I, John Callaghan, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of:
Doctor of Philosophy
in Political Science
It is entitled:
"Slavery and Major Power Warfare: Similar Paths to Obsolescence?"

Student Signature: John Callaghan

This work and its defense approved by:

Committee Chair: Richard Harknett, PhD

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Slavery and Major Power Warfare: Similar Paths to Obsolescence?

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Cincinnati in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the Department of Political Science of the College of Arts and Sciences by

John Callaghan

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Committee Chair: Richard J. Harknett, Ph.D.
Abstract

A debate exists in the international relations community over the future prospects of warfare, particularly warfare between the major powers. Many scholars have accepted the notion that interstate warfare is declining. One in particular, John Mueller, has offered the intriguing analogy that war is declining just as slavery did before, because the idea of the institution had first become rationally and normatively unacceptable, and now has become subrationally unthinkable. This historical analogy implies both that major state institutions can become obsolete and that such an outcome can come about through changes in ideas, beliefs, and norms. This dissertation uses a qualitative, congruence/process-tracing methodology to assess the historical record of transatlantic slavery and finds that that institution is sufficiently analogous to warfare to warrant comparison. However, while Mueller suggests a normative cause for slavery's decline, the case studies presented here suggest a more complex causal process that included a mix of normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic factors, including the importance of societal inclination to the success of norm adoption. Such a conclusion challenges many of the assumptions of core international relations theory. For example, the fact that Britain was the first state to end the slave trade and practice despite the fact that such measures were not in its own economic and geostrategic interests, along with the fact that the nature and structure of domestic politics significantly mattered in determining when and which states rejected slavery and how that process proceeded, challenge the dominant realist literature framework. On the other hand, the fact that hegemonic Britain became the most powerful "norm entrepreneur" acting against slavery and that its leadership was crucial to the institution's demise challenges constructivist frames which stress individual/group transnational activism. The study concludes with observations on the prospect for an anti-offensive warfare norm in the early 21st century and suggests that the nuanced findings this study provides can serve as an important foundation for further research on the process of decline, and thereby, the prospects for war in the future.
Preface

In his 2007 reflection on transatlantic slavery entitled _Slavery, Emancipation, and Freedom: Comparative Perspectives_ Stanley Engerman notes "it is striking that, within a period of only about one century after the start of the first antislavery movement in England, slavery was ended in the Americas and, in the same century, serfdom abolished in Europe, and that it was then, over the next three-quarters of a century, ended as a legal institution in various colonies and other European offshoots, and in much of the world."¹ As he notes, over four centuries (1500 to 1900), between 10 and 12 million Africans were brought to the new world as slaves and for most of that time very little thought was given to the propriety of the activity, and certainly not to ending it. During the same time, the Europeans were almost always at war and probably suffered about 13 million casualties.² Therefore, in this long sweep of history it appears that slavery ended rather "abruptly," as John Mueller puts it, and that perhaps warfare could just as quickly fade to obsolescence.³

The following work looks at transatlantic slavery's decline in order to better understand what can be learned regarding warfare. While a century is a mere blip on the long path of history, we need beware a sweeping generalization that once British abolitionists turned their critical eyes on the institution in the late 1700s it was just a simple matter of time before the rest of the world fell in line. As will be seen in the hundreds of pages to come, slavery's process of decline was long, convoluted and rather more complex.

Before turning to the dissertation, it is worth mentioning a couple items regarding the process and form of this work. First, with regard to process: a study of slavery would seemingly not be complete without discussing racism as a variable, and yet, that is what this work does. I have deliberately left racism out of this dissertation. Racism was pervasive throughout the slave-trading/slave-holding states discussed and remained so

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even after abolition and emancipation. One need make the distinction between the idea that blacks and whites are truly equal and the idea that the slave trade/slavery should exist. However ridiculous it may seem in the modern world, in many cases, the former proposition – that blacks and whites are equal – did not develop for years and indeed racism still exists to this day. The latter concept – that no matter if you believe blacks and whites equal or not, the slave trade and practice is unacceptable – is the focus of this study. To be clear, both the trade and the practice of slavery were abolished long before racist ideas lost their currency in the societies studied; and sadly, such misplaced, prejudicial ideas still linger.

With regard to form, note that footnotes are more prevalent in some sections than in others. In most cases, I footnoted every sentence or relevant item/note, whereas in others I put a single footnote at the end of the paragraph to denote that the ideas in the paragraph came from a combination of the works cited. I hope readers find the citations sufficient. Further, please note that the words abolition and emancipation have mixed connotations throughout the text. In general, abolition and/or abolitionism tend to refer to the movement to abolish the slave trade. Emancipation and emancipationism tend to connote the effort to end the slavery practice. However, abolitionism can also be used to describe both movements – both to abolish the trade and/or abolish the practice. For example Seymour Drescher uses the term abolition to describe the overall anti-slavery movement in his 2009 treatise Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. Finally, there are an abundance of spellings (different hyphenations, Anglicized versus American English forms of words, etc.) and new words (such as immediatism, etc.) that spring forth from the literature on slavery. I’ve tended to keep the spellings from the works being cited, and this results in a wide range of renderings of the same concepts. I hope the reader is not distracted by the variety of handlings.

In the end, I came upon this study because I am an international relations scholar interested in the future prospects of warfare. In the process, I had to become versed in the long, rich history of anti-slavery. I only hope that I did this literature justice, and provided something of interest for enthusiasts of either subject – slavery or warfare.
For Jackie and our family,
and in memory of Mom
Acknowledgments

Thanks to Dr. Laura Dudley Jenkins and Dr. Thomas G. Moore for all the advice and assistance; and especially to Dr. Richard J. Harknett for all the hours of work, outstanding mentorship, and unmitigated support. I couldn't have been more blessed.
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Chapter 1
An Introduction into Major Power War and the Decline of Slavery

A debate rages in the international relations community over the future prospects of warfare, particularly warfare between the major powers. Many scholars have accepted the notion that interstate warfare is declining.\(^1\) More particularly, some scholars assert that warfare between the most powerful states in the system – the major powers – is declining and this decline is of interest because the absence of such warfare would dramatically change the dynamics of the relationships between states in the international system.\(^2\) As Raimo Väyrynen concludes, "if the hypothesis about the waning of major-power war is accepted, it has important consequences for the study of international relations... many theories of international relations will simply cease to exist if the thesis about the decline of major-power wars can be sustained."\(^3\)

If one is to judge trends in interstate warfare then one must develop a definition of both states and warfare. This has been the theoretical quest of the Correlates of War Project data sets started by J. David Singer and Melvin Small in the 1960s and continuing through to today.\(^4\) Singer and Small established criteria for statehood/membership in the international system based on population estimates and diplomatic recognition.\(^5\) Given their foundational efforts, the

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Correlates of War Project has gone on to document and examine cases of inter-state, 6 intra-state, 7 and extra-state 8 war 9 from 1816 to the present. Using this and other data, scholars have suggested several trends in the history of interstate warfare. Political Scientist Kalevi Holsti reports a general, but fluctuating decline in interstate warfare, with a particular decline in the decades since the end of the Second World War. 10 For example, Table 1.1 reveals that between 1815 and 1914, the risk of war involvement by state per year was 1 in 67, while from 1945 to 2003 it was between 1 in 167 and 1 in 250, a marked decrease in probability. Professors Marie T. Henehan and John Vasquez come to similar quantitative conclusions. They note that the overall probability of an interstate dispute escalating to war was 0.180 for the entire period 1816-1992; the overall probability of war in the 1816-1945 time frame was 0.296, but only 0.089 from 1946-1992. 11

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6 According to the Correlates of War Project, inter-state wars are "serious military conflicts between states." See http://www.correlatesofwar.org.

7 According to the Correlates of War Project, intra-state wars are wars "within states." See http://www.correlatesofwar.org.

8 According to the Correlates of War Project, extra-state are wars "between states and non-state actors." See http://www.correlatesofwar.org.

9 Mueller, John. "War Has Almost Ceased to Exist: An Assessment." Political Science Quarterly Vol. 124, No. 2, 2009: 298. As Mueller notes (based on the work of Singer and Small and the Correlates of War Project): "war is very commonly defined as an armed conflict between governments (in the case of international wars) or between a government and an at least somewhat organized domestic armed group (for civil wars) in which at least 1,000 people are killed each year as a direct consequence, or a fairly direct one (caught in the crossfire), of the fighting." This definition is a sufficient baseline from which to conduct quantitative analysis, but a more refined definition of warfare is needed for the present study and so this issue will be addressed again later in this chapter.


Therefore, again, the numbers suggest there's been a decline in the likelihood of war in the post-1945 period.\textsuperscript{12}

Table 1.1. Incidence of Interstate Wars, 1495-2003\textsuperscript{13}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Average # of states in the system</th>
<th># of interstate wars</th>
<th>Onset of war (every ____ years)</th>
<th>Interstate wars per state per year</th>
<th>Risk of war involvement by state per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1495-1600</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>1 in 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1648-1714</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>1 in 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1715-1814</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>1 in 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1815-1914</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>1 in 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-1941</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>1 in 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-1990</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>1 in 167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-2003</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>7*</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>1 in 250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This list includes the Gulf War, wars in Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Eritrea-Ethiopia, Nagorno-Karabakh, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the invasion of Iraq. Note that Holsti's table totals 8 interstate wars, counting the Yugoslavian wars in Croatia and Bosnia as distinct conflicts.

In his works Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War (1989), The Remnants of War (2004), and most recently "War Has Almost Ceased to Exist: An Assessment" (2009), Professor John Mueller has similarly reported a decline in warfare, to the point of declaring its obsolescence.\textsuperscript{14} The evidence he presents shows that while warfare continues to take place in the new millennium, it tends mostly to occur within societies (i.e. civil war), in non-state forms such as terrorism, or between lesser-developed countries. Interstate warfare and war between the major powers is in decline, particularly since 1945 (See Figure 1.1).


\textsuperscript{13} This table is based on Holsti, Kalevi J. "The Decline of Interstate War: Pondering Systemic Explanations." In The Waning of Major War: Theories and Debates. ed. Raimo Väyrynen. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006: 136. As Holsti notes, this tally "excludes European imperial expansion wars, wars among or against non-members of the central state system (e.g., Boxer rebellion, nineteenth century war in Latin America), post-1945 wars of 'national liberation', or internal wars."

The assertion that warfare between major powers is in decline, as opposed to just inter-state war, adds another level of complexity. How does one determine which states are the most powerful in the system in a given period? Here again, Singer and Small began working on measures of influence back in the 1960s, developing measures of kinetic and potential power to rank order states.\textsuperscript{15} Using this methodology, the Correlates of War Project has come up with a list of the major power for given periods, as shown in Table 1.2. If one uses this formulation of major power status, and marries it to the Correlates of War Project records on inter-state warfare, one can conclude that the likelihood of inter-state war involving at least one major power is reduced since World War II. Further, there is only one instance of war between major powers and that is the Korean War, involving the United States and China.

\textbf{Figure 1.1. Ongoing Wars, 1946-2008}\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{ongoing_wars.png}
\caption{Ongoing Wars, 1946-2008}
\end{figure}


Similarly, Henehan and Vasquez point out in their study "The Changing Probability of Interstate War, 1816-1992" that the base likelihood of warfare involving a major power during this entire period is 0.246, but only 0.077 in the period from 1946 to 1992. Others, such as John Mueller, further narrow the field by saying that there has been no warfare between "developed" countries since 1945. Mueller has been historically vague about how he defines "developed" status, but in his most recent work he includes the states of Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. Having left 1950-era China off the list of developed countries, there are then no interstate wars between major powers since 1945.

The point of this dissertation is not to re-litigate the defining or categorization of interstate and/or major power warfare. For the purposes of this study, major power warfare is defined as major military conflagrations between prominent global or regional states, the outcomes of which significantly impact the global or regional system. The present author is


19 Mueller, John. "War Has Almost Ceased to Exist: An Assessment." Political Science Quarterly Vol. 124, No. 2, 2009: 300. Frankly, although this is an improvement on precision, Mueller still suggests there are "a few other" developed states "like Japan" but doesn't mention who they are specifically.

20 Still others, such as Patrick Morgan and Peter Wallenstein, suggest that any definition of major powers would have to take into account major regional powers, and if one divides powers this way, one may include not the countries already listed, but others such as Israel, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, India, Indonesia, Egypt, South Africa, Nigeria, Brazil, and Argentina. If one goes to this level, then one might conclude that some of the Arab-Israeli wars or India-Pakistan conflicts were indeed major power wars. See Morgan, Patrick M. "Multilateral Institutions as Restraints on Major War." In The Waning of Major War: Theories and Debates. ed. Raimo Väyrynen. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006; or Wallenstein, Peter. "Trends in Major War: Too Early for Waning?" In The Waning of Major War: Theories and Debates. ed. Raimo Väyrynen. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006.

sufficiently convinced of and takes as a given the assumption that interstate and major power warfare have declined since the end of World War II. Given this assumption, the more pertinent overarching question is what is causing the decline in interstate/major power warfare?

**Table 1.2. Major Powers in the International System, 1816-2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Powers in the International System, 1816-2010</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>1898-Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>1816-Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1816-1940, 1945-Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany (Prussia)*</td>
<td>1816-1918, 1925-1945, 1991-Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria (Austria-Hungary)*</td>
<td>1816-1918</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1860-1943</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia (Soviet Union)*</td>
<td>1816-1917, 1922-Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1950-Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1991-Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Parentheses denotes states that have gone through name changes during various periods of major power status

Scholars have suggested several possible reasons for the apparent decline. One common assertion is that the development of nuclear weapons has been the most important factor in preventing war between major powers over the past half-century. Others suggest a similar, but more general, argument that new technologies have made modern warfare so costly as to preclude its use as a viable policy option. Alternatively, some reason that economic calculations and the world's increasing interdependence make war less likely. Other theorists credit the spread of

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democracy with the spread of peace among democratic states;\textsuperscript{26} while still others stress the importance of international institutions in reducing the likelihood of war.\textsuperscript{27}

Table 1.3. Interstate Wars, 1816-1945\textsuperscript{28}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Major Power Conflict?</th>
<th>War</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Major Power Conflict?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Franco-Spanish</td>
<td>1823</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Russo-Japanese</td>
<td>1904-1905</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Russo-Turkish</td>
<td>1828-1829</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Fourth Central American</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican-American</td>
<td>1846-1847</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Second Spanish-Moroccan</td>
<td>1909-1910</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austro-Sardinian</td>
<td>1848-1849</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Italo-Turkish</td>
<td>1910-1911</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Schleswig-Holstein</td>
<td>1848-1849</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>First Balkan</td>
<td>1912-1914</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War of the Roman Republic</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Second Balkan</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Plata</td>
<td>1851-1852</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>World War I</td>
<td>1914-1918</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimean</td>
<td>1853-1856</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Estonian War of Liberation</td>
<td>1918-1920</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anglo-Persian</td>
<td>1856-1857</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Latvian War of Liberation</td>
<td>1918-1920</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War of Italian Unification</td>
<td>1859</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Russo-Polish</td>
<td>1919-1920</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Spanish-Moroccan</td>
<td>1859-1860</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Hungarian Adversaries</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italian-Roman</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Second Greco-Turkish</td>
<td>1919-1922</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neapolitan</td>
<td>1860-1861</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Franco-Turkish</td>
<td>1919-1921</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franco-Mexican</td>
<td>1862-1867</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lithuanian-Polish</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuadorian-Columbian</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Manchurian</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Schleswig-Holstein</td>
<td>1864</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Second Sino-Japanese</td>
<td>1931-1933</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lopez</td>
<td>1864-1870</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chaco</td>
<td>1932-1935</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naval War</td>
<td>1865-1866</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Saudi-Yemeni</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven Weeks</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Conquest of Ethiopia</td>
<td>1935-1936</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franco-Prussian</td>
<td>1870-1871</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Third Sino-Japanese</td>
<td>1937-1941</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Sino-Japanese</td>
<td>1894-1895</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Changkufeng</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Peru</td>
<td>1894-1895</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Nomonhan</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish-American</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Russo-Finish</td>
<td>1939-1940</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxer Rebellion</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Franco-Thai</td>
<td>1940-1941</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sino-Russian</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>World War II</td>
<td>1939-1945</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 1.4. Interstate War Since 1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Major Power Conflict?</th>
<th>War</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Major Power Conflict?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Kashmir</td>
<td>1947-1949</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>War over Angola</td>
<td>1975-1976</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean War</td>
<td>1950-1953</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Vietnamese-Cambodian Border</td>
<td>1977-1979</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Shore Island</td>
<td>1954-1955</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ugandan-Tanzanian</td>
<td>1978-1979</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinai</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sino-Vietnamese Punitive</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Invasion of Hungary</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Iran-Iraq</td>
<td>1980-1988</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ifni</td>
<td>1957-1958</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Falklands</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan Straits</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>War over Lebanon</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War in Assam</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>War over the Azouzou Strip</td>
<td>1986-1987</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Kashmir</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gulf War</td>
<td>1990-1991</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six Days</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>War of Bosnian Independence</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War of Attrition</td>
<td>1969-1970</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Cenepe Valley</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football War</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>War for Kosovo</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War of the Communist Coalition</td>
<td>1970-1971</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Kargil</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War for Bangladesh</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>2001-Present</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yom Kippur</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Invasion of Iraq</td>
<td>2003-Present</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turco-Cypriot</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the most cited, commented upon, and supported arguments is that presented by John Mueller in the works already mentioned, particularly *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War* (1989) and *The Remnants of War* (2004). He states, "for a few centuries now, it appears, the notion has been gaining acceptance in the developed world that war there is both abhorrent – repulsive, immoral and uncivilized – and methodologically ineffective – futile." Further, he asserts:

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31 Mueller, John E. *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 1989: 217. By this formulation, the line of reasoning seems to be that all developed countries are recognizing war as ineffective and repugnant; thereby, given that all major powers are in the "developed world" they are part of that larger subset and thus, there is a decline in major power warfare.
For almost all of history war has been accepted as a natural, inevitable, and, often, desirable element in human affairs. However, over the course of the last century, it appears that the institution has been losing that casual acceptance and is moving toward obsolescence rather in the manner of slavery and dueling before it. In particular, while still entirely possible in a physical sense, it seems that major war – war among developed countries – is becoming increasingly unlikely as developed countries seize control of their destinies and decide that war with each other should not be part of them.\textsuperscript{32}

In Mueller’s formulation, war becomes \textit{rationally} unthinkable, that is, the idea of war becomes undesirable, and then over time, becomes \textit{subrationally} unthinkable, as war no longer enters anyone's mind as a coherent policy possibility.\textsuperscript{33} Inherent in this formulation is the concept of war as both irrational from a cost-benefit analysis and normatively unacceptable.\textsuperscript{34} With regard to cost-benefit analysis, Mueller asserts that "from a rational standpoint, then, major war seems to have become unthinkable. It lacks the romantic appeal it once enjoyed, and it has been substantially discredited as a method."\textsuperscript{35} With regard to the acceptability of war, Mueller suggests "there has been a shift in values: prosperity has become something of an overriding goal, and war – even inexpensive war – is almost universally seen as an especially counterproductive method for advancing this goal."\textsuperscript{36} As his later book \textit{The Remnants of War} (2004) stated, for Mueller "the long peace among developed states was caused primarily by changing attitudes toward war."\textsuperscript{37} For Mueller, the key to this change in attitudes is the effort of "idea entrepreneurs"\textsuperscript{38} in promoting previously "novel" ideas; in this case, that war was neither inevitable, nor productive or

necessary. Mueller, thus, makes a predominantly normative/constructivist argument for the
decline of warfare among major powers. That is, he asserts, as Hendrik Spruyt formulates it,
that changes in "ideas, beliefs, and norms," or the mentalite collective, have played a primary
causal role in the decline of war among major powers. Professor Mueller's argument asserts a
normative/social learning theory of warfare decline, as opposed to a theory of decline based on
structural or material causes. In fact, Mueller's argument challenges many of the most prominent
theories regarding warfare's decline. For Mueller, the development of nuclear weapons was not
necessary for decline; the spread of democracy is coincidental; peace promotes trade rather than
the other way around; even norm emergence – which one would read as his core variable – isn't
causal, as he suggests that people develop norms because they're war-weary, they don't become
war-weary because a norm has emerged. No, according to Mueller, war is ugly and norm
entrepreneurs help show that ugliness; people stop using war as a policy option and then over
time it fades to obsolescence, just as happened with slavery. He thus suggests that civilization can
progress and/or is progressing toward the eradication of warfare due to an enhanced
understanding of the institution's negative nature. Therefore, Professor Mueller’s work (and
those that follow similar reasoning) not only examines a central feature of international relations
(war), but raises a substantial challenge to those who study international relations from realist,
structural, and other key theoretical frames.

39 Mueller, John. "Accounting for the Waning of Major War." In The Waning of Major War: Theories and
40 Holsti, Kalevi J. "The Decline of Interstate War: Pondering Systemic Explanations." In The Waning of
points out, Mueller is never particularly clear in his books about what he considers "major war." See the
first paragraph for this author's definition. Further, the present author suggests that Mueller's argument is
"predominantly" normative/constructivist because that is where he places his focus, vice on the cost-benefit
analysis aspect. As will be seen when discussing slavery, the cost-benefit aspect drops from the equation.
social theory of learning, suggesting ideas, norms, and social learning are "closely related." (2006: 155).
43 This would be in striking contrast to the realist paradigm of international relations, still the dominant
framework in the field, which suggests that war is all but inevitable due to the anarchic nature of the
international community.
Mueller’s work has generated both support and critique from a variety of perspectives and methods.\textsuperscript{44} However, one foundational element of his argument has garnered relatively less attention. To bolster his case that major institutional behaviors in world politics can change through shifts in ideas, beliefs and norms, Mueller asserts that the obsolescence of major war is historically analogous to the decline of the state institution of slavery.\textsuperscript{45} In other words, the process of decline that major power warfare is undergoing is one that has been seen before in history. As Mueller writes, it occurred to abolitionists that "slavery was no longer the way people ought to do things. As it happened," Mueller notes, "it was an idea whose time had come" and slavery "abruptly" became a "peculiar institution."\textsuperscript{46} By this formulation, a normative/constructivist idea – that slavery was unacceptable – facilitated the decline of the institution of slavery to the point of obsolescence through the (presumably domestic and transnational) efforts of idea/norm entrepreneurs. The institution first became rationally unthinkable, and then subrationally unthinkable (See Table 1.5). Mueller suggests warfare is declining toward obsolescence via the same process, although his delineation of the "rationally unthinkable" aspect is less than clear in both; with regard to slavery, he admits it was a "viable, profitable" institution, and regarding warfare, he asserts that warfare is no more costly than it's ever been and that economic interdependence is the result of peace rather than the other way


\textsuperscript{45} It should be noted that Mueller mentions dueling as an additional analogous case, but dueling has been excluded from this study for several reasons. Most importantly, this author asserts that dueling is not an inherently appropriate comparison case because the levels of analysis differ. Dueling is a state/individual-level phenomenon. Individuals duel among themselves and states attempt(ed) to control/eradicate the practice within their own borders. No significant global movement against dueling developed. In contrast, the decline of warfare and decline of slavery represent state/international system-level variables. That is, Mueller is asserting that warfare is declining internationally, as slavery declined internationally (but with particular focus on the transatlantic institution). Additionally, scope and space limits prohibit tackling both dueling and slavery in this dissertation.

around. In this way, it is clear that Mueller takes as a given that warfare is rationally ineffective. In fact, he says "the notion that war, particularly in the developed world, is economically counterproductive has been widely, perhaps universally, accepted." Yet, he is never clear about what, if anything, has changed regarding war and thereby, the implication seems to be that war has always been ineffectual, but only recently have societies recognized it as such. This again returns us to an emphasis on the centrality of the normative/constructivist variable as causal mechanism.

Table 1.5. Mueller's Model of Slavery's/Warfare's Decline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causal Variable</th>
<th>Mueller's Model of Slavery's/Warfare's Decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institution becomes unacceptable to the point of obsolescence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normative/Constructivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Actor</td>
<td>Domestic and/or Transnational Idea/Norm Entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process (How it Happened)</td>
<td>- Idea entrepreneurs help reveal institution as rationally unthinkable (normatively unacceptable, irrational from a cost-benefit analysis*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Institution then becomes subrationally unthinkable (it no longer registers as a viable policy option)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Mueller seems to take war's ineffectiveness as a given, and this returns most of his emphasis to the normative/constructivist causal variable.

Embedded in Mueller's historical analogy of warfare to slavery are two distinct but related notions: one, that the decline of slavery is a case of such similar characteristics to war that it forms an historical analogy from which we can draw persuasive confidence that war can indeed follow a similar path to decline (if not obsolescence), and two, that norm shifts can cause major adjustments in state behavior and this occurred in the case of slavery. It is around these two areas of contention that this dissertation seeks to enhance the existing literatures relevant to the war decline thesis. Both require serious attention and examination. On the latter point, it is possible that other causal variables distinct from norm-based reasoning – economic, domestic politics,

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geostrategic – played more significant roles in the decline of slavery than Mueller’s assertion of a normative/moral causal path.\textsuperscript{49} Thus, it is possible that major state behaviors can adjust significantly (thereby, providing historical evidence that the decline of war is possible), but that the reason for this has little to do with Mueller’s specific rationale. On the former point, it is possible that a shift in ideas was the most salient factor in causing slavery to move from ubiquitous behavior to a disavowed and outlawed mistake of the past. However, one might find upon close analytical examination that the peculiarities of slavery and war are so distinct as to make their extrapolated relevancy to each other tenuous at best. The current literature, then, is unclear as to whether the decline of slavery is suggestive of a generalizable process of institutional behavior change and whether the slavery case is substantively relevant to the decline of war.\textsuperscript{50} This dissertation seeks advances in both the specific literature on war decline and the broader literature of international relations theory through a detailed examination of both of these points.

While there is an abundance of historical accounts of the slave trade's/slavery's decline in the Western hemisphere, there is a relative dearth of contributions from the field of political science. Additionally, this work hopes to add to the prominent efforts of John Mueller and others, such as James Lee Ray,\textsuperscript{51} who have espoused the utility of examining the model of slavery's decline as a possible explanation for the decline in major power warfare. This latter point is perhaps the most salient and contributory element of this effort; for it is one thing to apply models and variables from political science to an historical case – slavery; it is quite another, and more significant contribution to utilize these tools to tackle the great question of international relations – the nature and future prospects of warfare. By determining if the decline of slavery is an

\textsuperscript{49} Mueller, John. \textit{Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War}. New York, NY: Basic Books, Inc, 1989: 12. Of note, Mueller admits that abolitionists were up against an institution that was “viable, profitable, and expanding.” Therefore, his argument regarding slavery, and thereby given his analogy, warfare, seems to focus most significantly on the normative/constructivist aspect.

\textsuperscript{50} ...again, assuming one accepts that a decline in major power war is underway.

analogous case to the supposed decline of warfare, one lays a foundation for further research on
the nature and likelihood of warfare in the current era. If it is not an analogous case, then one can
again move forward to examine alternative explanations for any supposed decline in warfare. In
contrast, if it appears analogous, then a myriad of questions spring forth: What actions can be
taken to increase the speed with which the major power warfare marches toward obsolescence?
Might minor powers move toward a decline in warfare as well? Is the move toward decline
reversible? If so, what developments can slow or reverse this decline? What does the field of
international relations look like in a world without major power warfare? What roles do militaries
play in a world where major force-on-force engagements are outmoded? These are but a
smattering of the research vectors that one could undertake, but none of them are yet appropriate
unless one grapples with the critical research questions put forth in this study.

Research Question(s)

With this background in mind, two key questions form the basis of this effort. First, this
study will examine whether transatlantic slavery is an appropriately analogous case to study in
order to understand the decline of major power warfare. Second, this study will examine which
variable(s) led to the decline of transatlantic slavery, in the hopes of better understanding the
process of major power warfare's decline. I recognize that typically dissertations are structured
around a single dominating research question. While the examination of both case and process are
closely related, they ultimately need to be separated analytically; to examine one question without
the other would render only a partial assessment.52 The first research question – determining if
these are analogous cases – will be discussed in this chapter.53 Following that, the largest portion

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52 The present author contends that it is absolutely critical to examine both process and case similarities in
order to move the literature forward. Mueller assumes slavery and war are similar institutions and then
asserts that slavery and warfare decline processes are analogous. To assume the similarity of either
process, case, or both together, would be to simply follow in Mueller's footsteps and to leave the
scholarship incomplete.

53 ... because if it is determined that examining slavery offers no utility for understanding warfare, there is
no point in further discussing the follow-on question of analogous process.
of this dissertation examines the second question of process. So, to the first question this chapter now turns.

**Analogous Case:**
Is the decline of the transatlantic slave trade/practice an appropriately analogous historical case to study in order to understand the proposed decline of major power warfare?

Is slavery an analogous case to major power warfare? Does studying the institution of slavery offer utility in better understanding another global institution – major power warfare – and the possibilities for, and/or variables through which to achieve, its decline? It could be that the two institutions have little in common, and therefore, the analogies proffered by Mueller and others are misplaced. In contrast, if the two cases are sufficiently analogous, then the study of slavery's decline should provide insight into the decline of major power warfare as discussed above.

