

# DECOLONIALITY PRAXIS

This much-needed book unravels the intricate web of colonialism, neocolonialism, and the powerful resurgence of postcolonialism. It offers a fresh perspective on the roots and widespread impact of colonialism and its various forms, transcending spatial, temporal, and contextual boundaries. Through its thought-provoking narrative, the book invites readers to embark on a profound exploration of decoloniality and the complexities of postcolonialism and outlines the future and potential of humanity in light of colonial praxis.

*Jawad Syed*, Professor of Leadership and Organizational Behavior, Lahore  
University of Management Sciences, Pakistan

This book brings to the fore a critical global discourse on the untangling of the concept of colonialism which many people in academia, business, and public sectors are currently struggling with. The author, who is known for his factual evidence and critical reasoning, has brought a fresh perspective to the debate on the colonality of power, capitalism, and Eurocentrism. The reader will come to new insights and a better understanding of the complexity within the term colonialism, specifically if an attempt is made to decolonialize, for example, an academic curriculum, a policy document, a business, or a community practice.

*Prof Yvonne du Plessis*, Emeritus Professor at the North-West University  
Business School, South Africa

# DECOLONIALITY PRAXIS: THE LOGIC AND ONTOLOGY

BY

HAMID H. KAZEROONY



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*To Abdi*  
*My Beloved Brother, Always in my Heart*

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Hamid H. Kazeroony** (Dr), SPHR, SHRM-SCP, is a Professor at Walden University, Ph.D. Program, USA, currently serving as a European Academy of Management Board member (2021–2024), and Extraordinary Professor at North-West University, South Africa (2021–2024). He served as Chair of the Gender and Diversity in Organization Strategic Interest Group, EURAM (2017–2020); PDW, Symposium, and Caucus Chair, Africa Academy of Management (2014–2020); Membership Committee Chair, AOM between 2016 and 2019. His research reflects his interest in the way methods of production and diversity impact organizational leaders, institutions, values, and ethics as manifested in his recent editorial contributions to a wide range of academic Routledge, Palgrave, Sage, Information Age, Expert Press books, and journals. Currently, he is serving at the Global Partnership Management Institute annual conference, in Poland and serves as a Reviewer at Organization and Management Quarterly, Silesian University of Technology, Poland; and Series Editor for Routledge on Global GRDO.

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## PREFACE

This book reviews the roots and the reach of tentacles of colonialism, neocolonialism, its rebirth as postcolonialism, and what it takes to be decolonized irrespective of spatial, temporal, and situatedness. It will address colonialism's spatial, ontological, and epistemological nature, decoloniality as a process for disengaging from coloniality, and its postmodernist conjured up postcolonialism. Decolonization requires ending the colonizers' social, cultural, political, and economic hegemonic dominance and attending to cognitive justice (Visvanathan, 1997) and the liberation of the indigenous, the oppressed genders, races, ethnicities, and sexes, repositioning the ontological and the epistemic paradigms, allowing emergence from colonial and postcolonial practices. Yet, the untangling of colonialism is not an easy task – theoretically or in practice.

Through the ages, temporally and spatially, colonialism has been manifested differently at the hemispheric level, rooted in power, language, culture, and social structure and institutions. While on the American continent, colonialism has become entrenched in language and power structure; on other continents, heuristically, the colonial power has swayed life in its totality from modernist and postmodernist perspectives. Coloniality has been rooted in research by texts predicated on motivations to disincentivize and hide realities for arriving at desirable outcomes inconsistent with observable materiality (Patel, 2009).

To position the decoloniality argument, our frame of reference rests at the intersection of temporality, spatiality, and episteme. Temporality addresses the origin, reasoning, view, and paradigmatic essence of coloniality. Spatiality contains the conception of one's perception of lived experiences relating to decoloniality. In the American hemisphere, decoloniality has shifted from management toward literary work, presenting a void in examining its impact on research and limiting our understanding of its full effects on gender, race, ethnicity, sex, and diversity in organizations (Arias, 2018). Therefore, we must explore colonial *episteme*, derived from the Latin word *ἐπιστήμη*, meaning science or knowledge requires an etymological understanding of how we know based on our approach, for example, realism, positivism, etc. (Frick, 2017). As an enabler, I will address how decoloniality research can decenter

the Western ideals of knowledge production to help pave the way for sustainable practices by indigenous people everywhere autochthonous to their needs. Postcolonialism, rooted in the philosophical problem of modernism, “continues the Western ideals of the knowledge production of colonialism, corrupting the nature of objectivity in investigating reality rather than allowing multiple perspectives” (Kazeroony & Du Plessis, 2019, p. 48). Changing our approaches to examining postcolonialism and maintaining a decoloniality conceptual framework, as suggested by Chilisa (2012) and Smith (2012), can help arrive at a solution. Coloniality and postcoloniality prevent seeking practical solutions and pathways for the indigenous and marginalized.

