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# The European Legacy in Africa (The African Legacy in Europe)\*

*Abstract:* The contribution focuses on selected elements of the European legacy in Africa that frame the twentieth century in a crucial way. They contributed to the perpetration of major atrocities on the African continent on a scale that invites comparison with the Holocaust – that is, the genocide of Namibian Hereros at the beginning of the twentieth century and the genocide of the Rwandan Tutsis at its end. The paper also discusses elements of the African legacy in Europe – particularly the emergence and transfer of a new form of power that depends on the experience of imperialism as central to the ‘Western’ worldview. The Rwandan genocide in 1994 represents a new nature of the atrocity, in which the victims become the killers. A better understanding of it could therefore also shed light on some related, but different, events, such as “humanitarian interventions” and the “war against terror”. The article focuses on the organization of the colonial and postcolonial bureaucratic apparatus of rule, its special form of non-state power, and its connection with “race”, “tribe”, and “tradition” as crucial elements of post-totalitarian forms of government and new forms of identitarian collective violence. It stresses the crucial connectedness of the “African” and “European” structure of this new form of power, which indeed usurped the role of the modern nation-state. The processes that create the conditions for the new forms of domination and for the local and global undermining of politics and (political) responsibility can also be understood in the same way.

*Keywords:* Power, Genocide, Racism, Tribalism, Bureaucracy, Imperialism, Violence, Rwanda, Africa, Europe, the West

“We were well prepared by the authorities. We felt we were among ourselves. Never again did we think even for a moment that we would be hampered or punished. Ever since the plane crash, the radio had hammered at us, “The foreigners are departing. They had material proof of what we are going to do and they are leaving Kigali. This time around they are showing no interest in the fate of the Tutsis”. We witnessed that flight of the armoured cars along the road with our own eyes. Our ears no longer heard murmurs of reproach. For the first time ever, we did not feel we were under the frowning supervision of whites. Other encouragements followed that assured us of unchecked freedom to complete the task. So we thought, Good, it’s true, the blue helmets did nothing in Nyamata except an about-face to leave us alone. Why would they come back before it’s all over? At the signal, off we went”. (Adalbert, a killer in the Rwandan genocide)<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

This article focuses on certain elements of the European legacy in Africa that crucially framed the turn of the twenty-first century and marked the ‘Western’ picture of the world during that period. In addition, they were also the major factors enabling the perpetration of major atrocities on the African continent on a scale that invites comparison with the Holocaust – that is, the first and the last genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the genocide of Namibian Hereros at the beginning of the twentieth century and the genocide of the Rwandan Tutsis (with all its consequences and potential lessons)<sup>2</sup> at its end. This paper also discusses the question of the African legacy in Europe, especially the contemporary form of politics and power which is strongly marked by the experience of imperialism as central to the ‘Western’ worldview, and the question of how one can explain this. The 1994 Rwandan genocide was not a mere repetition or even an approximation of the European Holocaust, just as the Herero genocide (1904–8) was not simply its forerunner, although they all share many points in common. There is a ‘qualitative’ difference and a leap in the criminal ‘nature’ of the Rwandan genocide in the sense of something radically new (not only in view of previous genocides, but also the Holocaust) which is why a better understanding of it could also shed light on certain more recent events, such as the so-called ‘humanitarian interventions’ and the spectre of the ‘war on terror’. This contribution draws on some recent historical studies, the analysis of imperialism, race and bureaucracy in Hannah Arendt’s work, and authors who ‘methodologically’ base their research of the political institutions of Sub-Saharan Africa and the phenomenon of genocide on the Arendtian analysis of totalitarianism, such

as Mahmood Mamdani. The body of the article discusses the organization of the colonial and the postcolonial bureaucratic apparatus and its connection with “race”, “tribe”, and “tradition” as crucial elements of post-totalitarian forms of government and new forms of identitarian collective violence. My main aim is not so much to analyze the Rwanda genocide, but rather to re-think some of the established notions about it being a phenomenon of ‘black Africa’ and thus unimportant in the European and ‘our’ regional context because it is considered ‘remote’ or so unspeakably cruel that it defies all comparison. The various subplots of postcolonial power, racism, and tribalism in the Great Lakes Region and their specific potential to mobilize the masses are deeply interwoven with the European and global narratives, especially in terms of the manner in which the group that faces the risk of extermination becomes politically marginalized. It has numerous European roots and parallels in more recent European events.<sup>3</sup> Not only were European and other ‘Western’ political forces participants in these events, their underlying dynamics and consequences are all inscribed in the contemporary global power structure. This is why the article stresses the crucial connectedness of the ‘African’ and the ‘European’ structure of this new form of power, which is today termed a “state”, but which at the turn of the twentieth century assumed or indeed usurped the role of the modern nation-state. This suggestion is also related to my understanding of the process of creating the conditions for new forms of domination and for the local and global undermining of politics and (political) responsibility.