**What was/is Slavery?**

Most of the works cited in this dissertation spend some amount of effort at defining what slavery is/was. At its most basic level, slavery is an institution; institutions are broadly accepted as "recognized patterns of behavior or practice around which expectations converge." But, what type of institution is slavery? Historian David Brion Davis's earliest and classic treatise The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (1966) approached slavery as "an actual institution involving economic functions and interpersonal relationships;" he added, for a slave, "his person is the property of another man, his will is subject to his owner's authority, and his labor or

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54 In actual execution, the author conducted the assessment of process first because the detailed examination of slavery's decline process provided the material building blocks to be leveraged in the examination of whether slavery and warfare are analogous cases. In other words, the process examination illuminates the key characteristics of the slavery institution; these were then compared to warfare's key characteristics in order to determine if the two institutions represent analogous cases. In the dissertation narrative, however, it makes sense to examine the analogous case process first, in this chapter, before providing a causal explanation of the process(es) that produced slavery's decline.

services are obtained through coercion."\(^{56}\) A decade later, Davis (1975) stressed slavery as an extreme form of treating men as objects to be exploited and manipulated.\(^{57}\) In his latest works, Davis noted the complexity of precisely defining slavery, stating that:

> traditional definitions of slavery have stressed that the slave's person is the chattel property of another man or woman, and thus subject to sale and other forms of transfer; that the slave's will is subject to the owner's authority; that the slave's labor or services are obtained through coercion, meaning that the owner's authority is always backed up by the whip or other instruments for inflicting pain; and that the master-slave relationship is 'beyond the limits of family relations.'\(^{58}\)

This handling treats slavery as both a social institution and one geared toward economic exploitation/production. Famed historian Kenneth Stampp, author of *The Peculiar Institution* (1956), stressed the economic aspect, stating "slavery was above all a labor system."\(^{59}\) In contrast, while recognizing the economic aspect, historian Seymour Drescher has stressed the broader socio-relational definition of slavery, calling it a "communally recognized right by some individuals to possess, buy, sell, discipline, transport, liberate, or otherwise dispose of the bodies and behavior of other individuals."\(^{60}\) Stanley Engerman echoes Drescher's socio-centered definition, asserting "perhaps no single definition covers all legal aspects, and different aspects require differences in emphasis to be useful. Nevertheless, the most crucial and frequently utilized aspect of enslavement, and the most widely accepted, is the right to buy and sell individuals, its permanent or at least lifelong condition, and the inheritability of the status."\(^{61}\)

The social aspect of slavery is most forcefully asserted by critical theorists like Eugene Genovese and Gavin Wright. As Drescher notes, these authors assert the distinct differences

\(^{56}\) Davis, David Brion. *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 30-32. He also added that a slave's relationship to master are beyond those of familial ties, and that at its core slavery has changed very little over thousands of years, only Roman law finally giving systematic form to rights of class of slave and free/owner.


between societies that possess some numbers of slaves (societies with slaves) and societies whose structure is centered on the relationship of the slave class to the master class (slave societies). Illustrating this focus, Genovese wrote of the American South: "Slavery gave the South a social system and a civilization with a distinct class structure, political community, economy, ideology, and set of psychological patterns." The emphasis of his work is (as is discussed in Chapter 3) that, while slavery might have been profitable as an economic system, it was/is regressive as a social system. In his latest work, Gavin Wright centers his analysis on three dimensions of slavery: slavery as a form of labor relations, slavery as a set of property rights, and slavery as a political regime.

With these discussions/definitions as a background, this work can move forward with a brief working definition of slavery as a socio-economic institution entailing a structure of coerced domination of the life of one (or many) by another for the purpose of exploitation, usually in the form of labor. With regard to slavery's level of analysis, it is most appropriately examined at the individual and state/societal level. Slavery is at root an exploitative form of labor. In some states, it evolved into a way of structuring one's society and sectors of the economy. Indeed, this state-sponsored slavery – one in which slavery is an accepted, sponsored, sanctioned, and supported aspect of state power – is the type on which this study (transatlantic slavery) focuses. Transatlantic slavery, as examined in this work, no longer exists, having been eradicated in the late 19th century. Forms of slavery not sponsored and/or supported by states do most certainly exist in today's world, but again, these are not the focus of this particular study.

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66 The current author, too, would stress the non-familial aspect of slavery but for the sake of brevity will forego including it in this working definition.
Because states have historically made slavery a centerpiece of their socio-economic structure and their method of developing wealth/resources, slavery has geostrategic implications. That is, state-sponsored slavery was a method of acquiring wealth and resources and, thus, contributing to state power. To summarize, then, state-sponsored slavery is a socio-economic institution with geostrategic implications. The various countries that engaged in transatlantic slavery utilized and/or engaged in this socio-economic institution with significant geostrategic implications for themselves. See Table 1.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fundamental Category</td>
<td>Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution Type</td>
<td>Socio-Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means</td>
<td>Coercion, Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ends</td>
<td>Exploitation, Domination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Analysis</td>
<td>Individual, State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Implications</td>
<td>Individual, State, Systemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Implications</td>
<td>Social, Economic, Geostrategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Context</td>
<td>Widely Accepted for Millennia, Now Obsolete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is War?

War, too, is an institution, and as an institution it needs to be defined. The opening paragraphs of this chapter provided some basic definitions of war, but those broad formulations were developed primarily in order to conduct quantitative analysis. This dissertation requires a more refined definition in order to compare warfare to slavery. Therefore, it is appropriate to turn to master theoretician Carl Von Clausewitz and others for an appropriate characterization of warfare. For Clausewitz, at the most basic level, war is "an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will." He flatly states that war is "an act of policy," and shouldn't be thought of as anything but an instrument of policy. His words have been boiled down to the maxim "war is a

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67 Balibar, Etienne. "What's in a War? (Politics as War, War as Politics)." *Ratio Juris*, Vol. 21, No. 3. (September) 2008: 371. As Balibar says, "since war is an institution... there must always be a legal definition with more or less binding effects."


continuation of politics by other means," but it is worth looking at a more complete rendition of his definition:

    We see, therefore, that war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means. What remains peculiar to war is simply the peculiar nature of its means. War in general, and the commander in any specific instance, is entitled to require that the trend and designs of policy shall not be inconsistent with these means. That, of course, is no small demand; but however much it may affect political aims in a given case, it will never do more than modify them. The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered isolated from their purpose.\[^70]\n
Therefore, by this definition, war is a means (an act of force/coercion) to achieve an end; that end is usually achieving some level of control, exploitation, or domination over an enemy in order to serve an interest.

    Modern historians and political scientists have defined warfare as well. In *Ride of the Second Horsemen* (1995), Robert O'Connell labels warfare as organized fighting. In his exact words, "war is not simply armed violence. Rather, it is a specific institution – premeditated and directed by some form of government structure; concerned with societal, not individual issues; featuring the willing (though perhaps not enthusiastic) participation of the combatants; and intended to achieving lasting, not ephemeral, results."\[^71]\n
War involves premeditation and planning; it focuses on state-level issues with the intent of resolving those issues by force and because it uses group resources, it thereby involves some form of government structure and direction.\[^72]\n
Marxist philosopher Etienne Balibar more succinctly concludes: "to resort to arms, generally speaking to organized and intentional violence, in order to implement national interests, is to wage a war."\[^73]\n
    War is a two-group, or for our purposes two-state, game. One group can declare war or exert force on another but it takes the latter group deciding to defend itself for warfare to take

place. As Professor Samuel B. Payne Jr. formulates, "it takes two sides to fight a war and each must have a reason, or a number of them, for going to war.... when an aggressor sends its army across the border of another country, that aggression will not lead to war unless the victim fights back." \(^{74}\) This two-person game in which one may attack another (and the lack of an international authority over states to prevent an attack, known as "anarchy" in political science parlance), and the fact that groups/states can never perfectly know the intentions of others, leaves them with a constant uncertainty and/or fear regarding the future. \(^{75}\) This fear can result in what John Herz (1950) and Robert Jervis (1978) classically labeled "the security dilemma:" when a group/state attempts to improve its own security it can be seen as threatening, or as a decrease, to the security of other groups/states. \(^{76}\) Returning to the formulations of Clausewitz: "so long as I have not overthrown my opponent I am bound to fear he may overthrow me. Thus I am not in control: he dictates to me as much as I dictate to him." \(^{77}\) Because states live in anarchy and have fear of the future, they tend to be in competition with one another in order to maximize their own power and thereby achieve as much security as possible. \(^{78}\)

Given this background, this work can formulate a working definition of warfare moving forward. War is the organized use of force or coercion between two groups (states) to achieve a desired objective/interest usually related to some form of control or domination. Because it is a two-state game, that is, because it is a geostrategic institution that involves the interaction of multiple states in the international system, war is best analyzed at the state and system levels. This is in contrast to slavery, which relates to how a state forms its own economic and social functions within its borders. If a state decides to end slavery, it has (if it is truly sovereign over its

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own territory and interest groups) the ability to do so. If, however, a state decides to refrain from engaging in warfare, it may still face another state that decides to make war on it; in that instance, it can either refrain from fighting and face possible annihilation, or be compelled to engage in warfare to defend itself.

**Table 1.7. Case Characteristics: [Major Power] Warfare**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fundamental Category</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institution Type</td>
<td>Geostrategic/Geopolitical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means</td>
<td>Coercion, Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ends</td>
<td>Achieving Interest (which usually entails control, exploitation, or domination)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Analysis</td>
<td>State, System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Implications</td>
<td>State, Systemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Implications</td>
<td>Social, Economic, Geostrategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Context</td>
<td>Widely Accepted for Millennia...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is appropriate to now compare slavery and warfare in order to ascertain whether the study of one case is of benefit to the study of another. A review of Table 1.8 demonstrates a striking similarity between them. Both slavery and warfare are institutions. While slavery is a socio-economic institution with geostrategic/geopolitical implications, warfare is a geostrategic/geopolitical institution with socio-economic implications There is, as political scientist James Lee Ray notes, a historical connection between war and slavery based on their shared concept of forced violence.\(^{79}\) This forced violence is the means to the desired end: furthering/achieving interests, which are usually associated with control, domination, and exploitation. In Ray's terms, "slavery and international war both involve the use of brute force to control behavior and extract benefits."\(^{80}\) As with slavery, economic gain is often the desired

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\(^{79}\) Ray, James Lee. "The Abolition of Slavery and the End of International War." *International Organization* Vol. 43, No. 3, (Summer) 1989: 405. Of note, the present author came across Ray's work once well into the preparation of this study. As will be shown later, Ray's conclusions and those of the present author are often, but not always, in agreement. Interestingly, then, the two authors approached a similar question, studied it independently of each other/using different methodologies, and still share a number of conclusions.

"benefit" of states engaging in war. The implications of these uses of force/coercion have social, economic, and geostrategic implications.

**Table 1.8. Case Characteristics: Slavery and Warfare**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Case Characteristics: Slavery and Warfare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slavery</strong></td>
<td><strong>Warfare</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fundamental Category</strong></td>
<td>Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institution Type</strong></td>
<td>Socio-Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Means</strong></td>
<td>Coercion, Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ends</strong></td>
<td>Exploitation, Domination</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Individual, State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Implications</strong></td>
<td>Individual, State, Systemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Implications</strong></td>
<td>Social, Economic, Geostrategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historical Context</strong></td>
<td>Widely Accepted for Millennia, Now Obsolete(^{81})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The critical difference between slavery and war is that slavery is fundamentally best analyzed at the individual and state level, while war is best analyzed at the state and system level. Slavery is predominantly a one-state game; war is a two- (or multi-) state game. A state can control whether it engages in slavery in its territory, but even if a state decides to not engage in warfare, it can be forced to defend itself against other states engaging in warfare or face the possibility of the loss of its existence. The two-state nature of warfare is a critical distinction and will be discussed in greater detail later in this study. Before doing so, however, it's worth noting that war, although a state/system variable, clearly has implications at the individual (life and death), state (nature, interests, and welfare of a state), and system (the absolute and relative power of a state) levels. Further, while slavery tends to be most closely associated with implications at the individual and state level, a state's decision to engage in slavery has larger implications at the system level as well. As this study will repeatedly show, while states ultimately controlled whether to engage in slavery in their territories, that decision was greatly affected by whether and/or how other powers in the system were engaging in the practice. As Ray notes, "although

\(^{81}\) This study will discuss the concept of obsolescence in more detail below.  
\(^{82}\) The question of whether great power warfare is in decline is the focus of this study; this study will discuss the concept of decline in more detail below and will ultimately attempt to answer both if it is in decline, and if so, how (and is the decline a similar process to slavery).
slavery was ultimately an intrastate matter, it did also, like international war, involve interstate relations.\textsuperscript{83} Slavery and its decline were "affected by foreign policies and by relationships between states within the international political arena."\textsuperscript{84} The critical difference is that while the decision to engage in slavery may have implications on a state's society and economy, and thereby, a state may view whether other states are engaging in the practice and gaining socially/economically from it before deciding for itself, the end result of engaging/not engaging will only be a relative loss socially and economically. The nature of the two-level game/institution of warfare means that a state's refusal to engage in war when attacked by another potentially puts that state's very existence at risk.

Given the discussion above, are slavery and warfare perfectly analogous cases for study? The short answer is no; the reason they are not is that slavery is an individual- and state-level institution and warfare is a state- and system-level institution. Further, slavery is a single-state/intra-state game, while warfare is a multi-state one. Nonetheless, the preponderance of other characteristics suggests that the study of transatlantic slavery's decline could indeed provide some insight into the perceived decline of major power warfare. As James Lee Ray concludes:

"For thousands of years, slavery was thought to be an immutable part of human nature. Yet it was abolished... The practice of slavery and the philosophical rationalizations made in defense of it share enough similarities and logical connections to international war and its rationalizations that the elimination of the first provides reason to expect the disappearance of the second.\textsuperscript{85}

One may not agree that the "similarities and logical connections" between slavery and warfare provide reason to expect the disappearance of the latter, as Ray asserts, but this author would suggest that the number of similarities (as provided in Table 1.8) provides enough justification to examine the process of slavery's decline in order to discover what insights for war it may, in fact,

\textsuperscript{84} Ray, James Lee. "The Abolition of Slavery and the End of International War." \textit{International Organization} Vol. 43, No. 3, (Summer) 1989: 423. Ray perceives that war is in decline as well, and so suggests this is indeed a commonality between the two institutions. His exact words are: "Slavery, then, and its demise were (like war) affected by foreign policies and by relationships between states within the international political arena."
provide. The remainder of this chapter discusses how this study will undertake that examination of process.

**Analogous Process:**

What variable(s) led to the decline of the transatlantic slave trade/practice in the Western hemisphere?⁸⁶

If slavery and warfare represent cases of enough similarity to warrant comparison, then the decline process of one is likely to shed light on the decline process of the other. The purpose of this research question is to determine which variables did and did not contribute to the decline of transatlantic slavery in order to better understand how similar variables might be contributing to the decline of major power warfare. Did normative factors play a decisive role in the decline of slavery, a pervasive global state practice/institution, as Professor Mueller and others have suggested? In other words, was the process that actually ended slavery historically analogous to the process that Mueller suggests is pushing major power warfare toward obsolescence, or were other variables more salient causal mechanisms? In the coming chapters, this dissertation will examine four possible causal variables – economic, normative, domestic politics, and geostrategic calculations – to see which ones played a causal role in the decline of transatlantic slavery in order to, hopefully, shed light on the decline of warfare.

**Methodology and Outline**

This is a qualitative dissertation, utilizing a congruence/process-tracing methodology. Generally, "the essential characteristic of the congruence method is that the investigator begins with a theory and then attempts to assess its ability to explain or predict the outcome in a

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⁸⁶ Mueller is less than clear in delineating which slavery institution he is referencing in his work. Many scholars would note that slavery still exists in several parts of the world. For his part, Mueller suggests he is referring to as a practice in “developed countries.” This is a vague delineation. Therefore, the present author has chosen to narrow the study to the transatlantic slave trade and eradication of the slavery practice in the western hemisphere/western world, the dominant region of the global world in the 17ᵗʰ, 18ᵗʰ, and 19ᵗʰ centuries of interest.
particular case.”\textsuperscript{87} In general, congruence methodology entails formulating a general version of a theory/hypothesis to be employed; in this case general hypotheses regarding key variables in political science loosely derived from prominent theories in the field.\textsuperscript{88} The second and third steps are to select a historical case(s) and match explanations or predictions of the theories with outcomes of the cases to test for consistency. To add depth to this approach, this study relies on process-tracing as well, which "attempts to identify the intervening causal processes – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable."\textsuperscript{89}

**Research Hypotheses**

As stated above, the major portion of this effort will address what variable(s) led to the decline of the transatlantic slave trade/practice in the Western hemisphere. The dissertation will discuss the decline of slavery as an institution in the great powers of the era.\textsuperscript{90} The dependent variable of the case study, then, is the decline of slavery. The independent variables will include ideas, beliefs, and norms – the normative variable – as a set. Additional independent variables include economic factors, domestic-political variables, and geostrategic calculations.

\textsuperscript{88} Alexander Wendt, perhaps the most prominent Constructivist theorist says congruence, particularly process-tracing, is an effective methodology, saying as noted in George & Bennett (2005), page 206: "that the core of descriptions of causal mechanisms is 'process-tracing, which in social science ultimately requires case studies and historical scholarship.'"
\textsuperscript{90} Although focusing on all great powers, this study does spend a significant amount of effort on the study of Britain, and the United States as well. Focus on Britain (and the United States) is appropriate for several reasons. Britain was the dominant power of the time and the leader in the anti-slavery movement. It is, therefore, simply imperative to understand slavery's decline in Britain as the cornerstone of any study of slavery. At the same time, the United States offers a case study of an emerging, mid-level power from the period. In examining these two, one should get a decent understanding of the structural power dynamics of the international arena of the time. Of course, practical considerations would also lead one to focus on Britain and the United State – particularly the common English language and wealth of historical literature and records. All that said, it should be stressed again that this is an international study and, therefore, the dissertation will attempt to illuminate the slavery decline dynamics of all the prominent players of the period.
In all cases, operationalization of the variables will follow the prominent literature in the field, and given that the seminal work of Professor Mueller forms the catalyst of this study, it will attempt to closely follow his formulations as well. Unfortunately, Professor Mueller puts forth relatively loose constructions of both the exact locations in which and/or extent to which the institution of slavery has declined (Mueller asserts its decline in "developed countries"), and the exact meaning of the term "decline" (which he uses interchangeably with the term "obsolescence"). One could argue that forms of slavery exist to this day, and for this reason this study will focus specifically on state-sponsored transatlantic slavery. As such, this dissertation is inter-national, but limited, in scope. Further, this study needs to be clear in defining decline versus obsolescence if these terms are to be of any use in studying the state of major power warfare. Inherent in Professor Mueller's formulation of decline/obsolescence is the concept of war as both normatively unacceptable, and irrational from a cost-benefit analysis.\footnote{Holsti, Kalevi J. "The Decline of Interstate War: Pondering Systemic Explanations." In The Waning of Major War: Theories and Debates, ed. Raimo Väyrynen. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006: 152. As Holsti notes, "for Mueller, change comes from cost-benefit analysis and changing norms."} By his calculation, a phenomenon first becomes rationally unthinkable and then subrationally unthinkable, at which point it fails to even enter the mind as a potential policy option. This study accepts this formulation of decline and obsolescence. A phenomenon becoming less and less acceptable represents a state of decline. The second part, when an option becomes subrationally unthinkable, that is, when it never seriously enters the conversation as a potential policy option, represents a state of obsolescence. By this formulation, transatlantic slavery is not only in decline, it is obsolete. One would be hard-pressed to find any theorist that would suggest that there is any thinkable possibility of state-sponsored servitude of the type and magnitude of transatlantic slavery returning to the modern world. In contrast, despite using the term obsolescence in his 1989 book Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War, Mueller asserted as recently as 2004 that "there may have been a decline in the appeal, and therefore in the frequency, of war – or of certain kinds of war – over the course of the last century or so. But this in no way
suggests that war, or any specific kind of war, has become impossible."\textsuperscript{92} In other words, war is not obsolete. One can debate if it is in decline, and it is the assumption of this study that it is, but it is not yet obsolete. The point of the preceding discussion is not to "word-smith" Professor Mueller's work, but rather to make absolutely clear the formulation of decline and obsolescence and thereby be precise about the focus of this study. Having laid this foundation, the study can now discuss the independent variables to be examined in the following chapters.

Economic Indicators:

$H_E$ – Slavery declined when it was perceived as no longer economically viable/profitable.

Perhaps the most intuitive explanation for transatlantic slavery's demise is that it died a "market death,"\textsuperscript{93} that is, it declined naturally when it was no longer economically profitable. This study examines the best available economic data related to the profitability of the slave trade for countries of interest. The critical element is to examine how reference to economic data (whether accurate or not at the time) played a role in changes in national and international behaviors. In other words, the key question is to what degree slavery was deemed profitable during the period, as evidenced through the documents and speeches of legislators, economists, merchants, and the

\textsuperscript{92} Mueller, John. The Remnants of War. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004: 85. Note that in the 1989 volume, Mueller states "much of this book has also been devoted to establishing two specific propositions: 1) that major war is in a state of obsolescence and 2) that the Cold War has never been close to hot war and could well be on the verge of terminal remission as the Soviet Union's enthusiasm for widespread revolution wanes" (Mueller, 1989: 245). Yet, in Remants of War (2004) he pulls back from the obsolescence claim, and in a more recent example, Mueller's 2009 article "War Has Almost Ceased to Exist: An Assessment" in Political Science Quarterly. The phrasing "almost" again suggests a state of decline, not obsolescence.

general population at the time. One additional aspect that will be examined in this section is the state of technology during the period and its impact on the slavery institution. In what ways, if any, did changes in technology at the crossroads of the industrial revolution contribute to the decline of slavery?

If the evidence suggests that economics played a causal role in slavery's decline, then in theory this impacts two prominent theories of warfare's decline: the technological argument and the war profitability/cost argument. In warfare studies, technology is typically considered a geostrategic variable. The most prominent technological argument for warfare's decline posits that the development of nuclear weapons has reduced the likelihood of war. This argument is prominent in realist literature. In the same way, the "war has become too costly" argument is prominent in international relations literature. It is intuitively rational to think that as a

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94 One should note the use of the word "perceived" as relates to the economic data on slavery. It is critical to distinguish the perceived economic data at the time from the data that can be re-created in hindsight. What is critical for this variable is whether the data suggested to policymakers and interest groups that slavery was economically profitable at the time, and how that knowledge shaped their arguments during the period. One may be able to recreate more accurate data this many years on, but again, the critical data is that which was available during the period. As Morgan (2000) aptly demonstrates, the historical battle still rages as to whether slavery was profitable for the mother countries, and if so, exactly how profitable. See Morgan, Kenneth. Slavery, Atlantic Trade, and the British Economy, 1660-1800. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Righting the historical record is difficult, and may be near impossible. Luckily, the point of this study is not to re-write the economic history, but rather, to determine to what degree people of the period perceived the institution profitable – a more readily executable task.

95 This technological factor is in keeping with other systemic/structural variables in the strategic realm and match closely with related structural/technological variables (nuclear weapons, for example) espoused in the decline of warfare literature.

practice/institution loses is utility or profitability, it will cease to be an enticing policy option; theorists like Michael Howard and Carl Kaysen, among others, have suggested as much.\footnote{See Howard, Michael. \textit{War and the Liberal Conscience}. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, University Press, 1978; and Howard, Michael. \textit{The Invention of Peace: Reflections on War and International Order}. New Haven, CT: Profile Books, 2000; as well as Kaysen, Carl. "Is War Obsolete?" \textit{International Security}, Vol. 14, No. 4 (Spring) 1990: 42-64. John Mueller cites these two sources particularly as archetypes for these lines of reasoning.}

**Normative Indicators:**

\textbf{Hₙ - Slavery declined when its idea became normatively/morally unacceptable.}

Similarly, Ethan A. Nadelmann's work suggests most globalized norms share an evolutionary pattern containing five stages. In the first, "most societies regard the targeted activity as entirely legitimate under certain conditions and with respect to certain groups of people."102 In the second, "norm entrepreneurs" redefine the given activity as problematic.103 In the third stage, norm entrepreneurs push for suppression of activities and formation of international regimes. Nadelmann suggests these moral entrepreneurs "include governments, typically those able to exert 'hegemonic' influence in a particular issue area," as well as transnational groups and individual actors.104 He adds, "their agitation takes many forms, ranging from diplomatic pressures, economic inducements, military interventions, and propaganda campaigns of governments to the domestic and transnational lobbying, educational, organizational, and proselytizing efforts of individuals and nongovernmental organizations."105 If these actions are successful, then the fourth and fifth stages develop. In the fourth, proscribed activity becomes the focus of prohibitions and laws throughout much of the world. In some cases, these activities actually attain stage five, in which they significantly decline and/or become obsolete.106

With these formulations as foundations, this study examines norm entrepreneurs at the domestic and international level, and discusses how shifts in particular state policy led to larger internationalization of the norm against slavery in the Western Hemisphere. The examination of

102 Nadelmann, Ethan A. "Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society." 
103 Nadelmann, Ethan A. "Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society." 
104 Nadelmann, Ethan A. "Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society." 
105 Nadelmann, Ethan A. "Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society." 
106 Nadelmann, Ethan A. "Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society." 
the normative/moral thesis is presented in Chapters 4 and 5. The key to determining normative change is to determine when a policy becomes unacceptable to a majority of the population and/or policymakers within a state (and across states in the system in the international context). This is difficult in an examination of 18th and 19th century societies, as polling data is not available. For this reason, the examination that follows relies on a variety of data types. In traditional studies, one would expect the normative indicators of unacceptability to be the same across cases, but given the difficulty of judging public sentiment in past centuries, and the nature of process-tracing methodology, it is appropriate to utilize whatever sources best tell the tale for a given society. In some cases, policy "unacceptability" is judged by petitions put forth to parliament. In other cases, it is judged by policymaker perception of the public's sentiment. The end result is the attempt to explain when slavery became normatively unacceptable as judged through the prism of Finnemore and Sikkink's formulation of norm emergence cycles.109

107 Finnemore, Martha and Kathryn Sikkink. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." International Organization Vol. 52, No. 4, (Autumn) 1998. Of note, examining this normative variable will shed light on the impact of democracy, if any, on the process of slavery decline. This lends itself nicely with follow-on comparison to the "democratic peace" literature, which suggests two possible paths to decline: cultural/normative and structural/institutional (See for example, Russett, Bruce. "Why Democratic Peace?" In Debating the Democratic Peace. eds. Michael E. Browns, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001: 96-97, 102-103). If present, normative/institutional decline indicators should present themselves via this variable. If structural/institutional factors prove relevant, they should show themselves in the examination of the domestic/bureaucratic-political variable.

108 Initially, this dissertation proposed to judge when transatlantic slavery became normatively repugnant.

109 One key subsidiary question will be to what degree these arguments and the belief system that emerged around them did so in explicit rejection/opposition to material arguments (they were not considered, set aside, or considered inferior) or in congruence to material arguments (material factors would be improved or unaffected through a moral stand).
**Domestic-Political Indicators:**

$H_B$ – Slavery declined when domestic interest groups and/or political players and bureaucrats in favor of abolition gained more influence over the national policymaking and legislative processes than anti-abolitionists.

This section of the case study draws on domestic sources of policy change.\textsuperscript{110} The domestic politics variable encompasses three sub-aspects that will be examined and illuminated in the case studies that follow: the nature of the public sphere, the domestic political structure, and bureaucratic politics. The public sphere relates to the ability of persons within society to associate with others, and to formulate, discuss, and spread ideas free of oppressive state/government intervention. The public sphere, then, interacts with the institutions of government, the domestic political structure, which encompasses the structure and processes of government. The last aspect of domestic politics is bureaucratic politics; that is, how players in the institutions of government interact to decide upon and execute policy. The domestic politics variable examines the nature of the public sphere in given societies and organizational avenues and mechanisms through which change in policy is brought about. It focuses on players in the domestic socio-political structure in order to trace how domestic interests ultimately yield societal/governmental decisions and action.\textsuperscript{111}


\textsuperscript{111} Again, as mentioned, examining this domestic-political variable will shed light on the impact of democracy, if any, on the process of slavery decline. This lends itself nicely with follow-on comparison to the "democratic peace" literature, which suggests two possible paths to decline: cultural/normative and structural/institutional. Structural/institutional factors should show themselves in the examination of this domestic/bureaucratic-political variable.
**Geostrategic Indicators:**

\( H_5 \) – Slavery declined when it was perceived to reduce the state's strategic power relative to other states in the international system.

This section of the case study examines the decline of slavery in the context of geostrategic politics. In international relations theory, the dominant realist framework would posit that an institution such as slavery would only become obsolete if it was deemed that its continuation would reduce a state's strategic power relative to other states in the international system, or alternatively, if ending the institution was expected to increase a state's power in that system. The critical factors of geostrategic/power center around economic, diplomatic, and military/security capabilities.\(^{112}\) Did state calculations of geostrategic power matter in the decline of slavery and can such a factor(s) provide a persuasive explanation of that institution's decline?

**Outline of the Study**

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides an overview of the history of the rise and decline of the transatlantic slave trade and practice of slavery. The six analytical chapters follow, and their purpose is to examine the four causal variables behind the decline of slavery to determine whether the superior explanation indeed rests with ideas, beliefs, and norms as Mueller and others assert, or elsewhere. Chapter 3 covers the economic variable. Examination of this variable shows that slavery was indeed a profitable, viable form of labor and production. The normative variable is discussed in the two chapters after that; Chapter 4 discusses the normative movement inside Britain, as it represents the best archetype of an effective, sustained normative campaign. Then Chapter 5 discusses the movements in the other pertinent powers, which achieved mixed results. Chapters 6 and 7 contain the examination of the domestic politics variable, including the three important sub-variables: the nature of the public sphere, domestic political structure, and bureaucratic politics. Chapter 6 discusses these variables in Britain and the

United States, and then Chapter 7 discusses the rest of the pertinent powers (France, Spain (Cuba), and Brazil). The last case study chapter is Chapter 8, which covers the geostrategic variable. How did international strategic calculations and/or the balance of power impact slavery's demise, if at all? Then, Chapter 9 summarizes the findings as they relate to the second research question. What, if anything, can be learned from the process of slavery's decline in relation to the decline of major power warfare? To examination of that question, this dissertation now turns.
Chapter 2:
An Abbreviated History of the Rise and Decline of Transatlantic Slavery

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the rise and fall of transatlantic slavery to
determine the institution's characteristics, understand its decline, and ascertain whether it is
comparable to warfare. To do so, one must first understand the basic history of the rise and fall of
slavery in the Atlantic world. The first part of this chapter examines the rise of transatlantic
slavery; how and why did the institution of slavery reach such enormous levels in the Atlantic
world in the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, and which countries were responsible? The second
half of the chapter then discusses its continued expansion in the 18th century and the key events
and milestones that led to its ultimate decline.

Part I – The Rise of "New World" Slavery

The Birth of Transatlantic Slavery - 1400-1600

The years 1441 and 1444 have been cited repeatedly as the beginning of the Atlantic
trade slave; in 1441a Portuguese raiding party captured 10 blacks on Africa's western coast
(probably present-day Mauritania or Morocco) and sold them at a Lisbon slave market.113 In
1444, the Portuguese started sending regular expeditions to the northwest coast of Africa and by
the end of that year had carried hundreds of slaves to Portugal.114 Even before these events,
blacks were purchased in North Africa and brought across the Mediterranean for use as bondsmen

in Europe.\textsuperscript{115} In the beginning, the expeditions typically raided to capture or steal slaves.\textsuperscript{116} Hugh Thomas, who produced a classic history of the transatlantic slave trade, notes that from 1444 Portuguese historians continually mention "kidnappings of more and more Africans by Portuguese captains in ever more southern latitudes."\textsuperscript{117} By 1448 about 1,000 slaves had been brought back to Portugal or Portuguese Atlantic island possessions.\textsuperscript{118} This "Mediterranean Slave Trade" probably reached its peak during the 14\textsuperscript{th} and 15\textsuperscript{th} centuries,\textsuperscript{119} and historian Philip Curtin suggests that by the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, 50,000 Africans had been shipped to Europe;\textsuperscript{120} another 25,000 or so slaves had been transported to the islands of Cape Verde, Madeira, and the Canaries and perhaps as many as 100,000 were shipped to the African island of São Thomé. Collectively, these shipments came to be known as the "Old World Atlantic slave trade."\textsuperscript{121}

Eventually, it became clear that it was more beneficial for all parties that benefited from the slave trade – Africans and Europeans – to combine efforts in the trade. Africans couldn't resist European accessions by storming their ships by force, and at the same time, the Europeans had a difficult time conducting seaborne attacks on the mainland; the result was the Europeans resigned

\textsuperscript{115} Postma, Johannes Menne. \textit{The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1990: 2 and Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 44. Thomas specifically notes that the Trans-Saharan slave trade probably dates back to 1000 B.C. This trade was to form the foundation of the later "Mediterranean Trade" and ultimately, Transatlantic Slavery.


