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Beyond ‘instrumental rationality’: Lord Cromer and the imperial roots of Eichmann’s bureaucracy

YEHOUDA SHENHAV

In *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Hannah Arendt introduced the term ‘banality of evil’ to describe the ‘superficial mind’ of an over-conformist bureaucrat, whose organizational expertise was the emigration of Jews. The literature that examined the roots of Arendt’s thesis on the banality of evil assumed that she had portrayed a pathological and malfunctioning rational bureaucracy, motivated by a strong culture of instrumental rationality. In contrast to this instrumental rationality thesis—and despite Arendt’s own reservations about a wholesale comparison between British imperialism and Nazism—I suggest that: (a) Arendt’s depiction of Nazi bureaucracy was anchored in her reading of imperial bureaucracy as analysed in *The origins of totalitarianism*; (b) Arendt’s analysis of Eichmann’s Nazi bureaucracy was, in several respects, similar to her analysis of Lord Cromer’s principles of imperial bureaucracy formulated in Egypt in the early years of the twentieth century; and (c) the ‘instrumental rationality’ thesis overlooked Arendt’s insights about the affinity between imperial bureaucracy and totalitarian bureaucracy, and particularly the relationships between race, arbitrary governance and bureaucratic aloofness. I explore the similarities between the Nazi model and the imperial model of bureaucracy in Arendt’s writings, focusing on the analogies she drew between Lord Cromer and Adolf Eichmann. The analysis reveals that her ‘banality of evil’ argument is deeply anchored in the history of race and imperialism, and that she was not oblivious to the affinity between imperial bureaucratic repertoires and bureaucracies of genocide.

Introduction

In 1961, Hannah Arendt arrived in Jerusalem to observe and cover the trial of Nazi criminal Adolf Eichmann for *The New Yorker*. In her *Eichmann in Jerusalem: a report on the banality of evil*, which was based on five articles she wrote for the magazine, Arendt criticized the prosecution’s portrayal of Eichmann as an exceptionally satanic villain, ‘a perverted, sadistic personality’ who had acted out of sheer hatred against the Jews.¹ The term ‘banality of evil’, which is hardly used in the book but has been canonized in the literature, refers to the superficial mind of a ‘thoughtless’ bureaucrat who is not motivated by sheer hatred.²

Although Arendt was not interested in bureaucracy per se, she nevertheless offered a thick description of Nazi bureaucracy, arguing that ‘the essence

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of every bureaucracy is to make functionaries mere cogs in the administrative machinery out of men, and thus to dehumanize them'.³ In her view, Eichmann was an instance of an ardent bureaucrat (although not a mere cog) whose expertise was the emigration of Jews. He was recognized 'not merely as an expert . . . but as an "authority" on emigration and evacuation, as the "master" who knew how to make people move'.⁴

Eichmann's portrayal as a bureaucratic criminal was, at the time, a truly revolutionary observation.⁵ Considering that the majority of intellectuals attributed the German atrocities to hatred of Jews, Arendt arguably added a moral, universal and sociological lesson on evil. It was perhaps the first systematic secular approach to evil, phrased not as a theological question, but rather as a sociological practice conducted by ordinary people.⁶

Eichmann in Jerusalem has bred rich interpretative scholarship from several intellectual traditions and academic disciplines, including sociology,⁷ literature,⁸ law and human rights⁹ and history.¹⁰ Over two hundred books and articles were written in reaction to Arendt's report,¹¹ which has become remarkably influential in the fields of philosophy, Jewish Studies and German Studies.¹² Arendt's text shifted critical attention from an idiosyncratic Jewish attitude towards the Holocaust¹³ to a cosmopolitan, global and universal perspective on genocide.¹⁴

Extant research has linked Arendt's thesis on Eichmann to three major intellectual European roots: (1) Ancient Greek philosophy—primarily the discourse on public space and on the concept of 'the political';¹⁵ (2) European phenomenology, mainly Kant,¹⁶ Husserl and Heidegger;¹⁷ and (3) German sociology, mainly Weber, Kafka¹⁸ and even the Frankfurt School.¹⁹

Yet there is a question that has not received due attention in the literature: which model of bureaucracy did Arendt have in mind upon her arrival in Jerusalem in 1961? The dominant interpretations have assumed that Arendt portrayed a Weberian rational model of bureaucracy that went astray as it became dominated by a strong culture of instrumental rationality. Bauman summarized the argument as follows:

The most shattering of lessons deriving from the analysis of the 'Twisted Road to Auschwitz' is that—in the last resort—the choice of physical extermination as the right means to the task of *Endlösung* [Final Solution] was a product of routine bureaucratic procedures: means-ends calculus, budget balancing, universal rule application.²⁰

In contrast to this scholarship, which saw Arendt's thesis as portraying mainly the supremacy of instrumental rationality in Nazi bureaucracy (i.e. in Europe), I maintain that in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Arendt established a clear link with the bureaucratic repertoires of imperialism and totalitarianism. In *The origins of totalitarianism* (hereafter *Origins*), Arendt provided a detailed analysis of the nexus between race, arbitrary bureaucracy and moral aloofness—three salient characters of bureaucracy—and in so doing, she sketched the principles of imperial bureaucracy, which differed in some cardinal respects from the European model of Weberian rationality. The common disregard of her use of imperial bureaucracy

(explored in *Origins*) in her analysis of the Nazi bureaucracy (explored in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*) is, therefore, a misinterpretation of her work.²¹

I first outline the differences between the 'instrumental rationality' thesis and Arendt's 'banality of evil'. I will argue that Arendt emphasized the *racial* character of bureaucracy, the *arbitrary* nature of its functioning vis-à-vis the rule of law, and the peculiar aspects of racially based *moral aloofness*. I then make a comparison between the two bureaucracies as they appear in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* and in *Origins*. The comparison supports my argument that Arendt's portrayal of Eichmann was, in several respects, similar to her depiction of Lord Cromer, who served as the chief British bureaucrat in Egypt in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Furthermore, these similarities did not match the culture of instrumental rationality that de-emphasized race, as Bauman and others have suggested.

The banality of evil interpreted as 'instrumental rationality'

The predominance of the 'instrumental rationality' thesis is patent in literature on the Holocaust. It is rooted in Weber's notion of *Zweckrational*, referring to instrumental action that becomes a value in itself.²² In light of the Nazi horrors, the notion was later substantially addressed by the Frankfurt School. For example, Franz Neumann outlined the disastrous connection between efficient bureaucracy and the loosely integrated bureaucratic apparatuses of the Nazi state.²³ Horkheimer and Adorno described the dialectical nature of instrumental reason, pointing to the displacement of goals and means and to the ascent of the instrumental spirit at the root of the 'enlightened' atrocities of totalitarianism.²⁴

This 'instrumental rationality' thesis, which was developed against the backdrop of the horrifying state violence during World War II and thereafter during the Cold War, was indeed eye-opening. In Weberian terminology, the Frankfurt School scholars examined the tension between action and its unintended consequences, between stability and destruction and between value rationality (and morality) and instrumental rationality. It pointed to the manner in which rational bureaucracy faced unintended consequences and turned into a non-rational death machine. The instrumental rationality thesis underscored the deceptive nature of the organizational machinery, the detrimental effects of ideology-based efficiency and the malicious use of bureaucracy's advantages towards genocide.²⁵

