

– Introduction –

COMPENSATION AS A DRIVING FORCE FOR ABOLITION



Since the end of World War II there have been a growing number of requests for compensation for historic wrongs. Such reparations, granted mostly by governments, can be of three types: material (the return of artworks, ancestral remains, etc.), symbolic (apologies, education, commemorative sites and days, etc.), or financial (monetary payments).¹ The “goodwill” of those paying the compensation is explained by the fact that a country’s or company’s “moral image” and respectability are drawing more positive public opinion. Such “moral” notions have become sufficiently important on the international stage that they are an incentive for countries to recognize the wrongs they have committed and ensure that justice is done for the victims.

These requests for reparations echo a practice that was widespread in the nineteenth century yet is now largely unknown. While granting reparations to human-trafficking and slavery victims who come forward is a subject for debate today, compensation was in fact provided in the past, after the abolition of slavery in the Americas. It was intended to indemnify victims who had suffered harm. It was not granted to the slaves, however, but to their owners, who at the time were considered the injured party. Today, paying compensation to the plantation owners seems strange or even shocking, but this phenomenon occurred in many instances during the abolition of slavery in the New World.

Compensation could take many forms. A financial indemnity consisted of a monetary payment to the plantation owners. This type of compensation was visible throughout the abolition processes of Britain, Sweden,

Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and some countries in continental Spanish America. Planters could also be paid in labor provided by the emancipated slave. In these cases abolition occurred gradually, while the ex-slaves were forced to work for their former masters for a certain number of additional years. Both adults (in the British, Danish, and Spanish abolitions, and that of Dutch Guiana) and children (in the northern United States and Latin America) could be subject to this “apprenticeship” period. Finally, a less widespread form of compensation gave the slave owners land. In Puerto Rico, owners received financial compensation for the first three slaves they freed and land grants for any others. In some Latin American countries, the owners of slaves enrolled in the army received this same sort of material compensation.

These three types of indemnity, payable by the government and/or the slaves, could also be combined. British and Danish planters, and those in Surinam, were compensated both financially and through forced labor. Puerto Rican owners of more than three slaves were granted triple compensation in the form of a monetary payment, forced labor, and a land grant.

While some governments did offer compensation, others did not. After Southern plantation owners in the United States lost the Civil War, they received nothing. It follows that in such cases, arguments sufficiently convincing to prevent compensation must have been raised during the abolition process. So indemnification of slave owners was not a foregone conclusion and was sometimes successfully fought. This qualification seems to be confirmed by the variety of compensation granted. Some governments preferred a single form, while others combined several types. Such a wide range of solutions begs an examination of how the idea of indemnification came about and the causes of the various compensation options chosen when slavery was abolished in the New World. How did contemporaries justify granting planters an indemnity? What were the arguments for and against a step that today seems so questionable? Why did some European colonial governments (France, Great Britain, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain) and sovereign nations in the Americas (Haiti, Spanish American countries, the United States, Brazil) devise systems for compensation while others did not?

Quite surprisingly, the existing secondary literature contains scarcely any answers to these questions. Even when it does address the compensation issue, some aspects are covered more thoroughly than others.² The approach usually taken is primarily “technical” in nature: the focus is on the amount of the payments (in absolute figures or relative terms), how it was paid, the granters, and the recipients. Most of these studies concentrate on the final phase of the process once compensation had been

accepted in principle and the amount determined. The overall issue has never been systematically examined in its totality, from the germ of the idea of indemnification to its goals, from proponents' and opponents' arguments and the difficulties encountered throughout the process to their resolution. So a huge piece of the puzzle is missing. This relative neglect comes from the fact that other areas have attracted more interest from specialists, and from the complex nature of the subject. Most historians generally focus on the causes of abolition, its major figures, or abolitionist societies. The topic of compensation also suffers from a lack of visibility and is not easily understood. Its existence is not immediately obvious to a researcher interested in the abolition of slavery, and it sometimes even seems purely anecdotal.

In order to identify compensation as one of the essential components of emancipation, as I will attempt to show, we must learn more about the specific details of each case. Obviously, our problem here is only one of the many factors in an instance of abolition, which itself is part of the much broader issue of slavery, with its many aspects (economic, moral, political, cultural, etc.) at various levels (local, regional, national, and international).³ Having to read on these many levels sometimes tends to cloud the issue and make the world-history phenomenon known as compensation difficult to assimilate and fully understand.

