

40 years of slavery studies*

40 anos de estudos sobre a escravidão

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ABSTRACT

In this lecture, read at the 7th Graduate Meeting of Economic History, held at Universidade Federal Fluminense, in 2014, Stanley Engerman examines 30 topics concerning academic studies about the social institution of slavery. He analysis since the first studies, which emphasized moral aspects of the compulsory and the free labor in Modern world, to studies of the working of slave systems in the Americas, as well as he dedicates special attention to the recent developments in this field of the historical knowledge. About this last topic, Engerman delves into the economic and demographic implications of the slave systems, seen in comparative perspective.

Keywords: Slavery. Historiography. Demography.

RESUMO

Nessa conferência, proferida no VII Encontro de Pós-Graduação em História Econômica, realizado na Universidade Federal Fluminense, em 2014, Stanley Engerman examina 30 tópicos relativos aos estudos acadêmicos sobre a instituição social da escravidão. Analisa desde os primeiros estudos, que enfatizavam os aspectos morais das formas de trabalho compulsório e livre no mundo moderno, aos estudos sobre o funcionamento dos sistemas escravistas nas Américas, e dedica especial atenção aos recentes desdobramentos desse campo do saber histórico. Sobre esse último item, Engerman desenvolve considerações sobre as implicações econômicas e demográficas dos sistemas escravistas, tomados em perspectiva comparativa.

Palavras-chave: Escravidão. Historiografia. Demografia.

1. It is now about 40 years since I first co-authored (with Robert Fogel) a book, *Time on the cross*, a study of slavery primarily in the U.S. This paper will basically discuss what I learned over these years of study – and will indicate what were changes from an earlier generation's view of slavery. These have been most interesting and exciting times for scholars of slavery. This is true for the study of slavery, not only in the

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U.S., but also in the Caribbean and in Brazil. As we shall see, there are generally some quite similar aspects of changing interpretations in all these places, although given my primary areas of research I will focus most of my attention on the American case.

2. It is useful to note that slavery is a very difficult area to study, given that it is always a highly charged issue – morally and politically – reflecting both the interpretation of the past and the meaning of the past for today’s events. Slavery is always used as a term denoting something evil, whether in the past or even today, even when certain things are described as slavery, if not quite the same as nineteenth century slavery in the Americas. The study of slavery has always posed controversy and disagreement. There is one key problem to consider when describing the nature of the slave system, the interaction of slaves and their owners. It is necessary to provide a consistent behavior pattern for slaves and owners – can the two patterns be reconciled? Owners can be seen as harsh or lenient, and slaves basically as destroyed or as people with agency and community life, but it seems difficult to have argued for slaves having great agency but with exceedingly harsh masters.

To make sense of slave-master interaction there must, however, be some consistency of belief and balance between the two major actors. The controls exercised by the master are influences upon, as well as influenced by, the slave. Cruel masters in a cruel system there were, but recent attention to slave culture and what the slaves did with the “space” allowed them (the slave’s agency) can be presented not as part of a pro-southern defense but as beliefs of those with strong antislavery sentiments. This is telling us a great deal not only about the slaves but also about the masters. To make these patterns consistent may, however, run into moral objections since conditions of slave accomplishments means things were perhaps not always as harsh and destructive as they could be, although this may have been the way things were. This makes it often difficult to describe what is regarded as accommodation by slaves and what is resistance. As was commented by the bishop of Marseilles in the fifth century, dealing with French slavery, “if slaves obey their masters according to their own judgment they are not obedient even when they obey”. Actually the attack on slavery need not have rested upon the specific cruelty of particular masters, in contrast with slavery’s basic evil – that the rights of individuals (slaves) were given to their owners and potential owners.

In the U.S., Frederick Douglass stated:

First of all, I will state, as well as I can, the legal and social relation of master and slave. A master is one (to speak in the vocabulary of the Southern States) who claims and exercises a right of property in the person of a fellow man. This he does with the force of the law and the sanction of Southern religion. The law gives the master absolute power over the slave. He may work him, flog him, hire him out, sell him, and in certain contingencies, *kill* him, with perfect impunity. The slave is a human being, divested of all rights – reduced to the level of a brute – a mere ‘chattel’ in the eye of the law – placed beyond the circle of human brotherhood – cut off from his kind – his name, which the ‘recording angel’ may have enrolled in heaven, among the blest, is impiously inserted in a *master’s ledger*, with horses, sheep and swine. In law, the slave has no wife, no children, no country, and no home. He can own nothing, possess nothing, acquire nothing, but what must belong to another. To eat the fruit of his own toil, to clothe his person with the work of his own hands, is considered stealing. He toils that another may reap the fruit; he is industrious that another may live in idleness; he heats unbolted meal, that another may eat the bread of fine flour; he labors in chains at home, under a burning sun and a biting lash, that another may ride in ease and splendor abroad; he lives in ignorance, that another may be educated; he is abused, that another may be exalted; he rests his toil-worn limbs on the cold, damp ground, that another may repose on the softest pillow; he is clad in coarse and tattered raiment, that another may be arrayed in purple and fine linen; he is sheltered only by the wretched hovel, that a master may dwell in a magnificent mansion; and to this condition he is bound down as by an arm of iron.

From this monstrous relation, there springs an unceasing stream of most revolting cruelties. The very accompaniments of the slave system, stamp it as the offspring of hell itself. To ensure good behavior, the slaveholder relies on *the whip*; to induce proper humility, he relies on *the whip*; to rebuke what he is pleased to term insolence, he relies on *the whip*; to supply the place of wages, as an incentive to toil, he relies on *the whip*; to bind down the spirit of the slave, to imbrute and destroy his manhood, he relies on *the whip*, the chain, the gag, the thumb-screw, the pillory, the bowie-knife, the pistol, and the bloodhound. These are necessary and unvarying accompaniments of the system. Wherever slavery is found, these horrid instruments are also found. Whether on the coast of Africa, among the savage tribes, or in South Carolina, among the refined and civilized, slavery is the same, and its ac-

companyments one and the same. It makes no difference whether the slaveholder worships the God of the Christians or is a follower of Mahomet, he is the minister of the same cruelty, and the author of the same misery. *Slavery* is always *slavery* – always the same foul, haggard, and damning scourge, whether found in the Eastern or in the Western hemisphere.

There is still a deeper shade to be given to this picture. The physical cruelties are indeed sufficiently harassing and revolting; but they are but a few grains of sand on the sea shore, or a few drops of water in the great ocean, compared with the stupendous wrongs which it inflicts upon the mental, moral and religious nature of its hapless victims. It is only when we contemplate the slave as a moral and intellectual being that we can adequately comprehend the unparalleled enormity of slavery, and the intense criminality of the slaveholder. I have said that the slave is a man. ‘What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension how like a God! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals!’ The slave is a man, ‘the image of God’, but ‘a little lower than the angels’; possessing a soul, eternal and indestructible; capable of endless happiness, or immeasurable woe; a creature of hopes and fears, of affections and passions, of joys and sorrows; and he is endowed with those mysterious powers by which man soars above the things of time and sense, and grasps with undying tenacity, the elevating and sublimely glorious idea of a God. It is *such* a being that is smitten and blasted. The first work of slavery is to mar and deface those characteristics of its victims which distinguish *men* from *things*, and *persons* from *property*. Its first aim is to destroy all sense of high moral and religious responsibility. It reduces man to a mere machine. It cuts him off from his maker, it hides from him the laws of God, and leaves him to grope his way from time to eternity in the dark, under the arbitrary and despotic control of a frail, depraved and sinful fellow-man. (Douglass, 2000, p. 166)

To Douglass, even if the food and material treatment provided the slave was adequate, it was the loss of freedom of action that was the primary evil of enslavement.