Many management and organization scholars have tended to draw on Western concepts and privileged the Global North logic and frameworks when reviewing organizational change and development knowledge (Metcalf & Woodhams, 2012; Syed & Metcalfe, 2017). Intersectional feminism has highlighted the differences in our lives and families and the stories/histories that generate different priorities and interests. However, intersectional frameworks have tended to gloss over the spatial dynamic of difference and organization (McDowell, 2009). Injecting spatiality allows the opening out, extending, and exploring new possibilities for pluralist feminisms and subjectivities. These inquiry lines will not be built on or in relation to Global North logic. Still, they will have a trajectory rooted in histories and unique geographic and cultural fields.

According to Mignilo (2007), the new geography of power includes three elements of coloniality of power, capitalism, and Eurocentrism. Mignilo (2007) stressed that the geography of power is built on hegemonic institutions, the nation-state, the bourgeois family, the capitalist corporation, and Eurocentric rationality. However, the 20th century political dynamics changed the nature of colonialism’s institutional praxis and Eurocentrism – colonialism became a Chinese and Russian practice under the guise of helping non-aligned nations, creating a new dimension far beyond any Orwellian thinking. There is growing evidence that social science research “needs emancipation from hearing only the voices of Western Europe, emancipation from generations of silence, and emancipation from seeing the world in one color” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 212).

The “coloniality of power” refers to the deeply racialized division of labor under global capitalism resulting from colonization processes (Mignilo, 2007; Quijano, 2007). Exploration of the coloniality of power refers to dismantling other knowledge that has shaped discriminatory discourses reflected in modern postcolonial societies’ social and economic conditions. While this highlights hierarchies in the global capitalist system, it does not explain how

colonizing is a gendered process and how global capital organization has gendered impacts. While contemporary thinking has promoted post-feminism in the West, it is a logic that helped disappear concerns of ethics, equity, and equality. In the Global South, however, commitment to gender and social justice has been vibrant and robust, leading to the formation of the millennium development goals (MDGs) in 2000 (United Nations, 2018).

As the North and the South have become engaged in a dialogue, addressing the past travesties, the East<sup>1</sup> spread its colonial practices near and far. Therefore, the North and the East require attention as we explain the roots, the continuation, the methods, and the future of humanity in light of colonial praxis.

## NOTE

1. The word East in the context of this book refers to China and Russia.

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Visvanathan, S. (1997). *A carnival for science: Essays on science, technology, and development*. Oxford University Press.

# INTRODUCTION

## ABSTRACT

*This chapter outlines the underpinning author's perspective to explain the approach to decoloniality and untangle the current praxis and research method from coloniality. This chapter also describes the subsequent chapters' structure, moving from colonialism and its roots to decoloniality in practice and research.*

**Keywords:** Coloniality; episteme; spatial; temporal; Global North; etymology

As a colonized person, the oppressed, living in the shadow of the so-called civilized, relegated to the *Third World* and marginalized to the edges of humanity, deprived of linguistic, sexual, racial, tribal, cultural, and ethnic identity, the subalterns find themselves in a temporal, spatial, and epistemological vacuum. Without a place in time or space, the colonized wander the earth and remain homeless spatially, ontologically, and epistemologically. As the subalterns move through the postqualitative, postmaterialist era of neoliberalism, they stand at the threshold of a fight against oppressive epistemologies from the right and its underlying epistemological, ethical, and economic underpinning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, pp. 887–888). The movement is the nature of coloniality and its aftermath, rising from centuries of colonialism requiring our attention.

First, I will review colonialism tentacles' roots and reach as a living organism and its rebirth as postcolonialism and neocolonialism. The discussion of the topics is not a straight logical, linear progression. It contains many turns and twists. I must go back and forth in examining how colonialism manifested

in the coloniality of individuals and groups among the indigenous people of the lands they deemed exotic and their own people.

Coloniality has been manifested differently at the hemispheric level, rooted in power, language, culture, social structure, and institutions temporally and spatially. While on the American continent, colonialism has become entrenched in language and power structure; on other continents, heuristically, the colonial power has swayed life in its totality from modernist and post-modernist to poststructuralist perspectives. Coloniality has been rooted in research by texts predicated on motivations to disincentivize and hide realities for arriving at desirable outcomes inconsistent with observable materiality (Patel, 2009).

