

From Slavery to Freedom

Comparative Studies in the
Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery

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Foreword by Stanley L. Engerman



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THE COMPARATIVE IMPULSE

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The vastness of some historical events and processes attracts scholars into postulates marked by singularity. Like the Holocaust, modern slavery intuitively appeals to the historical imagination as a candidate for uniqueness: 'There was nothing quite like black slavery, in scale, importance or consequence', writes one of slavery's recent chroniclers.¹ Beyond slavery's challenge to scholarly understanding, recently, considerable popular pressure has generated a demand that greater attention be paid to the story of slaves and their descendants in the world at large. The enormous increase in scholarly discussion and in the public visibility of the Holocaust in the United States has contributed to corresponding reflections on the place of slavery in American and world history. In April 1995, a *New York Times* front-page story on the commemoration of slavery reported that 'some scholars compare this widespread reflection to that of Jews who have vigilantly preserved memories of the Holocaust'.² Because both phenomena are so intimately tied to stories of mass degradation, dispersion and death, they elicit not only scholarly analysis but tempt philosophers, theologians, and politicians into competitions over comparative victimization.

In an early comparison, a historian of American slavery attempted to analogize the psychology of Nazi concentration camp inmates with the trauma of enslavement in order to explain what was considered to be the cultural annihilation

*Chapter 4 in Alan S. Rosenbaum (ed.), *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on comparative genocide* (Boulder: Westview, 1996). © 1996 Westview Press, Inc., a Division of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.

and long-term infantilization of blacks in America. Subsequent research and discussion of this putative analogy indicated that the original comparison had been premised on deficient knowledge about both systems. Since the 1970s, the research on both subjects has, if anything, widened the distance between the Holocaust and New World slavery. A generation of slavery scholarship has increasingly demonstrated the ability of slaves not only to sustain themselves but to create systems of culture, family, community, enterprise and consumption from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.³

Histories of slavery in the Americas now routinely devote much of their pages to such themes as the development of religion, family life, women and children, leisure and the arts, independent economic activities, consumption patterns and individual and collective forms of resistance. The whole scholarly enterprise now focuses on a system that endured and expanded for almost four centuries and produced an enormous variety of human interaction. Slaves created patterns of human relationships as complex as any to be found outside the distinctive economy of the Atlantic system. African Americans were part of a durable system in which the enslaved played key roles as actors in 'an ever-widening social and economic space'.⁴

By contrast, historians of the Holocaust must analyze human behavior, thought, and Institutional development within a time-frame of years, not centuries. Analytical questions about intergenerational patterns of production and reproduction, modes of family- and community-building, and the evolution of economic activity over many generations are irrelevant. There were, of course, rapidly changing patterns of work, culture and even artistic expression, but they unfolded in terms of months and years, not decades, generations and centuries. Except for isolated individual fugitives hidden by gentiles and pockets of Jewish armed partisans, the Holocaust is a tale of rapidly *narrowing* economic and social space, physical concentration, immiseration and annihilation.⁵ A recognition of the divergence of the two 'institutions' was quickly grasped in the wake of the initial comparison. It remains the starting point in any contrast of slavery in the Americas with the Holocaust in Europe.

If there is one aspect of African slavery that might be fruitfully linked to an analysis of the Holocaust, it is probably the

process of initial enslavement. Coerced transfers of sub-Saharan Africans fed slave systems of the Mediterranean, Atlantic, and Indian Ocean basins for ten centuries. The largest component of this forced migration after 1500 was the transatlantic slave trade. During three and a half centuries, from the early 1500s to the 1860s, up to 12 million Africans were loaded and transported in dreadful conditions to the tropical and subtropical zones of the Americas. In the process, probably twice as many were seized in the African interior.

One historian has estimated that in the peak century and a half of the intercontinental forced migration from Africa (1700–1850), ‘twenty-one million persons were captured in Africa, seven million of whom were brought into domestic slavery [within Africa itself]’. The human cost of sustaining the combined slave systems to the west, north, and east of sub-Saharan Africa between 1500 and 1900 was an estimated ‘four million people who lost their lives as a direct result of enslavement’, plus others who died prematurely.⁶ Of the nearly 12 million in the Atlantic slave trade, around 15 percent, or up to 2 million more, died on the Atlantic voyage – the dreaded ‘Middle Passage’ – and the first year of ‘seasoning’. In the Americas, the death rates dropped gradually to levels approximating those projected in Africa.⁷ Averages offer only an inkling of the intensity of suffering in particular regions, communities, barracoons and slave ships or in the diverse situations to which slaves were delivered in the Americas. In terms of conditions of life as well as of death, the long journey from the African interior was the peak period of pain, discomfort, psychological dislocation and degradation in the Atlantic system. Within the parameters of the slave trade, comparisons with the Holocaust may, therefore, be more meaningful, even if the differences remain overwhelming.

MARKET VERSUS NONMARKET FORCES

A fundamental comparison may begin with the terms given by those who organized the two systems. The Holocaust was envisioned as a ‘final solution’ to a problem: Jews were beings whose very existence was a threat and whose physical

disappearance was regarded as one of the highest priorities of the Nazi leadership. The success of the enterprise required rapid institutional innovation and was measured in a time frame calculated in months and years. The Atlantic slave trade developed incrementally with millennia of institutional precedents. The initial age of European transoceanic expansion from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries slowly added a new dimension to the expansion of African slavery. Europeans discovered by stages that they could best tap the mineral and agricultural potential of the Atlantic basin with massive rearrangements of labor. The rapid depletion of New World populations led to experiments in various forms of imported, coerced labor from both Europe and Africa. In large parts of the New World, as in Africa, slaves proved to be an economically optimal form of labor for slaveholders. The context of the development of the slave trade was, therefore, both long-term and incremental. For hundreds of years, the Americas presented enormous tracts of sparsely populated land and subsoil minerals suitable for profitable production and overseas export. During the same period, Europeans developed capital and communications networks capable of directing the transportation of American production to all parts of the Atlantic world. Simultaneously, Africans expanded and intensified their internal networks of enslavement, and Europeans tapped into those networks of enslavement for long-distance, coerced migration.⁸

Historians of slavery intensely dispute the slave trade’s long-term effects on each region of the Atlantic system – whether and how much slavery stimulated or constrained development in Europe, the Americas and Africa.⁹ There is, however, a generally shared consensus about two points. First, there was no single collectivity, whether defined in political, geographical, religious, or racial terms, that dominated the entire trade complex at any point. Indeed, it is the fragmentation of power that assured the system was sustained as a competitive system. Second, whatever groups entered into and departed from this vast complex of human and material transfers, the central mechanism driving its general expansion for well over three centuries was the economic gain accruing to those who remained in it. Economic considerations and the attempt to bend economic outcomes to advantage by additions of political

constraints define the terms in which participants entered or exited from the trade.¹⁰