Despite such challenges, this study aims to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted phenomenon of compensation to planters by examining its goals and what was at stake. The hypothesis underlying the research is that the compensation issue is of major importance to an understanding of the various instances of emancipation in the Americas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—even though it has been neglected by historians who did not consider it so. Its omnipresence in the processes of abolition and the many forms it took are both indications that lead one to suggest that compensation was one of the driving forces behind emancipation. Furthermore, focusing our attention on this issue may enable us to broaden the scope of the “reasons” for abolition favored to date by specialists, who invoke mainly legal or economic factors to explain compensation for plantation owners. However, while the expropriation of the slave owners' human property and the other losses likely to arise from emancipation are the main explanations cited for this phenomenon, other elements—social and political factors, for example—should also be considered in order to gain an understanding of the complex issues of emancipation.

This research establishes that contemporaries of slavery's end, far from considering only the rights of slaveholders, thought of an indemnity as a way to reconcile economic, social (even ethical), and political aims, in

the sense that life in the colonial “city” was being reorganized along new lines. Compensation brings together categories that were usually distinct and so falls squarely under the concept of “moral economy,” having the public good—in the broad sense of the term—as its objective, and combining the “just” and the “useful”⁴ into a single action. This makes it possible to understand both why there was such a variety of abolition processes and the similarities between them.

The originality of the method used here lies both in the choice of comparison as a means of investigation and in the selection of parliamentary debates as sources. Since the work involved retracing the history and development of the phenomenon of compensation—itsself closely enmeshed with slavery and the various instances of abolition—over several decades and on a continental scale, the use of comparison emerged as the obvious choice. The tiny state of Vermont in the northern United States began the abolition process in 1777 by freeing about twenty slaves. At the opposite end of the process—speaking geographically, chronologically, and numerically—Brazil was the last, bringing up the rear in 1888 by freeing over 1.5 million people. Between these two dates, about thirty instances of national emancipation freed over 7.5 million slaves out of an American population of 25 million in 1800 and 59 million in 1850.⁵

The spatial and temporal scope of the topic suggested that I should undertake specific case studies for more detailed analysis. The relative number of slaves and the amount of compensation paid in actual monetary figures were used as selection criteria. I chose to examine the American continents, where the plantation system prevailed and slave labor

Table 0.1. Composition of the Colonial Population⁶ (in thousands)

<i>Place (Abolition Dates)</i>	<i>Slave Population</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>%</i>
Saint-Domingue (1793–94)	465.4	523.8	88.9
British colonies (1834)	666.7	842.7	81.3
French colonies (1848)	214.1	272.0	78.7
Dutch colonies (1863)	61.2	83.4	73.4
Danish colonies (1847)	26.9	41.3	65.2
Southern United States (1865)	3,954.1	9,103.3	43.4
Spanish colonies (1870–80)	412.3	1,979.8	20.8
Brazil (1871–88)	1,510.8	9,553.5	15.8
Swedish colony (1846)	0.5	4.0	13.0
Northern United States (1777–1804)	40.4	1,922.4	2.1
Continental Spanish America (1811–69)	225.0	14,000.0	1.6

Note: The years shown are those closest to the dates of emancipation.

predominated.⁷ The concentration of the slave population in colonies in the Americas allowed me to refine this initial selection. Just before abolition began, over two-thirds of the population in Saint-Domingue and the British, French, Dutch, and Danish colonies consisted of slaves. There is a clear break between these and a second group of colonies in which slaves made up less than half of the population. So the “model” cases were selected from the first group.

The French and British cases could then be differentiated by the amount of the monetary payment. The two instances of French abolition in 1794 and 1848, and the British instance in 1833, are also the three largest over time.⁸ The choice of the abolitionist movements in France and Great Britain as subjects is all the more justified because these countries were two

Table 0.2. Specifics of the Major Instances of Abolition⁹

<i>Place (Abolition Dates)</i>	<i>Compensation (Millions of £)</i>	<i>Apprenticeship (Year)</i>	<i>Form</i>
British colonies (1834)	20.0	4–6 (4–4)	Total
French colonies (1848)	5.0	–	Total
Saint-Domingue/Haiti (1793–94)	3.6	–	Total
Puerto Rico (1873)	1.4	3	Total
Cuba (1880)	–	8 (6)	Gradual (18)
Netherlands Antilles (1863)	–	–	Total
Surinam (1863)	1.0	10	Total
Danish colonies (1847)	0.2	12 (1)	Total
Northern United States (1777–1804)	–	–	Gradual (18–28)
District of Columbia (1862)	0.2	–	Total
Southern United States (1865)	–	–	Total
Swedish colony (1846)	<0.1	–	Total
Brazil (1888)	–	–	Gradual (21)
Latin America (1811–69)	–	–	Gradual (14–25)