This interpretation re-emerged in the wake of Arendt's report on the Eichmann trial.²⁶ In his influential experiments, Milgram aspired to show how obedience to authority could transcend moral grounds.²⁷ In the introduction to his book, he concluded: 'This is perhaps the most fundamental lesson of our study: ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process'.²⁸ Therefore, he argued, 'Arendt's conception of the banality of evil comes closer to the truth than one might dare imagine'.²⁹ In this vein, Browning³⁰ argued that the 'Nazi mass murder of the European Jewry was not only the technological achievement of industrial society, but also the organizational achievement of a bureaucratic

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society'.³¹ Kelman³² and Feingold³³ described Auschwitz as a rational modern bureaucracy that had 'gone awry' as it was caught by the culture of instrumental rationality.³⁴ In Weizenbaum's succinct description, 'Germany implemented the "Final Solution" of its "Jewish Problem" as a textbook exercise in instrumental reasoning'.³⁵ Kuper viewed the procedures and regulations of Nazi bureaucracy as suffused with instrumental rationality:

The [Nazi] civil service infused the other hierarchies with its sure-footed planning and bureaucratic thoroughness . . . this vast bureaucratic apparatus showed concern for correct bureaucratic procedure, for the niceties of precise definition, for the minutiae of bureaucratic regulation, and the compliance with the law.³⁶

Thus, Kuper believed that Nazi bureaucracy was orderly, precise and lawful—all characteristics of a rational bureaucracy.

To be sure, Raul Hilberg was the first to study the history of German bureaucracy, in an attempt to 'touch bottom', as he himself explained.³⁷ He examined trains and railways, administrative procedures and abrupt administrative decrees in the context of human transport, concluding that the killing 'was no atrocity in the conventional sense'. 'It was infinitely more,' he added, 'and that "more" was the work of a far-flung, sophisticated bureaucracy.'³⁸ Yet Hilberg was careful in attributing a sole role to bureaucracy. He delineated the racial aspects of German bureaucracy and focused on the administrative construction of racial categories (e.g. what is a Jew?). This lesson was almost written off in the literature on instrumental rationality, particularly in Bauman's work.

It was Bauman who provided the most cogent description of the nature of bureaucratic instrumental rationality in the sociology of the Holocaust.³⁹ Following Hilberg, Arendt and Milgram, Bauman concluded that the 'use of violence is most efficient and cost-effective when the means are subjected to solely instrumental-rational criteria'.⁴⁰ He offered two (not mutually exclusive) features of Nazi bureaucracy:

- a) An extreme form of rationality defined by efficiency, carefully calculated design of means and ends, predictability and the elimination of chance.⁴¹ Like Kuper, Bauman assumed that precision and predictability were the principal features of Nazi bureaucracy.
- b) Dissociation of means from end.⁴² According to Bauman, this split resulted from the elaborate functional division of labour as well as from the replacement of moral values with technical ones.⁴³

Bauman discounted antisemitism as an exogenous explanation, suggesting instead that 'it was the spirit of instrumental rationality, and its modern, bureaucratic form of institutionalization, which had made the Holocaust-style solutions not only possible, but eminently "reasonable . . ."'.⁴⁴ Bauman's work on instrumental rationality, which was based on a one-sided interpretation of Arendt's banality of evil (as it excluded her insights on imperial bureaucracy), inspired further studies in the sociology of bureaucracy. These studies argue that Nazi bureaucracy

was highly authorized, vastly routinized and premised on an elaborate division of labour.⁴⁵

Even the firmest critiques of the 'banality of evil' thesis,⁴⁶ of Milgram's obedience experiments and of the instrumental rationality thesis⁴⁷ remained indentured to the same assumptions about the nature of Nazi bureaucracy. These critiques stressed that genocide was the result of the purposeful killing of Jews rather than of moral indifference. At the same time, their definition of bureaucracy as exceedingly rational (which served as the basis for its irrationality) remained intact.

In contrast, I maintain that the instrumental rationality thesis was inaccurately juxtaposed with Arendt's thesis on the banality of evil and distorted her views on imperial bureaucracy. First, the proponents of the 'instrumental rationality' thesis exaggerated their description of instrumentality devoid of race, and therefore failed to theorize the racial foundation of bureaucracy. Second, Arendt emphasized the arbitrary nature of Nazi bureaucracy. Rather than rational, precise and efficient, it was flexible and did not always comply with the rule of law. Third, they ignored the imperial sources of her thesis, focusing only on Europe and on European intellectual sources.⁴⁸ Although Arendt was careful about the comparison and stressed the major differences between British imperialism and Nazism,⁴⁹ she certainly also discerned the similarities between them.

Eventually, the structure and epistemology of this instrumental rationality thesis were anchored in European-Weberian liberal assumptions about governance and the rule of law as the finest forms of modern political rationality. Arendt, I believe, told a different story. Her understanding of bureaucracy was influenced by her previous reading of totalitarianism in conjunction with imperial history and, importantly, of Lord Cromer in Egypt as a paradigmatic case of imperial bureaucracy. She sketched the three main characteristics of this type of bureaucracy and showed how they differed from the ideal typical rational bureaucracy: (1) Nazi bureaucracy, like imperial bureaucracy, was racially based. It was therefore different from the (ostensibly neutral) liberal bureaucracy in which all citizens were considered equal; (2) Nazi bureaucracy, like imperial bureaucracy, was arbitrary and did not comply fully with the rule of law. Rather, it was founded on the legal notion of 'exception', which resulted in states of emergency and abrupt decrees; (3) The bureaucrats' moral aloofness was juxtaposed with race—as was the case in both bureaucracies—and assumed a different form as compared with the moral aloofness of a rational bureaucracy.

Imperialism and bureaucracy

Traces of imperial bureaucracy in Arendt's writing on Nazi bureaucracy

While the imperial lesson was absent from the interpretation of Arendt's work on Eichmann's bureaucracy, it featured prominently in her writing.⁵⁰ First, in *Origins*, Arendt depicted a model of imperial bureaucracy devised by Weber's contemporary, Lord Cromer, during his twenty-seven-year rule of Egypt. Second, following the publication of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Arendt

acknowledged that her thesis on Eichmann was in close dialogue with her earlier examination of imperial bureaucracy in *Origins*. This is apparent, for example, in a letter dated September 1963, addressed to Mary McCarthy, in which Arendt reflected on the link between *Eichmann in Jerusalem* and *Origins*. Arendt focused on the differences between the two texts, but her account also marked continuity:

I may add that there are some points in the Report which indeed are in conflict with the book on totalitarianism, but God knows [why the reviews] didn't spot them . . . [If] one reads the book carefully, one sees that Eichmann was much less influenced by ideology than I assumed in the book on totalitarianism . . . [P]erhaps most importantly, the very phrase: 'Banality of Evil' stands in contrast to the phrase I used in the totalitarianism book 'radical evil'.⁵¹

Admittedly, Arendt attested to the fact that her views on evil had been modified in the period between the respective publications of the two books. Yet, indirectly, she also suggested a comparison between the two models of bureaucracy—one that had been conspicuously omitted in the reviews of her interpretation of Nazi bureaucracy. This last argument is subject to a dispute in the literature on the linkage between imperialism and totalitarianism in Arendt's writings.⁵² Indeed, Arendt herself was not very clear about the connection. On the one hand, she referred to a certain connection between imperialism and totalitarianism but, on the other hand, she warned against a direct full comparison. I will address this problem in the methodology and the concluding sections.

