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CHAPTER IX

Digital Colonialism: Reimagining Power, Identity, and Resistance by Decolonizing AI

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Abstract

This paper deals with the convergence of AI and postcolonial studies. Instead, it interrogates how the means of AI development reproduce the old colonial ideologies in the contemporary time. To put it in the words of Said's 'Orientalism,' AI, which the West uses to further impose its inequalities globally, especially against prejudice inherent in machinery and algorithm models, is a result or/and a tool of imperialism derived from colonial philosophies. Bhabha's notions of hybridity and the third space offer a way to explore the potential of AI as a site for resistance and the re-imagining of postcolonial futures, questioning whether AI could become a space for subverting colonial legacies. Meanwhile, Spivak's critique of Western epistemologies and her concept of the subaltern underscores the risks of marginalizing voices and experiences in the development of AI systems, which are often dominated by Western, predominantly white, technocratic elites. Therefore, the ideas of these postcolonial theorists provide an important framework for understanding AI as a tool that not only reproduces historical power imbalances but also reshapes contemporary forms of domination. Drawing on these theorists, this paper explores how AI systems—often developed in the Global North—are implicated in processes of digital colonialism, reinforcing surveillance, data extraction, and economic exploitation in postcolonial societies. At the same time, it demands decoloniality for AI through voices. It needs to be centered in the Global South, favor ethical, inclusive technology, and, as such, deconstruct the power dynamics of colonial histories into emergent futures.

Key Words: artificial intelligence, postcolonial theories, digital colonialism, power, inequality, decolonization, algorithmic bias.

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Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an integral part of contemporary society, influencing diverse fields such as healthcare, finance, education, and cultural production. Its global implications, however, are profoundly shaped by existing socio-political hierarchies and histories of inequality. AI systems, often developed in the Global North, have embedded biases that perpetuate stereotypes and systemic discrimination (Buolamwini & Gebru, 2018). While AI offers opportunities for innovation, it also risks reinforcing global inequalities. A critical, decolonial approach ensures that these technologies benefit all societies equitably.

In South Asia, these biases are particularly evident in linguistic AI tools like Google Translate, which sometimes fail to capture the nuanced cultural context of languages like Urdu or Tamil. This recalls colonial-era practices of reducing diverse, rich traditions to oversimplified, Western-centric frameworks. In literature, works like Amitav Ghosh's *The Ibis Trilogy* highlight the global flow of labor and capital during colonial times, which parallels today's regional data extraction practices. Platforms like TikTok or YouTube often use algorithms that favor dominant Western norms, sidelining local, vernacular expressions of creativity.

Postcolonial studies critically examine colonialism's lingering effects on societies, cultures, and identities, mainly focusing on power dynamics, representation, and identity formation. Central to this framework are Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), which argues that colonial powers framed the East as the Other to assert dominance, and Gayatri Spivak's concept of the subaltern, which highlights the silencing of marginalized voices. Postcolonial studies interrogate how cultural production, language, and literature are implicated in sustaining imperial ideologies.

In English literature, texts like Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* have been reexamined through postcolonial lenses to depict Africa as a space of chaos, which justifies European dominance. Chinua Achebe's critique of Conrad underscores how such narratives perpetuate racial hierarchies.

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AI tools like ChatGPT or DALL-E, trained on Western-centric datasets, often replicate these colonial frameworks by privileging canonical Western texts while marginalizing postcolonial voices. For instance, when prompted about classic literature, these systems frequently prioritize works by Western authors like Dickens or Austen, sidelining authors such as Achebe or Arundhati Roy. Postcolonial studies reveal the need to critically assess how AI reinforces hegemonic narratives, emphasizing the importance of inclusive training datasets that reflect diverse voices and challenge colonial legacies.

Just like colonial narratives in English literature, AI systems reflect and reproduce power hierarchies by marginalizing non-Western perspectives. Conrad's Heart of Darkness presents Africa as a primitive Other, akin to how AI algorithms prioritize Western epistemologies (Said, 1978). However, AI also holds potential for resistance, as seen in projects centering on diverse voices, similar to Achebe's critique of colonial literature. Decolonizing AI training data can reimagine postcolonial futures and create equitable digital spaces. This paper explores how AI systems reflect and reproduce colonial ideologies while holding potential for postcolonial resistance. It begins with Edward Said's Orientalism to analyze how AI perpetuates Western-centric biases, marginalizing non-Western epistemologies.