## Hannah Arendt’s contribution

The specific of modern collective crimes during the Holocaust and after it is their paradoxical ‘uniqueness’ and simultaneous ‘repeatability’ and comparability, which makes them difficult to understand and prevent. Simply put, the question still revolves around the dilemma of whether that which leads to collective crimes, such as genocide, is an ‘objective’ structure, a regime etc., or first and foremost a ‘subjective’ component – an ideology and the related blindness and hatred that spawn the criminal motive. In the discussion among the historians and analysts of the Holocaust, there thus reappears the rift between the structuralist-functional and the ideological-intentional interpretation of collective crimes such as genocide. In her attempt at understanding such events, Hannah Arendt transcended both the dilemma of ‘uniqueness’ and ‘repeatability’, and the dilemma of structure and intentionality, without having had to either give into an absolute causality of structures or swear by complete subjectivity. This is precisely why I draw on her work here. Au-

thors such as Zygmunt Bauman did follow Hannah Arendt's example (and contributed to the wrong interpretation of her position), but they explained the origins of totalitarianism and the phenomenon of concentration camps chiefly through the modern bureaucratic structure as an "instrumental rationality" of the Weberian type, which is based on a pyramidal power scheme and obedience, and thereby produces the bureaucratic distancing of individuals. This enables a cold blooded, technologically efficient and well-organised execution of collective crimes.<sup>4</sup> Hannah Arendt did speak about "administrative mass murder" and not "genocide", but this was not because of her "functionalistic-structural" understanding of the crimes of Nazi domination or their cold blooded rationality. In her *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, she already showed that the events in Europe can only be understood through the experience of imperialism and a special form of power that was formed in the European colonies – *especially in Africa*, which creates the framework for the inversion of the human order.<sup>5</sup> Not only do we find here the precedence for new types of crime, it is precisely here that the new form of power first also 'structurally' enabled them, with the structure and the actors of this 'new type' merging into a special type of action and behaviour.

The experience of imperialism is closely related to the decline of the European nation state or what could also be termed its "self-destruction" (Stoetzel 2007: 131), which is only accelerated by the invention of the "hybrid form"<sup>6</sup> of power practiced in the European colonies. In her *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt names it simply bureaucracy. But the use of the term bureaucracy itself, which mislead Bauman, must not steer us in the wrong direction here, as her specific problem does not originate in the "instrumental rationality" of the bureaucratic apparatus (which in the modern age grows, eliminates interpersonal relationships, becomes "alienated" and loses its human dimension). The emphasis is on a *new form* of rule that cannot be understood via an analogy with or a derivation from the nation state. Bureaucracy in the colonies (and metropolises) develops its own transnational existence that is decisively bound to two more elements of totalitarian rule: the phenomenon of imperialism and race.

### The specific of bureaucracy as a 'new form of rule' in the age of imperialism

Bureaucracy thus does not amount merely to the state apparatus and the bureaucrats themselves. As a new form of power, it is inseparably related to imperialistic domination, with which it constitutes a phenomenon that is today

euphemistically called “globalisation”.<sup>7</sup> This form of power proceeds from an open struggle for power between the (nation) state and the (bourgeois) society in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a struggle resulting in the *instrumentalisation of the institutions of the nation state for the imperialistic needs of the bourgeoisie*. Thus, contrary to what the word suggests, contemporary imperialism actually has nothing to do with empire building or ‘the scale of conquests’ comparable to those in the antiquity. Through analogies with antiquity, imperialism can obtain an aureole of ‘grandeur’ and ‘humaneness’, but in reality “a few capitalists [are] conducting their predatory searches round the globe for new investment possibilities and appealing to the profit motives of the much-too-rich and the gambling instincts of the much-too-poor” (Arendt 1973: 132). Imperialism is not a grand conquest and even less an establishment of new political bodies. It is “expansion for expansion’s sake”, as the nation-state framework becomes too constricting for the interests of the ruling class of capitalist production, while business, the export of capital and their ‘security’ become the key issues of domestic and foreign politics. This is why a (suitably redefined) state apparatus is the ideal potential carrier of the “export of power” (Arendt 1973: 135), and in this sense imperialism enables “expansion of political power *without the foundation of a body politic*” [emphasis added].<sup>8</sup> In practice, this amounts to the export of violence, that is, the export of those state apparatuses that monopolise violence (the army and the police), into the colonised parts of the world with an ideological reference to Enlightenment ideals and humanism. Imperialism thus becomes an all-encompassing civilisational mission (the so-called *white man’s burden*).