3. In recent years the history of slavery has attracted much academic as well as non-academic attention. It has become widely emphasized that slavery existed not just in the U.S. South, the European colonies in the Caribbean, the Spanish colonies of South and Central America, and

Brazil, but in most of the rest of the world and also at almost all earlier times. Slavery was a ubiquitous institution, and it posed many of the same issues everywhere, such as problems of devising labor incentives and the allocation of rewards to get slaves to produce. In general, the enslaved were considered outsiders, not only based on race, but also at various times and places, on religion, nationality, and ethnicity. Moreover, in many cases it was based on a long-distance slave trade bringing slaves to locations where they could be productive, and were too far from home for slaves to easily run away and escape. Many slaves were military captives. There was some kidnapping, but this was generally less prevalent than was enslavement as the outcome of warfare.

4. I shall first deal with some general issues to give some comparative perspectives on slavery in the U.S., Brazil, and elsewhere in the modern world, and its various relations to the emerging dominance of “free labor” and to the other forms of coerced labor.

Slavery had existed in many societies, in many times, from ancient societies into the 20th century, in the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa. Other forms of what is regarded as coerced labor have also long existed, including serfdom, convict labor, debt bondage and indentured servitude. Thus within the U.S. or Brazil, the presence of slavery is not historically unique. Indeed, the U.S. South wasn’t the first of the British or European New World settlements to have slavery, nor was it the last area in New World to end slavery (that was Brazil in 1888). And slavery’s ending in Africa and Asia was often at least one-half century later than that in Brazil. It is often still argued that slavery persists in some parts of the world today, whether in the prevalence of sex slavery, debt bondage, and long-term contracts, as well as in quasi-legal forms in places like Mauritania and the Sudan.

Much discussion of modern slavery, by contemporaries and by subsequent scholars, has been about the Americas, Europe, and Africa. It has often taken place at a specific juncture in historical time, with the rise of industrialization or modernization and with emerging views about the sanctity of the individual, for religious and other reasons. There was an expansion of so-called free labor (both wage labor for others, as well as self-employment). Much of the economic discussion of slave labor then, was based, implicitly or explicitly, on comparisons of slave and free labor, as part of defining the positive role of free labor and of

freedom; and with the crime of slavery in moral terms, by comparison, to have as an absence of individual freedom as well as being a cause of economic backwardness. These arguments tied in with the impact of Enlightenment beliefs, still widely held today, a conviction that “all good things come together,” and thus what was moral was economic (and presumably vice versa), contentions that still remain central to beliefs about the nature of slavery.

Much of the new understanding of U.S. slavery has come not only from the study of slavery itself at a specific time and place, but also from examinations of several related topics which have also recently become studied in some detail. First concerns the philosophic differences between slavery and freedom. Is slavery unique in its evils, which makes other forms of labor control seem less bad, or is it part a spectrum of systems making slavery seem less bad since its evils are then not seen as unique. Related is the attention given to the other forms of so-called coerced labor (the attempt at definition of which has given rise to many important points for understanding slavery) – such as indentured or contract labor, convict labor, and the various laws limiting the rights of nominally free labor (or, as some call it, wage slavery).

There has been increased attention to trying to determine the causes of the ending of the slave trade and of slavery in various parts of the world. While it previously seemed relatively easy to earlier argue either for the rise of a heightened sense of morality or else the clear impact of economic decline in slave societies, it turns out that detailed studies suggest more subtlety is needed in understanding the ending of the slave trade and, then about a quarter or a half-century later, of slavery itself. The importance of political, economic (itself viewed in several different ways), and other factors in its endings are widely debated. And this has meant an increased sensitivity to the complex political, cultural, and ideological factors that accompanied slavery and emancipation. The interest in the slave trade has also shown us more about the nature of the slave trade in Africa – and the role of wars, kidnapping, and other means of acquiring slaves within Africa, and then sending slaves to the coast by Africans for sale to Europeans. African traders gained from the rising slave prices due to the increased demands from the Americas. Slavery played a significant role in Africa before, during, and after the transatlantic trade. Slavery was generally ended by European colonizers,

since an indigenous African anti-slavery movement was quite limited. Indeed, in many cases the maintenance of slavery was seen to be essential for the survival of African societies. There is now greater understanding of what happened in those societies that had slavery after slavery ended, when a new and sometimes quite different economic system was introduced. These adjustments did vary in terms of output, structures, income levels, and the health of ex-slaves. It is interesting, for example, to compare changes in Haiti where freedom was accomplished by a slave uprising, to be followed by a complete decline in plantations and export production; with, say, Barbados, which maintained plantations with resident labor, or Trinidad, which re-established plantations but with indentured labor mainly from India. In the U.S. cotton production was maintained by a movement of white labor into cotton farms, while in Brazil it meant the introduction of southern Europeans, particularly Italians, into coffee production. By seeing how things evolved once the extreme controls of slavery ended, more can be understood about what slavery meant in social and economic terms. The patterns of adjustment to the labor constraints introduced with the end of slavery indicates both what the ex-slaves took out of slavery economically, culturally, and socially, and also what ex-owners and ex-slaves did given legal differences in labor supply constraints.

5. Because of our contemporary concerns with racial differences, and their past and future, the writing of slavery and post-slavery has always taken a rather moral tone. This is because slavery has always been justified by regarding slaves as others – outsiders to society, and thus enslavable, unlike our own, and this set of attitudes usually persisted after slavery ended. There are obvious difficulties in generalizing about something like slavery as a concept, and also in trying to generalize about the experience of slaves, given its many thousands of masters and millions of slaves, and particularly given the differences in location, size, crops, etc. (These factors, however, have stopped few past and present historians from generalizing about slavery, or indeed, many other issues).

6. Perhaps the majority view of slavery in the Americas, including the U.S. and Brazil, when Fogel and I began our studies was a belief in the weakness of slaver personality and community, based on the destructive impact of the slave system and of the slaveowners on slaves. The cruelty of the system was thought to explain not only the behaviors

under slavery, but also many of today's social problems based on the legacy of slavery. Why? The harshness of masters was seen in Kenneth Stampp's discussion of owner control as a way to make profits, control not only by physical measures but also by giving rise to a set of racial beliefs in society limiting options of slaves. This was an argument, with the related belief in the backwardness of black Americans, which, depending upon the attitudes towards races and slavery, was based either on genetic factors as part of the pro-slavery argument, or, as argued by abolitionists, based on the sociological impact of slavery on the individual. Agreements persisted about slave backwardness throughout antebellum times, but the differences as to causes remained. This argument was very important in describing what slaves, once freed, would be able to accomplish and it also influenced the discussion of the process of emancipation and of the time required to educate the ex-slaves for freedom.