Notes:

- A hyphen (-) indicates that data do not exist for the case in point.
- Compensation data have been converted to pounds sterling using the following exchange rates: £1 = 25.23 francs (1848), 12.11 guilders (1860), \$4.87 (1862), and 25.225 pesetas (1870).
- The numbers in the “Apprenticeship” column indicate the years of forced labor stipulated by the abolition laws. The numbers in parentheses indicate the actual duration of the apprenticeship period.
- The “Form” column indicates the form of abolition implemented in the relevant colony. The numbers in parentheses indicate the age at which children yet to be born were to be “freed” from forced labor.

of the largest slave-trading and pro-slavery powers. Consequently, their decision as to how slavery would be abolished influenced later emancipations inspired by their successes and failures. The French and British cases were also selected for more in-depth treatment through the use of primary sources; others were examined using secondary literature.

The parliamentary debates were chosen as the basis for this research because of the very characteristic course of action taken by the abolitionists and the presence of a large proportion of abolition stakeholders in parliaments.¹⁰ As Drescher emphasizes, the choice of parliamentary debates as a source of investigation has the advantage of providing a relatively balanced view of the arguments and counterarguments on the issue.¹¹ Slavery supporters rubbed shoulders with abolitionists in the houses of the legislature, where they took turns stating their positions on the motions put forward. The alternating speeches show the positions of each side much more symmetrically than other information sources such as the petitions, pamphlets, and newspaper articles put out mainly by abolitionist circles. So debates in Great Britain's House of Lords and House of Commons, and in France's National Convention, Chamber of Peers, Chamber of Deputies, or National Assembly, depending on the time period being considered, are at the heart of this research.

I also analyzed the minutes and reports from parliamentary committees assigned by the government to study the issue of abolishing slavery. These records are available at the Senate House Library (SHL) and the Institute of Historical Research (IHR) in London, and also in the Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer (ANOM) in Aix-en-Provence. The same is true of the documents issued by the British and French committees that the parliaments made responsible for distributing payments to the recipients, which are available at the National Archives in Kew, ANOM, and the Centre Historique des Archives Nationales (CHAN) in Paris. In addition to the parliamentary debates, I also consulted many works published by slavery supporters and opponents. Once an author was found to have taken a position on compensation, all of that author's works were examined. In this way, I obtained a selection of works from the catalogues of the SHL, IHR, ANOM, BNF, CHAN, and the Bibliothèque Administrative in Paris, as well as the Bibliothèque Cantonale Universitaire (BCU) in Lausanne.¹²

While using parliamentary sources to study the abolition process is not a new idea,¹³ the originality of our process lies in its systematic approach. Abolition-related arguments by House of Commons and Chamber of Deputies members were methodically inventoried and tabulated by topic. The tables were then used for a statistical study of the main questions raised during the parliamentary debates concerning the abolition of,

first, the slave trade then slavery itself.¹⁴ The analysis easily adapted to the chronology of abolition, addressing the initial process of abolishing the slave trade then the later suppression of slavery itself. So for Great Britain, the statistical treatment of the arguments set forth in the House of Commons was divided into segments, lasting from 1788 to 1807 and from 1823 to 1833; and for the Chamber of Deputies in France from 1790 to 1818 then from 1831 to 1845.¹⁵

This methodology enabled me to construct a four-part study in which analysis of the arguments made by British and French members of parliament lets the contemporaries of abolition speak again. A study of the origins and positions of those for and against compensation will be covered in the first chapter. Next the debate between indemnification's proponents and opponents will be explained before being put back into context and discussed in terms of its scope and what was at stake. To this end, the various arguments advanced during the parliamentary debates will be grouped into three main categories: legal (chapter 2), economic (chapter 3), and political (chapter 4). The goal is to understand how the issue of compensation was raised and subsequently became a pressing concern for participants in the abolition process. This analysis will make it possible to explain and measure compensation's influence on the far-reaching and complex issue of abolition in the New World.¹⁶

