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MUSLIM IDENTITY AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM: READING ZOHRAN MAMDANI'S MAYORAL VICTORY IN NEW YORK CITY

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Abstract

This study analyzes Zohran Mamdani's victory in the 2025 New York City mayoral election, a result widely regarded as a triumph for the city's pluralistic society given Mamdani's identity as a Muslim and a member of a minority group. Throughout the campaign, Mamdani faced sustained attacks from political opponents, both Republicans and fellow Democrats, who targeted his Muslim identity directly. This study employs a qualitative method, drawing on books and journal articles to examine the foundations of socialist thought, supplemented by international news coverage to trace Mamdani's campaign strategy. The findings show that Mamdani was elected as the 111th mayor of New York with 50.4% of the vote, far surpassing Andrew Cuomo and Curtis Sliwa. This outcome indicates strong public trust in a democratic socialist platform centered on prosperity, including reduced housing costs and lower prices for basic necessities. For non-Muslim voters, Mamdani's religious identity was not perceived as an obstacle to leadership; rather, identity politics was seen merely as a tactic used by opponents to influence the election. For Muslim voters, rising costs of living, transportation difficulties, and housing rents were understood as collective burdens rather than the responsibility of any single group—an outlook aligned with both democratic socialist principles and Islamic values. These findings suggest that Mamdani's faith bears no relation to any erosion of democratic values, contrary to claims made by his political rivals. Ultimately, Mamdani's victory demonstrates his capacity to position New York City as an inclusive city, particularly for its lower-middle-class population.

Keywords: Democratic Socialism; Mayoral Election; Minority; Muslim Identity; Zohran Mamdani.

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis kemenangan Zohran Mamdani dalam pemilihan Wali Kota New York tahun 2025, sebuah hasil yang dipandang sebagai kemenangan bagi masyarakat plural Kota New York, mengingat identitas Mamdani sebagai seorang Muslim dan kelompok minoritas. Selama masa kampanye, Mamdani menghadapi serangan yang konsisten dari lawan politik, baik dari Partai Republik maupun sesama Demokrat, yang secara langsung menyasar identitas keislamannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan merujuk pada buku dan artikel jurnal untuk memahami karakteristik pemikiran sosialis, serta didukung oleh pemberitaan internasional untuk menelusuri strategi kampanye Mamdani. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Mamdani terpilih sebagai Wali Kota New York ke-111 dengan perolehan suara 50,4%, jauh melampaui Andrew Cuomo dan Curtis Sliwa. Hasil ini menandakan tingginya kepercayaan publik terhadap platform sosialis demokratis yang berorientasi pada kesejahteraan, termasuk penurunan biaya perumahan dan harga kebutuhan pokok. Bagi pemilih non-Muslim, identitas keagamaan Mamdani tidak dipandang sebagai penghalang kepemimpinan; politik identitas justru dinilai hanya sebagai taktik yang digunakan lawan politik untuk memengaruhi hasil pemilu. Bagi pemilih Muslim, kenaikan biaya hidup, masalah transportasi, dan harga sewa rumah dipahami sebagai beban kolektif, bukan tanggung jawab kelompok tertentu—pandangan yang selaras dengan prinsip sosialisme demokratis maupun nilai-nilai Islam. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa keyakinan Mamdani tidak memiliki kaitan dengan kemunduran nilai-nilai demokrasi, sebagaimana dituduhkan oleh lawan politiknya. Pada akhirnya, kemenangan Mamdani membuktikan kemampuannya menjadikan Kota New York sebagai kota yang inklusif, khususnya bagi kalangan menengah ke bawah.

Kata Kunci: Identitas Muslim; Minoritas; Pemilihan Wali Kota; Sosialisme Demokratis; Zohran Mamdani.