7. This view of black inferiority was an essential part of the analysis of the influential southern historian, Ulrich B. Phillips, who argued that the slave system had kind, tolerant masters and who described the plantation as a school, unfortunately unsuccessful, to educate Africans. In the past, it was widely argued that slavery was not economically-oriented and was not a productive system, an argument made by Marxists, liberals, and southern conservatives. This backwardness was attributed to various reasons, including the manner by which the day-to-day resistance of slaves affected their productivity, or else because the masters viewed slavery as more a matter of conspicuous consumption than one of maximizing profits. It is accepted, however, that the system did not permit industry to develop, leading to an economic structure that was backward relative to the North. It was accepted that slavery could persist for nonpecuniary reasons, such as the love to domineer or the desire to show-off expensive assets.

It was often thought probable that slavery would soon grind to a halt economically and end of its own accord, with the slaves ultimately freed voluntarily by their owners. In general, it was argued that slavery created a backward economy compared to North, strengthening the earlier belief in Yankee superiority, and that the South would not be able to maintain itself much longer – but how long remained a question.

8. To start to describe U.S. and other slave systems, I want to begin

where we started – the economic issues, since they will help to open up many other significant issues. The first basic question was: was slavery profitable to the owners? The answer to this was determined using slave price data. There are many sources of slave price data, reflecting the commercial nature of the southern system, e.g.:

- a) commercial records;
- b) wills and decedent probate inventories;
- c) plantation records;
- d) bills of sale in slave markets;
- e) newspaper advertisements;
- f) insurance policies;
- g) market newsletters of slave traders.

There have been (at least) two major interrelated broad shifts in interpretations of slavery in recent years, that have been influential in the U.S., Brazil, and elsewhere. In regard to economics and demography, views have shifted from seeing slavery as the cause of a backward and declining economy with slavery now come to be seen as a system that was often booming and quite productive, but some accepted some future decline and relative loss was always conceivable. These future declines were, however, generally seen to be sometime in a rather distant future, a point with significant political as well as economic implications.

The key demographic issue has been the different patterns of population growth in the United States and elsewhere in the Americas – the U.S. had an unusually high rate of population growth, while elsewhere there was a negative rate of growth, with total slave imports from Africa exceeding the slave and black population at the time of emancipation. Brazil's rate of decline was less than that in most of the Caribbean, but the total of the slave and free black population in 1888 was less than the total of slaves received in Brazil from Africa between 1500 and 1851. Brazil was the largest recipient of African slaves, about 40 percent of the total, as it started early and ended relatively late, the only New World nation that ended its slave trade later was Cuba.

From demographic studies of the slave trade and slavery, we have learned (or relearned since it was known to people at the time), that the U.S. received only about 5 percent of the transatlantic slave trade.

Yet the U.S. had more than 1/3 of all New World blacks in 1830. This growth reflected a very high rate of natural increase, based on unusually high level of fertility and relatively lower mortality than for slaves elsewhere. The other slave areas had a natural decrease of the slave population, with fewer blacks alive than had arrived in the slave trade. This was reflected in the higher mortality and considerably lower fertility among slaves in the British West Indies, and, no doubt, Brazil than in the U.S. It was the high southern slave fertility – as high as that of northern and southern whites at the time – in combination with the westward movement of the slave population that give rise to arguments of so-called slave-breeding, of a deliberate interference with slaves reproduction to make money for planters, a contention I shall return to.

9. The U.S. differed dramatically from the British West Indies, having fewer slave imports and thus more native-born in the slave population at any time. In 1800 it was estimated that about 90% of U.S. slaves were born in the U.S., while it was about one-half in Jamaica. The British West Indies were 90% black slave and the U.S. South only 40% slave. The U.S. overall as only about 10-15% black slave at most, even before the impact of emancipation in the North. Free blacks were generally only about 10% of the whole population, a considerably smaller portion than in Brazil. In the BWI, there were many units of 150 to 250 slaves laboring on sugar plantations, while U.S. cotton plantations generally had between 20 and 50 slaves. Thus there were considerably more contact with whites and less continuous contact with the African-born in the U.S. than in the British West Indies and other slave powers. Large units and recent slave imports via the transatlantic slave trade were in Cuba (the slave trade ending in the 1860's) and Brazil (when the slave trade ended c. 1850). In all these places, African patterns continued to flourish.

The demography of the Brazilian black population was unusual for the Americas. While the slave population varied over time, by 1872 slaves amounted to about 16 percent of the overall Brazilian population. What was unique in Brazil was that the population of free colored in that year was about 2.8 times the slave population, even larger than was the free white population.

In terms of the slave economy, Brazil had some resemblance to the U.S., with dramatic changes in major crops produced and large-scale

geographic relocations. From the early importance of the production of gold, Brazil specialized in the production of sugar in the northeast through the first part of the nineteenth century, and then shifted to become the world's major producer of coffee in the southeast. This shift in the location of the slave population was due, in part, to a shift in the location of arrival of slaves from Africa, as well as the internal slave trade. These demographic differences among the slaveholding areas led to differences in the extent and stability of slave families, an influence on the rates of fertility.

10. The link between economics and culture points to some differing views about what makes the economic system operate in an effective manner. Did economic profitability mean that owners were always harsh and destructive – or did it mean a certain reduction of harshness and allowing of “space” as a means of having slaves becoming more productive? The slaves did not, of course, work effectively to please the master but, rather as the result of how the system was structured, for the slaves own purposes in providing for themselves and their families (as were, e.g., those free workers receiving wages, who were also producing for their own reasons, and not really to please their bosses).

11. What were the key anti-slavery *economic* arguments and why did they persist? What do they tell us about both the contemporary perceptions and the actualities of slavery?

The slave economy was long-argued to be backward and declining, because it was seen to be unprofitable to the individual owner and ultimately nonviable (not survivable) for the region. Thus ending slavery would free individuals to work harder and produce more (the “free” labor ideology), but this could mean either positive incentives (emphasized by Smith) or less positively, to a desire to avoid starvation (Hume). These economic conditions – backward and declining – meant, it was argued, slavery's end would increase the income of ex-slave owners, and of these regions as a whole, and also permit non-slave free workers to earn higher incomes.

It was argued by Marxists, liberal Marxists, and southern defenders that because of the political power of the slaveowning “elite”, slavery was permitted to exist and retard the desire for there to have been a shift to industry and commerce, where, it was believed, future higher incomes were to be earned. It was then and later argued that a slave

economy had a rather different structure, to its detriment, than did a free labor economy, since slaves generally producing crops to be exported to northern and European consumers. The most important of these crops were sugar, cotton, coffee, and tobacco, grown only in certain climates. To some, such as Mill and McCulloch, the link of climate and crops explained the high productivity of slave labor, since working conditions and the size of producing units made plantation work undesired by free workers.

Actually, as we shall see, this argument of relative gains from changing the structure need not imply slavery was unprofitable, backward, and declining. The claim of increasing unprofitability was used by the first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Eric Williams, to argue that the ending of the British slave trade and later slavery was based upon the declining profitability of sugar production for their West Indian slave-owners, which reduced their political power within Britain, and increased the financial gains to the British from its abolition. But what is politically essential for abolition may not depend on the level of slavery's profits, but rather on the relative importance of slavery to the British economy. This might mean that the slave trade and slavery had then become relatively inexpensive to give up. Or, as Adam Smith suggested concerning the Pennsylvania Quakers, that they ended slavery indicated that it was unprofitable to them; the demand for morality is downward sloping. It is easier for individuals and societies to behave morally when the costs of morality are considered low.