Homi Bhabha's concepts of hybridity and the third space are applied to examine AI as a potential site for resisting colonial legacies and reimagining postcolonial identities. Finally, Gayatri Spivak's critique of Western epistemologies and the subaltern highlights the silencing of marginalized voices in AI development. The paper concludes by advocating for decolonial AI practices to foster ethical, inclusive technology for postcolonial societies.

Historical Context: Colonial Ideologies and Technological Development

Legacy of Colonialism in Modern Epistemologies:

Colonialism profoundly shaped Western systems of knowledge and power, establishing epistemological frameworks that continue to

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influence contemporary technological innovation. During the colonial era, knowledge production was tied to domination, with European powers constructing themselves as rational, scientific, and superior while framing colonized societies as primitive and irrational. This binary served to justify imperial conquest and governance, embedding hierarchical structures into disciplines like anthropology, cartography, and natural sciences.

Edward Said's Orientalism (1978) critiques how Western intellectual traditions framed the Orient as an exotic, backward Other to affirm the West's cultural superiority. For instance, literature such as Rudyard Kipling's The White Man's Burden encapsulates this ideology, portraying colonial subjects as incapable of self-rule and needing Western intervention. This framing mirrored the colonizers' systematic control of knowledge and technology, with colonial-era inventions like the telegraph and steamship facilitating resource extraction and surveillance in colonized regions.

In modern AI systems, similar epistemological patterns persist. Algorithms often encode biases that prioritize Western perspectives, marginalizing non-Western knowledge systems. For example, AI language models trained on Western-centric data fail to capture the nuances of postcolonial narratives, effectively excluding them. This reflects Said's concept of knowledge as a tool of domination: AI systems, like Orientalist texts, construct a digital Other that reinforces global inequalities. Thus, the legacy of colonialism in shaping epistemological hierarchies remains evident in today's technological landscape. To address these issues, it is essential to deconstruct colonial ideologies embedded in AI development, ensuring inclusive systems that reflect diverse cultural epistemologies.

AI as a Product of Colonial Philosophies:

AI systems are deeply rooted in colonial philosophies' ideological and material legacies, reflecting and perpetuating the power dynamics established during the colonial era. Colonialism relied on extraction, classification, and control systems to exploit resources and marginalize colonized populations. Similarly, AI

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systems use data extraction, categorization, and surveillance, echoing these practices digitally.

In English literature, colonial ideologies are evident in texts like Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, which depicts Africa as a space of chaos and the West as a civilizing force. This narrative of superiority mirrors the Global North's dominance in AI development, where Western companies and institutions control technological innovation.

AI tools often privilege Western epistemologies, marginalizing the Global South's languages, cultures, and knowledge systems. For instance, natural language processing tools like GPT-based systems frequently struggle with underrepresented languages such as Bengali or Persian, reinforcing global inequalities in digital communication (Bender et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the material links to colonialism persist through practices like data extraction. AI companies extract data from the Global South, often without adequate consent or compensation, paralleling the resource exploitation of colonial times (Couldry & Mejias, 2019). For example, facial recognition technologies have been deployed in postcolonial regions for surveillance, disproportionately targeting marginalized communities, much like colonial practices of control.

Postcolonial Theoretical Perspectives on AI

Edward Said's Orientalism and AI:

Edward Said's Orientalism (1978) concept offers a critical lens to understand how artificial intelligence (AI) perpetuates colonial power dynamics in contemporary technology. According to Said, Orientalism refers to the Western construction of the Orient as the exotic, irrational, and backward Other, a position used to justify domination and imperialism. AI systems, similarly, function as tools that encode and amplify this binary distinction between the West and the rest, reproducing the colonial ideologies embedded in their development.

AI models, particularly in natural language processing and image recognition, often reflect Western epistemologies and

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knowledge systems, marginalizing non-Western ways of knowing. A prime example is language bias in AI. Models like GPT-3 are trained on large datasets of text from the Internet, predominantly consisting of English-language materials and Western-centric sources.

As a result, these systems are more adept at understanding and generating text in English while failing to accurately capture nuances in other languages, especially those from the Global South, such as Bengali or Swahili (Bender et al., 2021). This Western-centric bias reinforces the marginalization of non-Western languages and epistemologies, creating a digital divide that mirrors the colonial imposition of Western languages and values.