INTRODUCTION

Zohran Mamdani won the New York City mayoral election with 50.4% of the vote and was inaugurated as the 111th mayor on January 1, 2026.[1] Mamdani identifies as a democratic socialist, aspiring to transform New York City into a humane, livable, and safe city for the people. Mamdani is a minority in New York City, a Muslim, born in Uganda, and of Indian descent. While seeking support for his mayoral candidacy, he faced intense attacks from political rivals, both Democrats and Republicans. Donald Trump even directly attacked him, calling him a communist.[2] Basically, Mamdani's campaign topics and promises are very humanistic, but what is most problematic is his identity as a minority, especially because he is Muslim.[3]

[1]Maya Yang, Will Craft, and Andrew Witherspoon, "Live NYC Mayoral Election Results: Zohran Mamdani Defeats Andrew Cuomo," The Guardian, 2025, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/nov/04/nyc-mayoral-election-results-zohran-mamdani-andrew-cuomo-voting-polls.

[2]Dan Mangan, "Trump Calls New York Democratic Mayoral Candidate Zohran Mamdani 'a Communist,'" CNBC, 2025, https://www.cnbc.com/2025/06/27/trump-new-york-zohran-mamdani-communist.html.

[3]Gloria Pazmino, "Zohran Mamdani Wins New York City Mayoral Election," CNN Politics, 2025, https://edition.cnn.com/2025/11/04/politics/nyc-mayor-zohran-mamdani-wins.

During his campaign, Mamdani used the social realities faced by New Yorkers as a guide for his policies if elected as a mayor. He considered New York City to be the center of world civilization, entertainment, finance, and media, and the city never sleeps. Yet, its people live solely to work and meet their daily needs. The cost of living continues to rise every year without any specific government intervention.[4] It is recorded that approximately 40% of New Yorkers have low incomes in the range below USD 64,626 per year, middle income is around 20-30% in the income range of USD 64,626 to USD 107,889 per year. The upper class is quite large in this city, around 12% with incomes above USD 200,000. The number of rich people at 12%, is quite large, it should be able to make this city the most humane in the entire US, especially since many millionaires and billionaires live here, in fact 1 in 4 city residents cannot buy basic necessities, even resident who have jobs have difficulty paying rent, it is truly ironic for the most magnificent city in the world.

This social reality of New York City society was then taken by Mamdani as the most important issue during the campaign period. His campaign promises gave New Yorkers a glimmer of hope for a better and more secure life. Mamdani solemnly promised to stop rent increases for lower-class residents for four years, and intended to build 200,000 public housing units. Mamdani also wanted New York City to have supermarkets that sell basic necessities at lower prices than private supermarkets, and he also wanted to create a free public transportation scheme. Most controversial, and the most interesting during the campaign, was the imposition of a very high tax on the rich people in New York City. The individual tax was set at 2% for individuals earning more than USD 1 million per year, which would affect 1% of the population, and the corporate tax, which was originally only 7.25%, was increased to 11.5%. Mamdani also seemed to be very concerned about the needs of mothers through a free childcare program, and also promised to raise the wages of childcare workers to be on par with public school teachers. For Mamdani, this policy aims to realize equality and justice for New Yorkers, who have been shackled by a capitalist system that perpetuates structural poverty.[5]

To address these issues, democratic values are essential, including the establishment of a democratically run and decentralized socialist economy. The goal is to create economic justice for the community and reduce the negative impacts of the capitalist system by improving regulations and adapting them to the realities that faced by the communities. These regulatory changes must also be implemented fairly and transparently, with full public support.[6] Therefore, the election of Mamdani as mayor marks a new chapter in US political history. With Mamdani's election, Islamophobia is considered to have declined since 9/11 attacks. Nowadays, Islam is considered part of US pluralistic values, which have the same rights as other groups, as long as what is fought for is equality, justice, and prosperity. Therefore, this article will try to answer the question of how a Muslim, namely Zohran Mamdani, who is considered a minority can win the election for mayor of New York.

