than the divine right of kings. A king however dubious his divinity might seem, did not have to be imagined. He was a visible presence, wearing his crown and carrying his sceptre. The people, on the other hand are never visible as such. Before we ascribe sovereignty to the people we have to imagine that there is such a thing, something we personify as if it were a single body... a collective entity more powerful and less fallible than a king or than any group of individuals it singles to govern it. (Morgan 1988: 153)

The imagination of sovereignty lying with an abstract body of "people" in democratic system has been criticised strongly by Carl Schmitt who opens his 1922 work on *Political Theology* with the statement "Sovereign is he who decides on the exception" (Schmitt, 1985: 5). Written after the defeat of Imperial Germany at the end of the First World War, the book is a study of sovereignty through times of

revolutionary change and the associated idea of dictatorships. For example, the French Revolution led to the dictatorship first of the directory and then eventually the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. Similarly, the Russian revolution eventually theorised for the rise of a dictatorship. The justification for dictatorships lies in the extraordinary circumstances that revolutions engender with counter-revolutionary activities demanding the concentration of sovereignty in a single body. Because of the immediacy of the threats facing a revolutionary state, it is impossible for democratic consensus which is time consuming to play a part in the day to day running of the revolutionary state. Most revolutionary states, look upon the institution dictatorship as a temporary measure which would eventually be dissolved after the success of the revolution. However, in his work, Schmitt sees as necessary the singular concentration of sovereignty for times of crisis and emergencies even in democracies. He locates the need for having "emergency" powers in order for a state to be able to tide over emergency situations, which include external foreign aggression, financial meltdown or internal civil revolts. These emergency powers, he argues, confers on the person holding them, the position of "sovereign" in a democratic system. The sovereign therefore occupies a position that is neither inside nor outside the constitution of the state, and is defined as the one holding power over the dissolution of the democratic system. Through his study of Article 48 of the Weimar constitution, Schmitt argues that the inclusion of emergency powers through the Article makes the one wielding the power the sovereign of the Weimar state, as that person can "decide whether the constitution needs to be suspended in its entirety" (Schmitt, 1985: 7) Moreover, he notes that although democracies try to limit the power that can be given during emergencies, the very nature of emergencies and the nature of popular democracies ensure that "whether the extreme exception can be banished from the world is not a juristic question. Whether one has confidence and hope that it can be eliminated depends on philosophical, especially on philosophical-historical or metaphysical, convictions" (Schmitt, 1985: 7).

The word democracy comes from the PIE root *da- (Harper, 2015) which literally means cutting up, *mo- referring to society, and *kre-tes, which is a suffixed form of *kre-, meaning hard, strong, or power. Etymologically, the word suggests a cutting up, or division of power. The greek *demos*, referring to people gives the more popular meaning, which is the rule of the people. However, with his discovery of the provision of emergencies inherent in the workings of modern liberal democracies,

Schmitt unsettles the division of power, revealing the necessary possible concentration of power as a natural part of all democratic states. *The State of Exception* (2005) by Giorgio Agamben takes up Scmitt's ideas, and demonstrates that-

> …modern totalitarianism can be defined as the establishment, by means of the state of exception, of a legal civil war that allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated into the political system. Since then, the voluntary creation of a permanent state of emergency (though perhaps not declared in the technical sense) has become one of the essential practices of contemporary states, including so-called democratic ones… This transformation of a provisional and exceptional measure into a technique of government threatens radically to alter—in fact, has already palpably altered—the structure and meaning of the traditional distinction between constitutional forms. (Agamben, 2005: 2)

So unlike the Oxford English dictionary which looks on democracy as "A system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives" (OED, 2015), this thesis will take on the view that democracies actually run through exceptional totalitarian turns, while providing for an imaginary democratic participation. As Cornelius Castoriades clearly states, echoing Unger, "What is needed here is a long talk about the imagination and the imaginary. The imaginary isn't the production of images; it is the creation of a human world and not only at the level of the individual psyche, but in the social-historical field. There obviously is an imaginary of democracy" (Castoriades, 2010: 81). The point of defining democracy today as essentially oligarchic and totalising in practice does not mean that this thesis is arguing against democracy in any way. Agreeing with Jacques Rancier's *Hatred of Democracy* (2006), one could suggest that "The evils of which our democracies suffer are primarily evils related to the insatiable appetite of oligarchs. We do not live in democracies. Neither… do we live in camps. We live in states of oligarchic law…" (Rancier, 2006:73). The point is to try and extract better imaginations of democracy that will not devolve into oligarchies. However, we must note that what perhaps lurks most strongly behind the development of the democracy of today is the

invisible hand of capitalism. As Barrington Moore points out- "Without going into the evidence further… we may simply register strong agreement with the Marxist thesis that a vigorous and independent class of town dwellers has been an indispensable element in the growth of parliamentary democracy. No bourgeois, no democracy" (Moore, 1966: 418). The important thing nonetheless is not to confuse democracy as merely a system of governance of a state. It is to see democracy as a mode of interaction in everyday life, beyond interactions of the state. In our world, while our means of creating political decisions are democratised, our means of generating products, whether creative, academic or economic are not.

The word politics itself comes from the Greek "polis" or city, which can be further traced back the PIE *pele- meaning citadel, often on a high ground. At the very root of the word lies the idea of interactions amongst city dwellers who all are already enclosed and protected on the one hand, while also being sovereign within that space. What is given for politics to begin is therefore the existence of a protected space of interaction. Further what is central to politics is the flow of power within structures of the society and how individuals can participate in creating and benefitting from that power. "Power is the currency of all politics" (Magstadt, 2013: 3) and the politics of colonial resistance was aimed at taking back power from the imperial forces, and in the case of India, distributing it back to the people of India. This was supposedly achieved with the establishment of parliamentary democracy in India on 26th January, 1950. What was central in the imagined new state was the idea of popular democracy, popular sovereignty and national integration. In this respect, in the case of India, as in erstwhile colonised spaces, we can look on the idea of decolonization as political goal, as set out in the UN declaration 1514 (xv) "The general Assembly… Convinced that all people have an inalienable right to complete freedom, the exercise of their sovereignty and the integrity of their National territory, Solemnly proclaims the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations" (UN, 1960: 1514.xv). In some ways, decolonization marks the point of entry of the nations into the political sphere, having regained its bounded territorial structure through decolonization. Decolonization marks an event, a supposed rupture which can be located in time. Decolonization, in many ways, claims to be the concrete opposite to the colonial imagination. It is therefore incomplete as it does not take into account the imaginary of colonialism that continues to haunt the world even today through neocolonisation.

Postcolonialism today therefore becomes the haunted space after the event, where the persistence of imaginations of colonial rule continues to impact and order society even into the future. One of the primary locations of this dichotomy lies in decolonization perpetuating the ideas of democracy and sovereignty that it inherits from colonial times.

Part of the problem of decolonization lies in the fact that the ideas of democracy and sovereignty are themselves problematic and limiting. One of the contentions of my thesis is that in order to truly move beyond the imaginaries of colonialism, it is imperative that we relocate sovereignty as lying beyond exclusive elitist reworkings that aim to favour the privileged and democracy as lying beyond exclusive majoritarian articulations that dispossess minorities. While noting that today democracy and sovereignty have potentially become weapons more of oppression than of assertion, the thesis will be aimed at extracting practices of non-alterity that can transcend the othering that is inherent in the practice of democracy (majority versus minority) and sovereignty (us versus them). The thesis will remain critical of the politics of colonial resistance that stems from alterity practices that unwittingly reproduce the same structures of oppression that colonialism further and will demarcate them from imaginations of non-alterity that this thesis will argue finds continued relevance towards a resistive praxis today.

The thesis will look on the central role of imagination in making of postcolonial society in India. Leading from this overview, the Indian political imaginative response to colonialism will be located through the manner in which these thinkers see the Indian nation, democracy, sovereignty and capitalism – the three central institutions in our modern socio-political imagination. The project is a review of colonialism as it analyses precisely those in-between catachrestic spaces that Gayatri C. Spivak talks about in her *Postcolonialism, Marginality and Value* (1990) that are present in "postcolonial claims to the names that are the legacy of European enlightenment (sovereignty, constitutionally, self-determination, nationhood, citizenship, even culturalism)" (Spivak, 1990: 229). That decolonization marks a definite moment defining postcolonialism can be gathered from Gyan Prakash who describes it "as an aftermath, as an after being worked over by colonialism" (Prakash, 1992: 8). This project will therefore not aim at producing new structures, or for creating new programmes, but will merely try to provide an interlude, a space for recognising and realising the possibility of new

imaginations of society, if not new societies themselves. As Jacques Derrida would put it "on what here receives the name khora, a call might thus be taken up and take hold: the call for a thinking of the event to come, of the democracy to come, of the reason to come" (Derrida, 2005: xv).

Throughout the survey, what can be noted is that there is a constant assertion of alterities. Indeed how we think of a colony is as the other of the metropolis. India has been imagined as the 'other' fantastical land of riches. The nation has been imagined as a collective which is something 'other' than other collectives whether it be on the basis of language, heritage, race or history. Colonialism and imperialism work on the principle that 'other' lands need to be occupied and exploited for the benefit of the self. Such tactics often involve a justificatory imagination that this will actually be beneficial for the 'other' in bringing them civilisation, modernity, religion and other such benefits. Sovereignties become imaginations which actively establish the other while democracies are subverted to ensure that people are othered from the exercise of sovereignty. This thesis will therefore attempt to extract that Derridian khoric space, neither in nor out of, but allowing for interaction and new possibilities in the works of Indian political thinkers who shaped Indian politics after decolonization. The work will proceed through an interrogation of the imaginations of nation, sovereignty and polity with an emphasis on developing ideas for a new way of looking at the world – a state of radical alterity reached at through a realisation of non-alterity.

The imagination of the 'other' or the 'different', that makes us realise our self, our identity or the 'I' as something created through an opposition or conflict with the 'he/she/them' can be extended to the imagination of the colonial as forming the identity of the postcolonial, in a reversal of the identity formation of the Orient vis a vis the Occident. This should not be seen, as is often simplistically done, in terms of a one way negation – which is a gross reduction of an otherwise complex interaction, but perhaps through a more nuanced understanding of the idea of 'alterity' itself. Othering is the natural root of alterity driven identity formulation, but the roots of the word itself betrays a rather different tendency. Coming from the PIE root *al- referring to "beyond", and combining the adjectival comparative suffix *-tero- the word contains the hint of the progression of Hegelian dialectics. It is almost as through the interaction of two ideas that there is a possibility of moving beyond both. In this regard, this thesis

will move by rejecting seeming alterities, or otherness, in order to reveal strategies for moving beyond –towards a state of radical alterity. By showing postcolonialism and decolonisation to be continuations of modes of imaginings that are based on othering, or alterities, the thesis will proceed to propose a non-alterity based counter imagining that will be aimed at freeing theory from the binds of colonialism while acknowledging its immense impact. The thesis will continue through a reading of Indian political thinkers identifying both imaginations based on alterities as well as those based on non-alterities in order to argue for a new radical way of looking on colonialism and its complex continuing echoes in today's world.

CHAPTER II

From the Alterity of Postcolonial Theory and Decolonization: Towards the Non-alterity of a Paracolonial Praxis

17th December, 2010, began as any other day would, in the tropical winter of a sleepy Tunisian town named Sidi Bouzid. In the morning, amidst a sleepy populace, a 26 year old vegetable vendor, Momamad Bouazazi (Abouzeid, 2011) plied down the roads to set up his stall, perhaps being fully aware that again today he would be targeted for not having the necessary licence for conducting business – but having little option to feed his family, the graduate and only wage earner went out nonetheless. He was challenged by a local woman government official, Faida Hamdi, who after an initial scuffle had to call in the police, who confiscated his entire cart. In a culture deeply influenced by perceptions of honour, the story which spread was that of a young scrawny graduate orphan male, who was slapped, spat at and beaten up by a woman official (Abouzeid, 2011). By 11.30 am, Bouazizi had doused himself in a flammable liquid and set himself on fire in front of the town's city hall in protest of repeated police extortion of money as bribes – amounts which exceeded his daily income – and set off the Tunisian Jasmine Revolution, that would topple a 23 year old dictatorship. He, and the successful Tunisian revolution also inspired the cycle of events that would lead up to what is now called 'Arab Spring', but which stretched across more than 21 countries in the Middle East and North Africa, extending across most of the erstwhile colonised nations. Even India had its own cycle of protests, particularly the Anna Hazare movement, that radically altered public perception of the ruling Congress Party and hastened its downfall from various state legislatures, and eventually the central government. Bouazizi's suicide had an impact that led to the overthrow of six governments through direct public action, three civil wars, one civil disorder leading to government change, five government changes through peaceful protests, and five major and five minor protests. Its ripples were felt from the westernmost tip of Africa-Morocco, Mali and Mauretania, to Gabon and Congo in the south, and across the Middle-East into Iraq, Iran and Pakistan. For the Third World, the Orient, the erstwhile colonised people who were

under the rule of tyrannical dictatorships, the Arab Spring became a beacon of hope, of the possibility of popular assertion that could topple the rule sponsored, supported and propped up by western capitalist states, or the dregs of rule propped up by the erstwhile communist bloc, that had come to a compromise with the dominant capitalist worldview of the post Soviet period. The popular assertions in the Arab world naturally brought to the forefront various Islamic democratic parties, often in alliance with liberal and socialist formulations. The continuing narrative is well known. In country after country, apart from Tunisia, the west intervened to ensure that dictatorships returned to power that were avowedly anti-Islamic and favourable to the west. The Arab Spring, with its hope of popular assertion devolved back to fragmented wars and a turn back towards military rule. The west, and its capitalist overlords, of course could breathe a sigh of relief. It was a victory against possible Islamic assertion, even though it may have been democratic.

It was not only the west that cheered the demise of the Arab Spring. Formations wary of Islamic fundamentalism, including Israelis, Christian minorities in the Arab world, Hindu India and liberals of all hues, including liberal Muslims, saw the restoration of dictatorships in the Arab world to be a restoration of secularism and stability. Shadi Hamid, an American researcher, in his book *Temptations of Power: Islamists and Illiberal Democracy in a New Middle East* (2014) argues that democratization actually pushed Islamic parties to take up more radical positions, apart from advocating that it was precisely the direct repression offered by the dictators that pushed Islam towards a more reformatory agenda in the first place. Raphael Israeli, in his book *From Arab Spring to Islamic Winter* (2013) seems to be clear that democratisation never really happened. For him, the Arab Spring was nothing less than the complete breakdown of the western liberal democratic setup, and its replacement with an Islamic Winter-

> ...judging from the places where the dust seems to have begun to settle - like Tunisia - and from the balance of power that seems to be in the making in others - like Egypt, Yemen and maybe also Syria and Libya - it appears that Islam has been emerging as the winner from the Spring turbulence while the other governing alternatives, comprising the democratic, liberal and secular forces, which have been cultivated by the

West, have been badly beaten and discarded. (Israeli, 2013: xi-xii)

The reaction of S.K. Bhutani, of the Indian Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), shows that the Islamic question was of concern to India as well, perhaps one which was far more important than the question of democracy. Bhutani says-

> The Tunisian example became contagious – people in Egypt, Syria, Bahrain and elsewhere in the Arab world took 'to the streets' to seek political change. This was the birth of the Arab Spring. But it turned out to be short-lived and was replaced by 'Islamic resurgence' – a divisive development whose lethal consequences have come to the fore. (Bhutani, 2015)

But I would like to come to a very different portrayal of the same incident that is firmly from the perspective of the liberal West in order to show how the West continues to impact perceptions of the Third World through the nuanced usage of liberal logic. Islam and the East are still to be seen as something anti-women, undemocratic, false and ultimately conspiratorial. How to liberally deflate the Bouazazi incident? How to argue against a popular uprising that ultimately has given power to an Islamic government? Michael J. Totten's article, "The Woman Who Blew Up the Arab World" (2012) does just that, by claiming to shift the perspective to that of the woman public officer who had been the direct tool of the state in leading to this macabre chain of events. Unlike almost all other articles, which place Bouazizi in the centre of the Arab Spring narrative, Totten, writing five months into the events, with the Tunisian dictatorship already toppled, decides to talk of the events from the posture of the liberal enlightened West, sensitive to the demonization of a woman, who, like the many Germans of the Second World War, was only doing her 'job' and following the 'law'. Totten quoted Faida Hamdi, who has inspired his article "The Woman who blew up the Arab World" as saying-

> My job was to chase away illegal fruit vendors. I don't carry a gun. I don't have a truncheon. I don't carry a weapon at all... I had been tolerating his illegal work for a long time but that week I had an order from the ministry to confiscate any merchandise sold from any illegal vendor from that particular place. So I was doing my job. (Totten, 2012)

Totten speculates that Faida had possibly been sexually molested by Bouazizi, recounts her months in prison, presents her as a woman in tears, speculates as to the condition of women under the new regime, and considers that Bouazizi might have never got his graduation degree. Faida is presented as "Lorenz's butterfly, a small soul who flapped her wings and set off storms of tornadoes for thousands of miles in every direction" (Totten, 2012). In contrast, Totten likens Bouazizi to Gavarilo Princep, the Serbian terrorist, whose act of shooting Archduke Francis Ferdinand led to the death of millions of people. The contrast could not be more obvious – a trained ideologically motivated terrorist who helped plan and execute the Hapsburg crown prince with a vegetable vendor who in complete frustration and lacking any resource for violence against oppression burnt himself to death in front of the building which had designed the laws of his oppression. The question remains, who is the butterfly and who is the terrorist? Perhaps the question should be reframed as to for who is Bouazizi a terrorist, and for who is Faida a butterfly?

Perhaps it is this continued intervention in narratives from the western gaze that continues to remind us of the relevance of a postcolonial continuity into today. However, the reason why I chose to begin my chapter on postcolonialism and decolonisation from this particular incident and the Arab Spring is because of the direct linkage that has been made by Hamid Dabashi in his book *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism* (2012). The strange conundrum of an event recalling both the continued relevance of a world view and also prophesying its end marks the beginning of my inquiry into postcolonialism and decolonisation.

While Dabashi's formulations are born out of his study of the Arab Spring, I would argue that they are largely applicable to India as well as other erstwhile colonised nations. The crux of his reasoning can be brought together under the following points-

1) The binary between the 'West and the Rest', a phrase taken from the conservative anglophile (Pankaj Mishra in the *London Review of Books* (2011) calls him 'neoimperialist') historian Niall Ferguson's book *Civilization: The West and the Rest* (2011), who more infamously coined the term 'Anglobalisation', at least according to Dabashi is no longer relevant. As he puts it "The mystical consciousness our world has inherited hangs around the binary of "The West and

the Rest", the most damning delusion that the European colonial map of the world manufactured and left behind... It is precisely that grand illusion that is dissolving right before our eyes" (Dabashi, 2012: 23).

2) This false binary of the West and the Rest is based on the no longer relevant understanding that capital can be at all located in any particular geographic zone, like the West. Modern capitalism, with the rise of digital technology has served to dislocate capital. Indeed, multinational corporations with their pan national networks of operation have served to make the location of capitalism an impossible task. As Bauman noted in his *Globalization: The Human Consequences* back in 1998, the Nation state is gradually withering away through its inability to control economic activity- "'The economy' - capital, which means money and other resources to get things done, to make more money and more things yet - moves fast enough to keep permanently a step ahead of any (territorial, as ever) polity which may try to contain and redirect its travels" (Bauman, 1998: 250). Moreover, the false binary is attacked more concretely by Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt in their *Empire* (2000) where they note that even the emancipatory project of Marx in relation to western imperialism is already predicated by this false binary-

> The colonial situation falls too easily into a choice between two bad alternatives: either submission to British capital and British rule or return to traditional Indian social structures and submission to Indian princes; either foreign domination or local domination. For Marx there must be another path that refuses both of these alternatives, a path of insubordination and freedom. In this sense, in creating the conditions of possibility for a new society... Marx saw no use in overthrowing foreign domination simply to restore some isolated and traditional form of oppression. The alternative must look forward to a new form of freedom, connected to the expansive networks of global exchange. The only "alternative" path Marx can imagine, however, is that same path that European society has already travelled. Marx has no conception of the difference of Indian society, the different potentials it contains. He can thus see the Indian past only as vacant and static. (Negri and Hardt, 2000:

119-120)

3) The deflation of this false binary has been accelerated by the growth of new public spaces, not the least of which is the new digital domain of interaction available in the form of blogging, micro-blogging and social network sites. Revisiting the 1970 Gill Scott Heron song, a new catchphrase was picked up by the media across the world - "The revolution will not be televised, but it will be tweeted!" The importance of central public spaces like Tehrir Square or avenues and roads like Avenue Habib Bourguiba, where people physically congregated - often through coordination over the internet, cannot be undermined. Dabashi continues-

> To pave the way for an open-ended unfolding of these revolts, the public space has been expanding for a very long time, and the political act is now being charged and redefined to accommodate it. But the public facade of unity across social classes and between different political tendencies, which has characterised the uprising from the very outset, has been and will continue to be fractured. But these fractures will expand the public space, not diminish it. That societal expansion of the bedrock of politics will not be along ideological lines. In the world beyond Christian dogma, people are not born in a state of sin, for this to be forgiven by way of communal declaration. As there is no original sin, there is no final forgiveness - and thus no grand illusion, no master-narratives of emancipation. The ideals remain open and grand, as they must, but demanding and exacting their realisation require painstaking and detailed work by particular voluntary associations beyond the reach of the state - labour unions, women's rights organisations, student assemblies - all by way of forming a web of affiliation around the atomised individual, thus protecting her, thus enabling him, to resist the ever increasing power of the emergent state. (Dabashi, 2012: 24-25)

4) Dabashi argues that postcolonialism has largely served to hide that the underlying underpinnings of colonialism was economic exploitation. He argues that the cultural logic of imperialism played a large part in obfuscating this

central point, but extends this argument to the sphere of postcolonialism as well. Whatever his critiques of colonialism, postcolonialism according to Dabashi has largely failed to counter the continued economic exploitation of the erstwhile colonised spaces - not by the West per se - which is another obfuscation, but by the decentred absent presence of modern capitalism. In this, what is to be underlined is that colonialism is nothing but imperialism, which we have already discussed, is the highest stage of capitalism. Dabashi therefore notes that even the West is a victim of colonialism-

> Europe colonised the Arab and Muslim world from one end to the other precisely according to the model of power by which it was itself being colonised by the self-fetishising logic of capital. It was, by way of partaking in the making of the fetishised commodity, being alienated from itself as it was forcing that massive alienation on the colonial world. Postcolonialism was instrumental in conceptually fetishising colonialism as something other than the abuse of labour by capital writ large. It is not, and never has been. (Dabashi, 2012: 25-26)

5) Finally, Dabashi rejects the position of postcolonial subjectivity, with its supposed anxieties between western colonising influences and nativist assertions, its chasing after subalternities and interstitial spaces, its anxieties of influence and paralysis of imagination-

> The postcolonial subject, which was none other than the colonial subject multiplied by the illusion of emancipation, was thus released into the force field of that very same colonial history on a wild goose chase of ideological certainty before and after political convictions. For more than two hundred years - the 19th and 20th centuries - colonialism begat postcolonial ideological formations: socialism, nationalism, nativism (Islamism); one metanarrative after another, ostensibly to combat, but effectively to embrace and exacerbate, its consequences. As these postcolonial ideological formations began epistemically to exhaust themselves, the position of "subalternity" travelled from South Asia and became a North American academic fanfare, before it was politically

> neutered and soon turned into the literary trope of a "native informant". (Dabashi, 2012: 26)

For Dabashi, the future lies through this rejection of postcolonial paralysis, a rejection of the supposed binaries of "colonialism and postcoloniality" which "combined to place" erstwhile colonised subjects as an "absolute other outside the self-universalising tropes of European metaphysics, where the non-Western (thus branded) was never in the purview of full subjection, of full historical agency" (Dabashi, 2012: 28). However, the Arab Spring has shown that it is possible for subjugated people to "(come) to full historical consciousness in terms of their own agential sovereignty and worldly subjection". Further he notes that those erstwhile colonised people "are now exiting that trap, having identified it as the simulacrum of... the European entrapping of "humanism"" (Dabashi, 2012: 29).

What Dabashi is proposing is quite radical in that he is rejecting postcolonialism not only as a continuation of colonial structures and oppression, but rather as a block on the imaginative possibilities of erstwhile colonised people to come up with radically new structures of polity and global interactions. At the same time, he is not suggesting that we ignore the impact of decolonisation or postcolonialism, but rather work through the false binaries, the false structures of unquestioned polity and being they propagate, in order to radically rethink the possibilities for a future polity. The Arab Spring becomes an event that reveals the readiness of an erstwhile colonised people to move beyond the boundaries of imagination imposed by colonialism, in embracing uncertainties and doubts, giving space to opposites and moving beyond the political hegemonies imposed by capitalism.

However, my thesis attempts to resituate postcolonialism and decolonisation in the Indian context. Is it possible to identify a similar moment of Spring in Indian polity that changes or reinterrogates formulations that have been taken as sacrosanct through colonialism and into postcolonialism? Can we at all evolve a tradition of parallel thought that can be a trigger for the end of postcolonialism in the Indian context? Perhaps to answer these questions we must begin from a completely different vantage - why do we need to at all call on an end to postcolonialism or even question the movements of decolonisation?

One of the most celebrated anecdotes about the decolonisation debate is supposed to have happened during the 902nd Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly held in New York in 1960 (Carlson, 2010: 408-412). On 12th October, 1960, at the meeting, Nikita Khrushchev - the then Soviet Premier, is popularly remembered to have done something rather strange. In various accounts he is said to have taken his shoe, or a shoe, and used it as a gavel in order to oppose the Philippines delegate Lorenzo Sumulong's interpretation of colonialism that included the Soviet Union as colonising vast swathes of Eastern Europe apart from Central Asia (Ingrassia, 1988: 87). Khrushchev had taken these allegations as a personal affront especially over remarks as to forcible transportation and concentration camps that had been a hallmark of a Stalinist period. Khrushchev had started the process of de-Stalinisation which had been seen as the means to rectify the mistakes of the excesses that Stalin had resorted to in order to keep the Soviet Union intact through the pressures of the Second World War. Hundreds of thousands of political opponents and those deemed dangerous by Stalin, who had been locked up in camps were released as a part of this process. However, Sumulong's allegations cut deeper as they equated the capitalist drive for colonies for exploitation with the Soviet expansion into Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In other words, both capitalism as well as socialism engaged in the suppression of other geographical spaces and their people in order to derive benefits for themselves. As far as colonialism goes, one could no longer look upon the hunt for colonies as a unique product of capitalist induced imperialism as Lenin had declared, but must now take into account that even the supposedly Marxist and socialist Soviet Union was equally busy colonising spaces for the purpose of its largest constituent Russia.

In his own memoirs, Krushchev's bodyguard Colonel General Nikolai Zakharov from the Ninth Directorate of the KGB, the infamous secret police of the erstwhile Soviet Union, recalls how October 12th was one of the "stormiest sessions" of the UN, with the discussion "introduced by the Soviet delegation...of the abolishing of the colonial system" (Khrushchev, 2007: 892). According to him, Sumulong had called the Soviet Union "a concentration camp" (Khrushchev, 2007: 892). It was then that Khrushchev raised his hand in order to ask for leave on a point of order, but the president of the session Frederick Henry Boland of Ireland either did not see him or pretended not to see him. Khrushchev stood up and again raised his hand and in the words of Zakharov: "now it was simply impossible not to notice Nikita Sergeyevich

standing there with his hands raised" (Khrushchev, 2007: 892). However, Boland still refused to take note. Supporting the story of Khrushchev banging his shoe, Zakharov continues "Then Khrushchev took off one of the light boots he was wearing and began to bang it on the table. He banged to a regular rhythm, like the pendulum of a metronome...a sensation was born right before my eyes" (Khrushchev, 2007: 892). Obviously, Boland had to give Khrushchev leave to speak. It is at this point that Khrushchev called Sumulong "that imperialist *kholui*" (Khrushchev, 2007: 892) which roughly translates as an imperialist 'lackey' or a 'lout'. Khrushchev attacked western powers like the Spanish who had engaged in colonialism and profited from it. In his own recollections, Khrushchev recalls the shoe-banging incident as having happened in response to the Spanish delegation's response to his speech attacking the Francoist Fascist regime of Spain (Khrushchev, 2007: 269). Either ways there seems to be a certain amount of doubt as to what exactly transpired which led to Khrushchev banging his shoe. In an Indian connection, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru actually approached Khrushchev deeming the incident unnecessary with Khrushchev remembering the import of his words: "maybe we shouldn't have behaved that way - or that I personally should not have" (Khrushchev, 2007: 269).

The incident enters decolonisation as a theoretical framework with Franz Fanon talking of it in his *The Wretched of the Earth* (1964). Fanon recalls the incident as a source of support for the colonised world saying:

> When Mr. Khrushchev brandishes his shoe at the United Nation and hammers the table with it no colonised individual, no representative of the underdeveloped countries laughs. For what Mr. Khrushchev is showing the colonised countries who are watching, is that he, the missile-wielding *muzhik* (peasant) is treating these wretched capitalists the way they deserve. (Fanon, 2004: 37)

Fanon, of course, is advocating a violent resistance through nationalism against continued colonial interventions of the western capitalist nations. He sees a difference between the diplomacy "as initiated by the newly independent people" (Fanon, 2004: 37) and the diplomacy of "the petrified, motionless world of colonisation" (Fanon, 2004: 37). For him, violence is common in the erstwhile colonised worlds where hundreds of

thousands of people could die without comment in Africa, South East Asia etc. while the west could uphold virtues of civilised behaviour. For him Khrushchev and Castro in his full military uniform "is demonstrating how aware (they are) of the continued regime of violence" (Fanon, 2004: 38).

The interesting thing is that the incident might have never happened (Taubman, 2003). The United Nations then as today was the hub for the world's media, eager to cover the sayings and doings of the world's leaders. Moreover, the Cold War meant a braver urgency and immediacy, accompanied by greater levels of theatrics that were the bread and butter of news houses. According to many journalists who were present at the event, the incident never happened. There is no video footage of it, nor is there any photographic evidence. The only photograph which was printed in the newspaper had a shoe added on artificially (Romero, 2008 & Latynina, 2008). It seems that there is no real evidence which would be expected considering the magnitude of the event and also that Khrushchev was the leader of the Soviet delegation and as such one of the most important delegates in the UN meeting. Perhaps what is important is not whether the incident took place or not but rather why the incident marked itself out so prominently in the debate on decolonisation.

At the root of the issue lies the perception rather encouraged by Marxist thinkers that colonialism is uniquely an advanced stage of crisis inherent in the capitalist system. This makes it difficult to look upon economic exploitation of spaces by the erstwhile Soviet Union as colonialism, although many of the post-Soviet states could look upon themselves as erstwhile colonised states. The basic difference between First World colonisation and Second World colonisation lay in the latter's granting the territorial units it controlled a greater degree of political participation as well as representation. However, this was not through truly democratic participation but rather through the mediation of a single party that was nominated by the central Soviet communist party. Even then there were often purges and expulsions even in the nominated communist parties in order to ensure continued control of the Soviet. Along with complete surrendering of independence, most of the erstwhile Soviet states also underwent huge demographic shifts with hundreds of thousands of people being forcibly shunted out of the country into new settlements and their being replaced with ethnic Russians in a policy designed to promote integration. With the end of the Soviet Union most ethnic

Russians returned back to Russia. The systematic exploitation of both natural and human resources for the benefit of Russia was an integral part of Soviet doctrine enforced by the might of the Red Army and its nuclear strength. In various countries including Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic, Soviet military actively destroyed popular protests demanding democratic reforms or greater autonomy. States like East Germany were openly looted with the further justification of the Second World War and Nazi rule to support such actions. Against such a backdrop, the Third World itself with its diverse range of dominations and suppressions needs to be brought back into the discourse of colonialism. A history of having been colonised cannot exempt one from colonising others later in history. Using this simple maxim, one finds various Third World interactions problematised including the Indian treatment of the people of North East and Kashmir, the Sri Lankan treatment of the Tamil ethnic groups, African conflicts ranging from Morocco down to Zambia etc. all allowing for the deployment of the critical strategies that postcolonialism advances. This is summed up by David Moore in his article "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet?: Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique" (2006), when he proposes a movement towards a global postcolonial critique. Moore says-

> I would like to defend an inflation of the postcolonial to include the enormous post Soviet sphere. Primarily I do so because Russia and then the Soviet Union exercise powerful colonial control over much of the earth for from 50 to 200 years, much of that control has now ended, and its ending has manifest effects on the literatures and cultures of the postcolonial-post-Soviet nations, including Russia...The specific modalities of Russo-Soviet control as well as their post-Soviet reverberations have differed from the standard Anglo-Franco cases. But then again, to privilege the Anglo-Franco cases as the colonising standard and to call the Russo-Soviet experiences deviations... is wrongly to perpetuate the already superannuated centrality of the western or Anglophone world. It is time, I think, to break with that tradition. (Moore, 2006: 28)

Therefore, when Khrushchev was banging his shoe in response to the Philippines delegate, it is not as if the entire colonised world would agree with Fanon. The Second

World's colonies would actually be wondering who Khrushchev was banging his shoe on, for in reality they too were under the iron boot, only the boot was being worn by Khrushchev himself. Indeed, one needs to delink modes of production from the historical fact of colonisation - something that Aijaz Ahmad so forcefully writes back to Fredric Jameson about. Colonisation freed from particular modes of production shows itself to be a trans-historical phenomenon that extends across the world. Postcolonialism, therefore, cannot be used as a moral or ethical state of being to attack an erstwhile colonising agency and to deflect from present colonising tendencies. Therefore, anxieties that are raised when the US, Canada or Australia are placed amongst the category of postcolonial nations are perhaps more of a moral outcry rather than one based on historical fact. In the words of Moore, what is required is to rather consider "if postcolonial hermeneutics might add richness to studies of place or literature X or Y or Z. In some the colonial relation at the turn of the millennium, whatever it may be, is thus not theoretically inflated to a point of weakness, nor is it the property of a certain class or space of peoples, but rather it becomes as fundamental to world identities as other "universal" categories, such as race, and class, and caste, and age, and gender" (Moore, 2006: 29-30).

