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# The Politics of Knowledge Production and Decolonisation: An Appraisal of Mahmood Mamdani's Contributions

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## Abstract

One of the fundamental challenges facing higher education is the much-needed confrontation of the legacies of colonialism which are hidden behind the claims of universality, neutrality and objectivity in knowledge production. From the vantage point of the present, Mahmood Mamdani, is one of the scholars who have given an account of colonial rule, its main characteristics and consequences of colonial conquests in a telling manner that renders transparent how the universalising structure of political modernity produced the colonised as subjects of difference. In his writings, Mamdani has connected the diverse experiences of the post-colonial world and flagged modernity as very pivotal in understanding the politics of knowledge production because it was crafted by the colonial project which centred on producing colonial subjects of difference within the hegemonic European thought. Mamdani's main contribution is his use of historical analysis from the

vantage point of the present to offer a productive frame of thought on knowledge production that exposes the anatomy and operation of colonialism and its universalising structures that have been inadvertently normalised as the model in knowledge production. In this article, I attempt to piece together the fundamentals of Mamdani's exposition of how colonialism was a particular variation of the discourse of difference that shaped forms of existence and knowing. Primarily using a decolonial inspired theoretical framework, the paper makes a nuanced reading of Mamdani's writings to show how his contributions makes visible the impact of colonialism as a project that is not confined to history and its pervasiveness in shaping the production of the objects of knowledge and its subjects.

**Key words:** Modernity, Colonial state, Eurocentrism, Subject, Power.

## Introduction

The modern world has been shaped in various ways by the empire and processes of colonialism in ways that have attracted vast numbers of scholarly reflections that spawn across various disciplines. It is the enduring influences of colonialism in contemporary ways of life and thought that has also provoked the need to critically reflect on the validity and limitations of Eurocentric notions of universalism in knowledge production. The Euro-modernist notions of universality is a system of global power structure that has not only pushed the ex-colonised's ways of reading and interpreting social experience to the margins but has also perpetually trapped them in colonial configurations in terms of knowledge production. The exclusion of other knowledges of the majority of the world's population from the domain of credible and authoritative knowledge has been one of the crucial entry points in disrupting the logic of coloniality in knowledge and this constitutes a body of thought by decolonial theorists such as (Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013a; 2013b; Maldonado-Torres (2011; 2018), Grosfuguel (2011) and Mignolo (2011), to mention just a few. These scholars have taken a leading role in revealing the darker side of modernity that has privileged the Eurocentric framework of rationality as the centre from which all ways of knowing and being cascade from.

Decolonial theorists propose the reversal of the imposition of universal ethos underpinning Euro-modernist epistemologies and the persistence of power relations embedded therein that have hierarchised and pushed to the margins other ways of knowing that fall outside of the framework of modernity. Mahmood Mamdani's quest to give an account of colonialism and how it operated on multiple levels as a racial object of continually producing and reproducing the colonised as subjects of colonial difference within European thought has a compelling resonance with decolonial scholarship's concerns with the pervasiveness of coloniality in knowledge production. I argue that Mamdani is one of the key figures in this scholarship because his works links to some of the key questions debated today in the politics of knowledge production. In his works, Mamdani variably pulls together an exposition of how colonialism systematically and deliberately

emphasised and politicised differences in social life as a major technology of domination in a systematic and deliberate manner. This is significant in so far as it shows how Mamdani's angle of intervention reveals how within the discursive terrain of the colonial project, difference was constructed in ways that amount to coloniality of thought and being. I start off by mapping out the units of analysis that are proffered by decoloniality as they offer a productive lens through which we can read the politics of knowledge production and modern global power structure. This will be followed by a brief background of Mamdani's works before proceeding to explore how he employs an analysis of colonial rule and the rule of difference as an overarching premise from which to think about and confront the epistemic challenges of Eurocentrism and its demeaning consequences on African realities and experiences.