Ample evidence points to elements of imperial bureaucracy in Arendt's analysis of the Nazi bureaucracy. For example, in an article that appeared during the war in the *Jewish Frontier*,⁵³ Arendt used similar phrases to describe both bureaucracies: 'administrative mass murder' (although she made a clear distinction between British and German); 'cogs in the mass-murder machine'; the organization 'relies not on fanatics, nor on congenital murderers, nor on sadists; it relies entirely upon the normality of jobholders and family men'.⁵⁴ These are the early seeds of her thesis on the German bureaucratic machine, pointing to the omnipresence of a bureaucratic culture operated by 'ordinary men' in a 'malfunctioning', instrumentally oriented bureaucracy. In this early *Jewish Frontier* article, Arendt also included a reference to the 'imperialistic age' that brought about 'crude precursors of future political methods'.⁵⁵ Although Arendt did not explicitly address imperial bureaucracy at this early stage, the reference is indicative of the baseline model that would inform her analysis of Nazi bureaucracy at a later stage.

In a rather cryptic paragraph that appeared in the 1963 postscript to *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Arendt established a clear connection between Nazi crimes and the imperial experience, using a common description for the two juxtaposed events: 'administrative massacres'. While she emphasized that the crime committed by the Nazis was 'unprecedented',⁵⁶ she nevertheless claimed that 'massacres of whole peoples are not unprecedented' and that 'centuries of colonization and imperialism provide plenty of examples'.⁵⁷ 'Administrative massacres', she maintained, was also 'a term raised in connection with British imperialism'.⁵⁸ This

postscript paragraph thus indicates that Arendt analysed the Nazi bureaucracy, among other things, through the lens of imperial bureaucracy.

As I have shown in these examples, in several locations in Arendt's work there is evidence for the proposition that she was not oblivious to the connection between the two models of bureaucracy when writing *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Although commentators recognized that Arendt had arrived in Jerusalem with a certain understanding of bureaucracy, they failed to acknowledge its imperial history.⁵⁹ Even the works that examined Arendt's thesis on Eichmann in the context of European imperialism⁶⁰ overlooked the centrality of Lord Cromer, a British imperial bureaucrat, on her understanding of Eichmann.⁶¹

Lord Cromer played a pivotal role in Arendt's analysis of imperialism. In *Origins*, Arendt focused extensively on the new form of bureaucracy that had mixed 'bureaucracy' and 'race' in the European colonies—particularly in Algeria, India and Egypt. Her text contains at least thirty-four references to Lord Cromer, and nineteen additional references to his writings on the management of 'subject races'. Intrigued by Cromer's philosophy of bureaucracy, Arendt extended his analysis to constitute a paradigmatic case (my own choice of words) to understand European imperialism and imperial bureaucracy. To the best of my knowledge, only a few scholars recognized Cromer as the backdrop of Arendt's analysis, and referred to his role only in passing.⁶² The index of the impressive volume on Arendt, collected by King and Stone,⁶³ has only one marginal entry on Cromer.

Lord Cromer's features of imperial bureaucracy

Lord Cromer was born to a family of British bankers, and prior to his first appointment as imperial bureaucrat he had served in the British army.⁶⁴ His first imperial post was in India, in 1872, when he became secretary to Lord Northbrook, the British governor of India. Based on this experience, he was later nominated British Consul General of Egypt.⁶⁵ Cromer had a tremendous influence on the development and organization of modern Egypt, including major reforms to the country's finance, agriculture, army, law, education and administration. Arendt argued that Cromer's career as a bureaucrat had typified the shift from colonialism to imperialism: 'Lord Cromer's career is fascinating because it embodies the very turning point from the older colonial to imperialist services'.⁶⁶ This is indicative of Arendt's firm distinction between colonialism, as driven by states, and imperialism, as driven by the European bourgeoisie. Expansionist imperialism thus produced arbitrary, fluid and illegal bureaucracy.

In 1883, when Cromer became the British Consul General of Egypt, the future of colonial rule over the country was still uncertain. At the beginning, he was uncomfortable with the emergent 'hybrid form of government', which was explicitly racial and utterly different from the one he had known in Europe.⁶⁷ For an imperial bureaucrat, this hybridity also implied the absence of a coherent rule of law and a lack of administrative clarity—the very principle of bureaucratic rationality. Yet, after a while, Cromer reconciled himself to this temporary,

‘arbitrary bureaucracy’ (as Arendt termed it), and began to ‘justify it and to expound the need for a government without name and precedent’.⁶⁸ This ‘need’ yielded a form of bureaucracy unknown explicitly on the European continent.

When Cromer realized that the occupation would endure, he presented a set of principles for a hybrid type of bureaucracy, combining bureaucracy and race, which were later published in *The government of subject races*⁶⁹ and in *Modern Egypt*.⁷⁰ Cromer perceived the role of bureaucracy as crucial for the continuation of the imperial regime over the ‘subject races’ because ‘the sword will assuredly be powerless to defend us for long, and the days of our imperial rule will be numbered’.⁷¹ He made a case for an imperial bureaucracy that endeavoured to ‘ensure the harmonious working of the different parts of the machine’.⁷² Bad government, he prophesized, would ‘bring the mightiest empire to ruin’.⁷³ Imperial bureaucracy was necessary in the colonies because it was a method ‘thoroughly uncongenial to Oriental habits of thought’.⁷⁴ Cromer devised a form of bureaucracy for the governance of ‘the subject races’ in societies that ‘could not be mapped’ into the catalogue of modern nation-states.⁷⁵ The revised system was based not only on the rule of law, but also on exceptions to the law (e.g. state of emergency, arbitrary decrees and martial law) and on racial differentiation in its population and functioning. This model of bureaucracy was conducive to imperial expansion and, as I argue, included features that resemble Arendt’s portrayal of the Nazi bureaucratic profile.

The analysis below compares the two bureaucrats—Cromer and Eichmann—and their bureaucracies, as they appear in Arendt’s *Origins* and *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. The comparison is made along three characteristics, salient in Arendt’s understanding of bureaucracy: race, arbitrariness and moral aloofness. I supplement this comparison with Lord Cromer’s writings and with additional observations from the historiography on imperialism.⁷⁶ Admittedly, I focus on similarities and not on the differences between the two forms of bureaucracy. Such a comparison (which focuses on similarities) may lead to false conclusions as it is based on interpretive texts that have been juxtaposed artificially for the purpose of comparison, while compromising chronological and spatial differences. Under such conditions, a comparison between two seemingly similar cases may yield a conclusion that is based on similarity as a desirable outcome.⁷⁷ My proposed comparison is further challenged by the fact that Arendt made a firm distinction between the administrative massacres of British imperialism and those perpetrated by Nazi Germany, and also by the fact that the language of causality is foreign to Arendt’s methodology. Clearly, Arendt did not believe in an inherently causal link between imperialism and twentieth-century mass murders. She also rejected sociological methods that absorbed political novelty into the framework of ideal types.⁷⁸ It is further evident that Arendt’s writing also marked differences between Cromer and Eichmann, but these are not fully explored in this article.

The comparison between the two models, even if it is embedded in an interpretive text and partially detached from temporal and spatial restrictions, nevertheless recovers a forgotten historical continuity (see discussion below) between two

otherwise dissimilar cases of bureaucracy: the imperial type and the Nazi type. Arendt would probably agree that such a historical comparison would be helpful in identifying the scope conditions⁷⁹ under which one could argue that imperial and Nazi bureaucracies shared several common characteristics.⁸⁰ The comparison drawn in the rest of this article is based on the similarities between the two types of bureaucracy along three salient characteristics: (1) bureaucracy and race; (2) arbitrary bureaucracy; and (3) moral aloofness. While moral aloofness is a feature that characterizes all bureaucracies and is conducive to instrumental rationality, Arendt embedded her concept of aloofness in the history of race.