Notes

1. Concerning the contemporary issue of reparations for historic wrongs, see Bouda Etemad, *Crimes et réparations* [Crimes and reparation] (Brussels: André Versaille, 2008).
2. To my knowledge, six studies exist—four dissertations and two articles—that address this topic specifically. Half of them concern British compensation, the other half French compensation. See Kathleen M. Butler, *The Economics of Emancipation: Jamaica and Barbados, 1823–1843* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Nicholas Draper, "'Possessing Slaves': Ownership, Compensation and British Metropolitan Society at the Time of Emancipation, 1834–1840" (Ph.D. diss., University of London, 2008), published in 2010 as *The Price of Emancipation: Slave-Ownership, Compensation and British Society at the End of Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Cécile Ernatus, "L'indemnité coloniale en Guadeloupe, Guyane et Martinique entre 1848 et 1860: monnaie de pierre, monnaie de sable, monnaie de sang" [Colonial compensation in Guadeloupe, Guiana, and Martinique between 1848 and 1860: stone money, sand money, blood money] (Ph.D. diss., Université Paris X, 2004); Ronald E. P. Wastell, "The History of Slave Compensation, 1838–1845" (Ph.D. diss., University of London [King's College], 1932). The subject of compensation also comes up in the following works, in the broader context of the abolition of slavery, treated either from a comparative standpoint or in monograph form: David Baronov, *The Abolition of Slavery in Brazil: The "Liberation" of Africans through the Emancipation of Capital* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000);

- David B. Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), esp. 168–226; Seymour Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment. Free Labour versus Slavery in British Emancipation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), *From Slavery to Freedom: Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1986), and *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977); Stanley L. Engerman, *Slavery, Emancipation, and Freedom: Comparative Perspectives* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), esp. 36–39, “Slavery and Emancipation in Comparative Perspective: A Look at Some Recent Debates,” *Journal of Economic History (The Tasks of Economic History)* 46, no. 2 (June 1986): 317–39, “Some Economic and Demographic Comparisons of Slavery in the United States and the British West Indies,” *Economic History Review*, new series, 29, no. 2 (May 1976): 258–75; Stanley L. Engerman and Robert W. Fogel, “Philanthropy at Bargain Prices: Notes on the Economics of Gradual Emancipation,” *Journal of Legal Studies* 3, no. 2 (1974): 377–401; Claudia D. Goldin, “The Economics of Emancipation,” *Journal of Economic History (The Tasks of Economic History)* 33, no. 1 (March, 1973): 66–85; Lawrence Jennings, *French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802–1848* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), and *French Reaction to British Slave Emancipation* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988); Franklin W. Knight, “The Disintegration of the Caribbean Slave Systems, 1772–1886,” in *General History of the Caribbean: The Slave Societies of the Caribbean*, ed. Franklin W. Knight (London: UNESCO Publishing and Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1997), 3:322–45; Nelly Schmidt, *L’engrenage de la liberté, Caraïbes – XIX^e siècle* [Freedom’s chain of events, Caribbean—nineteenth century] (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l’Université de Provence, 1995), esp. 125–38; Philippe Steiner, “Les économistes libéraux et l’esclavage (1815–1880): limites et ambiguïtés d’un engagement” [Liberal economists and slavery (1815–1880): limitations and ambiguities of a commitment], in *Abolir l’esclavage: Un réformisme à l’épreuve—(France, Suisse, Portugal, XVIII^e–XIX^e siècles)* [Abolishing slavery: Putting reform to the test—(France, Switzerland, Portugal, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries)], ed. Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008), 225–45.
3. Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau made this observation concerning the slave trade in “Pour une étude du milieu maritime nantais entre les fins XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles” [Concerning a study of Nantes’s shipping circles between the late eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries], *Enquêtes et documents* no. 17 (1990): 55.
 4. Concerning the notions of “just” (*juste*) and “useful” (*utile*) in abolitionist discourse, see Caroline Oudin-Bastide, “Discours colonial et discours abolitionniste: entre passions et intérêts” [Colonial and abolitionist discourse: between passions and interests], in *Abolir l’esclavage*, 247–76. Concerning the concept of “moral economy,” see Didier Fassin, “Les économies morales revisitées” [Moral economies revisited], *Annales HSS* no. 6 (November–December 2009) 1237–66; Johanna Simeant, “Economie morale et protestation—détours africains” [Moral economy and protesting—African digressions] *Genèse* 81 (2010): 136–51; and Edward P. Thompson, “The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century,” *Past and Present* 50 (1971): 76–136.
 5. Rondo Cameron, *A Concise Economic History of the World: From Paleolithic Times to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 193.
 6. Sources for Table 0.1:
 - Saint-Domingue (1789): Charles Frostin, *Les révoltes blanches à Saint-Domingue aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles: Haïti avant 1789* [The white revolts in Saint-Domingue in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Haiti before 1789] (Paris: L’Ecole, 1975), 382.
 - The number of slaves in the British colonies was taken from Barry W. Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807–1834* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University