Almost every scholarly work on the slave trade also acknowledges or infers the primacy of economics or political economy as the nexus of the flow of forced labor within the system.¹¹ Only the captives, transferred from owner to owner in a network of exchanges that often extended for months from the interior of Africa to the interior of the Americas, had no bargaining power in the stream of transfers. What drove the movement of human beings along the network was the value-added potential at the end of the process and the ability of individuals and states to tap into that delivery system. If the slave trade was what some historians have termed an 'uncommon market', *uncommon* is clearly the modifier; *market* is the noun. What ensured that the trade continued was the dream of wealth flowing back into the system as returns on previous investments in human beings. And though the slave trade epitomized the reduction of human beings to the category of things, it was also the slaveholder's conception of the enslaved as potentially *valuable* things that sustained the system of exchange. From the perspective of all those involved in the traffic, the longer that all able-bodied slaves remained alive, the greater was their potential to add to the wealth, status, and power of the traders and slaveholders. The slaves' status as property and as productive instrument, analogous to 'laboring cattle', ensured that their disablement or death registered as costs to their owners.¹²

The Holocaust of 1941–5 developed in a different context and was driven by different motivations. It was confined to a single continent. It reached its greatest intensity in European areas and against populations that had been least directly involved in the Atlantic slave trade. Unlike the latter, it was dominated by one hegemonic political entity: the Nazi regime. It functioned most effectively, according to its own directors, where the Nazis had unimpeded institutional authority to implement their plans. Where Nazi political power was less direct and more limited, the system worked less effectively or thoroughly.¹³ Rather than attempting to convert underpopulated or underexploited areas into optimal producers of wealth, the perpetrators conceived of the areas under their

influence as already overrun with undesirable populations afflicted with human pollutants. Even before the decision for the Final Solution, the Nazis assigned a very high political priority to methods of quarantine and expulsion of Jews into zones far beyond Europe. Africans, Europeans and Americans in the Atlantic slave trade measured their success in terms of the numbers of captives landed and sold alive. In the Nazi system, every Jew destroyed was a gain in 'racial' security and a once-for-all economic gain in confiscated goods.¹⁴

The slave trade was an open-ended process. Its voluntary participants (the traders) wished to perpetuate it. As a forced migration, it devastated areas of Africa and changed the balance of population groups within the Americas. Regarding the impact on the population of Africa, a major historical debate revolves around the question of whether the population of western or west-central Africa would have been substantially larger in 1700 or 1850 in the absence of the transatlantic branch of the slave trade. However, it never so depleted western and west-central Africa as to threaten the Atlantic system.¹⁵ By contrast, the Holocaust was directed against specific groups within Europe and had very specific effects on those groups. Millions of Jewish deaths were so concentrated in time and place that the impact of overall and short-term depletion of the target population was dramatic and definitive.

As a 'way of death', the slave trade was kept in being by the maintenance of a continuous flow of living human bodies who were a means to the production of labor. The Holocaust was kept in motion by the production of dead human bodies. The two systems, therefore, reveal dramatically different tempos of mortality. Joseph Miller, a historian of the Angolan slave trade, has drawn a profile of 'Annualized Mortality Rates Among Slaves from Capture Through Seasoning'. He depicts a typical trade cycle extending over four years (fourteen months in transit and almost three years of seasoning in the New World).¹⁶ For African slaves, the highest rate of loss would have occurred in the first fourteen weeks of captivity: on the journey through Africa, within the coastal holding quarters (the barracoons), and during the Atlantic Middle Passage. Ironically, one of Miller's four-year cycles is as long as the whole period of the Holocaust.

The mortality profile of the Holocaust victims is dissimilar from that of Angolan slaves. In some areas, whole communities were massacred on the spot. In the wake of the invasion of Russia in 1941, the *Einsatzgruppen*, of special killing squads, and their auxiliaries rounded up and slaughtered tens of thousands of Jews in open areas near their homes.¹⁷ For one stage of the slave trade, Miller notes that annualizing the death rate in the slave barracoons 'would produce a preposterous annual rate' of 1440 per 1000 per year. Raul Hilberg also notes the futility of offering annualized infant mortality rates of over 1000 per 1000 in the ghetto experience. At Auschwitz between July 1942 and March 1943, even among those Jews and non-Jews not immediately killed on arrival, the 'annualized' death-rate was more than 2400 per 1000. It would be even more absurd to speak of the series of mass slaughters during the early months of the Nazi sweep through the various regions of the Soviet Union in terms of 'annual' mortality.¹⁸ What is clear is that in this opening phase of the Final Solution in the East, the primacy of on-the-spot maximum annihilation was manifest in the documentary reports making their way back up through the Nazi chain of command.

For the millions of Jews who resided elsewhere in Nazi-dominated Europe, the Holocaust proceeded rapidly, from late 1941 to early 1945, through stages of identification, concentration, and deportation.¹⁹ Short of death for victims of the Atlantic slave trade, one peak of collective suffering came early in the process of enslavement: the trauma of uprooting, family disintegration, and physical restraint (shackling). A fresh set of afflictions accompanied the march to the sea, including attrition from epidemic disease, hunger, and thirst. In this African side of the process, large numbers of slaves were siphoned off into local populations. Others, however, were added to the enslaved caravans along the line of travel as criminal and 'tribute' slaves. Captives were sometimes used as beasts of burden, carrying other commodities down to the coast, thereby offsetting some of the costs of transportation for their captors. At the coast there would be some respite from shortages of food and water experienced en route. However, the slave would have exchanged the conditions of forced marches in shackles for the dangers and discomfort of sedentary imprisonment. Concentrations of people from different

disease environments increased the appalling toll of disease. The 'slave pens' in Benguela, Angola, 'were about 17 meters square with walls three meters or more in height'. With 'two square meters per individual', the barracoons contained 150 to 200 slaves, often enclosed together with pigs and goats.²⁰

Few aspects of the trade expressed the valuelessness of dead slaves more clearly than the slave merchants' habit of dumping bodies of the dead in a heap in a small cemetery or depositing them in shallow graves in great numbers as food for scavenging birds and animals. On the western shore of the Atlantic in Rio de Janeiro, slave traders heaped up their decomposing losses in a mountain of earth awaiting weekly burials. On those occasions when slaves died too quickly for burial, the decomposing corpses were partially burned, giving off a terrible odor.²¹

TRANSIT

For those captives not retained in Africa who survived the barracoons, the most distinctive part of the Atlantic slave trade was the transoceanic journey. The Middle Passage was a voyage lasting from weeks to months in an environment that none of the enslaved had ever experienced in their lives. In the Holocaust, there is no precise counterpart to the Middle Passage. For European Jews, a completed *seaborne* voyage actually represented redemption. During the Nazi period, one transatlantic voyage of Jews illustrates the contrasting contexts of the two systems. In the famous case of the aborted journey of the *Saint Louis* to Cuba and the United States in 1939, the passengers' forced return to the Old World meant captivity and destruction.