The elimination of political limitations endangers all limits – not only the political, but also the legal, state and ethical ones. Absolute expansion is the core of imperialism, “the first stage in political rule of the bourgeoisie” (Arendt 1973: 138), and not the last stage of capitalism as Marxist theoreticians assumed. According to Hannah Arendt, in imperialism, capitalism actually comes to its end because imperialism is willing unreservedly “to abandon the so-called laws of capitalist production and their egalitarian tendencies” (Arendt 1973: 204), which are based on the nature of the very relation between labour and capital. This is why (especially in the colonies) it invents an entire assortment of “non-economic” mechanisms of force and coercion and revives numerous old ones.

In the system of bureaucracy as a new form of (imperialistic) domination, political principles (and politics itself) are replaced by mere functionality in the shape of the administrative apparatus and administrators. Laws are

replaced by decrees and instead of “public-law decisions”, an “anonymous office administration” is introduced. Such a “rule by decree” (Arendt 1973: 244) and arbitrariness fully develop in the specific circumstances of the colonies since they have “conspicuous advantages for the domination of far-flung territories with heterogeneous populations and for a policy of oppression” (Arendt 1973: 244). This is precisely why we should not confuse bureaucracy as a new organisational principle with the administrative apparatus itself, which is an indispensable composite part of the modern state. It is a completely new mode of government in which the political model that builds on the political participation of citizens and the people as a political category is overcome by a model of a professional administration of statistical “laws of society” as “policies”, and the regulation of the continued “aimless” life process of society (Arendt 1973: 216).<sup>9</sup>

The rule by bureaucracy is thus not an intensification of the modern principle of the Hegelian and Weberian state rationality or the building of a superior and efficient organisation; rather its key moments are precisely arbitrariness and anarchy. The project of administering the life process of society beyond the limits of the political “will of the people” makes the members of the administrative apparatus subjectively believe that they have a special global historical calling in which there arises “a possible and magic identification of man with the forces of history” (Arendt 1973: 216), which, regardless of individual human will and any side-effects, fulfils the supposed demands of the “white man’s burden”.

The specific of such a “rule of nobody”, which replaces the law with temporary and changing decrees and in which the accidental and the absolute, despotism and arbitrariness connect (Lee 2007: 71), is the decisive element in the formation of total domination.<sup>10</sup> In connection with “exterritoriality” and messianism and with the fulfilment of the “laws of nature and history” which prove to be the laws of “social development”, there also comes to a connection with another, seemingly quite different element: race. At first, both elements developed separately, but, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the circumstances of late colonialism, they began to constitute the frame of imperialistic expansion, which left its biggest stamp on the African ground, to which European domination – for the observers at the time, surprisingly – expended precisely at the end of the slave trade.<sup>11</sup> In imperialism, race as a pseudoscientific social construct that can justify colonial domination becomes a principle of the body politic (Arendt 1973: 185), which is ‘inscribed’ in the structure of government. On the basis of the unification in the ‘awareness’ of a superior race, imperialism unifies the class division within

the “body politic” of metropolises and creates a binary structure of colonial institutions. Here, race is no longer merely an ideology, just as bureaucracy is no longer merely an apparatus. The combination of both forms a special mentality and opens an exceptional range of the “potentialities of power accumulation and destruction” (Arendt 1973: 186), which is functional especially in view of the phenomenon of superfluous people (which imperialism can either mobilise for its project or let them be exterminated) and the superfluousness of their human capacities – political action, thought, judgement and, in the end, also work.

