

Seeing Like a State with Cataracts: Slavery and Political Religion

Introduction

In his sweeping comparison, Orlando Patterson has noted that, historically, slave systems are commonly based upon a sacred order.¹ I would like to argue that this is true of totalitarian regimes as well, and it is what makes totalitarian slavery unique among modern forms of bondage. This will strike many as patently absurd. Totalitarian regimes have been invariably secular. And yet they retain the most extreme, chiliastic impulses of the world's historical religions. "Heaven" is transformed into secular "Thousand Year Reichs" or "Dictatorships of the Proletariat."

Recently, Michael Burleigh has attempted to place National Socialism in the context of 20th century extremism by defining it as a "political religion." As he defines it, political religions are based on statolatry. Citizens worship in mass political rituals. Salvation is promised through faith in the regime and its leaders. Last, the regimes promise to deliver citizens to a promised land, a new historical destiny.

Burleigh explicitly grounds his conception of political religions on theories of totalitarianism. As famously defined by Hannah Arendt, totalitarianism bases its rule neither on a political philosophy of human nature nor on any divine right. It bases its legitimacy instead on a historical mission to alter the stuff of human nature itself. It claims to set to work on nothing less than the metaphysical destiny of the world and refashion humanity itself in this name. In all cases, Burleigh notes, such regimes evoke a quasi-religious fervor. They displace the expectation of redemption in an afterlife into the present. They proclaim that a utopian political order can and will achieve that destiny in this world.²

When such regimes resort to slavery, they invariably do so by invoking a millenarian quest. In the process slavery is decoupled from any conventional pursuit of material gain. Its stated purpose becomes the transcendence of natural and human limitations through political order. The mere pursuit of profit could never account for such flights of metaphysical fundamentalism. True enough, outright greed is always present. The economic benefits of the Gulags or the Nazi concentration camps were also sometimes touted as national policy. In the Soviet Union prisoners were expected to produce between 30 to 50 percent more while receiving between 15 to 25 percent less pay than “free” laborers. Hitler’s slave lords expected similar gains. When concentration camp managers brought to Heinrich Himmler’s attention that prisoners did not work as efficiently as German civilians, he retorted, “It is simply normal and plain obvious that one can get double the amount [compared to civilians].”³

In each regime, reformers tried to rationalize these systems (Lavrenty Beria in the USSR and Oswald Pohl in Nazi Germany). The very expectation of untold productivity gains, in the end, serves as an example, not of rational economic calculation, but of how totalitarian regimes almost completely disregard the reality of modern production, as if it could simply be decreed. The rational calculation of productivity or efficiency—that is, standard engineering practice since the rise of modern management in the late 19th century—is always notably absent in totalitarian slave systems. Violent anti-capitalism, distrust of international standards of knowledge or best practice compound a glorification of “will” and essential community in order to preempt this. The attempts at reform proved woefully inadequate, even by these reformers’ own estimates and failed precisely because of resistance from within the slave system itself.

Rather than straightforward, pragmatic exploitation, the slave systems of totalitarian regimes most often combined what historian Paul Josephson has called “totalitarian science and

technology” and what historian Loren Graham has called “Megaprojects.” “Megaprojects” may be defined as any large-scale undertaking in the name of industrial modernization that requires the vast transformation of a nation’s social fabric and the environment. These cost vast sums of money and involve labor forces numbering in the hundreds of thousands. They are not unique to totalitarian societies, and one could easily tot off examples of railroad building in the 19th century or interstate highway building in the 20th.⁴ Still, totalitarian societies distinguish themselves in that a hypertrophically centralized state invariably pursues hypertrophically exaggerated ventures.⁵ Josephson defines totalitarian science and technology by its centralized command and control. Loud proclamations in the name of the commonweal, community, culture, the worker, or the public good often mask the fact that central control overrides market forces, public opinion, civil rights, or whatever might check arbitrary waste, abuse, and tyranny. This is even more the case with slave systems, for precisely the most powerful organs of executive control—the secret police, the SS, the NKVD—act as slave lords. Precisely the weakest victims—the regimes most vulnerable enemies—provide the workers.

Both Josephson and Graham note that totalitarian megaprojects have a propensity to couple slave labor, technological utopianism, and an aesthetic of gigantism. The historian Karl Wittfogel once quipped that the great monuments executed by the compulsory labor of the ancients—the pyramids, the ziggurats—substitute a maximum of material for a minimum of ideas.⁶ It might be too flippant to suggest that the unique addition made by totalitarian regimes to this mixture of slavery, gigantism, and lack of imagination was the vogue for mass production, electricity, and Taylorist time management new to the 20th century. Projects like the Dniepr dam or the Magnitogorsk steel mills were publicized as the largest, most impressive in the world.⁷

Likewise the SS touted its factories as the grandest, most advanced of their kind. Their gigantism invariably announced: "centralized political power is the message!"⁸

Most of them were abject disasters in direct proportion to their complete divorce from any rational estimate of their practical value. This is not to say that economy, science, and technology under totalitarian regimes proved universally incompetent. Although this view was very prevalent in the immediate post-war period and still enjoys a certain popularity, enough excellent scholarship has demonstrated the very opposite. But totalitarian slave projects almost invariably succumbed to abject incompetence and failure precisely because megaprojects had become acts of devotion in the political religion of their regimes. There can be no doubt that a sacralization of machines accompanied them. Slaves most often found themselves working on what might be called messianic technocracies, reaching out for the total transformation of the world.⁹

"Electricity will replace god," Lenin once stated, "The peasants should pray to it; in any case they will feel its effects long before they feel any effect from on high."¹⁰ Michael Burleigh comments that in the study of National Socialism, "emphasis on bastardised science has begun to distract from the role of bastardised religiosity."¹¹ But these are not mutually exclusive. The megaprojects of National Socialism allowed Hitler to be both priest and engineer of the German spirit. One canonical survey of the monumental architecture of the Nazi regime compares the dilapidation of "other races which remain nomads even in the most fertile territory" to "the buildings of the new Reich, that place the highest demands on both the engineer and the architect, and make clearly felt that the German people has risen up as the master of technology and subordinated its possibilities to the German will."¹²

Influential “post-modern” interpretations notwithstanding, political religions have proven relatively immune to rational calculation or “technocratic” reason. Recourse to grandiose Four and Five-Year Plans proliferate everywhere, but if Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union were “seeing like a state,” they did so through cataracts.¹³ Economic rationale, planning, or technological calculation cannot account for what is uniquely perverse in the slavery of the 20th century. The only thing that can is the chiliastic political religions of totalitarian states. I will here ground the case of slavery under National Socialism, the case I know best, in a comparative perspective in an attempt to illustrate the unique nature of this practice.

Hitler’s Labor Lords

National Socialism gave rise to many forms of compulsory labor, but I will focus here on the most extreme and deadly, slave labor in the concentration camps. It has been common to locate the uniqueness of the camps in their supposed total “system” of control. As a result, emphasis has tended to fall more on the form rather than the substance of slave labor in the concentration camps. The camps themselves are often presented as institutions of absolute power, even hermetically sealed, as if they developed according to an intrinsic logic of terror.¹⁴ This does seem to capture a prevalent viewpoint among victims, to whom the camps often seemed to serve no other purpose than torment. Yet their institutional history suggests potent influences other than an insane logic of absolute power “grounded upon itself.”¹⁵

Totalitarian regimes do not so much invent novel methods for the pursuit of power. Rather they distinguish themselves through an almost hallucinatory preoccupation with what I will call ontological enemies. Ontological enemies are defined by their being rather than by any real actions, opposition, or even thought or opinions. Nazi activists presumed the very existence of the “Jew” or any other “unnecessary eater” to create a state of civil war or, at the very least, to

weaken Germany intolerably. If the concentration camps continued to evolve as a “system” of state power, they did so only because they began to incorporate a totalitarian preoccupation with the historical transformation of the citizen and the state, including a preoccupation with ontological enemies, enemies by virtue of nothing else than their being.

In the first months of Nazi rule, Hitler’s regime did what all dictatorships do. It quickly suppressed its political opposition, especially but not exclusively communists and socialists. Some were murdered. Many more were incarcerated in ad hoc detention centers that evolved into the concentration camp system. The camps originally served nothing more than a successful dictatorial seizure of power. This was bloody but scarcely unusual; and in comparison with, say, the arbitrary murder unleashed by Suharto or Augusto Pinochet, the Nazis did not distinguish themselves. At the end of 1935, the Justice Ministry even considered eliminating the camps because they had served their purpose.¹⁶

Only with the innovation of new foundational principles did the camps evolve into the system of terror synonymous with Nazi rule. The concentration camps, as Heinrich Himmler argued, must vigilantly protect what Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann have called the “racial state.”¹⁷ In a context that conflated biology, culture, and politics, deviance of any kind could be taken as evidence of transgression against the “race.” Thus, after 1935, the Gestapo began to arrest predominantly German men for new reasons.

Totalitarian slavery always starts at home and cleansing the body politic began with members of the preferred racial group.¹⁸ Jews were not specifically targeted at this time, though they were vastly overrepresented in the camps and singled out for the harshest treatment. But the National Socialist state was always very ecumenical in the pursuit of its mission. The camps

expanded to receive an influx of “professional criminals,” “habitual criminals,” and “asocials,” all loosely defined not so much by actual misdeeds as by a speciously defined “nature.”

Himmler, the Reichsführer SS and ultimate head of the concentration camps, argued repeatedly that vigilance against internal enemies was necessary for national defense.¹⁹ The SS was remarkably consistent in this regard. Near the end of the war, the special office responsible for managing labor allocations to war industries issued a question-and-answer drill to train guards. This was to be memorized and performed by those who managed labor details:

Q: Why are prisoners dangerous?