## Decolonial Epistemic Perspective and its Units of Analysis

Decoloniality has been chosen as an indispensable theoretical toolkit precisely because it drills deeper into the specificity of how coloniality works and lays bare the hidden power structures and articulations that shape knowledge production in universities and are at the heart of epistemic violence. In proceeding, it is therefore vital to flesh out the three conceptual pillars of decoloniality namely coloniality of power, knowledge and being. The concept of power which is used in decolonial perspective is usually deployed to understand the dominant global power structure as constituted by 'hetararchies', that is, multiple, vertical, horizontal and criss-crossing strings of 'colonialities' that touch every aspect of human life (Grosfuguel 2007). Through the conceptual pillar of coloniality of power, decolonial theorists like Quijano (2000); Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013a, 2013b), and Grosfuguel (2007), for example, have delved deeper into understanding the invention, configuration and universalisation of modern asymmetrical global power structures. The decolonial theorists have used this concept of power in richly telling ways that illuminate the visible and invisible colonial matrices of domination and control, exploitation and dehumanisation of the African subject. We learn through the works of Annibal Quijano that coloniality of power is not a form of coloniality that only imposes domination

and control on subjectivity but also hegemonic control over various facets of life. He put it this way:

[P]ower is a space and a network of social relations of exploitation/domination/conflict, which are basically integrated around the dispute over control of the following arenas of social existence: (1) labor and its product; (2) depending on the first, nature and its productive sources; (3) gender, its products, and reproduction of the species; (4) subjectivity and its material intersubjective products, including knowledge; (5) authority and its instruments—specifically those of coercion. (Quijano 2000:3)

Quijano's analysis of coloniality of power goes a long way in illuminating how the subjective racialised subjectivities were produced, logics of inclusion and exclusion and 'paradigm of difference' to borrow from Mudimbe's (1994) was produced. The power to define is the driving logic in the coloniality of power which led to the relegation of some social groups as blacks, the coloureds and the Indian and their subjective experiences. The organising principle of the social hierarchisation and classifications in the coloniality of power is race or a 'mental category of modernity' as Quijano (2008: 182) calls it. The concept of the coloniality of power is significant in unmasking the hidden logic of the Eurocentric monopolisation of knowledge systems because the imposition of power as the operational logic of coloniality has remained intact as Quijano (2007: 171) rightly observed: "coloniality of power has proven to be longer lasting than Eurocentred colonialism." On the other hand, through the works of scholars like Saldívar (2007) we learn about the marginalisation and interpellation of the non-Western as subject and as minor through the hegemonic practices of coloniality of power. The logic of classification and production of knowledge is articulated through coloniality of power and the legacy of colonial power which has been sustained through the myth of decolonisation and postcolonialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). Grosfoguel (2007: 219) also succinctly dismisses the myth of postcolonialism in the following way that sums it all:

One of the most powerful myths of the twentieth century was the notion that the elimination of colonial administrations amounted to the decolonization of the world. This led to the myth

of a "postcolonial" world. The heterogeneous and multiple global structures put in place over a period of 450 years did not evaporate with the juridical-political decolonization of the periphery over the past 50 years. We continue to live under the same "colonial power matrix." With juridical administrative decolonization we moved from a period of "global colonialism" to the current period of "global coloniality." Although "colonialism administrations" have been entirely eradicated and the majority of the periphery is politically organised into independent states, non-European people are still living under crude European exploitation and domination. The old colonial hierarchies of European versus non-Europeans remain in place and are entangled with the "international division of labour" and accumulation of capital at a world-scale.

The tendency to view the removal of juridical administrative colonialism as postcolonialism obscures the current status quo of asymmetrical power relations of global coloniality.

Coloniality of being is the second important contour of analysis which was conceptualised by one the leading decolonial theorist Maldonado-Torres (2007) when he argued that being human itself suffered a form of colonisation. Coloniality of being is closely linked with coloniality of power wherein those who became targets of colonisation and enslavement were subjected to denial of humanity and a myth of a people without history or human agency. On this, scholars like Grosfoguel (2007: 214) have argued that through the colonial discourse, the non-Western subject were dehumanised and portrayed without legacy. In his own words, Grosfoguel had this to say:

We went from the sixteenth-century characterisation of 'people without writing' to the eighteenth and nineteenth century characterisation of 'people without history', to the twentieth-century characterisation of 'people without development' and more recently, to the early twentieth century of 'people without democracy.'

What has been highlighted by Grosfoguel was deliberate denial of humanity, social classification and racial hierarchisation of humanity and most importantly invention of the 'other' and aberration

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of the norm (Maldonado Torres, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). As one of the major technologies of domination, denial of humanity led the colonised subject to be pushed to what Fanon (1968) calls 'zone of non-being' and profiled as lacking, including lack of 'humanity' itself. Fanon's works is useful for the interrogation and deeper understanding of the existential conditions of black subjectivity.

