the rule of law. Instead, policy was shaped by particular political concerns, whether local or geopolitical. Carefully researched and well argued, this book addresses and provokes important questions of the nature of colonial rule, and how far notion of the rule of law could be marginalized in a colonial context. It will be of great interest not only to historians of Hong Kong, but also to those interested in the nature of colonial rule throughout the British Empire.

doi:10.1017/S0738248023000482

Yael Berda, *Colonial Bureaucracy and Contemporary Citizenship: Legacies of Race and Emergency in the Former British Empire*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. Pp. 278. Hardcover $91.98 (ISBN 9781316511664). doi:10.1017/9781009053495

Darren Wan

Cornell University
Email: dw597@cornell.edu

Yael Berda's recent monograph builds on her earlier research regarding the Israeli permit regime in the occupied West Bank by broadening the spatial and temporal ambit of her work. Through extensive archival research that examines governmental correspondence and office memoranda across multiple departments and ministries, she tracks administrative systems and bureaucratic practices governing purportedly disloyal and suspicious subjects in Palestine, India, and Cyprus from the final decades of British colonial rule through the early years after Britain's departure, roughly from the 1910s to the 1970s. Weaving together fields ranging from the sociology of organizations to the anthropology of the state, this comparative history argues convincingly that the "bureaucratic toolkit of emergency"—what Berda calls the raft of emergency legislation that shored up the late colonial bureaucratic apparatus's management of colonized subjects' mobility—was differentially appropriated by Indian, Israeli, and Cypriot governments, which in turn generated divergent regimes of citizenship. Yet this shared colonial legacy engendered commonalities as well: minority citizenship in these former British colonies is not merely an abstract claim to political membership that entails specific rights, but a regime of mobility that determines the deportability of the minority subject (163, 214–15).

The book's most compelling intervention is that it attunes us to the nature of institutional change in the transition from British colonialism to

independence in these three quite distinct national settings. On the one hand, Berda rejects triumphalist nationalist accounts that regard post-independence bureaucratic templates as radical reorientations of colonial practice (2). On the other—and perhaps more crucially—she eschews any simplistic understanding of "colonial legacies" by demonstrating that administrative forms and bureaucratic institutions were not passively bequeathed from the colonial government to the Israeli, Indian, and Cypriot states. Instead, aspects of the colonial bureaucratic apparatus were selectively appropriated and retrofitted for new exigencies after independence. In this, Berda makes a strong case for increased scholarly attention to bureaucratic institutions during colonies' transition to independence, as this was when statutory laws of citizenship were in the process of crystallizing (127), and when ad hoc measures to manage large-scale migrations in the wake of territorial partitions—such as the Israeli state's system of entry and exit permits—became routinized and institutionalized (189). There is no ahistorical assumption here that the colonial legacy of "hybrid bureaucracy" simply endured untransformed after decolonization in Cyprus and India, or after the inauguration of a settler colonial state in Palestine. Rather, these practices had to be actively maintained by bureaucrats who reanimated the "administrative memory" (23) of government bodies. Berda's fine-grained processual account of institutional change portrays post-independence bureaucrats as agents who interacted with and revivified colonial legacies to redefine political belonging in a time of great geopolitical instability.

Berda writes with the primary method of "looking over the shoulder of the bureaucrat" (34) to approach these issues from an "organizational vantage point" (91). By doing so, Berda decenters lawmakers and legislation—the lens privileged by studies on mobility restriction and citizenship policy—by revealing how bureaucrats' discretionary power might "make law by bureaucratic means" (37). Through this approach, Berda queries the utility of the Weberian ideal-typical conception of bureaucracy as rational, impersonal, and objective, as thus a neutral conduit for the enactment of legal rulings. In its stead, she develops a theory of "hybrid bureaucracy" through a reading of the writings of Lord Cromer, British Consul-General of Egypt, in Chapter One. Here, she shows how colonial bureaucracy and its afterlives were not founded solely on sheer improvisation or utter lawlessness, but on a set of ordered principles that conferred bureaucrats with sovereign-like powers to enact a racially differentiated rule of law.

Drawing from what Laleh Khalili terms the "horizontal circuits" of empire, Berda eschews a diffusionist model—so prevalent in comparative colonial studies—that presumes that imperial scripts transferred unidirectionally from metropole to colony. She demonstrates how bureaucratic practices moved between colonies in contingent and often unexpected ways, and, even after such transcolonial circulations, they were never imitated wholesale and were subject to adaptation for local contexts. Such cautious empirical work extends to Chapters Four and Five, where she attends to the post-independence intersections and departures between the three former colonies. Although India and Israel retained colonial-era emergency laws that were used to enforce

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0738248023000470 Published online by Cambridge University Press

racially differentiated population management practices, Cyprus annulled such laws upon independence—which Berda argues contributed to the suspension of the power-sharing constitution in 1963 and the subsequent decades-long stalemate between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. This divergence, Berda suggests, demonstrates that the retention or abolition of emergency laws upon independence was a "deterministic critical juncture" (231) that had ramifications on minority citizenship.

While the wide scope of the book produces a comparative perspective that would pique the interest of scholars working on other colonial sites where emergency laws were enacted—Malaya, Kenya, and Ireland, to name a few—this bird's-eye view has left little room for illustrations of how such diverse bureaucracies operated on the ground. Berda's argument is most successful when particular cases are adduced to concretize abstract bureaucratic forms and principles. For instance, to demonstrate the discretionary power of "purification committees" assessing the loyalty of Israeli civil servants, Berda describes the case of one David Goldberg, who was cast as suspicious because, among various reasons, he "[spoke] too much English, and [flattered] the British" (157). Here, we see vividly how the "axis of suspicion" on which bureaucrats assessed claimants operated in practice. But perhaps to ask for more attention to on-the-ground processes is too much for an already extensive book whose length reflects Berda's more circumscribed and focused method.

Ultimately, Berda's book demonstrates the value of and proposes future directions for comparative colonial history. Her monograph models an approach that "neither [assumes] a single isomorphic model of colonial statecraft, nor [assumes] the exceptionality of each case" (204–5). Inheriting shared colonial legacies, then, does not necessarily translate to parallel post-independence trajectories. It is only by paying careful empirical attention to how such legacies were differentially appropriated, intensified, or rejected that institutional change in multiple sites across the former British Empire can be meaningfully put in conversation.

doi:10.1017/S0738248023000470