- Press, 1984), 47. The figures for the total population of the British colonies (1830), and the slave and total populations of the Danish colonies (1835) and Dutch colonies (1830/1832) were taken from Stanley L. Engerman and Barry W. Higman, "The Demographic Structure of the Caribbean Slave Societies in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *General History of the Caribbean*, 3:50–51.
- French colonies (1846): "Relevé de la population des colonies, d'après les derniers recensements parvenus au ministère de la marine" [Summary of the population of the colonies, according to the latest censuses received by the Ministry of the Navy], in *Abolition de l'esclavage. Procès-Verbaux: rapports et projets de décrets. Commission instituée pour préparer l'acte d'abolition immédiate de l'esclavage* [Abolition of slavery. Minutes: reports and draft decrees. Committee established to prepare the official document for the immediate abolition of slavery] (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1848), 295.
 - Spanish colonies, Puerto Rico (1860), and Cuba (1862): Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and Antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico (1833–1874)* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999), 16, 208n31.
 - Brazil (1872): Baronov, *Abolition of Slavery in Brazil*, 157.
 - Swedish colony (1846): The number of slaves on Saint-Barthélemy has been estimated at slightly more than 500 in 1846, at 531 according to Augustin Cochin, *L'abolition de l'esclavage* [The abolition of slavery] (Fort-de-France and Paris: Ed. Emile Désormeaux, 1979 [1861]), 393; and at 518 by Victor Schoelcher, *Histoire de l'esclavage pendant les deux dernières années* [History of slavery during the last two years] (Paris: Pagnerre, 1847), 534. The total population of this colony in 1836 is given by Stanley L. Engerman and Barry W. Higman, 51.
 - Southern states of the United States (1860): According to the 1860 census, for which the data can be consulted at <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1860.htm>. The total population present in the Southern states alone is broken out.
 - Northern states of the United States (1790): Peter Kolchin, *Une institution très particulière: l'esclavage aux Etats-Unis, 1619–1877* [A very peculiar institution: slavery in the United States, 1619–1877] (Paris: Belin, 1998), 294–97.
 - Continental Spanish America (1810): Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776–1848* (New York: Verso, 1988), 334, 339.
7. This initial choice is also justified by the fact that there was no abolition process as such outside of the Americas. While the need for emancipation was discussed in the context of the New World colonies, elsewhere the issue came up differently and later. When Africa and Asia were colonized, the need to eliminate slavery was acknowledged by all of the Western nations. So it was not the subject of parliamentary debates as was the case with the American territories.
 8. The French cases occurred in two installments: an initial instance in 1793 and 1794, then a second in 1848. Drescher considers that even though each instance of abolition has its own history, those of the South in the United States and the British and French cases are the most significant, from both quantitative and qualitative standpoints. See Seymour Drescher, "British Way, French Way: Opinion Building and Revolution in the Second French Slave Emancipation," *American Historical Review* 96, no. 3 (June 1991): 710. While some emancipations did occur before the British and French cases, their relative scope must be taken into account. The slave populations they affected were only negligible (in both absolute and relative terms) compared to the selected cases. The average proportion of the slave population in the northern United States was only 2.1 percent (Kolchin, *Une institution très particulière*, 296, table 3). In continental Spanish America, Venezuela had the highest proportion of slaves. Its slave population came to 10 percent of the total population in 1810 and less than 1 percent at the time of the final abolition in 1854 (Charles Lancha, *Histoire de l'Amérique hispanique de Bolivar à nos jours* [History of Spanish America from Bolivar to our times] (Paris: L'Harmattan), 2003, 27,