Lord Cromer's imperial bureaucracy and Eichmann's Nazi bureaucracy: a comparison

Bureaucracy and race

Hannah Arendt pointed to the mutually constitutive categories of 'race' and 'bureaucracy' in both imperial and Nazi bureaucracies. She argued that the dangerous liaisons between race and bureaucracy had unleashed extraordinary power and destruction, all the more alarming as they 'bathed in an aura of rationality and civilization'.⁸¹ In 1951, she described the link between modern bureaucracy and race as a major political moment in human history:

Two new devices for political organization and rule over foreign people were discovered during the first decades of imperialism. One was race as a principle of body politic, and the other bureaucracy as a principle of foreign domination. Without race as a substitute for the nation, [and] . . . without bureaucracy as a substitute for government, the British possession of India might well have been left to the recklessness of the 'breakers of law in India'.⁸²

In this quotation, Arendt set the stage for examining the interrelations between race and bureaucracy as two major devices of imperial bureaucracy. She offered an inquiry into the manner in which race was constructed and established it as a prescribed category for the functionality of bureaucracy. This was apparent in the demographics of rulers versus ruled as well as in the manner in which racial distinctions were formally prescribed and applied bureaucratically. Indeed, Cromer was explicit in emphasizing that the proposed bureaucratic profile was essential because 'the inhabitants of the countries under British rule [were] not of Anglo-Saxon origin'.⁸³ In his two-volume book, *Modern Egypt*, he expressed the Englishman's confidence in his 'ability to perform [the] task' of raising the locals ethically and materially.⁸⁴ The rationale and legitimacy for Cromer's racialized bureaucratic structure rested upon what was perceived as the low level of the 'subject race', which, in his mind, was merely 'the rawest of raw material'.⁸⁵

Contrast [to] . . . the European talkative mind, bursting with superfluous energy, active in mind, inquisitive about everything he sees and hears [is] the grave and silent Eastern, devoid of energy and initiative, stagnant in mind . . .⁸⁶

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Cromer further believed that ‘so long as British supervision [was] maintained, the Egyptian [would] readily copy the practices and procedures of his English teachers’,⁸⁷ and, consequently, the ‘intellect’ of the oriental worker would ‘be developed’, and ‘his moral being elevated under British auspices’.⁸⁸ In postcolonial literature, this connection between bureaucracy and race was defined as the ‘rule of colonial difference’.⁸⁹

Arendt’s report on Eichmann is suffused with discussions about race. She surely pointed to the same linkage between ‘race’ and ‘bureaucracy’ as a prescribed element of Nazi bureaucracy. As patent in her report, in 1933, the Nazi government had already cleansed its bureaucracies of the ‘Jewish race’, and designed rules and procedures as means for solving the ‘Jewish question’. Nazi bureaucracy developed and used racial definitions in its formal workings, issuing them through emergency decrees in order to differentiate between Jews and non-Jews.⁹⁰ Eichmann had entered the organization as an apprentice in a department that dealt with Jews, and four years later he was considered ‘an expert on the Jewish question’.⁹¹ He read classic Zionist texts, met with Jewish officials and even visited Haifa in 1937. As Arendt pointed out, he had been commended for his ‘comprehensive knowledge of the methods of organization and ideology of the . . . Jews’. Arendt emphasized the bureaucratic characteristics of the job, in which Eichmann envisioned a production line that processed documents into passports.⁹²

This is how Jewish officials described the racial production line in Vienna after the *Anschluss*, presenting the viewpoint of bureaucracy’s racial subjects:

This is like an automatic factory, like a flour mill connected with some bakery. At one end you put in a Jew who still has some property, a factory, or a shop, or a bank account, and he goes through the building from counter to counter, from office to office, and comes out at the other end without any money, without any rights . . .⁹³

In 1941, the Nazi regime sent an order to the Netherlands to ‘establish a central office which was to serve as a model for the “solution of the Jewish question” in all occupied countries in Europe’.⁹⁴ Thus, ‘race’ and ‘bureaucracy’, juxtaposed as mutually interrelated formal categories, were pivotal to Arendt’s analyses of both Cromer and Eichmann. It was particularly the gap between bureaucracy as a form of governance for one’s own citizens and bureaucracy as a form of governance for the non-citizen ‘subject races’ that was crucial to understanding the conditions under which imperial and totalitarian atrocities had taken place. At one point, Arendt named this form of organization ‘arbitrary bureaucracy’.⁹⁵

Arbitrary bureaucracy

Arbitrary bureaucracy transcended the rule of law, and used arbitrary decrees, constant states of emergency and military aid to bureaucracy. According to Arendt, imperial bureaucracy replaced stable laws with temporality and with changing decrees that allowed the bureaucrat to remain ‘the man behind the scenes who [pulled] the strings of history’.⁹⁶ Cromer’s imperial bureaucracy

was notoriously founded on the principle of 'exceptions' since the law's inherent stability threatened its dynamic operation. The vision of imperial bureaucracy, outlined by Cromer, was readily materialized in practice. As Timothy Mitchell has described, the British had established in Egypt a system of control that was, as Cromer admitted, tantamount to the introduction of legal exceptions.⁹⁷ Imperial bureaucracy appeared as a miracle-like sovereign: on the one hand, it was omnipresent and ubiquitous and, on the other, it was illusive due to its flexibility, secrecy and absence of written documents.

Arendt portrayed young, ambitious, well-trained and highly reliable staff willing to renounce the human aspiration of recognition for their achievements, instead preferring secrecy, informality and a lack of accountability.⁹⁸ Cromer expressed his objection to bureaucratic transparency, stating that '[t]he less British officials are talked about the better'.⁹⁹ Cromer epitomized these qualities and prided himself on 'remain[ing] more or less hidden [and] pull[ing] the strings'.¹⁰⁰

Similarly, argued Arendt, Nazi rule had employed arbitrary decrees,¹⁰¹ at times 'top secret decrees',¹⁰² some of which had not been brought to the attention of the public. On the day after the burning of the Reichstag (28 February 1933), Hitler issued a decree that suspended the Weimar constitution for an indefinite period of time. Likewise, the very definition of a 'Jew' had been issued by a decree,¹⁰³ as were the first deportations of Jews before any law was passed.¹⁰⁴ These decrees developed into an important bureaucratic procedure, using emergency regulations. Baehr described this in the most lucid terms:

A totalitarian regime, Arendt declared, is the antithesis of a [Weberian] bureaucracy because it permits no room for positive law, stability, or predictability, but instead unleashes unceasing, turbulent movement.¹⁰⁵

In her analysis of the bureaucratic arbitrariness of the Third Reich, Arendt made a direct reference to her analysis of imperialism. She argued that in imperialism 'everything was always in a state of continuous flux, a steady stream', a description that accords with her depiction of totalitarianism as a system of government that is falsely attributed with a 'monolithic quality'.¹⁰⁶ This is an important lesson, considering that Arendt was interpreted as saying that 'the profundity of totalitarian evil lies precisely in its ordinariness'.¹⁰⁷ In her description of the arbitrary nature of these bureaucracies, Arendt argued the contrary.