A: Because they can destroy the unity of our nation, lame our power, threaten our victory. They threaten to make it possible for those at home to stab the soldiers at the front in the back, just as they did before [i.e. as Jews, socialists, and communists had supposedly done in World War I].²⁰

The manual went on to define prisoners, not only as enemies of the state, but as deviants, freeloaders, traitors who had maliciously withheld their contribution in a time of total war. As ontological enemies, the SS considered their very existence to threaten civil war. As this quasi ritual of labor management only suggests, racial-biological definitions of citizenship were also inherently economic, but in ways that deviated markedly from liberal political economy.

Individuals were judged in terms their use-value to the “national community.” The SS, along with German economic planners, considered its enemies a threat to production by virtue of their mere existence.

Slave labor began when the SS took upon itself the task of forcing its enemies, whose very being posed a threat, into the service of higher purposes. From 1936 to 1939, SS industries set out to lay hands upon “fallow work power” (*brachliegende Arbeitskräfte*) and drive prisoners

to “communal” service.²¹ “Fallow” was relatively moderate in Nazi vocabulary politics, but it captures the ethos expressed in much more radical terms like “unnecessary eater” or “lives unworthy of living.” As the SS liaison to the Office of the Four Year Plan stated, “... national labor discipline dictated that all persons who would not conform to the working life of the nation, and who were vegetating as work-shy and asocial, making the streets of our cities and countryside unsafe, had to be compulsorily registered and set to work.”²² Those who managed the burgeoning industrial empire of the SS were more enthusiastic: “Companies of the Schutzstaffel are operated in order to fulfill the task of the Reichsführer SS to bring prisoners in the [concentration] camps once more to work that is worthy of men.”²³ These statements express, not so much concern with the exploitation of labor power, as a preoccupation with danger and a desire to refashion “worthy” men.

Hitler’s slave labor lords emphasized communal goals, historic mission, and cultural crusades. The chief executive of SS corporations emphasized, “The SS pursues its enterprise exclusively to fulfill discrete tasks that are completely cultural and communal in nature. The SS fundamentally avoids business endeavor for the sole purpose of earning money. ... [This] leads our companies down certain paths that a purely private businessman would never dare, and this causes losses from time to time.”²⁴ Discussion of economic rationale, concrete calculations of labor power, efficiency, productivity—one searches in vain for any of this.

This is undoubtedly because slavery has commonly been about identity politics. As Orlando Patterson has pointed out, the economic relations of slavery, so important for theorists like Marx and so typical of American slavery, are not necessarily primary in the long history of slavery. As slaves, individuals exist in a permanent state of dishonor. As such, their debasement elevates the honor of the master. Most important for my purposes here, masters have historically

impressed slaves into bondage less out of any concrete economic need than as an exaltation of their status, an expression of their identity as masters.²⁵ Totalitarianism has distinguished itself by combining this older, more traditional identity politics with the industrial revolution and the most radical politics of the nation state.

Nazi Germany's primary motive for enslaving its own citizens grew out of preoccupation with ontological enemies as well as the desire among activists to project their own worthiness. There can be little doubt that this took on sacred overtones. According to one party journal: "... the National Socialist Menschenfuehrer [leader of men] should uncover and expose unhealthy ideological developments ... these tasks have certain similarities with the profession of the clergy..."²⁶ The SS founded its own corporations in this spirit. This effort was as much about the identity of National Socialists as about their enemies.

The case of the Jews is interesting in this regard. However important to Hitler and other Nazi activists, anti-Semitism played no significant role in garnering widespread public support among "ordinary Germans." Jews comprised less than one percent of the German population, and—unlike communists or socialists who, after all, maintained paramilitary formations—the persecution of the Jews served no obvious pragmatic end. Yet attacks upon them did cement a sense of omnipotence among true believers in the regime. Historian Richard Bessel notes, it "appears to have satisfied emotional urges, the desire to humiliate and harm people who were alleged to have enormous power and influence but in fact were largely defenseless..."²⁷

Victims, in general, repeatedly became objects upon which to perform one's devotion in the regime's political religion. In his biography of Theodor Eicke, the SS man responsible for the geometric expansion of the concentration camp in the 1930s, Tom Segev, remarks that Eicke "wanted his men to know why they were serving ... and he often overlooked willful

mistreatment of the prisoners as long as he was convinced that the misconduct was the result of an inner identification with the tasks of the concentration camps."²⁸

On the opposite side of this coin, Eicke's camps tailored forced labor to the perceived nature of their ontological enemies. The camps did not organize work details rationally on the basis of skills or professional abilities. Rather punishment was supposed to fit the crime, and the crime had less to do with actions than with the inmate's race, politics, or "nature," however defined. Eicke's service regulations specifically reserved the hardest labor for the most unforgivable political or racial enemies (communists or Jews, for instance). Eicke showed little interest in the exploitation of skill; in fact, he told Kommandanten not to heed professional criteria: "Prisoners, without exception, are obligated to carry out physical labor. Status, profession, and background will not be taken into account."²⁹

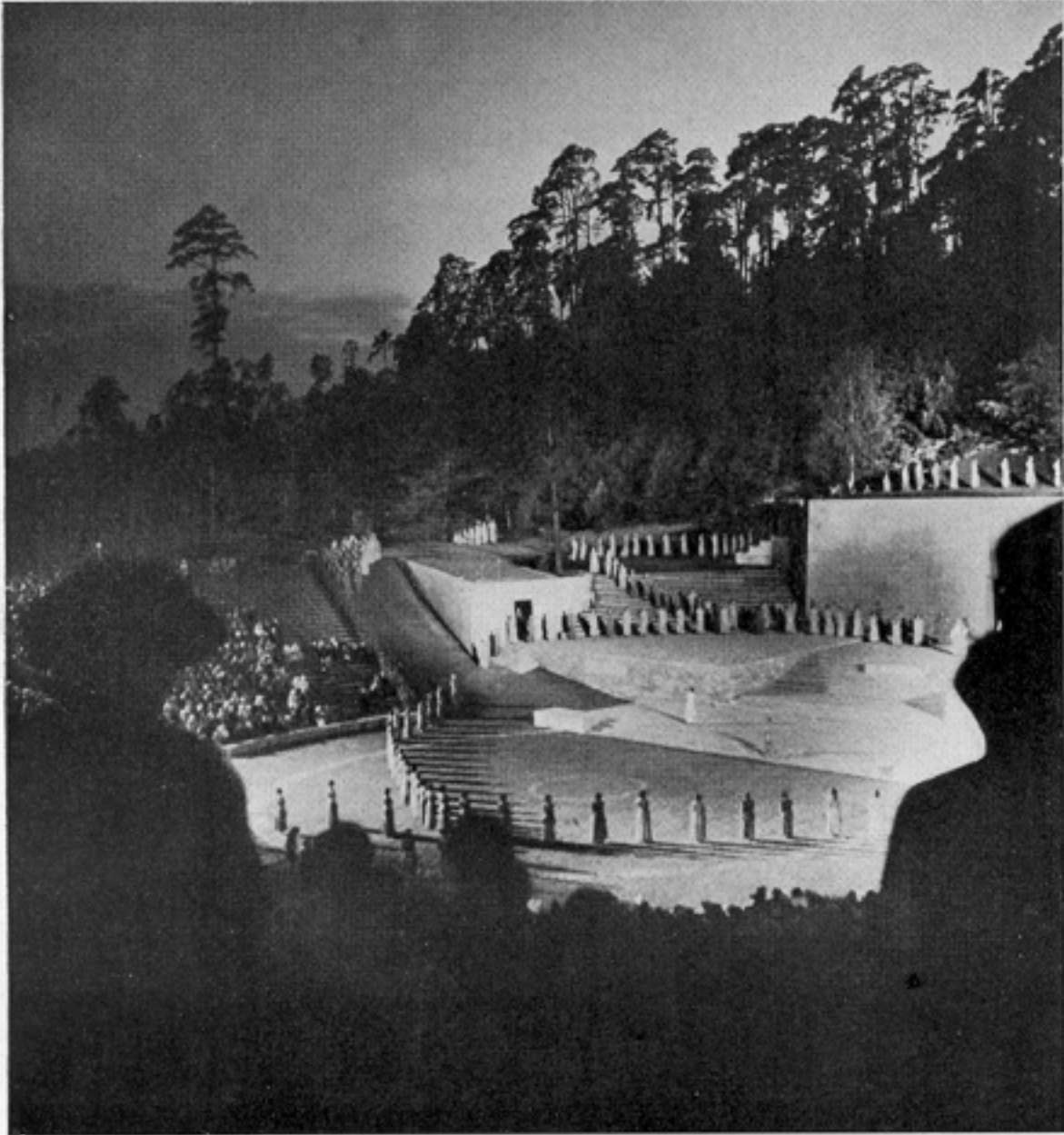
Slave labor was originally a means to impose the might of National Socialism upon inmates. One official of the Reich Ministry of Justice formulated this quite bluntly: "One of the most valuable tools for securing the safe incarceration of the criminal is [to make him] work all day long, from morning to night, every week, month, and year of his imprisonment. This leaves him no time for stupid thoughts [*dumme Gedanken*] and, as an added bonus, helps to raise discipline within the institution."³⁰ To the SS men who supervised the inner camp grounds, slave labor also provided a daily practice in which they could prove their "will" in the face of ontological enemies. "We will pick you up by the scruff of your necks and bring you to silence after our own recipe!" Eicke declared.³¹

“Under the Pharaohs”: Slavery and Monumental Building in Nazi Germany

If slave labor lent a daily routine for a kind of identity politics in the camps, it served a grander purpose at the level of national policymaking. The SS drove its prisoners in carefully selected projects that directly served the regimes political religion.