- 51). The 500 slaves present in the Swedish colony of Saint-Barthélemy and the 26,900 freed in the Danish colonies in 1846 and 1847, represent 428 times and 8 times fewer, respectively, than the 214,100 French slaves in 1848. Therefore, the North American, Latin American, Danish, and Swedish emancipations have been set aside, even though some of them were earlier than the cases that were selected in the end.
9. Sources for Table 0.2:
 - British colonies: Franklin W. Knight, “The Disintegration of the Caribbean Slave Systems, 1771–1886,” in *General History of the Caribbean*, 336.
 - French colonies: Josette Fallope, *Esclaves et citoyens: Les Noirs à la Guadeloupe au XIX^e siècle* [Slaves and citizens: Blacks in Guadeloupe in the nineteenth century] (Basse-Terre: Société d’Histoire de la Guadeloupe, 1992), 348–49.
 - Saint-Domingue/Haiti: Compensation in Saint-Domingue, as set by the French edict of 17 April 1825, was £6 million (150 million French francs). It was reduced to £3.6 million (90 million French francs) in 1838.
 - Spanish colonies: Knight, “Disintegration of the Caribbean Slave Systems,” 338.
 - Dutch colonies: Dutch compensation, see Edwin Horlings, “An Economic Explanation of the Late Abolition of Slavery in Suriname,” in *Fifty Years Later: Antislavery, Capitalism and Modernity in the Dutch Orbit*, ed. Gert Oostindie (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1995), 112.
 - Danish colonies: On page 323 of “Disintegration of the Caribbean Slave Systems,” Knight mentions compensation of over 5 million French francs, but does not give an exact number.
 - District of Columbia: Claudia D. Goldin, “Economics of Emancipation,” 73n15.
 - Swedish colony: The amount of the Swedish indemnity was £10,000 (250,000 French francs), Schoelcher, *Histoire de l’esclavage*, 534.
 10. Translator’s note: Since the discussion in this book refers to a number of different parliaments, the word is capitalized only when referring specifically to the British Parliament.
 11. Seymour Drescher, “People and Parliament: The Rhetoric of the British Slave Trade,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 20, no. 4 (Spring 1990): 568.
 12. However, it was impossible to make this an exhaustive inventory due to the huge number of titles on slavery. With regard to the French abolition process, two master’s theses in contemporary history, defended at the Université de Bretagne-Sud and directed by Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau, provide exhaustive lists of all of the French publications about the slave trade, slavery, and the colonies between 1814 and 1849, that is, from the Restoration to the 1849 Law on Compensation. The first of these theses, by Elodie Le Garrec, is entitled *Le débat sur l’abolition de la traite des Noirs en France (1814–1831): Un reflet de l’évolution politique, économique et culturelle de la France* [The debate on abolition of the negro trade in France (1814–1831): A reflection on France’s political, economic, and cultural evolution]. The second, by Audrey Le Galudec, is *Le débat pour l’abolition de l’esclavage en France (1831–1849): Un reflet de l’évolution politique, économique et culturelle de la France* [The debate on the abolition of slavery in France (1831–1849): A reflection on France’s political, economic, and cultural evolution].
 13. See for example Izhak Gross, “The Abolition of Negro Slavery and British Parliamentary Politics,” *Historical Journal* 23, no. 1 (1980): 63–85; and Drescher, “People and Parliament.”
 14. See appendix A.
 15. The main justification for this choice lies in the amount of time separating abolition of the slave trade from the final freeing of the slaves. The process of abolishing the slave trade in the Americas extended from the last quarter of the eighteenth century to the 1860s, or nearly a century. The fight against the slave trade lasted nineteen years in Great Britain (1788–1807) and forty-two years in France (1790–1831). The time between the prohibition of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery was twenty-six years in

Great Britain (1807–33) and seventeen years in France (1831–48). So abolition usually moved forward in two stages that were separated in time. The interval between the stages of the process prompted us to consider them separately.

16. This approach will thus cover the various stages and main aspects of the issue of compensation, except for the local payment of the compensation in the colonies and investment of it once settlement was complete, which is actually an entirely separate subject. Furthermore, this aspect of the issue is explored in part in the doctoral theses cited above. Omitting it is also justified by the geographic dispersal of the necessary material and the considerable number of records that would have to be perused. For example, the documents necessary for such a study would have had to be consulted in the departmental archives of the five relevant French overseas territories and in the nineteen British colonies. So this aspect of the issue was studied exclusively by means of the secondary literature.