\textsuperscript{117} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 56. Again, Thomas specifically mentions the chronicles of Zurara as his source. See also Thornton, John. "The Birth of an Atlantic World." In \textit{Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World}. Verene A. Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles. Princeton, NJ: Marcus Wiener Publishers, 2000: 64; Thornton mentions that exploration of Africa continued at an often slow, but nonetheless, steady pace from the mid 14\textsuperscript{th}-century through the late 15\textsuperscript{th} century and beyond. But again, forays into the slave trade as historian understand it did not likely occur until the mid-15\textsuperscript{th} century.


\textsuperscript{121} Postma, Johannes Menne. \textit{The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1990: 3.
themselves to retaining minimal holdings in Africa\textsuperscript{122} and to replacing raiding with peaceful, regulated trade.\textsuperscript{123} In 1458, Prince Henry of Portugal dispatched emissaries to negotiate with the Africans, assuring them that from then on they would not steal slaves, but rather, would barter like "honorable men."\textsuperscript{124} John Thornton notes "diplomatic and commercial relations easily replaced the raid-and-trade or raid-and-conquer patterns of other parts of the Atlantic, especially because the Portuguese soon discovered to their pleasure that there was also a well-developed commercial economy in Africa that maritime commerce could tap into without engaging in hostilities."\textsuperscript{125} "Peaceful" trading in humans – however highly relative and anachronistic the meaning of the phrase appears today – became the rule along the African coast.\textsuperscript{126}

The beginning of the "real," or "New World" slave trade, is sometimes placed at 1502, as in that year Spanish administrative records make mention of blacks in the Western Hemisphere.\textsuperscript{127} Others have pointed to 1510 as the year the transatlantic slave trade commenced; in that year King Ferdinand of Spain approved the transport of 250 slaves across the Atlantic.\textsuperscript{128} Still other accounts place the beginning at 1518, when Spain's Charles V granted a royal license – \textit{asiento} – allowing an assigned merchant company of entrepreneurs exclusive right – essentially a

\textsuperscript{122} Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 13. Morgan notes that neither the Brits, nor other European powers, controlled large tracts of land in Africa, and that West Africa was a basically a free trading zone.


monopoly – to take African slaves to Spanish America. Whatever date one places its start, the trade was a lucrative business by the 1520s. By that time, Spain was Europe's strongest power; but the Portuguese were the leading practitioners of the slave trade, in part because theirs was a maritime culture with excellent shipbuilding, and no less because they were less racked by internal strife than other powers. In particular, Spain's religious intolerance and high taxing of subjects had resulted in revolt in areas it had controlled, such as the Netherlands, and then its annexation of Portugal in 1580 (the union lasted from 1580 to 1640) led to greater tension with its old rival England. The loss of its great armada, sent to invade England in 1588, portended the decline of Spain's empire in the coming century.

For their part, the Portuguese had established a series of trading depots on the coast of Brazil in the last decade of the 15th century, and the first permanent settlement near present-day São Paulo by 1532. At first, the Portuguese had little interest in "controlling" Brazil, and generally gave "captaincies" of coastal land plots to private individuals. By the 1530s, they were interested in more control so as to assure dominance in the region against other Europeans rivals, particularly France during this period. The French had begun seizing shipments of gold from Portugal's first African trading fortress – Elmina Castle (established in present-day Ghana in

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1481) – in 1492.\textsuperscript{137} They had explored the Brazilian coast in the early 1500s, but were sidetracked by their internal Huguenot Wars in the last half of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{138} For their part, the English had involved themselves in the Old World slave trade as early 1481, but their participation did not begin in earnest until 1562, when Captain John Hawkins was commissioned to carry out the increasingly attractive transatlantic trade.\textsuperscript{139}

By mid-century, a few thousand black slaves were being shipped across the Atlantic per year, and the numbers were on the rise.\textsuperscript{140} "By the middle of the sixteenth century, then, the Atlantic world had begun to take shape. European sailors, who had come to understand the winds and currents of the Atlantic, had established a system of navigation that bound Europe, Africa, and the Americas into a single system of commerce."\textsuperscript{141} At first, particularly for the Spaniards, the Africans were brought over to assist in mining for gold and minerals, taking the place of a rapidly diminishing native population.\textsuperscript{142} Later, Africans were increasingly working to produce staple crops. By the mid-to-late 1500s the Portuguese had spread sugar plantations from the Atlantic islands to Brazil, setting in motion the large-scale cultivation of the crop that was to produce the demand for slave labor beyond all others.\textsuperscript{143} As Hugh Thomas writes, "the provision


\textsuperscript{139} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 78, 154-156. Note, Queen Elizabeth, "approving Hawkins's expedition, expressed the pious hope that the slaves would not be carried off without their free consent, a thing 'which would be detestable and call down the vengeance of Heaven upon the undertakers.'" Clearly she did not understand the nature of the trade and slave traders at that time.


of slaves for the New World was now becoming what it was to be, in ever-increasing dimensions, for the next 350 years: a source of profit for the merchant as well as for the Crown.\textsuperscript{144}

\textbf{The Age of Monopoly – 1600 to 1700}

The 17\textsuperscript{th} century witnessed the rise of the modern state system in Europe following the Thirty Years War (1618-1648),\textsuperscript{145} and a change from settler communities to exploitation colonies in the European presence in the Western Hemisphere.\textsuperscript{146} The Spanish and Portuguese had led the way in New World exploration in the 15\textsuperscript{th} and 16\textsuperscript{th} centuries, establishing what Pieter C. Emmer calls the "first Atlantic system." This first system was a "halfhearted breakthrough to the new era of international capitalism;" the Spanish and Portuguese states were active in almost every part of the trade, and their own shipping firms and capital markets were unable to keep up with the demand for transport and investments.\textsuperscript{147} In some ways, the first system was "international" – the traders could belong to an international group of investors, but ultimately their goods could be stopped and confiscated by Crown authorities; further, Spanish/Portuguese "haciendas" (plantations system) contained a fixed set of land, labor, and capital and therefore couldn't adjust to maximize the factors of production.\textsuperscript{148} The Spanish/Portuguese system was limited by its more mercantilist inclination, and all the infrastructural drawbacks and inflexibility that came with it.\textsuperscript{149} Other European powers engaged in the trade and operated within the initial Spanish/Portuguese system, even if their penetration was often illegal or surreptitious.\textsuperscript{150}

The Dutch were some of the most active interlopers.\textsuperscript{151} The Dutch had begun their forays to the African coast in search of their first two great interests – gold and ivory – but as those commodities declined in the early 17\textsuperscript{th} century their interest in another lucrative commodity – slaves – rose concomitantly.\textsuperscript{152} The Dutch had by 1600 been at war with Spain and Portugal, literally, for two decades; they had been engaging in a surreptitious economic war with Spain and Portugal for even longer. The first Dutch slaving expedition was recorded in 1606 (although earlier voyages are possible) and the Dutch West India Company (WIC) was first established by Dutch merchants in 1607,\textsuperscript{153} much to the chagrin of other Dutch merchants, sailors, and investors that were engaging in trade surreptitiously. An official company was likely to gain government-sanctioned monopoly rights on trade (as the Dutch East India Company had for Asia), and these interlopers were quite happy with the less regulated, less mercantile system with which they had so successfully penetrated the Iberians' empire.\textsuperscript{154} But Dutch elites had other ideas. The Dutch had enjoyed a truce with Spain from 1609 to 1621,\textsuperscript{155} and used this time to build a large merchant marine fleet and standing army, to invest in Brazilian sugar plantations, and to become the leader in the carrying of finished products back across the Atlantic and exporting them on the European continent.\textsuperscript{156} In 1623, the reborn Dutch West India Company (it had at first failed and was relaunched in 1621) was the vanguard of a planned attack on the vast Spanish/Portuguese empire,


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taking first Bahia on the coast of Brazil and then striking at Luanda, the largest European
settlement in Africa. Their conquest of parts of northern Brazil by 1630 sparked their ever-
deepening involvement in the slave trade. In 1637, the Dutch seized Elmina, taking it easily and ending 160 years of Portuguese occupation. These were years of decline for Spain and Portugal (the Portuguese were fighting for independence from Spain again in 1640), and Dutch invaders were just the first of many countries that would chip away at their imperial possessions.

As the Dutch were putting a frontal assault on the Spanish empire in the 1620s and 1630s, the French and English were conquering the Caribbean and were for the first time becoming major users of slave labor. The French were putting down roots in the New World,

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162 Kopperman, Paul E. "Ambivalent Allies: Anglo-Dutch Relations and the Struggle against the Spanish Empire in the Caribbean, 1621-1641." In *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World*. Verene A. Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles. Princeton, NJ: Marcus Wiener Publishers, 2000: 166-168; and Thomas, Hugh, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870*, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 185. Kopperman notes that the 20 years between 1620 and 1640 witnessed a growing rivalry between the Dutch and English, even though they were tacitly allied against the Spanish Empire. Also of note, 1630-1635 was a time of relative decline in English movement in the Caribbean, but the decades after were to see increasing activity.
settling Canada in 1603 and Caribbean islands starting in 1625. Like the Dutch, the English whittled away their rivals' empires, taking Bermuda in 1609, Virginia and Massachusetts soon thereafter, Barbados in 1625, and other islands, like Antigua, by 1632. The English had tried to fill their labor needs with indentured servants – men and women that contracted themselves to labor for a period of time in return for passage to the New World but, as Thomas notes, "within a generation it came to be realized that the treatment of such men and women was harsh, and that feudal conditions which many had sought to avoid in Europe were being copied in the New World; Indentured servants found it hard to find good land after their ten years of service were over; and slaves began to look cheaper to the planter." In many ways, there was a free trade slave system in the Caribbean from the 1620s into the 1660s as the Dutch took on the Iberian powers and the infrastructure the Dutch had established assisted the English and French in exploiting their possessions. In this way, the emerging 17th century system of interconnected trade between Africa, the New World, and the European imperial centers – what P.C. Emmer calls "the second Atlantic system" was "as much the work of the Dutch" as any other European power. Ironically, however, the Dutch West India Company, despite its modest record, was to become the model of transatlantic mercantile trade that all others would follow. Describing the government rationale, Stinchcombe notes, "the primary purpose of the government in supporting mercantilist policy

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seems generally to have been to make the trade easily taxable, to get advance payment for the monopoly privileges, and to make the colonies pay for the projection of empire power into the interimperial system."171 As Thomas summarizes, the investment in slaves and equipment...

...was so great, the strategic risks seemed so considerable, and the need for a regular supply of slave labour so compelling that all the main colonizing nations organized privileged national companies of the kind which seemed such a success in the case of Holland... So not only the French and English developed these enterprises, in emulation of the Dutch, but even small polities, such as those of the King of Denmark, and the Duke of Courtland in the Baltic States, established companies which combined African with West Indian interests.172

In this way, the slave trade came to take this monopolistic form: the colonies were to grow the prescribed crops, predominantly sugar; the colonies were supposed to trade only with their home countries; and lastly, the countries' trade was supposed to be carried out through a national monopoly company, like the Dutch West India Company.173 The trade has been popularly characterized as the "Triangular Trade," based on the nature and course of the expedition: slaves were obtained at the West African coast and taken across the Atlantic to serve as the labor force for the colonies in the Western Hemisphere; the crops and raw materials that they helped develop were then taken to Europe to be sold and turned into finished goods, and some of these goods were taken to the African coast to trade for slaves.174 Typically, a group of investors combined to finance a particular voyage to Africa and the Americas;175 the entire trip took about a year and naturally a trip of this time and distance was fraught with economic risk.176

Charter companies were established by virtually every state, although private entrepreneurs continued to work around the monopoly restrictions. To protect these mercantilist companies and their colonies, every country developed its version of the British Navigation Acts, which tried to ensure that nothing in the colonies could be bought which was not made in the native European metropole.¹¹⁷ From the point of view of the colony, Arthur Stinchcombe adds, "slaves, provisions, and often manufactured goods were almost always cheaper if bought in the local Caribbean trade."¹¹⁸ Planters protested, and of course there were defiant acts everywhere by

¹¹⁸ Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 188-189. Thomas summarizes the English Navigation Acts: "There were in England three such acts: that of 1647, which attempted to ensure that no plantation should allow its products to be shipped save in English ships; that of 1650, which provided that all foreign ships trading with plantations had to be licensed; and that of 1651, the Navigation Act proper, which provided that no goods from Asia, Africa, or America could be imported into any English territory, colonies included, except in English-build ships directed by an English master, and manned by a crew at least three-quarters English in origin. Between 1660 and 1672, further laws provided that most colonial produce had to be sent to England and, on the English ships which carried the goods, three-quarters of the crew had to be English."
private merchants; colonists began to insist, even by petition, that they be allowed to purchase
goods (mainly slaves) from other countries.\textsuperscript{180}

The slave trade in the Americas in the 16\textsuperscript{th} and early 17\textsuperscript{th} century remained at a relatively
small, but still significant, scale until the 1640s.\textsuperscript{181} That decade marked what some authors have
called the "sugar revolution;" years that saw an "explosion of the slave trade" when a relative
"trickle" of slave imports became a "flood."\textsuperscript{182} The key factor in this great increase in slave
traffic was the spread of sugar cultivation from the Brazilian coast to the Caribbean islands.\textsuperscript{183}
Sugar needed to be grown on a large scale to be profitable, and thus, required large supplies of
cheap labor.\textsuperscript{184} Before the 1640s, most slaves worked on smaller farms or as household servants;
but once demand for sugar expanded, the plantations and the amount of slave labor required grew
larger and larger.\textsuperscript{185}

Sugar cultivation dominated the slave economy. As Stinchcombe writes, if one is to study
slavery and the slave trade, "the core of slavery was the sugar plantation, so the geographical
distribution of slavery was the distribution of sugar cultivation."\textsuperscript{186} It took fifteen months to grow

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{181} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 180. Thomas notes that it was probably smaller at this point than the Arab trans-Saharan trade in slaves.
\end{itemize}
and required a relatively sophisticated distribution of labor to produce. David Watts outlines the basic process of sugar cultivation:

The actual technique of sugar production from the cane was well understood, although haphazard production methods often lowered the quality of the product. Once the juice had been removed from the cane stalk, it was channelled into an adjacent boiling house, where it was drained into a series (5 or 6) of cooper cauldrons, each of which had a separate furnace underneath it. The juice was boiled for a while in one cauldron, before being transferred to the next in sequence, where the process was repeated, impurities being skimmed off at each stage. The sticky molasses which resulted increased in density after each transfer; and, following the last boiling, they were scooped into small, clay, sugar-loaf moulds, in which they were left to cool. Any uncrystallized molasses, and any further impurities, then were removed and the sugar cake (called maccabado), which might be coloured anything from a golden yellow to a dark red, was lifted from the moulds to be shipped to Europe for direct sale, or for additional refining into sugar.

Planters developed the "gang" system to meet the challenge of producing sugar in mass quantities. A gang typically consisted of ten to twenty workers, with a black "driver" in the lead, pushing the workers to ensure they stayed on task and achieved their production objectives. The gang system achieved a high level of precision, and utilized some of the more advanced technology of the age. The concepts involved in effective sugar cultivation were the forerunners of those used in the coming industrial revolution. As noted slavery historian Robert Fogel discusses, urban enterprises did not require slavery to become competitive in the marketplace," but the gang system worked wonderfully in the production of sugar and when these

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practices were extended to crops like rice, coffee, and cotton, it would conquer these also, leaving other small-scale famers at a distinct disadvantage in the markets.\textsuperscript{192}

Overall, the trend was largely similar across various regions: sugar pushed out other crops like tobacco; large slave plantations pushed out smaller ones; gang labor pushed out traditional methods of farming.\textsuperscript{193} As Postma summarizes, "with an increasing demand for workers on the plantations in the Western Hemisphere, and indigenous Americans and European immigrants being either inadequate\textsuperscript{194} to the task or unobtainable in sufficient numbers, Africa became a logical source for inexpensive labor for the most arduous work on the plantations."\textsuperscript{195} Barbados was an example of this trend; in 1641 there were only a few hundred slaves on the island, but by 1645, after sugar became the main crop, that number had risen to some 6,000.\textsuperscript{196}

The Dutch were the leaders in Africa and the Caribbean in the 1640s; "they were in these heady years the dominant world power, Portugal's successor on both sides of the Atlantic."\textsuperscript{197} But their wave of power was rising only to just as quickly recede. After 1650, the English and French spent a decade fighting a series of anti-Dutch wars in "an effort to destroy Dutch influence and improve the efficiency of their own mercantile system."\textsuperscript{198} The Dutch lost settlements – northeast


\textsuperscript{194} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 92. Thomas suggests Native Americans had shown themselves to be inferior workers to the black Africans, who were more accustomed to the domesticated animals and who were also more resistant to disease.


Brazil in 1654 and their foothold in North America – New Holland (now New York) – in 1654,\(^{199}\) and the two countries that would come to dominate the known world in the 18\(^{th}\) century – France and England – were in ascendance.

The French were increasingly looking to boost their slave industry revenue, but in the 1660s, the French West Indies did not yet display the promise that they later would.\(^{200}\) England, on the other hand, was on the move. As mentioned, England had captured Jamaica from Spain in 1655 (although Barbados was still at this point, its crown jewel), and the Stuarts returned to the throne in England in 1660, providing renewed stability and starting the country on a path to world dominance.\(^{201}\) That year, the Royal Adventurers into Africa Company was founded and given monopoly on English slave trade for 1,000 years.\(^{202}\) The English and Dutch fought over access to African ports until the Dutch recognized the trading right of the Royal Adventurers in the Treaty of Breda in 1667.\(^{203}\) The company struggled, and was replaced by the infamous Royal African Company (RAC), which took over monopoly of the trade in 1672.\(^{204}\) Little did anyone realize that that 1,000-year monopoly would not even last one-hundred.

So it came to be that after a period of relatively free trade, all participants established mercantilist policies, often to the dismay of their merchants and planters.\(^{205}\) Still, the "second

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\(^{204}\) Thomas, Hugh, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870*, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 201-202. Thomas notes, "The RAC was one of the largest early joint-stock companies, combining the idea of incorporation (an ancient method of organization for charitable purposes) with the modern one of the association of capital."

Atlantic system" the Dutch had helped to establish wasn't in danger of reverting to the ineptitude (lack of competition, fixed inputs resulting in the inability to meet demand, inflexibility in the face of market changes, etc.) of the first system for several reasons. First, the second system was always competitive and somewhat international, because at no time would the Royal African Company monopoly dominate the trade and the British and other power's slave trades were larger than their own demand for slaves. Further, capitalists invested in plantations beyond their own state's and the distribution of those plantations' produce was international. The bottom line is the Dutch helped set up a system that had an international flavor of free trade to it; when they tried to dominate it via mercantilism they failed, but their failures and their adjustments to those failures helped chart a more successful, more free course for themselves and their English and French successors. If the system reverted back to mercantile tendencies for a period, the overall evolution was toward more free market principles. In this way, "the Dutch attack on the first Atlantic system did not destroy it, and by themselves the Dutch could not create a second one. The development of this second Atlantic system of trade would be driven in large part by the rise of sugar cultivation, which the British and French would come to dominate.

As Paul Kennedy's classic, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers points out, "the most significant feature of the Great Power scene after 1660 was the maturing of a genuinely multipolar system of European states, each one of which increasingly tended to make decisions about war and peace on the basis of 'national interests' rather than for transnational, religious causes." Those interests increasingly compelled the powers to engage in warfare and

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plantation-based slavery, and a "Financial Revolution" in banking and credit schemes in the late 1600s and early 1700s allowed European powers to finance their efforts as necessary. The once-dominant Spain and Portugal gave way to the Dutch (temporarily) and more lastingly to the French and English, who would harness slave labor production to assist them in dominating the European power game in the coming century.

1700-1780

By 1700, "sugar was king" throughout the Caribbean. By that same year, "it should have been evident that no chartered company had a future." Why did mercantile charter companies fare so poorly? In the end, private parties were more flexible in adjusting to the market and more efficient in utilizing factors of production. In 1698 the RAC lost its monopoly, only twenty-five of its thousand years utilized. From then on, private British business entrepreneurs could partake in the slave trade, while the government would continue to maintain the forts on the African coast, as they were "undoubtedly necessary" to those engaged in the trade. Other state enterprises limped on, "as state enterprises usually do, and new ones even came to be founded." But, "it should have been obvious," Thomas notes, "to the Spanish

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Crown that the pursuit of the ideal monopoly contract (asiento) for trading slaves was as vain as the search for a Fountain of Eternal Youth."\(^{220}\) Nonetheless, during the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1713) holding the asiento was one of the most important issues at stake.\(^{221}\) The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 concluded the war and passed the asiento from the Portuguese to the English. "Though a Bourbon ruled Madrid, British ships would carry Africans to the Americas to work in the haciendas, the palaces, the mines, and the tobacco and sugar farms of his great empire."\(^{222}\) The Treaty of Utrecht brought a "sense of realism" to the French trade as well, and they too opened the African trade to private merchants.\(^{223}\) The one stipulation was that slavers left from the "privileged" French ports – Rouen, La Rochelle, Bordeaux, Saint-Malo, and Nantes – of which Nantes would become the leading port and its leading destination was Saint-Domingue, increasingly the jewel of the French sugar industry.\(^{224}\) Although fading, the Netherlands was still an important Atlantic power in the 1700s.\(^{225}\) The West India Company lost its formal monopoly in Africa in 1734 and the West Indies in 1738, and hence, other Dutch traders were opened to the commerce.\(^{226}\) The Portuguese still remained the leading carrier of


\(^{224}\) Thomas, Hugh, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870*, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 250-255. Trade was opened up to all ports in 1741, although merchants still were forbidden to trade with other countries, although they, of course, still surreptitiously did.


slaves across the Atlantic until the 1730s, but all countries were following the British model, as Britain was by this time seen as the economic giant of Europe.

By the early 1700s, the British North American colonies were coming into their own as traffickers of the slave trade. Slaves had been introduced to Spanish Florida by 1560, but the arrival of twenty slaves to Jamestown Virginia in 1619 is likely the earliest movement into British-controlled North America. Slavery's success in British North America was never over-determined. Similar to other parts of the new world, settlers attempted to use Native Americans as labor, but this effort quickly failed. For most of the 17th century, then, indentured servants filled the bulk of the colonies' labor needs. Until the 1680s the non-Indian population was mostly white, with Africans only trickling in. Severe economic dislocations in England during the civil war period (early 1640s to early 1650s) had led to increased immigration of indentured servants to the New World. Once England was stabilized following the restoration of the

monarchy in 1660, wages rose and labor opportunities increased. Therefore, there were significant numbers of indentured servants in British North America from 1650 to 1680, after which the practice declined rapidly.

There were five main geographical regions to consider when discussing slavery in British North America – the North, Chesapeake, lowcountry (Carolina/Georgia), Florida/Louisiana and the West. Although Northern slavery is often neglected, there were a large number of slaves working in Northern colonies, mostly in households and other urban settings. No northern crops required a large labor base like that required by sugar plantations or to a lesser degree other crops such as tobacco. Tobacco became a staple crop in the Chesapeake region first, and rice took hold in the lowcountry. By 1680 for the first time, slaves were being introduced to Virginia in large numbers. Between 1680 and 1750 the percentage of Africans per total population went from 7 to 44 percent in Virginia and 17 to 61 percent in South Carolina. Tobacco cultivation went from 20,000 pounds in 1619 to 38 million pounds in 1700, and then fluctuated between 25 and 60 million pounds for the rest of the 18th century. When most people think of slavery in British North America and later the United States, they tend to think of

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cotton, but in reality, cotton was a late-coming (but nonetheless hugely important) staple crop. Cotton didn't emerge as a major southern crop until the beginning of the 19th century, particularly after the invention of the cotton gin (1793). Louisiana and other western regions would see an increase in slavery as cotton became the principal staple crop and its cultivation moved west in the 1800s. Sugar, too, would take hold in this region, but only after 1795.

All told, demand for slaves was strong for the first half of 1700s, but soil exhaustion from tobacco overproduction led to a temporary decrease as planters shifted to other crops in the latter half of the century. One of the most striking aspects of North American slavery, as compared to other regions, was that it achieved a natural reproduction rate, and thereby became self-sustaining. For example, in the United States the slave population at emancipation was 6 times as large as the total number imported; by contrast, in Jamaica it was less than half as large. Another contrast was that while slaves greatly outnumbered whites in Brazil and other parts of the Caribbean, slaves made up a much smaller percentage of the North American population – fluctuating between 10 and 20 percent.

Elsewhere, the late 18th century was the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, and in being so, it was also "the age of sugar." By this time, people of all classes began to use sugar,

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252 Bergard, Laird W. *The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 24-27. When the census was taken in 1790, the U.S. had 3.8 million people, of which 18% (700,000) were slaves. See also Morgan, Kenneth. *Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 17; Morgan suggests slaves comprised 90 percent of the population in virtually all sugar colonies.

not just the rich; therefore, the ability to control the sugar industry and supply became a matter of utmost national importance. As mentioned, sugar production was among the most technologically sophisticated industries of the time. As sugar production moved forward, it was increasingly the prototype for later assembly-line production. David Brion Davis says "from the beginning, sugar looked more like a modern agribusiness."  

**Figure 2.2. The Caribbean in the Late 18th Century**

Britain was the leader in the sugar trade between 1740 and 1750; her ships provided about 200,000 slaves to the Americas, which was more than anyone else had carried in any other comparable ten year period to that point. The Seven Years War (1756-1763) was beneficial for Britain; they took Guadeloupe and Martinique and control of Havana in 1762, and with their influence in Cuba, the island began its ascent – transforming itself from a place with a moderately

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balanced economy to one in which sugar was the commodity. France's commerce had all but ceased during the Seven Years War, but the Treaty of Paris brought peace and Britain returned many of her key possessions to France as part of that peace.

The fifteen-year peace after the Seven Years War (1763-1778) was good for the slave trade everywhere, and particularly beneficial for the British West Indies. In these years, though, France was starting to overtake Britain as a sugar producer; in 1767, France exported more of the commodity than the British for the first time (77,000 tons to 71,000 tons). African slavery was still considered the answer to Brazilian labor in this era. It was, as Hugh Thomas notes, "the characteristic form of labour in Brazil, in both the rural and the urban scene, even if the mining of both gold and diamonds was in decline... sugar and tobacco were Brazil's most important crops, and both began to seem as valuable as exports of precious metals." The Brazilian slave trade accounted for 160,000 slaves between 1760 and 1770. The Dutch were increasingly at odds with the British during the Seven Years War, as the British wanted to limit their trade with the French. This led to diplomatic quarrels (1758-1759) and open hostilities later (after 1780).

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Spain struggled along, both producing sugar in some areas but also buying it from France.\(^{267}\) Strikingly behind the times, the declining Iberian power still believed the key to the trade was holding the monopolistic *asiento*.\(^ {268}\) The more important development, from the slave trade perspective, was the increasing importance of Cuba as a sugar producer. Jamaica was sending large numbers of slaves to Cuba, and Cuba was the main buyer of slaves during this period (1770s and 1780s); there was also increasing sales in North America, with the English take-over of Florida a critical opening.\(^ {269}\)

The American Revolution had negative consequences for perpetrators of the slave trade; conflict usually did.\(^ {270}\) France's trade numbers were only slightly diminished during this period, and the other neutrals kept up their trade as well; but British slavers, merchants, and planters suffered.\(^ {271}\) Liverpool was particularly hurt, and some merchants went out of business during this period. Yet, these were short-term fluctuations and "the long-term prospects for the slave trade appeared excellent in, say, 1780, provided only that the nations could live in peace."\(^ {272}\) In fact, despite the fact that British Navigation Acts were after 1783 extended to the newly independent United States, with its subsequent negative impact on Britain's trade, the overall slave trade attained its highest levels during the 1780s.\(^ {273}\)

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were carried across the Atlantic: perhaps 325,000 by Britain,\textsuperscript{274} with Liverpool in the lead.\textsuperscript{274} The French probably carried about 270,000 slaves, gaining some momentum back from the American Revolution and taking back some African coastal possessions as a result of the Treaty of Paris in 1783.\textsuperscript{275} "So it was that in 1780 the African trade in slaves seemed an essential part of the economies of all advanced countries, both a traditional thing and one which was being adjusted to meet all modern opportunities."\textsuperscript{276}

**Figure 2.3. Principal Slave Importers\textsuperscript{277}**

![Map of Principal Slave Importers](image)

**Conclusion: The Rise of Transatlantic Slavery – Who? Why? How?**

In order to summarize, the brief history offered above can be segmented out into the "who," "why," and "how" of the rise of the transatlantic trade in slaves and the practice of slavery to at least the end of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century.


Transatlantic Slavery - Who?

Spain was the dominant empire from the start of the trade in the 15\textsuperscript{th} century through the middle of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, but its neighbor, Portugal, was actually the leader in transatlantic trade itself. Lisbon had made some of the initial forays into Africa, set up the first trading castle (although not initially for the purpose of slaves) at Elmina, and then became the leader in the exploration across the Atlantic – from the small islands near the continent all the way across to Brazil. She had mixed the two processes that would so critically dominate this history – acquiring and transplanting African slave labor and then using that labor to cultivate staple crops, particularly sugar. In the early 17\textsuperscript{th} century Spain and Portugal were supplanted by the technological and financial prowess of the Netherlands, who was only then to be overcome by the British and French. Even as the strength of these powers increased in the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century, new slaving countries were coming on the scene – Britain's newly free colony in the United States would eventually have the highest number of slaves within its southern slave society. Portugal's Brazilian colony and Spain's Cuba, too, both would become independent slaving juggernauts in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Other smaller powers engaged in the trade as well, but these countries – Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Britain, France, the United States, Brazil, and Cuba – were the most important players in transatlantic slavery.

Transatlantic Slavery - Why?