Furthermore, the dominance of Western tech companies in AI development perpetuates the marginalization of non-Western perspectives. Corporations like Google, Amazon, and Microsoft have significant control over AI, shaping the technologies that govern our lives while reinforcing Western ideals and economic interests. The technologies they develop are often deployed in postcolonial countries without considering local cultures, knowledge systems, or needs, perpetuating a form of digital colonialism (Couldry & Mejias, 2019).

Said's Orientalism reveals the deep connection between colonialism and knowledge production, and AI systems function as modern tools of this legacy. To decolonize AI, it is crucial to incorporate diverse epistemologies and ensure that AI systems reflect the values and needs of marginalized communities.

Homi Bhabha's Hybridity and Third Space:

Homi Bhabha's concept of *hybridity* and the *third space* offers an insightful framework for understanding the potential of AI systems to disrupt colonial legacies and reimagine identities and narratives. Hybridity, as Bhabha defines it, refers to the process by which colonized and colonizing cultures interact, creating new, hybrid forms of identity that resist fixed categories of race, culture, and nationality (Bhabha, 1994). In this context, these hybrid identities are negotiated in the third space, allowing for reconfiguring power and culture outside traditional binaries such as colonizer/colonized.

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AI systems, particularly those developed through the collaboration of diverse cultures, can create a hybrid space where Western-centric technologies meet non-Western epistemologies, potentially fostering new forms of knowledge and identity. For example, AI's ability to process and interpret multiple languages, such as creating multilingual models, offers a hybrid space where linguistic and cultural exchanges can occur. When developed with inputs from diverse, non-Western perspectives, these systems can challenge the dominance of English and other Western languages, reimagining how global communication occurs in the digital age (Bender et al., 2021).

Moreover, AI can serve as a third space for rethinking postcolonial identities. In regions where colonialism imposed rigid boundaries between cultures and identities, AI technologies can facilitate cross-cultural understanding and collaboration if designed with cultural sensitivity. For example, AI-driven platforms can document and preserve Indigenous languages, often marginalized under colonial rule, offering an avenue for cultural revival (Maynard, 2019). These technologies thus allow formerly colonized communities to assert their voices and narratives in the digital world, countering colonial attempts to erase or distort their identities.

However, AI's potential as a site of resistance is not guaranteed. AI systems, by their very design, can replicate existing power structures, especially when created in predominantly Western tech hubs without consideration for local contexts.

Biases in AI algorithms and data sets often reinforce colonial hierarchies, as seen in the racial disparities in facial recognition systems and predictive policing tools (Buolamwini & Gebru, 2018; Richardson et al., 2019). Therefore, while AI holds the promise of creating a third space for resistance and reimagining postcolonial futures, its ability to do so depends on deliberate efforts to ensure that AI development is inclusive, decolonial, and responsive to the needs of marginalized communities.

AI systems can potentially become hybrid spaces that resist colonial legacies by reimagining identities, narratives, and power structures. However, for AI to truly serve as a site of resistance, it

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must be shaped by diverse voices and an awareness of its historical implications.

Gayatri Spivak's Subaltern and the Risks of Marginalization:

Gayatri Spivak's concept of the *subaltern* refers to those individuals and groups who are marginalized and silenced within dominant power structures, particularly in postcolonial contexts. In her seminal essay Can the Subaltern Speak? (1988), Spivak explores how colonial and postcolonial power dynamics have historically erased the voices and experiences of oppressed peoples. This concept is particularly relevant when examining the development of AI systems, which often prioritize the perspectives and needs of Western technocratic elites, silencing marginalized groups in the Global South.

AI development, primarily driven by companies in the Global North, frequently marginalizes the voices of the subaltern by failing to include diverse cultural, social, and economic contexts. For example, AI technologies like voice recognition and natural language processing (NLP) systems have been shown to perform poorly when applied to non-Western languages or dialects.

Researchers have highlighted how these systems, trained on data predominantly from Western sources, fail to accurately understand or process languages spoken by marginalized communities. Buolamwini and Gebru (2018) found that AI systems used for gender classification were less accurate when identifying darker-skinned women, reflecting a clear bias built into the data sets used to train these models. This mirrors Spivak's critique of how colonialism, and by extension, modern global capitalism, systematically excludes the voices of the subaltern.

Furthermore, AI's reliance on Western epistemologies perpetuates the dominance of technocratic elites and dismisses indigenous knowledge systems, which are often seen as inferior or irrelevant. In postcolonial contexts, this exclusion limits the development of more inclusive AI and reinforces existing power imbalances. For instance, AI systems in healthcare have been shown to prioritize data from Western medical practices, which may not be

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applicable or practical in non-Western contexts, thus perpetuating inequities in access to quality care (Obermeyer et al., 2019).