The “coloniality of power” refers to the deeply racialized division of labor under global capitalism resulting from colonization processes (Mignilo, 2007; Quijano, 2007). The coloniality of power has dismantled other ontologies of epistemology, shaping discriminatory discourses reflected in the social and economic conditions of modern postcolonial and neocolonial societies. While this highlights hierarchies in the global capitalist system, it does not explain how colonizing is a gendered process and how global capital organization has gendered impacts. While contemporary thinking has promoted postfeminism in the West, it is a logic that helped disappear concerns of ethics, equity, and equality. In the Global South, however, commitment to gender and social justice has been vibrant and robust, leading to the formation of the millennium development goals (MDGs) in 2000 (United Nations, 2018). As the North and the South have engaged in dialogue, addressing past travesties, the East<sup>1</sup> spread its colonial practices near and far. Therefore, the North and the East require attention as I explain the roots, the continuation, the practices, and the future of humanity in light of colonial praxis. I will attempt to expand on these coloniality issues by examining the nature and expansion of colonialism and how it led alienation of people in their land, within their skins, and sexuality.

Next, I will examine possible pathways to decoloniality in light of spatial, temporal, and situatedness, addressing colonialism’s spatial, ontological, and epistemological nature. I will review the disengagement process from coloniality and its postmodernist conjured-up postcolonialism. In this context, I will discuss how modernism, postmodernism, or poststructuralism ontologies have been used to justify postcolonialism as a theoretical milieu offering a false sense of progress and advancement by Eurocentric intellectuals. With this background, decolonization requires ending the colonizers’ social, cultural, political, and economic hegemonic dominance and attending to cognitive justice (Visvanathan, 1997). The process would liberate the indigenous, the oppressed genders, races, ethnicities, and sexes, repositioning the ontological

and the epistemic paradigms and allowing emergence from colonial and post-colonial practices. Yet, in practice or theory, untangling colonialism is not an easy task.

To position the decoloniality argument, our frame of reference rests at the intersection of temporality, spatiality, and episteme. Temporality addresses the origin, reasoning, view, and paradigmatic essence of coloniality. Spatiality contains the conception of one's perception of lived experiences relating to decoloniality. Episteme hinges on the ontological and paradigmatic position of research. In the American hemisphere, decoloniality has shifted from management towards literary work, presenting a void in examining its impact on research and limiting our understanding of its full effects on gender, race, ethnicity, sex, and diversity in organizations (Arias, 2018). Therefore, we must explore colonial *episteme*, derived from the Latin word *ἐπιστήμη*, meaning science or knowledge that requires an etymological understanding of how we know based on our approach, for example, realism, positivism, etc. (Frick, 2017). I will address how decoloniality research, as an enabler, can decenter the Eurocentric ideals of knowledge production and the neocolonialists, that is, China and Russia, to help pave the way for sustainable practices by indigenous people everywhere autochthonous to their needs.

I will explain how postcolonialism has extended coloniality and how neocolonialism has perpetuated colonization and coloniality. Postcolonialism, rooted in the philosophical problem of modernism, “continues the Western ideals of the knowledge production of colonialism, corrupting the nature of objectivity in investigating reality rather than allowing multiple perspectives” (Kazeroony & Du Plessis, 2019, p. 48). Changing our approaches to examining postcolonialism and maintaining a decoloniality conceptual framework, as suggested by Chilisa (2012) and Smith (2012), could help arrive at a solution. Coloniality and postcoloniality prevent seeking practical solutions and pathways for the indigenous and marginalized. Therefore, we must first understand the current trajectory of organization and management theories that continue the perpetuation of coloniality.

Many management and organization scholars have drawn on Eurocentric concepts and privileged the Global North logic and frameworks when reviewing organizational change and development knowledge (Metcalf & Woodhams, 2012; Syed & Metcalfe, 2017), which by extension continues social and gender coloniality. Intersectional feminism has highlighted the differences in our lives and families and the stories/histories that generate different priorities and interests. However, intersectional frameworks have tended to gloss over the spatial dynamic of difference and organization (McDowell, 2009). Injecting spatiality allows the opening out, extending, and exploring

new possibilities for pluralist feminisms and subjectivities. These inquiry lines will not be built on Global North logic or in relation to it. They require the dismantling of this regime of thoughts. Our exploration must have a trajectory rooted in heuristic lived experiences and unique geographic and cultural fields containing temporality and spatiality.

According to [Mignilo \(2007\)](#), the new geography of power includes three elements: coloniality of power, capitalism, and Eurocentrism. [Mignilo \(2007\)](#) stressed that the geography of power is built on hegemonic institutions, the nation-state, the bourgeois family, the capitalist corporation, and Eurocentric rationality. However, the 20th century political dynamics changed the nature of colonialism's institutional praxis and Eurocentrism – colonialism became a Chinese and Russian practice under the guise of helping non-aligned nations, creating a new dimension far beyond any Orwellian thinking ([Mosely, 1967](#); [Robinson, 2010](#)). There is growing evidence that social science research “needs emancipation from hearing only the voices of Western Europe, emancipation from generations of silence, and emancipation from seeing the world in one color” ([Guba & Lincoln, 2005](#), p. 212). But as Mosley and Robinson pointed out, our effort requires equal efforts in emancipation from Chinese and Russian colonialism and their imperial ambition, who are more determined than Eurocentric counterparts in squashing the hopes of any liberation by the subalterns.