Decoloniality also rests on the analysis of knowledge as an important unit. According to Hoagland (2009: 24) knowledge is produced from the "epistemic framings and methodologies that are fraught with colonial orderings, including racial and gendered orderings." As part of the coloniality of being, dehumanisation of the colonised and placing of the non-Western subject in the realm of subalternity within the hierarchy of the structure of modernity ensued. According to Quijano (2007: 169) coloniality of knowledge resulted from repression of specific beliefs, ideas, images and symbols that constituted the colonised people's indigenous knowledge systems. Making it much clearer is Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2009a: 21) who articulated on the operational logic of coloniality of knowledge by putting it in the following way: "get a few of the natives, empty their hard disk of the previous memory, and download into them a software of European memory..." What we learn from Ngugi

wa Thiong'o's works is the invasion of the mental universe that resulted in alienation, deep mental dislocation, dehumanisation and invisibility of the colonised human subject in the production of knowledge. Ngugi (2012: 39) then sums it all by noting that:

The colonial process dislocates the traveller's mind from the place he or she already knows to a foreign starting point even with the body still remaining in his or her homeland. It is a process of continuous alienation from the base, a continuous process of looking at oneself from the outside of self or with the lenses of a stranger. One may end up identifying with the foreign base as the starting point towards self, that is from another self towards one-self, rather than the local being the starting point, from self to other selves . . .

Of critical concern in coloniality of knowledge as Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2012: 30) rightly observes is the use of knowledge to 'obscure reality and force a certain perception of reality'. I draw on the three conceptual premises of decoloniality (power, being and knowledge) to argue that a close examination of Mamdani's works helpfully illuminates the power relations embedded within the discursive framework of modernity through which racialised and historical subjects were constituted across time and space. His interventions are fundamental in flagging colonialism as a project of epistemic violence and raging debates on politics of knowledge production. Read carefully alongside decoloniality scholarship which hinge on unlearning and re-learning of ideas as an alternative line of knowledge production that is against Eurocentric epistemologies that purport to be universal, objective and neutral, Mamdani's fine grained analysis of colonialism sheds light on the colonised's experience of modernity and the creation of their subjectivity. His works challenge scholars to not only rethink their scholarship but also relearn the history of the colonised-particularly the hierarchization of humanity through race as the organising principle of the structure of the colonial power. This is an analysis that neatly dovetails with arguments of decolonial thinkers who have argued that if colonization is understood as a global power structure it makes visible how differences were turned into hierarchical arrangements through naturalisation of racialised power.

## Background and Historical Context of Mamdani's Works

Born in 1946, Mahmood Mamdani is third generation Ugandan of Indian ancestry who was born in Mumbai and grew up in Kampala. He specialises in the study of African and international politics, colonialism and post-colonialism and the politics of knowledge production. His works explore the intersection between politics and culture, a comparative study of colonialism since 1452, the history of civil war and genocide in Africa, the Cold War and the War on Terror and the history and theory of human rights. Permeating several of his works is the view that instead of looking at Africa and comparing it with Europe, Mamdani sees Africa as separate, with its own historical path. Hence the injunction to think about how colonialism shaped the modern world and how it mutated into coloniality as a power structure to sustain differential power relations in knowledge production is an idea that can fairly be credited to Mamdani as one of the leading thinkers in the decolonisation of knowledge. Predominantly it was his work: *The Citizen and the Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* which was first published in 1996 that arguably made a compelling impact on making us rethink about how modes of rule and legacies of difference are animated and how the rule of difference premised on race and ethnicity as distinction about settler and native remade the African people in the image of the colonial conqueror.

*Citizen and Subject* is a landmark work of Mamdani and historical narrative that explores the theoretical foundations of the modern African state and of contemporary conflict and most importantly how colonialism “left an indelible legacy in the present since it so powerfully politicised culture as a mode of rule.” (Pillay 2018: 42). Mamdani provides an analysis of two related phenomena: how power is organised and how this formation of power tends to fragment resistance as a valuable compass with which to navigate how the rule of colonial difference was primarily about the management of difference in ways that mattered politically. *Citizen and Subject* is an important work that goes to the heart of the subject, examining its history, its current status and its future and his work carries intellectual fertility that dovetails neatly with the

important work of scholars like Quijano (2000), Maldonado Torres (2007) and Dastile and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) – just to mention a few – who give an account of denial of humanity to those who became a target of colonisation through racial hierarchization of human species in accordance with invented ontological densities.