Like Cromer, Eichmann was also a 'bearer of secrets'.¹⁰⁸ Arendt described the bureaucratic system within which he operated, and pointed to the 'language rule' (*Sprachregelung*), a code name given to a bureaucratic lie. These lies, she argued, served as 'foolproof shields against reality'.¹⁰⁹ Or, as she maintained elsewhere, it was difficult to find documents containing such 'bold words as "extermination", "liquidation" or "killing"'. Arendt extended the argument to include the Jewish community officials who had cooperated with the Nazi regime. These collaborators voluntarily became 'bearers of secrets', to either assure quiet and prevent panic, or out of 'humane' considerations, for example that 'living in the expectation of death by gassing would only be harder'.¹¹⁰ In the analyses of both

types of bureaucracies—imperial and Nazi—Arendt referred to the language of bureaucracy, and its functionaries, that yielded self-delusionary practices and made transparency impossible.

Moral aloofness

The distinction between the virtue of ‘bureaucratic aloofness’ and the vice of ‘corruption’ played a prominent role in Arendt’s observations about both Adolf Eichmann and Lord Cromer. Eichmann was clearly a bureaucrat whose views of the world were mediated by the lenses of bureaucracy. He ‘remembered the turning points of his career rather well, but . . . they did not necessarily coincide with the history of the Jews’.¹¹¹ According to Arendt, Eichmann had no motive at all ‘except for an extraordinary diligence in looking out for his personal advancement’.¹¹² He was an ambitious young man who was fed up with his job as a travelling salesman. From a humdrum life without significance, ‘the wind had blown him into History . . . into a movement that always kept him moving’.¹¹³ His assignment as an officer in Vienna in 1938 was the ‘first important job in his whole career’.¹¹⁴ Eichmann developed an overly conformist bureaucratic personality, claiming during the police examination in Jerusalem that he would have sent his own father to his death if that had been required.¹¹⁵

‘Officialese [*Amtssprache*] is my only language’, he said.¹¹⁶ Eichmann camouflaged the concentration and extermination camps in terms of ‘administration’ and ‘economy’, disassociating himself from ‘emotions’ and taking pride in his own sense of ‘objectivity’.¹¹⁷ Truthful to his bureaucratic personality, Eichmann expressed distaste towards corruption and greed. Although he was surrounded by corruption for many years, he was not susceptible to this kind of temptation.¹¹⁸ Arendt argued that Eichmann had the greatest contempt for people who aspired for, or succeeded in, accumulating wealth in the course of their work.¹¹⁹

Eichmann also attributed virtue to bureaucratic aloofness. This made him averse to bribery and profit, valuing those who were prepared to sacrifice everything (and especially everybody) on the altar of their ideas.¹²⁰ Arendt argued that ‘moral aloofness’ was a consequence of the dehumanization endemic to the pathologies of many bureaucracies, as was the case with the Nazi bureaucracy. This is also indicated in the fact that the bureaucrat did not hate its subjects, as Eichmann explicitly stated: ‘I myself had no hatred for the Jews’.¹²¹ The ideal bureaucrat ‘had of course his personal feelings and emotions, but he would never permit them to interfere with his actions if they came into conflict with his ideas’.¹²²

The moral aloofness argument was not unique to imperial or Nazi bureaucracies. Yet it is peculiar that Arendt described both bureaucrats—Cromer and Eichmann—in similar language. This distinction between (positive) ‘aloofness’ and (negative) ‘corruption’, drawn in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, also ran as a thread through her analysis of Lord Cromer in *Origins*. In the latter, Arendt described Cromer’s ‘indifference and aloofness and [his] genuine lack of interest in [his] subjects’.¹²³ She argued, for example:

Aloofness became the new attitude of all members of the British services; it was a more dangerous form of governing than despotism and arbitrariness because it did not even tolerate that last link between the despot and his subjects, which is formed by bribery and gifts.¹²⁴

Furthermore:

The very integrity of the British administration made despotic government more inhuman and inaccessible to its subjects than Asiatic rulers and reckless conquerors had ever been. Integrity and aloofness were symbols for an absolute division of interests to the point where they are not even permitted to conflict. In comparison, exploitation, oppression, or corruption look like safeguards of human dignity, because exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed, corruptor and corrupted still live in the same world, still share the same goals, fight each other for the possession of the same things.¹²⁵

Arendt described both Eichmann and Cromer as bureaucrats who believed that they were not supposed to have ideas about political matters. Although bureaucratic aloofness is also a trait of rational bureaucracy, I have shown that Arendt applied the distinction between 'moral aloofness' and 'corruption' in both cases, albeit in otherwise dissimilar historical contexts of Nazi and imperial bureaucracies. Furthermore, moral aloofness produced disastrous outcomes when juxtaposed with racist ideologies.

The analysis above has pointed to the inherent similarities between Cromer's imperial model and the Nazi model of bureaucracy. Furthermore, through the comparison between Arendt's texts (*Origins* and *Eichmann in Jerusalem*), I explored the usage of similar phrases and arguments, strongly suggesting that Arendt was not blind to these similarities and that her analysis of the Nazi bureaucracy was significantly in dialogue with her understanding of its imperial counterpart. In more simple terms, Arendt detected clear repertoires of imperial bureaucracy in the Nazi bureaucracy.

This aspect of Arendt's work, which has been neglected in the literature, sheds new light on our understanding of the linkage between genocide and bureaucracy as well as on the deployment of violence by political systems in the contemporary postcolonial world. This connection is crucial in examining the manners in which local governments manage racial and arbitrary bureaucracies in the metropolitan centres of Europe and North America.

Omission of the imperial legacy in the interpretation of Nazi bureaucracy

Is there sufficient explanation for this failure to take seriously Arendt's suggestion about the shared bureaucratic repertoires of Eichmann and Cromer? The answer is probably 'no'. The literature that examines the dissociation between Nazism and imperialism presents two competing perspectives: one suggests that Arendt argued for continuity between the two systems,¹²⁶ whereas the second suggests that Arendt emphasized the discontinuity between them, as she differentiated between Europe and its colonies.¹²⁷ Like Moses, I believe that this ambivalent position reflects Arendt's views on the subject, and should not be 'resolved'. That is, I treat both perspectives as complementary, suggesting that Arendt did

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not see a wholesale continuity between the two regimes, but definitely saw similarities in their political repertoires. However, these similarities were blurred and marginalized in the Cold War discourse.