For enslaved Africans, the boarding process often signaled their transfer to the authority of Europeans. The state, the church, and the owners might affix their own seals of ownership upon each boarding victim through the repeated application of hot irons to their bodies. Europeans branded slaves as marks of ownership exactly as they branded their cattle or horses or as goods clearing customs. In addition to the marks of capitalist ownership, some states might add their separate brand of royal arms, denoting vassalage to the crown. Representatives of the Church could add a cross branding to the royal arms as a mark of baptism. Under certain jurisdictions,

the branding process might continue in the Americas where slaveowners affixed their own signs and renamed their new human properties or designated them as runaways.²²

For deported Jews, the passage to the death camps in boxcars was also like nothing they had ever experienced before. Lack of food, water, heat, or sufficient air circulation created a human environment rife with futile disputes – by ‘curses, kicks and blows ... a human mass extended across the floor, confused and continuous, sluggish and aching, rising here and there in sudden convulsions and immediately collapsing again in exhaustion’. The journey of two or three days ended when the crash of opening doors and barked orders forced the passengers out onto platforms.²³ The closest analogue to the branding of Africans was the tattooing of inmates at Auschwitz after selection. They were not renamed but numbered, signifying their transition to the condition of anonymous state property. Only by showing one’s ‘baptism’ (number) could an inmate get his or her daily ration of soup.²⁴

For Africans, the ordeal of oceanic transit could last from weeks to months. Many of the Africans were sick, and all must have been terrified boarding an object that they had never seen, heaving upon a medium they had never experienced. The passengers were arranged in tightly packed horizontal rows lying shoulder-to-shoulder along the length of the ship and were even curled around the mast. The males were linked together in irons, making it difficult for them to ‘turn or move, to attempt to rise or lie down’, without injuring each other. The collisions and curses that accompanied the crowding were further intensified by fights at feeding times and during attempts to relieve themselves. Overflowing lavatory buckets and the effluvium of digestive tract diseases added to the discomfort of stifling air. From the beginning of the voyage, the holds were covered with blood and mucus and were so hot that the surgeons could visit the slaves only for short periods at a time. To the many incubating intestinal diseases that the slaves had brought on board with them were added the nausea of seasickness.²⁵ Accounts of the pervasive sensory impact of excrement on the slave ships correspond to Holocaust reports of the wall of feces three feet high in one ghetto lavatory and a concentration camp latrine at Auschwitz where a system with a capacity for 150 was used each morning by 7000 people.

With many inmates stricken with diarrhea and dysentery and with no more than ten minutes allowed for bodily functions, people were knee-deep in excrement.²⁶

Cruelty and arbitrary abuse added to the toll of hunger, thirst and disease in both systems, but most slaves who died of hunger and thirst did so as the consequence of unanticipated long voyages. The railroads to Auschwitz moved relatively close to a schedule, the precision of which was the pride of the German railway bureaucracy. Trains rolled when they had been cleared for through passage to their destination. What one historian calls the ‘floating tombs’ of the African trade had their literal equivalents during the Holocaust. Trucks in transit to death camps sometimes served as gas chambers.²⁷

Crews of African ships were at much greater risk than were the Nazi guards and their auxiliaries. Slave crews faced considerable danger from tropical disease, hunger and thirst. They had no recourse to reinforcements in the event of a slave uprising when slaves were released from their hold below deck for daily exercise. Above all, ship’s captains in the slave trade had a stake in the survival of their human cargo. Every sale at the end of the voyage meant revenue for the state and profits for the traders. Every dead body meant some loss on invested capital.

Nothing better illustrates the legal difference between the two systems than one of the most bizarre slave trade cases ever heard in an English Court – the *Zong* case, argued in Britain in 1783. The slave ship *Zong* had sailed from Africa to the Caribbean in 1781 loaded with 470 slaves bound for Jamaica. After twelve weeks under sail, it had already lost over sixty Africans and seventeen crew members. In order to preserve the rapidly dwindling water reserves, save the remaining ‘cargo’, and allow the investors to claim a loss under their insurance policy, the captain threw 131 of the sickest slaves to their deaths. (Unlike losses due to capture or insurrection, losses of slaves due to death by suicide or sickness were routinely uninsurable.) Designated victims were selected in daily batches by the *Zong*’s crew. They were pushed overboard in sight of the remaining slaves. Consequently, ten more slaves, witnessing the selections, threw themselves overboard.

The underwriters refused to pay for those cast into the sea. A civil suit was brought by the investors. The case was argued in the court of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, famous for having

declared in 1772 that colonial slave law did not apply within England. Counsel for the slavers logically brushed aside the whole question of murder, on the ground that in terms of the suit the *Zong* slaves were goods and property. The only question before the court was whether some property had been rationally jettisoned at sea in order to preserve the rest. Mansfield agreed: 'Though it shocks one very much ... the case of the slaves was the same as if horses or cattle had been thrown overboard.'²⁸

Nothing like the *Zong* case came before a German court over the disposal of captive Jews – nor could it in Nazi 'actions' or shipments. No one who engaged in either the authorized killing of or who *refused* to kill Jews was the object of legal action. There was no property over which such a case could have arisen – no acknowledgment of the monetary value of persons, no contract for the sale of persons, no description of the sex and age of the deceased at the point of loading, no lawful insurance upon the human cargo, and no inquest into reasons for the deaths of any or all of a transported group. The passengers' fares were payable to the railway system whether or not they arrived alive (one-way for Jews, round-trip for their guards). The fares were paid for by funds previously confiscated from the victims themselves. No suits were filed for uncompleted journeys due to death en route. There was literally no 'interest' in the survival of the passengers en route.