Why were these countries drawn into the trade in humans and the practice of chattel slavery? "Whatever contemporary writers may have said about motives, or how much rulers may have desired the results of such schemes, the progress of Atlantic exploration ultimately depended on financial considerations."\textsuperscript{278} The slave trade, for both Europeans and Africans, was an

economic venture. Slavery was a system of labor, and while one required large amounts of capital to engage in the slave trade, ultimately it was deemed to be a labor form worth the economic expenditure. Why did it become such a dominant form of economic venture in this period? On the one hand, the main reasons are external factors: 1) the need for a large labor force to first mine for precious metals and then later to produce staple crops, 2) the fact that European labor, particularly indentured servants, was more expensive than slave labor, and 3) the fact that African slaves were believed to be better able to endure the rigor of the tropics than the Europeans and better able to stand up to disease than the native Americans. These are important, but not exclusive, reasons; one must add an internal factor to the list – the fact that these countries had no ideological compunction against the enslavement of a class of humans – stereotyped as black, uncivilized, heathens – and were willing to allot to slavers and planters the power to exert an extreme amount of brutal force on them in order to produce economic reward. "What would certainly now be, and possibly then was, regarded as brutal was certainly accepted as necessary," and "by the early 1700s most English merchants and political leaders agreed with the eminent economist Malachy Postlethwayt: The Negroe-Trade and the natural

281 Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press. 1975: 5. In the late 1700s, the average initial requirement for Dutch trade was 8857 pounds sterling... and for British it was 8534 pounds.
Consequences resulting from it, may be justly esteemed an inexhaustible Fund of Wealth and Naval Power to this Nation.”

Transatlantic Slavery – How?

If slavery was an economic venture, how did it rise to become such a seemingly "inexhaustible" source of wealth and power? As noted, the rise of transatlantic slavery was not over-determined. Slavery had existed for centuries, but it took on a new form and scale in the Atlantic world. Initially Spain and Portugal explored the African coast in search of any number of commodities, and slaves were not at the top of the list. "All the black slaves traded in Portugal, Spain, and Africa," Hugh Thomas notes, "were regarded then as just one more form of commodity, and though prized, not as an especially unusual one." Then later they branched out to the Atlantic islands and eventually to the New World. There they found gold and silver, commodities whose mining/exploitation required a significant labor force. "The near extermination of native populations created an immense vacuum... in many regions this invasion left only a skeletal native population that could be coerced to perform heavy labor." Natural precious resources then depleted, the Europeans looked for economic gain through the development of agriculture.

Peter Kolchin concludes large-scale slavery "emerged to meet the pervasive labor shortage that developed wherever landholders tried to grow staple crops – sugar, coffee, tobacco, rice, and later cotton – for market in areas of population scarcity." Slavery existed in the northern United States and other parts of the New World. In pre-sugar era, most slaves worked as

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household servants or on small farms, yet these enterprises "did not require slavery to become competitive in the marketplace." When slave labor extended to the cultivation of crops such as tobacco and rice "it left small-scale farmers with minor percentages of the market." Yet, these industries were not massive plantation systems one typically visualizes when considering slavery. These crops offered "limited opportunities for the division of labor and for the organization of production on an assembly line basis." As late as 1725, the average slave operation was 10 persons. No, the vision of the massive, technologically advanced plantation has become synonymous with slavery because of the rise of the sugar industry, and to a lesser degree, cotton (after the invention of the cotton gin). Sugar and cotton plantations were capitalist institutions, oriented to production for a market, involving significant investment, but employing non-wage labor. These plantations used some of most advanced technology of the age and had a division of labor similar to a modern industrial system. Fields hands worked in "gangs" of 10 to 20, each headed by a "driver" that pushed his charges to achieve assigned production. Over the decades, from the rise of sugar cultivation in the early 1600s to the maturation of the "gang system" in the late 1700s and early 1800s, the size of plantations grew larger and larger. By the end of 18th century, a typical Jamaican sugar plantation operated between 150 and 200 hands and

292 Fogel, Robert William. Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 23, 35. Fogel notes that slavery went away in Mexico, for example, and was only marginal in northern U.S. colonies because the crops did not lend themselves to the "gang" system, but in sugar colonies and other places where crops were produced that needed the gang system, slavery surged forward and free labor was phased out.


was valued at 26,400 pounds sterling.\textsuperscript{299} Hence the cycle: Sugar (or cotton) pushed out tobacco and other crops; slaves pushed out free laborers; large slave plantations pushed out small ones; gang labor pushed out traditional methods of farming.\textsuperscript{300}

The overall summary of the "who, why, how" questions of the rise of transatlantic slavery from the early days through the beginning of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, then, is this: the technological advances of the day\textsuperscript{301} led rulers and entrepreneurs to explore new realms in search of commodities such as gold and silver; when those commodities dwindled, they then turned to production of cash crops, particularly sugar, produced through a process that called for a large labor supply; this labor was filled by African slaves after native populations had proven inadequate or had been exhausted; an inability for these slaves (except in rare cases like in the American South) to reproduce their numbers naturally led to a continuous need for imported labor to work old and newly discovered lands.\textsuperscript{302} Thus, "from the early sixteenth century until the end of the eighteenth century or beyond, the relevant factors conspired... to promote the victory of slave over free labor."\textsuperscript{303} Slavery had become an essential foundation of a sophisticated international trading system of good and resources. What then "tipped the scales"\textsuperscript{304} in the other


\textsuperscript{300} Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery}. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 23, 39. Fogel further summarizes, "the outcome of the contest between slave and free labor thus turned on a combination of technological, economic, political, and cultural factors... for the gang system to succeed there had to be a set of crops that allowed the division of the production process into a series of simple and easily monitored tasks. There also had to be a rapidly growing demand for such crops... to operate effectively the system required an adequate supply of slaves, wide latitude in the use of the force needed to achieve an industrial discipline, and freedom to reallocate its labor force as economic conditions might dictate."


direction? The next section lays a foundation for exploring that question further by outlining the
general trends and milestones of transatlantic slavery's abolition.

Part II – Slavery and its Ultimate Decline

Early History to 1780

It is not too far off the mark to say that from the beginning of history until the 18th
century, as Professor John Mueller puts it, "it occurred to almost no one that there was anything
the least bit peculiar about the institution of slavery." States engaged in the practice without
much second thought, and other sources that one might expect to comment negatively on the
practice – philosophers, the church, the media, literati – fared only a little better. This period of
history from the beginning of the slave trade to the early 1700s was, as David Brion Davis points
out, a brutal time to be alive and if one can wrap their arms around the world of that time then one
can, perhaps, understand why slavery was largely accepted. In fact, as Davis states, "it is
perhaps remarkable that the emerging African slave trade drew as much courageous fire as it
did," noting the anti-slavery writing of the likes of Jesuit theologian Luis de Molina, Spanish
jurist Tomás de Mercado, and Bartolomé Frios de Albornoz, a lawyer.

Interestingly, there was significant campaigning against enslaving native Americans.
Licenciado Zuazo and Bartolomé de las Casas, known as the "protectors of the Indians," spoke
out against the treatment of the natives and pushed for their replacement by Africans, which
increasingly became the common pattern. The lack of concern for Africans as compared to
other races is based in no small measure on the belief blacks are cursed descendants of Ham, as

305 Mueller, John E. Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War. New York, NY: Basic
306 Davis, David Brion. Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World. New York, NY:
307 Davis, David Brion. Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World. New York, NY:
308 Davis, David Brion. Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World. New York, NY:
delineated in the Judeo-Christian Bible. This Biblical "justification" became a mainstay argument of planters in the American South.

The Portuguese actually came closest to adopting any measure that could even remotely resemble a humanitarian concern about the practice, when in 1664 they established minimum standards for water and later in 1684 put limits on the percentage of slaves to ship tonnage. Beyond these modest steps, there is little noted state intervention in the trade prior to the late 18th century.

Literary and philosophical voices began speaking against the slave trade in the early to mid-1700s. "Literature, mainly through the anti-slavery implications of the noble savage theme, and through its reflexion [sic] – appropriation, even – of ideas of liberty and benevolence, sharpened and extended awareness of the problem of slavery, and made its own contribution to the emergence of anti-slavery conviction" Further, Enlightenment figures such as Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau spoke on the subject, but few knew exactly how to attack the trade or what to do about it. The philosophical attack on slavery in the 18th century was a latent one at best.

The institution that one might expect to rail against slavery as a moral outrage – the church – was largely silent as well. Thomas notes "there is no record in the seventeenth century

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of any preacher who, in any sermon... condemned the trade in black slaves.”

Yet clearly there was some low-level Protestant agitation against the trade, which ultimately led to more outspoken and organized calls for abolition in the early 18th century. For its part, the Catholic Church spoke against the trade in 1683, and again in the early 1800s, but its efforts were always intermittent, half-hearted, and ineffectual. The Church was far more interested in converting slaves than freeing them.

The Quakers were one of the few institutions/religious organizations that were definitively speaking against the trade by mid-century. Although George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, had once spoken in favor of the practice, the tenets of Quakerism – that Christ had died for all men, that all men were therefore equal, and that all men must be loved – were such that the practice would almost inevitably be countered by doctrine once a few key minds forced the issue. "What was so striking about the Society of Friends in the eighteenth century is that it was a veritable Atlantic community." The Philadelphia Meeting of Friends made avoidance of slavery an issue in 1696. The Philadelphia Meeting spoke against the practice by 1719, the London Yearly Meeting recommended censuring any member participating in the slave trade in

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320 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press. 1975: 203-205. Of note, John Woolman and Anthony Benezet were two key figures in continuing to write on the subject and push the agenda in Quaker, and later, abolitionist circles.
1727. Nonetheless, there was debate on whether to ultimately make an outright prohibition in
the dealing in slaves a matter of Quaker doctrine on both sides of the Atlantic until it was finally
established as such in the 1770s.

    British intellectuals contributed their voices in the 1760s and 1770s. In 1761, George
Wallace, a Scottish lawyer, wrote System of Principles of the Laws of Scotland, and stated that
"an institution so unnatural and so inhuman as that of slavery ought to be abolished... no one is
born slave; because everyone is born with all his original rights." Sir William Blackstone
chimed in with a similar English voice in his Commentaries on the Laws of England (1765-1769),
saying that he did not expect slavery to long last in the British Isles and arguing that as soon as a
negro landed in England he became free. While perhaps self-evidently true, there was no
explicit law on the matter; English judges had ruled both ways with regard to the status of
Africans who arrived in England. Adam Smith added an economic voice to these judicial
opinions; in 1776 he published his classic Wealth of Nations, which stated that the slavery
"institution was just one more artificial restraint on individual self-interest."

    The Somerset case (1772) was a crucial early step in rectifying this matter. James
Somerset had been brought to England by his master, escaped in 1771, and then was re-captured
and an effort was made to send him back to Jamaica. Granville Sharp, the future abolitionist,

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325 Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810. Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
Humanities Press. 1975: 204; and Morgan, Kenneth. Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to
326 Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810. Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
327 Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY:
Simon & Schuster, 1997: 468; and Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-
328 Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY:
Simon & Schuster, 1997: 469; and Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-
329 Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY:
330 Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY:
brought the case forward on behalf of Somerset. Lord Mansfield took seven months deciding the case, ultimately concluding that English law did not support the re-exporting of a slave from English soil. This was a limited decision; he did not explicitly outlaw slavery in Britain, but in the public mind it came to represent Britain as a land of freedom symbolically, and thus, helped further the cause of abolition.331

Beyond Quakers, other Protestant denominations (in England mainly "dissenters," those Protestants that broke with the Church of England) were undergoing a transformation as they embraced the concepts of benevolence and Providence.332 The former is the belief in treating fellow humans well and compassionately, as Christ had; the latter the belief that God's divine Providence would be revealed by his rewarding nations that acted righteously and bringing ruin on those that were immoral.333 The Protestant anti-slavery movement was boosted when John Wesley published his condemnation of the trade – *Thoughts upon Slavery* – in 1774.334 Because Methodists were much more influential than Quakers, this was perhaps "the most serious onslaught on slavery, as well as the trade, that had yet been made."335 Still, Quakers, and even


Protestant dissenters, were largely considered outsiders, and no parliamentarian had yet discussed
the issue with any significance.\footnote{336} In the North American colonies, there was talk against the trade from the Quakers and
there was also an ever-present fear of over-importing slaves, and hence, being ripe for slave
rebellion.\footnote{337} In fact, when looking at the population numbers the American colonies had less to
fear than those in the West Indies. In 1770, slaves made up 22 percent of the population of North
America (80 percent were born there), as compared to 90 percent in the West Indies.\footnote{338} There
were additional "humanitarian" reasons to debate the validity of the slave trade – in the colony of
Georgia, for example, anti-slavery sentiment centered around the worry that holding slaves
promoted laziness and a proclivity toward "being severe."\footnote{339} Hugh Thomas concluded that in the
late 1700s, any prohibitions that took place in the North American were not "decided upon for
reasons of humanity. Fear and economy were the motives."\footnote{340} Whatever the motives, the colonial
debate on the utility and righteousness of the slave trade would have to wait for the outcome of
the revolution.\footnote{341}

The Seven Years War had been a "world war" and all participants scrambled for revenue
to pay for it. The tax increases that followed helped to spark the American Revolution, and that
revolution would put the slave institution in America under scrutiny.\footnote{342} Warfare on the continent
disrupted plantation discipline and the British reached out to slaves as allies, offering them

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{336} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY:
\item \footnote{337} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY:
\item \footnote{338} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY:
\item \footnote{339} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY:
\item \footnote{340} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY:
\item \footnote{341} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY:
\item \footnote{342} Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY:
Oxford University Press, 2006: 141-156; and Bergard, Laird W. \textit{The Comparative Histories of Slavery in
\end{itemize}
freedom in return for bearing arms against the rebellion.\textsuperscript{343} The Continental Congress approached the slave issue pragmatically, also enlisting slaves and offering eventual manumission when it was in desperate need of additional troops.\textsuperscript{344} The end of the war and the fashioning of the new nation would leave the slavery question very much in doubt.

Within thirty years of the outbreak of the Revolutionary War every northern state initiated some form of slave emancipation.\textsuperscript{345} Again, their reasoning was based mostly on their lack of a staple crop based on large-scale slave-based cultivation, fear of tainting their numbers with inferior races, and fear of rebellion. Hence, gradual emancipation had little long-term negative economic impact in the north and most slaveholders were compensated for emancipation to boot.\textsuperscript{346} In general, these laws applied to slaves born after a certain date; they did not free slaves immediately.\textsuperscript{347} Vermont was the first state to abolish slavery, in 1777.\textsuperscript{348} By 1781, Massachusetts courts had interpreted the state's new constitution as consistent with a prohibition against slavery.\textsuperscript{349} By 1810, about 3/4 of all northern blacks were free and within a generation almost all would be.\textsuperscript{350}

Still, the future of slavery in America was very much in doubt and would ultimately hinge on the Constitution. The Second Continental Congress had passed a resolution in 1776


\textsuperscript{347} Engerman, Stanley. \textit{Slavery, Emancipation, and Freedom: Comparative Perspectives}. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2007: 4-5. Engerman notes "as late as 1802, there were still over ten thousand slaves in New York State (to be freed in 1827 as a result of legislation passed in 1817), and in 1830 some twelve of thirteen northern states still had some slaves listed in the federal census – ranging from one in Massachusetts to 2,254 in New Jersey."


opposing slave imports (and many state Constitutions banned imports on their own, including Virginia in 1778), and yet, the Peace Treaty that ended the war in 1783 said the British should withdraw from the U.S. without "carrying away any negroes or other property of the American inhabitants." A bill drafted by Jefferson in 1784 would have barred slavery from the Northwest Territory after 1800; it was defeated by a single vote but in 1787 the Northwest Ordinance did abolish slavery in that territory. When it came time to draft the Constitution, the issue of slavery was left deliberately vague in order to preserve national unity. The Founders compromised by counting slaves as part of the southern population, but gave them only a fraction of their total population by counting every five slaves as three persons (The Three-Fifths Compromise); additionally, they affirmed the right of planters to seize runaway slaves and pushed the decision on prohibiting the slave trade itself back twenty years, to 1807. The Constitution that was adopted in 1787 never explicitly used the word slavery, nor did it deem slaves as "property," only referencing them as "persons." In short, the Constitution was open-ended. The Founding Fathers had been cautious and pragmatic in their writing, had compromised on almost every issue, and the Constitution's "meaning with respect to slavery would depend heavily upon how it was implemented."

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352 Fehrenbacher, Don E. *The Slaveholding Republic*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 25. Thus it was a casual acceptance of blacks as "property."
354 Fehrenbacher, Don E. *The Slaveholding Republic*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 18. The author states, "There can be little doubt that in the Continental Congress and elsewhere, antislavery sentiment was often muffled in the interest of national unity."
1780-1800

In Britain, the American Revolution perhaps sidetracked the abolition movement for a time, but the loss of that war forced the country to re-consider itself; the result: latent feelings of the need for reform were gradually turned into actual action to assure reform. 358

In 1783, Granville Sharp argued against the crew of the slavership Zong, who had thrown 131 of their slave "cargo" overboard in an effort stop a disease epidemic. 359 Sharp lost the case, but the whole affair was publicized by Sharp and Quaker reformers, shedding light on the plight of slaves. 360 Such events had taken place before, but they increasingly found avenues of appeal in the last years of the century. 361

In June 1783, the London Meeting of the Society of Friends put a petition before Parliament calling for the abolition of slavery on the grounds of Christianity, humanity, and justice. 362 That same year Anthony Benezet published 11,000 copies of *The Case of the

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361 Thomas, Hugh, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870,* New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 489. Of note, in 1784, the town of Bridgewater brought a municipality motion before parliament calling for the end of the slave trade, again reinforcing that whether via the courts or via petition of parliament, the movement was gaining traction.

Oppressed Africans.\textsuperscript{363} In 1787, Thomas Clarkson led the way in founding the Committee on Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade.\textsuperscript{364} Clarkson was a young Cambridge scholar that became intellectually interested in the concept of the rights of man. Once committed, he attempted to get articles on the subject of slavery published and this put him in contact with publisher James Phillips and Reverend James Ramsay; this group would form the core of the London Abolition Committee.\textsuperscript{365} William Wilberforce was a final key player in this group. In this same year, Wilberforce, who had recently undergone a spiritual awakening leading him toward evangelical Christianity, was convinced through conversations with his friends William Pitt and Lord Grenville that it was time to counter the slave trade in Parliament.\textsuperscript{366} Wilberforce was perfect for the role; he had the right mix of "wealth, ability and charm."\textsuperscript{367}

The movement leaders had greatly debated whether to target an end to the slave trade or an end to the practice of slavery itself. Ultimately, they decided to go after the trade, as it was known to be the most inhumane aspect of the institution and the leaders assumed once the trade was ended, the practice would follow.\textsuperscript{368} The reformers didn't want to aim for too much and risk losing everything.\textsuperscript{369} As Roger Anstey notes, "if the attack were made on slavery, the cry would be raised that property was being attacked and that 'an irritated race of beings' would be let loose,

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\item\textsuperscript{363} Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 156.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
whilst it was doubtful whether action against slavery could be taken without overriding the colonial legislatures."\footnote{Anstey, Roger. \textit{The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810}. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press. 1975: 256.}

Clarkson presented information on the slave trade to Parliament starting in May 1787.\footnote{That same year – 1787 – the first suggestion to start a freed slave colony, what was to become Sierra Leone, was put forth. A British naval vessel landed at Sierra Leone with 411 blacks on 10 May 1787, sponsored by the charitable work of Clarkson, Wilberforce, and Sharp. The first effort failed, and was tried again with more success in 1793. See Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 496-498, and Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 158.} Clarkson focused on both the immorality and the inefficiency of the slave trade.\footnote{Anstey, Roger. \textit{The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810}. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press. 1975: 260.} "The Abolition Committee soon concluded that the general, moral case against the slave trade had been made and that the way to induce a positive readiness to end the trade was to demonstrate that it was impolitic as well as unjust and inhumane."\footnote{Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 496.} The Committee continued their efforts in Parliament and the countryside using pamphlets, books, and poems; in the latter, they were starting to have an effect on the sentiments of the country.\footnote{Anstey, Roger. \textit{The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810}. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press. 1975: 264-265; and Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 161. Manchester was the local organization that at the "cutting edge" of the movement, going so far as to petition Parliament en masse.} Local abolition committees started almost by accident, but also in no small measure because of the work of Clarkson, who traveled the country gathering stories and evidence against the slave trade throughout 1787.\footnote{Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 157.}

Parliamentary understanding of the nature of the slave trade was undoubtedly advanced through these efforts in 1787 and 1788.\footnote{Anstey, Roger. \textit{The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810}. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press. 1975: 266.} By June 1788 Parliament had received over 100 petitions against the trade.\footnote{Anstey, Roger. \textit{The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810}. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press. 1975: 256.} William Pitt was poised to put the issue of trade abolition before
Parliament in May, but even with his support, the pro-trade interests defeated the effort. Sir William Dolben did successfully put forth a bill restricting the percentage of slaves per tonnage. It passed, and may have improved overall conditions (as perhaps did the later bonuses given to captains and surgeons that limited losses during the journey), but the overall impact on slave mortality is historically indeterminate.

Argument against the trade began again in May 1789, with Wilberforce in the lead. He had the support of some of the most powerful parliamentarians; Pitt, in particular, spoke eloquently on the subject. The pro-trade interest groups were strong as well, however, and despite the influence of Wilberforce's supporters, the best the effort produced was a call for further studies/facts on the effects of the trade.

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379 Morgan, Kenneth. Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 160; Harmer, Harry. The Longman Companion to Slavery, Emancipation and Civil Rights. New York, NY: Pearson Education, 2001: 74; and Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 507-508. As Morgan notes, this was the first British measure that legally restricted the number of slaves that could be carried based on the tonnage of the vessels. It was passed right before parliament adjourned and regulated 5 slaves for every three tons up to 200 and 1 slave for each ton after. It also forced there to be a surgeon on board to keep a log of illness.


Wilberforce brought resolutions before Parliament again in 1791 and 1792; in 1791 the House of Commons debated the motion but voted against it 163 to 88. In 1792, Wilberforce and his allies secured an agreement in the Commons for ending the supply of slaves to foreigners and "gradual abolition of the slave trade" starting in 1792 and complete termination of the trade by 1796; the measure was defeated in the House of Lords.

The events in revolutionary France were beginning to hurt the abolition movement in Britain, as "any change in the status quo could now be easily presented by them as potentially subversive of public order." When parliament resumed in 1793, war with France was about to commence. This was no time for abolitionist adventure, and "every attack on the slave trade could be represented as an attack on ancient British institutions, apparently everywhere under attack, precisely because of the French Revolution – and the war."

Because of the fighting and need for ships, no ships left Liverpool for trading in 1794. Wilberforce pushed for abolition again in 1795, looking to achieve it by 1796, but by that time the mood had changed due to the French Revolution, the large scale and successful revolt in Saint-Domingue which had begun in 1791, the war with France, and social problems at home. The carry-over of the French Revolution would have a long-term impact. As Kielstra explains: "to triumph, the movement had to become acceptable to British society: one of the biggest

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problems British campaigner’s ever faced was dissociating themselves from former radical supporters after the French Revolution made Westminster more conservative.\textsuperscript{390} Wilberforce and his colleagues tried repeatedly, again in 1796, 1797, 1798, and 1799, but in truth, they were running out of new arguments to put forth.\textsuperscript{391} One bill did pass in 1799, further restricting the number of slaves per ton of shipping.\textsuperscript{392} This was the best that could be hoped for during this period, and at this time, slave merchants were fairly confident the slave trade was not going away any time soon.\textsuperscript{393}

Europe and North America were the only places where humanitarian arguments were making an impact, and in Europe, besides Britain, the impact was rather minimal. One European country that did take action against the slave trade was Denmark. She abolished the import of slave to her islands in 1792, with full enactment by 1803.\textsuperscript{394} Denmark had taken the step for several reasons: the cost of slaves was low, they thought England was about to do the same, and they considered the slave trade voyages too dangerous and costly to their sailors.\textsuperscript{395} That said, in a preview of what was to take place in the future, the Danes made sure their islands were stocked with all the slaves they would need in the years between passage in 1792 and enactment in 1803.\textsuperscript{396} Their decision held little sway over other European countries; the British decided little

"Denmark was of no importance,"397 and Portugal and Spain had not yet caught "abolition fever."398

France was far behind Britain with regard to organizing against the slave trade, but of course, the revolution changed things. The first French abolitionist movement centered around the Société des Amis des Noirs, founded in 1788399 and modeled after the London Abolition Society.400 Thomas Clarkson helped establish abolition campaigns in France in 1790, following the spark of the revolution there in 1789.401 In 1791, the National Assembly condemned slavery in general, but didn't go as far as their revolutionary nature might have inclined, thinking that too much freedom too fast would inevitably lead to struggle.402 This fear was heightened following the slave revolt that year in Saint-Domingue.403 Later that year, the Assembly in Paris declared anyone that arrived in France was free, whatever color.404 In 1794, Revolutionary France became

402 Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 520-522. This was the first measure of its kind in Europe. Further, they did state the children of all free parents would be granted full citizenship.
the first great power to abolish colonial slavery. This significant reform was short-lived; Napoleon would re-establish slavery in 1802 and it would be years before a full-scale, more effective campaign would help end the trade and the practice.

1800-1820

The overall hopes of abolishing the slave trade did not appear promising at the turn of the century. The French Revolution and then war with France, along with an Irish rebellion in 1798, all combined to force a conservative approach from Pitt's government. These developments, and particularly events with/within France, caused the British public to label opposition to the slave trade unpatriotic. With Britain and France distracted by war and with Saint-Domingue in turmoil, Portugal's Brazilian colony was producing significant profits, as was, increasingly, Spain's colony in Cuba. In America, the invention of the cotton gin in 1793 and the corresponding rise of cotton production in the early part of the century meant the need for slave labor was at fever pitch; and as mentioned, Napoleon reintroduced slavery to France/French colonies in 1802.

Against this backdrop, Wilberforce soldiered on, introducing anti-slavery measures in 1797, 1798, 1799, and 1802, to little avail.\footnote{Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 166.} By 1804, the abolitionists were again making some headway – Wilberforce's motion passed in the House of Commons, but was stonewalled in the House of Lords.\footnote{Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 166; and Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 236.} Apparently some support was returning after the government's conservative clampdown in the mid-1790s.\footnote{Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 166.} The abolitionists then shrewdly realized they could divide the West Indian interest by going after the trade to foreign possession first; in 1805 Pitt issued an Order-in-Council stopping the trade to foreign colonies.\footnote{Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 236; and Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 166.} A bill making it illegal for British captains to sell slaves to foreign countries passed in May 1806.\footnote{Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 548-552.} Leading Parliamentary members then moved to abolish the slave trade, and at the same time committed to ensuring diplomatically that other countries followed Britain's lead.\footnote{Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 552; and Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 169-170. As Morgan notes, Pitt had died in 1806 at the age of 47 before abolition was achieved; the antislavery campaign had been waged for 19 years, with significant support and pressure from, lots of activity, 3 bills restricting the trade, but no ban.} Prime Minister Grenville put forth a motion to abolish the slave trade in January 1807; it was eventually passed in March 1807,
abolishing the British slave trade after May 1807. Soon after passing the bill, a British West African naval squadron was established to combat the trade along the African coast.

Meanwhile, in the United States President Thomas Jefferson, a famous slave-owner himself, made a powerful speech in December 1806 calling for the United States to "abolish the slave trade absolutely the following year." Southerners suggested it foolish to enact a law that would be so consistently broken. A bill passed both houses in February and was signed by Jefferson in March, making it illegal to introduce slaves into the United States and for a citizen to equip any ship in U.S. ports for use in the trade. The problem was, as pro-trade Congressmen had signaled, that no special provisions for enforcement were included in the law and it was, in fact, broken on a regular basis.

It seemed that Washington and London were, oddly enough, marching in lock-step toward a world free of the slave trade. Of course, there were many opponents in their path, and London therefore endeavored to influence the governments of other great powers, as Hugh Thomas notes:

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419 Thomas, Hugh, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870*, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 559-562, 573. It should be noted that the British abolition act of 1807 caused great confusion in Africa. Britain had been the leading trader, and yet, they had seemingly done an about-face on the issue. Further, it should be noted that, in 1807, there were more slaves in Africa than there were in the Americas. In some areas, African slave traders became more intense in their efforts as they feared the British would step in and shut down the traffic. As other Europeans came on-board, they and the British tried to get the Africans to learn new trades to replace the slave trade.
It therefore became appreciated soon after 1808 in London, if less so in Washington, that the abolition of the trade in slaves would be incomplete unless the British and American acts of 1807 were followed by similar denunciations in the other slave-trading countries. Since they had abolished the slave trade themselves, it was scarcely in British interests to allow their commercial rivals to stock their colonies with slaves. That country's diplomats, therefore, set about trying to convince other governments that they, too, should abolish their slave trades, in the hope that, eventually, that would lead to an end to slavery itself in the respective empires.  

While countless historians have discussed the internal workings of the British abolitionist movement, the international aspect of the movement has perhaps been under-appreciated. The great powers of the day – Portugal (and its Brazilian colony), Spain (and Cuba), France, and even though it had outlawed the trade, the United States – were the main challenges for the British. Brazil was the biggest market for slaves. Cuba was also witnessing an expansion of its sugar and coffee production. The U.S. had a third of all slaves in the Americas, but the trade into the U.S. was actually somewhat miniscule; the U.S. was one of the few slave societies to achieve natural reproduction rates, and while its prohibition slowed the international trade, it said nothing about the continental or coastal trade (nor could it completely eradicate the illegal trade for that matter.

London put anti-slave trade pressure on its Portuguese ally first; within weeks of attaining abolition itself, British officials pressed Portugal to do the same. In August 1807, Napoleon gave Lisbon the ultimatum of closing Portuguese ports to the British or facing invasion;

when he invaded in November, the royal family fled to Brazil on British ships. 429 Hence, the Portuguese were largely dependent on British troops for protection of the empire.430 On February 19, 1810 Dom João signed a treaty that gave Britain most-favorable-trade status and committed Portugal to a gradual ending of the "injustice and disutility" of the slave trade.431 From that point forward, British pressure on Portugal (and later Brazil) would be near constant.432 The British couldn't achieve the same concessions from Spain during this period,433 and again, agreeing to gradual abolition like the Portuguese had, and actively endeavoring to end the trade, were two different things. Further, for most states it was hard to accept the seemingly overnight turnaround of the world's leading slave trader; rather, it seemed to be a ploy for greater British world domination.434

The second most powerful country in the world at the time was France, with whom the British were actively warring. The French had always suspected Britain was cloaking attacks on the trade in philanthropy.435 Kielstra states, "from the beginning of British agitation for abolition, Frenchmen generally had believed the English were self-interested, promoting a measure far

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more harmful to France than to Britain. Resisting it became a patriotic act. The interests of the two countries were diametrically opposed. The British believed they were ordained by God to end the trade, and took doing so to be a national calling. In contrast, the French business interests thought slavery the fastest cure for their ills and insurance of world prominence.