The SS founded slave-labor corporations in a sector that was neglected precisely because it lay outside the massive rearmament drive begun in 1935/1936. This was the building-supply industry, supposed to serve the architectural monuments of Hitler’s regime. Albert Speer, Hitler’s favorite architect, was the SS’s strongest ally. Since 1934 he had been preparing massive edifices like the Reich Chancellery, the Nürnberg Party Rally Grounds, and the German Stadium.³² Collectively, these were known as the “*Führer Buildings*.” Albert’s brother Hermann Speer remarked that his “little brother” had gotten involved in “that stupid anti-Semitism” during this work. Albert had cleared Jewish apartments blocks around Berlin’s Potsdamer Platz in preparation for the *Führer Buildings*, and Hermann recalled that he let drop: “After all, the Jews were already making bricks under the Pharaohs.” He supposedly suggested to Heinrich Himmler that prisoners might as well be put to work in the same way.³³ Germany’s re-armament drive created a pressing labor shortage. Speer was placing huge orders for bricks, dressed granite, marble, and limestone. These were precisely the kind of raw materials that required labor-intensive production. Both Speer and Himmler sensed that they could use each other to mutual benefit.³⁴

[Illustration 1] {Rittich, 1941 [#192@42](#)}



Werner March — The Dietrich Eckart Stage at the Reich Sports Field, Berlin

The Führer Buildings and others not only monumentalized the regime to its citizens and the rest of the world; they were also the intended sites of the regime's political rituals. They are the edifices that appear so prominently in Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*. The photograph above shows the theatre designed by Werner Marsch for the Olympic complex in Berlin. The architecture consciously amalgamates classicism, religious ritual, and mass political

demonstration. The photographer has embedded the viewer deep within the audience, high above the performance. The collective spectacle subsumes the individual. Any particularity is blurred and flattened in the crowd, while the stage glows luminescent. The amphitheatre evokes the rite of ancient theatre, in which civic devotion, entertainment, and worship are indistinguishable.³⁵

The concentration camps set their prisoners to work on “Führer Buildings” of much grander proportions than this. From the summer of 1936 to the outbreak of war the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps founded no less than five new camps: Sachsenhausen (1936), Buchenwald (1937), Flossenbürg (1938), Mauthausen (1939), and Ravensbrück (1939)—all in conjunction with prison industries. Others, like Neuengamme, Natzweiler, and Gross-Rosen, later grew out of industrial satellite camps established next to quarries or clay pits. Albert Speer’s office, the city of Hamburg, and the German Workers Front all placed advanced orders or extended credit to the SS in these endeavors.



[illustration 2: Model of the German Stadium. The SS founded Natzweiler near rare red granite quarries in order to supply stone desired by Albert Speer for this monumental building. The quarries were chosen despite the fact that they were known to be unprofitable and abandoned by private business. The stadium was to hold over 400,000 visitors and thus be the “largest in the world.” See the city museum of Nürnberg, http://www.museen.nuernberg.de/english/reichsparteitag_e/pages/bauten_e.html]

The SS’s factories displayed all the hallmarks of totalitarian science and technology in their gigantism and technological dilettantism. For example, the SS set out to make brickworks at Sachsenhausen the largest in the world. Technological dandyism quickly manifested itself. The German Earth and Stone Works invested in a newly invented brick press. Albert Speer wrote after the war that “someone turned up with a new system for manufacturing brick” and this nifty machine was the selling point.³⁶ SS business executives themselves testified after the war, “The *Reichsführer* SS Himmler and, following his example, Pohl supported all inventors on principle.”³⁷ Management never bothered to assess the clay deposits near the camp. These proved unsuitable for the machine. In another case, fuel generators were so faulty they threatened to explode.³⁸

By 1944, Himmler's high-tech mesmerization would fuel SS interest in the so-called miracle weapons, the V-1 cruise missile and V-2 rocket. But even these, the most successful of the SS’s ventures, provide further examples of the waste and irrationality of totalitarian science and technology. The V-2 rocket project, to this day the object of admiration among war buffs and technology enthusiasts, inflicted, in Michael Neufeld’s estimation, fewer losses on the enemy in combat than it cost the slave labor force of the Harz Mountains where it was assembled.³⁹

In a consistent pattern, the SS seems to have been driven by a desire to capture the essence of futurism through technology. Historian Modris Eksteins has argued that new technology "was a means of escaping from the confines of reality, a way of liberating the imagination."⁴⁰ The SS posed as the vanguard of National Socialism. Repeatedly striving to associate itself with futuristic technology, the SS sought to demonstrate the will and acquire the means to transform German society, to usher it into the future. What better way than by championing technologies that seemed "cutting edge" or promised, however vaguely, to embody change and progress?

In any case, calculated estimates of how the SS could exploit slave labor rationally are consistently absent from SS records. And since the justification was always "cultural," mismanagement seldom deterred further expansion. One might expect wartime to have reigned in these impulses, but, quite to the contrary, the war drove Himmler onward to more grandiose fantasies than the Führer Buildings, slavery quickly became even more intimately fused to the identity politics of Hitler's "racial state." In like measure, it also became more deadly.

By the fall of 1941, the chief executive of all SS corporate enterprise, Oswald Pohl, announced the "final organizational form" of a new holding company for the management of slave labor. He stressed the "fulfillment of tasks that fall to the *Reichsführer SS* as the Chief of German Police, such as the concentration camp industries," including "tasks ordered by the Reichskommissar for the Reinforcement of Germandom."⁴¹ (Notably absent in Pohl's announcement was any pragmatic concern with armaments production or the war economy.) The Reichskommissar for the Reinforcement of Germandom (RKF), a grandiloquent title that fell to Himmler on 7 October 1939, marked a new departure. Immediately after the conquest of Poland, the Nazi state began to plan a vast ring of Aryan settlements in the conquered territory.

These would “surround” (*einkesseln*) native Polish and Jewish populations in order to “gradually crush them to death economically and biologically.”⁴² In short, the new duties of the RKF constituted a historical mission far more vast than that offered by the Führer Buildings of only a few years before.

Heinrich Himmler announced in the summer of 1942:

The war will have no meaning when, 20 years hence, we have not undertaken a totally German settlement of the occupied territories ... If we do not provide the bricks here, if we do not fill our camps full with slaves--in this room I say the thing very clearly and unambiguously--with work slaves, who, without regard to whatever loss, [are to] build our cities, our towns, our farmsteads, we will not have the money after the long years of war in order to furnish the settlements in such a fashion that truly German men can live in them and can take root in the first generation.⁴³

Himmler demanded the immediate expansion of all SS corporations to meet a minimum of 80% of the SS's settlement construction needs: "If we do not," Himmler warned, "we will never ... get houses for our SS men in the Reich, nor will I, as Reichskommissar for the Reinforcement of Germanism, be able to erect the homes that we will need in order to make the East German."⁴⁴ Pohl sought to expand the SS industrial empire until the end of the war in the name of this racial-supremacist utopia. Slave labor expanded geometrically.

There can be no doubt that this was a “megaproject,” in Loren Graham's terms. The scale is dumbfounding, especially when one considers that the German economy was in the midst of a painful transition to total war. A newly organized SS engineering corps started to establish labor brigades with over 160,000 fresh prisoners: “POW's, Jews, and otherwise incarcerated foreigners, etc.,” as Hans Kammler, the SS's chief of engineers put it

indiscriminately.⁴⁵ Kammler projected a schedule of 20-30 billion Reichsmark, Himmler's own handwritten notes chided his needless parsimony. 80 to 120 billion, Himmler penciled in the margin, would be more appropriate!⁴⁶ By comparison, Germany's total industrial investment in 1942 was only 5.9 billion, a figure only surpassed in 1953. Even in 1955, total industrial investment was no larger than 9.3 billion.⁴⁷

In early 1942 Himmler notified the Inspector of Concentration Camps, "In the coming days I will send ... 100,000 Jews and up to 50,000 Jewesses. In the next few weeks the concentration camps will be assigned great industrial tasks. SS Major General Pohl will inform you of the details."⁴⁸ This was roughly the number of laborers that Pohl and his engineer, Kammler, had called for in their projected SS slave-labor brigades for the construction of Aryan settlements.

In its most megalomaniac dimensions, Himmler's visions of racial imperialism became known as the New Order, its scope limited only by the advance of German arms. This was a megaproject of the first magnitude. The New Order proposed to remake all of occupied central and Eastern Europe, and the SS intended its slave industries to manufacture and build it.

The most infamous concentration camps were founded with this project in mind. In 1940-1941, the SS founded Majdanek near Lublin, Auschwitz in Upper Silesia, and Stutthof near Danzig. From the beginning, these camps integrated slave labor with regional settlement plans. Stutthof alone, the smallest of the three camps, foresaw space for 25,000 prisoners. This alone would have doubled the previous captive labor force of the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps, "with which we can then complete the build-up of settlements in the Gau Danzig-West Prussia," as Himmler put it.⁴⁹

As with many megaprojects, something unreal clung to these plans. The feverish pace of Pohl and Himmler's designs was, ironically, matched only by the rapidity with which Germany's prospects in war began their decline. As already mentioned, the SS laid out its "New Order" amidst a general transition to total war, and eventually war mobilization could not help but redirect the SS's industrial empire to the more pragmatic demands of armament production. Nevertheless, the SS simply diverted its slave labor pool to new megaprojects that arose in the total war economy.