Both captive Africans and Jews were designated as 'pieces', but Africans were more highly differentiated goods because an African's status was derived from the exchange value of an adult male for a piece of imported textile. A set of categories designated slaves who were less than full 'pieces', in order to indicate their lower exchange value, ranged according to age, health and strength. The 'use-value' of the ideal African piece was clear. By contrast, all Jews who were not deemed of 'full' immediate labor value were immediately sent to the furnace. Their only use-value was that of certain 'pieces' of their bodies.²⁹

DIVERGENCE

At journey's end, the fate of the captives diverged. In the transatlantic slave trade, landfall marked the end of the seaborne

horrors. Slaves very often arrived disabled, covered with sores, and suffering from fevers, but the sight of land and the removal of shackles excited a transient feeling of joy. The captives were offered fresh food. They were bathed, 'bodies cleansed and oiled', and given gifts of tobacco and pipes. In some ports, a priest might come aboard to reassure the terrified passengers that they had not been transported in order to be eaten on disembarkation. The next stage of the process involved further psychological humiliation. Captives had to endure long and repeated physical inspections by prospective buyers. Slaves were offered for sale almost naked to prevent deception. The healthiest and strongest went first. The remaining ('refuse') slaves were sometimes taken on to other ports or sent onshore to taverns and public auctions. Further separations from relatives or shipboard companions at this point added to the trauma of sale. If slaves survived this series of traumas, they might enter a period of relative recovery ('seasoning'), along with the imposition of a new name, instruction in a new language, and coercion in a new work discipline.³⁰

For Jews in transit, the moment of arrival marked not a lessening but the most dangerous, single moment of their collective suffering. As they arrived, they were unloaded onto a vast platform. Compared to the purchase of African slaves, the rail-side inspection of Jews was extraordinarily casual. SS men or other agents of the state moved quickly through the silent crowd interrogating only a few: 'How old? Healthy or ill?' Mothers who did not wish to be separated from children were told to remain with their children. The SS decided, often in a fraction of a second, between life and death. In a few minutes from the opening of a railway car, the overwhelming majority were on their way to the gas chamber. A mentality of superfluity enveloped the whole process. Only in this context can one fully appreciate Primo Levi's opening phrase in *Survival at Auschwitz*: 'It was my good fortune to be deported to Auschwitz only in 1944, that is, after the German Government had decided, owing to the growing scarcity of labor, to lengthen the average life span of the prisoners destined for elimination.'³¹

The slave trade was always predicated on the value of the captives as potential laborers. Well before the decision for the 'Final Solution' to the 'Jewish question' by mass murder in 1941, the Nazi regime had also realized the potential utility

of coerced Jewish labor following the captives' pauperization. In Germany, a series of decrees between 1938 and 1941 mobilized all able-bodied Jewish labor within the Reich and occupied Poland, sustained at a standard of remuneration and nutrition far below that of the non-Jewish populations around them. On the eve of the invasion of Russia, more than 100 000 had been conscripted in Germany alone.³² In the occupied Polish territories between 1939 and 1941, a running debate ensued between attritionists (favoring accelerated starvation) and utilitarians (favoring temporary use of Jewish labor for producing at least the equivalent of their temporary upkeep). The debate revolved around local policy options while awaiting decisions from above about the disposition of the Jewish population. Some ghettos briefly succeeded in achieving the status of short-term economic (not long-term demographic) viability. By the end of 1941, a portion of ghettoized adult able-bodied Jews was contributing to the Nazi economy and war production at minimal survival levels. Had the Nazis decided in favor of exploitation rather than liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto in the summer of 1942 and had the harsh living conditions and the high death rate remained at levels of the first half of that year (i.e. over 1000 per cent of the prewar monthly rate), 'it would have taken eight years for all of Warsaw's Jews to die out'.³³

The German invasion of Russia was accompanied not only by a moving frontier of massacre to its east but by the creation of death camps. The decision for mass annihilation in the already conquered territories was taken at a moment when the Nazis looked forward to total victory in the East. In such a context, the Slavic populations under Nazi control were also perceived to be superfluous – one more obstacle to the movement of an Aryanized frontier to the east. Enormous numbers of Russian prisoners of war were allowed to starve to death during this early period of the Holocaust. The Nazis, therefore, anticipated no major economic impediments to their twin ideal of general racial reorganization and accelerated Jewish annihilation. By stressing the parasitic concept in relation to both economic and racial development, the Nazis could also formulate the annihilation of Jews in terms of accelerated economic modernization. In addition to its public health dimension, the Final Solution would eliminate petty bourgeois impediments

to the growth of large-scale industrial organization. This 'imagined economy' of some Nazi bureaucrats drew on both capitalist and Communist visions of the industrial future.³⁴

The division of 'visions of labor' between slave traders and Nazi officials illustrates another divergence between the Holocaust and the transatlantic slave trade. Jews were of demographically negative value to the Nazi New Order. To the sponsors of the slave trade, Africans were indispensable, or at least optimal, to economic and imperial development. The failure of slaves to achieve a positive reproduction rate in the tropical Americas (thereby requiring continuous infusions of Africans for sustained economic growth) was perceived as a shortcoming, not a virtue, of the Atlantic system.

LABOR

In policy terms, these divergences between the two systems are even more marked for the period of the Holocaust after the stalling of the German blitzkrieg against the Soviet Union. By the end of 1941, the conflict had settled into an extended struggle. German economic mobilization for war was intensified. As more Germans were required for military service, massive inputs of new labor were needed to fuel the German war machine. At that critical moment, the Nazis finalized the Final Solution into a rational bureaucratic annihilation. German industrialists began scrambling for alternative sources of labor, including the remnants of the Russian prisoners of war. The moment that killing operations against the Jews accelerated, the economic pressure increased. Thus, by 1944 there were more than 7.5 million coerced laborers in the heart of Europe, compared with less than 6 million African slaves in the Americas in 1860 after more than three centuries of the Atlantic slave trade.³⁵

However, the rising number of Germany's slave laborers failed to boost productivity. The disciplinary habits and indifference to human suffering, developed during the era of superfluity, hindered the introduction of rationalized allocation or management of labor and precluded the development of incentives among prisoners. 'Until the very end the Nazis pursued the policy of maximum results with minimum investments.'

The system was most effective not in raising productivity but 'in squaring the economic postulates of German industrial circles with the plans to exterminate the Jews and certain categories of slaves, which had been outlined in the first years of the war by Nazi leaders and put into practice by the SS'.³⁶ Primo Levi's opening phrase about his own 'good fortune' in arriving at Auschwitz in May 1944 was, therefore, also an obituary on the fate of his fellow Jews. When Levi was arrested, the overwhelming majority of Jews in Nazi-controlled Europe had already been murdered.