The marginalization of the subaltern in AI development highlights the urgent need for ethical inclusivity. AI systems must be developed with input from diverse voices, particularly those from the Global South, to ensure that the needs and experiences of marginalized communities are considered. This includes prioritizing cultural sensitivity in data collection, engaging with local knowledge systems, and ensuring that the profit-driven motives of Western corporations do not solely drive AI development. Without these considerations, AI risks reinforcing historical patterns of domination rather than offering a platform for empowerment.

AI as a Tool of Digital Colonialism

Surveillance and Control:

AI technologies reinforce surveillance in postcolonial societies, echoing colonial mechanisms of control by targeting marginalized communities. During colonial rule, censuses and cartographic mapping tools were used to monitor and control colonized populations. Similarly, modern AI-powered surveillance systems disproportionately impact postcolonial societies, often under the guise of security. For instance, China's deployment of facial recognition in Xinjiang targets Uighur Muslims, paralleling colonial surveillance practices (Zuboff, 2019). These systems, developed mainly in the Global North, replicate power asymmetries, perpetuating systemic oppression in the Global South. Such practices highlight the enduring colonial legacy in contemporary technological governance.

Facial recognition systems and predictive policing models exemplify how AI technologies perpetuate systemic biases and reinforce colonial power structures. Facial recognition tools, often developed in the Global North, have been widely criticized for their racial biases. For instance, research by Buolamwini and Gebru (2018) reveals that commercial facial recognition systems have significantly higher error rates for darker-skinned individuals, echoing colonial-era practices of racial categorization.

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In postcolonial societies, these tools are frequently deployed in ways that disproportionately target marginalized groups. For example, in India, facial recognition is used to monitor protests, especially those involving marginalized communities such as Dalits and Muslims, perpetuating state surveillance and oppression (Gupta, 2020).

Predictive policing models further illustrate the bias embedded in AI systems. These algorithms, trained on historical crime data, often replicate existing societal prejudices, disproportionately targeting historically marginalized communities. In the United States, for example, predictive policing tools like PredPol have been shown to over-police Black and Hispanic neighborhoods, reinforcing systemic racism (Richardson et al., 2019).

Similarly, in postcolonial contexts, such tools often direct resources and attention toward disenfranchised communities, framing them as inherently criminal. These case studies underscore the need for decolonial approaches in AI development, ensuring technologies dismantle rather than reinforce historical inequalities.

Data Extraction and Economic Exploitation:

AI-driven data extraction is a contemporary parallel to colonial resource exploitation, reflecting enduring economic inequalities between the Global North and South. During colonial times, raw materials like spices, gold, and labor were extracted from colonized territories to fuel the industrial growth of European powers. Today, data—often termed the new oil —is similarly harvested from the Global South by AI companies headquartered in the Global North. This extraction often occurs without meaningful consent or fair compensation, perpetuating imbalances in wealth and power.

For instance, platforms like Google and Facebook collect vast amounts of user data from countries in the Global South, which is then monetized to train algorithms and develop AI products. These profits overwhelmingly benefit corporations in Silicon Valley, while the countries providing the data often see little to no return (Couldry & Mejias, 2019). Additionally, AI development often relies on outsourced labor for tasks like data labeling, which underpaid workers

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frequently perform in postcolonial regions such as India or the Philippines. This mirrors colonial systems of cheap labor exploitation (Gray & Suri, 2019).

Moreover, AI's reliance on resource-intensive infrastructure exacerbates economic disparities. For instance, the electricity and computing resources required to maintain AI systems disproportionately burden countries with less robust infrastructure, diverting local resources while offering minimal economic benefits. This cycle of data extraction and economic exploitation reinforces digital colonialism, mirroring historical patterns of domination. A decolonial approach is essential to address these issues, prioritizing fair data practices, equitable profit-sharing, and including Global South voices in AI governance.

Algorithmic Prejudices:

Colonial narratives, like literature, reflect the ideologies of imperialism and colonialism, presenting the colonized as the Other in need of governance, education, and culture imposed by the colonial powers. Colonial literature also contains representations of racial and cultural stereotypes that sought to dehumanize colonized peoples.