## Pre-totalitarian introduction in Africa

The emergence of bureaucracy as such a specific form can be traced in non-settlement colonies, such as Egypt, Algeria and India, while the emergence of a “racial society” and its blatant oppression can be seen especially in the settlement colony of South Africa. In practice, both regimes (race and bureaucracy) appeared simultaneously and complemented each other, but one dimension was more pronounced than the other, depending on the circumstances and the ratio between the number of settlers and the number of natives. Hannah Arendt denoted this dichotomous, ambiguous nature of the form of government with absolute power on the one hand and complete arbitrariness on the other hand as a “hybrid form of government”. The connection between ‘race’ and ‘bureaucracy’ turns out to be a suitable and fatal form of power also in the European context of “continental imperialism” – only that, here, racism is transformed into the ideology of Anti-Semitism and tribal nationalism, thus disclosing the possibility of a unique process of the operation of “racism without race”.<sup>12</sup>

Imperialism is thereby located in the centre of the processes that crystallise in the project of total domination and crimes, like the ones that entire groups of peoples in Europe were organised into in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the Nazi regime. At the same time, imperialism can also be placed at the beginning of “a new age” in which the emergence of a new type of domination actually marks the end of the state and the economic scheme. Although these crimes are also marked by unprecedented forms of violence and suffering, their core is not violence itself, but primarily the practice of unimaginable experiments in the framework of the “inversion of the human order”. Africa was a testing ground – here, colonial administrations practised extermination even before the concentration camps in Europe. It is precisely here, writes Hannah Arendt, that “the most terrible massacres in recent his-

tory” began. Although she herself did not analyse the precise direct connections between the two, Hannah Arendt was convinced that “African colonial possessions became the most fertile soil for the flowering of what later was to become the Nazi elite” (Arendt 1973: 206).

Not only did the analysis of imperialistic rule as a transnational coalescence of race and bureaucracy stimulate reflections on the boomerang effect (and also the consequences for Europe and the West), but it was also the forerunner to numerous postcolonial and local analyses of the new forms of power that developed in Africa. The discussion of the South African structure of government and the mentality of the Boer minority in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* indicated the subsequent course of events in this colony – that is, the emergence of apartheid as a principle of body politic and an indirect (local) model of government based on local administration and ‘customs’ in the South African bantu ‘homelands’.

One of the key conclusions and an important “methodological guideline” of the analysis of race and bureaucracy is that there is no simple continuation of any of the previous forms of rule nor are there any simple causal relations between their individual elements. Historical studies have confirmed the validity of the thesis regarding the decisive role of imperialism in the preparation of ‘crimes against humanity’.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, some researchers of African political history and the forms of citizenship also applied the principles of analysis and understanding that Hannah Arendt introduced in her consideration of the new form of power. In his studies of the structures of colonial and postcolonial power in Africa, the Ugandan author Mahmood Mamdani successfully connected the analysis of the ‘elements’ that crystallise in new forms of domination with the ‘methodological’ guideline of writing history ‘outside analogies’ and inferences based on the already exhausted theoretical models, on class, Marxist and economic-development-related interpretation of African state forms.<sup>14</sup> Thus, he translated the Arendtian interpretative framework, which analyses the specific of imperialism and its consequences “for the West” and Western political tradition, into a particular (first local and regional) analysis of the African forms of government and citizenship (Mamdani 1996: 2001), and then, from this perspective, also to a transcontinental analysis of the preservation of global dominance by way of the ‘war on terror’ and ‘humanitarian interventions’ (Mamdani 2005 and 2009).

Mamdani related the Arendtian analytical framework and “methodological” guidelines to Franz Fanon, a theoretician of colonial revolution whom Hannah Arendt in her *On Violence* saw as a prophet of violence. In his *The Wretched*



of the Earth, Fanon wrote the notorious sentence that “the colonized man liberates himself in and through violence” (Fanon 2005: 44).<sup>15</sup> Mamdani develops his analysis of the Rwandan genocide precisely around this consideration and shows how it happens that yesterday’s victims of colonial violence (in Rwanda the Hutu majority) execute exterminating violence against the representatives of the settlers (the Tutsi minority). Although in her analysis of imperialism Hannah Arendt did not think about the possibility of the natives carrying out a genocide against the settlers in Africa (the genocide of the European Jews can be understood as a ‘native’ genocide against the Jewish ‘settlers’), she clearly detected in the South African white minority a justified fear of retributive actions by the natives and described it in her analysis of a sort of a petrified mentality of the Boers in South Africa (Arendt 1973: 193ff.). This already indicates the possibility of there emerging an ideology and various systems of power that feed on the “spectre of genocide” (Mamdani 2004: 10) and in which the victims become the perpetrators and vice versa.