The labor shortage caused a small slowdown in the killing process. For three years, individual Jews engaged in desperate attempts to ensure themselves against deportation to the death camps by retaining their status as slaves. Even small children grasped the significance of labor qualification as a final, frail barrier between death and brief survival. 'How deeply this labor-sustained psychology had penetrated into the Jewish community is illustrated by a small incident observed by a Pole. In 1943 when an SS officer (Sturmbannführer Reinecke) seized a three-year-old Jewish girl in order to deport her to a killing center, she pleaded for her life by showing him her hands and explaining that she could work. In vain.'³⁷

The comparative figures on enslavement and annihilation between 1941 and 1945 show that the ideology of Jewish elimination took precedence over the ideology of production in Nazi policy. Time and again Jews were deported before requested replacements arrived. At the highest political levels, economic reasoning was treated with condescension or contempt. Even when grudging concessions were made to urgent requests for the temporary retention of Jewish slave labor, it was understood that 'corresponding to the wish of the *Führer* the Jews are to disappear one day'.³⁸ Hitler personally overruled a request by the bureaucrat responsible for labor supply to postpone the removal of Jews from German soil in vital armaments factories. Josef Goebbels rejoiced that the arguments of 'economic experts and industrialists, to the effect that they cannot do without so-called Jewish precision work, do not impress him [Hitler]'.³⁹

In Nazi Europe, it was usually capitalists and bureaucrats in direct control of Jews who tried to rationalize labor mobilization on the road to elimination. This underlines the difference

between the two historical processes that we emphasized at the outset. In the Atlantic system, political rulers – both African and European – tapped into and tried to manipulate a competitive market that they could never hope to fully master. They failed in their attempts to control the flow of slaves to or at the coast or to monopolize the seaborne transit of slaves. If they succeeded temporarily, the effect was either to stifle the slave trade to their own zones of power, to draw new competitors into the trade, or to stimulate the formation of new networks of trade and production.⁴⁰ In the Holocaust, the power relationship between state and capitalists was reversed. It was the political leadership that literally controlled the switches governing the flow of captive populations into war industry or death factories.

Europeans in both systems converged in acquiring adult males as slaves. This group was heavily overrepresented among those boarded on the African coast. It also was overrepresented among those selected for survival at Auschwitz and elsewhere. (One must note, however, that adult males were the *first* group targeted for mass killing by the Nazi *Einsatzgruppen* in the East during the summer of 'superfluity' in 1941.)⁴¹ The Nazis, however, chose their labor force from a full demographic range of human beings. Mothers, children, and the aged were transported in the same shipments as young males and were usually designated for death on arrival. In the slave trade, African captors and traders substantially altered the sex and age distribution of captives offered for sale to European traders. Among Africans, captive women and children had considerable value.⁴² Women and children in the slave trade who died from hunger, nutritional deficiencies, thirst, exposure and disease perished for reasons beyond the determination of their captors. Under the Nazis, Jewish children who died in large numbers for these same reasons perished because of Nazi decisions to withhold food and medicine available to the surrounding population.

If one turns from victims to perpetrators, one professional group appears to have played a significant role in both processes. Doctors in the British slave trade were rewarded for saving lives en route to the Americas. A recent economic historian specializing in the medical history of the slave trade has concluded that doctors, for all of their limitations, succeeded in

reducing mortality on the slave ships. Moreover, in the end, the greatest contribution to Africans by some 'Guinea surgeons' in the Atlantic system was their testimony about conditions aboard slave ships. Physicians enjoyed quite a different role in the Holocaust. In Auschwitz, conclude two historians, doctors presided over the killing of most of the 1 million victims of that camp. They chose between labor and death, decided when the gassed victims were dead, rationalized the selection and cremation process, and lent the prestige of their profession to the whole operation, converting mass murder into a medical procedure. Nazi doctors rationalized the public health ideology of annihilation. They spent more time and care in examining some of the dead than most of the living. They conducted ferocious experiments on the bodies of the living. Jews who never saw a Nazi doctor during the years of the Holocaust stood a far better chance of survival than those who did.⁴³

RACISM

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Justification for the two systems also overlapped. 'Race' was used as a rationale for sustaining both processes. 'No other slave system', writes one recent historian of British slavery, 'was so regulated and determined by the question of race'.⁴⁴ Historians of slavery might make an equally strong claim about the rationale for collecting vast numbers of coerced laborers at work sites throughout Nazi-dominated Europe. Jews, Gypsies and Slavs were not only ranked in racial 'value' but their bodies were at the disposal of the state for experiments, as well as for labor brigades and brothels.

Ironically, race may have played a limited role as a justifying concept in the launching and early expansion of the Atlantic slave trade. This finding has generated a long and inclusive debate on the role of antiblack racism as a cause or consequence of the enslavement of Africans.⁴⁵ Slavery was hardly synonymous with Africans nor were Africans with slaves when the Portuguese first began to purchase Africans in the mid-fifteenth century. Africans did not regard themselves as a unitary 'race', and Europeans continued to enslave people from other portions of the world well into the age of exploration. From their earliest transoceanic voyages down to the eighteenth

century, various European groups continued to enslave people in the Mediterranean, Africa, the sub-Sahara, America and Asia. At the beginning of the Atlantic slave trade, only peoples of European descent were considered nonenslavable in the full sense of becoming inheritable reproductive property. Many non-European groups were only gradually exempted from enslavement by Europeans. By 1750, sub-Saharan Africans and their descendants constituted the overwhelming majority of slaves in the Americas and the exclusive source of slaves for the transatlantic trade. As the African slave trade persisted, the racial link embedded itself ever more deeply in the ideological fabric of European consciousness, especially in the Americas. In the process of dehumanization, European holders of African slaves intrinsically linked them to domestic animals or pets. Inventories consistently listed the value of slaves first and that of livestock second. Unlike Jewish captives, however, Africans 'were not generally likened to predators, or to vermin', or to invisible carriers of disease.⁴⁶

At no time, moreover, was the linkage between Africans and slaves fully congruent. European states and slave traders were fully aware that their slave-trading partners in Africa (princes, warriors and merchants) possessed some of the same distinctive physical features as the enslaved. Treaties were signed and contracts were made by Europeans with Africans. Europeans paid tribute and customs to Africans. Military, economic, and marital alliances were formed with Africans. Africans were educated in European schools. Legal and administrative precautions were taken against wrongful seizures or enslavements of Africans. General characterizations of Africans as being more uncivilized or barbarous than Europeans, therefore, did not preclude an enormous range of political, economic, family, and cultural exchanges with Africans as equals in those relationships.⁴⁷

Whatever the constraints against enslaving non-Africans, the identification of slavery with Africans in the Americas was a residual result of centuries of experimentation with various African and non-African groups, not the outcome of an imagined racial selection before the beginning of the Atlantic slave trade. Considerations of race came to define the outer limits of enslavability, not the designated status of Africans as slaves. The color-coded racial hierarchy was designed by

Europeans to stabilize an asymmetrical distribution of transatlantic power over the long term. Given the indispensability of the slaves, renegotiations of master-slave relationships began almost from the moment slaves arrived in the New World. If racism undergirded the African slave trade, it was an effect rather than a cause of that system.⁴⁸