The act of beating the desk with the shoe is supposed to convey the impression of contempt. However, desks are beaten to show both approval as well as disapproval. In a strange turn, the rhythmic shoe banging of Khrushchev, the loud protests of the Philippines and the Spanish - all come together affirming the continuance of colonialism, ironically in a global summit to discuss decolonisation. The incident of Khrushchev's shoe comes back today to remind us how not too far back in history, socialism actually promised to bury colonialism and end colonisation. In retrospect, Khrushchev's contribution to the decolonisation debate must be seen as an example of paradox. While he was trying to attack what obviously was an extreme form of oppression, subjugation and exploitation, Khrushchev failed to recognize that colonialism was as much a hallmark of the Soviet system as it was of the capitalist. Colonialism is indeed central to human history, from primitive communist societies and slave societies down to today - not because it is predicated on any economic need, but because it is an economic need based on the very imagination of economics that governs both the capitalist and the 20th century socialist models. It is not that colonies were inevitable, but that human imagination saw colonisation as a necessary moral virtue

required for the betterment of people who were engaging in it. Colonising nature and natural resources has long been seen as the same as development. The issue became morally untenable only when colonisation affected other people, especially once, after the abolition of slavery and the victory of modern humanism declared the abolition of some central alterities, ensuring that all people were seen as equals no matter what their gender, race, religion or other social markers.

Decolonisation therefore meant the emancipation of people from colonial rule, not the end of colonisation itself. The ticket out of colonialism for colonised people was the assertion of a nationality. The colonizers on the other hand ensured continued colonisation while granting political decolonisation through the grudging concession of this national identity, which itself was carefully calibrated through a colonial gaze. Therefore, the politics of decolonisation became primary rather than that of attacking the underlying economic basis of colonialism, which could be rehashed around varying subterfuges. Today, in a world where political decolonisation is more or less complete, it is the underlying fact of continued economic colonisation that is fuelling resistance against exploitation. Ranging from environmental concerns to continued angst regarding people's participation in decision making despite the expansion of presence of democratic structures and the demands for national and sub-national recognition, there remain a plethora of issues despite the grand project of the decolonisation of the First World having seemingly completed itself almost half a century back. Decolonisation has been seen largely in opposition to colonisation as its 'de-' or undoing, or opposite, or even reversal, depending on the interpreter. However, this undoing has been much harder than was possibly thought of when demands for decolonisation rose up. As has already been pointed out, on the one hand we have the political part of the decolonisation which involves sovereignty or freedom, with a nation space, with the right to self determination, while on the other hand we have the wider project of decolonising the mind, escaping from Eurocentric, hegemonic modes of thinking that may be limiting. Apart from this, we must realise that the underlying push for colonialism comes from an underlying economic exploitation which is not necessarily limited to any particular geographical space or time. Therefore, to oppose colonialism means fighting the universal economic logic of colonialism that pervades the dominant economic ideologies down the ages. Colonisation, therefore, has to be seen as the highest stage of not only capitalism but also Soviet and perhaps also Chinese style

socialism, apart from being a characteristic of Third World nationalisms. Colonisation, therefore, cannot be placed as exclusive to any one of the binaries of capitalism and socialism, nor is it necessarily absent from mixed economies. This is the limitation of the imagination of postcolonialism, which constantly re-centres it back to a western dominant logic. This limitation in dealing with postcolonialism continues in its assertion of liberal democracies, western style free trade and FIAT capital, western style homogenised nationalisms etc. which together combines to make for a paralysis in thought. True decolonisation becomes a deferred event, while political decolonisation becomes the immediate event that is celebrated as final.

However, the problems with postcolonialism are far more than that of the limits it places on the imaginations of freedom and need to be clearly placed, especially in postcolonialism's continued claims of being deeply interested in decolonising the mind. Why is it that an established body of thought that has enjoyed an almost hegemonic influence in literature departments has also been so widely critiqued and attacked? Unless we clearly understand the challenges to postcolonialism, it may be difficult to find ways of overcoming them in our own formulation.

Postcolonialism, in the context of literary studies, is referred to as a 'theory' with the goal of decolonisation as its practice. Postcolonialism is often used interchangeably with postcolonial theory. It is probably derived from an indication of an ontological state, as in postcoloniality or being postcolonial. So perhaps our enquiry should begin with what we understand as 'theory' (Harper, 2015). The word itself can be traced back to have a sense of viewing and seeing, back to its PIE roots of 'wer-', meaning to perceive. It is in this context that postcolonialism is a theory, a way of perceiving the condition of a people after colonial rule. However, the word theory has also come to redefine our ideas of perceiving itself. The great scientific turn of the last two centuries has come about to give a certain teleos to the evolution of 'scientific' theories. In the scientific framework, theories are the product of long deliberate experimentation on various competing hypotheses that ultimately evolve to give repeatable verifiable results. For example, the Copernican model of heliocentricism provided a better model of the motion of planets and came to be accepted as the most viable hypothesis, which has now gained the status of an axiomatic truth. In social sciences, unlike the physical sciences, the tendency towards forming universal overarching structures of axiomatic

truth is far lesser especially after the poststructuralist turn in the middle of the last century. Indeed, what is more common with social theories is an acceptance of various competing theories that are cogent and co-dependent, providing certain notions of truths, with varying degrees of predictive ability. In humanities and the social sciences, more so than in the physical sciences do we therefore find a movement back towards original meaning of theory, that is, ways of perceiving, or an organised body of ways of perceiving or thinking about or viewing certain phenomena. Moreover, in social sciences, the idea of theory leading to immediate practice is somewhat uncertain. While there are theories in social science that emphasise immediate action, a large number do not. Marxism stands out in emphasising 'praxis', denoting not the original sense of practice, or immediate use, but rather a synthesis of theory and practice.

Postcolonialism in this sense is rather theory oriented, in the sense of creating different ways of perceiving the state of being as impacted by colonial rule, while decolonisation can be seen as its practical counterpart, concerned largely with the practical problem of attaining freedom or more particularly, gaining sovereignty. Of course such a neat demarcation did not exist in early Marxist thinkers who saw decolonisation as a necessary and inevitable part of the fight against capitalism as imperialism. Therefore, in the works of Fanon one finds decolonisation equated with the rise of a national consciousness guided by a Marxist call for unity amongst the labouring classes and peasantry transcending tribal differences in a practice of violence against global capitalism. However, with the recognition that socialism itself has historically colonised and indeed continues to colonise, such unity in practice and theory today has few takers. The cultural turn in postcolonial theory with Said all the way down to Spivak and Bhabha, are located in a timeline after the end of the great period of political emancipation of colonies which finishes by the 1970s. The real popularity of postcolonialism only begins with the fall of the Soviet Union and the discrediting of simplistic polarisations on the basis of Marxist class analysis. As such, mirroring history where decolonisation is largely complete, postcolonialism becomes a spectral presence without any direct practical implementation.

Therefore, apart from looking at decolonisation as the practical counterpart to postcolonial theory, perhaps a more meaningful way of relating the two will be through a historical situation of the two terms. After the First World War, there already began

debates as to the continuance of imperial rule in large parts of the world which had been ruled by the central powers. Within Europe, the fragmentation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire created a string of democratic states from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia etc. Poland came up as an independent nation along with the Baltic States. The Ottoman Empire disintegrated to give rise to newly independent Arab states apart from British and French mandates in the Levant. After the Second World War, the fragmentation and breakdown of colonial empires became accelerated with the weakened European powers no longer able to control the growing clamour for independence arising across its empires. Decolonisation, therefore, became an immediate practical need with various models of continued colonial influence being setup as the colonial masters withdrew. At the same time, the Cold War presented a completely different dynamic where the withdrawing colonial forces attempted to at least install governments that were friendly to the capitalist West while the Soviet Union along with China promoted Marxist guerrilla groups and the formation of Left-leaning states. The major wars after the world wars had their origin in colonial rule whether they are in Korea, Vietnam, Angola, Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, Nigeria/Biafra or the complications around the Israel-Palestine conflict. In some ways, the decolonisation begins with an emphasis on anti-imperialism and a focus on gaining sovereignty. The initial impetus clearly shows its indebtedness to Marxism and its emphasis on praxis. As the First World shifted from direct political control towards more indirect means of control, the focus shifted from questions of political control towards questions of continued cultural hegemonies. As most of the colonised world gained freedom by the 1970s, the focus of decolonisation disappeared, and continued neoimperialist designs were largely boxed out in the larger politics of the Cold War. With the dissolution of the Second World, the newly independent erstwhile Soviet Republics claimed a status similar to that of the postcolonial spaces, giving a new emphasis to criticisms of Marxist praxis in the sphere of postcolonial studies. What perhaps was more interesting is that postcolonialism largely continued in a trajectory that became more and more nuanced towards identities and their assertion. Whereas earlier we could still think of wide collective identities to posit against colonial rule, after political decolonisation, postcolonialism also served to break the identity of the colonised into its constituent genders, castes, races, nationalities and sub-nationalities. Spivak's declaration that "the subaltern cannot speak" (Spivak 1988: 306), served in some ways to reduce the authenticity of the assertions against colonialism by implying

that they were already elite. With violence and revolution often giving rise to further cycles of violence across the erstwhile colonised world and with democratic formulation usually usurped by dictatorships, the privileging of hybridisation and in-between spaces led to a greying of what earlier was a rather Manichean black-and-white binary between the coloniser and the colonised. As practice became more and more stalled, theory became more and more obscure, and postcolonialism became more and more relegated to the hallowed groves of the academia. With a movement away from praxis and back towards theory, it becomes necessary to review postcolonialism and try and find ways of moving beyond the current paralysis.

One of the most potent critiques revolve around the origin of the term postcolonial, not because of any fetish in meanings but because the term itself has come to represent some of the key issues in the discourse. Initially, after decolonisation, the erstwhile colonised nations, their culture, literature etc. were usually placed under convenient brackets based on the colonising agency. The Francophone group of nations, representing a large chunk of North-Western Africa, and the British Commonwealth emerged as the two large groups that promoted closer ties between areas colonised by the same nations. Common games, literary prizes and mutually beneficial trade policies kept alive the memory of a bygone empire. The British Commonwealth of which India is a part, represents the sort of contradictions that any such groupings across such diverse places would entail. While some nations, like New Zealand and Canada continue to look on the British Monarch as the constitutional head of their country, others like India do not. Depending on whether the concerned nation was intensively occupied by the Whites, British settlers or not, the unfolding polity post-independence for all these spaces have remained varied and largely prevented any meaningful resistance to continued neo-imperialist or neo-colonial interventions. The word 'Commonwealth' (Harper, 2015) itself is quite an interesting formulation, from PIE Ko "together" + *"change, exchange" and Wel "to wish, will", suggesting almost a coming together through an exchange of wills and desires. While as a term it is perfectly liberating, its political history unfortunately marks it out to be a continuance of colonial norms. Indeed, the Commonwealth mirrors the ancient Greek city-states' interaction with its colonies through games and other common pageantries. The Commonwealth also helps secure blocks of nations for the continued benefit of England, especially when it came to foreign policies and debates in the wider global forum. It is noteworthy that India has

remained one of the few voices that had protested Anglophone incursions into the Suez or the continued western support for the war against the Palestinian people. Most Commonwealth nations have largely toed the line of the erstwhile empire's mother state even after attaining independence.

Ella Shohat in her essay "Notes on the 'Post-Colonial" (1992) rightly points out that the development of the field of postcolonial studies is intrinsically linked with the changing world polity only from the vantage point of the erstwhile mother state. Shohat anecdotally recalls:

> My recent experience as a member of the multicultural international studies committee at one of the CUNY branches illustrates some of these ambiguities. In response to our proposal, the generally conservative members of the college curriculum committee strongly resisted any language invoking issues such as 'imperialism and third worldist critique,' 'neo-colonialism and resisting cultural practices' and 'the geopolitics of cultural exchange'. They were visibly relieved, however, at the sight of the word 'post-colonial.' Only the diplomatic gesture of relinquishing the terrorising terms 'imperialism' and 'neo-colonialism' in favour of the pastoral 'post-colonial' guaranteed approval. (Shohat, 1992: 99)

In other words, how to label literature coming from spaces that were earlier colonised turns into an act of coming to terms with one's own past, especially if the location of this labelling lies in the erstwhile colonising space of the western academia. However, one could extend that the almost embarrassed unsettling feeling need not have any geographical location in our understanding. Labelling something as postcolonial is as much a way for one to say 'it's all in the past' as it is to avoid the terrorising realities of imperialism and neo-colonialism. Furthermore, she clearly outlines the importance of academic faculties in the creation and dissemination of the imagination of postcolonialism as distinct from decolonisation which was intrinsically linked with popular mass movements and uprisings. According to Shohat, the problem begins with how to accommodate, within the western academia, various interests that are often deeply critical of imperialism and colonisation.

The convenient grouping of nations based on their coloniser's identity allowed the erstwhile coloniser to actively promote the notion of a literature united to a common colonising agency. If nothing else it became a definite outpost for the propagation of the language of the colonising mother state. Even today, the socio-cultural currency that one receives on merely knowing English in India can be seen as a continued lived reality of its colonial past. Awards like the Commonwealth Literature Award cement these rigidities creating both a class of writers as well as intellectuals who are at least willing to engage in the coloniser's language. The coloniser, of course, feels like they have brought about a definite change for the positive through the entire process of colonisation.

However, by the eighties, voices had already risen against the linking of erstwhile colonised nations merely on the historic fact of their having the same mother state colonising them. With time, the idea of the Third World, distinct from the First World and the Second World with its separate historical development gained currency. While the First World came to represent the western capitalist powers and the Second World, the communist bloc led by the then Soviet Union, both of whom were designated as super powers with resources for intervening across the world, the Third World came to represent the vast playground of newly independent nations over whose futures these two large groups held sway. The more patronising term, 'The Developing World', also referred to the Third World, only it carried forward the earlier colonial burden of providing civilisation/development to less privileged parts of the world into the post-colonial times.

One of the most striking logical critiques of the idea of the Third World was articulated by Ahmad in his debate with Jameson where he points out that the Third World, unlike the First and the Second cannot be distinguished through any commonality in mode of production. While the First World has a liberal capitalist framework and claims to be freer, the Second World which has a Marxist communist framework and claims to be more equal, the only commonality for the Third World is the historical fact of colonisation. Jameson, in his essay, "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" (1986) makes the argument "all third-world texts are necessarily, I want to argue, allegorical, and in a very specific way: they are to be read as what I will call *national allegories*, even when, or perhaps I should say, particularly

when their forms develop out of predominantly western machineries of representation, such as the novel" (Jameson, 1986: 69). While Jameson himself says that this is a "sweeping hypothesis" and again that "this distinction (between First and Third World literatures) in a grossly oversimplified way...is a radical split between the private and the public, between the poetic and the political...in other words Freud versus Marx" (Jameson, 1986: 69), the implications for Jameson's project which he spells out in his note 26 - "sketch(ing) a theory of the cognitive aesthetics of third-world literature" (Jameson, 1986: 88) is profoundly disturbing. Jameson has managed to reduce the essential drive of Third World imagination to be rooted in nationalism - and that too, a nationalism that has been imposed with the withdrawal of colonial rule. It is almost as if the key component of any erstwhile colonised people's imagination is the upholding of inherited colonial structures, especially those of nationalism.

While Jameson's thesis is validated in the Indian context by many novels that do present its characters as mirroring the destiny of the nation including Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) or Ishmat Chughtai's *Terhi Lakeer* (1944), nonetheless many other novels including R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* (1958), Mulk Raj Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997) and many others do not explicitly devolve into a singular design of being a national allegory. In this regard, I would like to point out particularly the novel *River of Fire* (1959) by Qurratulain Haider that uses cyclical history in order to reposition the personal narrative of its principle characters Gautam Nilambar, Champak - the woman he loves, and his friend Hari Shankar, across various historical periods of North Indian history. In a complete reversal of Jameson's thesis it is not the political nation that is being allegorised in the lives of the central characters, although the nation is developing and changing around them from the rise of the Magadha dynasty through Muslim rule and into the end of British rule in the subcontinent. In Jameson's formulation, the nation becomes central, the constant goal for which the entire action of the novel exists. However, in Haider what is constant is the river of time which is equated with the Ganges. What is being allegorised is not the postcolonial nation but rather the paracolonial modes of human interaction that inform the majority of interactions of the people of the subcontinent.

Ahmad in his response to Jameson titled "Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and National Allegory" (1987) catches on this over-determination of colonial history in a

brilliant rejoinder. He exposes Jameson's "cognitive aesthetics" to be based on the "suppression of the multiplicity of significant difference among and within both the advanced capitalist countries and imperialised formations" (Ahmad, 1987: 3). He exposes the hollowness of the "binary opposition of what Jameson calls the "first" and the "third" worlds" (Ahmad, 1987: 3). Perhaps the most telling feeling of being left out as a Third World theoretician can be summed up by Ahmad's deep objection to Jameson's formulations of an over-deterministic and an overarching order as encapsulated in the terms "all?...necessarily?" (Ahmad, 1987: 4). In a poetic but poignant comment on theorisation from western perspectives, and in this case ironically a western Marxist perspective which is otherwise supposed to be liberating and sensitive towards Third World articulations, Ahmad notes that despite being a Marxist like Jameson and being "birds of the same feather even though we never quite flocked together" (Ahmad, 1987: 3), finally he "realized, with no little chagrin, that the man whom I had for so long, so affectionately, even though from a physical distance, taken as a comrade was, in his own opinion, my civilizational Other. It was not a good feeling" (Ahmad, 1987: 4).

While Jameson is wary of conflating the First and Second Worlds into each other, Ahmad reveals that the entire logic of Third World is based precisely on this convergence. The First and Second Worlds according to Ahmad "are defined in terms of their production systems (capitalism and socialism, respectively), whereas the third category - the Third World - is defined purely in terms of an "experience" of externally inserted phenomena. That which is constitutive of human history itself is present in the first two cases, absent in the third one. Ideologically, this classification divides the world between those who make history and those who are mere object of it..." (Ahmad, 1987: 6-7). In other words, Ahmad notes two interlinked problems of the formulation of the Third World, that are particularly important in understanding the necessity of delinking the simplistic idea of postcolonial nationalism from postcolonial being. Firstly, the very idea of three worlds unites structurally the First and the Second as having pure and distinct forms of production, which in itself is deeply problematic. Within this formulation lies the deeper belief, at least for classical Marxists, that because of the difference in forms and relations of productions, the Second World is exempt from either imperialist tendencies, or from colonial propensities, and that therefore decolonisation is particularly a fight against the First World, and its continuing

machinations into the Third. However, the Third is one without any determined mode of production, either capitalist, or socialist, and is therefore one without any autonomous agency. At the moment of economic classification, therefore, colonialism and western logics of production come to tie down the Third World into perpetual inaction. Further, in a related paralysis, the Third World therefore becomes a space which has no sovereignty over its own history - unlike the First and the Second World. The Third World is therefore caught, at least in this formulation, in between the First and the Second World, as extensions of their political economic thought that makes central to their being their question of history, the questions of "neither class formation and class struggle nor the multiplicities of intersecting conflicts based upon class, gender, nation, race, region and so on, but the unitary "experience" of national oppression (if one is merely the object of history, the Hegelian slave) then what else can one narrate but the national oppression? Politically, we are Calibans, all" (Ahmad, 1987: 9).

I would like to appropriate here Ahmad's continuation and call for an understanding of the universal permeation of colonial modes of thinking- "a radically different premise, namely the proposition that we live not in three worlds but in one; that this world includes the experience of colonialism and imperialism on both sides of Jameson's global divide" (Ahmad, 1987: 9) - or that colonialism and imperialism cannot be contained in different worlds, but are constitutive experiences that transcend into all worlds. We must therefore, while agreeing with Ahmad "that the category of "third-world literature"... is... epistemologically an impossible category" (Ahmad, 1987: 11) also prepare for an understanding that colonialism had a marginal role in the development of literature in erstwhile colonised spaces.

Ahmad's essay continues noting an entire list of Urdu authors in section VII (Ahmad, 1987: 17-22). He lists a historical survey of authors starting from Meer Amman's *Bagh-o-Bahar* adapted from the medieval *Qissa-e-Chahar Dervish* of Faizi, taken out from the publishing house of Fort William College, established in 1800 by the British and Rajab Ali Beg Saroor's *Fasana-e-A'jaib* published around the same time, both noting nothing about the British colonial onslaught or any resistance to it. He presents Sarshar's *Fasana-e-Azad*, an early novel as an example of serialised publication during the 1870s, Nazir Ahmed's *Ibn-ul-Vaqt*, as an example of the emergence of a new class of urban bourgeoisie. Rashid-ul-Khairi's string of women's morality novels, both at

the beginning of the turn of the century, as well as Meer Hadi Hassan Rusva's *Umrao Jan Ada* which is far more liberating towards women's issues, round up the survey – all of which serve as examples of texts that refuse to fall into the paradigm of national allegories. Therefore, Ahmad notes- "the formative phase of the Urdu novel and the narrative that arose alongside that novel, in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth, had to do much less with the experiences of colonialism and imperialism as such" (Ahmad, 1987: 20). Even in the events leading up to the formation of the nation, Ahmad argues-

> I cannot think of a single novel in Urdu between 1935 and 1947, the crucial year leading up to decolonisation, which is in any direct or exclusive way about "the experience of colonialism and imperialism"...All the novels that I know from that period are predominantly about other things: the barbarity of feudal landowners, the rapes and murders in the houses of religious "mystics," the stranglehold of moneylenders upon the lives of peasants and the lower petty bourgeoisie, the social and sexual frustrations of school going girls, and so on. The theme of anti-colonialism is woven into many of those novels but never in an exclusive or even dominant emphasis. (Ahmad, 1987: 21)

Ahmad further notes that even when nationalism was discussed in Urdu literature especially after the bloodbath of the partition in the 50s and 60s, it was not in opposition to colonial rule exclusively. In fact it was an extremely critical nationalism "a critique of others (anti-colonial nationalism) receded...entirely overtaken...by an even harsher critique of ourselves" (Ahmad, 1987: 21). According to Ahmad, the major fictions of that age were so very critical of the construct of nationalism that there actually was an "overriding doubt: where we are a nation at all?" (Ahmad, 1987: 21). Ahmad has therefore laid out the practical need of looking upon cultural productions from the erstwhile colonised spaces as potentially having a paracolonial logic in being concerned with issues that go beyond the colonial period or the ideological moorings of colonialism and in being self-critical of itself. In other words, what was being called the Third World does have both an imagination and a history of an imagination of itself beyond colonialism, necessitating a need for a shift in emphasis in theory.

The other term which has gained currency in recent times as an alternative to Third World as well as postcolonialism is "Global South". In particular, the Deutscher Akademisher Austaushdienst (German Academic Exchange Service) has been promoting the term through a series of conferences and workshops based out of the University of Tubingen over the last two- three 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 Noble 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 Unites 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 latitude of proximately thirty degree 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, strong patriarchal biases against women and a shared colonial heritage. 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 towards creating 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. Primarily the Brandt Report advocated the transfer of technology and resources, ethical trade policies and restructuring of Third World debt in order to create a more equitable world. However, the project did not take off as planned with consecutive world recessions through the seventies down to today and the breakup of the erstwhile Soviet Union and the faltering economies of the post-Soviet states. 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 which was created as a continuation of the Brandt Commission and promoted the idea that the unfinished work of the Brandt Commission should be taken up with some seriousness.

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 has 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 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 transference of hegemonic skills and technology from the Global North to the Global South and the current tendency of the Global South having to promote assistance amongst its own constituent members. It almost seems as if there is a reluctance of the Global North 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 come also 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 capitalisms as competitors 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)

What Dirlik succinctly points out is how the initial impetus for the Global North to agree to re-approachments 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 comes 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 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 arise after the 9/11 attacks, the drive for democracy across the Arab world, the current 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 of the resurgence of the People's Republic of China, a debate which is only relevant for this thesis as far as it reveals continued anxieties of the First World in terms of its search for others.

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 aterity 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 in the 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 a 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 own continued presences 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 taken from languages as diverse as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Zulu, Yoruba, Swahili, Vietnamese and Hindi. She privileges her department "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 literatures 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 literatures being taught in translation under threat. Of course they were charged of 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 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 own 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 own 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 is the marginalised, the under developed 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 can be seen to have 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). Postcolonialism, according to Dirlik, 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 much victims as beneficiaries" (Dirlik 1994: 353).

However, for 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 "postcolonial studies tend to translate it into the muticulturalist 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 being 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 JanMohamed'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 own 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 for a 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, postcolonial. With the bracket, the ambiguity of the post, as in is colonialism really over (?), is made more apparent while the "/" seems to unite the oppositional ideas together as if there really is no way of separating them at all. The various orthographies of the term, maybe celebrated as a part of the diversity that is inspired by it as is done by Chadwick Allen 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 historic, 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.

I shall start by reviewing the terms in order of their importance to the thesis, starting with those that are the most problematic. (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 do 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 is 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 Hildr stays back in the battle field 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 '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 stage coach 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 been also 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, coming 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 Carribbean islands. By para- from the PIE root *per- the sense which is being added is not one of going beyond, but rather of 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 a 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 a 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...pretentions 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 that is 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 encourage many of the literary, educational, linguistic, political, commercial, journalistic, religious etc. 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 across 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.

Sean Goudie, in his book on *Creole America* (2006) uses the term paracolonial to describe the USA's interventions in the Caribbean in order 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 own 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 along with classical colonial rule as 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 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 that is 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 work places 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 from 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 and the removal of choices, false promises is the hallmark of today's age.

To make sense of these seemingly irreconcilable contradictions, I would like to take up the idea of *pratityasemutpada* (Pearcey, 2008) or dependent origination. Taken from Buddhism, this idea of dependent origination provides a simple framework of 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 in themselves things do not exist as independent phenomena, then 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 are originating in a dependent manner from within, and 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 a radical alterity, a completely different way of being, on the other. The thesis will continue through a relook at Indian political thinkers, trying to locate in their ideas both strands that continue the alterities of colonialism as well as those that potentially help to strengthen the project of paracolonialism as a radical, imaginative praxis.

CHAPTER III

The Persistence of Alterities: Postcolonialism in Indian Political Imagination

Afternoon, February 12th, 2016, Kanhaiya Kumar, the President of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Students' Union was arrested from the campus on the charges of Sedition amongst other charges (Iyengar, 2016). The charges came after the media house, Zee News, alleged and furnished video evidence in the form of CDs to the Delhi Police that during a supposed cultural programme on the 9th of February, anti-national slogans had been raised (Express Web, 2016). Eventually two more students, Umar Khalid and Anirban Bhattacharya, who had been the principal organisers of the programme of the 9th, surrendered before the police, who similarly charged them with sedition (Roy, 2016). Eventually all three were granted bail by the Delhi High Court (Sheriff M., 2016). Carrying on from the 'Occupy UGC' movement and through Rohith Vemula's suicide, the arrest of three JNU PhD students was seen as a part of the wider attack on educational institutes and intellectuals which encompassed agitations across the country from Banaras Hindu University to Aligarh Muslim University, Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) to Jadavpur University and Presidency University (Ferreira and Gonsalves, 3/2016). However, in the invocation of sedition there was a new angle at play which could be traced across to a completely different thread of protests beyond the student movement - the curtailment of the freedom of activists and people under a draconian Colonial Law which was passed by the British to curb activists of the Indian Independence movement (Mallapur, 2016). Among the more recent and illustrious cases include sedition cases being tabled against the writer Arundhati Roy (Bhatia, 2016), public health activist Dr. Binayak Sen (Venkatesan, 2011), political cartoonist Aseem Trivedi (TNN, 2012), Delhi University Professor S.A.R. Geelani (Sana, 2016), the Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi etc. (Express, 2016/2). All of them have received bail in the recent past, with the higher courts noting the lack of proper evidence. In the past, sedition cases have been lodged in free India against many people, especially against perceived members of terrorist groups like the Khalistani rebels and the Maoists, but also against protestors and ordinary people, with most cases not standing scrutiny in the higher

courts (Dadwal, 2016).

However, in its interpretation, the higher courts have been particularly restrained. Gautam Bhatia, a Delhi based lawyer and the author of the book *Offend, Shock, or Disturb: Free Speech under the Indian Constitution* (Bhatia, 2015), traces out the history of the Sedition Law, noting how many times it was dropped, added or amended to its present form from its inception as a law written by none other than the famous British jurist Thomas Macaulay, who was instrumental in framing colonial educational policy "to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern—a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect" (Macaulay, 1835). The law was initially used to contain the activism of Indian freedom fighters, including M.K. Gandhi, who famously called it the "prince among the political sections of the Indian Penal Code designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen" (Gandhi, 1922). The charges against Gandhi were: "These charges were of 'bringing or attempting to excite disaffection towards His Majesty's Government established by law in British India, and thereby committing offences punishable under Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code'" (Gandhi, 1922). For the Father of the Nation, the logic of the law of sedition was itself flawed because it forced a citizen to be satisfied and supportive of a government. However, for Gandhi it was "a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system" (Gandhi, 1922). Indeed, any functioning democracy works by criticism of the government in power. Gandhi's allowing of sedition is hemmed in only by his emphasis on not giving space to aggression or brutality in the giving vent to dissatisfaction. "Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or system, one should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection, so long as he does not contemplate, promote, or incite to violence" (Gandhi, 1922). Indeed, for Gandhi, to give expression to dissatisfaction without resorting to violence is "the highest duty of a citizen" (Gandhi, 1922). Further, it should be kept in mind that Gandhi was saying all this while being on trial for precipitating and leading the Non-Cooperation Movement, which led to the massacre at Chauri Chaura. Gandhi was sentenced to prison for six years. Balgangadhar Tilak was tried for sedition three times and his words on being found guilty are etched on a marble plaque at the Mumbai High Court- "In spite of the verdict of the Jury, I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher powers that rule the destiny of men and nations and it may be the will

of providence that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my suffering than my remaining free" (Tilak, 1908). Tilak was imprisoned for six years as well. In a strange parallel, both men spent their time in jail to write commentaries on the *Bhagavad Gita*, perhaps united in finding a divine sanction for their actions beyond legality. No wonder that even when the law was tabled at the Constituent Assembly, it met with scepticism. Bhatia recounts-

> The Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly expressly included it as grounds for restricting free speech in its first draft of the fundamental rights. The Assembly objected strongly, with Somnath Lahiri sarcastically asking Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel whether he needed even more protection from his own people than the tyrannical British did. The next day, Sedition was quietly removed from the draft, only for it to make another appearance during the second reading of the Constitution. Once again, the Assembly protested vehemently, with many members recalling their own prosecutions during the nationalist movement; and once again, it was swiftly withdrawn. When Article 19(1)(a) finally came into being, "Sedition" was not among the permissible restrictions under Article 19(2). (Bhatia, 2016)

However, the new Indian government under Nehru lost no time in using the sedition law to crack down on both the RSS mouthpiece *The Organiser*, as well as the communist journal *Cross Roads*. Because the sedition laws were overturned by the article guaranteeing free speech, ultimately the government of India in its First Amendment of 1951 introduced the inclusion of threats to "Public order" in order to widen the scope of state control in the cases of abuse of free speech, subject to these measures be limited to "reasonable restrictions" (FA 3A, 1951). Nonetheless Jawaharlal Nehru called the Law "objectionable and obnoxious" during the debates on the amendment, and hoped "to get rid of it" (Parthasarathy, 2016). In its present form the law has been widely criticised by jurists and activists who point out the propensity of governments to use it to clamp down on dissent against its workings. The law has only been slightly amended and carries its imperial legacy, having only replaced the term "Imperial Government" for "Government" and "British India" by "India" and omitted the additional punishment option of "transportation for life" which in postcolonial India was

obviously no longer an option-

> 1*[124A. Sedition.-Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, 2***the Government established by law in 3*[India], a 4***shall be punished with 5*[imprisonment for life], to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine.
>
> Explanation 1.-The expression "disaffection" includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity.
>
> Explanation 2.-Comments expressing disapprobation of the measures of the Government with a view to obtain their alteration by lawful means, without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt or disaffection, do not constitute an offence under this section.
>
> Explanation 3.-Comments expressing disapprobation of the administrative or other action of the Government without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt or disaffection, do not constitute an offence under this section.] (IPC, 1860)

What is clear is that the law has a peculiar bind in a democracy where criticism of the government is part and parcel of everyday healthy functioning of the state. The explanations, which are attached to the IPC itself clearly take inspiration from Gandhi's emphasis on allowing for criticism of the government as long as there is no violence. The courts have historically noted that there must be immediate incitement to violence, as Bhatia notes- "Later judgements, keenly aware of the importance of free speech, and hesitating to trust the state with too much power, have insisted on a close and clear link between the suppressed speech and the feared public disorder. For instance, in a case called S. Rangarajan Etc. vs. P. Jagjivan Ram, the Supreme Court insisted that the relationship between speech and disorder be like that of a 'spark in a powder keg'." (Bhatia, 2016) and also how the courts further distinguished between advocacy and incitement, with only direct incitement being grounds for the application of sedition.