12. Slave prices varied with year of the transaction and the age of slave at time of sale, as well as sex, skills, color, and physical and behavioral attributes. These variations indicate that someone was calculating prices over time by adjusting for characteristics and changing productivity. Thus, by studying slave price trends over time and the value of slave characteristics, clearly, we can observe that some economic calculation existed. To estimate profitability over time, planters used calculations based on changes in output and prices, mainly of cotton in the U.S. and sugar and coffee in Brazil, regarding amounts produced and crop prices. The prices of slaves were also affected by the consumption allowed to the slaves and to their families, their health, and their life expectation. Actually, the expected lifetime of an individual as a slave, was either the expected lifetime of a slave at the date of purchase or else the

expected duration of the system of slavery (net of any compensation that might be expected). For females, planters considered the expected value and number of children. Also considered were variations in age and in productivity, and the expected productivity changes over time as slaves aged. Thus, the prices of slaves can be used to estimate the planter's expectations of how much longer they expected the slave system to continue, either on economic or political grounds. An important study of Brazilian emancipation by Pedro de Mello provides an interesting examination of the effects of legal changes regarding the timing of emancipation in the 1880's upon slave prices, using the ratio of slave prices to slave rental costs to see how many years of income that the slaveowner would be willing to pay for, thus giving a measure of when final legal emancipation was expected to occur.

13. The economists study of profitability to the slaveowner begins in the "modern" (post-1957) period with the 1958 work of two economists, Alfred Conrad and John Meyer, on the U.S. before the Civil War. Although they pointed to need for a systematic collection of various data to be used, they based their analysis on only secondary sources. Subsequently work has used primary archival sources to provide the needed information. And the study of the profitability of slavery has also been undertaken in other slaveholding areas of the Americas, using similar types of data sources and generally reaching similar conclusions.

The basic information needed for such calculations which are needed to estimate profitability came from slave sales advertisements and planters records. These sources also indicate that much was generally known about each slave, and his or her background. Note that collecting these types of data has led to related studies of demography (both mortality and fertility), southern capital markets (to determine interest rates), and the impacts of food and nutrition on physical development. Since the U.S. passed legislation to stop the international slave trade from Africa, at a time when there was also an internal slave trade using coastal waters, each individual slave shipped by sea was recorded on what were known as Coastal Shipping Manifests, with descriptive information, including age and height, and these have become widely used as a basis to study the material treatment of the slave population.

14. A general pattern of slave prices in most societies, including the U.S., was that the profits from slave production over time fluctuated, in

response to cotton output and prices in U.S., and for sugar and coffee in Brazil and the Caribbean. Slave prices adjusted to world economic conditions. The prices for males were greater than for females. Prices rose with age to about 28. This age-price pattern was used to determine the period of apprenticeship and the timing of manumission by owners when freeing slaves, asking what were costs paid to raise children to productive ages, and how much surplus over the annual costs of subsistence the owners would then claim as an offset. Prices for females included the anticipated value of children, which was about 20–25% of the total female value, a sum that reflected the female age at which children were born and the spacing between children, as well as the time it took for children to grow to productive maturity. Slave prices rose with the price of cotton and sugar over time. Prices in the U.S. rose through the 1850's, reflecting the expectation that slavery would continue. The same upward price pattern existed for slaves elsewhere, including for Brazilian and Cuban slavery. Even late in the slave era slavery was still profitable and planters did not expect decline to be immediate.

Profits to planters were basically considered normal, since there were rising costs of purchasing slaves from Africa, as well as costs to raise slaves to productive ages. Southern planters, however, were among the wealthiest individuals in the U.S., with large investments in land, slaves, livestock, and machinery.

Production apparently responded to market signals, and clearly profits were a goal of planters. This led to concern with means of getting high output from the labor force. The usual discussion of labor incentives starts with Adam Smith, who presumed the absence of incentives under slavery. Smith himself didn't fully believe this, since he thought that the French in the West Indies did better as slaveowners than did the British, suggesting that there was some ability to influence productivity. Some incentives were negative and harsh, while others were more positive, allowing higher consumption of food and clothing, days off, plots for subsistence gardening, and some personal space to slaves in terms of living and family life. An earlier (very early) example of positive incentives, even with payments to slaves made in kind, was provided by the Greek Xenophon, who rewarded his more productive slaves with higher quality consumer goods.

15. There are other specific economic questions that can cast light on slavery issues. One is viability, or the ability of the slave economy to continue, based on economic or other grounds. The test for viability is based on the comparison of the value of slave output with either the cost of raising and maintaining slaves, or with the costs of importing slaves from Africa (or elsewhere) when this was possible. Buyvsbreed was often discussed in Brazil and the British West Indies but not so much in the U.S., where slave fertility was high, even with fewer inducements to influence reproduction as elsewhere, where births were often rewarded with time off from working in the field. Some scholars argue that the U.S. Civil War was unnecessary since slavery would soon be nonviable. A famous argument was made by the southern historian Charles Ramsdell who discussed the natural limits of slavery and anticipated an ending within 10 years. Abraham Lincoln, in the debates with Stephen Douglas in 1858, argued to not end slavery where it existed but by not permitting it to expand into the territories, estimated the slavery's demise would occur without a war, based on the law of diminishing return, but would not occur for about 100 years. Other contemporary estimates were similar, consistent, in general, with the finding of long-term viability of U.S. slavery obtained from examining the rising prices of slaves in the antebellum period. Territorial expansion could defer the ending of slavery pushing it even longer in the future, making territorial expansion a heated political debate. Similar results, of wherexpected continuation on slavery on economic grounds, are also suggested by studies of other slave-holding areas (such as Cuba, Brazil, Jamaica, Barbados, Puerto Rico) in the Americas for the nineteenth century, where increased prices and values of slaves meant that planters were optimistic and that slavery was not soon expected to end. This desire to hold on to profitable slaves meant that, however morally perverse it now seems, compensation was often paid to slaveowners, either in funds or in rights to labor time. Societies did differ in regard to the frequency of a manumission, where self-purchase, not as a free gift, was the most frequent form of manumission for slaves.

What was the relative southern level of income and its rate of growth? This is a question that we answer today using national income accounts (GNP), which are measures of the final output of a given region or nation. While the full conceptual apparatus of national income accounts

was not developed until the 1930's, by Nobel Prize winner Simon Kuznets, attempts at regional comparisons of output were a periodic exercise in the antebellum period, and in at least two cases, George Tucker in Virginia (in the 1840's) and the mid-westerner Ezra Seaman (in the 1850's), there were rough approximations to measures of our present national income concepts based on the census measures of agricultural and manufacturing output. Curiously, perhaps, both placed the South in a better position relative to the North than did other contemporary writers, and were more accurate than the conceptually inaccurate 1850's measure of the racist Hinton Rowan Helper. But it is Helper who is still frequently cited by historians, mainly because, unlike the estimates of Seaman and Tucker, they became the basis of the political debates at the time.

The historiography on the issue of regional economic growth took a sharp turn with the publication of regional income estimates, based on U.S. Census data, by economic historian Richard Easterlin in 1961. Easterlin's findings indicated that from 1840 to 1860 the South grew about as rapidly as did the North, and that although its income was below that of the Northeast it was above that of the agricultural Midwest.