The 'Cold War discourse' emerged simultaneously with the publication of Arendt's 1951 *Origins*.¹²⁸ This discourse dissociated totalitarianism from its imperial roots, although at the same time it was based on an imperialist view of a rift between 'West' and 'East'. The Cold War language was marked by orientalist tones, and attributed totalitarianism to a relapse in the history of enlightened Europe. It ascribed totalitarianism either to 'Soviet' mentality or to a moment of 'barbarism' in the history of Europe. As Pietz asserted, in this discourse 'the appearance of the first truly totalitarian state in the heart of Europe was thus an accident'.¹²⁹ In this vein, George Kennan described Nazi totalitarianism as a 'relapse' of German culture into barbarism, certainly far from discerning a flaw in Western culture. He also referred to the 'natural outlook of the Russian people', which had marked a racial group as the one cause for this 'barbarism'.¹³⁰ The same is true for other thinkers and writers, such as George Orwell and Arthur Koestler, as well as for members of the Congress for Cultural Freedom.¹³¹ Several prominent sociologists, such as Daniel Bell and Edward Shills, were members of the Congress, by commission or omission, and promoted similar assumptions in their writings.¹³² Thus, with the emergence and development of that discourse, the narrative about the origin of barbarism shifted back from the European colonies to Europe. Pietz concluded that the disassociation of this vision of totalitarianism from its imperial roots was due, in part, to the adoption of orientalist and racial assumptions, portraying the East as inferior to the West.¹³³

I suggest that in this rewriting of the history of totalitarianism we may find one clue to the discursive denial of the continuity between imperialism and Nazism. The orientalist nature of the Cold War discourse re-organized the European political discourse to focus mainly on the 'nature' and 'essence' of the Soviet dictatorship.¹³⁴ Thus, the Cold War discourse on totalitarianism shifted attention from colonial and imperial legacies, translating 'all political events and social struggle anywhere in the world into the master code of US/Soviet confrontation'.¹³⁵ This left 'neither room nor need for the sort of colonial discourse so heavily relied on by Western states during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries'.¹³⁶ Paradoxically, argued Pietz, Cold War discursive structure received legitimacy because it appropriated ideologically familiar elements from an earlier discourse on Western imperialism—the legacy of which it was quick to bury and deny.

Arendt was no exception to that rule and expressed her own set of orientalist and racist attitudes. For example, when she arrived in Jerusalem in 1961, she wrote to the German philosopher Karl Jaspers:

Fortunately, Eichmann's three judges were of German origin, indeed the best German Jewry. Hausner is a typical Galician Jew, still European, very unsympathetic . . . boring . . . constantly making mistakes. Probably one of those people who don't know any language. Everything is organized by the Israeli police force, which gives me the creeps. It speaks only Hebrew and looks Arabic. Some downright brutal types among them. They obey any

order. Outside the courthouse doors the oriental mob, as if one were in Istanbul or some other half-Asiatic country.¹³⁷

As a European Jew (of German origin), she expressed the quintessential orientalist reading of Israeli society, one that could emerge directly from Edward Said's *Orientalism*.¹³⁸ The distinction between 'occident' and 'orient' became a scale on which she ranked all Jews, from 'European' on one end, to 'Arab' on the other.

Pietz linked these views to Arendt's observations about Africans. Arendt fundamentally believed that contacts with primitive societies corrupted the European mind and that tribal Africa infected Europe with 'tribal nationalism'.¹³⁹ She further added that 'the senseless massacre of native tribes on the Dark Continent was quite in keeping with the traditions of these tribes themselves'.¹⁴⁰

Arendt's orientalist perspective, a singular case of a larger phenomenon, is in accord with the discontinuity thesis pertaining to the shift in 'barbarism' from Africa to Europe. This shift, which may have enabled the erasure of imperial roots, produced an ironic outcome. On the one hand, Arendt's work on Eichmann was fundamental to the intellectual discourse of the second half of the twentieth century, particularly to the universal understanding of the sociology of evil. On the other hand, its popularity in North America and Europe was accompanied by a compartmentalization between Europe and its colonies. This compartmentalization was a result of the Cold War discourse in which Arendt was a pivotal thinker. Moses provides a broader analysis of the tensions within cold-war discourse, and the intricate relationship between liberalism and imperialism and particularly race imperialism.¹⁴¹

Indeed, the linkage between colonialism and genocide was raised at an earlier stage by anti-colonial black intellectuals. As early as 1936, Ralph Bunche suggested that '[t]he doctrine of fascism with its extreme jingoism, its exaggerated exaltation of the state and its comic-opera glorification of race, has given a new and greater impetus to the policy of world imperialism which had conquered and subjected to ... systematic and ruthless exploitation of virtually all of the darker populations of the earth'.¹⁴² Aimé Césaire suggested that the real crime of fascism was the application of colonial procedures to white people 'which until then had been reserved exclusively for the Arabs of Algeria, the "coolies" of India, and the "niggers" of Africa'.¹⁴³ Finally, it was W. E. B. Du Bois who argued that 'the colonialism of Great Britain and France had exactly the same object and methods as the fascists and the Nazis were trying clearly to use'.¹⁴⁴

While insightful, the observations made by anti-colonial intellectuals were often too broad and not sufficiently substantiated by historical data. In contrast, Arendt's suggestion was more modest and specific, albeit incomplete. She opened a porthole to the study of the connection between imperial bureaucracy and subsequent bureaucracies of mass murders. Yet, as others have noted, Arendt did not explore the manners in which German colonialism influenced Nazi leaders and their policies.¹⁴⁵ For example, Madley showed that the German terms *Lebensraum* and *Konzentrationslager* were not coined by the Hitler regime, but had been forged during the colonization of Namibia.¹⁴⁶ It

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was only during World War II that they were imported to Europe. The German rule of South West Africa was one of the more violent colonial enterprises. In the early twentieth century, the Germans, in their perpetuation of racial superiority theories, mass murdered approximately 40,000–70,000 members of the Herero tribe and approximately 12,000–15,000 members of the Nama tribe. These massacres were informed by racial laws and by a strong belief in the superfluous nature of the Africans. Even the expression ‘final solution’ was first used in the imperial context.¹⁴⁷ It therefore seems that the omission of the colonial experience in Arendt’s thesis on the bureaucracy of Nazism has prevented the advancement of research on the connection between bureaucracy and genocide.

When Arendt visited Jerusalem in 1961, Israel employed its own model of ‘bureaucracy and race’ to manage its Palestinian citizens. The bureaucracy that was formed, known as a ‘military regime’, was based on imperial elements: constant states of emergency, secrecy and collaboration. The local military rulers have had tremendous power in restricting freedom of movement, granting licence for businesses, determining administrative arrests, confiscating lands and other privileges. Israel’s laws of exception were originally adopted from the British imperial rule of Palestine that was in effect since 1945. These emergency rules were changed and tailored over the years, but are still based on the Schmittan concept ‘state of exception’. For example, security units are deployed against Palestinian political activists or African refugees. The coupling of bureaucracy with race is most conspicuous in the Jewish rule over the Palestinians in the West Bank. It is apparent that the bureaucracy of the Israeli occupation bears close resemblance to the imperial type.¹⁴⁸ I believe Arendt would have subscribed to this view.

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Endnotes

- 1 Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: a report on the banality of evil* (New York: Viking, 1963), p. 26.
- 2 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 289. To be sure, Arendt’s book does not focus merely on the perpetrators. She was also critical of Israel’s orchestration of the trial, describing the Zionist attempt to monopolize the history of the Holocaust as a grave mistake. She further argued that if the Jews had not been unorganized and leaderless, the Holocaust would have been determined otherwise, probably with far fewer Jewish victims. These arguments were sufficiently scandalous to generate an anti-Arendt stir among American Jewry, who pejoratively labelled her ‘Heidegger’s bimbo’.
- 3 In the case of Eichmann, Arendt rejected the defence argument that he was a mere cog. Also note that in her later writings Arendt gave more explicit attention to state bureaucracy, perhaps perceiving it as the most formidable form of state sovereignty.
- 4 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 60.