Ironically, the closest analogue in European culture to a 'racially' defined fear of contamination during the early period of the transatlantic slave trade was the Iberian obsession with 'purity of blood'. For two centuries after 1500, Spanish and Portuguese authorities conducted ongoing hunts for 'Judaizing' descendants of Jews converted to Christianity. Such *conversos* or 'New Christians' were indefinitely branded by their ancestral link to the Jewish tradition. In the Iberian settler societies, racial legislation was primarily concerned with the regulation of nonslave groups, including New Christians, Indians, and free people of 'mixed' race. For slaves, legal codes inherited from *pre-Atlantic* Roman law constituted the primary juridical nexus for grounding master-slave, free-slave, and slave-slave relationships.⁴⁹

Racism fulfilled a different systemic function during the Holocaust. The difference was not that Jews were defined primarily by the religious affiliation of their grandparents rather than by ancestral geographic origin or by color. For the Nazis, a racial revolution was needed to unravel past legal and social integration. Racial legislation also prescribed a new system of individual classification in order to unravel the results of religious intermarriage. The regime intended that one precisely designated group would, one way or another, disappear. Nazi racial policy was, in this sense, committed to a final solution – a policy of 'disappearance' – long before the particular physical implementation that began in 1941.⁵⁰ Thus, if European statesmen and merchants measured success in the slave trade in terms of ships and colonies increasingly filled with aliens, success for National Socialists was measured in terms of body counts and empty horizons. Rudolf Höss, the commandant of Auschwitz, not only arranged to return to his killing center in 1944 so that he could personally oversee the destruction of Hungarian Jewry but claimed credit for annihilating 2.5 million, rather than the 1.25 million, people actually murdered there.⁵¹

The slave trade and the Holocaust are characterized by another striking difference. For the first three centuries of the transatlantic slave trade, only isolated voices – no government – attempted to prohibit slaving by its own citizens. There was no need for concealment and no international declaration against the Atlantic slave trade until more than three centuries into the duration of the system. Every European state with ports on the Atlantic participated in the trade at one time or another. Participants in the Atlantic system operated within the comforting context of doing or seeing ordinary and customary things, even at times when they expressed personal revulsion or reservation about some particularly brutal action within that system.

The Holocaust differed from the slave trade in that it was not described by its perpetrators as conforming to some ancient and universal practice. The Nazis were cognizant that they were radical innovators and directors of an operation that they themselves had begun and that they alone were capable of seeing through to completion. Their commitment was crucial to the process. Indeed, they knew that they had bet their lives on a project that would be considered a war crime were they to be defeated.

CONCLUSION

This brief overview emphasizes the difficulty of comparing two events so disparate in space, time, intention, duration, and outcome. Yet the urge to find analogues to one's suffering is unquenchably human. What could be more encouraging than to see the recent surge of historical interest in the Holocaust as a model for calling attention to other human catastrophes? The African slave trade had, in its turn, served Jews as a means of making sense of catastrophic oppression, for apprehending the disorienting cruelty of the world. It was reflexive for Anne Frank to draw upon Europe's dark chapter in Africa in order to come to terms with her own terrifying present: 'Every night people are being picked up without warning and that is awful particularly for old and sick people, they treat them just like slaves in the olden days. The poor old people are taken outside at night and then they have to walk ... in a whole procession

with children and everything ... They are sent to Ferdinand Bolstraat and from there back again and that's how they plague these poor people. Also they throw water over them if they scream.' Beyond the evocation of comprehensible and distant past horrors lay only fragments of other incomprehensible and distant present horrors: 'If it is as bad as this in Holland whatever will it be like in the distant and barbarous regions they are sent to? We assume most of them are murdered. The English radio speaks of their being gassed perhaps the quickest way to die.'⁵²

Anne Frank's successive entries should serve as a caution to scholars. In comparing historical catastrophes, there is a temptation to argue as though one could arrive at a hierarchy of suffering or cruelty or radical evil such that only one such process reaches the apogee of uniqueness. Systems of human action are like Tolstoy's happy and unhappy marriages, all alike in some ways but each different in its own.

NOTES

I wish to thank Stanley L. Engerman, George Mosse, and Alexander Orbach for their helpful comments.

1. James Walvin, *Black Ivory: A history of British slavery* (Washington, DC.: Howard University Press, 1994), p. ix. For a parallel and much more ambitious claim for the Holocaust, see Steven T. Katz, *The Holocaust in Historical Context*, 3 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press), I, p. 1.
2. *New York Times*, April 2 1995, p. 1.
3. See Stanley Elkins, *Slavery: A problem in American institutional and intellectual life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), pp. 104–15; Earle E. Thorpe, 'Chattel Slavery and Concentration Camps', *Negro History Bulletin* (May 1962), pp. 171–6; republished in *The Debate over Slavery: Stanley Elkins and his critics*, ed. Ann J. Lane (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 23–42; Sidney W. Mintz, 'Slavery and Emergent Capitalisms', in *Slavery in the New World*, ed. Laura Foner and Eugene D. Genovese (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 27–37; Laurence Mordekhai Thomas, *Vessels of Evil: American slavery and the Holocaust* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), esp. pp. 117–47. See the introduction to Martin A. Klein, *Breaking the Chains: Slavery, bondage, and emancipation in modern Africa and Asia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), pp. 11–12. In a reappraisal, Elkins did not seem inclined

- to defend the heuristic value of the analogy in comparison with other institutions such as asylums and prisons. See Elkins, 'Slavery and Ideology', in Lane, *Debate over Slavery*, pp. 325–78; John Thornton, *Africa and the Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 152–82, 206–53.
4. See, most recently, the essays in Larry E. Hudson Jr., ed., *Working Toward Freedom: Slave society and domestic economy in the American South* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1994), p. viii; and Stanley L. Engerman, 'Concluding Reflections', in *ibid.*, pp. 233–41. See also the essays in *The Slaves' Economy: Independent production by slaves in the Americas*, a special issue of *Slavery and Abolition*, 12(1) (May 1991); and Robert W. Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract: The rise and fall of American slavery* (New York: Norton, 1989), pp. 154–98.
 5. See Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, rev. and definitive ed., 3 vols. (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1985).
 6. See Paul E. Lovejoy, 'The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa: A review of the literature', *Journal of African History*, 30 (1989), pp. 365–94, esp. p. 387.
 7. Patrick Manning, 'The Slave Trade: The formal demography of a global system', in *The Atlantic Slave Trade: Effects on economies, societies and peoples in Africa, the Americas, and Europe*, ed. J. I. Inikori and S. L. Engerman (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992), pp. 117–41, esp. pp. 119–20; Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); David Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); *idem.*, 'Free and Coerced Transatlantic Migrations: Some comparisons', *American Historical Review*, 88(2) (1983), pp. 251–80; J. D. Fage, 'African Societies and the Atlantic Slave Trade', *Past and Present*, 125 (1989), pp. 97–115; David Eltis, David Richardson and Stephen Behrendt, 'The Structure of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1597–1867' (unpublished typescript).
 8. See, *inter alia*, Thornton, *Africa and the Africans*; Inikori and Engerman, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*; Herbert Klein, *The Middle Passage: Comparative studies in the Atlantic slave trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).
 9. See Paul Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A history of slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); *idem.*, 'The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade'; and Patrick Manning, 'The Impact of Slave Trade Exports on the Population of the Western Coast of Africa, 1700–1850', in *De la Traite à l'esclavage*, ed. Serge Daget (Nantes, France: Société française d'histoire d'outre-mer, 1988), pp. 111–34. Compare, with David Eltis, *Economic Growth*, pp. 64–71; John Thornton, 'The Slave Trade in Eighteenth Century Angola: Effects on demographic structures', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 14(3) (1980), pp. 417–27; and Martin A. Klein, 'The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on the Societies of the Western Sudan', in Inikori and Engerman, eds., *Atlantic Slave Trade*, pp. 25–47.