There were criticisms of various aspects of Easterlin's measures – (1) were the years studied atypical, particularly 1860, which saw a major cotton boom? (2) how far back from 1840 could these growth rates and levels be extrapolated? (3) and, of course, what would have happened after 1860 in the absence of the Civil War? Brief answers to the questions are: (1) 1860 was a good year for cotton, but this doesn't offset Easterlin's conclusion, since cotton was only about 20% of southern output and, the cotton boom was at the expense of a marked decline in the production of corn, livestock and other southern crops in that year, with a shift to cotton production, with both a movement to cotton plantations from other crops and from urban areas in the South and shifts among crops on southern plantations; (2) economic growth was as rapid as in the South as in the North at least back to the start of the nineteenth century, and the South had also done quite well in colonial times; (3) there was a sharp measured decline in southern output when slavery ended, but this occurred with the end of plantation system, as generally happened with emancipation elsewhere, so the implications

regarding what might have happened with the ending of the slave economy are not obvious.

There were also conceptual points – what was the best measure of final output – one that excluded goods going to provide for slaves, given the arguments that only the free were final consumers and members of society? Or should the slave consumption be included to provide for comparisons of productivity with other regions without allowing for differences in the form of labor institutions? More generally, even for today, how well did any of these concepts measure welfare, particularly when the distribution of this output among the population is allowed for? Would a society with more modern industry than traditional agriculture be expected to experience more rapid growth in the future, whatever the present income level? In other words, are industrialization and urbanization better measures of relative economic standing and power than are measures of aggregate output which include various agricultural commodities and services? But, of course, industrial societies themselves had significant social and economic problems, including skewed income distribution, as the pro-slavery defense duly pointed out. Note, however, that none of these relative economic arguments need imply an unprofitable, inefficient southern economy, and there are now quite different political implications drawn than in earlier views. It had long been argued that the South had limited industry while its major crop was presumably *soon* to be experiencing a major decline, since the South's structural problems limited the flexibility of adjusting to changing condition. Yet the indications are clearly that the southern economy was flexible in movement – among regions, among crops, in shifts between rural and urban locations, and in shifts between agriculture and industry. And, although it is not clear exactly what it proves, cotton became more important to the south in 1880 than it was in 1860.

Clearly Brazil provides a good indication of the flexibility of a large slave economy, at least within the agricultural sector. Over the course of the nineteenth century Brazil experienced a major change in the location of many slaves and in the major crop that they produced, from 53 percent of slaves in the northeast primarily producing sugar as late as the 1820s, to 67 percent of the slaves in the southeast in 1887 primarily producing coffee, Brazil then being the world's exporter of coffee. This shift was accomplished both by an extensive internal slave trade,

and a change in the area of African slave arrivals before 1850. There was also a westward shift with a crop shift in Cuba, from coffee to sugar, entailing an adjustment in the labor force and in land ownership and entrepreneurial input. The flexibility in production and marketing characterized most slave societies in adjusting to changes in world market conditions.

16. All of these economic developments held for most slave societies in the New World and elsewhere. They were most dramatic in the New World, but they were not the only societies where slavery was profitable, or where slavery was seen to provide high economic returns. In no major case in modern times did slavery simply grind to a halt; all ended slavery via politics, laws, war, or other forms of coercion. (The only possible earlier exception was Roman slavery.) In none of these cases was slavery seen as economically declining. Moreover, there was no major case of a substantial economic decline prior to the end of slavery. Thus the arguments of Eric Williams describing the ending of slavery in the British colonies were not correct. There were cyclical fluctuations with world economic changes, as cyclical fluctuation did occur as well for non-slave production at the same time, as well as before and after. But, in general, the slave price trend was upwards to the end of slavery. This meant that the U.S. Civil War could be seen as necessary to end slavery. Slavery would not have ended on economic grounds without war or an aggressive political movement, at least within a relatively short time. Thus the key role of abolitionism and politics in ending slavery in the U.S. and elsewhere, rested on moral factors or at least political factors, not directly related to a declining economic return from slavery.

17. One key question now raised, particularly for the U.S. South and for Brazil, which has become central to the economic debate on slavery, is why did slave economies tend to have limited industry? There are a number of alternative explanations, which we can examine to point out the wide range of views, the different corollaries of particular “facts,” and also different portrayals of the slave economy.

a) Limited natural resources and an unfavorable climate. The argument based on resources is frequently made in the context of North-South comparisons and is often used when trying to explain the higher relative measured efficiency result for southern than for northern

agriculture and their different regional crop-mixes. With less attention, however, given to other differences in natural resources that were probably more favorable to the North.

b) Limited local demand for manufactured goods – due to a presumably more adverse distribution of income and wealth than in the North. This, however, was not true for the free population, given the extent of urban inequality in the North; and the low or, it was sometimes argued, zero consumption allowed slaves, overlooking the point that slaves must be fed to stay alive and be productive. These presumably led to a lower demand, and a different structure of demand, because of the presumed greater degree of inequality within the white and the overall population of the South than in the North.

c) An inability to use slave labor in urban, industrial pursuits, either because of a lack of skills of slave labor to do such complicated tasks (the earlier racist view) or else the inability to control slaves in areas of high density (the more recent liberal view). Neither, however, explains very much. Frederick Douglass was unique in his escape from slavery, not in his self-hire in a major urban area.

d) The political control of banking, transportation, etc. by the planter class was accomplished in such a manner that it limited the opportunities for industry to emerge more rapidly. Again, such divergent economic interests had also existed in the North, reflected in debates about tariffs, internal improvements, banking policy, and related issues. Also, argued is that the entrepreneurial skills developed on slave plantations were not transferable to more modern tasks, while the desire to limit white and black education meant an unskilled labor force not able to deal with factories.

While still more variants can be presented, this should indicate the quite different arguments used to explain the southern lack of industry, which often have quite different implications for other issues. Briefly, on these points: The North had a very favorable climate and resources for certain types of crops and production. Slaves did not have zero consumption; obviously they were given goods or allowed to produce their own food as owners were concerned with their physical well-being and morale. Urban controls were generally effective – and rather similar control problems existed in regard to immigrants in the urban North.

18. There are other aspects of the economic structure arguments to note:

a) It is argued that there was at the time or in the near future (quite different points), an over-dependence on cotton, which presumably would soon be experiencing a decline in demand, and the over-specialization of resources in that sector would limit any adjustment by shifts to other crops.

b) Further, it was often argued that there was a need for a westward movement to avoid the problems created by the destruction of soil due to mismanagement of slave labor, and the problems expected when the land available for cotton or other slave-grown crops would run out – which was to be, presumably quite soon.

c) The westward movement, it was argued, was influenced by the failures in older areas of the South, due to soil exhaustion. These older regions, however, were presumed to be able to make profits from the sale of slaves bred for that purpose to the newer areas of the South. Thus slave-breeding was seen as essential to the maintenance of the slave economy, but this was a source of profits that could not last indefinitely. The argument for slave-breeding was based ultimately on the unusually high slave fertility in the U.S. South – about as high as for southern whites and considerably higher than in most other slave and free white societies.