Therefore, one can safely surmise that while successive governments have kept the law and utilised it for suppression of dissent, the courts have by and large tried to narrow the ambit of the application of the law. The more interesting point to be raised is that sedition is a strange law because it does not aim to punish the lack of loyalty towards the state or the nation. It is designed to punish disloyalty to the government, which in a democratic setup is supposed to be the other way round, that is, the government is supposed to be punished if it is disloyal to the people, as, after all, the people are sovereign. Sedition is not treason. What is perhaps the real postcoloniality of the situation is that India does not have laws for treason; only for sedition. If one compares the Indian Penal Code with the Pakistan Penal Code or the Bangladesh Penal Code, one finds exactly the same wordings of articles 121-123, as both are derived from the British Code of 1860, with one glaring difference. While in the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC, 1860) and Bangladesh Penal Code (BPC, 1860), the laws are to protect "Pakistan" or "Bangladesh" as a state; in the Indian penal code, they are written to safeguard the "Government of India", the government denoting the central government or the government of a state. Even the Sri Lankan Penal Code (SLPC, 1885) articles 115-117 clearly mark out acts of treason against the republic as opposed to sedition against the government in power as marked out in 120, which includes as seditious actions against the Judiciary, or incitements to other citizens which demand actions that are not "legal". In India, actions against the government of India seem to be the only thing which has any importance - almost as if the government and the state are one. I see this as a clear colonial hangover. The British, after all, were colonial rulers, that too under the rule of a hereditary monarchy. The Law of Treason in Britain was reserved for crimes done against the Sovereign, which was not the people, but rather the British Crown, embodied in the King/Emperor and members of his family (Crown, 1998). That is why it became all the more necessary to define sedition - a set of laws protecting the British Government, which was of course not the British Crown. In India, although sections 121-123 roughly cover the areas of treason, they are still defined as against the Indian Government, and not India the state or the nation. The Law Commission of India, in its forty-third report on Offences against the National Security (Sundaram, 1971) clearly outlines the differences, as well as the current stop gap interpretations of existing laws which fill the space. With Great Britain revoking the clauses for Sedition in 1998 (Crown, 1998), the need to review the law for sedition, and the need to redefine Treason

becomes more and more pressing, especially considering the track record of the existing sedition law in India, which has done more harm than good in curtailing personal liberties and gagging individuals while doing little to safeguard the Indian State.

The postcoloniality of the situation therefore stems from the creation of an alterity in practice between the seat of sovereignty, which lies in the people of India as stated in the Preamble to the Constitution, and the exercise of that sovereignty which is delegated to the current government in power. However, it is also important to go back to the crimes that Kanhaiya was accused of, which included shouting slogans against the Indian government, including for "Azadi" for Kashmir (Express Web, 2016) amongst other things. In a turn of events it came to light that the media had possibly doctored evidence in order to give the impression that anti-India slogans were being raised (Deshmane, 2016). The cries for Azadi, or freedom were repeated in public once Kanhaiya was released on bail. The cries were of the nature of "freedom from" a host of social and political problems ranging from communalism to patriarchy and brahmanism, from neoimperialism to capitalism (Shaikh, 2016). It also included in the context of these demands the idea that various parts of the country, ranging from the North East to Kerala, and also including Kashmir, that people were demanding freedom from social and political evils. The slogan of Azadi itself has an anti-imperialist root going back to Chandrashekhar Azad and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, but it was popularised both by the women's activist Kamla Bhasin, who coined slogans such as "My sisters demand freedom, freedom from patriarchy, freedom of movement etc." in a sing song articulation in the late 1980s and 1990s (Dutt, 2016), as well as by Kashmiri separatists demanding freedom from India, who they look upon as an imperial colonial presence through and after the British rule in the subcontinent. The Kashmiri association with the slogan for Azadi has been brought to the Indian public imagination most widely and also rather recently through the movie *Haider* (Sharma, 2014). In all of these articulations the idea of freedom is negative and conditional, that is it is 'freedom from' (Sengupta, 2016) something. However, Kanhaiya after his release in his speech given at the administration block of JNU dabbled in a different approach to freedom- "Is it wrong to seek freedom (azadi) from the ills that plague our country today? They ask belligerently – who do you want freedom from? Has India enslaved somebody? My answer to them is NO. So isn't it obvious we are not seeking freedom from India? We are not seeking freedom FROM India but IN India. There is a difference" (Padmanabhan, 2016).

The project of decolonisation, especially decolonisation in the Indian context is predetermined by western logics of polity towards attaining conditional freedom. It is therefore not surprising that even today political slogans revolve around such an understanding. The echoes of this can be found in the nomenclature of *Poorna Swaraj*, the declaration of which creates almost a reassertion of a 'tryst with destiny', which is fulfilled on the anniversary of the initial Lahore declaration of 26th January, 1930, on Republic Day, 1950, twenty years later, and a full two years, five months and eleven days after the formal withdrawal of the British from India. What exactly do we mean by *Poorna Swaraj*? The formal declaration begins by stating "We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives the people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it" (Gandhi, 1929). The formulation clearly lays out a political goal for the state, and gives people the right to change or deny governments if they deny it freedom.

The first objective of the government is to give people 'freedom'. What do we understand as 'freedom'? The word itself arises from PIE root 'pri-' which means 'to love', which also gives rise to words like 'priya' or beloved. Even in many other languages, we get words like Old Saxon *friohan* "to court, woo;" German *freien* "to woo;" Old Norse *frja* "to love;" Gothic *frijon* "to love" (Harper, 2015). The idea of freedom is linked to love, as a verb, as a state of being. It's almost like freedom is a prerequisite to love, especially when seen from the vantage of its Indic roots. Of course, this does not mean that when Indian political leaders were demanding freedom, they were referring to a state of love. What is much more plausible is that a western educated man like Nehru was referring to the western notion of sovereignty, a term that finds its way into the constitution of the country. However, what was the imagination of freedom that was actually there amongst the people of the country in those days? What then are the imaginations of this freedom in the Indian context?

To begin with, we have the idea of Swaraj itself. Swaraj, or self rule, or rule of the self, was made famous by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the extremist Congress leader who

famously adopted the slogan "Swaraj is my birthright" from his friend and associate Joseph 'Kaka' Baptista (Baliga, 2013). However, the notion of political swaraj that found its way most effectively into the Indian conscience during the independence movement came from Gandhi. Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj,* a political text that sums up the central key tenets of his ideology was written during his oceanic journey from South Africa to India even before he set foot in the political quagmire of political India before independence. Gandhi often backtracked from his positions but this central text is perhaps among the few that he never revised, changed or disowned even in part. Dressed as a dialogue much in the Socratic-Platonic tradition, the text is a scathing critique of western modernity and civilization as was built up in the final days of the British Raj. Taking recourse to an idea of a radical other civilization, Gandhi contributed to the creation of a timeless perpetual way of life, largely inspired from Hinduism or what he would refer to as Sanathan dharma. It should be noted that like Tilak, Gandhi also revisited the Hindu text of *Bhagavad Gita* and in his commentary found in *The Gita according to Gandhi* (Desai, 1927) it is not the sanction for necessary violence but rather the message of universal and total ahimsa, which comes from universal and total non-alterity. *Hind Swaraj* unites the idea of non-alterity, ahimsa, selfless, celibate service to the nation as well as a complete rejection of western civilization and technology to present a unique, rural, agri-based vision of independence that severely limits and even sacrifices the individual in the name of the nation, India. Gandhian notions of swaraj unite the 'swa' referring to the self and 'raj' referring to rule into a strange paradox of societal governance through the complete effacing of the self with societal norms which takeover completely in order to rule the self. In a macabre social programming, his idea of the politician or the political self is one of an individual who has reduced his life completely to the service of the nation to the exclusion of all worldly desires. His term for such a political worker 'satyagrahi' uniting the words 'satya' meaning truth and 'agrahi' meaning aggressive seeker, presents the goal of swaraj to almost be a metaphysical truthful state of existence. However, this truth in itself is something not eternal but rather pliable and mouldable as suggested by his autobiography, *My Experiments with Truth*. Truth, for Gandhi, therefore, is not an eternal constant but rather something that has to be constantly tested for its own authenticity. This call for satyagraha or experimenting after truth, therefore becomes the modus operandi of achieving swaraj. Therefore the Gandhian idea of swaraj that becomes the dominant idea

of swaraj for the nation is paradoxical. While on the one hand, it lays a severe emphasis on the individual self, it also totally eradicates the self and replaces it with social morals which while being radical in their own way are ultimately responsible for the complete destruction of individual identity. Swaraj as an idea of emancipation can be placed squarely in the realm of the Freudian super-ego that completely destroys both the ego and the id and operates to uphold a moral order which is deemed good for society. Ultimately the call for swaraj becomes a negative idea of freedom, as an opposition to the self, as a subsuming of the self for the sake of a higher morality.

The call for azadi was popularised by Chandrashekhar Azad who had famously declared that "dushmanon ke goliyon ka hum saamna karenge, azad hi rahein hain aur azad hi rahenge" which can roughly be translated as "we have always been free and we will always be free". However, the most stirring call was given by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose when in his Rangoon address he declared "tum mujhe khoon do, main tumhe azadi dunga" (Basu, 2010: 130) or "You give me blood and I promise you freedom". The word azadi comes from the Persian root "azad" which refers to the lowest rung of mounted aristocracy who were recognised to be free men in opposition to bonded serfs or peasants, who were tied down to their lands. The call for azadi roughly translates as a call for freedom but etymologically carries the connotation of freedom through rise in stature, by being accepted into a higher rank. The Persian word azad itself comes from PIE 'jat' which is also the root for the Sanskrit word jati, meaning clan. In some ways, the call for azadi is a reference to being accepted as a part of a wider community through recognition of the individual self as a part of that society. The slogan of azadi became popular with the feminist movement in the subcontinent with variations like "meri behna maange azadi", "baap se bhi azadi", "khap se bhi azadi" etc (Dutt, 2016). At its very core the claim is for individual recognition and refers to an individual's demand for certain political recognition. However, the cry for azadi is also constructed as a negative idea of freedom. Either it is freedom from a particular structure or it is freedom to be recognized as a part of a particular structure. It is a demand for acceptance of an individual identity in a mass collective that recognises and empowers that identity. It is no wonder that in its appeal to aspire towards a collective while holding on to a shadow of individual rights, it became particularly popular in left liberal circuits. The notion of azadi can in some ways be linked with the Freudian domain of ego or the preservatory drive that fuels a desire for recognition and

preservation.

The slogan for 'Inquilab' which has largely been appropriated by the Left is used to refer to revolution. Coming from the Arabic root qalab, (Amatullah, 2009) referring to the changing heart, the slogan of 'Inquilab zindabad' can roughly be translated as "Long live the revolution". One the most popular of the Left Marxist slogans of the country, its calls for Inquilab has strongly resonated with the youth and the working classes of the country from before independence. Created by Hasrat Mohani, (Safvi, 2013), the slogan was popularized by Bhagat Singh and his HRSA (Bhattacharjee, 2009: A172). The idea of the communist revolution with its almost impossible dream of a classless society merged in India as it did elsewhere with the dream of driving out the imperial forces that were in control of the countries. Thousands of young students and youth flocked to the budding Left and communist organizations including Jawaharlal Nehru. The attraction of the Left lay in its simple humanist message demanding change for the better, as well as in its direct violent confrontationist attitude. Inquilab can therefore be seen to be corresponding with the id of the Freudian tripartition of the subconscious which is a violent reservoir of the deepest unchecked desires. Coming quite literally straight from the heart with its constant desire for change, the Left in India soon found itself alienating the largest part of its support base by revealing itself to be governed quite on the whims and fancies of the Soviet dominated international. However, the slogan of Inquilab, is equally a negative idea in being constructed as a call in opposition to the existing state of affairs, whether the anger is directed against capitalism, imperialism, patriarchy, Brahmanism or whatever.

Indeed this tripartitioning of the imagination of freedom in the Indian context is not to suggest any rigid watertight compartmentalisation. What I am proposing is that all three of these popular slogans are ultimately subconsciously negative imaginations of freedom. It is always freedom from, or at best freedom to, rather than freedom in. This is the central problem of the project of decolonisation and the imagination of postcolonialism - it can only produce imaginations of freedom that are negative and constructed as in opposition to. In the final analysis, postcolonialism and decolonisation must therefore be seen as attempts to promote conditional freedom. However, perhaps what we need instead is an imagination of freedom not limited to conditionalities, even if, or especially if those conditionalities are determined by a western Eurocentric mode

of thinking, especially when we are dealing with erstwhile colonised spaces that have their own imaginations of being and becoming. My proposal is that such an idea of freedom can also be derived from the Indian context, through a re-engagement with the idea of mukti which is precisely what Kanhaiya was hinting at when he advocated "freedom in" rather than "freedom from".

However, the postcolonial idea of "freedom from" has been particularly important in setting up aspects of both Indian Polity as well as Indian Social Reform. In the coming section, I shall take up the writings of V.D. Savarkar and Dr. B.R.Ambedkar, trying to extract from their major works - *Hindutva* (1923) and *Annihilation of Caste* (1936), the trajectory of conditional freedom and alterity in Indian politics and society. Savarkar was given the title "Veer" or "the Brave" by his followers and is most famously known as a major ideologue of the Hindu nationalist parties and groups, having led the Hindu Mahasabha, apart from being a prominent leader of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha. Ambedkar, also popularly known as Babasaheb and revered as a Bodhisattva by many Dalit converts to Buddhism, is seen by many as the primary ideologue of the Dalit movement which encompasses a wide range of political formulations across the country, including the National Level Bahujan Samaj Party. While I am not suggesting in any way that the politics of Savarkar and Ambedkar are related, I would like to, nonetheless, point out that their politics is essentially postcolonial in being based on alterity politics. Both identify themselves to be a part of a community of oppressed peoples, only that for Savarkar the major oppressing force was Muslim rule in the subcontinent that oppressed Hindus, and for Ambedkar the major oppressing force was that of Brahmanism that oppressed the Dalits. In some ways, through their varying interpretations of the ground conditions, their politics was anti-Muslim colonisation and anti-Brahmanical colonisation respectively. Against both, there are charges of cooperation with the British, who have traditionally been seen as the prime oppressors during the British colonial phase. Nonetheless, their ideas have played a steering role in current Indian politics, the first in shaping the ideology of Indian Nationalism, and the second in influencing the constitution, apart from shaping social justice in the country.

The ideas of *Hindutva* (Savarkar, 1923) were worked out by Savarkar while he was in Cellular Jail in the Andamans from 1911 to 1920, although the book was

completed only after he was shifted to Yerwada Central Jail in 1921. The book was published in 1923, while Savarkar was still in jail, by his associate V.V. Kelkar from Pune. The book outlines the ideology of Hindu Nationalism, conflating the two under the single term 'Hindutva'. Savarkar was a self proclaimed atheist, rather like Jinnah, and it is an interesting coincidence that religious nationalism in the subcontinent was propagated by non-believers looking to assert a culture, rather than a religion, as the foundation of their respective nationalisms. Hindutva as a political philosophy is therefore obsessed with revisiting history in order to appropriate aspects for its own politics today. The book begins by asserting that the very act of naming, or the choice of words used in everyday life are not innocent of deeper meaning, and that they have their histories and immediate usages which actually become a part of the word itself. As Savarkar puts it, "the word that signifies it, the name seems to matter as much as the thing itself" (Savarkar, 1923: 2), and uses this idea to enter into a discussion of the difference between 'Hindutva' which is his coinage, and the idea of 'Hinduism' as a religion. For Savarkar the strategy is to establish a sort of historical sanctity to Hindutva, to give it an origin that is ancient and through long standing existence as a practice, a certain validity. This is further strengthened by associating these practices exclusively with a race and a lineage of sacrifice for its benefit. Savarkar's definition of Hindutva is therefore very similar to ultra-nationalist varieties of alterity creation that seek to isolate communities on the basis of an imagination of shared religion, race, language and history. Savarkar ultimately unites Hindutva with history itself- "Forty centuries, if not more, had been at work to mould it as it is. Prophets and poets, lawyers and law-givers, heroes and historians, have thought, lived, fought and died just to have it spelled thus. For indeed, is it not the resultant of countless actions - now conflicting, now commingling, now cooperating - of our whole race? Hindutva is not a word but a history" (Savarkar, 1923: 3). Savarkar immediately marks out Hindutva to be the originator of "Hinduism... only a derivative, a fraction, a part of Hindutva" (Savarkar, 1923: 3). This is a rather effective strategy which allows Savarkar to unite people who do not adhere to Hinduism under a single banner of Hindutva, dismissing differences from those communities which form what he views as "Hindu civilisation" or "Hindu race" (Savarkar, 1923: 4). What is clear is that Savarkar is already strategising in order to include under his banner of Hindutva as many communities as possible, in order to create a majoritarian militant imagined community. He is willing to remove religion

from centrality, in order to propose a transcendental political identity that is more universal, but nonetheless based on alterities. He does this in the next section by going to the origin of the word "Hindu" while declaring Hinduism to be a "more limited, less satisfactory and essentially sectarian term" (Savarkar, 1923: 4).

Savarkar uses poetic language in order to conjure up a heroic past of "intrepid Aryans" with "adventurous valour" building "sacrificial fires" along the river Indus or Sindhu, whose "holy waters...were daily witnessing the lucid and curling columns of the scented sacrificial smokes and the valleys resounding with the chants of Vedic hymns - the spiritual fervour that animated their souls" (Savarkar, 1923: 5). He notes that the Aryans referred to themselves as the "Sapta Sindhus" because of their proximity and propagation along the Indus river basin with its six tributaries, and associates this river and its name as the beginnings of a nationality which he sums up as "a local habitation and a name" (Savarkar, 1923: 5). Savarkar is therefore a primordialist in placing the origin of nationalism in India with the coming of the Aryans, rather than with any transfer of power in 1947. Next Savarkar notes how the day to day imagination of the Hindu, through his chanting of mantras constantly reinvigorates the idea of the Sindhu homeland, which creates an imagination of a "common nationality and culture" (Savarkar, 1923: 6). For him this is a continuously handed down imagination. "Down to this day a Sindhu - a Hindu - wherever he may happen to be, will gratefully remember and symbolically invoke the presence of these rivers that they may refresh and purify his soul" (Savarkar, 1923: 6). After Savarkar discusses the nature of the consonant shift from 's' to 'h' giving us the term 'Hindu' from 'Sindhu', he makes an argument that the term perhaps was originally 'Hindu' and that it was the process of sanskritization that turned it to 'Sindhu', and not the other way around. His hypothesis is that the name probably pre-existed Aryan invasion, as the land was already occupied by "... scattered tribes. Some of them seem to have been friendly towards the newcomers and it is almost certain that many an individual had served the Aryans as guides and introduced them to the names and nature of the new scenes to which the Aryans could not be but local strangers" (Savarkar, 1923: 9). Therefore, Savarkar goes on to claim for 'Hindu' an origin even older than that of the 'Sindhu' saying - "If the epithet Sindhu dates its antiquity in the glimmering twilight of history then the word Hindu dates its antiquity from a period so remoter than the first that even mythology fails to penetrate - to trace it to its source" (Savarkar, 1923: 9).

Savarkar next traces the origin of Indian sovereignty to the mythical times of the *Ramayana*. He has before him the substantial task of uniting various Aryan tribes that have historically been at loggerheads into a unity that stretches from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari. Historically such a grand union was never achieved in totality. However, some of the larger kingdoms, including the Mauryas and the Mughals did come very close to achieving this. It was only in the mythic imagination of the *Ramayana* that Savarkar finds the first and grandest exposition of an 'akhand' (united) 'Bharat' (India) under 'Rama rajya' (the rule of Rama). The importance of Rama, an otherwise mythological figure in the ideology of the Hindu Right can be assessed in Savarkar's statement- "The day when the Horse of Victory returned to Ayodhya unchallenged and unchallengeable, the great white Umbrella of Sovereignty was unfurled over that Imperial throne of Ramchandra, the brave, Ramchandra the good, and a loving allegiance to him was sworn, not only by the Princes of Aryan blood but Hanuman, Sugriva, Bibhishana from the south - that day was the real birth-day of our Hindu people. It was truly our national day: for Aryans and Anaryans knitting themselves into a people were born as a nation" (Savarkar, 1923: 11). Savarkar therefore locates in the Aryan migrations into Sindh the birth of Hindutva or Hindu nationalism, while he locates in the mythical coronation of Rama in Sri Lanka, the establishment of the sovereignty of this Hindutva, with common acceptance across Aryans and non-Aryans, across the geographical unit of the Indian subcontinent.

Savarkar continues his discussion on alternate nomenclature for the land, accepting again another mythical rule. He takes from the Vishnu Puran, the couplet "The land which is to the north of the sea and to the south of the Himalaya mountain is named Bharata inhabited by the descendants of Bharata" (Savarkar, 1923: 12) in order to justify the nomenclature of Bharata, or Bharatvarsha, or Bharatkhanda. He is clear that, this non-historical approach is justified as "it is here enough for us to know that his name had been not only the accepted but the cherished epithet by which the people of Aryawarta and Daxinapatha delighted to call their common motherland and their common cultural empire" (Savarkar, 1923: 12). For Savarkar, the lived traditions of the people, the existing imaginations of commonality were far more important than their supposed historical veracity. The central issue was one of ensuring the justification for the wider project of Hindutva. This is perhaps best borne out by his rather non-indigenous set of arguments to promote the word 'Hindusthan' instead of 'Bharata' or its

derivatives. While somewhat contrary to the general theme of returning back to Indic roots, Savarkar strategically accepts that as regards the word Bharata, "foreign nations seem to have cared little for it" (Savarkar, 1923: 13) and that "Down to this day the whole world knows us as 'Hindus' and our land as 'Hindusthan' as if in fulfilment of the wishes of our Vedic fathers who were the first to make that choice" (Savarkar, 1923: 14). In a crucial move that accepts a dialogue with the other, even to the point of determining the name of the nation, Savarkar justifies this influence rather eloquently as the necessary outcome of encountering the other - "... a name by its nature is determined not so much by what one likes to call oneself but generally by what others like to do. In fact a name is called into existence for this very purpose. Self is known to itself immutable and without a name or even without a form. But when it comes in contact or conflict with a non-self then alone it stands in need of a name if it wants to communicate with others or if others persist in communicating with it. It is a game that requires two to play at" (Savarkar, 1923: 14).

In other words, alterity is the prerequisite to self identification, especially for a nation. Savarkar notes that in the rise of Buddhism and Buddhist learning and education, there developed a huge correspondence with the rest of the word which further strengthened the use of the term 'Hindu'. "Thousands of pilgrims from distant shores poured into this country and thousands of scholars, preachers, sages and saints went from this land to all the then known world. But as the outside world persisted in recognizing us by our ancient name 'Sindhu' or 'Hindu' both these in-coming and out-going processes helped mightily to render that epithet to be the most prominent of our national names" (Savarkar, 1923: 15-16). However, Savarkar's attitude towards Buddhism is not one of all reverence. He locates in the rise of Buddhism, the reduction of the martial prowess and fighting spirit of the Hindus. It is interesting that he locates Buddhism to be a Hindu phenomenon and readily accepts their worth. "We yield to none in our love, admiration and respect for the Buddha-the Dharma-the Sangha. They are all ours. Their glories are ours and ours their failures." (Savarkar, 1923: 18), and again "achievements as great if not greater and things as holy and more politic and statesmanly had gone before them and indeed enabled them to be what they were." (Savarkar, 1923: 18). However, he also notes that somewhere inherent in Buddhist doctrines of nonviolence lay the seeds of foreign political domination. Just as Buddha himself had not played any part in the defence of his own tribe when it came under

attack, Savarkar reasons that Buddhism itself refused to play any part in the defence of India when it came under attack from foreign invaders. As Buddhism within the Saka republic led to its complete political obliteration, Savarkar is clear that Buddhism within Hindustan led to its complete political subjugation time and again. "The confines of his little Shakya State expanded and embraced the confined the confines of India; and as if to give a touch of poetical precision and poetical justice, the woeful fate that had overtaken the tribal republic of Kapil-Vastu befell the whole of Bharatvarsha itself and it fell an easy prey to the strong and warlike" (Savarkar, 1923: 17). Savarkar sees in the revival of vedic Hinduism the realisation that "our race had to rekindle their Sacrificial Fire to oppose the sacrilegious one and to re-open the mines of Vedic fields for steel, to get it sharpened on the altar of Kali, 'the Terrible so that Mahakal -the 'Spirit of Time' be appeased." (Savarkar, 1923: 19-20). It is clear that Savarkar looks upon Buddhism as something that weakened the nation, while vedic Hindutva is seen as something that revived the nation. So while he does pay some lip service to Buddhism as having "conquests to claim but they belong to a world far removed from this matter-of-fact world-where feet of clay do not stand long, and steel could be easily sharpened, and trishna -thirst - is too powerful and real to be quenched by painted streams that flow perennially in heavens" (Savarkar, 1923: 19), he really looks upon Hindutva as the political reality, "'Up with the Vedic Dharma!' 'Back to the Vedas!' The national cry grew louder and louder, more and more imperative, because this was essentially a political necessity" (Savarkar, 1923: 20).

Savarkar's next move is to locate in Buddhism a universal religion that, nonetheless, is practically unsustainable. In asserting a nation, he clearly rejects any form of universalism to be impractical and historically unsustainable. He is clearly dismissive of non-violence and universalism instead advocating nationalism and strength that comes from a collective identity, even if it is based on race. He notes how under Buddhism India had tried to "kill killing by getting killed - and at last found out that palm leaves at times are too fragile for steel!" and instead opines "As long as the whole world was red in tooth and claw and the national and racial distinction so strong as to make men brutal, so long if India had to live at all a life whether spiritual or political according to the right of her soul, she must not lose the strength born of national and racial cohesion" (Savarkar, 1923: 21). For him any sort of universalism, that is, non-alterity is "mumbos and jumbos" (Savarkar, 1923: 21). In fact, Savarkar

actually stresses the need to create sharp differences amongst identities in order to promote opposition, especially to those who are antagonistic, through antagonism - "everything that is common in us with our enemies, weakens our power of opposing them. The foe that has nothing in common with us is the foe likely to be most bitterly resisted by us just as a friend that has almost everything in him that we admire and prize in ourselves is likely to be the friend we love most (Savarkar, 1923: 22). Indeed, in the universalism of Buddhism, in its refusal to look upon others as enemies and in its adherence to non-violence, Savarkar sees Buddhists as anti-nationals and traitors. For Savarkar, Buddhists become likely collaborators with foreign powers and traitors because they refuse to other, or participate in the idea of an exclusive Hindu nation. In their internationalism and non-alterity, they are as good as the enemy. "Nationalist tendencies refused to barter without national independence and accept a foreign conqueror as our overlord. But if that foreign invader happened to be favourably inclined towards Buddhism, then he was sure to find some secret sympathisers among the Indian Buddhists all over Indian, even as Catholic Spain could always find some important section in England to sympathise with their efforts to restore a Catholic dynasty in England. Not only this but dark hints abound in our ancient records to show that at times some foreign Buddhist powers had actually invaded India with an express national and religious aim in view. We cannot treat the history of this period exhaustively here but can only point to the half symbolic and half actual description" (Savarkar, 1923: 23). Even in this denunciation, it must be noted that Savarkar refuses to look for historical reference, instead of using mythology to stimulate an ideology of difference, a world view that thrives on creating differences and by differentiating.

In contrast with the universal Buddhists, we find Savarkar highlighting the institutions of nationalism next, the first of which interestingly is the caste system. He writes: "we find that institutions that were the peculiar marks of our nation were revived:- The system of four varnas which could not be wiped away even under the Buddhistic sway, grew in popularity to such an extent that kings and emperors felt it a distinction to be called one who established the system of four varnas. Reaction in favour of this institution grew so strong that our nationality was almost getting identified with it" (Savarkar, 1923: 24). He therefore roots in the caste system and all its prohibitions and social restrictions and evil excesses the beginnings of a reactionary nationalism. He attributes to this nationalism the steady decay of Buddhism and

universalism. He notes that it was only after the restrictions in movement came to be a part of the consciousness of the people that a politics of Hindutva really developed. The limiting of this border of movement by the oceans, the Himalayas and the Sindhu River allowed for a new geographical containment for Hindutva. "The day on which the patriarchs of our race had crossed that stream they ceased to belong to the people they had definitely left behind and laid the foundation of a new nation and were reborn into a new people that, under the quieting star of a new hope and a new mission, were destined by assimilation and by expansion to grow into a race and a new polity that could only be most fittingly and feelingly described as Sindhu or Hindu" (Savarkar, 1923: 25-26). Savarkar justifies this boundary with another mythological edict of the king Chandragupta Vikramaditya as found in the Pratisarga Parva of the *Bhavishya Purana*.

In his final demarcation of the boundaries of the nation, Savarkar gives up on all attempts at factual considerations when he centres it back to the River Sindhu, considering the Brahmaputra River to be a distributary linked to the Sindhu. This is of course not factually correct, but both rivers do originate in close proximity to Lake Mansarover in Tibet. In order to give greater significance to the word Sindhu, and therefore also present the land bounded by it on all sides to the north by it as "our land and nation Sindhustan—the best nation of Aryans" (Savarkar, 1923: 27) there is a remapping of geographical reality to produce attractive imaginaries of supposed unities. Savarkar happily sums up the extent of the land of Hindutva as "our whole Motherland: the land that lies between Sindhu (Indus) and Sindhu (Brahmaputra)—from the Indus to the Seas" (Savarkar, 1923: 28). Within this imaginative geographical confine, Savarkar placed all the people, no matter what their caste or tribe into a single unity of 'Arya', with an unsubstantiated flourish, differentiated from 'Mlechchas' who were foreigners living beyond this land. Savarkar of course is misled in attributing the term as 'Mlechchas' would have been used by Aryans in order to refer to the people of Meluha, recently popularised in the Trilogy by Amish (2011-13), just like 'Asura' would refer to the people of Iran and Assyria, or 'Yavana' for the people of Ionia or Greece. Nonetheless, Savarkar imagines that "whether Vaidik or Avaidik, Bramhana or Chandal, and owning and claiming to have inherited a common culture, common blood, common country and common polity" they formed a homogenous whole in this "Sindhusthan... the 'Best nation of the Aryas' as distinguished from Mlechasthan the land of the foreigners" (Savarkar, 28). Of course, this is getting forced as these groups have in the

past always had separate cultures, genealogies and laws. But Savarkar's imagination unites a certain constituent into a nation of Hindutva, othering it from the remainder of the world, who are 'Mlechchas', with such a rigid separation that it was not even allowed for the Hindus to go to their lands which lay beyond the Sindhu with the certain punishment of excommunication.

Savarkar next launches into a defence of his use of non-canonical sources of history, the complete rejection of the historical method which looks at a mesh of collaborative evidences for ascertaining the past, in favour of folk history, and schools of verbal transmission. In contrast with history which accepts oral traditions if they are backed by other evidences, Savarkar proposes a different way of accepting such traditions as history, unless there is particular evidence of it being false. So instead of oral history being accepted only on the availability of collaborative evidence, Savarkar proposes oral history to be only dismissed on the availability of contrary evidence. "After all, the main resources of our history had been and must ever be our national traditions remembered or recorded in our ancient puranas epics and literature. Their details may be challenged, their dates determined and rejected, but on account of discrepancies here or miraculous colouring there which are in fact common to all ancient records of mankind, we cannot dismiss them altogether, especially where the acts recorded have not an impossible or unnatural clement in them or when they do not contradict events otherwise proved to be indisputably true" (Savarkar, 30). It is perhaps this differentiation that allows for a far more flexible recounting of history and even geography than was otherwise possible. Savarkar finishes the chapter by declaring his reverence for the Buddha, but even the reverence has a certain element of sarcasm in its constant self depreciation and overarching praise, with the suggestion that the Buddha was not particularly worldly wise, or not of particular relevance to the world and even that he was ahead of the times. What is perhaps an even snider snipe is that Hindutva, having produced a Buddha, has done enough of a reverence to a Buddha. Utimately, "As long as the law of evolution that lays down the iron command- 'Immobile forces arc the easy prey of the mobile ones those with no teeth fall a prey to those with deadly fangs; those without hands succumb to those with hands, and the cowards to the brave.' is too persistent and dangerously imminent to be categorically denied by the law of righteousness whose mottos shine brilliantly and beautifully, but as the stars in the heavens do, so long the banner of nationality will refuse to be replaced by that of

Universality" (Savarkar, 1923: 32). Or in other words, Buddhism and universalism is impractical in the real world. We need to ultimately take recourse to nationalism.