10. William A. Darity, 'A General Equilibrium Model of the Eighteenth Century Atlantic Slave Trade: A least-likely test for the Caribbean school', *Research in Economic History*, 7 (1982), pp. 287–326; Hilary McD. Beckles, 'The Economic Origins of Black Slavery in the British West Indies, 1640–1680: A tentative analysis of the Barbados model', *Journal of Caribbean History*, 16 (1982), pp. 35–56; Raymond L. Cohn and Richard A. Jensen, 'The Determinants of Slave Mortality Rates on the Middle Passage', *Explorations in Economic History*, 10(2) (1982), pp. 173–6; David W. Galenson, 'The Atlantic Slave Trade and the Barbados Market, 1673–1723', *Journal of Economic History*, 42(3) (1982), pp. 491–511; Herbert S. Klein, 'Novas Interpretaoes do trafico de Escravos do Atlantico', *Revista de Historia*, 120 (1989), pp. 3–25.
11. See, *inter alia*, Inikori and Engerman, *Atlantic Slave Trade*; Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman, eds., *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Barbara L. Solow, ed., *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); David W. Galenson, *Traders, Planters, and Slaves: Market behavior in early English America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Janet J. Ewald, 'Slavery in Africa and the Slave Trades from Africa', *American Historical Review*, 97 (1992), pp. 465–85; Julian Gwyn, 'The Economics of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: A review', *Social History*, 25 (1992), pp. 151–62. On the contrasting meaning of humans as 'things' in the Atlantic system and in the Nazi system, see Claudia Koonz, 'Genocide and Eugenics: The language of power', in *Lessons and Legacies: The meaning of the Holocaust in a changing world*, ed. Peter Hayes (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1991), pp. 155–77; David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), ch. 2, pp. 31–5; and Sidney Mintz, ed., *Esclave = facteur de production: l'economie politique de l'esclavage* (Paris: Dunod, 1981).
12. See Henry A. Gemery and Jan S. Hogendorn, eds., *The Uncommon Market: Essays in the economic history of the Atlantic slave trade* (New York: Academic Press, 1979), on the 'Western' transoceanic trade; and *The Economics of the Indian Ocean Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (Special Issue), *Slavery and Abolition*, 9 (December 1988).
13. See, above all, Hilberg, *The Destruction*, 2, pp. 543–860.
14. See Claudia Koonz, 'Genocide and Eugenics', pp. 162 ff; Robert Jay Lifton and Amy Hackett, 'Nazi Doctors', in *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camps*, ed. Michael Berenbaum (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 301–16.
15. See David Eltis, 'Free and Coerced Transatlantic Migrations: Some comparisons', *American Historical Review*, 88(2) (1983), pp. 251–80; Stanley L. Engerman and Kenneth L. Sokoloff, 'Factor Endowments, Institutions and Differential Paths of Growth Among New World Economies: A view from economic historians of the United States', in *Why Did Latin America Fall Behind?*, ed. Stephen Haber (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966). On depopulation in Africa, compare Manning, 'The Slave Trade', in Inikori and Engerman, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, pp. 117–41, and Eltis, *Economic Growth*, pp. 64–71.

16. See Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant capitalism and the Angolan slave trade, 1730–1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), p. 439, figure 11.1. Miller's data base is quite small and lower estimates have been suggested by other authors. For example, Miller estimates an average loss of 35 percent from the point of capture to arrival at the coast, with a further loss of 10–15 percent in the port towns, yielding a total depletion in Africa of 45 percent (*ibid.*, p. 440). Patrick Manning estimates an interior loss of about 15 percent ('The Slave Trade', p. 121); as does John Thornton, 'The Demographic Effect of the Slave Trade on Western Africa 1500–1850', in *African Historical Demography*, II, *Proceedings of a Seminar* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1977), pp. 693–720. Manning notes that population loss in Africa, though relatively less serious than the depopulations of the Americas and Oceania, was caused in large part by human agency. This characteristic would bring the slave trade closer to the Holocaust in terms of agency than other population catastrophes: Manning, *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, oriental, and African slave trades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 87.
17. See Yitzhak Arad, 'The Holocaust of Soviet Jewry in the Occupied Territories of the Soviet Union', *Yad Vashem Studies*, 21 (1991), pp. 1–47.
18. Compare Miller, *Way of Death*, p. 401, n. 89, with Raul Hilberg, 'Opening Remarks: The Discovery of the Holocaust', in Hayes, *Lessons and Legacies*, pp. 11–19, esp. pp. 15–16; Yisrael Gutman, 'Auschwitz – An overview', in *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, ed. Yisrael Gutman and Michael Berenbaum (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 5–33. It is important to note that the Auschwitz mortality figure applies only to the 400 000 (of 1.5 million) who were given inmate status, registered, numbered and left alive for some time. The majority of arrivals were killed immediately. See Franciszek Piper, 'The System of Prisoner Exploitation', in Gutman and Berenbaum, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, pp. 34–49; and 'The Number of Victims', *ibid.*, pp. 61–76.
19. Hilberg, *The Destruction*, 1.
20. Miller, *Way of Death*, pp. 379–401; Philip Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Sengambia in the era of the slave trade* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), pp. 168–73, 277–8.
21. Miller, *Way of Death*, pp. 391–2.
22. Miller, *Way of Death*, pp. 404–6; Walvin, *Black Ivory*, pp. 250–1, 284–92; see also Herbert S. Klein, *The Middle Passage: Comparative studies in the Atlantic slave trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).
23. Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, pp. 17–20.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 27–8.
25. See Thornton, *Africa*, pp. 153–62. For eyewitness accounts by a slave and a surgeon, see Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, 2 vols. (London, 1789) 1, pp. 78–80; Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa* (London: J. Phillips, 1788), p. 25.
26. Robert-Jan Van Pelt, 'A Site in Search of a Mission', in Gutman and Berenbaum, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, pp. 93–154, esp. pp. 130–2. See also Terrence Des Pres, *The Survivor: An anatomy of life*