The aim of this research is to show the changes in the social dynamics of society regarding preferences for choosing leaders, which were initially heavily influenced by the popularity of candidate leaders who were supported by large parties with large amounts of financial support, shifting to candidate leaders who were considered closest to the people

[4]Grace Ashford and Benjamin Oreskes, "Mamdani Wants to Tax the Rich. Can He Persuade State Leaders?," New York Times, 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/11/06/nyregion/mamdani-hochul-childcare-tax.html.

[5]Emma G. Fitzsimmons, "Raise Taxes on the Rich? These Rich New Yorkers Are All for It," The New York Times, 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2026/03/11/nyregion/nyc-tax-rich.html.

[6]Carlo Invernizzi Accetti, "What Is Democratic Socialism in America? Left Ideology in the Age of Populism," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 30, no. 2 (May 4, 2025): 623–42, https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2023.2196243.

by offering humanistic campaign promises, especially for marginalized communities. This research contributes to enriching the study of Muslim election preferences in the US, especially under the Donald Trump administration, which is considered highly hostile to minority identities. Therefore, this research will address the challenges Zohran Mamdani faced, how he overcame it, and how he rallied voters to win the mayoral election.

METHOD

This study uses qualitative research methods to analyze Zohran Mamdani's victory as mayor of New York from a socialist perspective. Data collection techniques use secondary data, relying on previously published literature in books, international journals, and international news.[7] The book was chosen as an analysis material to understand the meaning and purpose of the criticism leveled by Mamdani's political opponents during the campaign period. By referring to one of the books written by Scott Burchil Andrew Linklater, and Richard Devetak, it will be further developed regarding the thought of liberalism which is the root of the capitalist system that Mamdani tried to change using a socialist thought approach to create equality in New York City.

The approach used by Mamdani was identified as successful in attracting voters' attention, so that he won the mayoral election. In addition, the book is also used to answer the political challenges faced by Mamdani in racing the mayoral election, especially regarding the paradigm of the capitalist system that has long been rooted in New York which political opponents tried to maintain, but shifted since Zohran Mamdani succeeded in spreading socialist thoughts by conducting a campaign that directly touched the grassroots, to realize equality for the people of New York City. Journal articles are used to explore the development of the political landscape in the United States, particularly those that focus on explaining or examining the spread of democratic socialist political movements, which have become increasingly popular since Mamdani ran for mayor of New York.

This topic is essential for developing this research.[8] News in global scale was also used to develop this research, primarily to quickly assess the respons of Mamdani's political opponents during the campaign and to gauge public opinion on the candidacy of a Muslim mayor for New York City. It also aimed to understand whether New Yorkers responded positively or negatively to Mamdani's election.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Pluralism of Society in New York City

The native of New York City were Delaware people. Today, New York City's society is highly diversified. The city was built and developed by immigrants from various parts of the world. European expeditions by the French, Dutch, and English in the 16th century shaped the city into a multicultural city. Along with the arrival of African slaves in the 17th century, Black people began to settle in the city. In the 20th century, people from various parts of the world, including ethnic minorities, increasingly entered the city. Islam has even been present in New York City since the 17th century, brought by Muslim African slaves. Then in the 20th century, Islam arrived brought by Muslim immigrants from the Middle East.[9] The estimated population is 8,478,000, with a population percentage of 30.9% non-

[7]E Ardyan et al., *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Dan Kuantitatif : Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif Dan Kuantitatif Di Berbagai Bidang* (PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia, 2023), https://books.google.co.id/books?id=A8LmEAAAQBAJ.

[8]Howard Lune and Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences (9th Edition)* (Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2017), Pearson Education Limited.

[9]Imām Al-Hājj Tālib 'Abdur-Rashīd, "A Brief History of the Afro-Islamic Presence in New York," *Souls* 12, no. 1 (March 2, 2010): 3–12, https://doi.org/10.1080/10999940903571270.