## Decentralised despotism as the African “form of state”

Mahmood Mamdani foregrounds precisely the South African experience, and is especially interested in the generation, relation and role of apartheid in the creation of the specific *African colonial form of a “divided state”*, which he calls *decentralised despotism*. Due to the particularity of apartheid, this experience was thematized as an African ‘exception’. Mamdani places it in the broader continental and transcontinental postcolonial framework, and shows that it is precisely the exception that proves the rule and that its comparison with other colonial practices provides insights that are firmly grounded in the African continent itself. Moreover, we could say that the entire African colonial and postcolonial situation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century could be understood primarily through the experience of apartheid. The African forms of state are not simply analogous to other forms of power; they have their own origin and history, but are at the same time *forms of postcolonial struggle*, rebellions and revolutions on African soil conditioned by the *new institutions of power* that emerged within the imperialistic structure. The identities that fight or connect with each other are historically conditioned political identities shaped by imperialistic expansion, and not original cultural or even natural racial and tribal identities.

The analysis of race and bureaucracy in Africa is thereby additionally complicated, for it is this second form – which was completely developed in the South African apartheid – that first truly fits the Arendtian description of the

combination of absolute power and arbitrariness and the special coalescence of race and bureaucracy in imperialistic domination. Two modes of rule – one based on citizenship and ‘civil society’, the other on the ‘tribe’ and ‘native’<sup>16</sup> customs – establish two parallel and mutually excluding structures that are reproduced throughout the entire African continent. One based on rights, the other based on customs, one based on civil law, the other based on customary law, a direct one and an indirect one.

The local African ‘culture’ and ‘customs’ obtained a great significance for the system of local administration in the gradual generation and establishment of indirect colonial rule (characteristic of the period between the two world wars), marked by the transition from an ideology of civilising to an ideology that must justify brute control and force. The employment of local chiefs (first introduced in the British colony of Natal in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) and the system of decentralising administration took place simultaneously with a reinvention of tribal traditions and customs. “Inventing” customs was a process in which the administration first abolished the original advisory forms of power and the restrictions that had existed in traditional institutions which prevented the arbitrariness of those in power.<sup>17</sup> This process was based on the interpretations and advice of numerous European researchers, anthropologists, historians and missionaries. The redefined structures then placed the mode of ‘cultural’ differentiation into politics as ‘customs’ – but in the ‘second’, additional circle of power.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the traditional intermediary spaces of autonomy and permeability that did not correspond to the European model of patriarchal rule – that is, the ‘unusual’ customs that originated in matrilineal communities, for example, and usually did not exist completely separated from the patrilineal ones – were also extinguished (Mamdani 2001: 39; cf. Amadiume 1995).

This newly established double form of power, which was a training ground for despotism and arbitrariness, replaced a rather expensive and for the white elite potentially dangerous system of direct racial oppression of the native majority by the privileged settler minority (so merely racial domination). In the system of ‘self-governing’ and intertribal differentiation, the natives in the supposedly ‘old’ power structure themselves participated in various forms of exploitation, executed coercion and suffered violence that often exceeded the imagination – without the colonial governors having to ‘get their hands dirty’ or be indirectly endangered.<sup>19</sup>

Bureaucracy, race, tribe and customs thus crystallise in a sort of “decentralised despotism” in which the district native power which is subordinated

to the colonial one is a parallel institution of administration that no African 'subject' can escape.<sup>20</sup> The double citizenship or the division into *citizens* and *subjects* is characteristic of all colonial institutions, not only the African ones. What is specific for Africa is the closeting of the population into a series of separate and impassable 'containers', which contain not only the personal affairs of individuals, but encompass their *entire status*, including the control over their access to land and common property (Mamdani 2001: 48), which in the end leads to the problem of the so-called post-colonial 'tribalism'.<sup>21</sup> Ethnicised tribes are understood as 'cultural' and deterritorialised, and are seen by the West as cultural units "possessing a common language, a single social system, and an established customary law" (Mamdani 2001: 80), which mostly provides the ground for institutional differentiation. Colonial Africans thus become chiefly 'tribe members' and are more than the members of any pre-colonial generation encapsulated in the relations determined by administratively defined 'customs' (Mamdani 2001: 51). The tribe becomes an indispensable unit of this new form of rule, and where it lacks, it literally needs to be invented.<sup>22</sup>

On the one hand, decentralised despotisms are special cases, while, on the other, they form a common paradigm of power (a new 'state' form) that has specific consequences for rebellions and postcolonial forms of rule – they amount either to the abolishment of tribal traditions (radical variants) or their preservation (conservative variants). The radical variants are transformed into a new form of centralised despotism, for, due to the unreformed status of local power which continues to be structured in the same way, the tribal chiefs are simply replaced by party chiefs (the "ethnic" or tribal group assuming administrative posts can change during this process) and in this contradictory way replace 'tradition'. Decolonisation thus means squaring up with the divided racial state that differentiates between white settlers and natives, but not also with the existing 'local state of customs' or the way that the local administration exercises power, that is, not by including the democratic structures of participation, but by subsuming a great measure of coercion, arbitrary violence and numerous forms of involuntary mobilisation.