- 5 Raul Hilberg, *The politics of memory* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, [1961] 2002). In fact, it was Raul Hilberg who first argued that '[i]t must be kept in mind that most of the participants [of genocide] did not fire rifles at Jewish children or pour gas into gas chambers Most bureaucrats composed memoranda, drew up blueprints, talked on the telephone, and participated in conferences. They could destroy a whole people by sitting at their desk', p. 1011. See also Nathaniel Popper, 'A conscious pariah', *The Nation*, 31 March 2010. Popper laid out the complex relationship between Hilberg and Arendt, including the question of originality of arguments.
- 6 Adi Ophir, *The order of evil: an outline for an ontology of morals* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), p. 1011.
- 7 George Kateb, *Hannah Arendt: politics, conscience, evil* (Totoway, NJ: Rowman and Allanheld, 1983); Peter Baehr, 'The grammar of prudence: Arendt, Jaspers, and the appraisal of Max Weber', in Steven E. Aschheim (ed.), *Hannah Arendt in Jerusalem* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 307–324; Larry May, 'Socialization and institutional evil', in Larry May and Jerome Kohn (eds.), *Hannah Arendt: twenty years later* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997).
- 8 Robert C. Pirro, *Hannah Arendt and the politics of tragedy* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001).
- 9 Seyla Benhabib, 'Identity, perspective and narrative in Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem*', *History and Memory*, Vol. 8, 1996, pp. 25–59.
- 10 Dan Diner, *Beyond the conceivable: studies on Germany, Nazism and the Holocaust* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000).
- 11 David Cesarani, *Eichmann: his life and crimes* (London: Heinemann, 2004).
- 12 Diner, *Beyond the conceivable*.
- 13 Henry L. Feingold, 'How unique is the Holocaust?', in Alex Grobman and Daniel Landes (eds.), *Genocide: critical issues of the Holocaust* (Los Angeles, CA: The Simon Wiesenthal Centre, 1983); Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's willing executioners: ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Albert A. Knopf, 1996).
- 14 Following this line of explanation, the historiography of the Holocaust has been split between at least two competing epistemologies to twentieth-century mass murders, known as 'intentionalism' and 'functionalism'. See Goldhagen, *Hitler's willing executioners*. Intentionalism focuses on hatred, racial motivations and antisemitic ideologies as the primary engines of genocide. See also Karl Schlensener, *The twisted road to Auschwitz* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1970). Functionalism (different from the sociological 'functionalism') provides a complementary epistemology that attributes mass murders to unfolding processes supported by the pathologies of modern civilization. Whereas intentionalism is based on Jewish exceptionalism, functionalism focuses on the process, including the workings of bureaucracy. One may note that these epistemologies correspond to two emblematic legal events. See also Natan Sznajder, 'Hannah Arendt's Jewish cosmopolitanism', *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2007, pp. 113–123. Intentionalism has found its best representation in the Eichmann trial. Israel turned the trial into a 'pedagogical poem', as asserted by one of Israel's prominent poets, Natan Alterman focusing solely on the Jewish victims. The universal perspective found its best representation in the Nuremberg trials. Rather than crimes against the Jewish people, it introduced a new category in international law: crimes against humanity. Despite Hannah Arendt's Jewish and Zionist past, her thesis on Eichmann was considered the best representation of the functional approach. The genealogy of this approach dates back to Raul Hilberg and his monumental book *The destruction of European Jews* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, [1961] 2002). Apparently, Arendt relied on Hilberg's work but failed to properly acknowledge her sources. See also Popper, 'A conscious pariah'. Popper lays out the complex relationship between Hilberg and Arendt, including the question of originality of argument. For reasons described in the article, I reject this typology between 'functionalism' and 'intentionalism' and instead wish to examine the imperial sources of this discourse.
- 15 Joseph Beatty, 'Thinking and moral considerations: Socrates and Arendt's Eichmann', in Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman (eds.), *Hannah Arendt: Critical Essays*, (SUNY Press, 1994), pp. 57–74; Elizabeth M. Meade, 'The commodification of values', in May and Kohn, *Hannah Arendt*, pp. 107–126; Shiraz Dossa, 'Hannah Arendt and Eichmann: the public, the private and evil', *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 1984, pp. 163–182; Philip Hansen, *Hannah Arendt: politics, history and citizenship* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993).
- 16 Beatty, 'Thinking and moral considerations'. See also Steven E. Aschheim, *Culture and catastrophe* (London: Macmillan, 1996).
- 17 Margaret B. Hull, *The hidden philosophy of Hannah Arendt* (London: Routledge, 2002); Hinchman and Hinchman, *Hannah Arendt*; Hannah F. Pitkin, *The attack of the blob: Hannah Arendt's concept of the social* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Bernard M. Crick, 'On rereading of the origins of totalitarianism', in Melvyn A. Hill (ed.), *Hannah Arendt: the recovery of the public world* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979); Dana R. Villa, 'The banality of philosophy: Arendt on Heidegger and Eichmann', in May and Kohn, *Hannah Arendt*.

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- 18 Margaret Canovan, *The political thought of Hannah Arendt* (London: J. M. Dent, 1974).
- 19 Franz Neumann, *Behemoth* (New York: Harper Books, 1942); Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of reason* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947); Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of enlightenment* (New York: Continuum, 1947).
- 20 Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1989); Christopher R. Browning, 'The German bureaucracy and the Holocaust', in Grobman and Landes, *Genocide*, p. 148; Stewart Clegg, 'Bureaucracy, the Holocaust and techniques of power at work', *Management Revue*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 2008, pp. 326–347.
- 21 It should be noted that although *The origins of totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. 1951) provides an informed analysis of imperial bureaucracy and of the relationship between bureaucracy and race, its scope is much broader. In fact, Arendt's original title, which was eventually rejected by the editors, was the three pillars of hell—antisemitism, imperialism and totalitarianism—in which antisemitism was perceived as an instance of racism. Unfortunately, the scholarly interpretation of *Eichmann in Jerusalem* remains oblivious to these insights.
- 22 Max Weber, *On the methodology of the social sciences* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1949); Richard L. Rubinstein, *The cunning of history* (New York: Harper, 1978).
- 23 Neumann, *Behemoth*.
- 24 Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of enlightenment*; David Held, *Critical theory: Horkheimer to Habermas* (London: Hutchinson, 1980).
- 25 Irving L. Horowitz, *Taking lives: genocide and the state power* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1982).
- 26 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*.
- 27 Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to authority: an experimental view* (London: Tavistock, 1974).
- 28 Milgram, *Obedience to authority*, p. 6.
- 29 Milgram, *Obedience to authority*, p. 6.
- 30 Christopher Browning, *Ordinary men* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).
- 31 Browning, 'The German bureaucracy'; Browning, *Ordinary men*.
- 32 Herbert C. Kelman, 'Violence without moral restraint', *Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 29, No. 4, 1973, pp. 29–61; Feingold, 'How unique is the Holocaust?'
- 33 Feingold, 'How unique is the Holocaust?'
- 34 Feingold, 'How unique is the Holocaust?'; Leo Kuper, *Genocide: its political use in the twentieth century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981).
- 35 Joseph Weizenbaum, *Computer power and human reason: from judgment to calculation* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1976), p. 252.
- 36 Kuper, *Genocide*, p. 161.
- 37 Hilberg, *The politics of memory*, p. 17.
- 38 Hilberg, *The politics of memory*, p. 59.
- 39 Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*.
- 40 Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, p. 59.
- 41 Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, p. 90.
- 42 Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, p. 106.
- 43 Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, p. 198.
- 44 Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, p. 18.
- 45 Clegg, 'Bureaucracy'; Edward S. Herman, *Triumph of the market* (New York: South End Press, 1995).
- 46 Yaacov Lozowick, *Hitler's bureaucrats: the Nazi security police and the banality of evil* (London: Continuum, 2002).
- 47 Marie Fleming, 'Genocide and the body politic in the time of modernity', in Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan (eds.), *The specter of genocide: mass murder in historical perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 97–116; Eric Weitz, 'The modernity of genocides: war race and revolution in the twentieth century', in Gellately and Kiernan, *The specter of genocide*, pp. 53–74; Laurence Reese, *Auschwitz: the Nazis and the final solution* (London: BBC Books, 2005).
- 48 Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, pp. 208, 212.
- 49 A. Dirk Moses, 'Hannah Arendt, imperialism and the Holocaust', in Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama (eds.), *German colonialism, race, the Holocaust and postwar Germany* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), pp. 72–92.
- 50 Richard H. King and Dan Stone (eds.), *Hannah Arendt and the uses of history: imperialism, nation, race and genocide* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), pp. 68–86.
- 51 Carol Brightman, 'Introduction', in Carol Brightman (ed.), *Between friends: the correspondence of Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy 1949–1975* (New York: Harcourt, 1995).
- 52 Moses, 'Hannah Arendt, imperialism and the Holocaust'.