Toward the later stages of war, Sweden and the Netherlands signed bilateral agreements outlawing the slave trade. Once Britain (and her allies) achieved victory over Napoleon, she sought to impose abolition on France. British domestic public opinion was now firmly in the abolitionist camp and this compelled London to exert influence on France and the rest of the world wherever possible. In the first Treaty of Paris, May 1814, the new French government agreed to work toward ending the slave trade. The trick, of course, was "translating legal changes into reality, when the networks of interest in both countries remained unaltered," and "to her discomfort, England would soon find... that her neighbour could not 'be taught morality at the

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440 Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 15, 55. Kielstra notes that in telling the story of French abolition, this is exactly what happened – it was imposed upon them – and this is why the French abolition movement is understudied by French historians. He writes, "unlike their anglophone counterparts, French historians have written little on abolition. Why it happened requires no analysis: the British imposed it. How it occurred has achieved scant attention because, as Robert Stein explains of nineteenth-century authors, 'The rather shameful history of French abolition' gave France's trade less 'intrinsic interest' than Britain's. 'French actions' provided 'little drama and less moral glory.'"
441 Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 582, 587-588; and Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 15, 55. Thomas notes that by 1814, abolitionists were so active that it seemed to the Duke of Wellington and other leaders that they were foolish enough to want to go to war to bring about the end of the trade. The leaders themselves were more pragmatic and cautious. As Thomas notes, "public opinion impelled London to do everything possible to stop the French trade. Besides diplomatic protests, it could seize ships itself or seek to apply unilateral or multinational pressure on France, both to toughen its laws and to accept the right of search. It tried each option with varying success."
point of a bayonet." British abolitionists were largely disappointed with this treaty; French possessions were returned and the best Britain could achieve was for Louis XVIII to resign himself to abolishing the slave trade within five years. Lord Castlereagh and Wellington chose to pursue an end to the slave trade via multinational negotiations. Lord Castlereagh was content to agree in principle and wait to see what kind of compliance ensued. The continental powers – Russia, Austria, and Prussia – were ready to cooperate on the slave trade and as the allies moved forward with the Congress of Vienna, the Duke of Wellington thought it foolish to unreasonably push for abolition; he wanted to avoid further conflict above all else. At the Congress, the British leadership proposed a universal declaration against the slave trade and the establishment of an international police force to enforce its end.

Portugal made a new agreement with Britain in January 1815, receiving £300,000 in compensation and forgiveness of some loans in return for ending the trade north of the equator (they could still carry on with the trade south of the equator at this point). In February 1815, Portugal, Britain, France, Spain, Sweden, Austria, Prussia, and Russia signed an Eight Power Declaration stating the slave trade was "repugnant to the principles of humanity and universal morality,' that 'the public voice in all civilised countries call aloud for its prompt suppression,' and that all the Powers possessing colonies acknowledge the 'duty and necessity' of abolishing it as

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443 Kielstra, Paul Michael. *The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 15, 21. This quote is attributed to Lord Castlereagh, and as will be seen in later chapters, Kielstra's recapitulation is not word for word.
soon as practicable;" they also agreed to negotiate a final cessation date in the future. In June 1815 this became part of the Acte Final of the Congress of Vienna and was the basis for several conferences on the subject; in this way, there was a near-permanent Congress from 1816 to 1819. During Napoleon's Hundred Days he agreed to suppress the trade, and then in November, after Waterloo, an anti-slave trade article was added to Second Treaty of Paris. Hence, Britain, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and France agreed to "concert their efforts for the 'entire and definite' abolition of the trade." Again, agreeing to counter the trade and actually doing so were two different things.

Spain had flirted with abolition in return for support from Britain while it was fighting with Napoleon. This was met with horror in its Cuban colony, for, in the last half of the 19th century and particularly after Saint-Domingue fell into chaos, Cuba had gone from a minor possession to the "jewel of the Spanish crown." As Spain was steadily stripped of its imperial possessions, the Cuban sugar trade became the main source of funding for Madrid's treasury. Ultimately, then, Spain paid lip-service to anti-slave trade agreements with Britain but no hard

453 Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 586, 623-624; and Corwin, Arthur F. Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 25-27. In March 1818, Paris declared participation in the slave trade illegal. Nonetheless, as was so true in other places, the slave trade was still happening there, and it would be a long time before they'd be able to actually enforce and end the practice. At this point, for example, the French Navy was demoralized by its defeat by the British and were not eager to perform tasks they perceived to be the biddings of their enemy.
and fast measures had come to pass.458 In the Treaty of Madrid, July 1814, Spain sparingly agreed that the trade was unjust and inhumane, that Spain wouldn't supply other countries, and that eventually they'd abolish the trade.459 Clearly the aim of this agreement was to pacify the British and to continue to stall the ending of the trade – another agreement without teeth. The Treaty of 1817 was more of a blow. The Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1817 had become the model, and Spain agreed to a similar treaty in September 1817.460 In return for an indemnity of £400,000, Spain agreed to end the trade north of the equator and to completely stop the trade (including south of the equator) by 1820.461 Naturally, this signaled to Spain's Cuban colony that they'd best stock up on all the slaves possible and prepare their insiders for the effort to forestall the end of the trade, both of which they did.462 The average importation of slaves from 1816 to 1820 was three times the size from 1812 to 1815.463

In the 1814 Treaty of Ghent, which ended the War of 1812, the United States and Britain agreed to work toward ending the slave trade.464 The wording of the treaty suggested the Americans treated slaves as property which must be returned or whose loss must be compensated.465 Congress passed a law in 1817 that directed "the seizure of any black suspected

463 Knight, Franklin. "The Transformation of Cuban Agriculture, 1763-1838." In Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World. Verene A. Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles. Princeton, NJ: Marcus Wiener Publishers, 2000: 274. Additionally, the population inside Cuba was changing – whites began being fearful and starting looking to Spain and its military to keep them safe. All of these developments would have consequences later in the Cuban quest for independence.

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of being a fugitive and ordered his removal to the state granting the warrant for his arrest.\footnote{466} Later, in 1818, President James Monroe put forward a new anti-slaving act that offered rewards to slavers that informed on their associates.\footnote{467} Additionally, the United States began plans for its own Sierra Leone for freed slaves – Liberia, and agreed to assist the British Navy in patrolling off the coast of Africa.\footnote{468} In reality, though, actual U.S. efforts in this regard were negligible.\footnote{469}

Whatever the intentions of the government, the efforts to assist in countering the slave trade were hindered by the fact that British interference with shipping infuriated the American public, and slavery was still entrenched in the South, however miniscule the actual trade was in the United States.\footnote{470}

Britain had sought to end the slave trade through international agreement and international law. In a promising development moving forward, cooperating powers had established joint commissions for adjudication of captured slavers in Sierra Leone, Havana, Paramaribo, and Rio de Janeiro.\footnote{471} These Mixed Commissions had a commissary judge, a commissioner of arbitration from each nation, and a secretary and registrar appointed by the government in which the commission sat. Thereby, in Sierra Leone a British judge sat next to Spanish, Brazilian, and Dutch colleagues, and the other commissions had one British judge and at least one from the mother countries.\footnote{472} The Commissions would decide if a captured ship was a

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\item \footnote{468} Thomas, Hugh, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870*, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 616-617. In 1823, the U.S. and Britain agreed to both treat the slave trade as a form of piracy.
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slaving ship, and either "condemn" it and confiscate its goods and free its slaves, or give back vessel and slaves and make up losses to owners. In essence, Britain was trying to establish an international judicial system backed by a cooperative "international police force" to combat the slave trade. In reality, British naval dominance meant they were more or less the only the ones patrolling.

1820-1850

In general, conditions were not conducive to abolitionist activity in Britain from 1807 to the early 1820s, but as the years wore on it was becoming clear to the abolitionists that ending the trade was not enough. In 1812, British abolitionists decided to start agitating for amelioration of conditions and slave registries, which, if conducted properly, would result in all non-registered slaves being freed. The resulting Registration Act of 1819 moved the cause forward, but perhaps more importantly, it resulted in a tremendous amount of data becoming available about the trade and the practice of slavery. The data showed plainly that the end of slave trade was not producing improved conditions in the slave practice.

If not producing expected changes to the practice of slavery, the abolitionists' efforts certainly had an effect on British society. As Walvin points out, in the 1820s, the term "rights of man" had reached common understanding, whereas only intellectuals understood such parlance in

the 1700s.\(^{478}\) By 1822, figuring out that the end of the trade wasn't producing the results expected, abolitionists decided it was time for political action against the trade itself and they formed Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery in 1823, with Thomas Fowell Buxton as the main parliamentary leader.\(^{479}\) Reports from the West Indies, mostly provided by missionaries, sparked an upsurge of abolitionist activity in 1825, with activists returning to their old tactics of publications and petitioning.\(^{480}\) The movement was no longer considered a group of radical "outsiders;" rather, by the mid-1820s, the movement was strong enough that supporting slavery became an electoral liability.\(^{481}\) Several significant reform acts occurred in the late 1820s – the Test and Incorporation Act was repealed in 1828 (stopped the practice of excluding dissenters and Catholics) and Catholic Emancipation was passed in 1829 (enfranchised Catholics and gave them the ability to hold public office).\(^{482}\) The Conservative Tory Party was in disarray; the Whigs won the general election in 1830 and, hence, there were hopes for more reforms.\(^{483}\) Abolitionists increased their pressure vigorously from 1830 to 1833.\(^{484}\)

An insurrection broke out in Jamaica in 1831 and the aftermath pushed the abolition movement forward; white religious missionaries in Jamaica were accused of pushing for

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Even before the British abolished the practice of slavery, there were positive steps taken elsewhere. In South America, Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia, Chile, Peru, Guatemala, Uruguay, and Mexico all outlawed slavery before 1830.\footnote{Morgan, Kenneth. Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 196.} Slavery was not a significant part of

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most of these countries' economies, but, even though the practice was outlawed the prohibition wasn't always enforced for years to come. \( ^{493} \) More pressingly, by that year the leading slave states were still the same "big four" – Spain (Cuba), Brazil, the U.S., and the West Indies (even though things would change dramatically in the West Indies after Britain ended slavery in its dominion in 1838).\(^ {494} \)

"Cuba's history in the early and mid nineteenth century was defined by sugar and slavery. The island developed into the world's premier sugar export economy, and constant technological innovation made it the most productive and profitable as well."\(^ {495} \) Cuba's sugar industry upgraded its technology in the 1820s and 1830s\(^ {496} \) and coffee was competing with sugar by mid-century.\(^ {497} \) Cuba was at its most prosperous in mid-1830s – 1833-1838 – as the end of slavery in British colonies forced Jamaica off the scene.\(^ {498} \) Still, Britain's Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston was aggressive in his efforts against the trade, and against this backdrop, Spain signed a treaty in August 1835 which re-asserted their commitment to abolishing the trade and promised to enforce it; included in the provision was Britain's right to search vessels and a call for effective slave registration.\(^ {499} \) Still, such statements had been made before.\(^ {500} \) Spanish and British ships were supposed to both be seizing slavers, but between 1820 and 1842, the Spanish had only seized 2


ships. Even though the British were exerting considerable effort and meeting some success, they were still not significantly curtailing the slave trade. Cubans believed the slave trade was essential to their island's well-being, and further, they believed the British anti-slavery movement was a Machiavellian ploy. The Spanish continued to pay lip-service to abolition, but resisted taking firm steps that were counter to its empire's interests.

Brazil declared its independence from Portugal in 1822 and established Dom Pedro as emperor. The Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1826 reiterated the stipulations of the 1817 treaty and extended the provisions to 1845. In November 1826, Brazil agreed to the same stipulations as the Portuguese treaty, outlawing the slave trade after 1830 in return for British recognition of the new Brazilian state. Still, inside Brazil few believed that British efforts were based on humanitarian motives. Pro-slavery interest groups moved to build their strength and stall abolition efforts; in the mean time, slavers once again rushed to stock their assets.

Sugar was still the number one staple crop in Brazil until the 1830s, when coffee took off. Economic conditions caused a downturn in the Brazilian slave trade in the early 1830s, but

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by 1833 the trade was flowing again\textsuperscript{510} and it continued to flow in the 1830s and 1840s, as coffee
cultivation became more and more prominent.\textsuperscript{511} Dom Pedro I, emperor of the Constitutional
Monarchy, was forced from his throne and returned to Portugal in 1831, leaving 5-year old Dom
Pedro II as heir to Brazilian empire.\textsuperscript{512} In the years from 1831 to 1840, three regents ruled the
country ("the Regency") until the young emperor could take over.\textsuperscript{513} Brazil had a weak central
government during this period; "during the mid-thirties the slave trade continued to expand
steadily with little or no interference from the Brazilian local authorities along the coast until it
eventually reached and passed its pre-1826 level."\textsuperscript{514}

Overall, the British Navy became moderately more effective in monitoring and curtailing
the trade during this period.\textsuperscript{515} Portuguese flags were still flown by ships conducting illegal slave
trading activities; this caused Lord Palmerston to let British ships seize all ships flying the
Portuguese flag in an effort to stop the Brazilian trade.\textsuperscript{516} Adjusting, Brazilian ships started flying
U.S. flags on their ships instead.\textsuperscript{517} Past treaties with Brazil were up for renewal in 1845, and the
British feared they would not be continued.\textsuperscript{518} As Lord Aberdeen (now British Foreign Secretary)
forecast in 1844, "relations with Brazil would soon become 'unpleasant and complicated.'"\textsuperscript{519}
While Lord Aberdeen has initially been less aggressive in his anti-slave stance than Lord

\textsuperscript{510} Bethell, Leslie. The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade
\textsuperscript{511} Bergard, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New
\textsuperscript{512} Bergard, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New
\textsuperscript{513} Bergard, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New
\textsuperscript{514} Bethell, Leslie. The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade
\textsuperscript{515} Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY:
\textsuperscript{516} Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY:
\textsuperscript{517} Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY:
\textsuperscript{518} Bethell, Leslie. The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade
\textsuperscript{519} Bethell, Leslie. The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade
Palmerston, recognizing the weak state of the Brazilian government and its unwillingness to enforce past measures, he put forward the Aberdeen Act in August 1845; this permitted British ships to seize, search, and adjudicate Brazilian vessels.\textsuperscript{520} The heat was on Brazil, and with continuing British pressure focused on them, Spain got some reprieve to run Cuban affairs on its own.\textsuperscript{521} Additionally, Spanish-U.S. relations were relatively congenial during this period, as both were concerned with increasingly forceful British activities in the region.\textsuperscript{522}

As already discussed, France had first abolished the slave trade in 1794 and then defeated, post-Napoleonic France had abolition forced upon it in the early 1800s.\textsuperscript{523} At the time, however, the abolition movement in France was far too weak to take on colonists, merchants, and manufacturers.\textsuperscript{524} As Kielstra states, "the preaching of outsiders – let alone old foes – was at first little match for injured nationalism and long precedent which justified behaviour now declared inhuman."\textsuperscript{525} In the mean time, the British and French governments had three options: ignore the problem, go back to war over it, or compromise as best they could in the hope, that over time, the trade could be abolished.\textsuperscript{526} The strength of the abolition movement in Britain precluded the first option, and actions on both sides prevented the second.\textsuperscript{527} The British anti-slavery movement was powerful in the early 1830s; the same cannot be said of the French movement, which was still in


\textsuperscript{522} Corwin, Arthur F. \textit{Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886}. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 89.


\textsuperscript{527} Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 261, 266. The British fervor kept up pressure, but at times, set back efforts. "Indeed, exclusive, nationalist myths exacerbated international tension. The British continued so to conflate abolitionism with their own identity that they could see only themselves ever doing any good for blacks, overcoming the base efforts of all other nations to snuff out this light and perpetuate dark enslavement."
its infancy.\textsuperscript{528} It took British emancipation in 1833-1834, to get the French abolitionist movement moving again.\textsuperscript{529}

In July 1830, the three-day Revolution toppled the Restoration and the last of the Bourbons, Charles X, fled to Britain; the July Monarchy, under King Louis Philippe, took power.\textsuperscript{530} Over time at a grassroots level, many French citizens had come to believe that the trade/practice was wrong.\textsuperscript{531} Given the July Monarchy's liberal/reformist credentials, it appeared a perfect time to move to counter slavery.\textsuperscript{532} The French government made taking part in the trade a crime in 1830, and agreed to the right of mutual search with the British in certain latitudes.\textsuperscript{533} Beyond that, the July Monarchy took less action against slavery than one might have expected.\textsuperscript{534}

In response to a government shutdown of a large reform banquet, crowds took to the Paris streets in February 1848 and within three days the monarchy fell and the Second Republic was established.\textsuperscript{535} After two months of study and debate, the Provisional Government signed an abolition decree on April 27, 1848.\textsuperscript{536} The decree ordered emancipation within three months, French citizens everywhere were forbidden to own slaves, and the National Assembly would

\textsuperscript{535} Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 275. As will be discussed later, banquets were a form of association that the French government abided and thus reformers took to this tactic.
decide on possible indemnities in the future.\textsuperscript{537} Emancipation had come to France and her territories; it had been a long time coming. The July Monarchy had procrastinated on the slavery issue for years and without its overthrow and the establishment of the Second Republic, slavery probably would have persisted for many more years to come.\textsuperscript{538}

In the United States, after abolishing the legal slave trade in 1808, the slavery issue didn't come back on the national scene until the 1830s. The abolitionist movement was alive, but it was only a minor force.\textsuperscript{539} The pro-slavery lobby was strong inside Congress; the power of southern states in national government was such that every measure meant to help limit slavery was defeated or mitigated.\textsuperscript{540} The issue of how to handle slavery as the United States expanded west would continue to plague national leaders. As mentioned, the Northwest Ordinance of 1784 prohibited slavery north of the Ohio River (the Southwest Ordinance of 1787 permitted it south of that river).\textsuperscript{541} The slavery "hornets nest" was "poked" again in 1819-1820, when Congress debated the fate of slavery in Missouri. The resulting Missouri Compromise of 1820 allowed slavery in Missouri but reaffirmed its prohibition to the north.\textsuperscript{542}

The issue was largely off the national stage through the early 1840s, but a movement was developing beneath the surface. In the 1830s, the Second Great Awakening of religious


revivalism (the First was 1730s to 1770s) stoked the fires of abolitionist sentiment.543 In 1831, William Lloyd Garrison established the *Liberator*, a publication dedicated to abolitionism, and founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society.544 The American Anti-Slavery Society was formed in 1833.545 The anti-slavery movement looked to make progress through religious appeals and secular attacks on the depravity of Southern culture.546

In the late 1830s, President Martin Van Buren had tired of slavers illegally flying the U.S. flag in order to avoid search by the British navy. He wanted to curtail the practice but the Congress was full of slave-holders and they limited his efforts.547 Nonetheless, even while continuing to resist Britain's right to search U.S. vessels, Van Buren did send U.S. ships to patrol the African coast in 1839, the first time since the 1820s.548 U.S.-British relations continued to ebb and flow; tensions were so high in 1841 that war was fully expected.549 That said, in the Van Buren years, London and Washington were largely in agreement on curtailing the slave trade, with the U.S. significantly increasing its efforts.550

Increasingly northerners feared "slave power" – the belief that the South was trying to dominate U.S. politics and further slavery everywhere.551 In 1840, abolitionists organized the Liberty Party, which was national-level political organization party whose one issue was

slavery. It was a fringe party, drawing 3 percent of the votes in the election of 1844, but it was a prelude of the party factionalism that was to come. Slavery was on the national stage again in 1845, as slavery was sanctioned in newly-annexed Texas. The United States was at war with Mexico from 1846 to 1848, and slavery was a hot topic again as Congress debated the fate of slavery in territories newly acquired from Mexico. The Free Soil Party was established that year, taking a an anti-slavery platform and taking abolitionist defectors from the Whigs and Democrats, along with residuals from the defunct Liberty Party, Free Soilers called for a prohibition against slavery in newly acquired western territories (from Treaty of Guadeloupe ending war). In 1850, Congress passed a Fugitive Slave Act that forced local police authorities to cooperate in retrieving runaway slaves. It was becoming increasingly clear that slavery wasn't going away voluntarily in the United States, and these developments – the Fugitive Slave Act, the increasingly vitriolic campaign against "slave power," the increasing party fractionalization – foreshadowed the explosive divisions that were to come in the next two decades.

By the late 1840s, then, there were clearly conflicting pressures facing Britain as it continued to try to bring about the end of the slave trade and practice. Britain's desired "international police force" was finally coming to some level of fruition, with British, French, and

U.S. ships on patrol.\textsuperscript{559} Further, Mixed Commissions continued to adjudicate cases at courts throughout the western hemisphere.\textsuperscript{560} That said, even as it was being combated, in some ways the trade, and certainly the practice, was as prevalent as ever.\textsuperscript{561} London had avoided war with the United States and France; but as Thomas summarizes, at this point was confronted with the question: "was Britain ready to go to war with her oldest ally, Portugal, as well as with her newest protegé, Brazil, over the issue of the slave trade?"\textsuperscript{562} Parliament called for a new select committee to examine the trade in 1848.\textsuperscript{563} When published in 1849, the results suggested the British Navy couldn't stop the trade, the suffering of the slaves was worse for all the steps taken, and the European desire for sugar ensured a need for labor.\textsuperscript{564} Nonetheless, Lord Palmerston continued to press the navy to aggressively stop the Brazilian slave trade; despite the fact that, oddly enough, the leading abolitionists were by this time turning against this action because they thought it was too forceful and risked war.\textsuperscript{565} Further, free traders were pressing the British government to not do anything that threatened relations that would thereby threaten trade with Brazil.\textsuperscript{566} In the end,

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{559} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 729. That said, as Thomas notes, slave captains were still far from being convinced of the power of the force; they didn't fear it. Thomas also smartly notes that the British did not send its best ships to patrol the African coast, far from it. This, too, Thomas notes, should have signaled to lesser powers that Britain's abolition crusade was not a ploy for greater world domination.
\item \textsuperscript{560} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 650. The French and Americans didn't recognize British courts, so the French went to Gorée and the U.S. went to ports from which they came.
\item \textsuperscript{564} Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 737. Note that this conclusion sounds strikingly like the situation one sees with regard to the U.S. War on Drugs.
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the British never quite came to grips with the fact that they could sign any number of agreements, but that the other signees were likely not following their dictates.\footnote{Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997:606-607.}

\textbf{1850-1900}

Brazil had imported large numbers of slaves in the 1840s, and as 1850 dawned the country's needs were relatively sated.\footnote{Bethell, Leslie. The \textit{Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1970: 327; and Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 743-745. By this period, Brazil was literally crawling with slaves – there were 6 million slaves in Brazil in 1851, twice the number present in 1793 – and the population was beginning to have substantial fears of slave uprisings. Thomas notes that half the population of Rio was slaves in this period.} Britain was threatening the use of force to stop the illegal trade, and so the Brazilian leadership decided that rather than waiting to be crushed, it might as well fully abolish (and enforce) the trade themselves while trading was relatively light and in order to increase its bargaining power with Britain.\footnote{Bethell, Leslie. The \textit{Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1970: 334.} The Queiroz Law outlawing the transportation of slaves from Africa was passed that year; trading continued inside the country and slave labor was still the essential cog meeting the world demand for coffee and other goods.\footnote{Bethell, Leslie. The \textit{Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1970: 87.} Still, the renewed Brazilian commitment achieved some success against the trade. Bethell comments, "it was 1850 before the Brazilian government was fully prepared – and, it should be added, fully able – to fulfill its treaty engagements of 1826 and launch a full-scale and ultimately successful effort to suppress the illegal slave trade."\footnote{Bethell, Leslie. The \textit{Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1970: 87.} In the 1850s and early 1860s the institution of slavery was relatively stable within Brazil and political leaders paid relatively little attention to the subject.\footnote{Toplin, Robert Brent. \textit{The Abolition of Slavery in Brazil}. New York, NY: Atheneum, 1975: 41.}
In the United States, several events in the early 1850s would lay the foundation for the Civil War that was to come in the early 1860s. The Fugitive Slave Act was passed in 1850; the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 superseded the Missouri Compromise and established that the slavery issue should be left up to each state. Finally, the Dred Scott case of 1857 ruled Scott, a freed black man living in the north should be returned to Missouri and further, that the Missouri Compromise had been unconstitutional – the federal government couldn't prohibit slavery in a territory. As Bergard writes of the decision, "in another affront to those who believed in abolition and human freedom, the highest court of the land also ruled that African-Americans were not citizens of the United States even if they were free and that they had 'no rights the white man was bound to respect.'"

The Republican Party was founded in 1854. It took on the position of the Free Soil Party that slavery should be banned and that it was within Federal government's power to do so. The challenge was to elect officials throughout government so that real change could transpire; in truth, the party really didn't advocate immediate abolition, but rather, was seeking to reverse the national-level political power of southern slavery advocates. At the first party convention in 1856, the Republican Party affirmed that the federal government could curtail slavery and between 1856 and 1860, was able to consolidate support from anti-slavery Whigs and Democrats, Free Soilers, urban working class, and Know-Nothing Party supporters (who had been largely

focused on anti-Catholicism and anti-immigration issues). Sectional cleavages were such that if the Republicans could take enough moderate support they might win in 1860; the Democratic Party split into northern and southern factions in 1860 and the Whigs nominated another candidate. The factionalism helped Lincoln win in 1860, despite winning only 40 percent of the vote and without even being on the ballot of several southern states. South Carolina seceded in December 1860, and America's deadly Civil War was on. In this way, the fundamental issue of 1860 was slavery in the new territories; but the war changed things, as once war commenced politicians and the public decided the only way to solve the issue was to destroy slavery and "slave power" once and for all. With a Union victory, and with the resulting amendments to the Constitution, slavery ended in the United States.

In the first half of the 19th century, Spain had formally agreed to anti-slave trade treaties but had been highly successful in resisting British pressure to actually enforce those treaties and thereby end the trade. In the 1850s, Cuba had become the world's leading sugar cane producer and despite continued slave importations, prices had reached new peaks. Inside Cuba, planters were fairly confident that the need for their sugar would preclude decisive action against the

585 Engerman, Stanley. *Slavery, Emancipation, and Freedom: Comparative Perspectives*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2007: 8. In fact, there was still such a need for labor that between 1847 and 1874 the Cubans also imported over 100,000 indentured workers from China.
trade; if the trade did get pinched, they hoped the U.S. would move to annex Cuba so they would be rid of the self-righteous and hypocritical British influence once and for all.\textsuperscript{586}

For their part, the British kept up the pressure, proposing in 1860 a conference of the great powers (Spain, Britain, France, the United States, Portugal, and Brazil) to put an end to 'an increasing traffic [in slaves] and finally to assure complete abolition.'\textsuperscript{587} The U.S. added ships to the African squadron and placed American ships in patrol off the coast of Cuba.\textsuperscript{588} With the start of the American Civil War in 1861, the United States and Britain agreed that no ships were to be fitted for slaving in U.S. ports and that both sides could search each other's vessels and if slaving equipment was found, culprits would be taken to courts in New York, Cape Town, or Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{589} This granting search permission to the British Navy was a complete counteraction of the entire history of U.S. foreign policy in this regard.\textsuperscript{590}

As the 1860s advanced, several factors were combining to hurt the pro-slavery cause – thousands of slaves had been imported in 1850s and early 1860s, but the trade had tapered off, to the point that no imports occurred in 1867.\textsuperscript{591} The Northern victory in the American Civil War had dashed Cuban planters' hopes of perhaps being annexed by the United States and continuing slavery indefinitely, and in 1865, for the first time an abolitionist movement developed inside Spain.\textsuperscript{592} In 1868, a liberal government came to power in Spain and emancipation was one of its

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tenets. In October of that year, the Spanish government passed new taxes and these combined with nationalist sentiment to spark overt resistance to Spain among some landholders, planters, and professionals in the East; slavery wasn't the key issue but it was in the mix in the ensuing Ten Years' War. The rebels ended slavery in zones they controlled, and it became clear that Madrid had to take some form of action against the practice of slavery. The "Moret Law" passed in July 1870; by its decree, all children born of slaves as of September 1868 were free, as were slaves that reached the age of sixty. This was a gradual measure and it was clear by the end of the 1870s that it would not be enough. Several factors conspired to end slavery completely: pressure from British and now American abolitionists, as well as the fledgling movement in Spain, the events of the Ten Years' War, and slave resistance (and resistance coming even from Chinese contract labor) all pressed the urgency of the matter.

In November 1879, a bill was put forward proposing a gradual end of slavery through the method of patronato – patronage or wardship – a step between master and slave which would give the master some remuneration and the slave some training/tutelage. This bill passed February 13, 1880; it established regulations and set the emancipation date of 1888. Slaves

resisted, and final abolition actually took place in 1886. In this way, the "Moret Law" and *patronato* served their purpose (at least in theory) – they prevented mass freeings and sudden change while giving time to reorganize the labor force. The long history of slavery in Spain and its possessions was over.

In Brazil, the War with Paraguay (1864-1870) brought the slavery issue back into prominence; Brazil needed to put slaves in uniform to meet its security needs and Paraguay's leaders tried to convince European leaders that the war was a battle between slavery and freedom. A movement for gradual abolition was developing inside Brazil. The Rio Branco Law – or "Law of the free womb" – was passed in 1871. Brazilians thought they were on the course to gradual emancipation, but the law freed very few slaves in reality.

The Saraiva-Cotegipe Law, passed in September 1885, freed slaves over sixty-five, forced slaves age sixty to work three more years, enforced registration of slaves, established payments for slaveholders releasing slaves and penalties for inciting insurrection/defection, and stated slavery would be ended within 13 to 17 years. It was not enough; abolitionists were increasingly ready to take emancipation into their own hands by inciting and assisting escape.