Hispanic white, 28.3% Hispanic, 20.2% Black, 15.6% Asian, and 1.6% multiracial. The religious affiliation is very diverse, with 53% Christian, 8% Protestant, 8% Jewish, 3% Muslim, 2% Hindu, 1% Buddhist, 1% Orthodox Christian, and 21% unaffiliated with any religion.[10]

Despite New York City's vast diversity of society and its diverse ethnicities, Mamdani was not favored by the Republican Party. This conservative party did not hesitate to issue threats to deport him simply because of his identity as a minority and Muslim, even though New York City is considered the most welcoming city for all classes and ethnicities. However, behind all that, his victory as mayor of New York made him an inspiring Muslim and even caused people to begin to ignore Islamophobia because of his interaction and leadership style that was very close to all classes, without any discrimination. This communication style was very well received by the New Yorkers, even teenagers liked it, not being rigid, and not dictating people's behavior according to the identity adopted by Zohran Mamdani. He also became very popular because he loudly stated that he would continue to defend Palestine for humanity. This is something that is very difficult for a politician in New York City to convey, because of the fear of the threat of reduced political support, especially the revocation of campaign funds. This humanistic eye of Mamdani is what makes him increasingly well-known and liked by society, especially the lower middle class and minorities.[11]

B. Zohran Mamdani's Victory and the Rise of Democratic Socialism in New York City

The political goal of a democratic socialist like Zohran Mamdani is to change a system that is considered to create extraordinary inequality between the rich and the poor. Therefore, socialists will continue to fight for every individual to have equal access to basic needs such as education, health care, housing, and employment. Socialists believe this inequality arises from the greed of capital owners who control the factors of production, thus creating a working class society that must work very hard just to meet their basic needs, while capital owners enjoy the wealth accumulated from the labor of workers. Socialists are essentially very focused on marginalized issues, such as issues of workers' rights, gender equality, minority rights such as ethnic minorities, the environmental crisis, climate change, and other social justice issues that have never been taken seriously by the elite.[12] These socialist ideas greatly influenced Mamdani in building New York City.

Like most socialist campaigns, Mamdani's campaign style is grassroots, conducted through a direct personal approach in the public sphere and successfully mobilized the community to understand what he is fighting for New Yorkers.[13] Mamdani does not rely on large funding from elite groups, campaign funds mostly come from various community groups, while his main rival Andrew Coumo, a fellow Democrat who ran independently, was fully supported by conglomerates through fantastic campaign donations, for example Michael Bloomberg, donated USD 8.3 million, and the total from all billionaires for Coumo's campaign needs reached USD 22 million. On the other hand, only two

[10]Pew Research Center, "People in New York," Pew Research Center, 2026, https://www.pewresearch.org/religious-landscape-study/state/new-york/.

[11]Dan Morrison and Ben Adler, "Love Him or Hate Him, Why Americans Are Obsessed with Zohran Mamdani," USA TODAY, 2026, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2026/01/01/america-obsessed-with-zohran-mamdani/87941107007/.

[12]Richard McIntyre, "Democratic Socialism," *Rethinking Marxism* 35, no. 1 (January 2, 2023): 24–35, https://doi.org/10.1080/08935696.2022.2127726.

[13]Jr. E.J. Dionne, "Why Zohran Mamdani's Victory Matters: How It Happened, What It Means," Brookings, 2025, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-zohran-mamdanis-victory-matters-how-it-happened-what-it-means/.

billionaires provided funds to Mamdani: Elizabeth Simons, with USD 250,000, and Tom Preston-Werner, with USD 20,000, a very contrasting amount of funds.[14]