It is only within a delineated postcolonial context that it is possible to place and think events such as the Rwandan genocide. Because of the great extent of face-to-face killings and an almost unbelievable number of inhabitants that participated in it, the Rwandan genocide can be said to be a Rwandan particularity, an African anomaly – or, in the style of the described colonial invention of 'tradition' and culture, ascribed to certain specific customs. At

the same time, the specificity of the Rwandan case also helps us reflect on some other connections.

## The African Legacy in Europe?

Because of the connection between the African and the European forms of power in the period of imperialism and the consequences in the sense of a new global form of domination, the African (or postcolonial) forms of state should interest Western researchers far more than they have so far. Numerous analyses are all too entangled in the analogous and 'historical' explanations of African political phenomena as the ones whose precursors they will find in the history of Europe and the so-called 'developed world', and they believe that the African path can only be a repetition of a certain development that the Western world has already gone through. Such a belief is held not only by many of those working in development studies, but also those who still think in the categories of 'world capitalism' and 'empire' in the sense of analogies. Especially after the experience of post-1989 Eastern Europe, the wars in former Yugoslavia and the twenty-year period of 'accepting' a supposedly 'capitalist' model and all its consequences, we could perhaps sober up if we looked at other experiences and approached our own situation from a more 'distant' perspective.

What is at stake here is not merely the study of the 'boomerang' effect of a new global form of power, which is already at work in Europe in the economic and security sense. It is crucial that we also consider what consequences the unreflected association to the imperialistic group, the alleged club of the chosen ones, which in the age that some call post-political and others anti-political is based especially on a racial and not, for a long time already, on a national and even a class consciousness, has for the countries affiliated to Western Europe. The main thing about racism is, as Hannah Arendt says, "that no matter whether racism appears as the natural result of a catastrophe or as the conscious instrument for bringing it about, it is always closely tied to contempt for labour, hatred of territorial limitation, general rootlessness, and an activist faith in one's own divine chosenness" (Arendt 1973: 197). The global politics defended by the West (Europe and its former settlement colonies) regarding the division of wealth, the use of resources, global participation and other issues, like migrations, for example, could "hardly be maintained except through racism", for the inhabitants who benefit from the global regime and live in the West or its deterritorialised units are an absolute minority in the global sense.

The justified fear of the revenge of the excluded, humiliated and superfluous

probably pervades these inhabitants as well, at least those who have roughly faced the consequences of world domination by the West and have not completely surrendered to the “state of denial” (Cohen 2001). This fear – that might be a distant echo of the real fear of colonial settlers that their criminally gained privileges will crumble and that they will suffer the revenge of the wretched – would, in order to be effectively real, have to produce a political reflection and not ‘phantoms’ and constructions of a cultural enemy that can supposedly be legitimately destroyed using whatever means. Or as Mahmood Mamdani says in his paraphrase of Fanon: “We need to think through the *full* implications of victims becoming killers” (Mamdani 2004: 9).<sup>23</sup>

Unfortunately, this subterranean current of fear that is reminiscent of the “spectre of genocide” and strides around like the “spectre of terrorism” does not act as a stimulus for political consideration, but generates humanitarian and messianic answers of the world elite and its pop icons to which the humane ideological identification is attached.<sup>24</sup> They are not only an ineffective and bad earthly consolation of the awareness of the exploitation they cause, but also a politically damaging activity that blocks actual reflection on the situation we are in. The spectre of allegedly ‘cultural’ violence is also an ideological motor of the holy ‘war on terror’, which enforces cultural racism and the differentiation of cultures as a general credo and basis for any, even the most arbitrary politics.

\* This text was spoken as a lecture at the Public Forum, Peace Institute, Ljubljana, October, 2014. A different version of the text was published in the Slovenian language in the Journal *Ars & Humanitas*.