Savarkar comes back to the question of caste and its close association with Indian society. He clearly puts emphasis on common descent as a better category for defining a people than societal norms. "All institution is meant for the society, not the society or its ideal for an institution. The system of four varnas may disappear when it has served its end or ceases to serve it, but will that make our land a Mlechchadesha — a land of foreigners? The Sanyasis, the Aryasamajis, the Sikhs and many others do not recognize the system of the four castes and yet are they foreigners? God forbid! They are ours by blood, by race, by country, by God. "Its name is 'Bharat' and the people are 'Bharati'" is a definition ten times better because it is truer than that. We, Hindus, are all one and a nation, because chiefly of our common blood — 'Bharati Santati'" (Savarkar, 1923: 34). Clearly, the homogeneity that Savarkar had ascribed to the land from the Sindhus to the seas needs to be further tuned. The presence or absence of the practice of caste, and perhaps other social modes, need to be buttressed across communities in India unless such formulations are to lapse back into a narrow Hindu-only nationalism. For Savarkar it is essential that non-Semitic religions of the subcontinent be united under a singular banner, that of Hindutva. This he does by the next imaginary conflation of all vernacular languages down to Prakrit, which he identifies as nothing other than Hindi, stating - "the living spoken national tongue of our people is already won by that Prakrit, which being one of the eldest daughters of Sanskrit is most fittingly called Hindi or Hindusthani the language of the national and cultural descendants of the ancient Sindhus or Hindus" (Savarkar, 1923: 35). Again, he refers to the close marital ties of the ruling families of the various divided kingdoms to propose an imaginary national unity, which he saw as further strengthening the growth of Hindi as a single national language "From Ceylon to Kashmir the Rajputs—a single family of princes—ruled, often connected closely by marriages and more closely by the tradition of chivalry and culture handed down by a common law. The whole life of the nation was being brought into a harmony as rich as divine, and the growth of the national language was but an outward expression of this inward unity of our national life" (Savarkar, 1923: 37). This of course would be contrary to history, where disparate and divided clans fought long wars for petty gains, and an entire host of regional languages developed which over the years separated out into different tongues with different scripts, grammars and distinct vocabularies, often

quite different from either Sanskrit or Hindi. The final strategy used by Savarkar to unite these disparate elements is the invocation of the other, the Muslims and their conquest, followed by the European powers.

Savarkar's creation of Hindutva is therefore largely placed to exclude the Muslims and Christians as foreign. It is to build an imagination of unity across the remainder, by denying the historical disunity among them that allowed for conquest in the first place, and by creating an imaginary unity based on the overall difference between them and the Semitic religions. For him, the invasions of Mohammad of Ghazni mark a turning point. "That day the conflict of life and death began. Nothing makes Self conscious of itself so much as a conflict with nonself. Nothing can weld peoples into a nation and nations into a state as the pressure of a common foe. Hatred separates as well as unites" (Savarkar, 1923: 37). In his invocation of hatred as a basis for unity, Savarkar reveals the trump card of Hindutva - an ideology based on othering in order to create unity. It is this central idea of creating difference between the Muslims and all other constituents of the subcontinent today that gives it power. Finally, in conclusion, Hindutva seems to be based on the hatred of the other. Savarkar views Islam as the perfect evil, an intermingling of religiosity and immorality. "...where religion is goaded on by rapine and rapine serves as a handmaid to religion, the propelling force that is generated by these together is only equalled by the profundity of human misery and devastation they leave behind them in their march. Heaven and hell making a common cause - such were the forces, overwhelmingly furious, that took India by surprise the day Mohammad crossed the Indus and invaded her" (Savarkar, 1923: 38). It is in an imagined grand alliance of people against Muslim rule that Savarkar identifies the continuation of Hindutva. Of course, the many stories of cooperation across religion, of betrayals within religion, which are necessary characteristics of a pre-national, feudal era are conveniently forgotten. Savarkar imagines a unity across castes and communities because of the Muslim invasion, as he states: "In this prolonged furious conflict our people became intensely conscious of ourselves as Hindus and were welded into a nation to an extent unknown in our history. It must not be forgotten that we have all along referred to the progress of the Hindu movement as a whole and not to that of any particular creed or religious section thereof—of Hindutva and not Hinduism only. Sanatanists, Satnamis, Sikhs, Aryas, Anaryas, Marathas and Madrasis, Brahmins and Panchamas—all suffered as Hindus and triumphed as Hindus" (Savarkar, 1923: 39).

Savarkar continues to substantiate and essentialise history from then on as a sustained combat against Islam by heroic Hindu leaders by referring to Prithviraj Chauhan, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Shivaji, Peshwa Baji Rao and Nana Saheb. Of course, he also leaves out the long list of Hindu kings who compromised, aided and benefitted from Muslim rule including the Rajputs.

The feeling of a common origin in the geographical delineations of the Sindhus and the Seas, as well as the opposition to Islam, extended also to the opposition to Christianity as well, will go on to inform the formulation of who is a Hindu. Savarkar adds to this mix, bonds of common blood. "The Hindus are not merely the citizens of the Indian state because they are united not only by the bonds of the love they bear to a common motherland but also by the bonds of a common blood. They are not only a Nation but also a race-jati. The word jati derived from the root Jan to produce, means a brotherhood, a race determined by a common origin,-possessing a common blood." (Savarkar, 1923: 73-74). Savarkar wishes away the rigid compartmentalisation of caste by arguing that cases of people marrying outside their caste have been recorded from the epics onwards, leading him to declare "a Hindu may lose his sect but not his Hindutva—his Hinduness—because the most important essential which determines it is the inheritance of the Hindu blood" (Savarkar, 1923: 79). He feels that over time, the natural mixing of bloods in the subcontinent can no longer allow anyone to claim any purity of blood, but in this rather wishful orgiastic mixing which is evidently countered by the institution of caste, he nonetheless finds no space for Muslims. This he does by including in the mix the imagination of a further imagined cultural unity, but by now of course we are no longer looking for proofs. "Many a Mohammedan community in Kashmir and other parts of India as well as the Christians in South India observe our caste rules to such an extent as to marry generally within the pale of their castes alone; yet, it is clear that though their original Hindu blood is thus almost unaffected by an alien adulteration, yet they cannot be called Hindus in the sense in which that term is actually understood, because, we Hindus are bound together... also by the tie of the common homage we pay to our great civilization—our Hindu culture" (Savarkar, 1923: 80). The almost Freudian slip on the issue of caste should be duly noted. Nonetheless Savarkar can imagine away differences in religious practice and symbolism across the subcontinent imagine away caste, communities, races and languages in order to imagine a unity based on festivals like Holi and Diwali. Festivals like these may be reduced to

spreading colours and bursting crackers, but they nonetheless have very different significances in different parts of the country, with varying narratives and rituals. He can imagine away differences in languages in order to find a common reverence for Sanskrit no matter what the caste. That the issues of gender, caste, aboriginal rights, linguistic rights as well as cultural differences within supposed religious imaginations, including Hinduism as well as Islam, are conveniently absent is something that seems obvious. However, it is in his definition of Hindu that he is the most flexible in subsuming alterities in order to create the other of the Hindutva nation. "Ye, who by race, by blood, by culture, by nationality possess almost all the essentials of Hindutva and had been forcibly snatched out of our ancestral home by the hand of violence—ye, have only to render wholehearted love to our common Mother and recognize her not only as Fatherland (Pitribhu) but even as a Holyland (punyabhu); and ye would be most welcome to the Hindu fold" (Savarkar, 1923: 102). The rhetorical jump to archaism in order to effectively sound prophetic is complemented by invocations to sacrifices and martyrdoms across the centuries caused by the hateful foreigners. The interracine wars and martyrdoms are silenced.

What does this definition mean? Savarkar himself will perhaps see it as a flexible and convenient platform for forging unity across castes and creeds in the subcontinent. After all, as long as one claims India as a Fatherland and a Holy Land one is perfectly qualified to be a Hindu. This means that Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists, apart from the many sects of animism prevalent amongst tribal communities can be conveniently included into the overarching structure of Hindutva. However, it is in this that Savarkar conveniently leaves out Muslims and Christians. Muslims, of course, traditionally looked to the Caliph as their head, but in more contemporary times, nonetheless look to Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem as their religious places which lie outside the geographical definition of 'Akhand Bharat' that Savarkar has created. Similarly, Anglican Christians look to the Church of England, while Catholics owe their allegiance to the Pope. No matter what their denomination, their religious places too lie outside of 'Akhand Bharat'. In giving this choice to the people of the subcontinent, Savarkar has strategically allowed for an exclusion in the imagination of Indian, or Hindu, allowing these communities to be branded as anti-national. Savarkar's allowance of reconversion of communities that have recently converted back to Hinduism is a further part of this exclusionary politics. "Ghar Wapsi" or reconversion of Muslims and Christians being

central to their identification as nationalist means that the reaction to such imaginations would also be equally fierce as these communities would naturally feel that their very existence is under threat. Savarkar is clear - "This is a choice which our countrymen and our old kith and kin, the Bohras, Khojas, Memons and other Mohammedan and Christian communities are free to make —a choice again which must be a choice of love. But as long as they are not minded thus, so long they cannot be recognized as Hindus" (Savarkar, 1923: 102). However, Savarkar's imagination of Hindutva as the way forward, through the othering of Muslims and Christians and the creation of a new common identity through this othering is not restricted to the subcontinent alone. In an almost natural culmination of militant nationalism, Savarkar finishes by outlining the great stores of natural resources and inner strength that the land already possesses, musing "Thirty crores of people, with India for their basis of operation, for their Fatherland and for their Holyland with such a history behind them, bound together by ties of a common blood and common culture can dictate their terms to the whole world. A day will come when mankind will have to face the force. Equally certain it is that whenever the Hindus come to hold such a position whence they could dictate terms to the whole world" (Savarkar, 1923: 128).

Perhaps coming to largely the absolute opposite conclusions to Savarkar, we have Ambedkar, who in contrast to Savarkar, shuns a political assertion of a nation in favour of the social assertion of a caste, instead of upholding Hindu values, rejects it outright and instead of finding in Buddhism the root of the nation's problems, actually turns to Buddhism in his final days as his final revolt against Hinduism. However, despite the differences, like Savarkar, Ambedkar's politics is based on alterity as well. While Savarkar's alterity is largely imagined in order to claim a radical difference from others to an imagined Hindu nation, Ambedkar's alterity is designed in order to imagine a non-Hindu, non-Brahmanical society. For Ambedkar the central problem is not one of British or even Muslim colonisation, but rather a continued Brahmanical colonisation that ties down his community under the binds of untouchability. Ambedkar's ideas, which have been most clearly articulated in the text *Annihilation of Caste* (1936) was originally meant to be an address to an anti-caste organisation of upper caste Hindus in Lahore. Ambedkar eventually was not allowed to give the lecture at all because he saw in the rejection of caste a rejection of Hinduism itself, apart from being critical of Gandhi, who was held in high esteem by the organisation. Eventually, Ambedkar

nonetheless went ahead and published the manuscript draft. The final book form contains two prefaces and a prologue that contain the back story of the text, which is important in establishing the text in its times and context, apart from two appendices that contain Gandhi's response to the text and events, apart from Ambedkar's own response to Gandhi. The text is important in publically being the last speech that Ambedkar prepared as a Hindu. Ambedkar is therefore clear that the main purpose of his writings is the assertion of a Dalit identity derived from the treatment untouchables receive at the hands of the upper caste Hindus and the final rejection of Hinduism itself, which he eventually does through his conversion to Buddhism.

The final book form begins with the preface to the second edition that outlines the growing popularity of the texts and notes the addition of the appendices. However, it also clearly articulates Ambedkar's position contra Gandhi in his reasoning for the appendices. It is important to note that in the preface Ambedkar calls Gandhi "Mr. Gandhi", while in the text of the speech he is usually referred to as "Mahatma". Ambedkar despises the fact that Gandhi was viewed uncritically as a prophet who could do no wrong and takes it upon himself to expose the problems of the views of early Gandhi which included a strong defence of varnas, if not castes. The positioning of his ideas against the individual Gandhi is justified by Ambedkar - "I have felt that in taking notice of such adverse comments I should limit myself to Mr. Gandhi. This I have done not because what he has said is so weighty as to deserve a reply but because to many a Hindu he is an oracle, so great that when he opens his lips it is expected that the argument must close and no dog must bark. But the world owes much to rebels who would dare to argue in the face of the pontiff and insist that he is not infallible" (Ambedkar, Preface to Second Edition, 1937). However, Gandhi is only viewed as the most important leader of the Hindus. Ambedkar is really interested in presenting the Hindus as a community to be the problem, the other that needs to be rejected. Ambedkar regards the Hindu community to be a diseased lot- "I shall be satisfied if I make the Hindus realize that they are the sick men of India and that their sickness is causing danger to the health and happiness of other Indians" (Ambedkar, Preface to Second Edition, 1944).

The Prologue narrates the sequence of events that lay behind the creation of the text using an epistolary format to furnish proof of the same. Ambedkar recounts how on

the 12th of December, 1935, he received a letter from Mr. Sant Ram, in his capacity as the Secretary of an anti-caste group, the Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal. The letter begins as a continuation of an ongoing correspondence between the two, which captures that the Mandal had already published writings of Ambedkar and that there existed a certain agreement and interest on their part regarding Ambedkar. In particular the letter requests for a clarification- "I am now very anxious to read the exposition of your new formula—'It is not possible to break Caste without annihilating the religious notions on which it, the Caste system, is founded.' Please do explain it at length at your earliest convenience, so that we may take up the idea and emphasise it from press and platform." It then goes on to invite Ambedkar as the President of their Annual Conference- "Our Executive Committee persists in having you as our President... We can change our dates to accommodate your convenience... So if you kindly accept our request and come to Lahore to preside over the Conference" (Ambedkar Prologue, 1944). Ambedkar goes on to note his own reluctance of engaging with "Caste Hindus" and how he "As a rule" avoided having to deal with them as he found them "different" and their "company quite uncongenial" (Ambedkar Prologue, 1944). He obviously thinks of them as essentially different and recounts that it was only after a great deal of persuasion that he agreed to their invitation. However, despite the enthusiasm with which they had gotten him to agree to preside over their session, the Mandal eventually cancelled the conference. Ambedkar relates he eventually had on his hands copies of the address that had been printed as "The notice of cancellation came long after my Presidential address had been printed" and how to recoup the monetary loss he had "decided to put the printed copies of the address in the market" (Ambedkar Prologue, 1944). The official reason for the cancellation of the invitation was "a dispute arose over the printing of the address. I desired that the address should be printed in Bombay. The Mandal wished that it should be printed in Lahore on the ground of economy" (Ambedkar Prologue, 1944). However, Ambedkar sets about the deconstructing this official version. He notes that in the letter stating the cancellation of the event there were severe apprehensions regarding the invitation of Ambedkar. "Almost all the Hindus in the Punjab are against your being invited to this province. The Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal has been subjected to the bitterest criticism and has received censorious rebuke from all quarters. All the Hindu leaders among whom... Dr. Gokal Chand Narang, Minister for Local Self-Government... have dissociated themselves... The Mandal has earned a bad name" (Ambedkar Prologue,

1944). However, Ambedkar also presents a letter from Dr. Narang, showing his willingness to not only have him as the President, but also to host him and expresses disbelief that "the Mandal should displease me for the sake of a few rupees in the matter of printing the address" (Ambedkar Prologue, 1944). What ultimately transpires is that the Mandal clearly presents the real reason for their cancellation-

> ...you have more than once stated in your address that you had decided to walk out of the fold of the Hindus and that that was your last address as a Hindu. You have also unnecessarily attacked the morality and reasonableness of the Vedas and other religious books of the Hindus, and have at length dwelt upon the technical side of Hindu religion, which has absolutely no connection with the problem at issue, so much so that some of the passages have become irrelevant and off the point. We would have been very pleased if you had confined your address to that portion given to me, or if an addition was necessary, it would have been limited to what you had written on Brahminism etc. The last portion which deals with the complete annihilation of Hindu religion and doubts the morality of the sacred books of the Hindus as well as a hint about your intention to leave the Hindu fold does not seem to me to be relevant. (Ambedkar Prologue, 1944)

What is clear is that the real reason for the cancellation lay not in Ambedkar's rejection of Brahminism, which was perfectly fine with the Mandal, but rather in his equating of the project of *Annihilation of Caste* with the complete destruction of the Hindu religion itself. Deeming the address to be "unnecessarily provocative and pinching", the Mandal clearly seems fine with the "remodelling of Hindu religion" or "the destruction of the evil of caste system" (Ambedkar Prologue, 1944), but not with the equating of the destruction of the caste system with the destruction of Hinduism. Ambedkar is, however, clear in his opinion that Hinduism means the caste system, and that "the real method of breaking up the Caste System was not to bring about inter-caste dinners and inter-caste marriages but to destroy the religious notions on which Caste was founded" (Ambedkar Prologue, 1944). Ambedkar has already come to the conclusion that the only way forward is "to advocate ...views regarding change of religion by the Depressed Classes" and strongly asserts that he would under no

circumstances give up his views (Ambedkar Prologue, 1944). The central issue for the Mandal was that while it believed in the reformation of Hinduism, at the last analysis Ambedkar was convinced that Hinduism was essentially inimical to the Dalits, and that Hindus and Dalits were others.

In such a framework, the only way that caste could be annihilated was through the complete rejection and destruction of the Hindu religion. As an immediate practice Ambedkar proposes the religious conversion of Dalits from Hinduism. In a gathering in Mumbai in 1936, Ambedkar advocated conversion vis-a-vis reform saying that "To reform the Hindu society is neither our aim nor our field of action. Our aim is to gain freedom. We have nothing to do with anything else" (Ambedkar, 1936). This background is necessary for a reading of the text as in the speech itself Ambedkar does not bring up the matter of conversion as the Mandal had expressly requested Ambedkar to not speak on the matter of conversion - a request that Ambedkar kept in the preparation of the address speech.

The text opens with an affirmation that the Mandal's decision to call and invite Ambedkar as the President of the conference is likely to lead to problems for the Mandal. Post facto, the irony is clear. Even without having had the conference, the Mandal has been brought into infamy down history through the published text. Ambedkar apprehends the nature of the problems that the Mandal will face in its decision to invite him to deliver the Presidential Address to be primarily on two grounds. "I have criticised the Hindus. I have questioned the authority of the Mahatma whom they revere" (Ambedkar, 1944: I). At the very outset Ambedkar clearly outlines his opponents, the community of Hindus, and their leader Gandhi. Ambedkar immediately gets down to the task of attacking Hindu laws regarding society and customs by noting that the Mandal in inviting him had already transgressed Hindu the Shastras. "According to the Shastras the Brahmin is appointed to be the Guru for the three Varnas, varnanam bramhano guru, is a direction of the Shastras." (Ambedkar, 1944, I). Neither is it permitted, that a teacher be selected on the basis of learning. Ambedkar refers to the Marathi saint Ramdas, the author of *Dasbodh* in asserting that caste, in Hindu imagination is a determining factor in the selection of one's teacher. However, Ambedkar, in his acceptance for the invitation for presiding over the session does not only ascribe dissatisfaction on the part of the Caste Hindus but also of the

Dalits themselves- "I have accepted the invitation much against my will and also against the will of many of my fellow untouchables. I know that the Hindus are sick of me... I am not a persona grata with them... I have deliberately kept myself away from them. I have no desire to inflict myself upon them. I have been giving expression to my views from my own platform" (Ambedkar, 1944: I). This articulation of complete independence bordering on aversion and based on othering is indicative of Ambedkar's position. It is almost like saying that space of debates and discussions are long over and that now there is really no scope for further interaction between Dalits and Hindus. Further, in light of the subsequent events, Ambedkar clarifies that he has only agreed to go the conference "because of your [the Mandal's] choice and not because of my wish" (Ambedkar, 1944: I).

Ambedkar next outlines his views on the dichotomy that had been created in the country between social reforms and political progress. While he notes that initially there was a concurrence that one was impossible without the other, over time the political fight for decolonisation overtook, dwarfed and eventually silenced the importance of social reforms. He notes that initially "...the National Congress was accompanied by the foundation of the Social Conference. While the Congress was concerned with defining the weak points in the political organisation of the country, the Social Conference was engaged in removing the weak points in the social organisation..." (Ambedkar, 1944: II). However, soon a rift developed between the two groups, which had initially functioned together. Ambedkar notes that for educated Hindus, the goal of political emancipation was largely becoming the more important issue, and by the time of the Surat Conference, the Social Conference was all but defunct. However, even as early as in 1892, the view that social and political emancipation were separate goals was articulated by the Congress President W.C. Bonnerji, whose logic for the separation of the two is recounted by Ambedkar- "I for one have no patience with those who saw we shall not be fit for political reform until we reform our social system. I fail to see any connection between the two...Are we not fit (for political reform) because our widows remain unmarried and our girls are given in marriage earlier than in other countries? because our wives and daughters do not drive about with us visiting our friends? because we do not send our daughters to Oxford and Cambridge?" (Ambedkar, 1944, II). This is representative of the sort of dislike that Hindu leaders were prone to display towards issues of social discrimination. Ambedkar goes on to describe the inhuman denigration

of Dalits over the years, referring to the requirements of carrying visible signs of being different, issues of transmitted impurity that supposedly lay in the spit and even in the shadow of an untouchable, issues of forced dress codes, the forced unpaid completion of tasks that were considered too lowly for the upper castes, prohibition on owning expensive metals and even restrictions on diet that were prescribed by the upper castes. Ambedkar is clear that a group of people capable of such animosity and oppression cannot be fit for political rule, no matter what Bonnerji and others think. What is more, Ambedkar distinguishes between the sort of reforms that even the Social Conference engaged in and the sort of reforms that were required by the Dalits to improve their condition. He writes: "...it is necessary to make a distinction between social reform in the sense of the reform of the Hindu Family and social reform in the sense of the reorganization and reconstruction of the Hindu Society. The former has relation to widow remarriage, child marriage etc., while the latter relates to the abolition of the Caste System" (Ambedkar, 144: II).

Ambedkar saw in the Congress as well as the related Social conference the coming together of mainly high caste educated Hindus who actually would not relate to movements to fight caste, as they themselves came from a different background, or worse, directly benefitted from Caste structures and would not have any pressing reason to change them even if they understood caste to be wrong. Rather, they would gravitate towards issues related to the Hindu family, something they would see and relate with on a day to day basis. Therefore it is of no surprise that "They felt quite naturally a greater urge to remove such evils as enforced widowhood, child marriages etc., evils which prevailed among them and which were personally felt by them" (Ambedkar, 1944: II). Because the Social Conference refused to engage with the question of the reform of Hindu Society, it missed the underlying problems plaguing the religion. After the gradual acceptance of reforms within the family unit, the Social Reform party therefore lost relevance, and slowly became subsumed into the political Indian Congress. Moreover, Ambedkar opines, in some ways echoing Bonnerji that "the view that social reform need not precede political reform is a view which may stand only when by social reform is meant the reform of the family" (Ambedkar, 1944: II). In contrast to mere reforms within the family, Ambedkar declares-

That political reform cannot with impunity take precedence over

> social reform in the sense of reconstruction of society is a thesis which, I am sure, cannot be controverted. That the makers of political constitutions must take account of social forces is a fact which is recognized by no less a person than Ferdinand Lassalle, the friend and co-worker of Karl Marx. In addressing a Prussian audience in 1862 Lassalle said: 'The constitutional questions are in the first instance not questions of right but questions of might. The actual constitution of a country has its existence only in the actual condition of force which exists in the country: hence political constitutions have value and permanence only when they accurately express those conditions of forces which exist in practice within a society'. (Ambedkar, 1944: II)

Ambedkar uses this principle of constitutions and legal structures as actually reflecting the condition of the society in order to justify his support of the Communal Award scheme which granted separate electorates to minority communities in India. The promulgation of the Communal Award, for Ambedkar is a direct admission that "the politicians who denied that the social problem in India had any bearing on the political problem were forced to reckon with the social problem in devising the constitution. The Communal Award is so to say the nemesis following upon the indifference and neglect of social reform" (Ambedkar, 1944: II). It is almost as if the ghosts of the Social Reform group have come back to haunt the Political Reform group, forcing them to accept the importance of acknowledging and ameliorating social differences by having to create unequal laws and representative frameworks within their polity. Ambedkar continues with his analysis, taking up the case of Irish Home Rule, where Ulster refused to compromise its separateness despite assurances of political safeguards for Anglican minorities within an otherwise Catholic dominated united Ireland. In the differences between the Catholics and Protestant Anglicans, Ambedkar notes a similarity with the differences between the Caste Hindus and Dalits. According to Ambedkar, both were social problems. Just like the Irish question had revealed that political solutions are not possible without the resolution of social differences, the Indian political question according to Ambedkar, could perhaps only be satisfactorily answered on resolution of its social differences. Ambedkar also cites how the republican government of Rome collapsed because it could not satisfactorily resolve the differences between the patrician class and the plebeians. In contrast, Ambedkar notes that historically all

political revolutions have been preceded by social revolutions-

> The religious Reformation started by Luther was the precursor of the political emancipation of the European people. In England Puritanism led to the establishment of political liberty. Puritanism founded the new world. It was Puritanism which won the war of American Independence and Puritanism was a religious movement. The same is true of the Muslim Empire. Before the Arabs became a political power they had undergone a thorough religious revolution started by the Prophet Mohammad. Even Indian History supports the same conclusion. The political revolution led by Chandragupta was preceded by the religious and social revolution of Buddha. The political revolution led by Shivaji was preceded by the religious and social reform brought about by the saints of Maharashtra. The political revolution of the Sikhs was preceded by the religious and social revolution led by Guru Nanak. (Ambedkar, 1944: II)

In other words, Ambedkar clearly makes social change the prerequisite for any political change. Societal restructuring and the overhaul of the imaginaries of society are necessary preconditions for the possibility of the change of polity and not merely the transfer of power as advocated by decolonisation. The parallels with Marxism lasts up to the analysis that only changes in the relations of productions allow for any change in societal organisation. Ambedkar is not predicating such changes on any change in the material conditions or the means of production themselves - something that the Marxists themselves refuse to do in their proposal for socialism. Indeed the transition from capitalism to socialism is not defined as due to any changes in the means of production, but rather in a change of relations of production through the violent overthrow of one class by another. Ambedkar, however, rejects the Marxist hypothesis. He accuses Marxism of being economically deterministic in ignoring the role of individuals. He feels that Marxism fails to incorporate the role of individuals and religion in continually shaping society, and therefore while agreeing with the overall proposal that economic equality is important, he feels "That economic power is the only kind of power no student of human society can accept" (Ambedkar, 1944: III). Almost prophetically announcing the reasons for the failure of Marxism, which otherwise has impeccable logic he opines-

> That the social status of an individual by itself often becomes a source of power and authority is made clear by the sway which the Mahatmas have held over the common man. Why do millionaires in India obey penniless Sadhus and Fakirs? Why do millions of paupers in India sell their trifling trinkets which constitute their only wealth and go to Benares and Mecca? That, religion is the source of power is illustrated by the history of India where the priest holds a sway over the common man. (Ambedkar, 1944, III)

He finds a parallel between the Indian case and that of ancient republican Rome where power was shared between patricians and plebeians, but the final selection of those from the plebeian class required the sanction of the Oracle of Delphi, a religious figure who always supported the interests of the patrician class. As such, the plebeians who were finally selected for public office were always those who were amenable to the dictates of the patrician class. Religion, in other words determined the actual working of the polity of republican Rome even though theoretically the polity was democratic. What is more interesting is that the plebeians never protested this matter at all and "Rather than give up religion, the Plebeians give up material gain for which they had fought so hard" (Ambedkar, 1944, III). Ambedkar differentiates the capitalist model of production and those prevailing in India, noting that India was in a state of economic and social advancement far behind that of Europe. "The fallacy of the Socialists lies in supposing that because in the present stage of European Society property as a source of power is predominant, that the same is true of India or that the same was true of Europe in the past. Religion, social status and property are all sources of power and authority, which one man has, to control the liberty of another" (Ambedkar, 1944: III). In other words, for Ambedkar, the socialists were misled in posing their faith in an ideology designed for a society that was far too advanced for meaningful application in the Indian context. At the same time, for him it was not enough to merely advance economic development for a period in order to reach the conditions required for Marxism to operate. "If liberty is the ideal, if liberty means the destruction of the dominion which one man holds over another then obviously it cannot be insisted upon that economic reform must be the one kind of reform worthy of pursuit" (Ambedkar, 1944: III). For him, instead, social revolution is a necessary ingredient in allowing for an equitable economic model which must precede any socialist economic revolution. "Men will not join in a revolution for

the equalization of property unless they know that after the revolution is achieved they will be treated equally and that there will be no discrimination of caste and creed" (Ambedkar, 1944: III). He asserts the primacy of social reforms by declaring that there can be no socialism without it. "I can't see how a Socialist State in India can function for a second without having to grapple with the problems created by the prejudices which make Indian people observe the distinctions of high and low, clean and unclean" (Ambedkar, 1944: III). Therefore, Ambedkar is clear that the chief issue that needs to be dealt with in India, for any meaningful political development is the addressing of social reforms, in particular the question of caste.

Next Ambedkar takes up the fact that despite its problems there continue to be voices that speak in favour of a continuation of the caste system. He firstly attacks the defence of the caste system which looks upon it as a "division of labour... a necessary feature of every civilized society" by declaring it to be "also a division of labourers" (Ambedkar, 1944: IV). He argues that while division of labour per se is not a problem; the fact that the caste system unequally divides labourers in non-negotiable hierarchical compartments makes it a social evil. Further, this is not a division of labour based on the desires and wishes of the individual, but is rather predetermined by the accidental fact of birth. Unlike industries and occupations that grow and develop with time, the caste system forces workers into a stasis which can never be positive for the growth of a society. Contradicting views that the caste system increases specialisation over generations, he argues, "By not permitting readjustment of occupations, caste becomes a direct cause of much of the unemployment we see in the country" (Ambedkar 1944: IV). Further in placing the occupation of an individual on the basis of their heredity, it completely ignores the natural talent and propensity of individuals in different or new innovative fields. Ambedkar also clearly rejects any notions that caste preserves the purity of race. He clearly does not subscribe to any idea of purity of races noting that "ethnologists are of opinion that men of pure race exist nowhere and that there has been a mixture of all races in all parts of the world" (Ambedkar, 1944: V). Instead of preserving the purity of races, Ambedkar opines that castes actually came up after races had already been mixed up with repeated invasions of the Greeks, the Scythians, the Parthians and the Bactrians up till the Gupta period, and later further with the invasions of the Huns, the Kushans etc. For Ambedkar, "To hold that distinctions of Castes or really distinctions of race and to treat different Castes as though they were so many

different races is a gross perversion of facts" (Ambedkar, 1944: V). He further argues that there can be little benefit even if there was any logic of eugenics in the strange admixture of prohibitive endogamy within certain communities as well as prohibitive exogamy with other communities as prescribed in the caste system. Endogamy actually causes a magnification of genetic effects, while hybridity has been genetically proven to be the most effective way to maximise positive characteristics of any organism. At any rate the prohibitions on inter-dining and social mixing amongst castes cannot possibly have any scientific basis. Ambedkar therefore recognises caste to be not a system based on science, but rather a "social system which embodies the arrogance and selfishness of a perverse section of the Hindus who were superior enough in social status to set it in fashion and who had authority to force it on their inferiors" (Ambedkar, 1944: V).

Ambedkar, after rejecting the possible arguments for the benefits of caste goes on to declare "that Hindu Society is a myth" (Ambedkar, 1944: VI). Obviously a society fragmented into such clearly demarcated divisions with little or no interactions across impregnable caste barriers cannot be seen as a united people as far as he is concerned. Echoing, and critiquing Savarkar's vision of a united Hindutva, we have Ambedkar clearly dissolving all such imaginaries of nationalism. "Each caste is conscious of its existence. Its survival is the be all and end all of its existence. Castes do not even form a federation. A caste has no feeling that it is affiliated to other castes except when there is a Hindu-Muslim riot. On all other occasions each caste endeavours to segregate itself and to distinguish itself from other castes" (Ambedkar, 1944: VI). However, the fact that anti-Muslim collective identity formulations had already started taking root can be surmised. Nonetheless, Ambedkar feels that this strategic unity cannot be reason enough to declare Hindus to be a Nation. "There is no Hindu consciousness of any kind. In every Hindu the consciousness that exists is the consciousness of his caste. That is the reason why the Hindus cannot be said to form a society or a nation. There are ...many Indians whose patriotism does not permit them to admit that Indians are not a nation, that they are only an amorphous mass of people" (Ambedkar, 1944: VI). He is clear that mere similarity on a broad level in terms of certain cultural and religious practices cannot be the basis of a common nationality.