Characters in novels like The Last of the Mohicans (1826) by James Fenimore Cooper or Jane Eyre (1847) by Charlotte Brontë often reflect this ideology, framing indigenous and non-European characters as inferior or exotic. These narratives, added to historical accounts, influence AI systems developed by the West.

Biases in AI algorithms often perpetuate racial and cultural stereotypes, reinforcing systemic discrimination in various sectors, including employment, healthcare, and law enforcement. These biases arise from training datasets that reflect historical prejudices and inequities and predominantly Western-centric development processes. Consequently, AI systems mirror societal biases and amplify them, disproportionately affecting marginalized groups.

For example, facial recognition systems like those used in the U.S. and India frequently exhibit higher error rates when identifying people with darker skin tones, as demonstrated in Buolamwini and Gebru's (2018) landmark study. Predictive policing algorithms

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further demonstrate this issue, as demonstrated by Richardson et al. These inaccuracies lead to false positives, disproportionately targeting Black and South Asian individuals in surveillance and law enforcement, echoing colonial practices of racial profiling.

Cultural biases in language models like ChatGPT also perpetuate stereotypes. For instance, AI-generated content often associates Western cultures with intelligence and leadership while depicting non-Western cultures as inferior or exotic. These patterns parallel colonial literature, Rudyard Kipling's *The White Man's Burden* (1899), which promotes the idea that it was the duty of Europeans to civilize and uplift savage nations.

Google often presents Britain as a heroic force in abolishing slavery, yet historical evidence reveals a more complex and contradictory role. While Britain formally abolished the transatlantic slave trade in 1807 and slavery itself in 1833, it was also a principal architect of the system. The British Empire played a significant role in initiating and expanding the global slave trade, forcibly transporting people from its colonies, including Sri Lanka, to work on tea and sugar plantations under exploitative conditions.

Moreover, search results on platforms like Google are often dominated by sources affiliated with Western institutions, shaping narratives that emphasize Britain's abolitionist efforts while downplaying its foundational role in slavery and forced labor. A more nuanced and accurate account of history emerges only through extensive and critical research beyond mainstream sources.

These examples highlight how AI algorithms, built on biased datasets and Western epistemologies, sustain racial and cultural stereotypes, exacerbating systemic discrimination. Addressing this issue requires decolonizing AI by diversifying training datasets, incorporating non-Western knowledge systems, and ensuring marginalized voices are central to AI governance and development.

Toward Decoloniality in AI Development

Principles of Decolonial AI:

Decoloniality challenges the dominance of Eurocentric knowledge systems and power structures, advocating for diverse

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perspectives and equitable practices. In AI, decolonial principles address the historical biases embedded in technology, ensuring inclusivity and justice for underrepresented regions, particularly the Global South. Decolonial AI prioritizes ethical practices, rejecting data colonialism, where marginalized communities' data is exploited without consent (Birhane, 2021). For example, facial recognition tools often exhibit racial biases, disproportionately misidentifying non-European faces.

Literature offers parallels, such as Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, which critiques colonial narratives by reclaiming African voices. Similarly, decolonial AI aims to empower local knowledge systems and languages, moving beyond Western hegemony. Tools like ChatGPT can adopt these principles by integrating diverse datasets, preserving indigenous languages, and addressing linguistic inequities. The Global South must actively shape AI governance, ensuring culturally contextual solutions. Ethical AI frameworks, such as UNESCO's AI Ethics Recommendation (2021), emphasize the need for participatory development, centering on marginalized communities. Decolonial AI ultimately demands a paradigm shift toward equity and inclusivity.

Case Studies of Decolonial AI Practices:

Decolonial AI practices aim to challenge digital colonialism by addressing the inequalities perpetuated by technology and amplifying marginalized voices. Several case studies illustrate these efforts, showcasing initiatives prioritizing inclusivity, ethical frameworks, and culturally sensitive AI development.

One notable example is the Indigenous Protocol and Artificial Intelligence Working Group, which explores how Indigenous knowledge systems can inform AI design. Their work emphasizes respecting Indigenous sovereignty and traditional knowledge while fostering AI technologies that align with community values (Lewis et al., 2020). For instance, they highlight the importance of localized data governance models that prevent the exploitation of Indigenous data.

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The Masakhane initiative addresses African linguistic inequality by developing natural language processing (NLP) models for African languages. This project challenges the dominance of Western languages in AI systems by creating open-source tools and datasets for underrepresented languages such as isiZulu and Yoruba, empowering local communities (Awokoya, 2025). Another example is the development of ethical AI frameworks like Mozilla's Trustworthy AI and UNESCO's AI Ethics Recommendation (2021). These frameworks advocate for participatory, inclusive AI design, ensuring technologies meet the needs of marginalized groups.