In late 1941, the Inspector of Concentration Camps had remained separate from Pohl's offices. After March 3rd, 1942, however, Himmler himself ordered Pohl to take over the concentration camps and convert them into a slave labor preserve for the German war effort. Pohl became the counterpart to Lavrenty Beria in the USSR. Both were appointed to orient slave labor toward national defense. Pohl greeted this new initiative with enthusiasm: "... the fetters of discoordinated administration must be shed ... and will be hailed everywhere as progress."⁵⁰

Yet pragmatism did not carry the day. If the racial supremacist utopia of the "New Order" had to be postponed, it nevertheless continued to preoccupy the minds of SS slave labor managers. Like many other enterprises, SS corporations struggled to find war contracts to prevent the armaments ministry from shutting down their factories and transferring their capital equipment to more vital sectors. In doing so, the SS sought to preserve its capacity in order to reconvert to a "normal" peace economy after total war ended. The SS still wished to return to its settlement fantasies, and even referred to these as the "peace building program" or "peace buildings" (*Friedensbauten*). In the summer of 1943, the chief of SS engineers wrote to Himmler about the "gigantic program after the conclusion of war." The SS had to secure „the

preconditions for a quick victory“ in order, simultaneously, to advance „in this way the facilities of the Waffen-SS for Peace Work [*Friedensarbeit*].“⁵¹

Pohl’s office negotiated steadily with the armaments ministry in the fall of 1942 over allocations of prisoners to armaments factories, but only half of the SS’s negotiations dealt with war production. The other half dealt with ongoing efforts to build up the SS’s vertically integrated construction combine. Pohl’s effusiveness on this topic far overreached any excitement over participation in armaments factories. “We are ready!” he wrote to Himmler, “I have discussed the organization of Building Brigades [with Speer’s office] ... In our Building Brigades I see the beginnings of our later Peace Building Brigades that will develop and build. It will Work!”⁵² The German Earth and Stone Works would supply roofing tiles and bricks for bomb-damaged cities; the German Equipment Works, another SS company, would provide window and door frames. In this way the SS could contribute to the war effort in the short term while building up the capacity to embark upon settlement construction after “final victory.”

Private industry and Speer’s ministry alike came to rely upon the SS as slave labor lord. The chief SS manager of labor allocations, Gerhard Maurer, received glowing praise. “It has been reported to me that we owe the smooth operation of this action [the SS Labor Action] essentially to your competence and cooperation,” wrote the head of German aircraft production in the spring of 1943.⁵³ Hans Kammler, chief of SS engineers, also put the Building Brigades of the SS to work building underground armaments factories, among them the tunnels in the Harz mountains where the V-2 rockets were manufactured. These efforts took off in 1943 after bombing raids prompted Hitler to demand gigantic, modern production lines within invulnerable underground factories. These were christened the "Great Building Projects" (Großbauvorhaben). Each was supposed to provide 600,000 square meters.

This again demonstrated a great deal of continuity with the SS's previous megaprojects. Hitler's architectural policies had progressed from one gargantuan, unrealistic program to the next. In the 1930's it had been the Führer Buildings. In 1939 the Reichskommissar for the Reinforcement of Germandom had dreamed spending in the range of 50-80 percent of Germany's gross domestic product on Aryan settlement construction. Now the "impregnable" Great Buildings took on apocalyptic proportions as the Führer's last architectural fantasy.⁵⁴

There can be no doubt that these were megaprojects. Hermann Göring's Luftwaffe alone demanded over 100,000 slaves, "in order to secure the development of self-contained air-craft fabrication of the most modern kind."⁵⁵ As already noted, even the most successful, the V-2 rockets, must, in the end, count as an egregious misallocation of resources. Each consumed up to six times the resources to build as more practical military hardware like fighter planes. The missiles delivered only 1000 kg of explosives and were not as accurate as the SCUD missiles deployed by Iraq in the first Gulf War.⁵⁶ The V-2 was much feared—not least because of the futuristic nature of the technology. This had drawn the SS to the "miracle" project in the first place. But the missile had no strategic value.⁵⁷ A disconnect from reality adhered to many more mundane aspects of these projects as well. The underground factory halls Hitler called for to produce the V-2 rocket and other "miracle" weapons required, as originally projected, more cement than existed in the entire German building economy.⁵⁸ In the end, however, the Great Buildings were one more experiment in the abject irrationality toward which totalitarian regimes so consistently incline.

Slave Labor and Genocide

I would like to conclude with the example of Auschwitz. Here the SS set slave labor to work on the most gruesome megaproject of the regime, the Holocaust itself. Unique to

Auschwitz the methods of genocide were technology-intensive and designed as a modern factory, and operated with slave labor. At other death camps, Jews were forced to aid their murderers, but these other camps were ad hoc and improvised. They might be considered precedents for Auschwitz's killing factory, but they were not designed by professional engineers. Only Auschwitz combined all the hallmarks of totalitarian science and technology in a "megaproject" of ethnic cleansing. I will attempt to show that it synthesized all the attributes of totalitarian slavery I have sought to illustrate here.

Birkenau, where the gas chambers and crematoria of Auschwitz were located, owed its existence to the most cherished megaproject of the Third Reich. Himmler had ordered the expansion camp of Birkenau in September of 1941 as a labor depot for the SS's projected slave brigades for the New Order. First projected to 50,000, then 100,000, 125,000, and finally 150,000 prisoners, Birkenau was expected to be the labor pool for Aryan settlement construction in the east. All told, fantasies of demographic engineering called for upwards of 850,000 slave laborers over 25 years.⁵⁹

Simultaneously and intimately connected to this megaproject. The Auschwitz complex quickly evolved into a center for extermination. No later than October of 1941, RKF planners, SS Einsatzgruppen, and other SS elites had merged the megaproject of Aryan settlement with an equally massive, labor-intensive project of ethnic cleansing. The crematoria and gas chambers of Birkenau were only one part of a larger design to dispense with the populations of Europe in a grand demographic shell game. Interdisciplinary teams of sociologists, historians, geographers, architects, and policemen worked together to remove unwanted populations from the East to prepare the way for German settlement. Jews were by no means the only targets of this social

engineering, but they were pursued the most ruthlessly. They were also, not coincidentally, the victims with the fewest resources to defend themselves.

Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the Reich Security Main Office, offered one of the most frank statements that syncretized slave labor and genocide in the well-known Wannsee protocol of early 1942:

... in the course of the final solution, the Jews will enter the Labor Action in a suitable way in the East. In large work gangs, separated by sex, Jews capable of work will build roads. During this work, a large number will doubtless perish due to natural cause.

The possible final remnant will doubtless represent a natural selection and be that part most capable of resistance. It will have to be handled accordingly, for if these were to be set free, they would act as a the seed of a new Jewish revival (see the experience of history.)⁶⁰

The fusion of genocide and dreams of Aryan settlement are evident throughout the occupied East. For example, the three death camps founded in the Lublin District known as Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka all originated under the leadership of the SS and Police Leader Odilo Globocnik. Himmler had also bestowed upon him special responsibility for organizing the first SS settlements of the New Order in this same district. The close relationship between the New Order and ethnic cleansing can also be seen in Globocnik staff. In August, 1941 he divided the functions of his office into five main departments. Three dealt directly with some aspect of the New Order, the settlement of “ethnic Germans” and the planning of SS model villages.

Globocnik charged one officer in particular, Obersturmführer Gustav Hanelt, with the “overall scientific planning of the SS and Police Strongholds and the cleansing of the Jews [Judenbereinigung, emph. mine].”⁶¹ The SS experienced this as a historical mission of the first

order. At a conference convened by Hanelt's "scientific" institute in the SS Community Building in Lublin, Globocnik's immediate superior declared it "the overall greatest task that the German people has to master for all future times in order to become a world power."⁶² The SS also dedicated special attention to the aesthetic, design of settlements and community buildings and one architect of the Oswald Pohl's engineering corps gave a presentation on "Questions of German Building Design in the East."⁶³ Thus Lublin had become the focus of a dense network of individuals planning both the murder of Jews in the East and the utopian expansion of "German blood" to fill the void. By mid-March of 1942, as the killing systems of Belzec were being tested, Hanelt declared the "Jewish Question" to have "found its conclusion."⁶⁴

Historian Götz Aly and political scientist Susanne Heim have demonstrated similar networks throughout German occupied Europe. These combined *genocidaires* and demographic engineers. In some districts of the occupied eastern territories, Aly has been able show that deportations of Jews and Poles correlate directly with the scheduled in-migration of "ethnic Germans," whom the SS was moving west from the territories of the Soviet Union.⁶⁵

Auschwitz was another such hub of settlement and genocide. The region around it quickly evolved into a chosen location for model communities. Historian Sybille Steinbacher notes in Auschwitz, like Lublin, "The highpoint of mass murder, it is evident, was at the same time the high point of hypertrophic 'Germanization' activity in Auschwitz."⁶⁶

Only at Auschwitz, however, did the SS amalgamate its demographic megaproject with totalitarian science and technology in the act of genocide itself. Other killing camps of the east were decidedly ad hoc. Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka, for example, were built of locally scavenged materials. Even at Auschwitz, the sordid business of industrial killing began more as the work of improvisers than modern industrial management. In the spring and summer of 1942,

the staff of the Political Department converted two small farmhouses, in the Birch woods behind Birkenau. A detail of prisoner masons bricked up the windows; paper tape sufficed to make the doors air tight. The first gassings at Auschwitz in September of 1941 had been even more of a slap dash affair. Höss's adjutant Karl Fritsch threw some gas into the basement of Block 11 in the main camp in order to kill several hundred Soviet prisoners of war who had been forced into the various rooms that the SS Political Department used as cells there.⁶⁷ It is important to note, however, that the results were devastating. Rudimentary methods sufficed to kill hundreds of thousands of people.