Even though thinking about colonialism and the colonial question is a subject that can be taken from different vantage points, Mamdani is one of the scholars who give a compelling analysis that cuts across disciplines and particularly unpacks how colonialism has been instrumental in the constitution of colonial subjects' difference. Arguing that race has been inherently an organising principle of colonialism, Mamdani – though using the case study of South Africa and Uganda, unpacks how differences among the colonised were codified as fixed and eternal as colonial powers tried to resolve the dilemma of stabilising their tiny minority alien rule over an indigenous majority population, otherwise referred to as the 'native rule'. In his all-important work, *The Citizen and the Subject*, Mamdani argues that culture was politicised as a mode of rule, wherein a “colonial power solidified the distinctions between the native and non-native, indigenous and foreigner, race and tribe, in way that transformed cultural difference into a form of difference that mattered politically.” (Pillay, 2015: 190).

Mamdani shed light on the dual nature of the colonial state and its deliberate institutional segregation of societies into two distinctive categories, namely 'citizen' and 'subject'. The leitmotif in this characterisation of the 'bifurcated' colonial state was how law was used to distinguish between citizen and subject and how this determined their participation within the affairs of the state. Using this as a point of entry, Mamdani tracked indirect rule as it existed throughout colonial Africa arguing that institutional segregation was made possible through principles of civil law. This ostensibly legitimated a universe citizen who were deserving of rights and enjoyed direct rule and a world of colonised 'natives' who were governed by a set of customary laws. Because the latter were profiled as belonging to 'ethnicities' and were according to civil law, excluded from racial categorisation, they were ruled indirectly “by either reconstituting or imposing tribal leadership as the local extension of the colonial state” (Mamdani, 1996:

17). It can be argued that Mamdani is a key figure in thinking about some of the central questions debated today on the politics of knowledge production broadly and colonialism as a project of epistemic violence through which racialised, political and historical subjects were constituted in time and space. In his work, Mamdani never loses sight of the pervasiveness of the colonial project in drawing and reshaping African cultures to invent 'natives' hence explained it in these revealing words:

Unlike what is commonly thought, native does not designate a condition that is original and authentic. Rather, [...], the native is the creation of the colonial state: colonised, the native is pinned down, localised, thrown out of civilisation as an outcast, confined to custom, and then defined as its product. (Mamdani 2013: 2-3).

The idea that before Africans were colonised and conquered by Europeans, their communities were marked by cultural heterogeneity is too well known to rehearse but what has been central in Mamdani's writing is a compelling case that the idea that Africans have always belonged to tribes is an oversimplification of very complex precolonial realities and it is ahistorical. Mamdani warns about reading the African past through the European gaze. Africans had very porous and flexible boundaries and ethnic identity did not determine group belonging. Political tribalism—the whole idea of defining group belonging by 'tribe' is a product of colonialism and apartheid. Tribes are a very modern construct, and tribalism only became a major problem in African societies when colonial governments linked Africans' access to limited resources such as land, housing and jobs to identification of individuals with a particular 'tribe'.

Mamdani's incisive intellectual works and thinking have demonstrated the predicament of postcolonial futures and their entanglement in the nature of colonial power from a historical perspective that sets out to prove that inheriting a European structure of governance lies at the heart of Africa's current problems. One of the main problems, according to Mamdani, is a glaring disconnect between the urban and the rural, a disconnect he maintains was reproduced from the days of colonial rule when urban and rural Africa was governed differently. This is where he fleshed out the idea that the colonial state in Africa