In examining such questions, however, we might note, as an indication of slavery's flexibility, that in the U.S. for its first two hundred years (three-quarters of the time of its existence) slavery produced different crops (mainly tobacco and rice) than it did for its last 50 years. It had remained tied to the eastern coast to the start of the nineteenth century, quite different from the pattern of the slave society in the nineteenth century, with the growth of cotton and the westward relocation at a rapid pace. Indeed, some now argued that the South was too flexible, since slaves could be moved to new locations to produce crops, but not it was not as inflexible in adjusting to changes as was the northeast, where enough labor did not move west, possibly giving rise to the labor force that led to industrial development.

19. The discussion of slave labor became one major debate among

economic historians after 1974. The claim that southern agriculture was more productive than northern in 1860, and that within the South it was the slave plantation that accounted for higher productivity aroused considerable disagreement, perhaps more than any other aspects of *Time on the cross*.

First, some background on concepts will be helpful:

a) The measure of efficiency is one quite familiar to economists and has been applied to numerous intertemporal and international comparisons. Indeed it is in the newspapers quite often, in discussions of U.S. productivity trends and in comparisons with other countries. It is, simply, a measure of the relation of outputs to inputs (although the specifics of measuring outputs and inputs are obviously not simple). Efficiency is not morality – unless we add in various of what economists call non-pecuniary components. But then we have a different question than previously asked, which has historically always been related to conventionally-measured outputs from different labor systems. It had sometimes been claimed, by contemporaries and subsequent writers, that slave labor produced more than free, not that it produced less, with the higher production offset by the disutility of the slave's work and their loss of control over life and work.

b) North-South comparisons of output, productivity, and efficiency had a long history in the antebellum period, by both northerners and southerners, and in the historical writings on slavery. There had seemed little objection when these indicated the North was more productive. It was only when the result went in a different direction that all the attention was drawn to the difficulties of measurement. Note that many of the objections to the measure – arguing that 1860 was atypical for cotton output and cotton prices, that land input and labor input (particularly the length of the work year) were mismeasured, and that differences in crop-mix made measures impossible – have only a minor effect on the results, and for many of the problems it is not obvious what direction the bias goes. And to the extent that climate and natural resources (for example, when considering the North's coal and iron) are used to explain the results, it is not obvious in which direction the full interregional comparison of resources and climate will go. The debate on efficiency emerged once it became clear that antebellum slavery was

profitable and viable and the southern economy was growing rapidly and had a relatively high level of income. The question then was whether it had as high a level of income as it could have – did it get the maximum output from its basic resources? We should note that while a higher measured labor force participation rate (more workers) in slave labor economies did raise southern incomes, it need not have an effect on measures of efficiency, since all of this labor is considered among the inputs.

c) No matter what crops were grown, however, it would still have been possible for the slave economy to be inefficient as well as unprofitable. Some say that the southerners' survival was due merely to luck – being in the right place at the right time with the right outputs. Perhaps, but this argument would seem to understate the human capacity for getting things wrong. As the American baseball executive who brought Jackie Robinson, the first black, into major league baseball, Branch Rickey, was fond of saying, “luck was the residue of design” and of extensive planning.

What was needed was entrepreneurs anxious to make money, willing to take and seek new measures to achieve that aim, able to adapt production to the changing economic environment and also to work out arrangements with slaves to get them to be productive laborers, whatever the slaves might have done with their non-working time. The most popular of anti-slavery arguments was Adam Smith's claim about slave labor lacking incentives and therefore not being productive. Smith may have known about this possible lack of incentives, but so did every slaveowner. Planters understood the central importance of labor-management relations and providing incentives, such as the task system, however skewed were the basic power relations. Thus the analysis of plantation operations provides an insight into planter class behavior and belief, as well as into the basic nature of slave life.

20. Since planters wanted to (and did) make money from their operations, they were not as frequently cruel and harsh as many believed. There were constraints imposed on their behavior by the health, well-being, and morale of the slaves. Thus, the treatment of slaves often entailed provisions of better consumption amounts than was legally necessary. A reasonable diet is shown by measures of food consumption, as well as

by measures of achieved height. More living space was given than was previously thought. More personal space was allowed – more agency, and a more flexible set of family relations were generally, but not always, allowed. We must remember that to the extent that slave agency did exist, it basically was at the sufferance of owners who had complete and unlimited legal and physical power over the slaves. And, of course, of perhaps more importance to both parties than the expropriation of labor was this power over slaves by other individuals.

21. In regard to the structure of the economy there are still other arguments that compare North and South before the Civil War, emphasizing the modernizing aspect of the North in terms of industry, urban growth, education, attraction of immigrants, etc. The corollary to this has been the argument that the South was falling behind, and southern decline, whether absolute or relative, was accelerating. The South's major problem, it was claimed, was that it was too much in agriculture and too rural due to slavery. Whether this was because of the presumed problems of backward labor as earlier argued, or to the existence of highly productive plantations (two quite different views both presented by contemporaries and in the literature) – has long been a source of debate. Slavery presumably had further effects in weakening the political, economic, and social position of non-slave-holding whites, and thus limited immigration relative to the North. Nevertheless, literacy of southern whites, which was often argued about, was almost 90 percent that of the North, and far above anywhere else in Latin America and Europe.

22. In recent decades we have expanded our knowledge of the demography of American slavery, and analyzed the marked differences between the demographic behavior of the British West Indies, Brazil, and the United States. It has been clear that, outside of the U.S., slave societies did not have a growing population, and the number of slaves imported exceeded the number of slaves there after the ending of the slave trade. The U.S. was quite different, with a very high rate of positive population growth and an excess of fertility above mortality. The differences between these regions have important implications for the continuity of the slave trade, as well as other cultural and economic issues. The basic data on fertility and mortality come from plantation records of birth and deaths, as well as, for the U.S., from the federal census.

The basic statistics show that the major differences between the regions were the result of the fertility rate. Fertility in the British West Indies and in Brazil was at the European level of about 30 per thousand, while that of the U.S. slaves was at the same level as U.S. whites, a Malthusian rate of about 55 per thousand. Death rates were closer together, the rate for the BWI slaves being higher than in the U.S., but differences were not nearly as large as the fertility rates. An initial explanation for the higher U.S. slave fertility, that infant children were of potential value to masters. There were thus assertions of slave breeding, meaning a deliberate interference with slave sexual activity to create both more children, as well as, it was also argued, some selective breeding for desired characteristics. This charge was often made in the abolitionist literature, but recent interpretations of the slave experience suggests that this was not as frequent an occurrence as sometimes argued, and, indeed, there were more subsidies to childbirth provided in the BWI than in the U.S. A decomposition of the childbearing pattern serves to highlight certain points. First, it appears that childbearing began at an earlier age in the U.S., reflecting better health and the earlier onset of menarche caused by a higher caloric intake. Next, it appears that there was a later age of last birth, again partly reflecting better health. Third, the childbearing interval was shorter in the U.S., related to the impact of differences in the length of the nursing period. The West Indian and Brazilian nursing pattern was for a 3-4 year interval, reflecting the patterns of African populations, while that of slaves in the U.S. was closer to one year, similar to European patterns. This is what might be expected given the wider availability of milk as well as better maternal health in the U.S. Finally, the percent of childbearing females was greater in the U.S. suggesting a greater frequency of marriage or stable relationships. Thus, the higher fertility of U.S. slaves reflects considerations such as health, available foodstuffs in the U.S., a higher stability of cohabiting, and an adaptation away from African patterns of nursing.