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607 Toplin, Robert Brent. *The Abolition of Slavery in Brazil*. New York, NY: Atheneum, 1975: 92-95. The Rio Branco Law was inadequate for several reasons: 1) children still treated like slaves, 2) what kind of person comes out of 20 years of slavery, 3) slaveholders pushed the bounds of the law, and ultimately 5) large numbers of slaves were not freed.
By early 1888 the retrieval of fugitive slaves was beyond the control of the police,\(^{610}\) and as the public witnessed these raids, it turned the issue into a personal one; the general public started interfering with efforts to re-capture slaves.\(^{611}\) In 1888, "slavery collapsed throughout Brazil as the abandonment of plantations by slaves" intensified.\(^{612}\) By April 1888, politicians of all stripes could no longer sit by and watch slavery ended by violence and anarchy.\(^{613}\) When Parliament came back in session in May, politicians could no longer resist the tide of events. "The Golden Law," passed May 13, 1888, stated "from the date of this law slavery is declared abolished in Brazil" and "all contrary provisions are revoked."\(^{614}\) The law formally abolished slavery and emancipated 700,000 Brazilian slaves.\(^{615}\)

One final act signaled the end of transatlantic slavery. With the General Act of Brussels in 1890, European countries abolished slavery in all their possessions.\(^{616}\)

**Conclusion**

The preceding paragraphs have presented an overview of the rise and ultimate decline of transatlantic slavery. As Stanley Engerman notes, "it is striking that, within a period of only about one century after the start of the first antislavery movement in England, slavery was ended in the Americas and... that it was then, over the next three-quarters of a century, ended as a legal institution in various colonies and other European offshoots, and in much of the world."\(^{617}\) How had this movement against the institution of slavery developed so quickly and to such great effect given the fact that "the practice had long existed in human society and, even in the eighteenth

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century and later, few observers believed that there was any reason to anticipate that slavery would cease at any time in the immediate future? What had turned the tide? What causal variables had played the decisive and supportive roles in bringing about the end of transatlantic slavery? It is to these questions that the following several chapters now turn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>Lord Mansfield resolves the Somerset Case, suggesting the questionability of slavery on British soil</td>
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<td>1774</td>
<td>The English Society of Friends votes for expulsion of any member engaged in the slave trade</td>
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<td>1776</td>
<td>The Society of Friends in England and Philadelphia force members to free slaves or face expulsion from the group</td>
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<td>1783</td>
<td>Zong Case brings attention to plight of slaves in the Middle Passage</td>
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<td>1787</td>
<td>Formation of &quot;The Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade&quot; in Britain U.S. Constitution is ratified; slave trade question is pushed back twenty years</td>
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<td>1789</td>
<td>Beginning of French Revolution</td>
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<td>1791</td>
<td>Beginning of large-scale, successful slave insurrection in Saint-Domingue (Haiti)</td>
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<td>1792</td>
<td>Denmark abolishes the slave trade</td>
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<td>1793</td>
<td>Beginning of war between Britain and France (1793-1801; 1803-14)</td>
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<td>1794</td>
<td>French National Assembly abolishes slavery in French territories. This law is repealed by Napoleon in 1802</td>
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<td>1807</td>
<td>Britain and the United States prohibit international slave trade</td>
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<td>1814-1815</td>
<td>End of Napoleonic regime; The Congress of Vienna calls for the abolition of the slave trade</td>
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<td>1823</td>
<td>Anti-Slavery Society formed in Britain</td>
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<td>1834</td>
<td>Slavery abolished in all British territories, to take place by 1838</td>
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<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>Slavery abolished in all French territories</td>
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<td>1850</td>
<td>Slave trade abolished in Brazil</td>
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<td>1865</td>
<td>Slavery abolished in the United States</td>
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<td>1867</td>
<td>Slave trade abolished in Cuba</td>
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<td>1886</td>
<td>Slavery abolished in Cuba</td>
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<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>Slavery abolished in Brazil</td>
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<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>European countries abolish slavery in all their possessions via the General Act of Brussels</td>
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Chapter 3
Economics and Abolition

As agricultural historian Gavin Wright noted in 1973, there are any number of reasons one might study the economics of slavery: "to discover whether the system would have collapsed or disappeared for economic reasons;" to learn about the nature of slaveowners and their system; or in the specific case of the American slave system, "to gain insight into the causes and/or necessity of the American Civil War."\textsuperscript{620} Although interesting subjects, the nature of a socio-cultural nature of slave systems is of less concern to this study, and the causes of the American Civil War will be discussed in other chapters. Rather, our primary concern is the first inquiry: did transatlantic slavery die a "market death?"\textsuperscript{621} If it did, this might lead some credence to the theses that war is in decline because it has become either too costly or futile from a cost-benefit perspective.

Part I – Economics and the End of British Slavery

Introduction – Eric Williams and the "Decline Thesis"

Early historians, with those of the world's most powerful country – Britain – leading the way, painted the end of the slave trade as a victory of moral righteousness over material interest.\textsuperscript{622} As Paul Michael Kielstra notes, in Britain "the received wisdom became that abolition had arisen as a result of righteous Britons, fighting for traditional British shibboleths of God and


\textsuperscript{621} Eltis, David. \textit{Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 219. Eltis uses the term "market death" regarding the trade to Cuba, saying "slave trade to Cuba died a market death in the sense that the cost of the clandestine introduction of Africans was now no longer covered by the going price for those Africans." This term is useful, and hence, the author has adopted it in this work.

liberty, using British institutions whose very design inevitably opposed tyranny.\textsuperscript{623} Sir Reginald Coupland, biographer of William Wilberforce and author of \textit{The British Anti-Slavery Movement} (1933), was among the most famed historians espousing this contention. Coupland noted that "it is difficult not to regard this treatment of Africa by Christian Europe... as the greatest crime in history."\textsuperscript{624} He rationalized that reasons of economics (profitability), politics (one couldn't give up a trade that one's enemies would then exploit) and vested interests, prolonged these "shocking brutalities" against the slaves.\textsuperscript{625} Further, according to Coupland, humanitarian forces were just coming into being and the practice of slavery and its brutality were largely out of the view of the average British person.\textsuperscript{626} Once the nature of slavery became clear, "knowing what the Trade was, he [the average British citizen] simply thought it so damnable a business that any decent person was obliged to do what he could to stop it."\textsuperscript{627} The positive, humanistic view espoused by Coupland was the accepted one, and the one promulgated by (mainly British) historians for nearly a hundred years: that a group of humanitarians had committed to ending the slave trade and over a period of years aroused the conscience of the British people in a way that succeeded in doing just that.\textsuperscript{628}

There were dissenting voices even given the strong inclination toward presenting abolition as a triumph of ideas over evil practice. Lowell Joseph Ragatz's \textit{The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean, 1763-1833} (1928) was among the first to argue with any traction that the West Indies were in decline after the 1750s and that this decline ultimately produced

British abolition. C.L.R. James's *The Black Jacobins* (1938) discussed the importance and impact of the Haitian revolution through the class (Marxist) lens. As Selwyn Carrington and William Darity further note, others, such as William Cunningham and Samuel Coleridge had examined the "moral" versus "material" question from early on.

With all respect to these important works, it was with the publication of Eric Williams's classic *Capitalism and Slavery* in 1944 that the normative/moral explanation of abolition would most forcefully (and lastingly) come under siege. This work "connected the dots" of the material argument and was the first to receive significant notice, particularly in the 1950s when it was read widely and received well by third world advocates. Williams was from the West Indies, educated at Oxford, and destined to be a future Prime Minister of Trinidad. Mentored by Lowell Joseph Ragatz and Frank Wesley Pitman, whom he considered the leading authorities on West Indian history at the time, he authored his dissertation "The Economic Aspect of the Abolition of Slavery and the Post-War Development of the Caribbean, 1815-1833." In *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader*, eds. Verene A. Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles. Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2000: 1031-1032. Of the humanitarian abolitionist movements, Ragatz wrote "Yet they were mere contributing factors. The American sugar producing areas within the empire had been overtaken by economic vicissitudes decades before the slightest obstruction to the free importation of new field hands was raised or the faintest popular demand for emancipation was voiced. Had abolition never been instituted, had the regime of forced labor never come to an end, the proprietors there must still inevitably have suffered the general ruin which engulfed them."

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the West Indian Trade and Slavery" in 1938.\textsuperscript{633} He then turned to what is considered his masterpiece, \textit{Capitalism and Slavery} (1944).\textsuperscript{634} Beyond C.L.R. James and his mentors, \textit{Capitalism and Slavery} was also inspired by Wilson E. Williams's \textit{Africa and the Rise of Capitalism} (1938); that work's conclusion was: "without the Negro slave it is likely that neither the African trade nor the West Indian economy could have played an important part in the development of English capitalism; and hence it is unlikely that without the slave trade, English capitalism could have shown the phenomenal growth it did."\textsuperscript{635}

Williams work was largely a polemic against the accepted historical wisdom of age, particularly as espoused by Sir Reginald Coupland.\textsuperscript{636} Like James, Ragatz, and his other predecessors, Williams believed that Coupland's explanation, although accepted by the British

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\textsuperscript{634} While it is considered his masterpiece, its criticisms are many, as will be discussed in detail throughout this chapter.
\textsuperscript{636} Temperley, Howard. "Eric Williams and Abolition: The Birth of a New Orthodoxy." In \textit{British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams}. eds. Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1987: 233-236. In reality, Coupland's approach was not so naively positive as Williams made out; he criticized Britain's role in developing the slave system as morally repugnant and further noted that the sugar colonies were in decline before 1807, making his conclusions in much greater harmony with Williams's than one would guess. See for example, Coupland (1964), page 62: "The loss of the thirteen colonies compelled British statesmen to examine and reorganize 'what was left' of the old Empire;" or page 334-35, which states: "The defenders of the slave-system ignored or denied its degrading influence on their own race. They even argued that Slavery benefited its black victims by saving them from primitive barbarism and bringing them into contact with a higher civilisation. But such an excuse, which at best could scarcely apply to more than a favoured minority of slaves, was not real palliation of the moral injustice and inherent cruelty of Slavery, and for the sheer bestiality of the Slave Trade there could be no excuse at all. Yet Slavery and the Slave Trade were not only tolerated but more or less actively supported by public opinion in all the maritime states of Western Europe for three or four hundred years and were only abandoned at last in the course of the nineteenth century. That is a startling comment on the process of civilization;" or
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establishment, was "a thorough misunderstanding of the subject." The dominant theme in
British imperial history had been the pursuit of profits and the "national interest;" there was no lack of evidence to show that such motives had continued to operate since its [slavery's] demise. As historian Howard Temperley asks, "was it really possible that this one episode was as totally 'clean' as Coupland claimed?"

Williams concluded, in a word, no. "The decisive forces in the period of history we have discussed are the developing economic forces." As noted slavery historians Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman summarize, Eric Williams's work presented four key treatises. First, slavery was an economic phenomenon; and hence racism was a product, not a driver, of that economic phenomenon. In Williams's own words, "here, then, is the origin of Negro slavery. The reason was economic, not racial; it had to do not with the color of the laborer, but the cheapness of the labor. As compared with Indian and white labor, Negro slavery was eminently superior." Second, the slave economies of the British West Indies caused, or at least,

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contributed significantly to, the British Industrial Revolution." As Williams states, "The profits obtained provided one of the main streams of that accumulation of capital in England which financed the Industrial Revolution." Third, the slave economies declined in profitability and importance after the American Revolution; "the greatest disaster for the British sugar planters was that the revolt of America left them face to face with their French rivals." Finally, as alluded to, abolition of the slave trade and emancipation of the slaves was driven by economic considerations inside Britain, not humanitarianism. As Williams states, "historians, writing a hundred years after, have no excuse for continuing to wrap the real interests in confusion." Selwyn Carrington concludes, "it is clear that Williams had realised that, while the humanitarian movement was central to the process of abolition, it was in the words of William Cunningham, a 'philanthropic sentiment' until it 'was reinforced by political and economic reasons.' Williams had for the first time placed British abolition 'in English works in economic history.' He had


647 Williams, Eric. Capitalism and Slavery. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944: 122-124. Williams adds: "Prior to 1783 the British government was uniformly consistent in its policy towards the slave trade. The withdrawal of the thirteen colonies considerably diminished the number of slaves in the empire and made abolition easier than it would have been had the thirteen colonies been English when the cotton gin revivified a moribund slave economy in the South."


649 Williams, Eric. Capitalism and Slavery. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944: 211. Williams adds "of this deplorable tendency Professor Coupland of Oxford University is a notable example."
challenged the traditional view of the role of the humanitarians and had subordinated it to the economic forces which had been largely overlooked by British scholars.650

Williams had stated that the humanitarian efforts had "been seriously misunderstood and grossly exaggerated by men who have sacrificed scholarship to sentimentality and, like the scholastics of old, placed faith before reason and evidence."651 Early reviews suggested it was Williams's work that had misunderstood the importance of moral power in ending the trade; he had been overly biased against the humanitarians.652 In contrast, in the early period after publication (the 1950s), his approach to economics over racism gained traction, only to retreat in the 1970s.653 Reaction to his pro-interest/anti-morality explanation of abolition tended to be negative in North America and Europe, but positive – as one might expect – in the third world.654 In the 1960s, new lines of (mostly Marxist) thought, such as dependency theory and the new world economy, supported Williams theses; noted dependency theorist Gunter Frank made reference to Williams's arguments about colonial trade's connection to British industry being more cogent and important than the arguments of Adam Smith and Marx himself.655 If Williams's treatise that slavery was a result of economics not racism fell flat, his "insistence on treating slavery as a supply of labor, with certain productivity and costs, whose adoption was determined by considerations in profit-maximization, was prophetic and has remained indispensable" to this


day.\textsuperscript{656} It is the second (slavery drove Britain's Industrial Revolution) and fourth (slavery declined due to economic interests, not humanitarianism) treatises that have been the most debated and have had the most impact on scholarship.\textsuperscript{657} Of the two, the fourth key point – that abolition and emancipation took place because economic interests dictated slavery's demise – is the key to this study. It is that contention to which this study now turns.

**Reviewing the Veracity of the "Decline Thesis"**

Eric Williams argued that there were declining economic returns following the Seven Years War and, particularly, the American Revolution and that, in Kenneth Morgan's words, "British perceptions of this decline caused its statesmen to abolish the slave trade because it was no longer viable."\textsuperscript{658} As Seymour Drescher, eminent scholar and perhaps Williams's chief antagonist puts it, "the decline thesis, no matter how elaborate, comes to this: In the first half of the eighteenth century the slave economies were far more important to the mother country than afterward. The abolition was preceded by a sharp decline in the value of slavery, hence of the slave trade, to the imperial economy."\textsuperscript{659} Stanley Engerman adds, "underlying the Williams thesis was the implication that slavery was not only becoming less important to the British economy, but that it was inefficient and unprofitable."\textsuperscript{660} In other words, the decline thesis asserts most


generally that the West Indies had become unprofitable after the mid-1700s and this led British elites to end the trade, and ultimately the practice, of slavery.

Overproduction and monopoly were Williams's key causal variables in his supposed West Indian decline thesis. Of overproduction Williams said, "from the standpoint of the grower, the greatest defect of slavery lies in the fact that it quickly exhausts the soil." This serious defect of slavery can be counterbalanced and postponed for a time if fertile soil is practically unlimited. Expansion is a necessity of slave societies; the slave power requires ever fresh conquests." An additional way to offset the negative consequences of overproduction was to manage crop rotation and soil exhaustion efficiently. Williams suggested that given that coerced labor exists by subjugating the worker, reducing his or her free will and perhaps intuitive intelligence, a planter couldn't make strategic soil use work in an economic/plantation system worked by slaves. Williams's conclusion: "overproduction in 1807 demanded abolition; overproduction in 1833 demanded emancipation."

This overproduction was exacerbated by the loss of the thirteen colonies. As Selwyn Carrington states, the continental colonies were the "bread basket" of the British West Indies. The American Revolution was a great disaster for the West Indies mainly "because the plantation system could not function efficiently and profitably without a reliable external source of supply of

665 Williams, Eric. Capitalism and Slavery. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944: 7. Williams added that "this serious defect of slavery lies in the fact that it quickly exhausts the soil." This serious defect of slavery can be counterbalanced and postponed for a time if fertile soil is practically unlimited. Expansion is a necessity of slave societies; the slave power requires ever fresh conquests."
foodstuffs and lumber." The revolt of America left them face to face with their French rivals," whose sugar colonies had been increasingly thriving since the early 1700s. Prior to 1783 the British government was uniformly consistent in its policy towards the slave trade; Williams concludes "the withdrawal of the thirteen colonies considerably diminished the number of slaves in the empire and made abolition easier than it would have been had the thirteen colonies been English when the cotton gin revivified a moribund slave economy in the South."

Given overproduction, and the detrimental effects of the American Revolution, Williams then tied overproduction into resistance to monopoly. He said:

the West Indian situation was aggravated by the fact that production was in excess of the home consumption. This surplus, estimated at twenty-five per cent, had to be sold in European markets in competition with cheaper Brazilian or Cuban sugar. This could be done only by subsidies and bounties. The West Indian planters were being paid, in fact, to enable them to compete with people who, as we have seen, were some of Britain's best customers.

As Williams stated, the policy of monopoly "provoked determined resistance in two quarters – the merchants in the outports, struggling to break down the monopoly of the capital; and the planters in the colonies, demanding free trade in blacks as vociferously and with as much gusto as one hundred and fifty years later they opposed free trade in sugar. The attack, according to Williams, fell into three phases:

the attack on the slave trade, the attack on slavery, the attack on the preferential sugar duties. The slave trade was abolished in 1807, slavery in 1833, the sugar preference in 1846. The three events are inseparable. The very vested interests which had been built up by the slave system now

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670 Williams, Eric. Capitalism and Slavery. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944: 123-124. "The center of gravity in the British Empire shifted from the Caribbean Sea to the Indian Ocean, from the West Indies to India. In 1783, momentous year, Prime Minister Pitt began to take an abnormally great interest in the British dominions in the East..." and then in 1787 Wilberforce was encouraged by Pitt to put a motion forward.
turned and destroyed that system. The humanitarians, in attacking the system in its weakest and most indefensible spot, spoke the language that the masses could understand.\footnote{Williams, Eric. \textit{Capitalism and Slavery}. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944: 136.}

Williams concludes: "the attack on the West Indians was more than an attack on slavery. It was an attack on monopoly. Their opponents were not only the humanitarians but the capitalists. The reason for the attack was not only that the West Indian economic system was vicious but that it was also \textit{so unprofitable} that for this reason alone its destruction was \textit{inevitable}" [emphasis added].\footnote{Williams, Eric. \textit{Capitalism and Slavery}. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944: 135.}

To summarize, Williams's argument follows several lines of reasoning. First and foremost, slavery was abolished because it was economically unprofitable after the middle of the century, and particularly, after the American Revolution. The main reasoning for this decline in profitability was overproduction. Secondly, slavery was abolished because there was a change in economic philosophy/policy; there was ideological resistance to protecting industries and markets, that is, resistance to mercantilism and monopolies. Both contentions are discussed further below.

**The Decline Thesis: Viable or Misleading?**

Williams's decline thesis received critique from several quarters. At a most basic level, Williams's effort has been criticized for its style and approach. Kenneth Morgan says, "because Williams wrote pithily but on a grand scale, it is difficult to pin down specific connections between the wide-ranging ideas and evidence he adduced in \textit{Capitalism and Slavery}."\footnote{Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery, Atlantic Trade, and the British Economy, 1660-1800}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 32-33.} More pressingly, according to Morgan "Williams ignored material or used partial evidence; for instance, he had very patchy data on sugar and slave prices and failed to produce any convincing estimates of the profitability of Caribbean sugar plantations to substantiate his thesis that
overproduction caused the abolition of Britain's slave trade.\textsuperscript{676} Michael Paul Kielstra calls Williams's work flat-out sloppy.\textsuperscript{677} Howard Temperley, too, suggests that Williams's case for overproduction was made boldly, if poorly.\textsuperscript{678} "If overproduction was indeed the problem, the government could have come up with less drastic ways of curtailing it."\textsuperscript{679}

The above critiques, however appropriate they may be, remain cursory to this study's debate. William's thesis, at least in part, was that British abolition and emancipation took place because slavery had become unprofitable and/or unviable. Whether he was correct about its cause (overproduction) isn't as important as determining whether his assertion that the West Indies had become unprofitable is accurate. Further, even if after over one hundred years historians determine that West Indian slavery was unprofitable, it is essential to understand whether contemporaries saw it as such. If the West Indian slave system was unprofitable, and understood to be so, then this economic variable seems the most obvious and likely cause of abolition/emancipation.

Seymour Drescher's \textit{Econocide} (1977) is the classic analytical critique of Eric Williams's \textit{Capitalism and Slavery}. It is still referenced to this day, and as the classic counter-argument, this section will examine it in some detail in order to arrive at a conclusion on the state of the historical field regarding Eric William's decline thesis.


\textsuperscript{679} Temperley, Howard. "Eric Williams and Abolition: The Birth of a New Orthodoxy." In \textit{British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams}. eds. Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1987: 244; and Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 8. Temperley suggests, "the obvious way would have been to lower the tariff, thereby decreasing the price and encouraging consumption." Drescher came to a similar conclusion, and in this way Williams's theses could be accused of being at cross-purposes, suggesting slavery was abolished in the name of both laissez-faire and mercantile capitalism at the same time.
If Eric Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery* was "sloppy" and perhaps lacking in quantitative analysis, Seymour Drescher's *Econocide* is the exact opposite. In some ten chapters and three appendices, Drescher set out to "professorially" dispute Williams's claim that economic decline made self-interest dictate slavery's demise in the British West Indies. Whereas Williams had not one table or figure in his main text (although there are two tables in the notes pages), Drescher's work is filled with nearly fifty tables and figures (some of which are copied below). Drescher looked at the value/productivity/profitability of the British West Indian system (particularly the sugar trade) both before and after the Revolution in French Saint Domingue (which began in 1791). This event led to chaos in the French system, and thus Drescher attempted to elaborate on the productivity both before that event, and after (the period he calls "The Era of British Supremacy"). Drescher confronted Williams's contention that the British West Indies were at a disadvantage in comparison to the French West Indies in the late 1700s, and thereby compelled to abolition based on these disadvantages. He further assessed Williams's assertion of stagnation (through soil exhaustion, etc.), and examined the relationship between Parliamentary abolition debates and economic factors. He concluded his arguments by examining the period after abolition up to 1814. The relevant profitability arguments are summarized below. Beyond these, Drescher has also spent significant effort in *Econocide* and after in examining the idea that the movement toward free trade signaled the death of slavery, and the part free trade played in slavery's decline is also discussed briefly below.
Table 3.1. British West Indian Share of Total British Trade, 1713-1832

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British West Indian Share of Total British Trade, 1713-1832 (by value)</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1713-1717 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1718-1722 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723-1727 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1728-1732 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733-1737 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1738-1742 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1743-1747 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748-1752 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1753-1757 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1758-1762 (England and Wales)</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1763-1767 (Great Britain)</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1768-1772 (Great Britain)</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773-1777 (Great Britain)</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1778-1782 (Great Britain)</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783-1787 (Great Britain)</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788-1792 (Great Britain)</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
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<td>1793-1797 (Great Britain)</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>1798-1802 (Great Britain)</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>20.2</td>
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<td>1803-1807 (Great Britain)</td>
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<td>13.1</td>
<td>20.8</td>
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<td>20.9</td>
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<td>1813-1817 (Great Britain)</td>
<td>27.6</td>
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<td>17.6</td>
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<td>1818-1822 (Great Britain)</td>
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<td>9.7</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1818-1822 (United Kingdom)</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>16.1</td>
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<td>1823-1827 (United Kingdom)</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828-1832 (United Kingdom)</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Drescher's Argument on Profitability (Pre- and Post-Saint-Domingue)

Drescher attempted to look at the "common figures of economic value" in the 18th century, variables that this study organizes as the trade's value to the empire, the trade's percentage of overseas trade, and slave imports, exports, demand, and prices. Additionally, Drescher attempted to look at profitability (a variable whose values were not well calculated and presented at the time), which is explained below as well. How does one measure these variables? As Drescher puts it, "in Parliamentary debates, in political economy, and in public

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parlance, rise and decline thus had the same fundamental meaning... Growth and expansion implied improvement, and contraction, decline. Drescher's conclusions are as follows.

a. Value. According to Drescher, the West Indies were valued at £50-60 million in 1775 and £70 million in 1789; after 1789 the trend remained upward moving – £80 million in 1790s and £20-30 million more with the territories that were conquered from France during the war in the early 1800s. These figures denote growth and expansion, not decline.

b. Percentage of Overseas Trade. According to Drescher, imports and exports to/from the West Indies didn't decline at the end of the 18th century (see Figure 3.1); in contrast, they were actually more valuable. As late as 1821, the West Indies constituted a greater percentage of overseas trade than they had been fifty years earlier (see Table 3.1). Further, these trade measures were the staple of the Parliamentary debate. In short, "the status of the British West Indies as a partner in the empire improved between 1791 and 1807." The share of metropolitan trade increased, and the increase of 6 percentage points from 1793-1797 and 1804-1807 was greater than any similar period in the 1700s (again, see Table 3.1).

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682 Drescher, Seymour. *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 10-16. Drescher concluded that Williams had presented evidence of economic expansion to 1773 and then lesser evidence that they were in decline in the period prior to emancipation. To build an effective argument, Drescher felt Williams would have needed to also show declining returns from the slaver trade/slavery system from 1770 to 1820, the period when the abolition work commenced and took effect.


686 Drescher, Seymour. *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 20. As Drescher points out, given the limitations of sources and economic calculations at the time, these types of figures didn't always reflect perfect reality. Nonetheless, these were the values used in the debate.

c. *Slave Demand (imports/exports, prices, demand)*. Britain was the leading carrier of slaves until it ended the trade, accounting for over half the total number of slaves carried across the Atlantic between 1791 and 1806. The British did particularly well from 1781 to 1800, which signals that the abolition movement actually commenced when the trade itself was at a high level.\(^{689}\) With regard to costs, citing evidence from planter records, the price of slaves was up 71

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percent in 1790 as compared to 1773; the rising costs are important considerations, but only in light of comparison to profits. During this period slave sales rose 48 percent and the price paid for sugar rose 69 percent, which leads to the conclusion that the "average 'balance at the disposal of the sugar planters, after all deduction' was 75.5 percent greater in 1790 than 1773."690 Later, when Parliament passed the foreign abolition act in May 1806, prices of slaves were at an all-time peak. Prices had moved steadily upward, through peace and war, from the opening of the Spanish colonies in 1789.691 With regard to demand, as Drescher asserted, the American Revolutionary War "years were clearly times of stress. Recovery returned about the mid-1780s, and the demand for slaves rose fairly steadily from then until abolition."692 From 1791 to 1805, the British landed and average of 52 percent more slaves each year in the New World than they had in previous 15 years.693

d. Profitability. Drescher pointed out that no general survey of planter profits existed for Parliament or others during the debate over abolition in 1806; in general, this question was outside the public realm at that point. He cited an 1807 Parliamentary committee report that calculated colonial profits averaging about 10 percent in the 1790s and 2 percent or less around 1807.694 Drescher admitted this suggested a short-term downward trend in profits just before abolition, but concluded that it was just that – a short-term trend. In Spring of 1806 sugar and coffee prices sagged because of the events of the battlefields of Europe (not overproduction); sugar backed up on the docks and the market price hit its lowest in 3 years, and thus there appears

691 Drescher, Seymour. Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 74. Drescher added that the supply of slaves had risen as well, and while Drescher believed profits of the regulated trade fell after 1799, they almost certainly did not once one takes into account the unregulated trade.
694 Drescher, Seymour. Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 81-82. According to this report, "a well-run estate" was earning profits of 12 percent from 1795 to 1798, averaged 6 percent from 1801 to 1804, and fell to 3 percent in 1805.
to be a correlation between these events and the abolition vote.\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 131-133.} But, Drescher noted, the crisis was less serious than similar ones in 1799-1800 and 1801-1802; Parliament still believed it was dealing with a short-term side effect of war and any downturn that did occur wasn't due to overproduction.\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 131-133.} As Drescher pointed out, not one speaker spoke of this; "the hard-core abolitionists were not subscribers to a tropical overproduction theory."\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 131-133.} Additionally, the downturns hit throughout the world's markets (the British were no worse off than anyone else)\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 131-133.} and in general, this decline was one that affected sugar planters but not significantly other parts of the overall slave system (shippers, insurers, refiners, merchants, etc).\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 131-133.} Drescher concluded, "slave-grown sugar, which had done well for the entire configuration of extraplanner [sic] interests during the 1790s, still afforded very few grounds for complaint from the metropolitan interests during 1792-1805. The planters' difficulties before the end of 1806 were not synonymous with distress."\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 131-133.}

Other historians, after Drescher, have asserted the difficulty in producing accurate profitability figures. A 2000 study by Kenneth Morgan notes "calculating the profits of transatlantic slaving is a complex issue, subject to varied results."\footnote{Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery, Atlantic Trade, and the British Economy, 1660-1800}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 3.} The various figures presented
by historians over the years have further clouded the issue.\textsuperscript{702} In 1750 Malachy Postlethwayt thought the profits from the slave trade were about £1.65 million per year.\textsuperscript{703} Michael Craton's 1974 study of a hypothetical balance sheet put before Parliament in 1788-89 calculated the profit at about 33 percent.\textsuperscript{704} Morgan noted three main approaches to explaining profits, all of them prone to their failures (which he noted): first, surviving accounts of slave traders' individual voyages (which is a small cache to rely upon); second, sorting through the numbers of slaves, sale prices, volume of shipping in order to calculate profits (there are lots of gaps in this data); and third, applying economic theory to empirical data (which inevitably leads to some miscalculations).\textsuperscript{705}

**Table 3.2. Average Annual Slave Exports by Britain and Other Powers, 1701-1807\textsuperscript{706}**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Annual Average</th>
<th>British Annual Average</th>
<th>British Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1701-1710</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1711-1720</td>
<td>33,200</td>
<td>14,100</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1721-1730</td>
<td>38,100</td>
<td>14,200</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1731-1740</td>
<td>49,800</td>
<td>20,700</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1741-1750</td>
<td>54,400</td>
<td>25,500</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1751-1760</td>
<td>48,500</td>
<td>23,100</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761-1770</td>
<td>60,700</td>
<td>30,600</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771-1780</td>
<td>56,800</td>
<td>25,400</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781-1790</td>
<td>84,000</td>
<td>36,000</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791-1800</td>
<td>75,300</td>
<td>44,800</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801-1805</td>
<td>61,800</td>
<td>37,500</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801-1807</td>
<td>59,300</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

 Sources: Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, pp. 150, 211, for all nations for the period 1701-1761; Anstey, "Volume and Profitability," pp. 6-9 for the British trade, 1761-1780; Anstey, "The Slave Trade of Continental Powers," MS, for the Portuguese and French trades, 1761-1807, and, for the British trade, 1781-1807, Appendix II of this study.