was of a 'bifurcated' nature. In urban areas, there was direct rule based on modern law, rural areas were governed indirectly through more traditional authorities and laws based on customs. In urban areas people were treated as citizens, while in rural areas people were treated as subjects. In a nutshell, Mamdani follows this line of thought as he takes concerns with the crisis in the African state and evaluates how state power is structured, the institutional legacy of colonialism and the governing differences between urban and rural areas. He argues that in postcolonial Africa, the fundamental distinction between rural and urban rule that was characteristic of the colonial state has been reproduced. In contemporary Africa there is clear distinction between citizens and subjects, resulting in a fundamental sociopolitical split among social groups. More tellingly, Mamdani criticizes arguments that aim to blame the problematic state in Africa on the way the state has been governed by postcolonial regime. He does not deny that many African countries have been poorly governed during the postcolonial era, but he argues that this is a symptom, not a cause of the problematic nature of the African state. For Mamdani, the problem lies in the institutional design of the state, not in individual regimes and people have governed within that design. The problem is with the inherited colonial system, not with the way that postcolonial African governments have used it. Such diagnosis of the crisis of governance in Africa and the postcolonial state in Africa is equally shared by Falola (2022) in his befitting review of Ndlovu-Gatsheni's works when he notes that "postcolonial challenges have been identified with Africans because the institutions of colonialism are alive. Rather, they are active and regrettably still in operation."

Mamdani's work on late colonialism has not only been well received around the world, but his unique historic-institutional approach gave his perspective great weight that went against the grain of mainstream thinking on the crisis of the African state. He argues that the concept of ethnicity, the marker of identity that defines a group by common ancestral, social and cultural experience and its meaning in Africa today, is not something that is either traditional or natural. Rather it is something created by European colonisers who constructed the idea to help them rule their African subjects.

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Mamdani’s work made cutting-edge interventions that did not just spell out the problems facing modern Africa, but he also traced these through a historically grounded approach -to colonial rule which was a project of define and rule.

Mamdani’s work revealed the mind-boggling reality of how the colonial subject of difference has been produced and reproduced in European thought. What he fleshed out renders transparent what is inherent in Enlightenment thought about bounded conceptions of belonging and that natives are different. This difference, Mamdani emphasises- was manufactured and instrumentalised in order to enable colonial power. This colonial power, Mamdani (2020) continues to argue, held itself to be the representative of the civilised world and the guardian of general principles of humanity. Mamdani’s analysis that drills into the specificity of how colonialism was a project of define and rule can be read alongside a number of works that bring to the surface how Africans were constituted into subjects of difference by the Western discourse. For example, the debates on how identities of colonised subjects

were constructed through ‘invention of tradition’ and the adaptation of pre-colonial indigenous traditions, customs and institutions to suit forms of colonial governmentality such as ‘indirect rule’ neatly dovetails with Mamdani’s characterisation of the colonial state and how it rooted Africans in difference. Although the scholarship on the invention of tradition and how it was used to politicise and produce identities of the colonised in Africa is fraught through with contestations over the extent to which the colonised retained a sense of agency, scholars such as Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) have convincingly demonstrated how colonialism invented tradition in ways that distorted and altered the fluidity and dynamism that characterised pre-colonial Africa.

Mamdani’s works is germane to various disciplines and efforts to understand the logic of modernity and the problematic paradigm of difference and the enduring coloniser’s model of the world that has been normalised, universalised and reproduced in contemporary thoughts and ways of life. The paradigm of difference that colonial power hinged on is what then legitimates the denial of humanity of others as a major technology of domination which enabled pushing them out of the human family into a sub -human category and a zone of non-being (Fanon, 1968), otherwise termed ‘colonization of being’ by decolonial theorists. Decolonial theorists have produced enduring evidence that being human itself suffered a form of colonisation known as ‘coloniality of being.’ Fanon in particular elaborates that being black meant existing outside the bounds of being human in a context of colonial relations of power. According to Maldonado-Torres (2008: 104), blackness is “a relational term that represents an area of exclusion from the reign of humanity.” For Mamdani, to establish the non-humanness of the colonised (African) other, a nuanced historical analysis is not only an ideal angle but most importantly a necessary one to understand how Euro-political modernity that underpinned colonialism herded Africans into a zone of non-being through the discourse of difference. Suitably interpreted, Mamdani’s work can be read as a scholarly and empirically grounded exposition of the epistemic consequences of colonial relations of power that render transparent the totalising and universalising structure of the colonial project. This colonially

instituted modernity and its framework of thought that has been internalised and reproduced in ways that have discursively led to the constitution of the colonised as subjects across space and time.