In fact, the contrasting funding did not make Andrew Coumo win, he only received about 41% of the vote, and his Republican rival, Curtis Sliwa, only received 7.1%. The New York City mayoral election was very unique, Mamdani, as a newcomer in the US politics, managed to defeat political veterans from both Democrats and Republicans. Democratic socialists led in New York City, the people was happy, but posed a threat to capitalists. Mamdani's programs were considered to destroy the system built by liberal capitalists, changing the market system, regulations and policies of the city, but such changes were what New Yorkers wanted. Political attacks with racist and personal tones were more often launched in the run-up to the election, ranging from accusations of being a communist, a radical, and a terrorist supporter. It turned out that these attacks failed to influence New Yorkers. Mamdani's votes came mostly from young voters, low-income people, and immigrants, who believed socialists like Mamdani would create a new system in organizing city life rather than believing he was a communist and a terrorist supporter.[15] Voters in this category are not at all interested in the issue of identity politics but choose rationally in seeing their future with a socialist system that is considered capable of transforming cities into livable places in the future.

C. The Struggle of the Lower Class in New York City

Beyond the common dislike of political opponents during campaign periods, Mamdani's ideas are seen as positioning socialism as part of the political tradition of the US, especially as the US is a liberal-capitalist country. Fears of a shift to a socialist system, unpopular with conservative politicians and capitalists (the wealthy), have arisen. This is because the belief that a society aware of being exploited by capitalists (the wealthy) will emerge, through control of the factors of production, and this conscious and enlightened society will support tax increases for the wealthy (rich people) to achieve prosperity.[16]

This idea arose because the most important factor determining the social status is the economic mode of production, because important things in cultural change in a period such as politics, ethics, religion, philosophy and art can be explained in the changes in the economic substructure. Meanwhile, the second factor is, the mode offered by capitalists of economic production is basically unstable and not guaranteed except only for a short period of time. Therefore, capital owners continue to implement a mass labor system that causes an increase in the standard of living, thus capital owners gain greater profits by justifying continuous production continuously. The consequence is an increase in mass suffering that leads to a crisis and the collapse of the production system. Therefore, the shortcomings of New York City which is too capitalist according to socialists like Mamdani are not due to individual actions or human actions, but originate from the law of value and surplus value in commodity-producing society. Therefore, there will be a time when the liberal system of capitalism is destroyed, then the most appropriate replacement is a socialist system.

The third factor is that class is defined as the role played in production, namely, economic interests fought for between economic classes will cause conflict that will affect other social status in the long term such as religion, race, and nationality. The things that

[14]Kyle Khan-Mullins, "Here Are The Two Billionaires Supporting Zohran Mamdani," Forbes, 2025, https://www.forbes.com/sites/kylemullins/2025/11/01/here-are-the-two-billionaires-liz-simons-preston-werner-supporting-zohran-mamdani/.

[15]Brian Osgood and Ted Regencia, "Updates: Mamdani Wins New York City Mayoral Race; Cuomo Concedes," Aljazeera, 2025, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2025/11/5/nyc-mayoral-election-results-live-polls-closing-soon-in-mamdani-cuomo-race.

[16]Dodo Widarda, "Demokrasi Sosial Dalam Pemikiran Paul Feyerabend," *Temali: Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial*, 2, no. 2 (2019): 184–203.

arise from this struggle are direct and indirect consequences of the struggle between classes, then make voters in New York City want to free themselves from unfair and unequal social status. Mamdani as a minority is able to read this situation, so that voters feel they have found a suitable leader candidate to bring change for them.

The fourth factor is that the state is only a small part of politics and law. Therefore, the class character must be transformed into a class struggle, for example, defending for peace with the assumption that no one will feel constrained, free from profit-seeking, and no exploitation. Until now, New Yorkers have received unfair subsidies, which have affected their social lives. For example, housing costs always increase every year and staple foods costs also increase every year, but the tax bills of the rich are very minimal. Therefore, changing it does not have to be on a national scale, but on a local scale. Mamdani successfully campaigned for it, and now in office, he has begun to fulfill his campaign promise, targeting high taxes on the rich to provide fair and equitable subsidies for various aspects crucial to meeting basic human needs. For the very conservative Republicans, this is a very big threat. Moreover, Republicans strongly dislike subsidies for the public, even recently the Donald Trump administration has cut health subsidies.[17]