The massive gas chambers of Birkenau differed markedly from their inception. Here the SS indulged a penchant for what Paul Josephson calls "display value" in the very buildings Jewish slaves were forced to murder their brethren. Architectural historians Paul Jaskot and Robert Jan van Pelt have demonstrated the concentration camps' investment in monumental features.⁶⁸ It is little known that the SS also imparted architectural flourishes to the Birkenau crematoria as well. One blueprint records that the doors and windows were to be "lined with sandstone!"⁶⁹ The drafter was excited enough to include the exclamation point in the original. The Jewish pathologist Miklos Nyiszli, forced to work in Crematoria II, also described the lavish "modern" autopsy rooms of Birkenau's crematoria: "... in the center ... stood a dissecting table of polished marble, equipped with several drainage channels. At the edge of the table a basin with nickel taps had been installed; against the wall, three porcelain sinks."⁷⁰ If one considers that the crematoria and gas chambers were built of massive brick and stone masonry, it is hard to escape the impression that the SS lavished some of the attention upon them otherwise reserved for Führer Buildings. Their cost and complexity distinguished them from all others. They were

not merely functional buildings. They were monuments to a fetishism for modern factory technology, its futurism.

The unique, technology-intensive means of genocide at Auschwitz-Birkenau have preoccupied the post-war imagination ever since, namely that of our nightmares. Auschwitz has come to embody, for some, those dreams of Western rationality that inevitably beget monsters. But a ghoulish preoccupation with the “factory of death” at Auschwitz has actually obscured the fact that these crematoria never actually worked as the SS intended.

It is also little known that the SS’s ad hoc systems, not the crematoria of Birkenau, proved cheaper, more durable, and, in this macabre sense, more “efficient.” Although the engineers of Auschwitz readied the first blueprints for the crematoria in October and November of 1941, construction did not start until June of 1942. Shortages delayed their completion well into March of 1943. Even then, the crematoria broke down within months of their first operation. The chimney flues caved in. By the winter of 1942/1943, the SS had been forced to go over to burning bodies in open pyres rather than in the massive banks of furnaces laid out like industrial kilns in Birkenau’s crematoria.

If Auschwitz’s Political Department seems to have resorted to ad hoc methods out of impatience, it had no problem quickly generating techniques that worked with devastating effectiveness. Had “function” taken precedence over the aesthetics of “form” in the genocide, the SS would have had no need for the crematoria of Birkenau to their completion. The SS did never require the over-engineered and costly, factory-style gas chambers and crematoria of Birkenau. They desired them, and that is what brooks explanation.

There is every indication that the SS celebrated its novel invention and that this enthusiasm was by no means confined to the circle of the technicians or engineers who

developed it. Something close to an exuberance for the modern technics of genocide seems to have surrounded the crematoria of Birkenau. One survivor of the SS architectural bureaus spoke of the “feverish work to find a technical solution to the application of poison gas for mass murder.”⁷¹ Another recalled an SS man describing the complex of Birkenau as “The most modern one that can be built in Europe.”⁷² The SS led tours of the facilities and visitors timed the process with stop watches. Visitors fetishized what one called, “The most modern measures which make possible the completion of the Führer’s orders here [Birkenau] in the shortest time and without a great stir.”⁷³

Typical of totalitarian science and technology, the SS sought to distinguish the ‘modernity’ of its technology, its service to higher causes (“the Führer’s orders”), and its unprecedented size. In 1933, there were only 152 crematoria ovens in all of Germany, although professional literature was touting this method as “modern equipment” for “new cemeteries.”⁷⁴ The Auschwitz complex had no less than 49. In the “Greater German Reich,” which included Austria and the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia, there were about 80,000 cremations carried out during the whole of 1939. One SS engineer calculated the capacity of Birkenau’s crematoria as nearly 5,000 in a single day.

One other aspect of Birkenau makes it a singular example of totalitarian slavery, science, and technology. The SS forced slaves to run the crematoria and gas chambers. Jews were forced to serve as the blue-collar workers of the Holocaust. This work had as much to do with the humiliation of the Jewish victims—and, simultaneously, the assertion of mastery and power among their SS slave drivers—as it ever did with “bureaucratic efficiency” and the like. This is at odds with interpretations of the Holocaust that have enjoyed wide popularity ever since the end of the war, interpretations elaborated in Hannah Arendt’s biography of the dismal Adolf

Eichmann or Stanley Milgram's social psychology experiments. Historians and social scientists have been preoccupied with how industrial-bureaucratic systems can induce "ordinary men" to override their scruples and commit murder. Many have assumed that the techniques of murder at Auschwitz actually served this purpose: to distance killers from their crime, to override a supposed revulsion for their crime.

But our preoccupation with the mentality of the killers has caused us to lose sight of the truly unwilling executioners: the slave laborers themselves, forced to work in the Special Details (Sonderkommandos) of the crematoria. Orlando Patterson defines dishonor and dehumanization as the essence of all slave systems, there can be little doubt that the Special Details experience this in one of its most extreme forms. The Nazi regime put its ontological enemies to work on the transformation of Europe into a racial utopia. The substance of their labor was not just murder; it was the extirpation of the very existence of their people.

We know relatively little about the Auschwitz's Special Details, numbering between 400-1200 men at any given time, because most of them perished. Their labor was divided according to task and managed by prisoner-foremen (Kapos, in the slang of the camps) who answered in turn to non-commissioned SS officers. Accounts of the Special Details vary, but some few did survive to write memoirs or testified in post-war trials. Many other survivors knew those who worked in the Special Details. Still more observed them from afar.

By all accounts this work was so excruciatingly humiliating and dehumanizing that many became so dejected and depressed that they died shortly after the SS selected them for the Special Details. Many also refused to work and were killed directly. One Greek Jew who survived the Special Details stated frankly that he could not take the work. "I used to have to close my eyes and pull the people out [of the gas chamber]." He also remembered that some

people simply gave up the will to live.⁷⁵ One survivor concealed his experience after liberation, something that suggests that the humiliation continued long after the war was over, “I was ashamed. People thought we helped the killing, calling us murderers...”⁷⁶ This acute shame was constantly with them, and another survivor recalled being most ashamed when he realized how inured he had become to the work: “We would eat near the bodies. I don't understand today how I ate near the bodies. I didn't feel anything ... Why didn't God help?”⁷⁷ Members of the Special Details often came across the bodies of their acquaintances, friends, and family among the dead. They themselves lived under the constant threat of liquidation, which happened on a regular basis.⁷⁸

Salmen Lowenthal, who did not survive, buried his notebooks in the hopes that they would bring the true nature of Auschwitz to light after his death. This voice from beyond the grave, from a time when industrialized murder went on day after day, also conveys a sense of being completely erased as a human being: “We were lost to such a degree that none of us knew what he was doing and how, and whatever was happening to him. We lost ourselves so much that we were as if lifeless. Driven on we ran like automatons, not knowing whither we were running, what for and what we were doing.”⁷⁹ It is hard to imagine a more extreme state of what Patterson describes as dishonor than this.

If we view Birkenau as a slave system with identity politics at its core rather than treating it as some kind of abstract “total” system of control or impenetrably banal bureaucracies, the other side of the master-slave divide also appears in a new light. The SS men who drove the Special Details to their work seemed to have derived sport from the humiliation of their victims. The very “efficiency” of extermination quickly became the substance of mirth, the substance of what philosopher Jonathan Glover has called the “Cold Joke”:

The cold joke mocks the victims. It is an added cruelty and it is also a display of power: we can put you through hell merely for our mild amusement. It adds emphasis to the difference between 'us' and 'them': we the interrogators are a group who share a joke at the expense of you the victims. It is also a display of hardness: we are so little troubled by feelings of sympathy that we can laugh at your torment.⁸⁰

When SS men spoke amongst themselves, back stage so to speak, Filip Müller, a survivor of the Special Details, recalled that they gloated: “[They] were checking by their watches the time it took for the noise inside the gas chamber to cease, cracking macabre jokes while they were waiting, like 'The water in the showers must be very hot to make them scream so loudly.’” Thereafter, "with some considerable pride" as Müller recounts, one of them exclaimed to subordinates, “Well, you two, have you got it now? That's the way to do it!”⁸¹

The industrialized nature of the process, in other words, provided a technique by which SS men projected their sense of superiority, another way in which they acted out the difference between themselves, as masters of “modern” technology, and prisoners, forced to serve it against their will. The killing center of Auschwitz-Birkenau displayed all the traits of totalitarian slavery that I have sought to emphasize here:

- 1) The slaves of Auschwitz were set to work on a megaproject of vast proportions, the New Order. This included the construction of “Aryan” settlements and the destruction of ethnic communities as ontological enemies throughout the East.
- 2) In the gas chambers and crematoria of Birkenau, this megaproject included an indulgence in scientific and technological dandyism so typical of totalitarian science and technology. These were overly complex and betrayed time lavished on an aesthetization of murder unique to Auschwitz. This has been

largely overlooked because the modern factory was what appealed aesthetically to the SS. Hardly the object of “rational calculation” or “functional efficiency,” the waste of time and cost this entailed bespoke the messianic technocracy so typical of totalitarian regimes.

- 3) Last, the Special Details evinced all the hallmarks of slavery in the service of political religion. It served the abject humiliation of the slave and the exaltation of the master in political religion of National Socialism.

Conclusion: Political Religion and Slavery in the 20th Century

If the Holocaust still counts as unique, it is nevertheless difficult to find a totalitarian slave regime that has not embarked upon some form of human engineering akin to it. Totalitarian states attempt the near total transformation of nature, in which they subsume the soft clay of humanity itself.⁸² Typically the authors of such projects attach labels to them like “new order” (hardly original to National Socialism), “great leap,” or the like. These announce the alteration of historical time itself. Another label frequently associated with them is “modernization,” invoked likewise in the name of bringing humankind into the light of history’s ultimate end phase. “Modernization” theory is perhaps more of an economic than a political religion of the 20th century, but there can be little doubt that it is capable of generating some of the same horror. Himmler referred to Sachsenhausen, where the SS’s gigantic brick factory was located, as “a completely new, modern concentration camp, expandable at any time, capable of securing the state against national enemies both in peacetime as well as in the case of war mobilization.”⁸³

Another example of the totalitarian potential of millenary “modernizers” might be Indonesia. Suharto’s regime, which came to power amidst much bloodshed in 1965, has often

been granted a “pass” as non-totalitarian because its “elites have not inflicted excessive hardship on the masses in pursuit of collective national goals, unlike the suffering caused by Soviet collectivization, China's Cultural Revolution, the partition of India on religious grounds, or the tribal massacres in some new African nations.”⁸⁴ The fall of Suharto has led many to take a closer look.⁸⁵ Suharto’s “New Order” and a “Five Year Development Plan” led to the same phenomenon from which many have wished to distance his regime.