Liverpool merchant William Davenport comprised a record of trading accounts from 1775 to 1784; of 67 detailed accounts, 49 were profitable and 18 were a loss, with a total

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estimated average annual profit between 8 and 10.5 percent.\textsuperscript{707} Roger Anstey studied profits and concluded the figures were 8.1 percent in 1761-70, 9.1 percent from 1771-80, 13.4 percent in 1781-90, 13.0 percent in 1791-1800 and 3.3 percent in 1801-1807; which, again, shows a rise after American Revolution and then a decline right before the end of trade with an overall profit of between 9.5 and 10.2 percent for the period.\textsuperscript{708} Morgan quoted a "meticulous primary research" PhD dissertation by Behrendt (1993) that suggested that profit margins "reached 7.1 per cent between 1785 and 1790, 7.2 per cent in the period 1791-1800 and 7.5 per cent from 1801 to 1807."\textsuperscript{709} Morgan concluded that "on average 'normal profits' of around 5 to 10 per cent were achieved in the final years of the legal British slave trade."\textsuperscript{710} Was this a significant, acceptable profit margin? Morgan concluded:

We cannot be certain what eighteenth-century entrepreneurs considered to be a good profit. But since the standard rate of return on British government consols (a relatively risk-free investment) was 3.5 per cent for most of the eighteenth century, and governments were generally able to borrow money easily to support military endeavours, anything in the 8-10 per cent profit range would appear to be an acceptable return on capital invested.\textsuperscript{711}

"It is now accepted that higher profit calculations for the slave trade have been based on unjustified assumptions."\textsuperscript{712} The implication is, as Morgan affirmed, that the slave trade was not the "bonanza" some estimates have suggested, but at the same time the profit margins were

\textsuperscript{707} Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery, Atlantic Trade, and the British Economy, 1660-1800}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 40-44. Michael Craton's and James Walvin's study of Worthy Park Plantation (1970) in Jamaica suggest that the average income from 1776 to 1796 was equal to, or slightly above, that of the period immediately before the American war, and about twice that of the period before 1750. Further, between 1775 and 1800 the average profit of the estate was between 15 and 20 percent, which shows that they were in good profit shape even before St-Domingue fell into chaos, which only made them more important.


In summary, Drescher used quantitative data to show with regard to "value," that the slave trade was probably reaching its peak at the end of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, just as abolition was taking off. \footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 25.} As Drescher summarized:

As the last decade of the eighteenth century opened, the slave colonies were doing what they had always done, raising staples, principally sugar, with by-products of rum and molasses, along with lesser crops of cotton and coffee... The West Indian share in British imports actually reached its eighteenth-century peak, just over 29 percent, in 1778-1782. While it fell back in the decade 1783-1792 to just over one-quarter of total imports, throughout the period it stayed at a level above any five-year period before 1768. Their share of British imports for the whole period 1778-1792 was actually slightly greater than in the halcyon years 1763-1777, and far better than any previous comparable period. \footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 44-45.}

This is a very odd time to start a movement against so successful a trade/practice. For Drescher, "in terms of both capital value and overseas trade, the slave system was expanding, not declining, at the turn of the nineteenth century." \footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 44-45.}

2) "Face-to-Face" with France

The decline thesis tried to portray an economic shift in the balance of power from France to Britain in the years after the Seven Years War and particularly the American Revolution. \footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 24-27. Drescher based his work, in part, on the efforts of Phillip Curtin. Curtin had concluded the trade had reached its peak value in the late 1780s or early 1790s, perhaps a little before Drescher's assertion but long after the period contended by Williams.}

The year 1787 is a good point of emphasis, because this is right at the end of the Revolution (peace treaty signed in 1783) and the exact year that the abolition movement organized itself. According to Williams, between 1783 and 1789 the French sugar colonies, particularly Saint-Domingue, were the juggernaut (based on trade figures). In 1770 (before the Revolution),

Caribbean France and Britain accounted for 75 percent of the sugar reaching Europe; French colonies accounted for 53.2 in 1770 and 54.1 in 1787, not a particularly significant increase.  
Between 1783 and 1789 Jamaican sugar exports were actually increasing, according to Drescher's figures, faster than Saint-Domingue's. According to Drescher, it was between 1720 and 1740, not 1770 and 1790, that St. Domingue overtook Jamaica in sugar, reached her peak, and held relatively firm until revolution hit the French colony. The bottom line is the French were the leader in sugar cultivation, yes, but this doesn't support the decline thesis; the British were second in sugar, and had been overtaken in the early 1700s, not the 1770s or 1780s.  
Continental supremacy had been consolidated and recognized well over fifty years before the first abolitionist petition presented to Parliament;" the British position had actually improved, if anything, in the late 1780s and early 1790s. At outbreak of the French Revolution, the French Caribbean contributed 43 percent of the sugar shipped to the continent, but by 1805-1806 that was down to 10 percent; British exports, in contrast, went from 37 percent to 57 percent of the total sugar market. Drescher concluded, "the obvious point is that between 1770 and 1787 the stability between the Big Two is far more striking than change... in terms of the French sugar rivalry, the British West Indies were not perceptibly weaker in 1787 than before the American War of Independence." As for the rest of the rivals, Williams hinted that Brazil, Cuba, and India were also important, but Drescher's figures indicated that Brazil's share of world market had actually fallen between 1770 and 1787 from 10.8 to 6.6 percent. Cuba was rising, but not to the

point that they were yet cause for alarm.\textsuperscript{724} As for India, "only after the St. Domingue revolt did Indian sugar begin to be thought of as a serious contender. It played no role whatsoever in the gestation of abolition in the 1780s; its rivalry before 1791 is purely a product of the imagination."\textsuperscript{725} The French were the main concern, and in terms of volume, the "juggernauts" were the same as they'd been in 1740 – France and Britain.\textsuperscript{726}

3) Soil Exhaustion and Supposed Stagnation

The decline theory assumes British West Indian slave system was decaying, lacked resilience, and had little hope for the future.\textsuperscript{727} This point supposes Britain was stuck within its 18\textsuperscript{th} century boundaries and therefore soil exhaustion would spark an irreversible decline.\textsuperscript{728} This line of reasoning is flawed for several reasons.

First, as Kenneth Morgan suggested, soil exhaustion is a "red herring," because sugar production isn't like tobacco; it doesn't exhaust the soil to the same degree and its effects can be overcome with smart management.\textsuperscript{729} As will be discussed in further detail later in this work, slave-based plantations showed themselves throughout history to be cutting-edge, adaptable forms of agriculture. Williams's assertion that slave-based systems were beyond innovation because of the inherent nature of slave oppression was not historically accurate.

Second, the British West Indian system was gaining new colonies, and thus expanding, during the period right before abolition (the early 1800s). Some British islands were at or past

\textsuperscript{725} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 54. Williams alluded strongly to the shift to India as producer, but Drescher pointed out that even Williams's mentor Lowell Ragatz had noted that no sugar had been commercially imported from India. The East India Company first recommended an agricultural experiment in sugar in 1789, and they were doubtful of its success.
their optimum density, Barbados and Leeward Islands for instance, and the general wisdom was that once one filled these islands there would ultimately be a decline in production;\textsuperscript{730} but the Bahamas, St Vincent, Dominica, and particularly Jamaica, were prime for populating.\textsuperscript{731} In fact, Jamaica's biggest problem was a labor shortage (once properly populated, by 1805-1806, Jamaica had essentially replaced besieged Saint-Domingue as a sugar producer).\textsuperscript{732} From 1797 to 1806, British naval power and conquests from the war with France – like Guiana and Demerara – meant that the frontier was expanding and that there was enthusiasm for continued expansion in the future.\textsuperscript{733} According to Drescher, in 1790, there were 37 slaves per square mile in the British colonies.\textsuperscript{734} In contrast, in 1803, the new colony of Guiana had less than 1 slave per square mile. The natural economic conclusion was to continue the expansion, and in fact, Parliamentarian Henry Dundas argued against immediate abolition because he thought it unwise to stop the islands from achieving a proper labor force and fully developing these new lands.\textsuperscript{736}

In general, the war with Napoleonic France hurt economic output for all the major powers. That said, the French economy was suffering the worst and even they were optimistic about their West Indian system.\textsuperscript{737} Further, of all the islands, the British seemed to be faring the


\textsuperscript{733} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 93-97. "At the outbreak of the French Revolution, the British slave system was relatively densely populated compared with 1806 when almost one-quarter of Britain's slave population was located in the largely underdeveloped new possessions acquired during the French wars."


\textsuperscript{737} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 129. Drescher wrote, "On the eve of the penultimate abolitionist thrusts of 1805-1806 in Britain, the French were apparently totally optimistic about the European market for sugar and coffee and the necessity of further expansion through the African slave trade."
best and British planters were still making profits, even in these worst of times. Finally, as the British conquered new, underdeveloped territories from the French, the outlook for the West Indian slave system only improved. In short, this period was one of growth for the British; after 1793, the British colonial slave empire never returned to its boundaries, it only grew during this time and moved toward hegemony.

According to Drescher, Williams had attempted to explain decline of the British West Indies by market forces: after the French turmoil the British planters overextended themselves and overproduced themselves, ultimately leading to their decline. But, this appears to be an example of Williams's selective use of evidence. He had asserted that the British West Indies had been significantly crippled by the turmoil of the Seven Years War and, particularly the American Revolution (which Drescher had shown not to be the case); and yet, he gave no consideration to how much the British had gained from the French Revolution and subsequent Napoleonic Wars. If the American Revolution had been such a notable loss, why wasn't the treasure from the Napoleonic Wars taken for what it was – an unparalleled triumph that signaled continued prosperity in the future? Drescher summarized his overall argument as such:

The evolution of British slavery between 1792 and 1806 only underlined the essential continuity of the empire's stake in its own and other slave systems. The West Indies became increasingly dependent on a market of international dimensions, while much of the foreign slave system became British. In terms of control over production and trade, British involvement was continuous and increasing. It increased in terms of British slavery's production, diversification, and value. It increased in terms of metropolitan dependence upon slavery for trade growth and raw materials.

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Finally, the importance of overseas slave labor to metropolitan survival was never more apparent than in the winter of 1807.\textsuperscript{743}

If the economic prospects of the British West Indies looked promising at the time of abolition in 1807, they only improved with the total defeat of Napoleon. By 1814 the British military victories had ended the Continental blockade and the slave-system was poised to produce record profits.\textsuperscript{744} Napoleon had been defeated and his slave colonies were at Britain's mercy, there were high prices and a product backlog to fulfill demand on the Continent, and the end of the war ensured the restoration of unencumbered trade to Latin America.\textsuperscript{745} The sugar trade was booming; the British were facing a period of extreme possibilities except for the fact that without the restoration of the slave trade production would continue to stagnate.\textsuperscript{746} In fact, abolitionists were not so sure of their victory's irreversibility.\textsuperscript{747} Drescher concluded, "the purely economic argument for reinstituting the slave trade seemed overwhelming."

Having defeated their sworn enemy after years of struggle, the British faced multiple policy options: they could refuse to return colonies to France and employ diplomatic, economic, and military pressure to choke the world trade in slaves; or they could restore the slave system to Britain until international agreement outlawed the trade.\textsuperscript{749} During this period, "it appeared quite clear that other societies were not prepared to forego the economic benefits of the slave trade and

\textsuperscript{743} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977: 91. Drescher noted the fact that 1807 France's Continental naval blockade was still having adverse effects on Britain, and hence again, this was a terrible time to take any measure that hurt the economy.


were as suspicious of British motives after abolition as they had been before.\textsuperscript{750} In short, the other countries' slave systems weren't going away without a struggle. Britain was in an unparalleled position to reap the economic rewards of the slave system if only she reinstituted the trade. What did she decide? Britain chose not to reinstate the slave trade at a time when it could have resulted in windfall profits, and instead, chose to employ diplomatic and military power against evading powers over several generations at great expense to her own people and economic coffers.\textsuperscript{751} Of Britain's decision and sincerity in her fight against the trade, Lord Rumilly spoke:

If to have relinquished this trade, when we almost singly, of all the nations of the earth, might have carried it on; and when we might have prosecuted it to a greater extent, and with a much greater profit, than we, or any other country had ever before derived from it; if to have persevered steadily for seven years in this self-denial, and never have shown the least symptom of an inclination to yield to the strong temptation which this lucrative monopoly was holding out – if facts like this left France unconvinced [of Britain's sincerity], then indeed, is she not open to conviction.\textsuperscript{752}

As Drescher concluded, "forced to fight the battle of world sugar production in untenable terms, Britain did not even so much as threaten to employ its potent precautionary weapon, the reopening of the British slave trade."\textsuperscript{1} In Rumilly's speech, one could easily substitute "Eric Williams" for "France" in speaking of entities not open to the conviction that Britain had ended the slave trade out of something other than economic [or strategic] interest; the evidence, as put forth by Drescher, suggested it clearly did.

The Historical Consensus

The above sections have recounted Seymour Drescher's conclusions about the state of the British West Indian slave economy at the turn of the century, but what have other historians


concluded since *Econocide* was published in 1977? Have subsequent studies confirmed what Drescher suggested?

Historians Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman hosted a conference entitled "British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams" at the Rockefeller Study and Conference Center in Bellagio, Italy in May 1984. The conference's presenters included the likes of famed slavery historians Selwyn Carrington, Michael Craton, David Brion Davis, Seymour Drescher, David Eltis, Joseph Inikori, Hilary McD. Beckles, David Richardson, Richard B. Sheridan, and Howard Temperley; the ultimate product was an edited volume of the same name. The conference didn't come to a clear-cut conclusion on the decline issue, although Williams's "portrayal of a concerted conspiratorial step-by-step attack by capitalists on the slave trade, slavery, and the sugar duties drew *no support*" [emphasis added]. With Carrington in attendance, the lack of consensus should come as no surprise. He continues to this day to argue that the American Revolution dealt the British West Indian slave system a serious blow. Carrington aside, a majority of scholars, including Drescher, Eltis, and Temperley, suggested

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Britain had hurt its own economic interests by taking antislavery measures, abolishing the trade, and eventually emancipating its slaves.  

David Eltis then published his *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* in 1987. He concluded that the quantitative underpinnings of Williams's decline thesis were "insecure." Revolution (i.e. Saint-Domingue) and war put Britain in charge of more plantation land than they'd had to that point or would have again. By the beginning of the 19th century, Britain was in control of the majority of the plantation world and their newly acquired territories gave them even more territories to cultivate; the only thing they lacked was labor. In other words, "it was probably when the British advantage was at its peak that the abolitionist assault got underway." Eltis's overall conclusion: "if there was a natural limit to slavery," in other words, if slavery was ultimately doomed on economic grounds, "it was certainly not in view at any point in the nineteenth century."  

Eltis concluded that as Britain arose victorious from the Napoleonic Wars, it had three options that were both economically and diplomatically more beneficial than the course they took (setting out to force an abolition of the slave trade on other powers): 1) taking a "laissez-faire"

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approach to the slave trade; 2) allowing its own intercolonial trade; or 3) re-opening the transatlantic trade in order to gain maximum benefit from its strategic/economic position.\(^{764}\)

*Option 1: Foregoing Suppression of Foreign Trade.* Eltis pointed out that in 1831 the Whig party took over British government and began asking what results the stationing of ships off the African Coast – the African Squadron – had produced.\(^{765}\) His conclusion is that, in trying to compare costs versus results, it would "appear that in absolute terms the British spent almost as much attempting to suppress the trade in the forty-seven years, 1816-1862, as they received in profits over the same length of time leading up to 1807. And by any more reasonable assessment of profits and direct costs, the nineteenth-century costs of suppression were certainly bigger than the eighteenth-century benefits."\(^{766}\) Eltis added, "the potential rewards for never undertaking the campaign in the first place would have been even more considerable. Between 1816 and 1862 British expenditures on the cruiser squadron, treaty payments to foreign governments, compensations for wrongful arrest, the courts of mixed commission and other elements of the antislave-trade structure were very high."\(^{767}\) While the overall inputs and outcomes of the suppression effort will be examined (in large measure based on Eltis's outstanding research) in later chapters, if nothing else, Eltis concludes the effort did not benefit Britain in pure economic terms.

*Option 2: Re-instate an Intercolonial Trade.* If the British would have allowed themselves to open an intercolonial slave trade from, say, 1807 to 1833, Eltis concludes the outcome would have been a slave population shift to underdeveloped lands like Trinidad and


Demerara. This re-opening would have received less international "moral" condemnation than a return to a full, unencumbered African slave trade and this "free market" approach would have allowed slave owners in less productive colonies to sell to the new lands, with great benefit to all. Eltis calculated an expected productivity increase of 24 percent, and "thus at virtually no additional cost in either economic or (by then-contemporary international standards) moral terms, the British could have captured for their own possessions all of the gains made by the Cuban producers after 1807." Eltis's conclusion: "the strangulation of the intercolonial traffic is the hardest to explain in terms of direct economic gains."

Option 3: Re-opening the (British) Slave Trade. Eltis asserts "of the three policy options discussed, this is the most difficult to visualize if only because contemporaries never considered it as a possibility." If Britain had reversed abolition, "access to Africa would have allowed the British to maintain their domination of world plantation produce acquired in the 1790s. Prices in non-British markets would have been lower and the Cuban and Brazilian share of those markets would have been smaller... the frontier colonies could have exploded like others had before." He continues, "as we have seen, the actual and potential benefits of plantation regions to the nineteenth-century British economy were considerable, and the lack of an alternative to slave labor, at least before 1850, almost complete." Eltis's overall conclusion, in economic terms: "the real interests of most groups in Britain before 1850 would have been best served by policies

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that encouraged the use of coerced labor in lightly populated transoceanic regions." In other words, British interests were best served economically by continuing the slave trade.

Echoing both Drescher and Eltis, Kenneth Morgan's *Slavery, Atlantic Trade, and the British Economy, 1660-1800* (2000) concluded "the eighteenth century was the period when British slave trading was at its peak; some 3 million slaves were carried in British vessels to the Americas during that century, more than by any other European power." English domestic exports and retained imports both quadrupled over the course of the eighteenth century: English domestic exports were worth nearly £4.5 million in 1700-1 and British domestic exports reached a level of £18.2 million in 1797-8. English retained imports grew from £5.8 million to £23.9 million between the same two sets of years." With this growth came change; the transatlantic trade expanded while the European trade declined somewhat. In 1700-1 the colonies were 11 percent of English exports and 20 percent of imports; by 1772-3 North American and West Indies consumed 38 percent of exports and provided 39 percent of imports, and by 1797-8 North American and West Indies received 57 percent of British exports and supplied 32 percent of imports. Morgan's conclusion: "recent research has discounted the notion of general economic decline in the British Caribbean by the time the British slave trade was abolished." In general, historians have accepted a "positive appraisal of the economic health of the British West Indies," and concluded "substantial wealth was still generated in that sector of the British Empire by the turn of the nineteenth century." Further, "most contemporary politicians did not link

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overproduction with abolition – a point that should be remembered by those who argue that the
British abolished their slave trade for economic reasons.\footnote{781}

**Figure 3.2. Revenue, Total Production of Sugar and Median Values of Adult Slaves in Jamaican Sugar Estates\footnote{782}**

Selwyn Carrington (1988, 1989) remains the most prominent historian to argue that the
West Indies were in decline in the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century.\footnote{783} Similarly, David Beck Ryden's 2001 article "Does Decline Make Sense" suggests Drescher's study "ignored a close study of sugar prices
during the period of abolition."\footnote{784} He concludes, "the \textit{Econocide} narrative grossly overestimates
the health of the British sugar economy during the early years of the nineteenth century."\footnote{785}
Looking at Ryden's graphics (see Figure 3.2), one can see that sugar revenue were flat at the time

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{785} Ryden, David Beck. "Does Decline Make Sense? The West Indian Economy and the Abolition of the British Slave Trade." \textit{Journal of Interdisciplinary History} XXXI, 3, (Winter), 2001: 373.
\end{itemize}
abolition was actually effected. Still, it remains open for debate whether this was one of many short-term trends, as Drescher has suggested, or whether these figures spelled doom for the slave plantation-based sugar industry.

Keeping Carrington's objections and Ryden's recent work in mind, one can still conclude that the collective wisdom of the historical community has undoubtedly coalesced around acceptance of the case put forth by Drescher's *Econocide*. A 2009 roundtable in *European Review* entitled "The Slave Trade and Slavery, a Round Table Discussion," which included the opinions of Seymour Drescher, Pieter Emmer, David Eltis, and French Abolition historian Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau concluded that recent research projects on the economics of slavery reached the same essential conclusion as *Econocide*: that slavery was still profitable at the time that abolition was taking hold. David Eltis commented: "I think that many scholars who do not specialize in slavery still subscribe to the idea that abolition had economic roots, but that primary sources offer little empirical evidence of groups that benefited from abolition, or at least did so in sufficient numbers that the benefits would match or exceed the costs." Seymour Drescher added, "in retrospect, historians have found that in terms of economic efficiency and costs, free labour was, and potentially remains, uncompetitive with slavery or other forms of bound labour." Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau affirmed Drescher's conclusion: "if slavery would have been declining around the middle of the 18th century, as some historians thought during the 1960s, abolitionism would have had an easy run. However, we now know that the opposite situation existed and that slavery

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786 Ryden, David Beck. "Does Decline Make Sense? The West Indian Economy and the Abolition of the British Slave Trade." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XXXI, 3, (Winter), 2001: 371-372. That said, looking at the prices of slaves, another measure of the profitability of the overall slave system, one can see that although declining in the short-term, this dip appears no worse than any other downturns over the longer period shown.


was at its economic climax when abolitionism arose."790 It is perhaps appropriate to put the
general conclusions of historians in as succinct language as possible; as Pieter Emmer summed:
"the thesis put forward in Seymour Drescher's *Econocide* in 1977 has been proven right."

**Epilogue: Free Labor, Free Trade, and Capitalist Ideology**

Before moving to a discussion of the American economic experience with slavery, it is
appropriate to elaborate on additional economic ideas and theoretical debates not yet brought to
light: free labor, free trade, and capitalist ideology. Thus far, the chapter focused on the hard and
fast numbers of slavery. While Eric Williams suggested that the forces of capitalism (in the form
of the West Indies' economic decline) had doomed slavery, in terms of concrete numbers and
sheer profitability/viability economic considerations certainly did not lead to slavery's demise.
Nonetheless, two "follow-on" arguments along the same line kept the debate alive. The first was
the idea that it was not capitalist forces, but sub-structural capitalist values that undermined
slavery. The second, related argument is that despite the fact that slavery proved profitable/viable,
free labor/free trade ideology and arguments helped undermine slavery nonetheless. These will be
discussed in turn.

Historians continue to grapple with the relationship of the rise of capitalism and
industrialization to the rise and decline of slavery.791 As Thomas Haskell (quoting Howard
Temperley), states, "to argue that 'abolition had nothing to do with economics except insofar as
economic interest was a factor to be overcome,' leads to conclusions that are, 'to put it mildly, a
little odd.'"792 Echoing these sentiments, John Ashworth states "since an obvious temporal
correspondence exists between the development of capitalism and the rise of humanitarianism,

790 Benjamin, Richard, Seymour Drescher, Pieter Emmer, David Eltis, and Olivier Pêtré-Grenouilleau. "The
792 Haskell, Thomas L. "Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility, Part I." In *The Anti-

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historians are understandably reluctant to believe that there is no causal connection.⁷⁹³ What
these authors are pointing to is economic "interest" that exists below the tangible, structural factor
of profit maximization. Howard Temperley suggests if you look at this issue through the same
lens Adam Smith had, economics is not just about achieving short-term gains, but also, how to
order societies – in this light, "economics and benevolence no longer appear as opposing
principles."⁷⁹⁴

Even historians that have concurred with Seymour Drescher's conclusions about the
decline thesis and the centrality of humanitarian norms in slavery's demise, admit there must be
something to this belief in the convergence of norms and capitalist ideas/interests. For example,
David Brion Davis has asserted that class interests had something to do with the rise in
humanitarianism that led to abolitionism. Davis states, "British abolition served conflicting
ideological functions but that it helped reinforce, in this initial period, the hegemony of capitalist
values."⁷⁹⁵ Further, "Slavery stood in direct opposition to the virtues inculcated by the market, the
virtues that English employers and ratepayers wished to instill in the English working class."⁷⁹⁶

Historian Thomas Haskell attempts to examine how the rise of sub-structural capitalist
elements might have influenced the rise of sub-structural elements like humanitarianism.⁷⁹⁷
Haskell believes "that a real change in sensibility occurred, and that it was associated with the rise
of capitalism."⁷⁹⁸ Countering Davis, but following a similar line of logic, his thesis states:

Whatever influence the rise of capitalism may have had generally on ideas and values through the
medium of class interest, it had a more telling influence on the origins of humanitarianism through
changes the market wrought in perception or cognitive style. And it was primarily a change in

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⁷⁹⁵ Davis, David Brion. "Reflections on Abolitionism and Ideological Hegemony." In The Anti-Slavery
⁷⁹⁶ Davis, David Brion. "Reflections on Abolitionism and Ideological Hegemony." In The Anti-Slavery
⁷⁹⁷ Haskell, Thomas L. "Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility, Part 1." In The Anti-
⁷⁹⁸ Haskell, Thomas L. "Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility, Part 1." In The Anti-
cognitive style – specifically a change in the conventions of moral responsibility – that underlay the new constellation of attitudes and activities that we call humanitarianism. What altered cognitive style in a 'humanitarian' direction was not in the first instance the ascendancy of a new class, or the assertion by that class of a new configuration of interests, but rather the expansion of the market, the intensification of market discipline, and the penetration of that discipline into spheres of life previously untouched by it.\textsuperscript{799}

At this point, it is sufficient to note these sub-structural factors/arguments and suggest that this debate will no doubt continue, likely without emerging with an accepted, definitive historical conclusion. Turning to a more concrete debate, one can also question if a belief in free labor/free trade ideology led to a decline in slavery, despite the hard economic numbers (discussed above) that suggest this ideology is unfounded. Did the idea that free labor was superior to slave/free trade superior to mercantilism, significantly contribute to slavery's decline? In the case of Britain, thus far, the evidence suggests yes and no.

Seymour Drescher is the historian that most thoroughly studied the belief in and desire to show that free labor could be as viable, if not more viable, than slave labor – what he calls "the mighty experiment."\textsuperscript{800} By the mid-1700s, free labor ideology was developing but it is not yet clear whether it was universally accepted.\textsuperscript{801} For contemporaries, practical experience and differences in climate or geography trumped conventional economic wisdom. "Coerced labor seemed to answer the needs of British society abroad," if not in the metropole.\textsuperscript{802} As discussed early in this chapter, Adam Smith stated, "the experience of all ages and nations, \textit{I believe}, demonstrates that the work done by slaves, though it appears to cost only their maintenance, is \textit{in the end} the dearest of any."\textsuperscript{803} Smith had asserted that free labor was better than slave labor

because it was less costly and more productive.\(^{804}\) Yet, the "the paradox was inescapable. The most inefficient type of labor system underlay the most profitable and dynamic agricultural activity in the British Empire."\(^{805}\)

In the early 19th century classical economists like Ricardo, Malthus, and Mill remained largely silent on the superiority of free labor over slave labor. Drescher points out "political economy's second generation did not elaborate on Smith's potentially potent thesis." The third generation, led by John R. McCulloch (1789-1864) was reluctant as well. McCulloch's *A Dictionary of Commerce* (1832) had a section on "Slavery and the Slave Trade" which condemned the injustice and brutality, but was silent on the economics. Every article that discussed economic performance supported slave labor's superiority.\(^{806}\) If abolitionists were to base their arguments in political economy, they had difficulty finding coherent reasoning that took into account and could explain away the practical experience of slavery's success:

Contemporaries, especially abolitionists, sought in vain for a consensus among the political economists. When they selectively culled the economists' texts they encountered encouraging abstractions, derived from a universalized European past and fortified by contemporary experiences... as soon as these same political economists expanded their observations to the Americas, the consensus shattered. They agreed that the colonies were exceptional, but the elements of that exceptionality were volatile and often contradictory. For reasons already evident, their science was characterized by a rising wave of modesty in dealing with the contests over slavery. In their absence both the abolitionists and their opponents had to turn elsewhere.\(^{807}\)

As will be discussed further next chapter, abolitionists wanted to first and foremost argue that slavery was immoral and repugnant; they also attempted to show that slavery was impolitic. In the latter case, arguments based on free labor/free trade theory were not high on their list. Clarkson often argued that other African "goods" could be traded for better, and that this trade would result in less marine deaths. Free trade ideology (against tariffs, etc) was discussed in a


roundabout way, and free labor ideology (that free labor was more efficient/inexpensive than slave labor), even less so. In arguing that the slave trade and slavery could be abolished, it would have been useful for the abolitionists to point to earlier successful abolitions and emancipations.\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor versus Slavery in British Emancipation.} New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002: 89.} Even in the early 1780s, abolitionists were putting great hope in the effort to re-colonize Sierra Leone with freed slaves. They attempted this beginning in 1787, but the effort quickly ran into difficulty and never flourished.\footnote{Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America.} New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 158; and Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery.} New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 126. A British naval vessel landed at Sierra Leone with 411 blacks on 10 May 1787 based on charitable work of Clarkson, Wilberforce, and Sharp.} As Drescher notes, with regard to Sierra Leone, "whatever the lines of reasoning on either side, after 1807 it was clear that the abolitionists silently distanced themselves from the idea of Sierra Leone as a labor experiment in the direct competition with West Indian slavery."\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor versus Slavery in British Emancipation.} New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002: 94.} Thus, given the difficulty political economists were having justifying free labor, given slavery's apparent success, and given the lack of success in Sierra Leone, it is no wonder early abolitionists stayed away from this free labor/free trade line of reasoning. "The entire issue of free versus slave labor dropped far down on the list of favored abolitionist arguments, both within and without Parliament, for an entire generation."\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor versus Slavery in British Emancipation.} New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002: 35, 97. "Defenders of Sierra Leone were eager to keep it out of all discussions of slavery. Its population was clearly more dependent than the West Indies on government subsidies."} Drescher concludes:

the abolitionist elite was wary about using the generic assertion of free labor superiority to guide policymaking beyond the line. For decades, while theoretically armed with the good news of free labor superiority, most parliamentary abolitionists opposed the immediate application of this immutable principle... they deliberately underplayed what historians have come to call the 'free labor ideology.' The principle of slave labor inefficiency was usually tucked modestly into the back pages of antislavery polemics.\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor versus Slavery in British Emancipation.} New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002: 107.}
Free labor ideology was again gaining steam in the lead up to emancipation in the early 1820s and 1830s. The first years after emancipation provided reason to believe free labor ideology would properly prevail, ironically because emancipated former slave colonies were being subsidized in complete contradiction of free trade ideology. Two years after the end of apprenticeship, Parliament set up a committee to judge how the transition was going and it was deemed a success. A few years later, as the World Anti-slavery Convention approached in 1840, abolitionists were in position to spread free labor ideology to the rest of the world. Yet, the view of success was quickly changing. "With the end of apprenticeship the price of sugar to the British consumer rose to a height not equaled since the end of the Napoleonic wars... In 1840, British per capita consumption dipped to its lowest level in twenty years, and in the period 1839-1842 it was nearly one-eighth less than in the corresponding years before emancipation." Great Britain was hit by depression at about the same time as full emancipation, and stories of higher wages for subsidized freemen in the Caribbean led to working-class rebuke in the late 1830s and early 1840s.