## Notes

- 1 Cited in Hatzfeld (2005: 90–1)
- 2 Not only the consequences for the Great Lakes Region and especially DR Congo, but also the consequences and lessons that concern the new age in the global politics of the West.
- 3 For example, the collective crimes in the war in former Yugoslavia, especially Bosnia. The comparison of the genocidal politics against the Muslims in Bosnia and the Tutsis in Rwanda has been carried out by Jasmina Dedić in her PhD thesis based on a precise classification. This was written in the framework of two projects at the Peace Institute. Cf. Dedić (2008).
- 4 Cf. Bauman (1991). Cf. also Fleming (2003: 102ff.). An in-depth analysis and the problems of this position can be found in Vetlesen (2004).

- 5 Inversion of order means that the acts and the things that had been unimaginable become imaginable, and that the crimes, violence and killings are a priori allowed; even more, killing is ordered – in the inverted order, these acts are not necessarily a crime anymore, they can be a greater or a smaller “transgression” at best. Actually, the entire ethical structure is perverted and, as H. Arendt says, the “temptation” here is no longer the desire to kill, but rather the desire not to kill. For more on this, see Jalušić (2007a and 2007b).
- 6 Hybridity has become commonplace in post-colonial studies. We use it in a very narrow sense here, in the sense of an “intersection” of two principles of power as used by H. Arendt, who borrowed it from Lord Cromer, the Consul-General in Egypt at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 7 The term globalisation supposedly originates in the 1970s when it appeared in business print promoting the neoliberal credo of destroying the protective and restrictive mechanisms of the state (Elyachar 2001: 110).
- 8 Due to this, Eurocentrism is a very relative concept, at least as far as the ‘export’ of equality, democracy and the related political institutions is concerned. The export of democracy as an ‘apparatus’ of power and an ideological mechanism that is functional for post-imperialistic rule becomes topical only at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – together with the neoliberal and neo-imperialistic use of the idea of the ‘free market’ as a successful legitimisation of the introduction of a new form of domination established through ‘humanitarian interventionism’ and ‘war on terror’. Cf. also Kuzmanić (2007).
- 9 This is a phenomenon that Foucault thematized with the term “biopolitics”, which is problematic and misleading since what is at stake here is neither (an individual) life nor politics.
- 10 The point here is not that there is ‘nobody’ in power in the sense of the Lefortian “empty space of democracy” in view of the absence of the figure of the sovereign, but that nobody knows where the law comes from, who grounds it and what the law even says. The connection between the structure of government and the subjective component in bureaucracy as the “rule of nobody” is best demonstrated in Kafka’s texts – the omnipresent atmosphere of pseudo-mysticism and secrecy in his descriptions of bureaucratic government in which the dominated people “never really know why something is happening” (what the supposed ‘law’ wants of them) and in which messianism and mysticism are in perfect accord with “mere self-interest” (Arendt 1973: 245, 307). Such a mystical atmosphere is even more pronounced in the colonies with an indirect rule and thus a bureaucratic apparatus staffed by the domestic population – Kafka conveys the experience with Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy, but some of his short stories also take place in non-European colonies. Hannah Arendt’s bureaucracy can in general be related to her reading of Kafka’s oeuvre. That which is called “law” in his writings is disclosed as a respective perverse and absolute arbitrariness of individual public servants, while the entire structure of such power is a pseudomystical and perverse decentralised despotism. The explanation of Kafkaesque law as a sort of a universal mode of the law’s operation, which as such operates in all circumstanc-

es (which was formulated in the framework of the Lacanian interpretation of “power”), is misleading. Kafka should be read as an exceptional recorder of the ‘operation’ of bureaucratic power – which replaces the law with arbitrary decrees – and its elements of total domination.