The fifth factor, the capitalist system in New York must allow for a future for socialism in the future because of the development and rationalization of better production techniques. This assumption arises because the abolition of private ownership of the means of social production has an impact on society, so that the assumption arises that there will no longer be class divisions, so that people feel their needs are well met behind the splendor of New York City. The sixth factor is, the movement towards socialism as implemented by Mamdani is a movement towards democracy. Political democracy must be defended from disruption by using the perspective that democracy is used to achieve domination to expand democratic values and principles in economic and social life.[18]

The six hypotheses above arise from this are that socialists consider the economic system and social classes in New York City to be a zero-sum game because individuals continue to be exploited and society is divided into the working class and capital owners. Socialists also consider New York to be driven only by the bourgeoisie, thus destroying equality and justice. New York City, because it is driven by the bourgeoisie, then those who believe in and adhere to the liberal capitalist system, will continue to be expansive and defensive so that they will continuously expand their movement to gain support through racist campaigns, direct insults to individuals to demean dignity, with the aim of perpetuating power and maintaining a system that is considered right.According to socialists, people are currently being exploited unconsciously through government-created cooperative agreements, whether through work contracts, joining organizations, or recognizing the role of the state.

To emphasize this idea, especially regarding the capitalist system, socialists state that capital and labor are considered commodities, and private ownership of production is used to generate profits. Therefore, socialists reduce private ownership of capital and production. According to socialists, capitalist liberals in New York have committed theft from workers (the proletariat) by paying workers the minimum wage possible to gain profits. Therefore, the issue of ownership must be carefully considered to achieve prosperity. This

[17]Chris Dal, "Trump Administration Seeks More Funding Cuts for NIH," CIDRAP, 2026, https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/09/health/trump-public-health-cuts-california.html#:~:text=The Trump administration plans to rescind $600,are in California%2C Colorado%2C Illinois and Minnesota.

[18]Steven W. Hook Christopher M. Jones, *Routledge Handbook of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

issue is a crucial debate because the primary goal of socialism is to achieve prosperity for all levels of society.[19]

D. Inequality of New York City's Capitalist Society Questioned by Socialists

Inequality from the view of capitalist arises from the unfair distribution of resources. The wealth of capital owners (the rich) already controls this distribution. Consequently, the distribution is uneven, with some receiving less than they need, while others receive more. Therefore, justice must be upheld fairly, without any pegs or claims of ownership (starting-gate theory). Even if resource scarcity or price increases occur in a region, this is not due to claims of ownership but rather to the failure of individual efforts to achieve or fulfill desires, not due to the inherent unfairness inherent in the individual's initial efforts.[20]

E. Self-Ownership, Natural Resources and Market

In the thinking of a socialist like Mamdani to challenge his very conservative political opponents, socialists will always strive to share capital or wealth equally to achieve prosperity. The explanation begins with the claim of self-ownership, then moves on to ownership of goods, ownership of natural resources and finally the market. From this, it is clear that the beginning and end are questioned by socialists about the long-established capitalist system in New York City and the form of welfare promoted by socialists is about self-ownership. Self-ownership is a doctrine of freedom that must be owned by every individual, which basically if questioned will cause confusion to draw coherent assumptions from each other.[21] However, on the contrary, the liberal capitalism system, as it has long existed and is rooted in New York City, states that socialism will not benefit anyone, even though each individual benefits from the socialism system, but the market works according to the doctrine of freedom, the market leads to a country or society that is able to show its commodities well, as well as the individual. Individuals, even though they have benefited from the socialism system, will certainly still try to put out the best effort from themselves. In this thinking, adherents of the liberal capitalist school are more inclined to carry out black campaigns to influence the middle class vote, to not elect Mamdani.[22]