Of interest is that several non-sugar growing areas, such as in the Dutch Antilles, had patterns of fertility more similar to that in the U.S. than to British West Indian colonies.

23. In the absence of politics and war, how was it thought that slavery would have ended? The basic argument about slavery's decline was on the basis of the land-labor ratio. As the U.S. economist Domar and,

earlier, the Dutch sociologist H.J. Nieboer argued, as labor increases relative to land, slave prices fall. This was not expected to be something that would soon happen. And, curiously, the same argument was made for the demise of the northern free labor economy. Some estimates made circa 1860 suggest the end of slavery in the U.S. was not imminent: in the U.S., owners were paying higher prices for slaves, and northerners were willing to keep investing and lending in the South.

As noted above, there were several arguments made to forecast the ending of U.S. slavery. The president Lincoln (1858) estimated that slavery would be ended voluntarily by slaveowners in about 100 years, if slavery was kept from expanding into the new territories. This, he argued, would be the best way to end slavery, since it would be without a war.

a) Virginia economist George Tucker, writing in the 1840s and 1850s, initially estimated (based on the 1840 Census) an ending in about 80 years, based on the land-labor ratio at the time of the English ending of serfdom. After the 1850 Census and the U.S. annexation of Texas, he raised the time before slavery ended, because of the increased land available.

b) The Irish economist Cairnes, writing in 1863, wrote, after the start of the Civil War, slavery would end in an estimated 25 to 40 years, a slow and gradual ending but this would occur only if southern political and demographic power did not increase.

There were also interesting estimates made in England about when slavery would end after the abolition of the slave trade to the BWI. Both Wilberforce and Pitt, in the early 1800's, estimated it would take over 200 years, but only if the British added no more Caribbean islands.

24. It might be noted that the British and the U.S. first attacked the slave trade as more probably successful than an attempt to attack slavery itself. Generally the slave trade was ended by most nations 25 to 50 years ahead of slavery. This was true for Brazil, where the slave trade was ended in response to British actions in 1850 and slavery ended in 1888. Thus whatever was argued about the relative benefits of free labor vs. slave labor systems, the long delay in ending slavery meant that it was anticipated that slavery would have a long future before the probability of collapse.

As a further sign of profitability, except for the rather unusual case of the U.S., in all major cases compensation was paid to slaveowners, not slaves, to get them to agree to emancipation. Payments of cash, bonds, land, and labor time were paid at the ending of slavery. Similar, at about the same time, payments were made to the lords for serfdom to end.

The ending of most cases of New World slavery and European serfdom occurred in the first half to two-thirds of the nineteenth century, and generally was the result of political movements to end the system. In most cases of emancipation, slavery was not ended immediately but was done quite gradually over a protracted period of years. The reason for gradualism reflected both economic factors to reduce the cost of the process of emancipation by adding to the period over which the slaves would be producing for their owners, but it was also influenced by the belief that time was needed to overcome the negative impact of the slave experience. In Brazil, gradual slave emancipation came with the so-called “law of the free womb,” which entailed a period of apprenticeship for those born after the passage of the law. Over time the terms of emancipation were liberalized ending with the final uncompensated emancipation in 1888. Some period of control was expected to provide an opportunity for slaves to be educated for the process of freedom and to adjust to their new status.

Thus there was an attempt to avoid the problems experienced at emancipation and afterwards in Haiti. Haiti itself was seen as a political and economic disaster, in which output fell continuously after emancipation, internal civil wars were frequent, and Haiti fell from being possibly the world’s richest area to the one part of the Americas that had a sub-Saharan level of income in recent years.

25. Let me briefly note some major issues in recent works, mainly regarding implications for slave economic life and culture, influenced by the findings regarding the slave economy, and the issues they raise for understanding the post-emancipation experience.

a) More attention is now being given to what is called the internal economy of the slaves “the slave’s economy”, with slaves producing on, garden plots for their own consumption or for sales to masters and others, with master permission or acceptance. Note this would effect the distribution of income among slaves, and impose some variations in

living conditions, as well as provide a basis for labor incentives given by owners. This differential effect on incomes is seen also in attention to the reliance on positive incentives in agricultural, urban, and industrial slavery, which also permitted inequalities in wealth and work input.

b) Emancipation saw a sharp decline in U.S. southern per capita income. In Brazil there was a definite decline in coffee output. In both cases there was an adjustment via movement to smaller farms. In the U.S. there were unfavorable changes in the health and mortality experience for rural ex-slaves, with a probable three-decades long decline in life expectation. Such declines in the output of staple crops and a shift away from plantation labor characterized almost all societies when slavery ended, except where population density was very high, as in Barbados and Antigua, or where it was possible to obtain migrant indentured labor, most frequently from India, but also from other areas, which led to output increases – Trinidad, British Guiana, Martinique, and Suriname.

There is some debate concerning the disappearance of ex-slaves from coffee plantations after emancipation in Brazil to be replaced by white migrants from southern Europe. Some argue that the ex-slaves left the plantation area, requiring the need for import of white labor if coffee production was maintained, but others claim that it was the ability of planters to import immigrants that forced the ex-slaves to leave the plantation sector.

c) There were also dramatic changes in southern laws, politics, and education after 1870 but also a sharp reversal of many conditions after 1890, with the rise of different aspects of racism in the U.S. Was this 1890's change in U.S. ex-slave conditions related to economic or to other factors? It does indicate, however, that there was some period of at least limited progress made by the ex-slaves before the pattern was sharply reversed at the end of the century, and continued for about another half-century. In general more attention is now being given to the diversity of slave and ex-slave experience – the result of different crop and production patterns, different geographic locations, for blacks as opposed to mulattos, for free blacks vs. slaves, and of the particular combination of African background and American environment that influenced cultures. These examinations can pose difficulties, so many questions are still open.

The ex-slaves desired independent land-holding after emancipation, and there was a relatively rapid increase in ex-slave land-ownership after emancipation, a pattern found in the ex-slave societies from Haiti onward. A debate remains as to whether black ex-slaves, as did whites, wanted farmer independence was desired to permit work to obtain higher income or rather to withdraw from the market while achieving subsistence. In either case, the intent seemed more family-orientated than communally-based.

26. I want to describe several more points relevant to separating slavery from the post-slave experience in the U.S., with implications for other countries. One, with a similarity to Brazil, concerns the nature and stability of the black family. There has been a recent controversy in the U.S. concerning the black family. From about 1870 to 1930, roughly 30% of black households were female-headed. After a sharp rise after 1960, this figure is now over 50% and illegitimacy rates rose from 25% to about 75%. Is the current circumstance to be regarded as a legacy of slavery, or is it to be seen as a response to current economic conditions, welfare policy, or post-slavery discrimination? If the current U.S. conditions are a legacy of slavery, why was it so long deferred, and on what did it depend on to take place?

Also to be noted is the differential success of West Indian ex-slaves in contrast with those from the southern states when both began to move to the northern U.S. in the early 20th century. Did slavery have such different social and cultural effects, despite the greater hardship associated with West Indian sugar production?