For Ambedkar, the caste system becomes the major reason why nationalism is not possible in India. He notes that the feelings of hatred across castes could be so

intense that "One caste enjoys singing a hymn of hate against another caste as much as the Germans did in singing their hymn of hate against the English during the last war" (Ambedkar, 1944: VII). He observes that the feeling of enmity between castes extended into sub-castes as well. Caste therefore leads to the development of an anti-social feeling in society. He mentions: "In my province the Golak Brahmins, Deorukha Brahmins, Karada Brahmins, Palshe Brahmins and Chitpavan Brahmins, all claim to be sub-divisions of the Brahmin Caste. But the anti-social spirit that prevails between them is quite as marked and quite as virulent as the anti-social spirit that prevails between them and other non-Brahmin castes" (Ambedkar, 1944: VII). The feeling between castes and their subdivisions is akin to that of hatred between warring factions. Unlike in the west, where wars in the past have a minimum impact on the relations between the descendents of the warriors who fought each other, the caste system actually promotes the creation of hereditary blood feuds. Ambedkar recounts how incidents from history are remembered and the hostilities they inspired continued in India through the caste system. "...the present-day non-Brahmins cannot forgive the present-day Brahmins for the insult their ancestors gave to Shivaji. The present-day Kayasthas will not forgive the present-day Brahmins for the infamy cast upon their forefathers by the forefathers of the latter" (Ambedkar, 1944: VII).

Ambedkar next takes up the situation of the tribal communities. He finds in the backward condition of the aboriginal tribes an atavistic absurdity that is the direct consequence of the caste system, which despite the progress in India up to that point is happy to class them as "criminal." While some people might argue that the tribals are mentally less developed, Ambedkar is clear that it is the segregation and isolation that the caste system promotes that has led to this state of affairs. In the imagination of the caste Hindus, "His whole life is one anxious effort to preserve his caste. Caste is his precious possession which he must save at any cost. He cannot consent to lose it by establishing contact with the aborigines the remnants of the hateful Anaryas of the Vedic days" (Ambedkar, 1944: VIII). The division of caste has therefore left out millions of people from healthy social interactions and mutual benefit, relegating them to a life of primitivism. Ambedkar gives the examples of the Sonars and the Pathare Prabhus of Maharashtra and the attempts by the Brahmins to use social pressure as well as legislation to justify that the "the higher-caste Hindus have deliberately prevented the lower castes who are within the pale of Hinduism from rising to the cultural level of the

higher castes" (Ambedkar, 1944, IX).

With the caste system, Ambedkar also associates the loss of the ability of Hinduism to propagate itself.

> That the Hindu religion was once a missionary religion must be admitted. It could not have spread over the face of India, if it was not a missionary religion. That today it is not a missionary religion is also a fact which must be accepted. The question therefore is not whether or not the Hindu religion was a missionary religion. The real question is why did the Hindu religion cease to be a missionary religion? My answer is this. Hindu religion ceased to be a missionary religion when the Caste System grew up among the Hindus. (Ambedkar, 1944: X)

Within this analysis, Ambedkar asserts that caste could not have been a permanent feature of Hinduism. The problem with converting someone into Hinduism lies in the problem of which caste to place such an individual in. Since caste is determined by birth and lineage, a new adherent of the faith cannot be allocated a caste except for some arbitrary logic. Moreover, such a forcing of caste need not be accepted by other members of society making ceremonies such as Shudhi (conversion) ineffective. The caste system also makes it impossible to evoke a united martial spirit amongst the Hindus, something Ambedkar calls "Sangathan" (Ambedkar, 1944: XI). He contrasts the disunited and dispersed condition of the Hindus with that of Muslims and Sikhs saying that these other communities possess strength from the knowledge that they are united against common enemies. He writes: "...all Sikhs will come to the rescue of a Sikh when he is in danger and that all Mohammedans will rush to save a Muslim if he is attacked. The Hindu can derive no such strength" (Ambedkar, 1944: XI). This happens because there is a common way of living in communities with compulsory social living as a part of their religion. There are common practices as far as the two communities are concerned which creates a certain social cement that can never arise amongst the caste ridden Hindus. "Among Sikhs and Muslims there is a social cement which makes them Bhais. Among Hindus there is no such cement and one Hindu does not regard another Hindu as his Bhai" (Ambedkar, 1944: XI).

Ambedkar notes that apart from promoting a certain division in society, the caste

system in a parallel also reduces individual freedom and liberties. Because a caste has the tight to throw out members who refuse to adhere to the norms of the group, it naturally promotes a herd mentality, conservatism and group subservience rather than individual initiative, openness and change.

> ...a caste has an unquestioned right to excommunicate any man who is guilty of breaking the rules of the caste and when it is realized that excommunication involves a complete cesser of social intercourse it will be agreed that as a form of punishment there is really little to choose between excommunication and death. No wonder individual Hindus have not had the courage to assert their independence by breaking the barriers of caste. (Ambedkar, 1944: XII)

For him, caste actually becomes a strong barrier against any sort of reform. Moreover, the system of caste, instead of promoting virtues, actually destroys all ethics. He notes:

> Caste has killed public spirit. Caste has destroyed the sense of public charity. Caste has made public opinion impossible. A Hindu's public is his caste. His responsibility is only to his caste. His loyalty is restricted only to his caste. Virtue has become caste-ridden and morality has become, caste-bound. There is no sympathy to the deserving. There is no appreciation of the meritorious. There is no charity to the needy. (Ambedkar, 1944: XIII)

Ambedkar further notes that apart from the wide support that Gandhi has gathered amongst Hindus, the tendency is for people to follow leaders from within their own caste. Ambedkar feels that in the laying of primacy of loyalty to the caste, "Hindus committed treason against their country in the interests of their caste" (Ambedkar, 1944: XIII).

However, in his articulation of an alternative to the organisation of society, apart from caste, Ambedkar actually goes to the west in asserting again the ideas of the French Revolution, "An ideal...society based on Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" (Ambedkar, 1944: XIV). The parallels with Fukuyama and his *The End of History and the Last Man* which root the essential and continuing imaginations of liberal modernity

to lie in these very values of the French Revolution are too clear to be ignored. For Fukuyama "the principles of liberty and equality that emerged from the French Revolution, embodied in ...the modern "universal and homogeneous state," represented the end point of human ideological evolution beyond which it was impossible to progress further." (Fukuyama, 2006: 66). Both thinkers seem to go back to the same event for inspiration. Ambedkar continues, "An ideal society should be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other parts. In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be varied and free points of contact with other modes of association. In other words there must be social endosmosis. This is fraternity, which is only another name for democracy. Democracy is not merely a form of Government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience" (Ambedkar, 1944: XIV). So to begin with we have a move away from hierarchies towards participative frameworks of social interaction and governance. Ambedkar's definition of liberty includes the right to free movement, the right to own property, including the right to own tools and machines, and the right to earn stay healthy. These are all liberal ideas of liberty that culminates in the invocations that are covered under the extended frameworks of Right to Life. However, what is of paramount importance amongst all the liberties for a crusader against caste like Ambedkar is "the liberty to choose one's profession" (Ambedkar, 1944: XIV).

Finally, in the matter of equality, Ambedkar distinguishes between three factors from which a person derives power. "A man's power is dependent upon (1) physical heredity, (2) social inheritance or endowment in the form of parental care, education, accumulation of scientific knowledge, everything which enables him to be more efficient than the savage, and finally, (3) on his own efforts" (Ambedkar, 1944: XIV). While he argues for complete equality amongst people on the basis of their own effort, he opens the space for positive affirmation in order to promote a Rawlsian idea of justice through intervention of the state in order to iron out differences that accrue through the first two factors. "It is obvious that those individuals also in whose favour there is birth, education, family name, business connections and inherited wealth would be selected in the race. But selection under such circumstances would not be a selection of the able. It would be the selection of the privileged" (Ambedkar, 1944: XIV).

Therefore, for Ambedkar's project of getting rid of the caste system and moving towards a liberal society, it would not be enough to wish for greater inter caste interaction, especially in terms of intermarriage, which Ambedkar describes as "the real remedy for breaking Caste" (Ambedkar, 1944: XX), as caste ultimately is an imagination - "a notion, it is a state of the mind. The destruction of Caste does not therefore mean the destruction of a physical barrier. It means a notional change" (Ambedkar, 1944: XX). It would be mere wishful thinking to prescribe a solution to the caste problem which is never going to be practiced as the root of this imagination of difference is sanctioned in the Hindu religion itself. It "is not the people who observe Caste, but the Shastras which teach them this religion of Caste. Criticising and ridiculing people for not inter-dining or inter-marrying or occasionally holding inter-caste dinners and celebrating inter-caste marriages, is a futile method of achieving the desired end. The real remedy is to destroy the belief in the sanctity of the Shastras" (Ambedkar, 1944: XX). Consequently, Ambedkar does not propose reforms in the Hindu religious system, but rather a rejection of the same. For him it is not possible to reform caste out of Hinduism because this is a belief so deeply ingrained in Hinduism that to reject it would be to reject the religion itself and "destroy the authority of the Shastras and the Vedas" (Ambedkar, 1944: XX). At the same time, Ambedkar is doubtful if such a project can proceed because the parties invested in maintaining status quo are unlikely to give assent. Ambedkar, at the end of the speech, declares his intention to leave the Hindu fold although he does express a continued interest in attempts at reformation of Hinduism- "I am sorry, I will not be with you. I have decided to change. This is not the place for giving reasons. But even when I am gone out of your fold, I will watch your movement with active sympathy and you will have my assistance for what it may be worth" (Ambedkar, 1944: XXVI).

As a result, Ambedkar must be placed within the imagination of postcolonial alterity. He is clear that there can be no overlap, reformation or rapprochement with the oppressive Hindu religion on the part of the Dalits. Instead, there must be a clean break as they are essentially different. In his *Origin of Untouchables*, Ambedkar clearly marks out that Dalits were at some point in their history Buddhists. It is towards a scientific Buddhism that he urges his followers to convert later in his life. At the same time, it is

interesting how despite coming from the same place, that is the articulation of an alterity, and in identifying clearly an oppressive other, Ambedkar and Savarkar come to completely different theses in their outlook regarding the construction of their idea of the nation. Whereas for Savarkar the nation is to be constructed as Hindu, in opposition to Christian and Muslim, for Ambedkar, it is to be constructed as anti-Hindu, in opposition to Brahminical norms that have tied down Dalits to servitude, and in pragmatic alliance with the Muslims, as he himself did in the most important electoral victory of his life, when, after the Congress had denied him ticket for the same, he won his seat in the Constituent Assembly as a Muslim League supported candidate from Bengal. While Savarkar reconstructs history in order to demonstrate the superiority of Hinduism and the problems of Buddhism, Ambedkar reads it to do precisely the opposite. Finally, while Savarkar is interested in asserting the polity of Hindutva, Ambedkar is clearly interested mainly in social reform, especially the annihilation of caste, which he sees as a prerequisite for any political reform.

It is in this context that their engagement with colonial modernity becomes important. While both saw in British rule an evil which must go, since their primary targets were different, it is not unusual to find an appropriation of colonial modernity in order to meet their ends. Savarkar had famously declared in his mercy petitions to the British Government "I am ready to serve the Government in any capacity they like... Where else can the prodigal son return but to the parental doors of the Government?" and "I am sincere in expressing my earnest intention of treading the constitutional path and trying my humble best to render the hands of the British dominion a bond of love and respect and a mutual help. Such an Empire as is foreshadowed in the Proclamation wins my hearty adherence" (Noorani, 2005). Such self imposed binds meant that after his release, his role during the Quit India Movement and other anti colonial struggles was actually one of supporting British rule. Ambedkar too saw in British rule and the resultant principles of equality before law, betterment from the situation that Dalits would have to endure under Hindu rule. Ambedkar had famously declared "Whenever there is any conflict of interest between the country and the untouchables, so far as I am concerned, the untouchables' interests will take precedence over the interests of the country" (Jaffrelot, 2016).

The central problem with the imagination of decolonisation lies in its

overemphasis on freedom as sovereignty, which serves to tie freedom to a western political nation oriented practice. Further decolonisation provides for imaginations of freedom that are negative in that they are ideas of freedom from something, or freedom to do something, or rather ontic freedoms rather than being ontological freedoms, or freedom of being. Therefore, decolonisation restricts itself to the limited objective of gaining freedom from the colonising agency, replacing only the agency of rule from the colonising to the coloniser, without substantially changing the mechanism of rule. This is done through the acceptance of liberal democracy as the key mechanism of difference of rule from colonial rule, although liberal democracy in itself provides only limited democratic sovereignty for any people. Postcolonialism, apart from recentering history to the moment of colonialism and being a problematic term, further becomes a grand narrative in framing the cultural practices of erstwhile colonised spaces. It is overtly jargonistic, limited to the academia and shuns practical engagement for theoretical analysis. Between decolonisation and postcolonialism there is a subsuming of non-colonial structures that continue to impact society, and their being situated within an imaginary of the postcolonial other. These in India include Brahmanism, patriarchy, capitalism, communalism and continued neoimperial and neocolonial designs that stem from them.

In order to liberate imagination for a meaningful praxis, I propose a radical rethinking of the central structures of the post-colonial polity and postcolonial engagement with culture. To this end, I propose a shift from collective imaginations towards an individual imagination of freedom, sovereignty, democracy and governance based on non-alterity. The principle vision of quality as set out in western thought is collective and usually involves the subsuming of the individual self in favour of that collective. The wider project of postcolonial polity, imagination and its related culture is similarly based on a collective imagination that is constantly under threat of fragmentation due to assertions of various identities. The question therefore is how to fit the individual in this wider frame of necessary political assertions.

The beginnings of postcolonial imaginations as has already been discussed were linked to Marxism which posits a different sort of collective action in order to overcome hegemonies that limit individual freedom. The practical working out of Marxist politics has historically, however, shown itself to have a tendency of further hegemonising

individuals through a different sort of collective action. At the same time, Marxist analysis based on its core principle of dialectical materialism provides a strong weapon in the analysis of society and also provides frameworks to develop society towards positive social change, at least in theory. The difference between Marxist theoretical positions and its failure at the practical level have no doubt contributed largely to the cynicism that many feel on being confronted with situations that demand social change.

Is it possible to free the revolutionary potential of Marxism from collective action? One of the primary stages of a Marxist analysis of society is the resolution of opposing forces in society into opposing primary dialectics. The Marxist process, therefore, begins with a collectivisation of opposing social forces. This is the beginning of the flattening that leads Marxism towards creating overarching hegemonies that exclude minority voices. However, the lesson from Marxist dialectics that must be taken up with some seriousness is its emphasis on change. Marxism is ultimately therefore a theory for predicting changes. It claims to be a theory for predicting becoming. It is strictly materialistic and stands against any sort of spiritual or non-materially verifiable hypothesis. The idea of dialectics instead provides for a mechanism of changes lying with forces within the system. There is no outside the system that cannot be incorporated within the study. The parallels of Buddhist thoughts and Marxism as in Dialectical Materialism are striking. Both are strictly materialist and are deeply interested in removing suffering (which in Marxism is looked upon as exploitation). Buddhism upholds the doctrine of co-dependent origination which can be thought of as a plural form of dialectics. Briefly put, beings don't exist in themselves but in relation to other beings or things. The goal of a Buddhist is to realise the complete non-being of the thing in itself, a realisation called 'shunyata'.

The problem with western structures of polity like sovereignty and democracy lie in their mutually opposing inter-dependence. Rather like the concepts of equality and freedom, which are binaries - both important to be meaningful, need each other despite opposing each other. Derrida recognises, similarly, an auto-immune response between sovereignty and democracy. Too much of sovereignty necessarily limits democratic potential while a complete system of direct democracy potentially weakens the sovereignty of the group especially under emergency circumstances. Decolonisation lays emphasis on the immediate political freedom of the mass under colonial rule while

postcolonial theory seeks to differentiate that mass and assert identities.

We, therefore, need to think not of asserting anyone but of radically new structures - of the sovereignty to come, of the democracy to come, of the decolonisation to come and of the postcolonialism to come. We must not think of our being today as final but rather as a stage of becoming, a being to come. This in short is the paracolonial praxis. What the paracolonial praxis is, therefore, an imagination of a future being while being grounded in the social realities of today. What will bring about this being is largely to be determined by our imagination of this society to come, dependant on the sort of ethics that we deem important for our being today.

What unite all social theories are their formulations of freedom. What is central to the paracolonial praxis is also freedom, but taking from a completely different tangent of unconditional freedom that I shall refer to as mukti. Coming from the Sanskrit root of moksha, it originally meant letting loose of the reins, a derivation possibly from the equestrian past of the Indo-Aryans. Within the ancient Indo-Aryan cosmology lay the central idea of reincarnation - a cycle of births and deaths through which an individual soul must pass before they attain enlightenment and a release from this cycle. However, materially what we can gather from the concept of moksha is quite relevant for imagining the paracolonial praxis. To begin with, mukti is an unconditional freedom which is not in opposition to any particular form of a pressure but is a release from all oppressions. It is not the assertion of any particular identity, but a release from all social hierarchies and identities. It is not the right to choose any particular alternative but rather the choice to create new alternatives. It is not dependent on the society of its day but addresses the possibilities of a society to come. It ultimately is the right to imagine and stay true to individual visions or imaginings and follow them through to self satisfaction. Similarly, it recognises the limitations of democratic polity and its representative system which leads to formulation of systems of governance for masses. Instead, it propagates the direct enunciation of the self in order to create rule in which the self is represented directly. Unlike janatantra (democracy of the majority), the paracolonial praxis recognises the need for swatantra (rule by individuals).

To sum up, the key components of the paracolonial praxis include rejection of interdependent binaries that provide the structure of our society today, the recognition of

individual selves rather than masses and the goal of unconditional freedom. In the next chapter, I shall take up the Indian Independence era leaders M.N. Roy, Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore in order to demonstrate that aspects of this sort of a paracolonial praxis had already been brought forward and that the paracolonial imagination continues to have a relevance in today's world.

CHAPTER IV

The Beginnings of Non-alterity: Paracolonialism in Indian Political Thought

January 17th, 2016, was not in anyways a normal day for Rohith Vemula, a research scholar in the prestigious University of Hyderabad (HCU), India (Aji, 2016). In fact, life had not been normal for him for quite some time. Vemula was an active member of the Ambedkar Students' Association (ASA) which is a radical organisation of Dalit students in the University (Johari, 2016). Although the ASA claims to represent the issues of the lower castes within the University, there also exists another lower caste faction called the Dalit Students' Union (DSU) which has been critical of the ASA for mainly upholding the concerns of the Mala Dalit community and suppressing the voices of the others which are smaller and have less political power as compared to the Malas. The DSU is constituted mostly by the Madiga Dalit community (Sirapangi, 2013). Within the campus, the ASA has been locked in a struggle for power against both the Left wing Students' Federation of India (SFI) which is the students' wing of the largest communist party of the country - the Communist Party of India (Marxist) that is the CPIM, and the ABVP which is affiliated to the Hindu right wing organisation - the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) (Azim, 2014). The ABVP is also linked with the nationalist BJP which came to power in the Indian legislature in 2014 under the leadership of Narendra Modi. Apart from these parties, the campus also has a small representation of the National Students Union of India (NSUI) that represents the politics of the Indian National Congress (INC), which is the traditional Central party in Indian politics and has ruled the country for most of its modern existence after the British transfer of power. Vemula, along with his other associates in the ASA, had been prominent in attacking both the ABVP and the BJP largely on lines of their representing a majoritarian Hindu Brahmanical politics - a charge which they also effectively extended to the SFI. In the largely tripartite struggle for power in the University politics, all of the major stakeholders, that is, the SFI, the ABVP and the ASA were extremely critical of each other's politics. All three have been in the Students' Union in the campus over the recent years. Vemula had earned the ire of the nationalist groups by defending the screening of

Muzaffarnagar Baaqi Hai in Delhi University (DU), a film which is overtly critical of the role of the BJP and the RSS in the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2014. Made by the FTII alumnus Nakul Sawhney, the movie lays the blame for the riots firmly on the Hindu nationalist right wing forces of the country at a time when the ruling power in the Centre was the Congress and the state of Uttar Pradesh, where the riots occurred, was the Samajwadi Party. Interestingly, after the suicide, Sawhney went to HCU in order to have a memorial screening (Vajpeyi, 2016). ABVP had been disrupting screenings of the movie which they considered to be biased propaganda. Again, Vemula, along with the ASA, attacked the government over the hanging of Yakub Memon, a person who is largely seen to be one of the organisers of the 1992 terror blasts in the city of Mumbai. Altercations with ABVP activists led to a formal pressing of charges against Vemula and four other ASA activists for allegedly beating up an ABVP activist. The BJP Member of Parliament from Secunderabad, Bandaru Dattatreya, wrote a strongly worded letter of complaint against the politics of the ASA and Vemula to the HRD Minister, Smriti Irani, in which he termed the activists "anti-national" (Janyala, 2016). Vemula, along with five other ASA activists were thrown out of the hostel and suspended from the University. They continued to protest by setting up a tent in the campus and going on a hunger strike (Chukka, 2016).

On the 17th of January, Vemula committed suicide, hanging himself in a hostel room using an ASA flag (Biswas, 2016). In a country where already a series of student unrests had manifested themselves - from Jadavpur University, Presidency College and Visva Bharati in Bengal to FTII in Pune as well as the 'Occupy UGC' movement in Delhi, Vemula's death proved to be a catalyst of some sorts, promoting a wave of linked protests. A nationwide Joint Action Committee coordinated programmes that erupted across Telengana as well as the rest of India (Ferreira and Gonsalves, 1/2016).

In JNU, in a separate incident, a meeting called to commemorate the hanging of Afzal Guru on 9th February 2016 led to another altercation between the ABVP and other student groups in the campus (FP Staff, 2016). The JNUSU president, Kanhaiya Kumar, from the All India Student's Federation (AISF) and two of the organisers of the programme, entitled 'A Country Without a Post Office', referring to the poem by Agha Shahid Ali, Umar Khalid and Anirban Bhattacharya, all PhD students, were charged with sedition. Later, courts released all three on bail (Sheriff M., 2016).

Major student unrests also occurred in Delhi University, which saw the implementation of four different teaching structures being imposed on students (Kausar, 2015), starting with the last year of Annual mode (2011-2012), the Semester mode (2012-13) (IANS, 2009), the Four Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP) (2013-14) (Express, 2014) and the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) (2014- 2015) (Bhada, 2015). With this, in March 2016 there was the added tension over the UGC notification (Staff, 2016) which increased teacher workload from 18 hours to 24 hours.

In the article "#JNU #Hokkolorob to #JusticeForRohithVemula: India's student uprising is upon us", the term 'Student Spring' was used by Arun Ferriera (Ferreira and Gonsalves, 1/2016) to describe the ongoing series of agitations in the country. In this context, the student spring is largely seen as a movement against a hegemonic, autocratic Hindu nationalist state that refuses to give space to dissident voices. Indeed, the entire movement can be simply reduced to that of a government that is trying to bulldoze its policies (and personnel) into higher education, and the resultant resistance to such moves on the part of those affected. However, it is in the constant evocation of Rohith Vemula's suicide as a rallying point by the various groups, often calling for a wider Left-Ambedkarite unity (Ferreira and Gonsalves, 3/2016) against the nationalist Hindutva right as represented by the ruling BJP and its students' organisation the ABVP that we shall start off our search for a beginning. While Dabashi finds in the Arab Spring the end of Postcolonialism, I propose that in the Student Spring of India, we can find the beginnings of a Paracolonial Praxis. Again, just as in the suicide of Bouazizi we find the rallying of forces for an end, in the suicide of Vemula, we can find the seeds of a new beginning.

Vemula had interestingly started out by voting for the ABVP in his first election, before starting his politics from the Left oriented SFI. He finished committing suicide with an ASA flag (Apurva, 2016). His identity background, being a Dalit Mala on the side of his mother, and an OBC Vaddera caste, along with his eclectic interest in both the left and Ambedkarite politics, apart from his academic brilliance as evidenced in his results which included his getting admission in the general category mark him out as a multifaceted and multidimensional young man (Mondal, 2016). What is of particular interest to this thesis is his suicide note - a document that has been reproduced and quoted over and over again in many contexts, often divorced from its actual content

(TNN, 2016). The letter itself has been controversial in its final release as it has an entire paragraph cancelled (Express, 2016). A single scrawled line supposedly by Vemula himself declares 'I myself strike these lines out' (Express, 2016) and carries an initial and signature of Vemula. The released text without the erasure in itself is unusual in carrying little of particulars of oppression, blames or vilifications, especially considering the political outcome of the incident, which has largely been seen as a result of institutional oppression and selective targeting of Dalit students. However, I shall argue that it is important to keep the struck off lines as a part of the text of the suicide note, reading them at the very least as being a part of the strategy of *sous rature* (Taylor, 2001), the Derridean strategy for calling into question direct meaning, itself derived from Heidegger. Firstly, the words struck off form a natural part within the continuity of the text itself. Secondly, had Vemula been certain that they should not be there, he would have likely rewritten the note without it. Keeping the tight structure and constant coming back to the theme of the universal from the particular, Vemula's note cannot be dismissed as the emotional outpourings of a person not in his senses, as far as it is possible for a person trying to commit suicide to be in their senses. It is logically drawn out, poetically executed and reflects someone who is clear in his purpose. The choice of using the banner of the ASA, the organisation that he was a part of at the time of his suicide, cannot be seen merely as something ironical. It was a choice. The struck off words remaining in the final note is a choice as well, reflecting not so much its non-reading after erasure, but possible reading under erasure. At best we can see his own struggle with accepting the role of the two organisations he had been a part of, and to whom he is also thankful "for making, introducing me to wonderful literature and people." (TNN, 2016)

As a suicide letter, it follows the script for the genre rather rigorously. Jerry Jacobs, in his "A Phenomenological Study of Suicide Notes" (1967) identifies that suicide notes can largely be divided into four types. The first are those where the person committing suicide is suffering from a terminal illness. The second is an allocation of guilt, a vengeful accusation of those who have hurt and caused the person to commit suicide. The third group are primarily a set of instructions for people to carry out, or an allocation of assets, rather like a last will. Finally, he identifies a category which he calls 'First Form Notes', which involve the person committing suicide engaging the reader in a series of arguments that are designed to win the reader's trust for an act that

by definition is one that implies a complete loss of trust in life. This does not mean that other concerns do not come into the note, only that the primary reason for the note is to assert that one may still trust the person committing suicide, even though one does not and cannot agree with their complete lack of trust with life. Jacobs outlines the usual strategy for such First Form notes as one where the person committing suicide shows themselves to-

> 1) be faced with an unexpected, intolerable, and unsolvable problem; 2) view this not as an isolated unpleasant incident, but within the context of a long biography of such troubled situations, and the expectation of future ones; 3) believe that death is the only absolute answer to this apparent absolute dilemma of life; 4) come to this point of view (a) by way of an increasing social isolation whereby he is unable to share his problem with the person or persons who must share it if it is to be resolved, or (b) being isolated from the cure of some incurable illness which in turn isolates him from health and the community, thereby doubly insuring the insolubility of the problem; 5) overcome the social constraints, i.e., the social norms he had internalized whereby he views suicide as irrational and/or immoral; 6) succeed in this because he feels himself less an integral part of the society than the others and therefore is held less firmly by its bonds; 7) succeed in accomplishing step 6 by applying to his intended suicide a verbalization which enables him to adjust his conception of himself as a trusted person with his conception of himself as a trust violator; 8) succeed in doing this by defining the situation such that the problem is (a) not of his own making (b) unresolved, but not from any lack of personal effort, and (c) not given to any resolution known to him except death (he doesn't want it this way, but . . . it's "the only way out"); 9) in short, define death as necessary by the above process and in so doing remove all choice and with it sin and immorality; and finally, 10) make some provision for insuring against the recurrence of these problems in the afterlife. (Jacobs, 1967: 67)

Of course Vemula's letter adds and deviates from this exhaustive list, but overall the trajectory of the letter places it clearly in the type of suicide notes of the Final Form. It is largely a text designed to win back the trust of the reader for an act that itself

proclaims a complete lack of trust. The letter begins- "I would not be around when you read this letter. Don't get angry on me." The note begins therefore, to use Jacob's words, by "beg(ging) your indulgence". It urges the reader to not get "angry" at the act of suicide. Again, it goes on to present how, to use Jacob's terms, "The problem is not of their own making". While the letter ostensibly says it is not anyone's fault, it goes on to list clear grievances. On the one hand it personally ascribes fault on no one- "I know some of you truly cared for me, loved me and treated me very well. I have no complaints on anyone. It was always with myself I had problems. I feel a growing gap between my soul and my body. And I have become a monster." On the other hand we get- "The value of a man was reduced to his immediate identity and nearest possibility. To a vote. To a number. To a thing. Never was a man treated as a mind." Again, we have "All the while, some people, for them, life itself is curse. My birth is my fatal accident. I can never recover from my childhood loneliness. The unappreciated child from my past", apart from the eleven lines of written text that were struck off- "ASA, SFI, anything and everything exist for their own sake. Seldom the interest of a person and his organisation match. To get power, to become famous or to be important in between boundaries and to think we are up to changing the system. Very often we overestimate the acts and find solace in traits." The overall text seems to suggest a link between the monster he had become and the repeated reduction of his identity, even though distanced in the non-personalised replacement of the self with the non specific term 'man' or 'person', which happened throughout his childhood and adult life to his immediate caste. Perhaps the struck off lines make even the structures he was a part of complicit in this process of reduction. However, the problems which led him to commit suicide are clearly not of his own making even though he takes great pains to exonerate them of it.

Vemula's letter clearly outlines Jacob's formulation of the First form. (1) The problem is of reduction of human beings to their immediate identities dependant on social and political exigencies - whether it be a reduction to a caste, a vote, a number or a thing, instead of looking at people as human beings: "As a glorious thing made up of star dust. In every field, in studies, in streets, in politics, and in dying and living." (2) The problem is not temporally disjointed, and has a long history, and no foreseeable end. It starts with his birth, and constant humiliations since then. Sudipto Mondal, in his article "Rohith Vemula: An unfinished portrait" (2016), traces out how from childhood

Vemula had been at the receiving end of caste discrimination. He was also witness to his mother being given differential treatment and physical abuse from the side of his father's family, the extent of which was such that eventually his mother had to shift out to stay separately. Vemula had emerged from poverty, financial instability, openly casteist treatment from blood relatives, purely on the dint of his own brilliance and the support of his mother. Mondal notes how "Despite the deprivation, he scored 65% in his MSc first year and 70% in his final year" besides qualifying in the general category for his PhD. (3) Clearly, the only solution, especially when we look at the erased lines outlining his then current situation of being continually reduced to his single identity of caste, is to take his own life, especially when the problem will never go away. (4a) His increased social isolation is captured by his feeling of alienation from his political comrades. (5 & 6) As Vemula himself puts it, "I am not hurt at this moment. I am not sad. I am just empty. Unconcerned about myself. That's pathetic. And that's why I am doing this." Realising the complete inevitability of transcending immediate identity, he is left with the space to rationally justify to himself the step of suicide. (7) Vemula justifies his act, positing it against the idea of cowardice by invoking an afterlife. (8) "People may dub me as a coward. And selfish, or stupid once I am gone. I am not bothered about what I am called. I don't believe in after-death stories, ghosts, or spirits. If there is anything at all I believe, I believe that I can travel to the stars. And know about the other worlds." There is a strange macabre rationality, cold but deeply passionate, that logically links up these lines with his initial expression of desire to "be a writer. A writer of science, like Carl Sagan" and his view of humanity being "a glorious thing made up of star dust." Carl Sagan is famous for being a writer of popular science books on the subject of astronomy, and by invoking the literally universal connection binding everything i.e. star dust, Vemula is suggesting a rejection of alterities, and the possibility of a new radical alterity in being. (9) This makes his death as beyond the question of morality and as he quotes in his letter "Do not shed tears for me. Know that I am happy dead than being alive. 'From shadows to the stars.'". The quote that Vemula inserts is most likely a mistranslation of the Latin phrase 'Per aspera ad astra', ascribed by Seneca the Younger, directly translating as 'From Hardships to the Stars". The phrase has been associated with flight and space travel in being incorporated as a motto for organisations, both in real life and films, and is likely to have been familiar to Vemula, who was after all a student working on the intersections of science and humanities. Either ways, Vemula

asserts an afterlife of being one with the stars which will ensure that (10) there will be no continuance of the problem of reduction to singular identity, and the rise of alterities in the afterlife. After all he would have made the journey from being in the shadows/hardships of identity politics and become one with the universal matter of stardust.