The efforts of scholars like Mahmood Mamdani in inviting us to systematically counter the Western discourse of colonial difference and epistemic violence of coloniality are even manifest in his book *Define and Rule: Native as Political Identity* (2012). In this book, Mamdani's analysis acknowledges the productive insights he drew from Bala Usman – one of the leading contributors of the Ibadan School of Social History who in his efforts to push back against reading the African past through the European gaze, argued that the term ethnicity is inappropriate for understanding precolonial Nigerian social formations. Additionally, one finds present within Mamdani's analyses a critique of history by analogy, that if something happened in Europe, it is bound to happen in Africa. Mamdani's works can be read alongside Mudimbe's (1988) work challenges the superiority and hegemonic tendencies of Western epistemologies that have turned a blind eye to the diversity of ways of reading and interpreting social experiences. In his book *The Invention of Africa* (1988), Mudimbe warns scholars within the field of African studies on the use of categories and conceptual systems that are anchored on the Western epistemology as what constitutes valid and legitimate knowledge. He notes:

Even the most explicitly “Afrocentric” descriptions, models of analysis explicitly or implicitly, knowingly or unknowingly refer to the same order. Does this mean that African *Weltanschauungen* and African traditional systems of thought are unthinkable and cannot be made explicit within the framework of their own rationality? My own claim is that thus far the ways in which they have been evaluated and the means used to explain them relate to theories and methods whose constraints, rules, and systems of operation suppose a non-African epistemological locus...What does this mean for the field of African studies? (1988: X)

If read alongside Mudimbe's interventions, Mamdani's works are well thought out insights that pushes to visibility enduring evidence that can serve as an arsenal to push back against

the over-reliance on Western epistemologies in the context of contemporary Africa that is grappling with manifestations of coloniality. There is burgeoning scholarship whose overarching preoccupations are that of disentangling and liberating knowledge from existing asymmetries in global knowledge production and this scholarship has tabled various propositions of drawing from a broad spectrum of epistemological traditions and contextual realities to rescue the knowledge systems that have been relegated to the margins. This is the category to which Mamdani belongs as he pushes the decolonial agenda into new and promising directions. It is through Mamdani's works that we mainly learn about how modernity makes subjects. Mamdani has been able to sharply focus on the practices by which political modernity constitute subjects, with a particular focus on colonialism and how it produced and reproduced the colonised as non-beings to authorise and normalise their colonial subjugation. Mamdani's position on colonialism places him firmly within a terrain of scholars that explain the modus operandi of coloniality and its pervasiveness in contemporary thoughts and ways of life like Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2012: 39) who has this to say:

The colonial process dislocates the traveller's mind from the place he or she already knows to a foreign starting point even with the body still remaining in his or her homeland. It is a process of continuous alienation from the base, a continuous process of looking at oneself from the outside of self or with the lenses of a stranger. One may end up identifying with the foreign base as the starting point towards self, that is from another self towards one-self, rather than the local being the starting point, from self to other selves.

Ngugi's interventions brought into sharp focus how colonialism invaded the mental universe. Mamdani's work clears the way for making conversations about colonialism, coloniality and decoloniality that even though they have been happening for a long time, have now received renewed resurgence as scholars are challenged to rethink their scholarship and relearn histories of the colonised world outside the normative bounds of modernity and its founding premises and practices.



## Conclusion

This paper has attempted to show how Mahmood Mamdani has engaged in an intellectual labour of giving us the backstory— that which is behind what is apparent by insisting on attending to the critical questions of what was colonial rule in order to disrupt the totalising hold of Euro-modernist epistemologies in knowledge production. Without necessarily being exhaustive of his works, a selected focus on some of his cutting-edge scholarly works gives an ideal perspective from which to mount efforts of epistemic thoughts about manifestations of coloniality in knowledge production. The relevance of Mamdani's works lies in his sustained exposition of the anatomy and operations of the colonial project which in every way was written continually by producing and reproducing the colonised as different and fit for colonial domination. Reading Mamdani's works through the lens of decoloniality opens a window of opportunity to link his contributions to the politics of knowledge production. At the level of knowledge production, Mamdani is unrelenting in challenging scholars to rethink their scholarship and question the power relations embedded in the universalising structure of European thought and colonisation whose impact is not confined to history. His works add a layer of contribution to decoloniality which has become necessary in unlearning some of the ideas that have been inadvertently produced in ways that pushes to the margin's diverse ways of reading and interpreting experiences that fall outside Eurocentric rationalist framework of knowledge.

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