- 11 In view of the consequential lack of cotton, this triggered the need for a “new regime of coercions”, but this time on African soil, so that its inhabitants could now stay at home. The need for cotton and also other industrial plants and resources for the European and North-American industries largely determined the new mode of domination. Livingston’s three C-s (cotton, Christianity and civilization), which were supposed to “rejuvenate” Africa, best illustrate the ideological and the interest framework of the scramble for Africa (Mamdani 1996: 37–8). In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt meticulously analyses how the interests of corporations, the appetites of adventurers and all kinds of researchers interconnected in the scramble for African soil. On the motives and modes of European conquests of sub-Saharan Africa, cf. Collins and Burns (2007: 265ff.).
- 12 For more on this, see Jalušić (2007b).
- 13 Hannah Arendt does not mention the first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century carried out by the Germans against the Herero people, while her interest in imperialistic politics in Africa is determined by her attempt to understand totalitarian politics in the European context, that is, the process of the emergence of concentration camps and the extermination of the superfluous in the Nazi regime. The topic of the link between the German imperialistic politics in Africa and the Nazi regime has since been taken up by numerous historians, such as H. Drechsler and H. Bley, but also the younger generation – B. Gevald, J. Gayish, C. Errischsen, J. Zimmerer (cf. Gewald 2004 and Zimmerer 2001).
- 14 Cf. Mamdani (1996, 2001, 2005), cf. also Lee (2007). Although Hannah Arendt claimed that the theoretical (politico-philosophical) tradition was very much involved in the denial of plurality, the praise of sovereignty, domination and violence instead of human action, in her writing and in her analysis of total domination, she focused on the social and political analysis – on the examination of the “actual power structures” (the apparatus of rule, the technical forms of administration and the organisation of the body politic), and not on deductions from theoretical models – from what she called “questionable (*fragwuerdige* in German) remains of tradition” and “over-all theories” (Arendt 2006: 98).
- 15 For Fanon, the proof of a native’s humanity was not in the willingness to kill the settlers, but in their readiness to sacrifice their own life (Mamdani 2005: 9–10).
- 16 The terms native, tribe and custom are within quotation marks due to their pejorative connotation in the European context, but are mostly used without them in the text for reasons of simplification.
- 17 In pre-colonial systems of power, the traditional chief or king was usually monitored and he operated within a ‘deliberative’ model, quite contrary to the ‘bureaucratic’ model introduced by colonial power. Such forms existed both

in more centralised and in more federalised South and West African pre-colonial political formations: for example, *liqogo* (the inner council) in the Zulu kingdom, *libandla* (national council) in the Swazi people and *kgotla*, an institution of the Tswana – a place where the community meets to openly discuss issues of common interest with the chief or even expresses severe criticism in ritualised or highly stylised form of songs or poems. The chief's power was even more curtailed in West African Ashanti and Fanti confederations (Mamdani 2001: 46–7).

- 18 Great Britain was especially prone to authoritarian possibilities of culture, especially possibilities proceeding from a 'creative' production of traditions and customs – when necessary. The idea of ruling through customs was first noted in Sir Henry Maine's *Ancient Law*. The introduction of 'tradition' was presented as a 'permissive act' which was supposed to relativise the thesis of the superiority of European institutions and admit a special value of local traditions. In his *African Survey* (1938), Lord Hailey, one of the influential architects of traditional power, often cited anthropological and legal authorities such as Driberg, Radcliffe-Brown, Malinowski, Hogbin, Seagle etc.
- 19 The case of the "Congo Free State" of the Belgian king Leopold, his methods of recruiting labour, collecting taxes and pillaging and enforcing crops is one of the most blatant ones. For the Belgian colonial and imperialistic politics in Congo, cf. Nzongola-Ntalaja (2007) and Hochschild (1999).
- 20 In South Africa, such a transition was effected by the introduction of the 1891 "Natal Code of Native Law". This code introduced the concentration of natives at separate locations and the administering of 'their' affairs in a separate 'judicial system' – according to it, the supreme chief obtained, among other things, the absolute power to forcefully move tribes and individuals, amalgamate or divide tribes, name subordinate chiefs, procure the labour force for public works, maintain patriarchal control over minors and women, control property and resolve disputes. In 1927, Cape Verde also received its "Native Administration Act", which appointed the supreme chief as the one *governing all the natives with a proclamation*.
- 21 Which actually means the destruction of the main supports of pre-colonial 'traditional' forms of rule.
- 22 In some places, the peoples without appropriate structures were simply subordinated to the neighbouring chiefdoms. Elsewhere, they appointed religious leaders as administrative chiefs, which was the case with the Masai, or several villages were joined and one of the numerous village chiefs was raised to the level of the leader.  
They thus created tribes also where there was no basis for it – as in the case of the Nyakyusa around Lake Victoria (Mamdani 1996: 80–1).
- 23 Fanon writes: In decolonization, there is therefore the need of a complete calling in question of the colonial situation. Cf. Fanon (2005: 3).
- 24 An uncompromising critique of this position, especially the *Save Darfur* coalition, is Mamdani's book *Saviours and Survivors* (Mamdani 2009).



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