Vemula stays true to Jacob's formulation "...the suicidal person sees in the act of suicide at long last the potential for the freedom he has sought in life. This can be seen in the notes themselves. The note writers are rarely "depressed" or "hostile." The notes are by and large very even, as though at the time of writing the suffering no longer existed and a resolution to the problem had been reached" (Jacobs, 1967: 66). Jacob Tuckman, Robert J. Kleiner and Martha Lavell in their "Emotional Content of Suicide Notes" (1959) note that 51% of the suicide notes they studied expressed "positive affect without hostility" and another 25% expressed 'neutral affect'" (quoted by Jacobs, 1967: 66), meaning that a very small percentage of suicide notes expressed direct anger. Instead there is a certain calmness that comes from a certainty of action, the final action to come after the end of the note.

Vemula's note neatly outlines what I have defined as a paracolonial sensibility towards the end of the second chapter. His lament at reducing "the value of man...to his immediate identity and nearest possibility" clearly identifies the source of sorrow and suffering in the politics of othering or alterity. It clearly demands recognition of the universal possibility that is inherent in everyone. It recognises that alterity politics severely limits and even makes it impossible for a person to achieve and be recognised for his ability to transcend and overcome his immediate identities. It is this sensitive understanding that leads Vemula to suicide, in search for a radical alterity - a state of being beyond alterities. This is where I draw the line between Vemula and a paracolonial praxis which should be aimed to provide for that radical alterity within this life. This is possibly the entire point of the paracolonial project that seeks to imagine this new radical alterity and provide a new praxis.

The thesis has already rooted the ideas of postcolonialism and decolonisation as practices that lie within the imagination of alterities and shown them to be potentially limiting. The act of reading itself has been colonised by frameworks of alterity that

often serve to hide and disclose underlying structures of oppression. Whenever we are confronted by an event, or a text, we have been trained to unearth alterities of being - the oppressor and the oppressed, the dominant and the marginalised, the binaries of others who land up inhabiting our imagination. Our sensibilities have developed the breakdown of identities into fragments only united through strategic essentialism, bound to breakdown into constituent forms at any instant. Our imaginations have been colonised by the idea of alterity to such an extent, that only through a Heideggerian death can we achieve any fashion of wholesome being. This chapter will continue through a reading of Indian political thinkers who actually oversaw or theorised the transition/creation of India with the withdrawal of British rule, focussing on those for whom non-alterity was especially important in order to show the possibility of such an imagination. I am going to be referring particularly to the ideas of Manabendra Nath Roy, the founder of the Communist Party of India and Mexico, who later on became the prophet of Radical Humanism; Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who is also known as the Father of the Indian Nation; and Rabindranath Tagore, who is also the author of the Indian National Anthem and is widely seen as such to be the National Poet. All three have an association with Indian Nationalism, and the latter two have been seen as mystics, with Gandhi earning the tile of 'Mahatma' (great soul) and Tagore 'Kobi-guru' (poet-prophet).

While there are similarities in the political philosophies of the three men, it is also a historical fact that they often did not see eye to eye on many issues, including Gandhi's Non Cooperation Movement and his advocacy of the Charkha (the spinning wheel). However, what unites all of them will be a general refusal to engage in alterity politics. This is particularly manifested in the doctrine of ahimsa or non-violence. The refusal to react to the other through mechanisms of violence in an absolute sense creates certain binds in this mechanism of othering. This is especially liberating since such othering by its very logic implies violence - the violence of reducing all aspects of another human being to an immediate identity that is furthermore predicated by constructions of self identity and being able to transcend it would lead one towards breaking down of boundaries. One could hence say that othering in some ways begins by violence inflicted on the self, in reducing the imaginative multitude of possibilities that one has down to an immediate essential - an immediate reconfiguration of one's imagination to a unitary that reveals only the pressures of external society, cultural

value codes and expectations. The process of othering is, therefore, not only essential to create the possibility of violence - it is violent in itself, in the reduction and the reification of the self on being presented with the other.

It is therefore fitting that among Indian political thinkers, the realisation of the need for a non-alterity based articulation influenced none other than the founder of its communist party - the traditionally violent end of resistance to colonialism, M.N. Roy who was born Narendranath Bhattacharya in Kolkata, but eventually changed his name during his wide travels. Roy's initial formulations regarding Marxism underwent a sea change in the later part of his life by the end of which he was propagating a completely different set of ideas, collectively referred to as 'Radical Humanism'. However, his disenchantment with the ideas of Marxism precedes these formulations by many years. The beginnings of his differences with the official Russian line go back to his "Supplementary Theses" (Blunden, 1977) on the colonial question in the Second Congress of the Communist International under Lenin in the fourth session held on 25th July, 1920, at Petrograd. While his viewing of the national bourgeoisie as a continuation of colonisation can be seen as a part of the continuing critique of decolonisation, the roots of his break with Marxism can be seen in his turning away from the non-negotiable alterity that Marxism demands between the proletarian and capitalist classes. Roy's major contribution to the decolonisation debate was to propose, against the views of Lenin, that the national bourgeoisie of the colonised nations while acting against the coloniser was ultimately more likely to join hands with the imperial bourgeoisie, which would be more willing to share power in order to continue the exploitation of the colonies. Lenin on the other hand, at that time was proposing that the communists should act with the national bourgeoisie in order to first overthrow colonial rule, which was the more urgent need. History has of course validated Roy to a large extent, with the continued joining of hands of the erstwhile national and imperial bourgeoisie, the divisions blurred today by the formation of multinational capital. Lenin's position on the colonial question can be summed up in the third point of his theses:

> Thirdly, I would like to emphasise the question of the bourgeois-democratic movement in the backward countries...We debated whether it is correct in principle and theoretically to declare that the Communist International and the Communist Parties have a duty to support the

> bourgeois-democratic movements in the backward countries, and the outcome of this discussion was that we came to the unanimous decision to talk not about the 'bourgeois-democratic' movement but only about the national-revolutionary movement. There can be no doubt of the fact that any nationalist movement can only be a bourgeois-democratic movement, because the great mass of the population of the backward countries consists of the peasantry, which is the representative of bourgeois capitalist relations. It would be utopian to think that proletarian parties, insofar as it is at all possible for them to arise in these countries, will be able to carry out Communist tactics and Communist policies in the backward countries without having a definite relationship with the peasant movement, without supporting it in deeds. But objections were raised that, if we say 'bourgeois-democratic', we lose the distinction between the reformist and revolutionary movement which has become quite clear in the backward countries and the colonies recently, simply because the imperialist bourgeoisie has done everything in its power to create a reformist movement among the oppressed people too. A certain understanding has emerged between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and that of the colonies, so that very often, even perhaps in most cases, the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, although they also support national movements, nevertheless fight against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes with a certain degree of agreement with the imperialist bourgeoisie, that is to say together with it. This was completely proven in the Commission, and we believed that the only correct thing would be to take this difference into consideration and to replace the words 'bourgeois-democratic' almost everywhere with the expression 'national-revolutionary'. (Blunden, 1977)

In other words, Lenin took up the historical role of the national bourgeoisie in Europe, which proved to be a key force in attacking feudal aristocracy. In thus hastening the change from feudalism to capitalism, they allowed for the development of a proletariat class. This suggests that the strengthening of the nationalist bourgeoisie in colonial spaces would attack the foundations of imperial rule since between the two there would be a competition for the access of natural resources for profitable exploitation. This understanding promoted a close collaboration between the nationalist

bourgeoisie political elites who would have the necessary political maturity and leverage to actualise a revolt against the colonial power. Therefore, Lenin actually promotes a completely different understanding of the bourgeois-democratic forces of colonised nations as 'National-Revolutionary', demanding support for them from communists as the development of communism in colonised nations was fragile and weak. This understanding comes from the view that colonised nations were industrially weak, and therefore had a weak and dispersed proletarian class. In contrast Roy proposes in point 7 and 8 of his supplement-

> 7. Two movements can be discerned which are growing further and further apart with every day that passes. One of them is the bourgeois-democratic nationalist movement, which pursues the programme of political liberation with the conservation of the capitalist order; the other is the struggle of the propertyless peasants for their liberation from every kind of exploitation. The first movement attempts, often with success, to control the second; the Communist International must however fight against any such control, and the development of the class consciousness of the working masses of the colonies must consequently be directed towards the overthrow of foreign capitalism. The most important and necessary task however is the creation of Communist organisations of peasants and workers in order to lead them to the revolution and the setting up of the Soviet Republic. In this way the masses of the people in the backward countries will be brought to communism not by capitalist development but by the development of class consciousness under the leadership of the proletariat of the advanced countries.
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> 8. The real strength, the foundation of the liberation movement, will not allow itself to be forced into the narrow framework of bourgeois-democratic nationalism in the colonies. In the greater part of the colonies there already exist organised revolutionary parties which work in close contact with the working masses. The Communist International must make contact with the revolutionary movement in the colonies through the mediation of these parties and groups, for they are the vanguard of the working class. At present they are not numerous, but they express the will of the working class and

> lead the revolution behind them. The Communist Parties of the various imperialist countries must work in the closest contact with the proletarian parties of the proletarian countries and through them support the revolutionary movement in general both materially and morally. (Blunden, 1977)

In other words, Roy was arguing directly against Lenin. He articulates the rising strength of the proletarian class and the intensification of industrialisation in colonies in the initial points of his thesis. This allows for a different argument from that of Lenin's who saw in the condition of the colonies a lack of industrialisation and therefore a lack of proletarisation. Roy can therefore, make an argument for a bypassing of support towards the colonial bourgeoisie, who Lenin thought were most likely the group to be able to challenge colonial rule. Roy, however, was certain that the national bourgeoisie and the imperial international bourgeoisie would be able to find ways of resolving their differences. After all it would be far more profitable for them to share and mutually gain from the joint-exploitation of natural resources in the colonies. Therefore, recognising that the interest of the working classes could not be represented by the national bourgeoisie, Roy put forward his supplementary thesis in favour of direct support for emerging communist forces. For Roy it was important that the Communist International would act in favour of the working classes, against the interests of both colonising forces, and the local bourgeoisie that were acting as a comprador class. Roy put forward his idea of India, not as a purely agrarian and backward economy, but as an economy in transition towards greater industrialisation with the tacit support of the British Colonialists acting through the Indian bourgeoisie in his book *India in Transition* (Roy, 1922), providing for a clear break with the Russian line and towards developing a separate Indian road to socialism. However, this work in itself does not really mark a point of non-alterity in Roy. What it does demonstrate is that there is a growing understanding of the possibilities of the supposed tools of oppression (the bourgeoisie, imperialism) and the supposed tools of their overthrow (International Communism) coming together under the supposed justification of tactical necessity (overthrow of colonialism and imperialism). Roy's work on Gandhism, *One Year of Non-Cooperation* (1923) shows the first articulation of his tendency of sliding towards non-alterity, in his upholding of the role of Gandhi. Vishwanath Prasad Varma in his article on "M.N. Roy and Marxism" (1961) notes how in the book:

> (Roy) acknowledged the efforts of Gandhi in mobilizing mass action from 1919 to 1922. He recognised four constructive contributions of Gandhism: i) use of mass action for political purposes, ii) consolidation of the Indian National Congress, iii) the liberation of the national forces from governmental repression by the 'slogan of non-violence' and iv) the adoption of the techniques of non-cooperation, non-payment of taxes and civil disobedience. (Varma, 1961: 280)

At the same time, Roy became increasingly alienated from the Communist International, which in 1924 moved towards Stalin's new principle of "socialism in one country" which he had outlined in his pamphlet "Concerning Questions of Leninism" (1926). In the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International (1928), Roy argued for his "Decolonisation theory" that emphasised the growing exhaustion of imperialism and its gradual acquiescence in the shifting of profits towards the colonial bourgeoisie in order to perpetuate its own profits, albeit at a reduced rate. Roy, in other words had formulated a critique of decolonisation that broke ranks with existing imaginations from both the right and the left, which looked upon it as a positive development. He recognised how political decolonisation did nothing for the cause of the oppressed classes under colonial rule, as oppression continued through the joint collaboration of the national and imperial bourgeoisie. At the same time, with the excesses of Stalinism, Roy realised that Marxism itself needed to be reinvestigated as far from providing a means for emancipation; it had given rise to a system of totalitarianism and oppression. The critique of Marxism, and its deterministic, alterity ridden philosophy made Roy move towards a new philosophy of thinking, which he termed 'Radical Humanism'. This was set out in his final and most succinct articulation of his mature phase of philosophy in *New Humanism - A Manifesto* in 1947. This key work shall be taken up next for extracting the paracolonial in Roy.

Roy's *Manifesto* begins with a clear critique of both capitalism and Marxism which he notes was "heralded as the salvation of the civilised world, tortured and tormented by capitalist exploitation" (Roy 1947: 1), but had instead become "a spectre, terrifying not only the bourgeoisie; it is causing grave misgivings even amongst the progressive forces of the modern world" (Roy 1947: 1). In recognising the non-alterity of both systems as far as being oppressive and problematic, Roy's new philosophy notes

the similarity of structures of injustice. For Roy, Marxism is essentially unimaginative because it ultimately seeks to battle the imaginations of capitalism through a negation of imagination itself. A mere negation of an idea cannot be seen as a particularly creative or imaginative act. He notes how while the initial impetus of Marxism lies in its invocation of a "humanist romanticism" - demanding the freedom of the individual from the slavery of the grand system of capitalism, it instead had, in its manifestation - "proved that the new order was not to be a creation of man rising as Prometheus unbound; that human creativeness, in the intellectual, moral and cultural fields, was not to be unfettered; that the new order was to enshrine the collective ego of the proletariat, to claim subordination and sacrifice of individuals composing the class" (Roy, 1947: 2). Instead of providing for an unfettering of human potential, Roy notes that in its emphasis on alterity in comparison to capitalism, it had instead created a divided world on the brink of a global war. Further, in the communist system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Roy notes "a negation of all the social and ethical values which have given expression to the liberating urge of mankind ever since the Man of the Renaissance rose in revolt against spiritual regimentation under the banner of the Christian Church, and temporal totalitarianism of the Holy Roman Empire" (Roy, 1947: 7). Either ways, for Roy, the choice between communism and capitalism is a non-issue as "both are defective, much too inadequate to meet the requirements of the contemporary world. Both have been discredited in experience" (Roy, 1947: 7). For Roy, at the same time, the inherent fallacies of modern democracies make its polity severely limiting.

Echoing the arguments of Carl Schmitt, Roy recognises the structural limitations of liberal democracies, which not only effectively exclude the poorer sections, but also allows for practically unbridled power to majority parties - a loophole that allowed Hitler to democratically come to power. For Roy "Fascism grew out of the crisis of parliamentary democracy" (Roy, 1947: 9) and as such needs to strengthen against the state itself. Roy is indeed close to articulating an idea of a democracy that defines a state, rather than the system today, where the state defines its democracy, when he proposes that "An organised democracy, in a position to wield standing control of the State, should be the political foundation of the new social order" (Roy, 1947: 9). Roy is therefore arguing for a need to move beyond the binaries of democracy and dictatorship that are actually revealed to be interlinked faces of the same system. While the communist system is led by a dictatorship, it claims to function through the mechanism

of "Democratic Centralism"; while the capitalist system claims to be a Democracy, but remains geared towards dictatorial powers. Roy posits the need for a new imagination that moves beyond these false binaries, noting that "If the germs of Socialism or Communism grew in the womb of the capitalist society, then, the inspiration for a truly liberating philosophy of the future should also be found in the moral and spiritual values of the so-called bourgeois culture" (Roy, 1947: 9).

Roy's rejection of Marxism is in small measure due to the practical inefficiency of its economics, something he himself realised in a first hand manner when interacting directly with its stalwarts like Lenin. Marxism, in Roy's last analysis, is a negative criticism of capitalism. It does not propose any alternate system, either politically or economically. As Roy sums up-

> Faced with the problem of economic reconstruction, Lenin quickly realised that Marx had written nothing about it... Marx was concerned with the anatomy of capitalism, having for his object to lay bare its contradictions. ... A prophetic view of history precluded him from planning socialist reconstruction... Revolution should free them from the fetters of capitalism; thereafter the future would take care of itself. As an economist, Marx was a critic. There is nothing of social engineering or technology, in his voluminous writings... While defending his "New Economic Policy", Lenin said that in the works of Marx there was not a word on the economics of Socialism. Nor did Marx write anything about post-revolutionary political practice. He postulated proletarian dictatorship as the instrument for breaking down the resistance of the dethroned bourgeoisie. What would happen thereafter, how the post-revolutionary society would be politically organised and administered—that again was all left to the operation of the determined and yet incalculable forces of history... As regards the problem of economic inter-relations of the new order, he fell back on the anarchist ideal—"from each according to his ability, to each according to his need"—which Lenin characterised as a "useless slogan". (Roy, 1947: 10-11)

It was this lack of any theoretical formulation that led Roy to the conclusion that it was "arbitrary" to call the revolution in Russia Marxist. What happened instead was a

"purely pragmatic" implementation of a programme that was later given the title of Marxism-Leninism. Roy is clear that the new communist order "justifies inequity and unequal distribution of wealth" (Roy, 1947: 12) with the new group of party elites in power replacing the class of the bourgeoisie determining wages. Roy is clear in declaring the Russian communist model as "State Capitalism", with the Stalinist maxim of "Socialism in one country preclud(ing) the realisation of the ideal of international Communism" (Roy, 1947: 15). Instead of providing for universal freedom for mankind, communism ultimately devolved into antagonisms "justifies inequity and unequal distribution of wealth" (Roy, 1947: 15). At this point Roy emphasises again, the need for imagination, a creative vision beyond the existing supposed binaries of choice that are put up- "We must have faith in human ingenuity and the creativeness of the human mind, which are far from being exhausted" (Roy 1947: 15). Roy asserts his faith in this imaginative and humanist way forward, which he finds even in Marx- "Marx was not the dry-hearted mathematical prophet of history as he has been celebrated by his followers. He was a passionate Humanist; and, with a burning faith in revolution, he was also a romanticist. The idea of revolution is a romantic idea, because it presupposes man's power to remake the world in which he lives" (Roy, 1947: 21). Roy's critique of Marxist economics continues with his observation that without accumulation of surplus labour, it was impossible for a society to progress. Therefore, even in the Soviet system, there must be accumulation of surplus labour, because Soviet society was undoubtedly progressing, as claimed by its own proponents. Therefore the idea of the elimination of extraction of surplus labour was a utopian concept that allowed for the exploitation of workers by the communist state. Roy declares that the "fallacious doctrine of surplus value, and particularly the experience of its appropriation, provided the theoretical foundation of the dogma of class struggle" (Roy, 1947: 26), allowing for a predetermined reading of antagonistic class struggles down human history, ignoring "a cohesive tendency that held society together" (Roy, 1947: 26).

Further, Roy notes that the Marxist prediction of the eventual destruction of the middle class under capitalism has historically seen to be false. For Roy, socialism is not an ideology of the proletariat at all. He declares "Socialism, indeed is a middle class ideology" (Roy, 1947: 27). He notes that it was the intellectual force of the middle class and their antagonism with the status of the capitalists that made them feel a drive to join the proletariat for a more equitable world. However, it was impossible for the middle

class to dissolve its values. Roy notes- "They were, however, not culturally proletarianised. They were capable of appreciating cultural and moral values as the positive outcome of human civilisation, and would not sacrifice that precious heritage at the shrine of the revolutionary Providence of economic determinism" (Roy, 1947: 27). Nonetheless, the contradiction in Marxism remained- "the working class was unable to work out an independent ideology; it followed either the bourgeoisie or middle-class socialist intellectuals. That was a clear admission that the ideal of Socialism and the theory of the proletarian revolution were not born out of the experience of the working class; the one was conceived and the other created by middle-class intellectuals" (Roy, 1947: 28). In other words, Marxism ultimately was an imagined imposition of the middle class. It was not representative of the desires and needs of the working class, as much as it was a projection of the desires and needs of the middle class onto the working classes. The proletariat in the final analysis, like the nation, was only an imagined community. Further, it was this injection of the desires of the middle class onto the proletariat that created the role of the communist party as the vanguard of the proletariat. This would be similar to the role of the capitalist injecting the imagination of nationalism onto the society in order to further its own agenda. In the final analysis, it is important to overcome false binaries and realise that the central issue is one of locating oppression and fighting it. As Roy sums up- "The bourgeoisie versus the proletariat, capital versus labour, is no longer the central issue; indeed, it has never been, although it has been, and still is, an issue to be settled. The conflict of our age is between totalitarianism and democracy, between the all-devouring collective ego —nation or class—and the individual struggling for freedom" (Roy, 1947: 32-33). The point is to emancipate the individual man from strictures and for that we need to see beyond the presented binaries and alterities in order to evolve a radical alterity.

Roy's proposal for this radical alterity is to go back to the most basic unit of society, in the most universal way possible. His proposal is to completely dissolve imagined collective identities that are totalising, in order to embrace, in total, the individual. This is what he thinks is being radical - or in a more Marxist sense, to grasp the root of the issue is to realise that every individual is more important than any group imagination- "Radicalism thinks in terms neither of nation nor of class; its concern is man; it conceives freedom as freedom of the individual" (Roy, 1947: 36). For Roy, the future is a "cosmopolitan humanism" that transcends all imaginary identities, in order to

emancipate the individual imagination. Roy's continual emphasis in freeing imagination continues in imagining this new polity as- "an organisation of society as will give unlimited scope for the unfolding of the creative genius of man" (Roy, 1947: 44). The rest of Roy's manifesto goes on to propose structures of direct democracy, continuous people's participation in decision making, the right to constant recall of all elected officials at all levels etc. However, we shall end this survey by extracting the ideas that help us towards formulating a paracolonial praxis.

Firstly, Roy looks upon collective consciousness to be false imaginaries that ultimately are likely to destroy the freedom of the individual. Secondly, leading from this, the idea of freedom itself is not collective, although it may be imagined to be so - it is also individual. As such collective identities; of being colonial, postcolonial, capitalist, communist or nationalist are all likely to be limiting and off the mark at the level of the individual. Thirdly, individual human beings shape their societies and its imaginaries in complex relations that cannot be reduced to economy or any singular factor. As Roy puts it, "Cultural patterns and ethical values are not mere ideological super-structures of established economic relations. They are also historically determined—by the logic of the history of ideas" (Roy, 1947: 55). Fourthly, Roy moves beyond supposed alterities of capitalism and communism in order to posit the possibility of a radical alterity through imagination. Echoing Unger's maxim that "the world is made and imagined" by human beings, Roy elaborates how we can think of a democracy to come- "the function of a revolutionary and liberating social philosophy is to lay emphasis on the basic fact of history that man is the maker of his world—man as a thinking being, and he can be so only as an individual. The brain is a means of production, and produces the most revolutionary commodity. Revolutions presuppose iconoclastic ideas. An increasingly large number of men conscious of their creative power, motivated by the indomitable will to remake the world, moved by the adventure of ideas, and fired with the ideal of a free society of free men, can create the conditions under which democracy will be possible" (Roy, 1947: 58).

Gandhi's emphasis on non-alterity can be traced out in many of his sayings at crucial junctions. In 1931, after the Round Table Conference as well as the Non Cooperation Movement, Gandhi could calmly assert- "My nationalism is not so narrow that I should not feel for … [Englishmen's] distress or gloat over it. I do not want my

country's happiness at the sacrifice of other country's happiness" (Prabhu, 1967: 309). After the Quit India Resolution was passed, Gandhi would go on to nonetheless say- "My love of the British is equal to that of my own people. I claim no merit for it, for I have equal love for all mankind without exception. It demands no reciprocity. I own no enemy on earth. That is my creed" (Prabhu, 1967: 310). Even on matters of differences of religion, Gandhi could comfortably take positions of non-alterity- "I have always held that there is no distinction between the two [Hindus and Muslims]. Even though their observances differ, these do not separate them. They undoubtedly profess different religions, but they, like others, come from the same root" (Prabhu, 1967: 319). Gandhi's statements often abound in seeming inconsistencies. Unlike Roy, who was always attempting a certain coherence in his political philosophy, a sort of a logical grand narrative that was consistent, Gandhi seems to be comfortable in his inconsistency. On the one hand Gandhi could denounce the West and its civilization in unequivocal terms- "India's destiny lies not along the bloody way of the West, of which she shows signs of tiredness, but along the bloodless way of peace that comes from a simple and godly life. India is in danger of losing her soul. She cannot lose it and live. She must not therefore lazily and helplessly say, 'I cannot escape the onrush from the West'. She must be strong enough to resist it for her own sake and that of the world" (Prabhu, 1967: 321). On the other hand, he could quite equally argue for a meaningful gain and learning- "I am humble enough to admit that there is much that we can profitably assimilate from the West. Wisdom is no monopoly of one race. My resistance to Western civilization is really a resistance to its indiscriminate and thoughtless imitation based on the assumption that Asiatics are fit only to copy everything that comes from the West" (Prabhu, 1967: 324). Gandhi commented on this in *Young India,* noting "I must admit my many inconsistencies. But since I am called 'Mahatma', I might well endorse Emerson's saying that 'Foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.' There is, I fancy, a method in my inconsistencies. In my opinion, there is a consistency running through my seeming inconsistencies, as in Nature there is unity running through seeming diversity" (Prabhu, 1967: 49). Indeed, one of the consistent hallmarks of Gandhi is his ability to be inconsistent. Over a long career of politics and writing he has consistently changed his positions on most of his doctrine, holding firm only to the idea of ahimsa or non violence, and even there he cryptically states- "I would risk violence a thousand times rather than risk the emasculation of a whole race" (Prabhu, 1967: 144).

At the same time, he also notes that perhaps it is in his persual of nonviolence that he seems to be inconsistent- "Friends who know me have certified that I am as much a moderate as I am an extremist and as much a conservative as I am a radical. Hence, perhaps, my good fortune to have friends among these extreme types of men. The mixture is due, I believe, to my view of ahimsa" (Prabhu, 1967: 49). However, it is perhaps in his *Hind Swaraj* (1938) that we find the most concentrated collection of his core ideas - ideas that he himself claimed to have never changed as described by his secretary Madhav Desai in his introduction to the text. The only concession that Gandhi makes is that while he is still committed to the ideas of the book in totality, his "corporate activity is undoubtedly devoted to the attainment of Parliamentary Swaraj, in accordance with the wishes of the people of India" (Gandhi, 1938: 12). This is further collaborated in Gandhi's "Message" before the text where he declares "...after the stormy thirty years through which I have since passed, I have seen nothing to make me alter the views expounded in it" (Gandhi, 1938: 15).

Hind Swaraj is arranged as a series of conversations between an "Editor", which is Gandhi, and a "Reader" which is the reader of the text. It is arranged keeping in mind that it originated in the actual conversations between Gandhi and Indian workers in South Africa, as Gandhi himself declares in his "Message" (Gandhi, 1938:15). However, the efficacy of the text is undoubtedly increased in its utilisation of the Socratic dialogic enunciation of political thought. The text begins with an emphatic defence of the Indian National Congress which is accused of being ignored by "Young India" and seen as "an instrument for perpetuating British Rule" (Gandhi, 1938: 16). The allegations are from the point of view of an extremist revolutionary critical of the moderates in the Congress, who not only continued to revere Britishers, but also saw the potential for them to actively help in the improvement of the situation of India. Gandhi begins from a position of non-alterity in recounting the contributions of the Britishers in creating the Indian National Congress and in providing a system for criticism of British Rule in India. In particular, the conversation shifts on the role of Dadabhai Naoroji, whose theory of "Drain of Wealth" as published in *Poverty and un-British Rule in India* (1901) had created a strong empirical basis for criticisms of British rule. While the Reader attacks Naoroji for saying "that the English Governors will do justice and that we should cooperate with them" (Gandhi, 1938: 17), Gandhi defends Naoroji as the "author of nationalism" in India- "What does it matter that, today, his trust is still in the English

nation? Is Dadabhai less to be honoured because, in the exuberance of youth, we are prepared to go a step further? Are we, on that account, wiser than he? It is a mark of wisdom not to kick away the very step from which we have risen higher. The removal of a step from a staircase brings down the whole of it" (Gandhi, 1938: 18).

However, this is a temporary tactic as we shall see that Gandhi is more than willing to still trust in the English nation in his own way. At the same time he has already declared his willingness to move ahead and beyond the moderates. This subtle space for differentiating and allowing for a different future practice while still respecting the contribution of the moderates will mark out a new Gandhian way that will dominate the politics of the Congress till the Independence of India in 1947. Gandhi in many ways fulfils the role that T.S. Eliot outlines in his *Tradition and Individual Talent* (1921) where he notes the need for a continual re-engagement with the past in order to shape a new present. Gandhi realised a little before Eliot that to be truly radical and new, one had to nonetheless engage with traditions in a contemporary manner. There is no contradiction between tradition and modernity, moderates and extremists, colonisers and the colonised. What is important is to radically appropriate the past in order to present a radically altered future possibility. This, for Gandhi is by laying emphasis on non-alterity. To the Reader's question, "Are we, then, to follow... in every respect?" Gandhi replies "I never said any such thing. If we conscientiously differed..." (Gandhi, 1938: 19) with an emphasis on refusing to differentiate between people just because they think differently. He clarifies- "It is bad habit to say that another man's thoughts are bad and ours only are good and that those holding different views from ours are the enemies of the country" (Gandhi, 1938: 19), and presses on a refusal to engage with people as others on the basis of imagined identities such as nation or race-"I can never subscribe to the statement that all Englishmen are bad. Many Englishmen desire Home Rule for India (Gandhi, 1938: 19). For Gandhi, non-alterity is tactical real politics. He argues "if we shun every Englishman as an enemy, Home Rule will be delayed. But if we are just to them, we shall receive their support in our progress towards the goal" (Gandhi, 1938: 19-20). This idea of winning over the supposed other to one's cause will become an important goal of Gandhi's politics. Gandhi's defence of the Congress, at a time when it was beleaguered by the criticisms of the extremists also begins with it as an organisation that unites differences- "The Congress brought together Indians from different parts of India, and enthused us with the idea of nationality" (Gandhi, 1938: 20).

Therefore, the Congress becomes Gandhi's chosen organisation because he sees in it already the possibility of uniting the greatest spectrum of opposition to the exploitative British rule, including sections of the British themselves.

Gandhi's looking on the Partition of Bengal, not as the catalyst for the split between the Moderates and the Extremists (as most clearly seen in the Surat Congress of 1907), but rather as a "real awakening" of the people through which "the Nation is being forged" and as an event that prepared people to "lose their all" and made people "ready to resist" (Gandhi, 1938: 21) exemplifies his refusal to reduce schisms and differences of opinions to the point of denying alterities even if they are staring straight in the face. Referring to the Surat split as "such divisions will not last long", Gandhi unites in the movement protesting the partition of Bengal the best of the moderate and extremist politics, and the beginnings of a new phase of radical politics-

> Hitherto we have considered that for redress of grievances we must approach the throne, and if we get no redress we must sit still, except that we may still petition. After the Partition, people saw that petitions must be backed up by force, and that they must be capable of suffering. This new spirit must be considered to be the chief result of the Partition. That spirit was seen in the outspoken writings in the Press. That which the people said tremblingly and in secret began to be said and to be written publicly. The Swadeshi movement was inaugurated. People, young and old, used to run away at the sight of an English face; it now no longer awes them. They do not fear even a row, or being imprisoned. Some of the best sons of India are at present in banishment. This is something different from mere petitioning. Thus are the people moved. The spirit generated in Bengal has spread in the north to the Punjab, and in the south to Cape Comorin. (Gandhi, 1938: 22)

Therefore, Gandhi sees in the economic power of Swadeshi, and the political force of peaceful suffering the seeds of his own politics, which is far more radical than the politics of prayers and petitions of the moderates, as well as being far more balanced than the cult of the bomb and violence of the extremists. Gandhi's emphasis on non-alterity therefore already informs his criticism of violent means. While he welcomes being not content with the present state of affairs, he criticises resorting to violence to

undo discontent as something possibly self defeating in the long run. He notes, "As long as a man is contented with his present lot, so long is it difficult to persuade him to come out of it. Therefore it is that every reform must be preceded by discontent... Such discontent has been produced among us after reading the great works of Indians and Englishmen. Discontent has led to unrest, and the latter has brought about many deaths, many imprisonments, much banishment... All these may be considered good signs but they may also lead to bad results" (Gandhi, 1938: 23). In particular one must note Gandhi's emphasis that discontent is being propagated not only by Indians, but by Englishmen as well, and that therefore one cannot really look upon a clear binary in the articulation of oppression and emancipation. In fact Gandhi's next move is far more radical in declaring the idea of independence that was being commonly understood, in terms of largely retaining the existing idea of government, with a constitution, army and bureaucratic apparatus, was simply an assertion "that we want English rule without the Englishman... want the tiger's nature, but not the tiger" (Gandhi, 1938: 24). The root of Gandhi's ability to declare the essential non-alterity of such imaginations of independence lay in his recognition that they were essentially the same. This is worked out next in Gandhi's critique of modern democracy and the parliamentary mode of government.