27. When did racial attitudes of Americans and Europeans harden into scientific racism? Did this occur under slavery or afterwards? Also, relevant is that U.S. ex-slaves advanced more rapidly between 1870 and 1890 than subsequently, in terms of education, land ownership, voting, and social progress. It appears that racism and Jim Crow legislation becomes significant thirty years after the ending of slavery, not immediately after emancipation.

Whatever coercive measures of labor control were attempted after the legal ending of slavery, there was always a great difficulty getting free labor to work on plantations. The one key exception was Barbados, due to its high population density, which later led to outflows of population when permitted. Initially the abolitionists considered Barbados

to be a great success in its ending of slavery, and held it out as an example to other areas. Several other areas had increased output from plantations after emancipation, but only after several decades. These were British Guiana, Trinidad, and Suriname, where indentured labor, a form of coerced labor new to these areas, was introduced. Workers, mostly from Asia and, for Suriname, from Java, another Dutch colony, were brought in to work on plantations for about 5–8 years. This institution lasted until the first part of the twentieth century. Another post-emancipation pattern emerged in the final two countries ending New World slavery where plantation labor by ex-slaves did not persist. Brazil and Cuba brought in southern Europeans to produce export crops on small farms, probably less efficiently than under slavery. In the U.S. the decline of the cotton slave plantation meant an adjustment that had small white farms producing a larger part of the cotton crop, in competition with ex-slave labor, leading to extensive political problems in the 1890s when there was a world-wide decline in cotton demand.

28. To repeat, the U.S. has had a rather diverse set of conditions affecting blacks after slavery. In the period of 1870 to 1900, there was a growth in incomes, education (schooling and education expenditures), and voting. The period 1900–1940 saw a sharp relative decline in black educational expenditures, and increases in lynchings, but at the same time a growth of black literacy and life expectation, as well as declining infant mortality.

After the period of WWII with the Civil Rights Movement, there were some important gains achieved for the black population, with the integration of the armed forces and the *Brown vs. Topeka* decision, which gave a legal commitment to school integration. There was a reduction of the income differential between whites and blacks through the mid-20th century. In 1965, the Voting Rights Act led to significant political changes throughout the country. Also of interest was the movement into college and professional sports, spearheaded by the signing of Jackie Robinson by the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1945, and the emergence of a wealthy group of black entertainers and athletes.

29. There has emerged a widespread interest in recent decades in a new set of demands by ex-slaves, the payment of what has been called reparations. This has led to increased attention to examining the circumstances of the ending of slavery and its aftermath. With the major

exception of the United States, slaveowners were compensated for the loss of slaves. The U.S. is an understandable special case because of the large-scale military action and the 600,000+ deaths of the Civil War. Some minor Latin American slaveholding countries also ended slavery without compensation. Otherwise, at the ending of slavery (and also serfdom in Europe) the slaveowners received some form of compensation. This could take various forms, or some combinations of methods. A popular set of measures was payment in part, in cash or bond, combined with payment in the form of a coerced period of labor requirements by the enslaved or apprentices. A more widely practiced method was what was called in Brazil “the law of the free womb”, where a child born to a slave mother was considered to be legally free, but subject to a period of apprenticeship to the mother’s owner for a period, depending on the country, of 15–30 years. This varied by gender in some cases, but this method meant that none of the present enslaved were freed. The length of time of the apprenticeship was meant to equal the time that it took a child to cover its rearing costs. Thus, the costs to taxpayers were held down and it was expected that they would be more accepting of the emancipation of slaves. The first New World emancipation was in Vermont in 1777, freeing a total of 19 slaves with a period of apprenticeship up to 12 years, followed by New Hampshire and Massachusetts in the 1790’s. By 1804, five northern states had passed “free womb” legislation to end slavery, but because of the provisions of the legislation, slavery existed in some northern states until the 1840s. At times it was argued that the slaves, not the owners, should be compensated for the theft of their labor, but this argument was infrequently made, and never carried out. Rather, there was no sustained attack on the importance of defending property rights, which justified the compensation paid to slaveowners.

There were a few calls to compensate ex-slaves after the Civil War, but in the U.S. and elsewhere there was not a determined calling for what came to be called reparations until the 1960s. This followed the post-World War II German payments, mainly to Jews, for the holocaust and confiscation of assets. The call for reparations in the U.S. was based on the cost to today’s blacks of both the legacy of slavery as well as racial discrimination in the post-slavery period. Estimates of the magnitude of reparations were based in part on the income exploited from

slave labor, and in part the shortfall in black welfare, economic and cultural, in today's world that could be attributed to the prior existence of slavery. The estimated cost of reparations, including the accrued interest for over 100 years, is astoundingly high. It is not clear exactly who should receive payments and who should be responsible for making them. Reparations could be made to individual blacks, or else, as others proposed, grants made to the black community. Although there has been considerable agitation on the issue, and a bill has been before Congress for several years, no reparations have been paid due to slavery. Indeed several states have apologized for slavery, but this has been with the provision that this is in lieu of any payment of reparations.

Since the 1960s there have been frequent calls for reparations for slavery and also for similar payments to various indigenous populations. Payments to American and Canadian Indians and Australian aborigines had the benefit, for legal purposes, of the prior ownership of land. There are also claims made for those nations in Africa which argued that they suffered due to colonization and the slave trade, as well as for many other groups that suffered harm, economic or cultural, due to European actions. One interesting aspect of the past several years is how unsuccessful requests for reparations have been. There has, however, been the rise of a new form of government action. This is the widespread use of apologies. The form of apologies has become standard. The evil action has been apologized for, indicating the recognition of some inappropriate action, but it is specified that no compensation or reparation will be paid. There are several cases where apologies are not given because of the possibility that it might lead to a legal basis for reparations.

As of recent years the spectrum of apologies include:

United States:

- by 8 states, including 4 southern, for slavery;
- by the Federal government for the late nineteenth century overthrow of the Hawaiian government;
- by the State of Illinois for the expulsion of the Mormons in 1846;
- by Congress (2005) for slavery and discrimination laws.

Britain:

- for the Irish Famine;
- for slavery and the slave trade (two times);
- by the City of London for the slave trade;
- to the Maoris of New Zealand (this made by the Queen personally).

Catholic Church:

- for the Inquisition;
- for slavery and the slave trade;
- for Mary Tudor;
- for the Crusades;
- for St. Bartholomew's massacre;
- for the treatment of Jews;
- for child abuse by priests.

Netherlands:

- for the colonization of Indonesia.

France:

- for slavery, recognizing slavery as a crime against humanity.

Germany:

- for the holocaust;
- for massacres in South-West Africa.

Australia:

- for the treatment of Aborigines.

Canada:

- for the treatment of Indigenous peoples.

Japan:

- for Korea; both for the early 20th century colonization, and later for the “comfort women”.

Ghana and Benin:

- for their role in the slave trade.

Papua New Guinea:

- to Fiji for cannibalizing four missionaries in 1878.

Given the recent increased frequency of apologies we should anticipate that this will become a standard measure in future years. It might be noted, however, that in many, perhaps most, cases, “apologies” have been really stated as “regrets”, a less guilty and contrite statement, since it deals with actions for which no responsibility is accepted.

30. I have given my presentation more attention to slavery in the U.S., the British West Indies, and Brazil, because it is what I know best and also because these are the largest of the nineteenth century slave powers. This, however, has not done justice to the study of slavery in the colonies of other European powers, nor to the many other historical cases of enslavement.

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