Chapter 1 will focus on colonialism's roots and scope. This chapter will define colonialism and offer examples of its historical roots, development, and changing nature over time. Chapter 2 will explore the historical impact of colonialism socially, culturally, and economically and its after-effect on people's lives. Chapter 3 will examine the concept of postcolonialism and the rise of imperialism as an extension of colonialism and its temporal and spatial effects. Chapter 4 will revisit and narrow the conversation of postcolonialism etymology and its ontological and epistemological significance as we begin our decolonizing efforts temporally and spatially. Chapter 5 examines the indigenous research pathways as a decolonizing research method, exploring the phenomenology of practice, reflexive ethnography, and grounded theory as possible research methods to advance indigenous studies and help decolonize research methods. Chapter 6 reviews different ontological positions and uses modernism, postmodernism, structuralism, and poststructuralism to illustrate how each changes the nature of research when attempting to decolonize the research method. Chapter 7 engages in a round table discussion with Montesquieu (*Persian Letters*), Fanon (*Black Skins, White Masks, Dying Colonialism, and the Wretched of Earth*), and Camus (*The Stranger*) posthumously. This chapter explores the inner psyche of the subalterns as they strive to reach decoloniality.

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## 2

# POSTCOLONIALITY: COLONIALISM ROOTS AND SCOPE

### ABSTRACT

*Chapter 2 offers examples of colonial and neocolonial working throughout history. This chapter defines and provides an overview of colonialism's development and its economic and administrative roots. This chapter is intended to contextualize colonialism rather than explain its complete history.*

**Keywords:** Colonialism; new colonialism; coloniality; orientalism; imperialism; whiteness

Colonialism, as is commonly discussed, refers to the colonial domination policy pursued by the powers of Europe from the second half of the 19th century to the years following World War II. However, powers long before Western Europeans, the Phoenicians, the Greeks, Romans, and Arabs engaged in colonialism. Conversely, colonialism refers to the control and management of knowledge by *universals* of Western modernity, Eurocentrism, and global capitalism ([Colonialism, Coloniality, and Settler Colonialism, n.d.](#)). Colonialism's impact on the colonized people has been complex. It has led to the colonized losing land, resources, culture, language, and identity. It has also led to the exploitation and oppression of the colonized people and slavery, forced labor, and other forms of violence. Colonialism's effects are still felt today in many parts of the world.

Coloniality, on the other hand, is a concept that refers to the continuing impact of colonialism on our societies. It is a way of understanding how

colonialism has shaped our world today. Directly associated with coloniality is Whiteness, a term that describes the social and cultural privileges associated with being white. It is a way of understanding how race operates in contemporary societies relegating the non-White to the status of the colonized, cognitively, epistemically, and socially. Coloniality and Whiteness have come to describe how colonialism has created a system of racial hierarchy that privileges Whiteness and marginalizes people of color. This system is still present in many societies and has been the subject of much academic research. There are many ways that coloniality and Whiteness operate together.

Here are some examples of Whiteness and coloniality working in tandem. The US education system often teaches history from a white colonial perspective, idolizing historical figures like Christopher Columbus and former president Theodore Roosevelt while painting Indigenous peoples in an unfavorable light (Huff, 2020). The colonized were viewed as closer to animals than men and women and closer to nature than humanity (Norris, 2020). Whiteness, in its guise of coloniality, describes systems of power and their dynamics that continue to play a significant role in shaping the structures and attitudes within the UK (Bruce & Clennon, 2022).

Colonialism has many variations, definitions, and effects. Therefore, one may examine the issue from a chronological, gender, indigeneity, sociology, anthropology, or other aspects. Different disciplines have shed different lights on colonialism. For example, some archeologists have offered a temporal and color-based view of colonialism where the power is white, and the powerless are black (Cipolla & Hayes, 2015). The materiality of life forced upon the subalterns by colonialists, such as consumption patterns, products they used, etc., have changed their social structure and, by extension, their relationships, adversely affecting their lives (Cipolla & Hayes, 2015). From archeologists' point of view, colonialism is racialized, gendered, aged, and carries different faith-based issues and chronological (Cipolla & Hayes, 2015). Colonialism is the practice of domination and subjugation of one people over another (Kohn & Kavita, 2022) politically, economically, socially, and spiritually, attempting to eradicate the dominant groups' culture and language, assimilating all life to their own. Perhaps, the literary view offers a view of how colonialism separates the colonizers from the colonized.

Said (1979) offered the rise of the hard meaning of colonialism from the soft notion of Western supremacy over the Orient (non-Europeans) in the literary world. Said (1979) argued that "orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies, and colonial styles" (p. 2). Said (1979) reasoned those classical