While the Reader asserts that "The Parliament, being elected by the people, must work under public pressure. This is its quality" (Gandhi, 1938: 27), Gandhi criticises the Parliament for being composed of "members (who) are hypocritical and selfish" (Gandhi, 1938: 27). He feels that those in power are ultimately only compelled to proceed under the fear of being removed from power. He notes how even when questions of great importance are being discussed, its members are often uninterested and lackadaisical. He recalls Carlyle's criticism that it is the "talking shop of the world" and considers it to be a "costly toy of the nation" (Gandhi, 1938: 28). Overall he looks upon the centralising tendency of the Parliament in investing undue importance to the power of the Prime Minister who are known "to have made Parliament do things merely for party advantage" (Gandhi, 1938: 28), rather than work for the benefit of the people. He is even critical of the role of the media and the press, which are regarded as the watchdogs of democracy and significant in shaping public opinion by keeping them in touch with the progress of the Parliament. Gandhi sees in the newspapers an issue in their being "...often dishonest. The same fact is differently interpreted by different

newspapers, according to the party in whose interests they are edited" (Gandhi, 1938: 29). Gandhi ascribes these problems of the parliamentary system on the underlying faults of the western civilisation. Largely critical of the ideas of technological progress, in which Gandhi finds the seeds of unwarranted desires, oppression of the poor and laziness. Equating it with a disease, he echoes Marx in his prediction that "This civilization is such that one has only to be patient and it will be self-destroyed" (Gandhi, 1938: 32). Gandhi links up the attraction of this profit seeking civilisation and its charms as being the root reason why India lost its independence to the British.

> They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them... They came to our country originally for purposes of trade. Recall the Company Bahadur. Who made it Bahadur? They had not the slightest intention at the time of establishing a kingdom. Who assisted the Company's officers? Who was tempted at the sight of their silver? Who bought their goods? History testifies that we did all this. In order to become rich all at once we welcomed the Company's officers with open arms. We assisted them. When our Princes fought among themselves, they sought the assistance of Company Bahadur. That corporation was versed alike in commerce and war. It was unhampered by questions of morality. Its object was to increase its commerce and to make money. It accepted our assistance, and increased the number of its warehouses. To protect the latter it employed an army which was utilized by us also. Is it not then useless to blame the English for what we did at that time? The Hindus and the Mahomedans were at daggers drawn. This, too, gave the Company its opportunity and thus we created the circumstances that gave the Company its control over India. Hence it is truer to say that we gave India to the English than that India was lost. (Gandhi, 1938: 35-36)

Gandhi therefore proposes a radically new imagination for the success of colonialism. Unlike others who root in the inherent military and economic superiority of the coloniser, Gandhi ascribes it to the consent of the colonised. Colonisation does not proceed primarily through repression and against the will of the colonised, but rather by co-opting and incorporating members of the colonised into a system from which it profits as well in the common looting of the colonised space. Moreover, the problem is

located not in any inherent evil of the coloniser, but rather in the structural problems of modern civilisation. Gandhi opines "that India is being ground down, not under the English heel, but under that of modern civilization. It is groaning under the monster's terrible weight" (Gandhi, 1938: 38).

Gandhi's views regarding religious differences also come from non-alterity. "India cannot cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions live in it. The introduction of foreigners does not necessarily destroy the nation; they merge in it. A country is one nation only when such a condition obtains in it... In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms; nor has it ever been so in India" (Gandhi, 1938: 43-44). Gandhi reminds us that in India, there have always been multiple religious views, often at loggerheads- "...there are deadly proverbs as between the followers of Siva and those of Vishnu, yet nobody suggests that these two do not belong to the same nation. It is said that the Vedic religion is different from Jainism, but the followers of the respective faiths are not different nations. The fact is that we have become enslaved and, therefore, quarrel and like to have our quarrels decided by a third party. There are Hindu iconoclasts as there are Mahomedan. The more we advance in true knowledge, the better we shall understand that we need not be at war with those whose religion we may not follow" (Gandhi, 1938: 45).

Gandhi's problematisation of modern civilisation extends into a strong dislike for machinery, legal arbitration as well as medicine, but at the root of it all is a call for a different imagination of civilisation that he describes as- "Civilization is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms. To observe morality is to attain mastery over our mind and our passions. So doing, we know ourselves. The Gujarati equivalent for civilization means "good conduct (*sabhyata)*" (Gandhi, 1938: 55). In rooting the idea of civilisation with the idea of *sabhyata*, Gandhi underlines his conception of civilisation to be not linked so much to progress, as it is to being cultured. In the villages of India, where modern civilisation has not reached, Gandhi finds "India remains as it was before... The English do not rule over them, nor will you ever rule over them. Those in whose name we speak we do not know, nor do they know us." In some ways, Gandhi is of course advocating a form of primitivism and return to village economy, but he is not blind to its faults- "...it is also India where there are hundreds of child widows, where two year old

babies are married, where twelve year old girls are mothers and housewives, where women practise polyandry, where the practice of Niyoga obtains, where, in the name of religion, girls dedicate themselves to prostitution, and in the name of religion sheep and goats are killed." and Gandhi clearly looks on these as "defects", noting that "Attempts have always been made and will be made to remove them" (Gandhi, 1938: 57). However, Gandhi's vision clearly is to empower the village and the margins rather than the urban and the centre. However, when it comes to defining the idea of independence or swaraj, Gandhi comes up with the idea that "It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves" (Gandhi, 1938: 59). Unlike other thinkers who look on freedom as a result of some external action on our environment, Gandhi sees it as a result of our ability to control ourselves and our own desires that will prevent our environment from enslaving us.

Gandhi proposes a different strategy for attaining this swaraj - what he terms 'Satyagraha' or truth force or soul force. He locates this force not in the recounting of history, but rather in its absence. In an almost Derridean turn, he locates this force in the trace it leaves behind amidst the recounting of wars, that is central to what he considers to be the logic of western history-

> History, as we know it, is a record of the wars of the world, and so there is a proverb among Englishmen that a nation which has no history, that is, no wars, is a happy nation. How kings played, how they became enemies of one another, how they murdered one another is found accurately recorded in history, and if this were all that had happened in the world, it would have been ended long ago. If the story of the universe had commenced with wars, not a man would have been found alive today... The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love. Therefore, the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of this force is to be found in the fact that, in spite of the wars of the world, it still lives on. (Gandhi, 1938: 73-74)

In this exercise of soul-force, in the political arena, Gandhi proposes the central idea of passive resistance to unjust laws. Instead of resorting to violence, Gandhi

proposes the nonviolent path of simply refusing to abide with repressive laws even to the point of death. "The real meaning of the statement that we are a law-abiding nation is that we are passive resisters. When we do not like certain laws, we do not break the heads of law-givers but we suffer and do not submit to the laws" (Gandhi, 1938: 74). Gandhi believes that this soul force is superior to any majoritarian consensus, something he views with suspicion as quick to change, and subject to opinions that can be moulded by those in power. In the breaking of unjust laws, his anti-majoritarianism is essential in allowing for dissent against democratic systems, which may nonetheless be unjust. "It is a superstition and ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority. Many examples can be given in which acts of majorities will be found to have been wrong and those of minorities to have been right. All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to majorities. If among a band of robbers knowledge of robbing is obligatory, is a pious man to accept the obligation? So long as the superstition that men should obey unjust laws exists, so long will their slavery exist. And a passive resister alone can remove such a superstition" (Gandhi, 1938: 76). For Gandhi, Satyagraha becomes a potent and eternal force for ensuring resistance to tyranny even after transfer of power.

> Extremists are considered to be advocates of brute force. Why do they, then, talk about obeying laws? I do not blame them. They can say nothing else. When they succeed in driving out the English and they themselves become governors, they will want you and me to obey their laws. And that is a fitting thing for their constitution. But a passive resister will say he will not obey a law that is against his conscience, even though he may be blown to pieces at the mouth of cannon. (Gandhi, 1938: 77)

Passive resistance is found to be the perfect weapon for assertion of truth against oppression for Gandhi.

Gandhi therefore can be seen to have certain aspects of a paracolonial approach. When in the conclusion of *Hind Swaraj*, he is accused of belonging to a "third party... neither an extremist nor a moderate", he replies "We have to learn, and to teach others, that we do not want the tyranny of either English rule or Indian rule. If this idea were

carried out, both the extremists and the moderates could join hands" (Gandhi, 1938: 92). I have, of course, taken the liberty of removing from this review Gandhi's vilification of machinery, in particular of the railways, or his criticism of the professions of medicine and law. I have also steered clear of his ideas of western education and the role of the English language, as these are all outcomes of his position on modernity and not necessarily the outcome of the non-alterity that I have tried to uncover in his political philosophy. To sum up, Gandhi's political positions begin from a position of non-alterity. He refuses to look upon anyone as an other who must be vanquished, but rather as an other who must be won over. This position leads to the most aggressive putting forward of non-violence or ahimsa, with the faith that passive resistance will ultimately win over the oppressor, or the coloniser, to willingly dissociate from oppressive behaviour. At the root of this is Gandhi's belief that the majority of the colonisers behaved as they did because they were convinced of their own civilising mission. Gandhi's ideas worked because they challenged the imagination of colonial rule as modern and beneficial, rather revealing the underlying weakness of western modernity, while positing against it the inner strength of indigenous thought. Gandhi's political imagination was not so much a real attack on the structure of British rule. Although his promotion of swadeshi and boycott undoubtedly hurt British interests, it rather was an attack on the imagination of the colonial mission itself. Once the West became convinced of the immorality of its continued colonial ventures, it was the people of these western states who themselves granted independence to their erstwhile colonies.

Tagore's political views were arguably even more radical than those of Gandhi's. When Gandhi launched the Swadeshi movement and asked students to boycott British schools, Tagore refused to back the move. He recounts in a letter to Gandhi- "I remember the day, during the swadeshi movement in Bengal, when a crowd of young students came to see me in the first floor hall of our Vichitra House. They said to me that if I would order them to leave their schools and colleges they would instantly obey. I was emphatic in my refusal to do so, and they went away angry, doubting the sincerity of my love for my motherland" (Bhattacharya, 2001: 58). Tagore's reason for refusing to ask students to leave their schools was simple - he did not see any reason for students to back out of education when there was no alternative arrangement in place for them. Tagore's non-alterity perhaps went further than Gandhi's for him to be able to declare- "I believe in the true meeting of the East and the West. Love is the ultimate truth of soul.

We should do all we can, not to outrage that truth, to carry its banner against all opposition. The idea of non-cooperation unnecessarily hurts that truth. It is not our heart fire but the fire that burns out our hearth and home" (Bhattacharya, 2001: 59). Similarly, his attack on Gandhi's "cult of the Charkha" and rejection of machinery came from his belief in the impossibility of undoing human progress, which he saw as necessary to free the individual mind from mundane activities. "But if man be stunted by big machines, the danger of his being stunted by small machines must not be lost sight of" (Bhattacharya, 2001: 82), declared Tagore, arguing that forcing everyone to spend time spinning would only serve to prevent productive mental activity of individuals. He argues that it is in the nature of human beings to constantly progress and strive to free themselves from the binds of nature by creating better tools, and clearly presents in Gandhi a romanticism that is untenable in practical reality. Tagore's political views regarding the nation are most fully traced out in his lectures on nationalism that he gave in Japan and the United States. While Tagore is often at variance with Gandhi, we can find in them both a deep concern with prevailing injustice and the refusal to brand any particular group as the other.

Tagore's book *Nationalism* (1917) collects three different essays, entitled "Nationalism in the West", "Nationalism in Japan" and "Nationalism in India", apart from the poem "The Sunset of the Century". In some ways the three essays are connected, and often echo ideas from one another. The essay "Nationalism in the West" begins with a new look at why we at all create collective identities and also how such collectives imply differentiation. The essay begins with, "Man's history is being shaped according to the difficulties it encounters. These have offered us problems and claimed their solutions from us, the penalty of non-fulfilment being death or degradation. These difficulties have been different in different peoples of the earth, and in the manner of our overcoming them lies our distinction" (Tagore, 1917: 13). For Tagore, the root of the need for creating collective identities is in the need for overcoming some common obstacle, and also that it is in how the collective decides to overcome that obstacle that the identity of the collective is established. Tagore therefore imagines a primordial material need that initially provides an impetus for collectivisation, and notes that it is the organisation of collective that powers not only freedom "from the tyranny of Nature and human neighbours", but notes how the "surplus of it (power) left in their hands" allows it to be "employ(ed) against others" (Tagore, 1917: 14-15). At the very outset

Tagore places in the drive for collectivisation the blame for the seeds of oppression. However, he also finds in collective action the means to escape from tyranny. Adopting a middle path, he concludes that "Neither the colourless vagueness of cosmopolitanism, nor the fierce self-idolatry of nation-worship is the goal of human history" (Tagore, 1917: 15). However, for Tagore, the goal of human history is to ultimately realise a global non-alterity, a goal that he seeks to locate as an integral part of Indian philosophy. Instead of exerting power abroad and flexing its military power, Tagore presents India as having been engaged through history in "social regulation of differences, on the one hand, and the spiritual recognition of unity, on the other" (Tagore, 1917: 15). He feels that the central purpose of humanity is to ensure that collective identities are regulated to ensure that they do not fall into violence and savagery that he ascribes the nomadic Scythians. Instead, in the development of Indian philosophy, he finds that the great thinkers and their works have had the singular goal "to set at naught all differences of man by the overflow of our consciousness of God" through "sympathy and true realization of the unity of man" (Tagore, 1917: 16). When Tagore describes India before the advent of colonialism, it is interesting that he describes it as "of no nations" (Tagore 1917: 17). While we can be sceptical of Tagore's vision of a pristine past, his observation that colonialism was unique in introducing "the Nation of the West driving its tentacles of machinery" (Tagore, 1917: 18) places the beginnings of Indian nationalism as a postcolonial development, while looking on India as a primordial entity.

Tagore differentiates between nations and races, suggesting that races found it easier to interact and share across boundaries than nations, which were more exclusive and watertight. Tagore defines - "A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of a people, is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organized for a mechanical purpose" (Tagore, 1917: 19). This is in contrast to the idea of society, that is "a spontaneous self-expression of man as a social being" and "has no ulterior motive". Tagore locates the requirement for politics as "only for a special purpose... self-preservation", however, noting that with growth in power this collective for preservation "occupies more and more space in society, and at last becomes its ruling force" (Tagore, 1917: 20). Tagore finds in the principle of a nation organising individuals, the replacement of individuality in a society with an artificial, lifeless set of principles. He saw in this the replacement of human "living bonds" with "mechanical organisation".

Tagore sees in nationalism the replacement of cooperation with competition, and the reestablishment of "the psychology of the primitive fighting elements rather than of humanity seeking its completeness" (Tagore, 1917: 21).

Tagore notes that anarchism and labour unrests have been made possible because the nation already has transformed into a system for the production and management of wealth, at the detriment of individuals. Tagore's idea of the nation-state is therefore the bourgeoisie nation which is primarily a "wealth-producing mechanism... incessantly growing into vast stature, out of proportion to all other needs of society, - (with) the full reality of man is more and more crushed under its weight." It is in response to this oppression that Tagore locates the left movement- "This state of things inevitably gives rise to eternal feuds among the elements freed from the wholeness and wholesomeness of human ideals, and interminable economic war is waged between capital and labour" (Tagore 1917: 22). Tagore's words sum up the feeling of alienation that capitalism produces- "When this engine of organization begins to attain a vast size, and those who are mechanics are made into parts of the machine, then the personal man is eliminated to a phantom" (Tagore 1917: 23). However, Tagore also notes how this alienation and dehumanisation impacts the left response as well. The Left, for Tagore, rather like Roy, becomes problematic as it soon loses its human and ethical moorings to become "a revolution of policy carried out by the human parts of the machine, requiring no twinge of pity or moral responsibility" (Tagore 1917: 23). For Tagore, the nation represents the possibility of completely ignoring its constituents from "a disdainful distance" (Tagore, 1917: 24), rather like "an octopus of abstractions, sending out its wriggling arms in all directions of space, and fixing its innumerable suckers even into the far-away future" (Tagore, 1917: 25). Tagore constantly relates nations with machinery, comparing the government of the nation with a powerloom.

Tagore acknowledges the role that the western idea of universal justice has played- "This reign of law in our present Government in India has established order in this vast land inhabited by peoples different in their races and customs. It has made it possible for these peoples to come in closer touch with one another and cultivate a communion of aspiration" (Tagore, 1917: 30). However, he notes that this ability to gain from the west cannot be made contingent on being under the thumb of western nations. He also puts forward the case of Japan and its successful challenging of the western

powers arguing that western modernity had been effective in the country because it had not been under colonial rule. "Only because Japan had been able to resist the dominance of this Western nation could she acquire the benefit of the Western civilization in fullest measure" (Tagore, 1917: 30-31). Tagore would largely support the notion that independence and freedom are prerequisites to the successful interaction between two cultures. In his opinion, colonialism has actually reduced the amount of positive interaction between the West and the East- "The benefit of the Western civilization is doled out to us in a miserly measure by the Nation trying to regulate the degree of nutrition as near the zero point of vitality as possible. The portion of education allotted to us is so raggedly insufficient that it ought to outrage the sense of decency of a Western humanity" (Tagore, 1917: 31-32). Tagore makes the same argument as Lenin does in labelling the western nations as necessarily colonial and exploitative due to mutual competition for resources. He comments that "these nations are fighting among themselves for the extension of their victims and their reserve forests" (Tagore, 1917: 33) and says that it is in the nature of this competitive western civilisation to actually keep its benefits from being extended to the colonised "Because this civilization is the civilization of power, therefore it is exclusive, it is naturally unwilling to open its sources of power to those whom it has selected for its purposes of exploitation" (Tagore, 1917: 33). Tagore is particularly critical of the colonial government, which while he admits, does provide law and order, nonetheless does so by taking away the power of the individual and the ability to come up with innovative means of overcoming them. For Tagore, what is of essence is that the modern nation impinges on the ability of individuals to imagine ways forward. In times before the colonial rule, "the hope of the unexpected was never absent, and a freer play of imagination... had its effect in the making of history. We were not confronted with a future which was a dead white wall of granite blocks eternally guarding against the expression and extension of our own powers..." (Tagore, 1917: 37). However, Tagore does not see colonialism as the primary problem at all. In a paracolonial turn, he recognises that the roots of imperialism can be traced back to nationalism, something that he sees in the rise of the militant Japanese nationalism which he saw as "the voluntary submission of the whole people to the trimming of their minds and clipping of their freedom by their government, which through various educational agencies regulates their thoughts, manufactures their feelings...The people accept this all-pervading mental slavery with cheerfulness and

pride because of their nervous desire to turn themselves into a machine of power, called the Nation, and emulate other machines in their collective worldliness" (Tagore, 1917: 39). Tagore's prophecy regarding Japan would come true and contribute to the devastation of Eastern Asia during the Second World War.

For Tagore, nationalism naturally would lead a people towards violence as a part of the competition it inspires with other nations. As such Tagore refuses to locate the evils of colonial oppression only in the colonies. He says to the people of the western nations, "the weakening of humanity from which the present age is suffering is not limited to the subject races, and that its ravages are even more radical because insidious and voluntary in peoples who are hypnotized into believing that they are free. This bartering of your higher aspirations of life for profit and power has been your own free choice, and I leave you there, at the wreckage of your soul, contemplating your protuberant prosperity" (Tagore, 1917: 40-41). For Tagore, the real reason for expansionism and empire stems from the fear that nations carry within them the possibility of another nation outdoing them. Therefore, nations can only be secure once it outdoes other nations by fighting and destroying them. The root of differences amongst the people of the world is to be found in the idea of nation itself, rather than in the economic system of capitalism. The drive for nationalism, along with the development of science, machinery and intellect has been at the cost of upholding moral values. Tagore asserts that "Man in his fullness is not powerful, but perfect" (Tagore, 1917: 50). As far as he is concerned, the entire logic of western civilisation, rooted in nationalism is designed to ultimately fall into the chaos of violence. At the bottom of it all, Tagore accuses nationalism of leading to a loss of ethics in the name of expediency- "...the Nation is one of the most powerful anaesthetics that man has invented. Under the influence of its fumes the whole people can carry out its systematic programme of the most virulent self-seeking without being in the least aware of its moral perversion, - in fact feeling dangerously resentful if it is pointed out" (Tagore, 1917: 57). In the First World War, Tagore finds the wholesale slaughter of men on the altar of nationalism as the logical culmination of the grand process of the collectivising and othering that began in antiquity. "The veil has been raised, and in this frightful war the West has stood face to face with her own creation, to which she had offered her soul" (Tagore, 1917: 59), he writes. Tagore finishes his first essay by calling for a need to go beyond the boundaries of nations and to find across the world an equal brotherhood.

Tagore's second essay in the collection titled "Nationalism in Japan" continues the attack that has been laid out in the first essay, but concentrates more on the case of Japan at the turn of the century. Having modernised itself under the Meiji restoration and defeated both China and the European nation of Russia, Japan had established itself as one of the great powers of the world after the First World War. Under a militant government, Japan had already embarked on policies of military development and nationalism that would erupt in its expansion and the Second World War. Tagore's essay, which was not particularly well received, was prophetic in predicting the dangers of ultra-nationalism. The essay begins by noting that civilisations go through periods of rapid development as well as dormancy and notes how in Japan's "sudden revealment of her power" (Tagore, 1917: 68) there lies a "legacy of ancient cultures from the East" (Tagore, 1917: 69). Unlike the prevalent discourse which saw Japan and its rapid modernization to be a consequence of the adoption of western norms, Tagore puts forwards the view that the reasons for Japan's sudden strides lie in her ancient traditions. He says that he "cannot believe that Japan has become what she is by imitating the west" (Tagore, 1917: 70). For Tagore, Japan's coming to the world stage provides an opportunity for the evolution of a critique of western civilisation based on nationalism. He advises the Japanese to "apply your Eastern mind, your spiritual strengths, your love of simplicity, your recognition of social obligation, in order to cut out a new path for this great unwieldy car of progress, shrieking out its loud discords as it runs. You must minimise the immense sacrifice of man's life and freedom that it claims in its every movement" (Tagore, 1917: 73-74). Tagore is not advocating a primitivism or a rejection of western modernity as much as he is emphasising the need to adapt from the west critically. He tells Japan "of all the countries in Asia, here in Japan you have the freedom to use the materials you have gathered from the West according to your need. Therefore your responsibility is all the greater..." (Tagore, 1917: 74)

Tagore proposes going back to a non-national framework that had existed before competitive western nationalism separated the world into warring camps. His vision of a non-alterity driven interaction is summed up in the following lines.

> I cannot but bring to your mind those days when the whole of Eastern Asia from Burma to Japan was united with India in the closest tie of friendship, the only natural tie which can exist between nations. There

> was a living communication of hearts, a nervous system evolved through which messages ran between us about the deepest needs of humanity. We did not stand in fear of each other, we had not to arm ourselves to keep each other in check; our relation was not that of self-interest, of exploration and spoliation of each other's pockets; ideas and ideals were exchanged, gifts of the highest love were offered and taken; no difference of languages and customs hindered us in approaching each other heart to heart; no pride of race or insolent consciousness of superiority, physical or mental, marred our relation; our arts and literatures put forth new leaves and flowers under the influence of this sunlight of united hearts; and races belonging to different lands and languages and histories acknowledged the highest unity of man and the deepest bond of love. May we not also remember that in those days of peace and goodwill, of men uniting for those supreme ends of life, your nature laid by for itself the balm of immortality which has helped your people to be born again in a new age, to be able to survive its old outworn structures and take on a new young body, to come out unscathed from the shock of the most wonderful revolution that the world has ever seen? (Tagore, 1917: 75-76)

Tagore's ideas of a world of positive interactions across differences of language, race, religion and other markers that constitute the identities of nations provide for a historical validation of the possibility of non-alterity. Tagore is referring to the spread of Indian philosophies, religions and art across Eastern Asia from antiquity to medieval times without the use of force. In the spread of Buddhism as well as Vedic culture in China and Japan, as well as Malaysia, Cambodia and Indonesia, Tagore finds the possibilities for a healthy interaction across differences. Tagore locates that the longevity of a civilisation does not come from military strength and technological progress. He notes "the lamp of ancient Greece is extinct in the land where it was first lighted, the power of Rome lies dead and buried under the ruins of its vast empire. But the civilisation, whose basis is society and the spiritual ideal of man, is still a living thing in China and in India" (Tagore, 1917: 78). Tagore refutes the idea that the West is about progress while the East is lazy and static. This is a common charge that many Orientalists would make. Tagore compares civilisation in the West to a rushing train and civilisation in the East to a tree. He notes that while the train appears to be moving, it is

actually lifeless and dead while the static tree is definitely alive. In his opinion- "the East with her ideas, in whose bosom are stored the ages of sunlight and silence of stars, can patiently wait till the West, hurrying after the expedient, loses breath and stops" (Tagore, 1917: 81). Tagore differentiates Eastern civilisation which is not based on nationalism as an alternate system:

> Eastern Asia has been pursuing its own path, evolving its own civilization, which was not political but social, not predatory and mechanically efficient, but spiritual and based upon all the varied and deeper relations of humanity. The solutions of the life problems of peoples were thought out in seclusion and carried out behind the security of aloofness, where all the dynastic changes and foreign invasions hardly touched them. But now we are over-taken by the outside world, our seclusion is lost forever. Yet this we must not regret, as a plant should never regret when the obscurity of its seed-time is broken. Now the time has come when we must make the world problem our own problem; we must bring the spirit of our civilization into harmony with the history of all nations of the earth; we must not, in foolish pride, still keep ourselves fast within the shell of the seed and the crust of the earth which protected and nourished our ideals; for these, the shell and the crust, were meant to be broken, so that life may spring up in all its vigour and beauty, bringing its offerings to the world in open light. (Tagore, 1917: 85-86)

Tagore, therefore, views the norms of Eastern civilisation not as something in opposition to nationalism or the West but rather as something which will help remove the faults of Western civilisation itself. It is this task of morally enriching the West while taking from it all that is necessary for its own growth that Tagore places on the East in general and Japan in particular. Tagore's critique of nationalism extends from an underlying philosophy of universal love and non-violence. He notes how-

> where the spirit of the Western nationalism prevails, the whole people is being taught from boyhood to foster hatreds and ambitions by all kinds of means, by the manufacture of half-truths and untruths in history, by persistent misrepresentation of other races and the culture of

> unfavourable sentiments towards them, by setting up memorials of events, very often falls, which for the sake of humanity should be speedily forgotten, thus continually brewing evil menace towards neighbours and nations other than their own. This is poisoning the very fountainhead of humanity. (Tagore, 1917: 98)

Tagore's final essay entitled "Nationalism in India" carries forward the ideas he has already set out with a more focussed attention on India. The essay was delivered as a lecture in America, to a Western audience. For Tagore, India is different from the West and has completely different primary problems than the West. However, he also believes that in the solution of that problem lies the solution of the "world problem as well" (Tagore 119). For Tagore the "real problem in India is not political. It is social. This is a condition not only prevailing in India, but among all nations. I do not believe in an exclusive political interest" (Tagore, 1917: 117). For Tagore, this problem largely boils down to the issue of othering, differentiation between peoples on the basis of caste, creed or way of loving, something he subsumed under the broader heading which he calls the "race problem" (Tagore, 1917: 118). Tagore locates in this a sort of pernicious differentiation that has been pre-national, and definitely pre-colonial, the problem has existed "from the earliest beginning of history" (Tagore, 1917: 118). For Tagore, the choice before mankind is one which is of following interests based on the identification of a self with certain characteristics, and the other with opposite characteristics; and the refusal of such differentiating identifications for a location of common interests despite individual, and not only collective, differences that may nonetheless remain. Tagore outlines his support for a radical non-alterity, which he also dubs as civilisation-

> Each individual has his self-love. Therefore his brute instinct leads him to fight with others in the sole pursuit of his self-interest. But man has also his higher instincts of sympathy and mutual help. The people who are lacking in this higher moral power and who therefore cannot combine in fellowship with one another must perish or live in a state of degradation. Only those peoples have survived and achieved civilization who have this spirit of cooperation strong in them. So we find that from the beginning of history men had to choose between fighting with one another and combining, between serving their own interest or the common

interest of all. (Tagore, 1917: 119-120)

For Tagore, therefore it was in the ability of combining and intermixing ideas across supposed differences that allowed for people to really improve and move beyond their immediate issues. He sees in the "moral spirit of combination... the true basis of their greatness, and this fostered their art, science and religion" (Tagore, 1917: 120). In other words, it is in the ability to overcome differences and find common grounds that allows for a truly constructive praxis. Therefore, the choice is one of where "the different groups of peoples shall go on fighting with one another or find out some true basis of reconciliation and mutual help; whether it will be interminable competition or cooperation" (Tagore, 1917: 121). At the end of the First World War, Tagore could turn this idea into a universal maxim- "I have no hesitation in saying that those who are gifted with the moral power of love and vision of spiritual unity, who have the least feeling of enmity against aliens, and the sympathetic insight to place themselves in the position of others will be the fittest to take their permanent place in the age that is lying before us, and those who are constantly developing their instinct of fight and intolerance of aliens will be eliminated" (Tagore, 1917: 121). Tagore sees in the destiny of India "to find out something common to all races, which will prove their real unity. No nation looking for a mere political or commercial basis of unity will find such a solution sufficient" (Tagore, 1917: 127). In locating the unity of races in something beyond the immediate and the economic, Tagore is suggesting a different way of imagining society, beyond the clash of capital as well as nations. "India has never had a real sense of nationalism. Even though from childhood I had been taught that the idolatry of Nation is almost better than reverence for God and humanity, I believe I have outgrown that teaching, and it is my conviction that my countrymen will gain truly their India by fighting against that education which teaches them that a country is greater than the ideals of humanity" (Tagore 1917: 127). This theme of learning from and mutually gaining from each other is evidenced in Tagore's acceptance of aspects of western civilisation- "I am not for thrusting off Western civilization and becoming segregated in our independence. Let us have a deep association" (Tagore, 1917: 130). This is so deep seated that Tagore is willing to even consider English overlordship. He declares- "If Providence wants England to be the channel of that communication, of that deeper association, I am willing to accept it with all humility" (Tagore, 1917: 131). This deep seated belief in non-alterity lets Tagore to declare "I am not against one nation in

particular, but against the general idea of all nations" (Tagore, 1917: 131) and that "Nationalism is a great menace" (Tagore, 1917: 133). Tagore finishes the essay with a strong indictment of nationalism. He is even critical of the idea of political freedom, especially at the cost of social freedom. This is clear when he mentions- "Those of us in India who have come under the delusion that mere political freedom will make us free have accepted their lessons from the West as the gospel truth and lost their faith in humanity. We must remember whatever weakness we cherish in our society will become the source of danger in politics" (Tagore, 1917: 145). His laying emphasis on the social is clear- "When our nationalists talk about ideals, they forget that the basis of nationalism is wanting. The very people who are upholding these ideals are themselves the most conservative in their social practice" (Tagore, 1917: 146).

Tagore's paracolonialism can therefore be rooted in his complete objection to othering. He is clear on his opinions. He is certain that the central issue is one of othering. He roots the imagination of nationalism in othering and therefore he rejects it. He clearly roots in the importance of a parallel social imagination in his constant reiteration of the race problem as being central to India. For Roy, Gandhi as well as Tagore, non-alterity becomes central in imagining a new political praxis that seeks to not reduce individuals to any singular immediate identity. In some ways their political views close the circle for release that Vemula articulates in demanding the freedom of 'Man from Man'. What is central to these thinkers is the rethinking of alterity in order to reveal its absence, which is the central idea of being paracolonial. In contrast we can find in the other major political figures of the independence period a heightening of the sense of alterity, a politics of deploying alterity in order to try and end it.

CONCLUSION

Through this PhD, I had initially set for myself the limited goal of interrogating postcolonialism in order to reach a better understanding about its structural nuances. However, through my study, I realised that there are many postcolonialisms. Rather than promoting a simplistic structure or framework guiding discourse, postcolonialism has, over the years, become a discourse in itself. Nonetheless, using the idea of non-alterity, I have tried to demonstrate through the thesis that it is possible to imagine new ways of describing cultural productions from the erstwhile colonised spaces by going beyond the debates of postcolonialism. Moreover, in this going beyond, there is actually a return to the time space that engendered the formulations of postcolonial theory. In the clash between the coloniser and the colonised in the context of the Indian subcontinent while it is true that many thinkers fall into alterity paradigms, it is equally true that propositions for non-alterities begin almost simultaneously. However, non-alterity should not be seen as non-resistive or non-confrontational. Indeed the thinkers I have taken up, including Gandhi, Tagore as well as Roy, have been bitter opponents of colonialism, imperialism or oppression in general. The paracolonial praxis takes forward this opposition to injustice only without lapsing into othering as a strategy for resistance. Through this thesis, I have tried to show that the creation of collective identities has largely been through the process of othering. The identity so created is an imagined identity that usually must be supported through a recreation of history. Moreover, the purpose of such collective identity is usually resistant to some other collective source of oppression. Taking a cue from Tagore, I would argue that the formation of the collective identity itself is deeply problematic and likely to create structures of oppression even on the individuals who are imagined to constitute that community, especially if the imagination of the community principally stems from othering. This does not denote an argument against the formation of collectives. What I am arguing against, is the formation of collectives on the basis of alterity.