In East Timor, in particular, the military embarked on resettlement policy, used concentration camps to remove Timorese citizens to lowland areas, and organized slave labor brigades in order to transform society. This proceeded hand in hand with genocide in a politically caused famine. The Timorese were prevented from farming for their own subsistence. Meanwhile, the regime put people to work building roads and farming cash crops for the enrichment of the military.

A vision of modernity guided these efforts and shared a predilection for technology and futurism with early Soviet doctrine or the SS’s own vision of “modernization.” One social scientist, who surveyed leading Indonesian economists in the 1970s, found that the overwhelming majority believed modernization necessitated the transformation of society, politics, and culture. They believed new technology was the key. Their jargon bordered on the statolatry so common to totalitarian regimes (e.g. bandying about phrases like “the state’s clear expression of practical priorities for guiding society”). Likewise Indonesian economists, many close advisors of the military, believed modernization would modify “counterproductive mental-cultural ways.”⁸⁶

Three years after this article appeared, Indonesia embarked upon a campaign of "encirclement and annihilation" in East Timor. Similar to the Holocaust, Indonesia enlisted

slave laborers to cleanse the regime of its ontological enemies. By the early 1980s, the military formed chains of Timorese citizens and forced them to march the length and breadth of the island to flush out bush fighters. Along the way considerable numbers of civilians died of starvation and arbitrary brutality. The military did not bother to provide them with food or shelter.

This campaign went hand in hand with the development of settlements. Timorese were forced to farm cash crops like coffee, cloves, cumin and other goods. The profits went to the military. Although the Portuguese colonists had introduced forced labor to East Timor for some of these same ends, the rationale was now far more radical. As historian John Taylor notes: "The military planned to use ... resettlement as a basis for a massive economic and social transformation ..."⁸⁷ This involved the founding of "model plantations" to contribute to the Five-Year Development Plan, which also began in 1979.

Although the clear-cut pursuit of greed clearly played a role, this plan also had a ring eerily similar to settlement campaigns that the National Socialists planned but were prevented from implementing, or that Stalin did implement in the collectivization drive. The Indonesian state forcibly resettled Timorese peasants in "development villages." New farms were to "set examples of modern agricultural methods for the local populations."⁸⁸ In especially desirable regions, the state arranged for the in-migration of Indonesians, accompanied by efforts to introduce "modern" irrigation practices, although the regions in question had already had successful irrigation farming for some time.⁸⁹ The collapse of Suharto's regime amidst corruption and economic debacle also recalls the outcome of the Soviet Union's much grander but similar demographic experiments.

A much better known example, one that combines nationalism, communism, and modernization in one, is Pol Pot's Cambodia. In the late 1970s, the Khmer Rouge largely

depopulated Phnom Penh, one of the only even remotely industrialized places in that overwhelmingly rural country. Urban residents found themselves defined as “New People,” ontological enemies whose very existence threatened the success of Red Kampuchea. Forcibly removed to rural areas, they had to build, often by hand and always at a great cost in life, massive hydraulic works. These, in turn, were justified in the name of the rapid modernization of the country.

“We must create the resources and character to leap forward,” reads the central document of this Plan.⁹⁰ History had to be brought to its full flowering with breathtaking speed: “Socialism must be built as rapidly as possible, taking us from a backward agriculture to a modern one in from five to ten years, and from an agricultural base to an industrial one in fifteen to twenty years.”⁹¹ By 1980, the Khmer Rouge’s Plan called for the near 100% control of all water, subjecting nature itself to party discipline. Like Stalin and Hitler before him, Pol Pot expected untold productivity gains: three tons of rice per hectare instead of the traditional average of one.⁹²

In the name of a “modern” Cambodia, the regime also seriously discussed building fertilizer factories, coal mines, oil fields, smelting steel, although no coal, iron, or petroleum deposits are known to exist in Cambodia. The reality: the dams and embankments for irrigation farming usually collapsed shortly after they were built.⁹³ In this, Cambodia recapitulated the history of the White Sea Canal, the brickworks of the German Earth and Stone Works, or, for that matter, the Crematoria of Birkenau.

All these regimes set about some form of the instauration of being; they were political religions of fundamental ontology.⁹⁴ The missions they proclaimed took the form, if not the substance, of the world’s historical religions. In the name of completing the logical destiny

ordained by history, each proclaimed a kind of politically perfected heaven on earth to be in reach. As one comparative study of genocide notes, "Only the terminology changed: heretics became reactionaries; sinners became enemies; and conversion became reeducation. What did not change was that ... the holy grail of a perfected future justified any means of persecution."⁹⁵ All generated "megaprojects," which in turn generated a demand for slave labor.

Totalitarian slavery occurs when ontological enemies are forced to serve—not merely the practical ends of the state—but a boundless, world historical mission. Enemies are attacked not so much due to their actual resistance or even due to their thought or opinions. Their very being is supposed to create a state of civil war and impede the conclusion of history's logical course. Slave systems put them to work against this "nature." This differs markedly from other modern slave systems, not least in its hostility to economic rationale. Typically the slavery of political religions puts ontological enemies to work on works of startling hubris and unreality. These, on the other hand, invariably count as the most sacred, highest priorities of the state.

National Socialism evolved projects ranging from monumental building schemes to vast demographic engineering projects to a last ditch effort to move war production underground into "impregnable" factories. I have also tried to show that the SS accomplished the Holocaust itself by forcing its ontological enemies to work in a system of totalitarian science and technology. The SS forced Jews into Special Details, which had to liquidate their very brethren in uniquely designed gas chambers. Last, the technology of genocide was a source of pride; it imparted a sense of superiority to its masters and abject humiliation to its slaves. The crematoria were smaller but no less typical of other megaprojects, merely a piece of a vast social engineering project whose dimensions we will thankfully never know. Defeat put an end to it, but the Holocaust was only its beginning.

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¹ Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982: 38-45.

² Burleigh, Michael. "Political Religion and Social Evil." *Totalitarian movements and Political Religions* 3 (2002): 1-17. Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (New York, 2000): 1-23. Hannah Arendt, *Part Three of Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1951).

³ Himmler to Oswald Pohl, 23 Mar. 42, BAK NS19/2065. For Stalin's similar expectation see **Applebaum**

⁴ Although he does not present it in this way, Richard White's treatment of the Columbia River might clearly be considered the history of a megaproject in Graham's terms, to name just one example: **Richard White, Organic Machine** or compare the aesthetics, labor, and scale of the Hoover dam: **David Nye, American Technological Sublime**

⁵ {Josephson, 1996 #564@3, see introduction in general and pp. 78, 106, } Loren Graham, *What Have We Learned about Science and Technology from the Russian Experience?* (Stanford, 1998): 98-9.

⁶ Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven, 1957).

⁷ Loren Graham, *The Ghost of the Executed Engineer: Technology and the Fall of the Soviet Union* (Cambridge, 1993). Graham, *What Have We Learned?* : 104-10, Paul Josephson, "'Projects of the Century' in Soviet History: Large-Scale Technologies from Lenin to Gorbachev," *Technology and Culture* 36 (1995, 1995), Paul Josephson, *Totalitarian Science and Technology* (Atlantic Highlands, 1996), Thomas Zeller and Paul Josephson, "The Transformation of Nature under Hitler and Stalin," in *Science and Ideology: A Comparative History*, ed. Mark Walker (New York, 2003). Nicolas Werth, "A State against its People: Violence, Repression, and Terror in the Soviet Union," in *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*, ed. et al. Stephane Courtois (Cambridge, 1999).: 203-13, 231.

⁸ Josephson, *Totalitarian Science and Technology*: 106.

⁹ I owe this term to Matthew Payne, for which I thank him.

¹⁰ Werth, "A State against its People," 124.

¹¹ Michael Burleigh, "Political Religion and Social Evil," *Totalitarian movements and Political Religions* 3 (2002, 2002): 13.

12 {Troost, 1938 [#183@first quote, 5](#), 132}

13 That planning, rationality, technology, or the Enlightenment caused the Holocaust or Stalinism's running amok is an argument whose popularity seems never to wane. Scarcely original, it has been popularly resurrected in some form almost every decade since the Second World War. One can track its lineage from Jacques Ellul and Martin Heidegger to Zygmunt Bauman and James Scott. See, for example, Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society* (New York, 1964). Martin Heidegger, *Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge: 1. Einblick in das was ist Bremer Vorträge 1949* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994): 1-81; Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, ed. William Lovit (trans.) (New York, 1977). Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, 1989). James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, 1998). Rational calculation has been a part of modern slave systems, and no doubt will continue wherever the practice persists in a globalized economy. A good review can be found in the introduction to David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress* (Oxford, 1984). The lively debate among economic historians over the contribution of slavery to the industrial revolution demonstrates that, at the very least, slavery is quite compatible with modern economies. Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton, 2000). Still, this cannot account for what is unique in totalitarian slavery or the boundlessness viciousness it generates.

14 Compare Wolfgang Sofsky, *Die Ordnung des Terrors: Das Konzentrationslager* (Frankfurt am Main, 1993); Gerhard Armanski, *Maschinen des Terrors. Das Lager (KZ und GULAG) in der Moderne* (Münster, 1993).