- 53 Hannah Arendt, 'Organized guilt and universal responsibility', in Jerome Kohn (ed.), *Hannah Arendt: essays in understanding* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994). Originally published in *Jewish Frontier*, 12 June 1945, pp. 12–16.
- 54 Arendt, 'Organized guilt', p. 129.
- 55 Arendt, 'Organized guilt', p. 131.
- 56 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 288.
- 57 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 288.
- 58 Moses, 'Hannah Arendt, imperialism and the Holocaust'. Arendt carefully added that 'the British deliberately rejected such procedures as a means of maintaining their rule over India', p. 288. Arendt made a clear distinction between British imperialism and Nazism and was adamant about it. Yet she also allowed for a limited comparison between them, as I show below.
- 59 Hans Mommsen, 'Hannah Arendt's interpretation of the Holocaust as a challenge to human existence', in Aschheim, *Hannah Arendt in Jerusalem*, pp. 224–231; Bhikhu Parekh, *Hannah Arendt and the search for new political philosophy* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1981); Melvyn A. Hill (ed.), *Hannah Arendt: the recovery of the public world* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979); Jane Lisa Disch, *Hannah Arendt and the limits of philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Daniel Bivona, *British imperial literature, 1870–1940: writing and the administration of empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
- 60 Omer Bartov, 'Seeking the roots of modern genocide', in Gellately and Kiernan, *The specter of genocide*, pp. 75–96; Cesarani, *Eichmann*; Moses, 'Hannah Arendt, imperialism and the Holocaust'.
- 61 Joan Cocks, 'On Frantz Fanon, Rosa Luxemburg, and Hannah Arendt', in Bonnie Honig (ed.), *Feminist interpretations of Hannah Arendt* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 221–245; William Pietz, 'The postcolonialism of Cold War discourse', *Social Text*, Vol. 19–20, 1988, pp. 55–75; Aschheim, *Hannah Arendt in Jerusalem*; Irene Silverblatt, *Modern inquisitions: Peru and the colonial origins of the civilized world* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).
- 62 Margaret Canovan, *Hannah Arendt: a reinterpretation of her political thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Domenico Losurdo, 'Toward a critique of the category of totalitarianism', *Historical Materialism*, Vol. 12, 2004, pp. 25–55; Christopher J. Lee, 'Race and bureaucracy revisited', in King and Stone, *Hannah Arendt and the uses of history*, pp. 68–86.
- 63 King and Stone, *Hannah Arendt and the uses of history*.
- 64 Roger Owen, *Lord Cromer: Victorian imperialist, Edwardian proconsul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
- 65 In 1903, Cromer, together with Zionist leaders, was assigned to examine the territory of Al-Arish in the Sinai Desert as a possible national home for the Jews. Cromer was suspicious of these leaders, asking to negotiate with the British only, and was adamant in his rejection of the proposal. He also believed that Al-Arish should remain an integral part of Egypt.
- 66 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, p. 93.
- 67 The Earl of Cromer, 'The government of subject races', *Edinburgh Papers*, January 1908, pp. 1–27.
- 68 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, p. 93; Owen, *Lord Cromer*, p. 204.
- 69 Cromer, 'The government of subject races'.
- 70 The Earl of Cromer, *Modern Egypt* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1908). As Owen pointed out, "'The government of subject races" presented materials which were removed from earlier drafts of *Modern Egypt*, in the guise of a review of a book on the decline of the Roman Empire'. Owen, *Lord Cromer*, p. 362.
- 71 Cromer, 'The government of the subject races', p. 6.
- 72 Cromer, 'The government of the subject races', p. 18.
- 73 Cromer, 'The government of the subject races', p. 3.
- 74 Cromer, 'The government of the subject races', p. 13.
- 75 Cromer, 'The government of the subject races', p. 11.
- 76 Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991); Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of experts: Egypt, techno-politics, modernity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).
- 77 Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: the representation of reality in western literature*, trans. Willard Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).
- 78 Baehr, 'The grammar of prudence'.
- 79 Bernard P. Cohen, *Developing sociological knowledge* (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1989).
- 80 Moses, 'Hannah Arendt, imperialism and the Holocaust'.
- 81 See also her methodological debate with Voegelin in his review of her book in *Review of politics*, cited in Disch, *Hannah Arendt and the limits of philosophy*, p. 311; see also Dossa, 'Hannah Arendt and Eichmann'.
- 82 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, p. 65.

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- 83 Cromer, 'The government of the subject races', p. 1.
 84 Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, p. 130.
 85 Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, p. 131.
 86 Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, p. 148.
 87 Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, p. 155.
 88 Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, p. 143.
 89 Partha Chatterjee, *The nation and its fragments: colonial and postcolonial histories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); George Steinmetz, 'The colonial state as a social field: ethnographic capital and native policy in the German overseas empire before 1914', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 73, No. 4, 2008, pp. 589–612.
 90 Hilberg, *The destruction of European Jews*.
 91 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, pp. 36, 40.
 92 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, pp. 44–45.
 93 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 46. Emphasis added.
 94 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, p. 45.
 95 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, p. 14.
 96 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, p. 96.
 97 Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt*; Yehouda Shenhav and Yael Berda, 'The colonial foundations of the state of exception: juxtaposing the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories with colonial bureaucratic history', in Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni and Sari Hanafi (eds.), *The power of inclusive exclusion: anatomy of the Israeli rule in the occupied Palestinian territories* (New York: Zone Books, 2009), pp. 337–374. In the case of the colonies, martial law was a frequent manifestation of 'exception'. See also Nasser Hussain, *The jurisprudence of emergency: colonialism and the rule of law* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003). As Hussain persuasively argued in his excellent analysis, state of emergency carried different meanings in Europe and in the colonies. Based on the cases of Punjab and St. Thomas, Hussain showed how the use of martial law in the colonies was suffused, both in practice and in theory, with racialized definitions and interpretations.
 98 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*.
 99 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, p. 93.
 100 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, p. 94.
 101 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 63.
 102 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 113.
 103 Hilberg, *The destruction of European Jews*.
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 105 Baehr, 'The grammar of prudence', p. 813.
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 107 Jeffrey Isaac, *Arendt, Camus, and modern rebellion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 48.
 108 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 24.
 109 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 81.
 110 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 84.
 111 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 53.
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 113 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 29.
 114 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 39.
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 117 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 64.
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 125 Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism*, p. 92.
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