Furthermore, answering the socialist challenge regarding the ownership of natural resources or if in New York City it is more translated as access to obtain social rights, such as subsidies, affordable basic necessities, affordable housing rents to salary increases for public school teachers, then the question arises, how can the wealth of natural resources (access) be controlled or owned by everyone with the slogan of shared ownership. Liberal capitalists will certainly state that the privatization that arises from the ownership of natural resources or access to social rights is not theft of individual rights as accused by socialists, assuming that initially the resources are not owned by anyone, have no price, and are not processed. If someone takes the initiative to process and develop them then that is freedom, in contrast if the person does not want to develop them or participate then he will not get

[19]Scott Burchill, Andrew Linklater, and Richard Devetak, *Theories of International Relations* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[20]Richard Peet, "Inequality And Poverty : A Marxist-Geographic Theory," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 65, no. 4 (December 1, 2010): 564–71, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1975.tb01063.x.

[21]William I. Robinson, *Theory of Global Capitalism: Production, Class, and State in a Transnational World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

[22]T W Hutchison, "Friedrich Engels and Marxist Economic Theory," *Journal of Political Economy* 86, no. 2 (August 2, 1978): 303–19.

anything, then the person who develops the resources will become an entrepreneur and enter the market, then that is freedom.[23]

Regarding the existence or control of the market that wealthy New Yorkers or capitalists seek to perpetuate, socialists argue that the market is highly risky and rife with injustice. Injustice arises from government or state intervention to monopolize a commodity. Therefore, the government should not be overly involved in market affairs except to establish subsidies to fulfill basic human rights, as there must be restrictions on individual property rights. Based on this assumption, liberal capitalists would argue that it is precisely the market conditions that create a world that can better understand and interact through the exchange of goods and services. Therefore, the socialist basis, namely the material base, would not apply in the market because it would encounter people with different characters in the market with their respective commodities. Furthermore, government intervention is heavily relied upon to protect society from market failure. Based on this thinking, capitalists and the wealthy have their own concerns about Mamdani's leadership. Moreover, Zohran Mamdani has now received global attention through his humanist socialist approach, which is considered a new face of the American political system.[24]

CONCLUSION

Zohran Mamdani's victory in the New York mayoral election demonstrates that political victories are not solely based on substantial campaign funding. Andrew Coumo, his Democratic rival, received $22 million in campaign funding but failed to become mayor, while Mamdani, with just $270,000 in campaign funding, became mayor. Mamdani was elected mayor by offering programs that addressed the problems faced by the New Yorkers, which he promised to address if elected mayor. For example, raising taxes up to 2% for the wealthy, subsidizing basic necessities, and lowering rents.

Furthermore, the issue of identity is no longer a benchmark in selecting a leader but rather focuses on programs offered during the campaign to bring change to the New Yorkers, especially lower-middle-class voters. Mamdani's identity as a Muslim was the most widely questioned during the campaign, but failed to shift public opinion towards him negatively. Attacks by political opponents regarding Mamdani's identity and beliefs are nothing more than an attempt to discredit him, a desire to make his identity a threat to society. The ideas used by Mamdani in winning the mayoral election were socialist in nature, essentially striving to create equality for the people, regardless of identity, social status, and ethnicity.

This research is expected to serve as a reference in future studies in observing the landscape of voter preferences in choosing leaders with Muslim identities in the US. The limitations of this study lie in tracking the successful implementation of Mamdani's campaign promises, and there has been no discussion of whether Mamdani's election as mayor will necessarily decrease racism against the Muslim communities in New York. Recommendations for further research include the satisfaction of New Yorkers with Mamdani's leadership and whether the global public's image of Islam has improved positively since Mamdani's election as mayor. This is important because New York is a global economic city, a global cultural city, and a global financial center. Changes in social phenomena in this city will have certain impacts at the global level.

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[23]C Reus-Smit and D Snidal, *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, Oxford Handbooks Series (OUP Oxford, 2010).

[24]Jill Steans et al., *An Introduction to International Relations Theory Perspectives and Themes* (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2010).

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