- in the death camps (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 60, describing the 'excremental assault' on the inmates. See also Hilberg, *Destruction*, 2, p. 490.
27. Arad, 'The Holocaust of Soviet Jewry', p. 14.
28. Walvin, *Black Ivory*, pp. 16–20.
29. That captive Jews were more readily imagined to be criminals than slaves may also be inferred from the case of the Ukrainian who consented to find refuge for two Jewish children whose father feared an imminent Nazi 'action' in his ghetto. When the children were discovered, Bazyli Antoniuk was accused of complicity in harboring 'criminals', not stolen goods. He was convicted and sentenced to death, despite the fact that the children, aged six and seven, were too young to be charged as criminals. Ingo Müller, *Hitler's Justice: The courts of the Third Reich*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 164. Jews under Nazi control were, however, of value to Jewish groups outside the range of Nazi power. For details of the futile negotiations on the ransoming of Jews, see Yehuda Bauer, *Jews for Sale? Nazi-Jewish negotiations, 1933–1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994). On the value of corpses, see Andrzej Strzelecki, 'The Plunder of the Victims and Their Corpses', in Gutman and Berenbaum, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, pp. 246–66. Under the auspices of Breslau University, a doctoral dissertation was published in 1940, 'On the Possibilities of Recycling Gold from the Mouths of the Dead'; Miller, *Way of Death* pp. 66–9; Levi, *Survival*, p. 16.
30. Thornton, *Africa*, pp. 162–82; Walvin, *Black Ivory*, pp. 59–66; Miller, *Way of Death*, pp. 445ff.
31. Levi, *Survival*, pp. 9–21. See also Paul Hoedeman, *Hitler or Hippocrates* (Sussex England: Book Guild, 1991), pp. 187–93; Franciszek Piper, 'Gas Chambers and Crematoria', in Gutman and Berenbaum, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, pp. 157–82.
32. Konrad Kwiet, 'Forced Labour of German Jews in Nazi Germany', in *Leo Baeck Institute: Year Book*, 36 (London: Secker & Warburg, 1991), pp. 389–410, esp. p. 393.
33. Isaiah Trunk, 'Epidemics and Mortality in the Warsaw Ghetto, 1939–1942', in *The Nazi Holocaust: Historical articles on the destruction of European Jews*, ed. Michael R. Marrus, 9 vols. (Westport, Conn.: Meckler, 1989), 6: 1, p. 43; Christopher R. Browning, *The Path to Genocide: Essays on launching the final solution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 34–51, 130–41. For an alternative and detailed account of the Warsaw ghetto, see Charles G. Roland, *Courage Under Siege: Starvation, disease, and death in the Warsaw Ghetto* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).
34. Browning, *The Path*, pp. 59–61; 111–22.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 73–4; Ulrich Herbert, 'Labour and Extermination: Economic interest and the primacy of Weltanschauung in National Socialism', *Past and Present*, 138 (1993), pp. 144–95; Peter Hayes, 'Profits and Persecution: Corporate involvement in the Holocaust', in *Perspectives on the Holocaust: Essays in honor of Raul Hilberg*, ed. James S. Pacy and Alan P. Wertheimer (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), pp. 51–73.

36. Franciszek Piper, 'The System of Economic Exploitation', p. 47. For an extended discussion of the role of utilitarian and nonutilitarian rationalizations of the Holocaust, see the essays by Susanne Heime and Götz Aly, Dan Diner, David Bankier and Ulrich Herbert, in *Yad Vashem Studies*, 24, ed. Aharon Weiss (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1994), pp. 45–145. However configured, the Holocaust frame of reference assumed a 'surplus' of people. The slave trade frame of reference assumed a deficit of laborers.
37. Hilberg, *Destruction*, 2, p. 529.
38. Himmler, quoted in Kwiet, 'Forced Labour', p. 403 (October 1942).
39. From J. Goebbels, *Tagebuch*, 2 March and 30 September 1943, quoted in Kwiet, 'Forced Labour', pp. 403–4.
40. Thornton, *Africa*, pp. 53–71.
41. Arad, 'The Holocaust of Soviet Jewry', p. 23.
42. Miller, *Way of Death*, pp. 159–63. On attitudes toward women and children in the African slave trade and in Auschwitz, compare Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein, eds., *Women and Slavery in Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), esp. the introduction, 'Women's Importance in African Slave Systems', pp. 3–25; Irena Strzelecka, 'Women', in Gutman and Berenbaum, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, pp. 393–411; and Helena Kubica, 'Children', *ibid.*, pp. 412–27.
43. See Richard B. Sheridan, 'The Guinea Surgeons on the Middle Passage: The provision of medical services in the British slave trade', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 14 (1981), pp. 601–25; *idem.*, *Doctors and Slaves: A medical and demographic history of slavery in the British West Indies, 1680–1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 108–26; Robert Jay Lifton and Amy Hackett, 'Nazi Doctors', p. 303. On the role of Nazi medicine in the process of mass murder, see also Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical killing and the psychology of genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); Götz Aly, Peter Chroust and Christian Pross, *Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi medicine and racial hygiene* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); Hoedeman, *Hitler or Hippocrates*.
44. Walvin, *Black Ivory*, p. ix; Anna Pawelczynska, *Values and Violence in Auschwitz: A sociological analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp. 54–5.
45. See, *inter alia*, William A. Green, 'Race and Slavery: Considerations on the Williams thesis', in Solow and Engerman, eds., *British Capitalism*, pp. 25–50; Thornton, *Africa*, pp. 137–8; 143–51.
46. Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American attitudes toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968); David Eltis, 'Europeans and the Rise and Fall of African Slavery in the Americas: An interpretation', *American Historical Review*, 98 (1993), pp. 1399–1423; Philip D. Morgan, 'Slaves and Livestock in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica: Vineyard pen, 1750–1751', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 52 (1995), pp. 47–76.
47. See, *inter alia*, Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British ideas and action, 1780–1850* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964); William B. Cohen, *The French Encounter with Africans: White response to blacks, 1530–1880* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980).

48. Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston: Little Brown, 1967).
49. Albert A. Sicroff, *Les Statutes de pureté de sangre en Espagne, au XVI. et XVII siècles* (Paris, 1955).
50. Koonz, 'Genocide and Eugenics'; George L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A history of European racism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), pp. 215-31.
51. Franciszek Piper, 'The Number of Victims', in Gutman and Berenbaum *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, pp. 61-76, esp. p. 614.
52. *The Diary of Anne Frank: The critical edition* (New York: Doubleday, 1987), pp. 265, 273, 316; entries of October 6, 9, and November 19, 1942.

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