15 Sofsky, *Die Ordnung des Terrors: Das Konzentrationslager*: 33.

16 Here and below I follow the analysis of Karin Orth, *Das System der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager. Eine politische Organisationsgeschichte* (See previous entry.), esp. 32-33.

17 See Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State 1933-1945* (Cambridge, 1991).

18 In the case of race-based regimes, as Ben Kiernan notes, "The 'rejection of the individual in favor of the race' did not privilege individuals for their membership in a preferred race but on the contrary it made them vulnerable to measures to protect it." Ben Kiernan, "Twentieth-Century Genocides: Underlying Ideological Themes from Armenia to East Timor," in *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, ed. Ben Kiernan and Robert Gellately (Cambridge, 2003): 32. Stalinism, in which race never played the same role, still notoriously degraded the condition of Soviet workers—in the name of a workers' utopia.

19 Reichsminister im Auftrag, Dr. Timm to Pohl (as Ministerialdirektor), 2 Jan. 40 and Schnellbrief from Schulze-Fielitz (OT), 5 Dec. 39 and Chef HAHB to Neubauleitung Flossenbürg, 27 Nov. 39, BAK NS4/34 Fl. I would like to thank Paul Jaskot for pointing me to the BAK NS4 Flossenbürg collection and sharing his own research notes with me.

20 Maurer's memo to Kommandanten 27 Jul. 43 "Bewachung der Häftlinge," BAP PL5: 42053, under the header of Office D1, thus probably in cooperation with Arthur Liebehenschel. This included new "Lagerordnung für Häftlinge," NO-517.

21 Walter Salpeter to Reichsfinanzministerium Dr. Assezar, 5 February 1941, "Steuerpflicht der DEST," NA: T-976, Roll 25.

22 From January of 1939, cited after Burleigh and Wippermann, *The Racial State*, 175.

23 Pohl to Reichskommissar für die Preisbildung, 19 Sep. 41, "Erklärung nach §22 KWVO der dem VuWHA angeschlossenen Gesellschaften," T-976/3.

24 Pohl to Reichskommissar für die Preisbildung, 19 Sep. 41, "Erklärung nach §22 KWVO der dem VuWHA angeschlossenen Gesellschaften," T-976/3.

25 Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge, 1982): 77-101.

26 From "Der Hoheitsträger," a journal circulated among Nazi leadership circles. Cited in Jeremy Naokes, "Leaders of the People? The Nazi Party and German Society," *Journal of Contemporary History* 39 (2004, 2004): 203-4.

27 Richard Bessel, "The Nazi Capture of Power," *Journal of Contemporary History* 39 (2004), Richard Evans, *In Hitler's Shadow: West German Historians and the Attempt to Escape from the Nazi Past* (New York, 1989).

- 28 Tom Segev, *Die Soldaten des Bösen. Zur Geschichte der KZ-Kommandanten* (Reinbeck bei
Hamburg, 1992): 127. See also Testimony of Oswald Pohl, Protocol: 1327-9.
- 29 Theodor Eicke, 1 Oct. 33, "Disziplinar- u. Strafordnung für das Gefangenenlager (Dachau)" and
"Dienstvorschriften für die Begleitpersonen und Gefangenenbewachung," BAP, PL5: 42053.
- 30 Staatssekretär des RJM-Berlin, Dr. Jur. Roland Freisler, "Arbeitseinsatz im Strafvollzug" (Title
Article for 13 September, 1940), *Deutsche Justiz* 102 (1940), 1021-25.
- 31 Theodor Eicke, 1 Oct. 33, "Disziplinar- u. Strafordnung für das Gefangenenlager (Dachau)" and
"Dienstvorschriften für die Begleitpersonen und Gefangenenbewachung," BAP, PL5: 42053. Hans-
Günter Richardi, *Schule der Gewalt. Das Konzentrationslager Dachau 1933-34* (München,
1983): 119-54.
- 32 Thüringen's regional Innenminister, Hillmuth Gommlich, from 24 April 1937, quoted in Paul
Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The SS, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building
Economy* (New York, 2000): 21. Here and below I follow much of Jaskot's analysis.
- 33 Jan Van der Vat, *The Good Nazi: The Life and Lies of Albert Speer* (New York, 1997): 352. Der
Spiegel published articles on this family feud in the early 1970s. Enno Georg, *Die
Wirtschaftlichen Unternehmungen der SS* (1963): 44-45. For sound analysis see Jaskot,
"Architectural Policy": 43ff and 47. Brenner, "Der 'Arbeitseinsatz' der KZ-Häftlinge in den
Außenlagern Flossenbürg," 682-706. See also Mumenthey and Salpeter, 31 Jul. 41,
"Geschäftsbericht der DEST 1940," T-976/26: 1-516.
- 34 Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The SS, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building
Economy*: 15-19.
- 35 On the failure of such political rituals in the Enlightenment and some insights into their terrifying
success in other regimes, see Mona Ozouf, *Festival and the French Revolution* (Cambridge,
1988).
- 36 Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich, Memoirs* (New York, 1970): 144.
- 37 "Mindener Bericht," (written by WVHA officers in Allied captivity in Minden, probably,
Mumenthey, Volk, and Hoffmann) reprinted in Walter Naasner, *SS-Wirtschaft und SS-
Verwaltung. 'Das SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt und die unter seiner Dienstaufsicht
stehenden wirtschaftlichen Unternehmungen' und weitere Dokumente* (Düsseldorf:, 1998)..
- 38 See chapter 3 of Michael Thad Allen, *The Business of Genocide: The SS, Slave Labor, and the
Concentration Camps* (Chapel Hill, 2002).
- 39 Michael Neufeld, *The Rocket and the Reich: Peenemünde and the Coming of the Ballistic Missile
Era* (Cambridge, 1995): 260-5
- 40 Modris Eksteins, Rites of Spring: The Great War and the
Birth of the Modern Age (New York: Anchor Books,
1989): 322. Eksteins focuses on the technological
means of the Holocaust as its quintessential
modernity. See pp. 320-1.
- 41 Dr. Leo Volk, signed by Pohl, 4 September 1941, "Stichworte zu den Ausführungen des
Gruppenführers für die Ansprache bei der Amtschefsitzung," NA: T-976, Roll 35. See also, Volk
to Pohl, 1 Sep. 41, "Umorganisation der Ämter," T-976, Roll 35.
- 42 SS officer quoted in Josef Marszalek, *Majdanek Konzentrationslager Lublin* (Warsaw, 1984): 18.
- 43 Himmler's speech on 9 Jun. 42, cited after Götz Aly, *'Endlösung' Vokerverschiebung und der
Mord an den europäischen Juden* (Frankfurt am Main, 1995): 292.
- 44 Himmler reply to Pohl and Kammler, 31 January 1942, BAK: NS19: 2065. Note here again the
total absence of preoccupation with SS armaments factories.
- 45 NO-1292, Kammler to Glücks, 10 March 1942, "Einsatz von Häftlingen, Kriegsgefangenen, Juden
usw. für die Durchführung des Bauprogrammes des SS-WVHA, Amtsgruppe C 1942."
- 46 Himmler's notes on Kammler to Himmler, 10 February 1942, "Aufstellung von SS-Baubrigaden
für die Durchführung von Bauaufgaben des RFSS im Kriege und Frieden," BAK: NS19/2065.
- 47 I thank Mark Spoerer for these estimates of German gross domestic product. See also Christoph
Buchheim, "Die Wirtschaftsentwicklung im Dritten Reich--mehr Desaster als Wunder. Eine
Erwiderung auf Werner Abelshauser," *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 49 (2001, 2001): 659.