Such efforts challenge the dominance of Global North-centric AI by fostering collaboration with local communities, preserving cultural heritage, and addressing inequities. These initiatives offer a roadmap for equitable and ethical technological advancement by embedding decolonial principles in AI.

Reimagining Postcolonial Futures with AI:

Reimagining postcolonial futures with AI involves using technology to promote social justice, equity, and cultural preservation while dismantling historical power imbalances. AI can be restructured to prioritize marginalized voices, foster local knowledge systems, and challenge Western-centric narratives that dominate technological development. By supporting underrepresented languages through NLP, the Indigenous initiative preserves cultural heritage and enables local communities to shape AI technologies.

AI can also deconstruct historical power dynamics by challenging biased data and algorithmic practices. Projects like Data for Black Lives emphasize creating ethical datasets that reflect diverse realities and address systemic inequities in healthcare, policing, and education (Benjamin, 2019).

Furthermore, AI art initiatives like GANs trained on Indigenous art forms demonstrate how technology can preserve and amplify cultural expressions. For example, Indigenous artists use AI to create digital art that celebrates their heritage while resisting cultural erasure (Lewis et al., 2020). By embedding ethical principles and

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decolonial frameworks, AI can foster emergent, inclusive futures that align with the values of diverse communities, ensuring equitable technological advancements.

Challenges and Limitations in Decolonial AI

Implementing decolonial principles in AI development faces numerous practical, institutional, and economic barriers. One significant challenge is the predominance of tech companies in the Global North, where AI systems are primarily developed, often with little consideration for the needs and perspectives of the Global South.

These companies, such as Google, Microsoft, and Amazon, control much of the AI research and development, reinforcing Western-centric values and perpetuating existing global inequalities. As a result, there is a stark imbalance in AI development, with resources and power concentrated in the hands of a few elite corporations, making it difficult for marginalized communities to participate meaningfully in the creation and governance of AI technologies (Couldry & Mejias, 2019).

Institutionally, the lack of diversity in AI research teams contributes to excluding non-Western epistemologies and experiences. Research shows that AI systems trained on predominantly Western datasets often fail to accurately represent non-Western languages, cultures, and social structures, perpetuating biases and marginalizing minority voices (Bender et al., 2021). Furthermore, economic barriers, such as the high cost of developing inclusive AI systems and the concentration of financial resources in a few tech companies, make it difficult for underfunded institutions in the Global South to compete or contribute to developing more ethical AI solutions.

There is also the risk of co-optation, where global elites may adopt decolonial rhetoric while maintaining exploitative practices. For instance, tech companies might promote ethical AI initiatives to improve their public image while continuing to exploit cheap labor in the Global South or reinforcing surveillance systems that disproportionately target marginalized communities (Obermeyer et

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al., 2019). This tension between technological advancement and ethical responsibility is further complicated by the profit-driven motives of large corporations, which may prioritize efficiency and economic gain over inclusivity and fairness.

Conclusion

The pervasive influence of artificial intelligence (AI) in postcolonial societies raises urgent questions about its potential to perpetuate or dismantle historical inequities. This paper has illuminated how AI technologies often replicate colonial-era power dynamics through mechanisms of surveillance, data extraction, and algorithmic bias. Echoing historical practices of domination, contemporary AI systems frequently marginalize non-Western voices, exploit resources from the Global South, and reinforce systemic discrimination. These parallels underscore the importance of decolonizing AI to create more equitable technological systems.

However, the potential for AI to act as a transformative force should not be overlooked. Drawing from postcolonial theories, particularly the works of Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak, this paper argues that AI can be reimagined as a tool for resistance and empowerment. AI can amplify marginalized voices, preserve Indigenous knowledge, and challenge entrenched biases by embedding decolonial principles, such as inclusivity, ethical governance, and cultural preservation. Indigenous initiatives exemplify the possibilities of inclusive, community-centred approaches.

A global shift in AI development is required to realize this potential. Policymakers, technologists, and scholars must collaborate to prioritize diverse epistemologies, equitable resource distribution, and meaningful representation from the Global South. Without these deliberate interventions, AI risks becoming a tool of digital colonialism rather than a platform for liberation. Only by embracing decolonial frameworks can AI catalyze equitable and inclusive futures.

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