The opposite of alterity is identity. However, in the field of alterity studies it is usually more common to use the term ipseity. The term comes from the Latin "ipse" which literally means "the self". In contrast the word 'identity' comes from the Latin root "id" meaning "it" or "the one", combined with the demonstrative suffix "-dem", which

gives us the meaning "the same as". Either ways, alterity is seen in opposition to oneself or something that is not the same as oneself. The precondition for alterity to develop is confrontation. It is only through the encounter that one recognises the other. However, encounters do not necessarily need to lead to othering. Confrontations can also lead to exchange and communication that eventually can help form bonds built on mutual respect and recognition. When "I" meets "you", in a non-confrontational setting we can evolve towards a mutually respectful recognition of each other that 'I' shall refer to as "thou-ness". Evidently I am taking the idea directly from Levinas who looks upon the idea of god as the radical unknowable other. However, in our interactions with this complete 'other', apart from the minority confrontational mode, the majoritarian response is one of respectful reverence that can be summed up in the address "thou". Therefore, in the binary between self-ness and same-ness on the one hand, and other-ness and difference on the other, as interactive strategies, apart from confrontation, we also have the possibility of respectful recognition that can function as a precursor to meaningful interaction and exchange. The underlying principle is that confrontation will inevitably lead to break down and mutual harm. So no matter what the difficulties, a meaningful praxis must emphasise translation of ideas and values rather than aggression.

For the sake of completing the list of possibilities when the self encounters the other, we must also take into consideration the possibility of complete non-interaction or silence in opposition to the dialogues of violence and cooperation. While on the face of it, such an approach seems practically irrelevant especially in our study of postcolonialism, I would like to point out that the advocacy for such a strategy often has institutional support. The field of ethnology, for example, for a long time advocated the complete delimiting of indigenous aboriginal people in confines sanitised of interactions with modernity. Even otherwise, arguments to let societies that do not fall into the structures of mainstream modernity, remain as they are, form a powerful discourse of non-engagement in the name of preserving civilisational differences. I would like to make clear that paracolonialism cannot fall prey to such justifications for the creation of simulated separation. Female circumcision cannot be defended as cultural difference, neither can the caste system or patriarchy. Strategies of silence on encountering the other ultimately stem from a conviction of superiority and a fear of taking a position. In some ways, the refusal to interact can be much worse than confrontation as well.

Postcolonial theory has existed for more than half a century, though its relevance in today's world has increasingly been brought into question. The world today is still separated into camps of the oppressor and the oppressed on the basis of structures that have their roots in colonialism. The imposition of western normativities as the best of evils amongst choices available to erstwhile colonized spaces is ultimately a limited imagination. That the East, the less developed and the weaker must adopt western modes in order to progress is accepted uncritically. Postcolonialism, in this regard, instead of replacing the binary of the West and the East or alterities based on other differences, usually seeks to repackage the same binaries and alterities into erstwhile colonised spaces only from an opposite perspective.

Colonialism is marked out to be an excess of capitalism supported by imperialism. However, my thesis roots colonialism as an imagination of warranted intervention over and above its direct relation to supposed economic imperatives. Colonialism is preceded by the creation of an imagination of "other" spaces as locations ripe for exploitation and conquest. The "other" space is constructed as feminine, weak, culturally and socially backward; yet rich, exotic and full of possibilities. The colonialist is encouraged to see the "other" land as a destination, a space to fulfil his destiny. They see themselves as agents of change and betterment for the colonised space which they see as improving because of their intervention. Colonialism is therefore a project that morally empowers the coloniser by letting them imagine that their intervention is necessary and beneficial. They see themselves as carrying the White Man's Burden of civilising the world even if they are not white men per se.

Colonialism is not exclusive to modernity. It can be traced out through antiquity and the middle ages. Further, it is not exclusive to the West or capitalised nations. Practically the entire world has been colonised at some point in its history and most spaces have been colonised multiple times by multiple people. Being postcolonial, therefore, cannot be a sheer moral or righteous claim. It cannot be seen as an end in itself, as a mere description. It can also not be used as a bargaining counter for demanding special privileges. In the last analysis, it must be recognised as a universal historical fact. Erstwhile colonised spaces like the United States have emerged as world leaders today. Other spaces that have had a colonial past have fallen prey to colonialism themselves. Being a colony at one time does not mean that at a later time the same space cannot or will not colonise others, and vice versa.

The colonial imagination is primarily based on the difference between the colony and the metropolis; the space for resource extraction and the space for resource utilisation. The two are linked as imaginary "others". The colony is the space giving the metropolis resources and in return the metropolis provides for cohesion and the rule of law and order. However, in reality this is not a benevolent willing exchange. The metropolis constructs itself as superior, and more important with its colony as the dependent "other". To be postcolonial is to try and reverse the alterity that colonialism imposes or at least to negate it. This means that postcolonialism is still based on the recognition of alterity. The coloniser and the colonised are seen as locked in an endless conflict for domination. Even in the term postcolonial, we find implied an alterity from colonial rule in a temporal sense of being after it. The colonial empire is therefore based on the subjugation and oppression of the other – the colonised, while it pretends the interaction to be an exchange of resource for rule, stability and civilisation. The postcolonial in this respect is an extension of the logic of alterity in so far as it proposes a revision of this oppression.

The logic of imperialism can be unearthed through a study of its underlying principle of maximising economic returns. This is continued today through the modes of neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism, which are largely a continuation of colonialism without direct political control. However, as Goudie describes, such modes of exploitation are precolonial as well as postcolonial. The creation of Banana Republics existed from before western colonialism and continues today after the end of the same. In some ways, they exhibit a paracolonial condition in existing beyond as well as through colonialism. The fact that colonial modes of alterity can exist without direct colonisation means that postcolonialism as a project in opposition to colonialism is limited. The case of the Balkans provides an example of such colonialisms without colonisation; modes of othering that require a paracolonial response. The propagation of colonial narratives in Imperial Germany, which had very little colonial progressions as well as in Britain which was the most prolific coloniser that the world has seen, show that colonialism works without direct politics through imaginations of othering. Its response must be through an imagination of non-alterity. Paracolonialism is an imagination of non-alterity in the face of alterity driven oppression.

However, just because paracolonialism is an imagination, it does not make it less potent in shaping the material world. Since imagination is labour, and labour and production requires imagination, imagination has the potential to change the world. By recognising that labour through technae as well as poesis through human labour are imaginative making and centralising imagination in the creation of the new, the potential for truth as the new in imagination is reached. Through imagination, the possibility of thinking of new relevant ways of theorising is made possible. At the same time, imagined communities are seen to be essentially based on "othering". Through a better imagination, ways of going beyond this othering must be possible.

The idea of sovereignty in this respect becomes the guardian enforcing this imagined alterity. Moreover the sovereign stands above the laws in being able to regulate the alterity. While this regulation is supposed to be for the benefit of the entire imagined community, the sovereign naturally is in a position to take decisions to further their own benefits to the exclusion of their imagined communities. Paracolonialism proposes a movement beyond looking on sovereignty as the enforcer of alterities. In this respect the notion of sovereignty must be criticised as promoting alterities, in order to ensure the identity of the imagined community through continued "othering".

Democracy in this regard must be seen as something that is in a constant tussle with alterity. However, rather than being the rule of the people, democracy has become a mechanism for managing alterities within an imagined community. Nonetheless, democracy as a principle cannot be limited by identity. Further, democracy must ensure the rights of the entire people and not merely a majority or a vocal subset of the whole. Therefore, the paracolonial imagination proposes a movement from sovereignties based on alterities in order to free the democratic potential. Sovereignty must ensure that democracy moves from being a mediation of alterity to being an acceptance of non-alterity.

The declaration by Dabashi that postcolonialism is at an end comes from his recognition of the growing realisation of non-alterity. The West and the rest no longer exist as alterities in this post digital and post global world. The sovereignties of states as well as collectives which are the guardians of alterities are dissolving with the erosion of monetary sovereignty as well as the growing role of multinational organisations. The

rise of access to public cosmopolitan spaces on the ground as well as online, is accelerating non-alterity through interactions between groups that reveal the imaginations of their differences to be limited. The centrality of oppression and subjugation of economic gains is becoming clearer across seeming alterities and is forming a common link for imagining unities. Postcolonialism, meanwhile, has been relegated to being a simulation of resistance and a block on imagination.

Decolonization as a political claim has been exposed as being lopsided in usually attacking the First World as the perpetrator of colonialism to the exclusion of all else. The issue of colonisations by the Second and Third World have largely been ignored. This comes from the influence of Marxist thinkers who concentrated their efforts on attacking the capitalist west and ignore the realities of colonial modes and relations in the rest of the world. The liberation of the First World colonies as well as movements on gender, racial equality or religious freedom that have been successful in sustaining themselves in the long run can be rooted back to the acceptance of non-alterity rather than through confrontations and the propagation of alterities. Decolonization, therefore, is merely the end of colonial rule of the metropolis, only a transfer of power from one set of ruling elites to a native set of ruling elites and not an end of the underlying imaginations of alterities that colonialism is based on. The failures of decolonization include the inability to deal with widening economic disparities, environmental degradation or even wider democratic participation.

Postcolonialism is largely oriented towards providing frameworks for perceiving the world after colonialism and problematising the cultural and social baggage that colonialism brings with it. It has less to do with direct resistive praxis because it situates itself historically in the development of theory to a period after the end of the great movements for decolonization. Whereas decolonization emphasises an imagined unity, many postcolonial scholars aggravated differences amongst the erstwhile colonised by locating subaltern classes, castes, races, nations and sub-nationalities. Postcolonialism originated from colonial era groupings like the commonwealth in the western academia or in departments modelled on them. It has been criticised for being linked to the interest of its practitioners who are themselves dislocated in the West away from the subject of their work. It has been suggested that as a discipline postcolonialism tends to uphold the interest of its sponsors who are mostly in the West. Postcolonialism only

deepens differences amongst alterities just like the ideas of the Third World, or for that matter the Global South. While postcolonialism finds alterity in the historical fact of colonial rule, the Third World emphasises alterity in terms of dominant modes of production while the Global South emphasises alterity on the basis of economic and other development indices. These alterity based frameworks ultimately fail to provide adequate structures in a world which is gradually realising its own non-alterity through greater interactions across boundaries made possible by the digital revolution.

Postcolonialism has two distinctive tendencies. The first is a critical school that tries to assert a resistive practice which is through assertions of alterity based collective imaginations like the nation, class, race etc. to provide united resistance and organisation. The second is a reconciliatory approach that involves asserting alterities in order to problematise and break down collective identities. Either ways, using frameworks for alterities has landed the postcolonial project into a stasis. The term postcolonial with its derivatives has been criticised for being inadequate, misleading or problematic. The alternative term paracolonial has already found currency among scholars. However, the term paracolonial does not indicate merely a change in terms but has already been used by scholars to address particular issues in postcolonial theory.

As has already been charted out, 'paracolonial', as a term, has been used to describe the condition of the native peoples of the world who have little or no agency left. Used particularly by Vizenor (1993) to describe the condition of the Native Americans, the term is used to associate a sensibility based on creativity and imaginative reconstructions of the past in order to create the possibility for a resistive survival of a people who have been driven to the brink of extinction. It has been used to describe the interactions during colonial times in West Africa by Newell (2001) to propose that beside oppressive and limiting frameworks there were also beneficial, mutually enriching exchanges that transcended the alterity of centre and periphery. Therefore, as a term, paracolonial seeks to involve the possibility of positive exchanges within the colonial framework itself. It has also been used by Goudie (2006) to describe the interactions of the United States of America with the Caribbean Islands, spaces that were never directly colonized but nonetheless fell under American political interference. Besides, the setting up of Banana Republics and sponsoring regimes, Goudie also shows how the inhabitants of the mainland Americas look down on the inhabitants of the

Caribbean Islands as culturally and socially inferior, using the term 'creole' as a derogatory othering. The term has also been used by Saleem (2014) to describe literatures that are from erstwhile colonised spaces but seek to locate the reasons for the continued political, social and economic problems of all these spaces of the current political and military establishment rather than a distant far-off colonial era.

To this existing set of concerns, this thesis proposes the addition of the principle of non-alterity. While in the central ideas of the thinkers using the term, there is already an underlined move towards non-alterity, it is by making it central that I propose the strengthening of paracolonialism as a better and a more radical way of looking at the world today. This does not mean that the colonial era does not impact the politics, society, and economy of today. Rather the continued impact of colonialism can be traced to the existing postcolonial-decolonial alterity oriented imagination that is a continuation of colonialism. This has most recently come up in the debates surrounding the retention of seditious laws within India, which are designed to protect the government of India rather than the Indian state from the people of India who technically are supposed to be sovereign. The logic of having a separate sedition law comes from the need to differentiate Treason, which was defined in colonial times as acts against the monarch who is sovereign, from acts against the colonial government which was merely a representative of monarchical sovereignty in the Indian subcontinent. The postcolonial continuity of colonial alterity between the ruler and the people which requires the government to remain accountable to the sovereign but not to the people even after decolonisation shows the need to critically re-examine our premises regarding our polity today.

The paracolonial response to the situation will be by denying the sovereignty of the government itself since that promotes alterity, i.e. through an anti-government and through an anti-state. It must be by denying the sovereignty of the collectives through an anti-nation, or religion or community. A paracolonial sensibility must be therefore prepared to accommodate alterities in order to allow for a radically new way of thinking interactions through non-alterity. This is what can potentially allow us to imagine a democracy without sovereignty; and ensuring of poeple's voices beyond the buyings of majoritarianism and towards a radically different way of resolving differences through mutual interaction and respect.

The dominant imaginations of today, even when seemingly resistive or apparently liberating, on closer examination show themselves to be built on alterity frameworks that require revision. The very concept of freedom in the subcontinent from the time of the anti-colonial movement has largely been dominated by a negative approach. The demands were always for freedom 'from', whether it be British rule, Brahmanism, anxieties regarding Islamic influence etc. Even today voices in protest demand freedom *from* patriarchal norms, heteronormativity, political misrule etc. The thesis has shown how the very idea of freedom has largely gained popularity as a negative concept. The purpose of the thesis, however, is to try and extract from the writings of Indian political thinkers an optimistic idea of freedom that it roots with 'mukti' which in contrast is seen as a positive concept of freedom. Freedom must not be constructed merely as an opposition to limitations but rather a demand for action. The idea of freedom as 'mukti' is to tie the project of liberation with the idea of being empowered to do what one wills. It is freedom 'to' rather than freedom 'from'.

In this regard, the thesis distinguishes between postcolonial ideologies that seek to promote a negative idea of freedom from a paracolonial sensibility that is embedded in a positive idea of freedom. The thesis links the creation of the imagination of a militant Right-wing Hindu nation as well as the anti-Hindutva social justice oriented articulations of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to both lie in negative ideas of freedom, i.e. freedom from Islamisization and freedom from Brahmanism. The thesis proceeds through a reading of Savarkar's *Hindutva* (1923) and Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste* (1936) which are both considered to be seminal texts in their world views. The first is largely a work in creating the imagination of a Hindu nation by positing semantic religions like Islam and Christianity as invasive and destructive to an original Hindu ethos. The second text, almost as a foil, treats the Hindu religion itself as necessarily othering and exploitative and demands social reforms over political reform. Through a close reading of these two texts we can arrive at a better understanding of the strategies and tactics used by alterity based identity formulations.

Savarkar begins his work by laying emphasis on the etymology of the term 'Hindu' which he links to the river Indus and ultimately derives a geographical location of the extent of the land of the Hindus which he calls Hindustan. This is an imaginary delineation which is obtained by conjecturing that the river Indus and the river

Brahmaputra have the same point of origin and that this riverine margin should be seen as the northern border of Hindu lands. Savarkar uses poetic language emphasising the bravery, sacrifice and heroism of the Aryan race which he sees as the progenitors of the modern Indian people. Throughout the centuries Savarkar interprets history to be a struggle between these Aryans who in themselves are an imagined racial construct and various invaders ranging from the Greece, the Sakas, the Huns down to the Muslim invaders of the middle ages and the British colonialists of the modern times. Within his conception of the Aryan Hindus, Savarkar takes pain to include various indigenous people whom he imagines to have had a positive and lasting interaction with the Hindu race. Within the folds of Hinduism or Hindu thought which encompasses enumerable gods and goddesses Savarkar includes religions like Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, which have all originated within the geographic limits of his imagined Hindu state. This is a necessary strategy in order to present the largest possible majority of the inhabitants of the subcontinent as united under the banner of Hinduism. Although Savarkar pays reverence to Buddhism, he nonetheless sees in its universal message of non violence and non alterity the roots behind the loss of the martial vigour amongst the Vedic Hindus. For Savakar Buddhism was not a socio-religious reform movement but rather a metaphysical peculiarity that serve to weaken Hinduism and ultimately allow for the conquest of the subcontinent by Islam.

Savarkar often takes recourse to mythologies and religious texts such as Puranas in order to substantiate his views of history of the subcontinent that primarily becomes a glorious narrative of support for Vedic Hinduism. Savarkar finds in the caste system the roots of Indian Nationalism. In his rhetoric he subsumes the untouchables, the tribals and all the voices that have been suppressed under Brahmanism to be a part of a common glorious culture of Hinduism. Savarkar uploads the idea that the racial purity of the Hindus was maintained through forcible segregation within the boundaries of the two Induses and the Oceans, the crossing of which automatically led to one's caste. In a strange reliance on what otherwise will be viewed as an extremely limiting practice of segregation Savarkar finds a geographical cement uniting all people within these boundaries to be Hindu.

Savarkar's idea of history and the historical method is the reversal of the accepted norms. Whereas history accepts oral traditions and mythologies only if they are

substantiated by archaeological evidences, Savarkar accepts oral history to be history unless it is contradicted by other evidences. This allows Savarkar a wide speculative space in constructing his hinduised view of history in support of the political practice of Hindutva. Further Savarkar clearly ascribes a common blood as a common ancestry across a various communities in India as being a basis for a common racial unity. Savarkar goes to the extent of speculating that historically the various ruling houses of the country had all inter married. Therefore, in his opinion the entire country had been ruled by a single family which were all tied to the same culture tradition and law.

Savarkar also tries to present the root of all vernacular languages in the country back to Prakrit which he indentifies to be nothing other than Hindi which is taken to be the common root of all Indian languages. Evidently this is pure fabrication; however the desire to link the people of the country through an imaginary linguistic nationalism centred around Hindi must be kept in mind.

Nonetheless, the factual accuracies of his proposals make for a weak and irrational argument. It is Savarkar's reliance on presenting the Muslim as well as the Christian as foreign and the other that gives the Hindutva of Savarkar its real power. The strategy used by Savarkar is to unite all communities against the Muslims and the Christians who are shown to be dominant ruling classes who have historically wronged all the communities of the subcontinent. Islam is presented as a particularly demonical entity which has systematically destroyed all other communities. The unity that Savarkar imagines across the castes and communities of the country are based on the ahistorical assumption that Islam attacked them all. Savarkar emphasises the view by selectively choosing those historical individuals who had fought against Muslim rulers including Prithviraj Chauhan, Guru Tegh Bahadur and Shivaji. In this Savarkar ignores the long list of Hindus who fought on the side of the Muslims or for that matter the Muslims who fought on the side of the Hindus ultimately in support of particular feudal privileges. Instead of treating the many wars and battles of those times as feudal battles he tries to present them as a national struggle of the people against Muslim rule.

In his definition of who is a Hindu, Savarkar is flexible enough to include everyone except Muslims and Christians who can be conveniently presented as hateful

foreigners in contrast to everyone else who view the geographical limits he has set out to be the birth place, their place of work as well as the place of their religious fulfilment.

In a complete contrast, Ambedkar sets out the parallel project of presenting Hinduism itself to be the root of the problems of the country. He is clear in his reading of history which aims to assert social justice demanding a complete abolition of the central tenet of the caste system in its totality. Ultimately Ambedkar presents Hinduism to be impossible to reform and eventually rejects it himself by converting to Buddhism. Ambedkar's text is also a clear indictment of Gandhi and attempts to acknowledge caste in its diluted form of the Varna system. Ambedkar clearly begins by identifying the community of Hindus to be his primary opponents and by differentiating the untouchables or the Dalits as a separate community which has had no interaction with the caste Hindus apart from being at the receiving end of their atrocities. Ambedkar outlines that whereas the caste Hindu formulations of the way forward for the country were largely linked to the goal of attaining political freedom from the British or the assertion of the political identity of a nation the true necessity of the age required immediate and total social reform of Indian society. While he acknowledge that caste Hindus had engaged in furthering certain reforms he saw them as being limited to issues related to the Hindu family and avoiding the central question of caste. In a complete departure from Savarkar Ambedkar proposes that political identities cannot be imagined into place. For the development of national spirit it is essential that there is rejection of Hinduism itself. He notes that social change is the prerequisite for the political change. Ambedkar also attacks the Marxist by noting that economic determinism was preventing their proper analysis of the ground situation of the country central to which was the question of caste. In contrast to Savarkar, Ambedkar refers to textual history in order to substantiate his arguments instead of lapsing into mythologies and speculations. He presents a holistic analysis of the evils of caste system and shows it to be unscientific, ahistorical and inhuman. For him caste becomes a means of oppression of a group of people by another. Because of the division of caste, Ambedkar rejects Savarkar's hypothesis that the Hindus form a separate people, instead showing Hindu society to be a fragmented, disjointed group of communities trying to take advantage of each other. The caste system which encourages hatred for fellow people across generations makes it impossible for a true feeling of nationalism to come up in the subcontinent.

In contrast to Savarkar, Ambedkar reveals the plight of the indigenous tribal communities, criminal castes and other people who are seen to be inferior by the caste Hindus. The separation of castes encourages the primitive conditions of the so called inferior races who in reality have nothing inferior in them apart from the attitude of the caste Hindus that has kept them in a state of constant backwardness which is almost similar to that of people who are centuries behind in terms of development and growth. Furthermore the caste system prevents people from converting into Hinduism. Because at some point Hinduism had undoubtedly spread over the subcontinent, it must have been a missionary religion however because of the solidification of the caste structure it became impossible for Hinduism to propagate itself except through natural propagation. Unlike Savarkar, Ambedkar is clear that Sikhs do not share the same cultural practices as the Hindus.

For Ambedkar the guiding principles of a just society cannot lie in any Hindu imagination but in the alterity of western modernity. Ambedkar's imagination must therefore be placed within the imaginations of post colonial alterity that seeks to replace Hindu thoughts and practices with colonial modernity. In his own life Ambedkar had close associations with the Muslim League which supported his candidature to the Constituent Assembly, when the Congress had denied it. While Savarkar and Ambedkar both saw the British imperial framework as oppressive they came to very different conclusions regarding the way forward because they constructed their identities of claiming nationhood and social justice respectively as the other of Islamisation and Brahmanism. For both the emphasis lay on attaining sovereignty as freedom. In contrast paracolonialism is rooted on getting freedom from sovereignty itself. This is explored in the final chapter through a reassessment of the requirement of non alterity and a revision of Indian political thinkers who had proposed various practices of non alterities around the same time as Indian independence from British rule.

The central problem with alterity politics lies in its reduction of identities to immediate use values which are usually defined through subjective imaginary self constructions rather than on any objective material reality. At its extreme end the politics of othering serves to take away from the rich possibilities of mutual interaction, replacing them with suspicion, distrust and enmity. The suicide note of Rohith Vemula captures this continually relevant message. In the alterity of postcolonialism we see a

perpetualisation of the process of othering that was strengthened through colonialism. The identity of postcolonial nation or even the imagination of identities of various communities within the folds of the postcolonial nation can be seen as the result of alterity paradigms. However there also exist imaginations of non-alterity that evolved around the time of independence around the same time as Ambedkar and Savarkar. In contrast to them, M.N. Roy, M.K Gandhi and R.N. Tagore in their writings proposed ways of dealing with different identities not through as assertion of alterity but through an acceptance of non-alterity. For all three thinkers the assertion of a separate identity is not central at all. Instead they are more interested in promoting interactions and growth between differing groups and individuals which they deemed to be far more important. M.N. Roy in his *New Humanism: a Manifesto* (1947) recognises that as far as systems are concerned both capitalism and Marxism were not alternatives for thinking of a future society in India. Between them they formed a closed pair othering themselves. Both imaginations of political societies were still rooted in capital and, for all its claims of critiquing capitalism, the international communist movement had contributed towards the creation of a divided bipolar world while upholding dictatorship across spaces under its sphere of control. Roy recognises that there were certain limitations of liberal democracies that included the assignment of unlimited powers to majoritarian parties which potentially could encourage dictatorships just as fascism had emerged through democratic processes in Germany and Italy. For Roy the solution to the problem of sovereignty lay in ensuring that the idea of democracy itself was made sovereign – a key idea which I have incorporated into my project. Roy's rejection of Marxism comes from the realisation of the fundamental non alterity between Marxism and capitalism which in his formulations ultimately become two sides of the same coin. Both ultimately lead to inequality and unequal distribution of wealth. While capitalism has a problematic relationship with democracy the Marxist formulation of democratic centralism easily devolves into authoritarian dictatorships. Marxist Leninist economics while pretending to provide a counter to capitalist hegemony becomes State Capitalism. So while in capitalism many bourgeois capitalists share in the exploitation of the workers, under Marxism exploitation becomes the privilege of the state and its ruling elite. For Roy the point is to somehow transcend the binaries of capitalism and Marxism in order to liberate the individual from the limiting structures of politics and society. He proposes a paracolonial term in advocating the dissolution of all imaginary collective identities that

are totalising and based on othering in order to empower individual human beings. This he proposes through the implementation of direct democracy and continuous people's participation in day to day decision making of the state.

From Roy therefore we can extract the following ideas that can help strengthen our idea of paracolonialism. Firstly, we must look up on collective consciousness to be a false imaginary that ultimately is likely to destroy the freedom of the individual. Secondly, the idea of freedom itself is not collective although it may be imagined to be so. Thirdly, individual human beings shape their societies and their imaginaries through complex relations that cannot be reduced to economy or other singular factors. Finally Roy shows that it is necessary to interrogate supposed alterities in order to check whether or not their premise works as negations of the same underlined principal. The rejection of false binaries is necessary from the movement towards a new and different imagination of society.

Gandhi, as a philosopher espousing non-alterity, was comfortable in accommodating the British as well the Indian people in his world view not as others but as communities which could learn and gain from one another. In fact Gandhi's emphasis on non alterity is particularly interesting because it is critical of the West without resorting to an othering of the West. Gandhi's ahimsa or non violence comes from his emphasis on non-alterity. Since there is no other, there is no need for violence against the other. Gandhi's emphasis on non-alterity allows him to present the moderate and extremist wings within the Congress not as separate factions but as complementary factions which together were working for the betterment of the country. The Congress for Gandhi becomes the platform that accommodates differences and allows for dissent creating the space for uniting the widest possible spectrum of opposition to exploitative British rule including the sections of British themselves. Gandhi's political tactics which included Swadeshi, Satyagraha and Noncooperation formed a third way outside the politics and prayers of the moderates as well as the violence and terrorism of the extremists. Gandhi realised that both the moderates and the extremists looked upon the British as others and tried to assert a separate identity based on sharpening differences. Gandhi's strategy was different in that it emphasised the winning over of the English people by revealing the underline injustice of British rule in India. Gandhi rejects the system of English government with its police and military apparatus as being completely

needless. In his opinion the greatness of British system stemmed not from any inherent quality within the British but rather in the ineptitude of the Indian themselves. Gandhi rejects western civilization, the modern governments with its parliamentary system, unitary centralised rule in favour of local self government, self reliance and the empowering of small village units. Instead of advocating violence Gandhi proposed passive resistance to unjust laws through the utilization of Satyagraha or soul force.

From Gandhi we can take the tactics of refusing to give emphasis to alterities and by emphasising non-alterity creating platforms for inclusion, deliberation and bettering. While his apathy towards mechanization, western education, the profession of medicine and law etc. can be seen as developments from his position on modernity, Gandhi's non-alterity creates a valid and lasting imaginative praxis for the nation reeling under colonial rule as well as various social evils. From Gandhi we also get a new imagination of dealing with a supposed other – the so called 'other' must not be vanquished but must rather be won over. Paracolonialism must advocate a most aggressive form of non-violence in order to differentiate clearly between the oppressor and the oppressed. Gandhi realized that colonialism ultimately was not successful only because of the direct material profits it allows the West but rather that it provided an imagination through which the West could justify its oppression as something beneficial to the colonized. Instead of attacking the Britishers or their personal property Gandhi destroyed the moral justifications for colonialism by laying them bare and hollow. Gandhi's deployment of the symbol of a half-naked emaciated fakeer as the counter to the jackboots of the colonial army did more to discredit and discourage colonial rule than the random acts of violence of revolutionary terrorist which ultimately had to deal with the label of terrorism and violence.

In Tagore, we find an extension of the logic of non-alterity which questions even the methods of passive resistance to be potentially violent. Tagore rejects nationalism in his series of essays noting that it was a false consciousness that when unchecked could lead to the oppression of other nations in the name of the betterment of one's own motherland. Tagore places the seeds of oppression to be lying in the creation of identities of collective. He advocates the regulation of collective identities in order to ensure that they do not become autocratic. For him, the purpose of philosophy is to reveal the underlined universal unity of all men rather than dividing them into imagined

communities set at loggerheads with each other. In particular Tagore is critical of the nation state which he feels is akin to the mechanization of human society for the purpose of economical and political gain. Nationalism therefore becomes the reason for competition and antagonism between entire communities of people which Tagore is certain will ultimately lead to the detriment of the individual members of those societies. For Tagore, colonialism and imperialism are the natural ends of an overtly nationalist society which is ready to harm other people for its own benefits. Instead Tagore advocates independence and freedom as prerequisite to successful, meaningful and beneficial interaction of two cultures. In particular, Tagore feels that political competition harms the exchange of culture and education. Tagore's own experiment of setting up a universal university at Shantiniketan can be seen as an extension of his laying primacy in this area. Tagore does not see colonialism to be the primary problem at all but rather traces back the issue to the othering that nationalism imposes. His prophecies regarding Japan and its sudden militant nationalism from the turn of the century proved to be an unheeded warning for the destruction of the country after the Second World War. For Tagore the reason behind expansion of an empire comes from the fear that other nations will overtake and dominate unless they are overtaken and dominated themselves. For Tagore, the othering that lies at the bottom of nationalism can only lead to the chaos of violence. Tagore is clear that nationalism leads to a loss of ethics in the name of immediate exigencies. Rejecting alterities, Tagore reposes faith in an equal partnership across the people of the world. For Tagore, the way out is to emphasize the need for a partnership between the western scientific modernity and eastern traditional ethics. For him this is not an impractical solution as he notes that in the past in Asia meaningful cultural religious and educational exchanges had extended across various races and nations without competition or political dominance. From a paracolonial point of view, Tagore is clearly advocating greater interaction amongst different nations in their mutual benefit rather than competitions and violence. The choice for Tagore on encountering the other lies between alterities and othering leading to violence, or non-alterity and respect leading to mutual cooperation and benefit. Amongst the political thinkers' survey, Tagore is the most vocal exponent of universalism.

Reaching towards the conclusion of the thesis it would not be out of place to revise what I am trying to put forward by using the term 'paracolonial'. Firstly the term

is intended to indicate a 'moving beyond' rather than a posting or situating on colonialism. The term 'paracolonial' is supposed to be able to cover factors that influence politics and social imaginaries of erstwhile colonised spaces that go beyond the problematics of colonial rule. In this respect we can also include factors like the caste system, religious communalism and regional aspirations which have all been impacted by colonial rule but nonetheless have their origins elsewhere. Paracolonialism is ultimately based on a new imagination of interaction which is based on non-alterity. In other words, instead of 'othering', it focuses on a respectful interaction aimed at mutual recognition for mutual gain and benefit. Taking inspiration from the ideas of M. N. Roy, Gandhi and Tagore, it lays emphasis on non-violence aimed at winning over others through an appeal to justice. Paracolonialism takes from Vizenor and Gandhi in laying emphasis on creating imaginations that aim to empower the colonised people morally without resorting to othering. From Newell, as well as Ambedkar, it takes in the possibility that structures and ideas that have their root in colonial interaction may nonetheless be beneficial for a space trying to move beyond colonial rule. From Goudie, it takes in the possibilities of indirect colonisations that operate by hegemonizing imaginations that need to be battled to ensure self-reliance and self-respect. Through a criticism of Savarkar and Tagore, it suspects the creation of imagined communities like the nation in order to propose free and frank interaction. In contrast to postcolonialism and decolonization, which are continuations of the alterities of colonialism, paracolonialism promises a new way forward to imagine a democracy without sovereignties, as the way forward in the world today.

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