- 48 Himmler to Richard Glücks, 26 January 1942, BDC: Hängeordner 643. See also Arthur Liebehenschel to all *Konzentrationslager*, 19 January 1942, "Überstellung von Juden," printed in Harry Stein, *Juden in Buchenwald* (Weimar: Gedenkstätte Buchenwald, 1992), 119. This decree orders the immediate transfer of the "number of Jews able to work to the POW Camp Lublin as reported by teletype" (received on the 26th). It mentions a teletype from the 8th of December. Note this predated serious talks of *Konzentrationslager* armaments works with Speer or Walther Schieber. I thank Peter Witte for providing this document.
- 49 Himmler to Pohl, 19 Dec. 41, BAK, NS 3/52, quoted in Orth, *Das System der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, 154-6.
- 50 R-129, Pohl's report to Himmler, 30 April 1942.
- 51 Kammler to Himmler, 1 Jul. 43, BAK NS19/2065
- 52 *Ibid.* A report one year later lists all of the SS independent industrial endeavors, none of which was an armaments firm: NO-551, Unsigned, 30 September 1943, "Die Wirtschaftsunternehmen der Schutzstaffel."
- 53 Erhard Milch to Maurer, 13 April 1943, NA: T-175, Roll 80.
- 54 Jägerstabbesprechung, 31 Mar. 44, BA MA RL3/4 and "Schnellbericht," 6 Mar. 44, BA MA RL3/10. This was in spite of the objections of the RLM. Chronik, 5 Jan. 44 and 10 Jan. 44. Mark Spoerer estimates the GDP of Germany at about 150 billion in 1942. I thank him for this information.
- 55 PS-1584(I), Hermann Göring to Heinrich Himmler, 15 Feb. 44, "Aufstellung der 7. Staffel/Fliegergruppe zB V. 7." Bertrand Perz, *Projekt Quarz. Steyr-Daimler-Puch und das Konzentrationslager Melk* (Wien, 1991): 145-8. Florian Freund, 'Arbeitslager Zement.' *Das Konzentrationslager Ebensee und die Raketenrüstung* (Wien, 1989): 84. Manfred Bornemann, *Geheimprojekt Mittelbau: Die Geschichte der deutschen V-Waffen Werke* (München, 1971): 77-8. Chronik, 5/44. "Vermerk über die Besprechung am 16.3.44, Verlagerung von Fertigung untertage" and MR Richter, 11 May 44, "Unterirdische Verlagerungen," R7/1173. Jägerstabbesprechung, 15 Apr. 44, BA MA RL3/5. Jägerstabbesprechung, 31 Mar. 44, BA MA RL3/4. "Anordnung über die Errichtung des "Jägerstabes", 13 Mar. 44, BDC Ordner 274. Anonymous, 1 May 44, "Durchführung der baulichen Arbeiten für die unterirdische Verlagerung"; Meffert, 1 Feb. 44, "Kommission für unterirdische Verlagerungen"; and Stobe-Dethleffsen to Kammler, 21 Dec. 43, "Bombensichere Ausweichbauten," BAP 46.03/68.
- 56 Ralf Schabel, "Wenn Wunder den Sieg bringen sollen: Wehrmacht und Waffentechnik im Luftkrieg," in *Die Wehrmacht: Mythos und Realität*, ed. Rolf-Dieter Müller and Hans-Erich Volkmann (München, 1999): 397.
- 57 Michael Salewski, "Die Abwehr der Invasion als Schlüssel zum 'Endsieg'," in *Die Wehrmacht: Mythos und Realität*, ed. Rolf-Dieter Müller and Hans-Erich Volkmann (München, 1999): 216-23.
- 58 Jägerstabbesprechung, 31 Mar. 44, BA MA RL3/4.
- 59 Michael Thad Allen, "Anfänge der Menschenvernichtung in Auschwitz, Oktober 1941. Eine Erwiderung auf Jan Erik Schulte," *Vierteljahrshäfte für Zeitgeschichte* 51 (2003): 566. Robert van Pelt and Debórah Dwork, *Auschwitz 1270 to the Present* (New York, 1996): 236-75.
- 60 Wannsee Conference, "Besprechungsprotokoll," in John Mendelsohn, ed., *The Holocaust: Selected Documents in Eighteen Volumes. Vol. 11: The Wannsee Protocol and a 1944 Report on Auschwitz by the Office of Strategic Services* (New York: Garland, 1982), 3-17. See also Christian Gerlach, "Die Wansee-Konferenz, das Schicksal der deutschen Juden und Hitlers politische Grundsatzentscheidung, alle Juden Europas zu ermorden," *Werkstattgeschichte* 18 (1997, 1997).
- 61 Hanelt, "Notiz für Brigadeführer [Globocnik], Stabsbesprechung am 6/8/41," in USHMM RG-15.027.M: 1:6 (Records of Der SS und Plizeiführer im Distrikt Lublin).
- 62 Hanelt, "Arbeitstagung im SS Mannschaftshaus, 11-13 Uhr," 30/10/41, USHMM RG-15.027.M: 1: 4.
- 63 Hanelt, "Entwurf Program für den 9/11/41," in USHMM RG-15.027M:1:4,

- 64 Hanelt, "SS Mannschaftshaus-Lublin," undated, RG-15.027.M: 1: 6. Although undated, this discusses the SS Mannschaftshaus as of 18/3/42 and mentions deportations of the 15th of the month.
- 65 Götz Aly, *Die Endlösung* (Frankfurt am Main, 1995), Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung. Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung* (Frankfurt/M, 1993).
- 66 Sybille Steinbacher, *'Musterstadt' Auschwitz. Germanisierungspolitik und Judenmord in Ostoberschlesien* (München, 2000): 232.
- 67 Michael Thad Allen, "The Devil in the Details: The Gas Chambers of Birkenau, October 1941," *Holocaust & Genocide Studies* 16 (2002, 2002). Karin Orth, *Das System der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager. Eine politische Organisationsgeschichte* (Hamburg, 1999): 140.
- 68 Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The SS, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy*: 114-39. van Pelt and Dwork, *Auschwitz 1270 to the Present*: 228-32.
- 69 Ulmer, Dejaco, and Bischoff, "Entwurf für das Krematorium, Erdgeschoß," Plan 933, 1942 Jan 19, PMO AuII BW 30/2.
- 70 Miklos Nyiszli, *Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account* (New York, 1993): 40. Compare this to the description of Auschwitz's first, rather shabby morgue in the main camp in {Kielar, 1972 #954@58}, "'With its concrete floor and big metal-topped table, the little room looked rather like a butcher shop."
- 71 Rudolf Kauer to Geschworenengericht beim Oberlandesgericht, Wien, 21/2/72, Signature V526/1-155, DöW microfilm roll 1108.
- 72 Memoir of Zofia Czerwinska-Kossakiewicz, "survivor of Kanada," in Irena Strzelecka, ed., *"The Sauna in Eyewitness Accounts and Memoirs," in Teresa Swiebocka, ed., The Architecture of Crime: The Central Camp Sauna in Auschwitz II-Birkenau (Oswiecim: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 2001): : 116.*
- 73 Alfred Franke-Gricksch, undated, from 1943, "Umsiedlungs-Aktion der Juden," printed in Jean-Claude Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers* (New York, 1989): 238.
- 74 {Hellwig, 1931 #202@369}. See also Jan Sehn, Dr. Ing. Roman Dawidowski, and Eduard Pechalski, "Gutachten," 26/11/46, in Signature V526/1-155, DöW microfilm roll 1107. Ibid.: 241-50.
- 75 Alfred A., video testimony in HVA-SVHF, interviewed by Yitzchak Kerem. Alfred A. was a popular singer among the guards and was able to get himself transferred. Irene W. also relates that her father was inducted into the Sonderkommandos and was shot quickly thereafter because he would not do the work, Irene W., video testimony in HVA-SVHF, interviewed by Ileana Kenney
- 76 Abraham, D., survivor video, FVA, T-1835, interview by Gideon Greif and Raphael Rozner, notes by Tamar Arieah.
- 77 Saul H., survivor video. In FVA, T-1839, interview by Raphael Rozner and Gideon Greif, notes by Mandu Sen.
- 78 One wide-spread belief among prisoners, within the Sonderkommandos and outside of it, is that the SS planned to systematically liquidate each labor detail every 3 to 4 months. Other survivors of the Sonderkommandos disputed this, however. There can be little doubt, on the other hand, that the Sonderkommandos were liquidated with great frequency. Judging from my research up to this point, I would speculate that individual details were murdered when the tasks which they had completed came to an end. Thus, for instance, the Sonderkommandos who exhumed the dead of the two "Bunkers" north of Birkenau seem to have been killed when that task was completed, etc. I doubt very much that the SS developed some kind of systematic murder rotation, and SS men, even those who had no real reason to hide such details, never spoke about testified to such a policy after the war.

- 79 Salmen Lewental, "Burried Notebook of the Sonderkommando," in *Amidst a Nightmare of Crime: Manuscripts of Prisoners in Cremation Squads Found at Auschwitz*, edited by Jadwiga Bezwinska and Danuta Czech, New York: Howard Fertig, 1992: 130-78 (survivor of SK, 1944, late October?): 138.
- 80 Jonathan Glover, *Humanity: A Moral History of the 20th Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999): 37. See also Berel Lang, *The Act and Idea in the Nazi Genocide*: 41.
- 81 Müller, *Eyewitness Auschwitz*: 38-9, 39
- 82 Josephson, *Totalitarian Science and Technology*: 6 and esp. 31-7.
- 83 {Pingel, 1978 #273@62} This enthusiasm for modernization was widespread among the SS's prison managers. See NO-1044, unsigned (Walter Salpeter), undated (from 1940), "Bericht über das erste Geschäftsjahr der Deutschen Versuchsanstalt für Ernährung und Verpflegung." Similarly, Theodor Eicke's pronouncements about Sachsenhausen ("A new, great, and modern concentration camp"): Johannes Tuchel, *Konzentrationslager. Organisationsgeschichte und Funktion der 'Inspektion der Konzentrationslager' 1934-38* (Boppard am Rhein, 1991): 219.
- 84 Guy Pauker, "Indonesia 1979: The Record of Three Decades," *Asian Survey* 20 (1980, 1980): 132.
- 85 Benedict Andersson, "Old State, New Society: Indonesia's New Order in Comparative Historical Perspective," *Journal of Asian Studies* 42 (1983, 1983), Mark van Langenberg, "Gestapu and State Power in Indonesia," in *The Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966: Studies from Java and Bali*, ed. Robert Cribb (Clayton, 1990).
- 86 {MacDougall, 1976 #31@first quote, 1168, second quote, 1169} Only five out of sixty believed that modernization involved strictly economic, rather than political and cultural, transformation; only eight mentioned the equitable distribution of income as a worthy goal.
- 87 John Taylor, *East Timor: The Price of Freedom* (New York, 1999): 93.
- 88 {Taylor, 1999 #39@93} See also Helen Fein, "Violence and the State: Revolutionary and Antirevolutionary Genocides: A Comparison of State Murders in Democratic Kampuchea, 1975 to 1979, and in Indonesia, 1965 to 1966," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 35 (1993, 1993).
- 89 Taylor, *East Timor*: 123-30.
- 90 David Chandler, Ben Kiernan, and Chanthou Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future: Confidential Leadership Documents from Democratic Kampuchea, 1976-1977* (New Haven, 1988): 45.
- 91 "Preliminary Explanation Before Reading the Plan," by the Party Secretary, 21/8/76, printed in *Ibid.*: 120-1.
- 92 David Chandler, *Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot* (Boulder, 1992): 123.
- 93 *Ibid.*: 125.
- 94 I am adopting this term from the late Richard Wolin, *Heidegger's Children: Hannah Arendt, Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse* (Princeton, 2001). and **The Metaphysics of Being**.
- 95 Frank Chalk and Kurt Johnsson, "Introduction," in *The History and Sociology of Genocide*, ed. idem (New Haven, 1990): 39.