The belief that one could replace slave labor with free labor and maintain (or supersede) profitability was being disproven via practical experience before the world's eyes. Herman Merivale, a future undersecretary of the colonies conducted a series of lectures at Oxford from 1839 to 1841. Merivale italicized Adam Smith's famous dictum, stating "Slave labour is

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dearer than free, wherever an abundance of free labour can be procured." He concluded "slavery was not an anachronistic residue from an earlier stage of history." He added, "no economical cause can be assigned on which we may rely for the extinction of slavery." As Drescher states, "during the era of great popular mobilizations against the British slave system, major political economists seemed to have been reticent to draw high-profile conclusions about the competitiveness of slavery. Deflating the attack on West Indian slavery risked placing political economy in the role of embarrassing Britain's great moral crusade before it had been tried. Merivale had himself hailed the fragmentary evidence from one Spanish colony as offering an empirical basis for optimism. In the wake of the returns from the islands after 1839 optimism vanished."

In May 1841, Lord Russell asked a question others hadn't dared - whether the success and happiness of blacks depended on the "excessive price" of West Indian labor. Abolitionists were forced to discuss the topic, as this was no longer apples (slaves) and oranges (free labor), but rather, "it was now a matter of comparing like with like." "Russell's words were the opening salvo of a long debate over the protection of sugar," about which discontent had been simmering for years.

Ironically, there was a new coalition against free trade; abolitionists joined with East and West Indian sugar interests. This coalition appealed to a notorious free trader, James Deacon Hume, who although reluctant, concluded that because colonies like Jamaica still had to compete

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with foreign colonies like Cuba that retained the advantage of slavery, these British colonies were an exception to the rule. Ardent free traders were livid, and blunted, by the conclusion of their "revered oracle." Still the end to subsidies and protectionism for the former slave colonies was near. The government fell in June 1846 because it was split over repeal of the Corn Laws. The Whigs took office and passed the Corn Law Abolition Act. A month later, they proposed a gradual reduction of preferential duties over five years. Public opinion had changed. West Indian labor had to be truly free – without subsidy or protection – to compete in a free trade world. Free traders were confident free labor would prevail; "antislavery prophecies of disaster were mere flights of speculation." Abolitionists, on the other hand, "feared for the well-being of the ex-slaves; they dreaded the expansion of the slave trade and the failure of the whole great experiment." As duties were ended in 1846, free traders proclaimed that free labor/free trade ideology would be proven and this would be a further boon to abolitionism around the world. "The next four years would sorely tax this proclamation." After subsidies were ended, the West Indian sugar colonies were facing "extreme commercial distress."

By the late 1850s, an entire generation had passed since the beginning of antislavery agitation and Britons stopped to commemorate the process. By the 1840s and 1850s, increasingly Britons were feeling as if, economically, this whole movement was a mistake. The Times asked "what had been the result of the experiment tried in 1833? It succeeded in converting every man, woman, and children in these [British] islands to the condemnation of slavery as a system'...

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828 Drescher, Seymour. The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor versus Slavery in British Emancipation. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002: 177. Ironically, as Drescher notes, "if there was any novelty in 1846 after five interminable years of debate, it was the sight of William Wilberforce's son, rising in the House of Lords twelve years after British emancipation to attack the free labor ideology."
Economically the results were more doubtful." It added, "Confessedly, taking the grand summary view of the question which we cannot help taking after a quarter of a century, the process was a failure; it destroyed an immense property, ruined thousands of good families, degraded Negroes still lower than they were, and, after all, increased the mass of Slavery in less scrupulous hands [i.e., Cuba, Brazil, and the United States]. As they looked to the rest of the world, particularly the United States, there was no doubt that free labor had shown no superiority to slave labor. The Times concluded, "there could be no doubt 'that slavery in the United States has extended, is extending, and will extend. It is remunerative, and as long as it is so there is not the smallest chance for Abolitionists." The Economist concurred: "with the example of West Indian emancipation before them, it could not be expected that Southern statesmen [in the United States] would ever risk the liberation of their slaves on such conditions."

This discussion suggests that free labor/free trade ideology played at best a secondary role in antislavery ideas and at worst, the evident success of slave systems proved a compelling counterpoint to free labor/free trade theory and hurt the abolitionist cause. "Abolitionists spent little time on any discussion of the relative value of free versus slave labor and drew no attention to a potential competitive weakness of British slavery. In their rhetoric, abolitionists overwhelmingly favored moral arguments, whereas those defending the trade favored economic arguments." Conventional wisdom had consistently suggested "the Atlantic slave system would never be undermined until sugar could be produced more cheaply by freemen than by slaves."

Yet, Drescher asserts this wisdom was, in the end, "totally wrong. For fifty years after launching

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their movement, abolitionists moved from victory to victory... Antislavery's victories came without encouragement from either transatlantic economies or metropolitan economists... The true taproot of antislavery lay in its successful mass political mobilization around a fundamentally uneconomic proposition."\(^{836}\) In the end, the economics of slavery – hard, concrete profitability numbers and the ideas of free labor/free trade alike – both proved ineffective and incapable of bringing an end to British slavery. Drescher concludes "precisely because slavery at the beginning of the nineteenth century was still fully viable and still profitably integrated with the British commercial system, abolition marked a clear-cut shift in the institutionalised values of British society."\(^{837}\) This proposed shift is examined in the next chapter.

**Part II – The Economics of American Slavery**

Even if one concurs with the historical conclusion of Drescher and others that British slavery was not ended due to the economic decline of the system, this does not automatically prove that the same can be said for the slavery in the United States or other slave systems in the western hemisphere. This section turns to the question of the profitability/viability of the American slave system. As an overview, the post-war debate about the economic profitability of the American slave system began most prominently with the publication of U.B. Phillips's *American Negro Slavery* in 1918 and has raged for nearly a century, only becoming what might be considered "settled history" in the late 1980s and 1990s. This section discusses some of the key publications and debates along the way. The point is not to re-calculate or re-formulate this most examined question, but rather, to show how historians and economists (and economic historians) came to the conclusion that they did: that the American slavery was indeed an efficient, profitable institution that showed no imminent sign of collapse absent the Civil War.


The Phillips Tradition

U.B. Phillips's *American Negro Slavery* (1918) offered a sympathetic view of the southern slave system that followed what Robert W. Fogel called the secularized Republican indictment of the institution;\(^838\) that "slavery was generally an unprofitable investment, or depended on trade in slaves to be profitable, except on new, highly fertile ground;" 2) that slavery was economically moribund; 3) that slave labor and agricultural production based on slave labor were economically inefficient; 4) that slavery caused the economy of the South to stagnate, or at least retarded its growth, during the antebellum era; and 5) that slavery entailed extremely harsh material conditions of life for the typical slave."\(^839\) Phillips accepted the first four propositions without reservation and suggested the plantation system should be judged more as a social mechanism than an economic one, as that was its purpose.\(^840\)

Phillips used three main sources of data for his account: records of large plantations, probate records, and bills of sale,\(^841\) the main economic variable of interest being slave prices.\(^842\) The volume and quality of records uncovered have to be commended and likely added to his thesis's longevity.\(^843\) Although *American Negro Slavery* put forth several propositions that endured for decades, his rationalization for slavery and handling of the black race and culture would most certainly be considered racist today. Of the need, rise, and practice of slavery, Phillips wrote:

\(^839\) Fogel, Robert William. *The Slavery Debates, 1952 – 1990*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2003: 7. According to Fogel: "in this view the slave plantations were inefficient and unprofitable not because planters had failed but because efficiency and profit were not their central objectives – were not the criteria by which they evaluated the performance of the 'peculiar institution.'"
In barbaric society slavery is a normal means of conquering the isolation of workers and assembling them in more productive coordination. Where population is scant and money little used it is almost a necessity in conduct of large undertakings, and therefore more or less essential for the advancement of civilization. It is a means of domesticating savage or barbarous men, analogous in kind and in consequence to the domestication of the beasts of the field. It was even of advantage to some of the people enslaved, in that it saved them from extermination when defeated in war, and in that it gave them touch with more advanced communities than their own.\(^{844}\)

He further concluded blacks were childlike, relatively lazy, and inefficient.\(^{845}\) While he accepted that blacks were likely overworked and mistreated, he suggested it was perhaps necessary and not as horrible as made out; as he said, "anyone who has had experience with negro labor may reasonably be skeptical when told that healthy, well fed negroes, whether slave or free, can by any routine insistence of the employer be driven beyond the point at which fatigue begins to be injurious."\(^{846}\)

His more lasting assertions were that the slave system was overcapitalized and that plantation owners were prone to overproduction. Phillips noted the risks of the industry and the cycle of overcapitalization:

The planters, who were the principal Southern capitalists, trod in a vicious circle. They bought lands and slaves wherewith to grow cotton, and with the proceeds ever bought more slaves to make more cotton; and oftentimes they borrowed heavily on their lands and slaves as collateral in order to enlarge their scale of production the more speedily. When slave prices rose the possessors of those in the cotton belt seldom took profit from the advance, for it was a rare planter who would voluntarily sell his operating force. When crops failed or prices fell, however, the loans might be called, the mortgages foreclosed, and the property sold out at panic levels. Thus while the slaves had a guarantee of their sustenance, their proprietors, themselves the guarantors, had a guarantee of nothing. By virtue, or more properly by vice, of the heavy capitalization of the control of labor which was a cardinal feature of the ante-bellum regime, they were involved in excessive financial risks.\(^{847}\)


\(^{845}\) Fogel, Robert William. *The Slavery Debates, 1952 – 1990*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2003: 4. See Phillips, Ulrich Bonnell. *American Negro Slavery*, 2nd ed. Gloucester, MA: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959: 395-396. For example, where historians have concluded that white immigrants chose to move to the south for various reasons related to climate and a perceived lack of opportunity, Phillips concluded blacks were responsible: "the continued avoidance of the South by the great mass of incoming Europeans in post-bellum decades has now made it clear that it was the negro character of the slaves rather than the slave status of the negroes which was chiefly responsible."


Similarly, Phillips served as an apologist for overproduction: "the force of custom... caused the South to spoil the market for its distinctive crops by producing greater quantities than the world would buy at remunerative prices." His overall conclusion was that "plantation slavery had in strictly business aspects at least as many drawbacks as it had attractions. But in the large it was less a business than a life; it made fewer fortunes than it made men."

Phillips's thoroughness in research and conclusions on the lack of profitability of the slave social system were widely accepted. In contrast, his racist approach was received with revulsion throughout the 1930s and 1940s and was most forcefully and effectively answered by Kenneth Stampp's *The Peculiar Institution* (1956). In it, Stampp "rejected both the characterization of blacks as a biologically and culturally inferior, childlike people, and the depiction of the white planters as paternal Cavaliers coping with a vexing social problem that was not of their own making." Beyond a redefinition of the cultural aspects of slavery, Stampp asserted that the use of slave labor was a deliberate choice based on the system's efficiency and a quest for economic profitability. Contrary to Phillips assertions of laziness and inefficiency, Stampp stated "wherever in the South improved methods were adopted, the slaveholders usually took the lead." Of profitability, Stampp said, "discounting the myths, there is ample evidence that the average slaveholder earned a reasonably satisfactory return upon his investment in

849 Phillips, Ulrich Bonnell. *American Negro Slavery*, 2nd ed. Gloucester, MA: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959: 399-401. Phillips also spoke of the supposed solution of continuous expansion, and that any project of emancipation "ignored the racial and cultural complications" (page 400.) He concluded "Emancipation would most probably, however, break down the plantation system by making the labor supply unstable, and fill the country partly with peasant farmers and partly with an unattached and floating negro population. Exceptional negroes and mulattoes would be sure to thrive upon their new opportunities, but the generality of the blacks could be counted upon to relax into a greater slackness then they had previously been permitted to indulge in."
slaves. In another section he concluded, "if the slave-holder's economic self-interest alone were to be consulted, the institution should have been preserved." Stampp's overall summary of the profitability of slavery was:

Surely there are limits beyond which it is unreasonable to credit noneconomic factors for the survival of slavery... had the possession of slaves been a severe economic burden, it is certain that the great mass of slaveholders would have thrown them on the market – or, if necessary, abandoned them... As long as slavery showed no sign of decline or decay the system was probably accomplishing a good deal more than merely supporting itself. If slavery appeared to be flourishing, it must have been justifying itself economically and not simply surviving on the strength of a sentimental tradition. And during the 1850's slavery did in fact give much evidence of continued vigorous growth. Slave prices were higher than ever before, and everywhere in the South the demand for Negro labor exceeded the supply.

In short, Stampp called the South of 1860 "big and prosperous," and still boldly willing to defend its "peculiar institution."

The Peculiar Institution was coolly received, as Fogel points out, by the elites in the history profession but it was "enthusiastically embraced by the young revisionists." By the mid-1960s it had superseded American Negro Slavery as the "standard interpretation of slavery in the antebellum era" and the profession had a standard history of slavery based on a more refined analysis than that of Phillips.

Stampp's conclusion that slavery was profitable was supported by Conrad and Meyer's The Economics of Slavery (1958), which marked the beginning of the rise of "cliometricians," that is, "the systematic application of the behavioral models of the social sciences and their

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related mathematical and statistical methods of the study of history." Conrad and Meyer attempted to measure the profitability of southern slavery in terms of modern economic theory. They sought to compare returns from slavery to returns of other capital investments of the period utilizing variables such as cost of capital, interest rates, and longevity of laborers. As they noted, "from the standpoint of the entrepreneur making an investment in slaves, the basic problems involved in determining profitability are analytically the same as those met in determining the returns from any other kind of capital investment."

Conrad's and Meyer's conclusion was (in keeping with Stampp) counter to what they labeled an "orthodox" (read: Phillips) approach to slave-system economics. Their principal conclusion was: "slavery was apparently about as remunerative as alternative employments to which slave capital might have been put... Slavery in the immediate antebellum years was, therefore, an economically viable institution in virtually all areas of the South as long as slaves

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862 Conrad, Alfred H. and John R. Meyer. The Economics of Slavery. Chicago, IL: Aldine Publishing Company, 1964: 45-60. As they said, "the following information is needed to determine the profitability of slaveholding from the slaveholder's point of view: (a) the longevity of slaves, (b) the cost of slaves and any necessary accompanying capital investments, (c) the interest rate, and (d) the annual returns from slave productive activities, defined to include both field labor and procreation." With regard to these variables: (a) Longevity of slaves – the period for which the slave investment was made (page 48); (b) Cost of Capital investments – included slaves and the land and equipment (page 50); and (c) Interest Rate – rate with which the cotton-slave returns must be discounted or compared – "is perhaps empirically the easiest and conceptually the most difficult of the tasks in computing the economic returns on slave investments" (page 53). They found the interest rate was in the 6-8 percent range (page 55).
863 Conrad, Alfred H. and John R. Meyer. The Economics of Slavery. Chicago, IL: Aldine Publishing Company, 1964: 47-48. The authors added, "The acquisition of a slave represented the tying-up of capital in what has appropriately been called a roundabout method of production. Like the purchase of any capital, a slave purchase was made in the anticipation of gaining higher returns than are available from less time-consuming or capital-using methods. This model is perhaps particularly applicable in the slave case, because slave investments, like the forests or wine cellars of classical capital theory, produced a natural increase with the passage of time."
864 Conrad, Alfred H. and John R. Meyer. The Economics of Slavery. Chicago, IL: Aldine Publishing Company, 1964: 67. They summed up the orthodox, Phillips tradition as: "(i) slaves are notoriously inefficient and unwilling workers; (ii) slave property, unlike wage labor, must be supported in the years before and after the slave is economically productive; (iii) slaveholding absorbed plantation earnings; (iv) slave economies are constantly threatened by decline because they cannot in general maintain the number of slaves; and (v) capitalization of the labor force inhibits the efficient allocation of labor."
could be expeditiously and economically transferred from one sector to another." 865 "In sum, it seems doubtful that the South was forced by bad statesmanship into an unnecessary war to protect a system that must soon have disappeared because it was economically unsound. This is a romantic hypothesis, which will not stand against the facts." 866

Conrad and Meyer set off a historical debate that lasted decades, a debate in which at times, it seemed as if historians were talking over and/or past each other. 867 A number of historians, men like Douglas Dowd, Herbert Gutman, Eugene Genovese, and Gavin Wright, concluded that the question of slavery's economics could not be solved using traditional economic theory and business models; in other words, slavery was not just a business enterprise, but was rather, a social system. 868 Conrad noted of these critics in 1967: "those who contended that slavery was uneconomic argued that slave markets were pathological and disequilibrated. Stress was placed upon investor irrationality... the specific contention was that in the immediate ante-bellum period a rational investor would not find it profitable to 'buy into' the slave system." 869 So, in this way, there were several lines of reasoning: there was critique of Conrad and Meyer

865 Conrad, Alfred H. and John R. Meyer. *The Economics of Slavery.* Chicago, IL: Aldine Publishing Company, 1964: 66. See also Conrad's and Meyer's Conclusions (page 82-83), which were: 1) "Slavery was profitable to the whole South, the continuing demand for labor in the Cotton Belt ensuring returns to the breeding operation on the less productive land in the seaboard and border states;" 2) "There was nothing necessarily self-destructive about the profits of the slave economy;" 3) "Continued expansion of slave territory was both possible and, to some extent, necessary;" 4) "The available productive surplus form slavery might have been used for economic development or, as in some totalitarian regimes of this century, for militarism. In spite of this good omen for development, southern investment and industrialization lagged." Further, in direct response to some of Phillips's conclusions, they said (page 80) "the inefficiency argument is not supported very securely..." and "capitalization of the labor force did not of itself operate against southern development." With regard to industrialization (page 83): "slavery is not, from the strict economic standpoint, a deterrent to industrial development and that its elimination may take more than the workings of 'inexorable economic forces.'"


869 Conrad, Alfred H. et al. "Slavery as an Obstacle to Economic Growth in the United States: A Panel Discussion." *The Journal of Economic History,* Vol. 27, No. 4. (December) 1967: 524. He went on to say he and Meyer had "demonstrated that this was certainly not obvious and almost certainly was fallacious."
cliometric techniques, but more lastingly, there were critiques of taking a business approach to what historians considered a socio-political institution.

Beyond critiques of technique, the more philosophical and lasting criticism was that simply measuring business profits was not enough to understand the long-term prosperity of a socio-political system such as slavery. Critics suggested one can't separate social from economic forces; they are in constant interaction and to surgically separate them with cliometrics is to miss the point.\textsuperscript{870} Douglas Dowd rebutted Conrad and Meyer directly, saying that he didn't debate slavery was profitable, but that his "contention is that it was a deterrent to economic growth despite the fact of its profitability."\textsuperscript{871} In other words, profitability was not enough to determine long-term systemic "development." Douglas Dowd's later commentary in a roundtable discussion with many of the key theorists of the period, is telling:

For the American South, it surely was good business sense that led planters to emphasize cotton cultivation, slaveholding, and slave-breeding; and good business sense was also good economic sense, if the short run and the interests of those in power are taken as guiding criteria. But when we speak of economic development it is not business sense or economic sense for the short run as viewed by those in power that are, or should be, taken as the appropriate referents for judgment; for then we are speaking not only of structural realities and changes in the economy, but also of far-reaching social and political structures and changes.\textsuperscript{872}

As one might expect, this argument over business versus socio-economic models and the concept that economic "development" entailed more than profits bled over into debates in the political development literature of the 1960s and 1970s. Again, Douglas Dowd illuminated the nexus between the South's economic history and the larger theories and debates on development in this argument, saying of the South's economy:

Of course slavery was profitable. And of course imperialism has been profitable. And of course the status quo in today's under-developed countries is profitable. Profitable, in all cases, to investors, whose definitions of profit do not go beyond the balance sheet and the income statement, and whose definitions of propriety are quite identical with their definitions of property. And of course slavery damaged both whites and blacks in the long run (and most, also, in the short

run). And imperialism damages most citizens of both metropolis and colony, in the long run; and similarly with under-development. Nor is it difficult to show that the damage that accrues from such systems is not solely, or mostly, economic; it is social, psychological, political, cultural. As it is also true that economic development both requires and brings about social, political, psychological, and cultural changes.\(^\text{873}\)

Once slavery entered the "development" conversation, it became the fodder for the arguments of many neo-Marxist theorists, including some most forceful arguments from Eugene D. Genovese in his *The Political Economy of Slavery* (1965). Genovese initially dismissed the notion that slavery was profitable.\(^\text{874}\) Even though slavery developed inside the capitalist system and took on many features – banking, commerce, credit – that didn't, according to Genovese, make it a true capitalist form.\(^\text{875}\) Further, he found several important drawbacks of the southern slave system: 1) one couldn't adjust the size of labor force and this labor force was prone to resistance/underproduction; 2) the tendency toward overcapitalization in a risk-filled institution; 3) that domination of the planter class unnaturally influenced the market; 4) that costs became excessively burdensome with no alternative cheap labor sources, and 5) that soil exhaustion led to the need for continued expansion.\(^\text{876}\) For all these reasons, when Genovese commented in the 1960s he felt certain that "the Southern economy was moving steadily into an insoluble crisis" in the 1850s and 1860s.\(^\text{877}\)

Why then had slavery persisted? As one might expect, Marxist thought would suggest that class domination had instituted the system and kept it alive. As Genovese wrote, "the premodern quality of the Southern world was imparted to it by its dominant slaveholding

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Genovese added, "slavery gave the South a social system and a civilization with a distinct class structure, political community, economy, ideology, and set of psychological patterns and that, as a result, the South increasingly grew away from the rest of the nation and from the rapidly developing sections of the world."  

Yet, as Genovese admitted in his Introduction to the 1989 printing of The Political Economy of Slavery, he had later "largely abandoned my youthful notion that the rate of profit in cotton production was low."  

Further, he noted that even before the work of Stampp, Conrad and Meyer, and Fogel and Engerman (discussed below), his notion that southern slavery had been unprofitable had been "shaken."  

Here again, though, like other critiques before, Genovese was less concerned with narrowly-defined economic interests of slavery than with other socio-political aspects of the institution. His focus of critique was the "paternalism" of the southern system and its negative impact on the slaves and their culture.
Conrad and Meyer's work had launched economic cliometricians into the debate on social, economic and political history in the 1960s. Given strong evidence that slavery was in fact profitable, many historians focused on examination of the social aspects of slavery, particularly slave culture. The result was heretofore largely undiscovered or neglected slave testimonies, which greatly strengthened the field. Then Phillip Curtin's Census work in 1969 brought a global perspective to the literature and a new concentration on issues of demographics. The expansion of analysis was to continue, as were new breakthroughs in the study of all aspects of slavery, economic as well as social.

More Progress? Fogel, Engerman, and their Time on the Cross

Although Robert W. Fogel is now seen as one of the cliometricians that most forcefully asserted the efficiency and viability of slavery, he didn't start out that way. In 1968 Fogel and Stanley Engerman set out to use the methods of "hard science" to measure the institution's efficiency and put the ongoing debate to rest, fully expecting to find it inefficient and unprofitable. To their surprise, they found that the numbers suggested slavery was more

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efficient than other forms of farming. Their efforts resulted in Time on the Cross, a two-volume work (one with verbal explanations/conclusions, the other containing methods and statistics) published in 1974.

Time on the Cross assessed total factor productivity to measure slavery's efficiency. Fogel and Engerman define total factor productivity as "the ratio of output to the average amount of the inputs... the higher the output per average unit of input, the greater the efficiency." Robert Whaples and Diane C. Betts, whose edited volume covers the technical economic debates of this period, describe total factor productivity as "a measure of how efficiently inputs (labor, land, livestock, machines, etc.) are used in producing output (cotton, corn, etc.). A higher total factor productivity figure means that one produces more output with the same amount of inputs." Fogel and Engerman's conclusions, which surprised even them, included: 1) engaging in slavery was not irrational, as profits were generally high; 2) the slave system was not economically "moribund" and there is no evidence that economic factors alone would have ended the system; 3) slave owners were not pessimistic about the institution's future prospects; 4) slavery was not inefficient compared to other forms of agriculture; 5) the typical slave worker was not inefficient or inept, quite the opposite; 6) slaves fared well when engaging in industrial tasks; 7) the concept of slave breeding in the American South was a myth; 8) the material (they point out – not psychological) conditions of slave life were not significantly worse compared to

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891 Whaples, Robert and Diane C. Betts. "The Slavery Debate." In Historical Perspectives on the American Economy. eds. Robert Whaples and Diane C. Betts. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995: 139. They further note, "total factor productivity cannot be measured directly. It is a residual, the amount needed to balance the production function equation after everything else is measured." This undoubtedly led to some of the subsequent debate about the measure's utility.
free industrial workers; 9) the exploitation of slaves was not as significant as thought; and 10) the economy of the South was not stagnating, but growing by 1860 and compared favorably with the North and other powers of the time. As the authors admitted, with this publication they "had to confront the discomfiting reality that, although American slavery was deeply immoral and politically backward, it might, nevertheless, have been a highly efficient form of economic organization that was able to sustain high rates of economic growth and yield substantial profits to its ruling class." 

*Time on the Cross* received much acclaim but criticism was broad and voluminous as well. There was some critique of the techniques, but the vast majority had to do with their conclusions on slave treatment, work conditions, and productivity. Overall, the broadest criticism was again, like that against Conrad and Meyer, that slavery was more than just an economic system and therefore determining profitability was not the same as determining the long-term viability and "development" of the system.

Paul and Temin's "Slavery: The Progressive Institution" (1974) primarily took issue with the methods used to determine slave consumption (treatment) and efficiency. As they wrote:

Fogel and Engerman's factor productivity measures at best can speak to the issue of the comparative 'revenue-getting efficiency' of the southern agricultural system, not the comparison between the technical or 'standard physical task' efficiency of agriculture using slaves and free family farming. Furthermore, as has been seen from the preceding discussion of the methods used to measure the land and labor inputs, their 'findings' lean heavily toward exaggerating the relative revenue-efficiency of southern agriculture. Their inferences about the relative personal efficiency of slave workers, correspondingly are overdrawn.

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894 David, Paul A. and Peter Temin. "Slavery: The Progressive Institution?," in *Historical Perspectives on the American Economy*. eds. Robert Whaples and Diane C. Betts. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995: 183, 188. Originally in *Journal of Economic History* (September) 1974: 739-783. "In taking up these points in turn, fullest and most careful attention will be reserved for the third, since it best illustrates the way that the text of Time on the Cross simplifies for 'popular' presentation some intricate, novel, and far from uncontroversial quantitative analyses which the authors report in their 'secondary' volume."
Gavin Wright's "Slavery and the Cotton Boom" (1975) supported Paul and Temin in their critiques of *Time on the Cross*, as did Richard Sutch, who concluded *Time on the Cross* did not pose a "serious threat" to "conventional historical methodology." These critiques were supported vigorously by Eugene D. Genovese, who said of Fogel and Engerman's factor-productivity index method: "few economists think [it] appropriate and fewer historians think [it] tenable." Still, if questioning their methodology around the edges, by this point few historians disagreed with the conclusion that slavery had been profitable. Herbert Gutman noted most "critics did not deny that slave-based southern agriculture had yielded big profits;" but in fact, many noted that this contention was nothing new and had been established by Kenneth Stampp. Genovese concluded "the South undoubtedly did enjoy an impressive growth in total and per capita wealth from colonial times to secession." In other words, slavery was a viable, profitable enterprise. The real debate and upheaval in response to *Time on the Cross* came from the assertion that the treatment – the physical and psychological well-being of slaves - was better than thought, helping to produce higher productivity.

Paul and Temin were troubled by Fogel and Engerman's seeming assertion of the "superior quality" of black labor, which might lead a reader to conclude that slavery was somehow a desirable institution. This emphasis is troubling because, in essence, it can suggest

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to the reader that the oppressive gang-system method is an effective way to garner maximum efficiency, as opposed to just adequate or commensurate efficiency. This reading led some readers to assume Fogel and Engerman were actually holding slavery up as an archetype of efficiency, losing its moral repugnance in the profitability and efficiency numbers. Herbert Gutman (1975) set out to refute the claim that slaveholders had a wide-ranging rewards system in place and to show, contrary to Fogel and Engerman's claims, slaves did not fall easily in line under the subjugation of Southern slavery.

The larger issue was that Southern slave profits still did not lead to true "development." According the Genovese, "the South, like other slave-plantation societies and colonies, exhibited an impressive rate of economic growth for a prolonged period, but it failed the test of development, which alone could have guaranteed that political viability without which economic viability has little meaning." So long as slavery existed, there was no chance of industrialization or economic diversification. "What slavery could not do, despite its economies of scale and its financial advantages, was to lay the foundation for sustained growth and qualitative development." These critiques remain valid. They do not however, prove that the American and other slave systems were not viable and/or profitable. Genovese properly suggested "there remains the theoretical possibility, noted by Fogel and Engerman themselves,

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907 Genovese, Eugene D. The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South, 2nd Edition. Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1989: 299-300, 318. According to Genovese, slave societies followed a common pattern wherever they developed: "First, slaveholding countries – those in which slavery dominated the economies – exhibited stunning levels of profitability and prolonged periods of economic growth. Second, in every case the boom rested on the export sector and approximated reliance on a single crop. And, third, in each case, the end of the boom left in its wake an economic wreck. No slaveholding country or region crossed the threshold to industrialization."

**Toward a Historical Consensus**

Robert William Fogel absorbed the critiques and having clarified and adjusted some techniques and findings, returned with *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery* in 1989. This work re-asserted the broader conclusions of *Time on the Cross* – that slavery was flexible, efficient, productive form of labor management – while toning down the misperceived insinuation that Fogel and Engerman's assertion of efficiency somehow asserted slavery's virtue.\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 388–417.}

According to Fogel, "one productive process is said to be technically more efficient than another if it yields more output from the same quantity of inputs."\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 72.} Fogel concluded that slave farms were actually more efficient than farms using free labor, and the larger the slave plantation the better. "When indexes of labor productivity (average output per equivalent prime hand) are used to compare technical efficiency, they give a marked advantage to slave plantations."\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 73-74.} For example, "the intermediate and large slave plantations of the cotton belt were nearly twice as efficient as the free farms of the same region in 1860."\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 73-74.} Further, according to Fogel, "plantations with 16 or more slaves exhibit a considerable advantage over smaller farms, whether slave or free."\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 74.} Employed effectively, with appropriate managerial prowess, the gang system was simply

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a highly efficient method of production. The gang-system plantations produced, on average, about 39 percent more output from a given amount of input than either free farms or slave farms that were too small to employ the gang system. When the technical efficiencies of agriculture in the North and in all farms in the South are compared, the South has an advantage of about 35 percent.

**Figure 3.3. Efficiency Scores for Large Slave Farms versus Free Farms**

![Graph showing efficiency scores]

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914 Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery.* New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 75. Fogel noted that although gang-systems gave cotton producers an advantage, it didn't always work out and wasn't a guarantee of success. Slave masters still had to be gifted managers to make the system work.


Southern slavery was not only efficient, particularly when employing the gang system, but it was a flexible, responsive system as well. Fogel concluded that the southern slave system had "allocative efficiency," meaning it adjusted slave numbers to whatever sector produced the

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most profits.\textsuperscript{919} For Fogel, the move of slaves westward was the "most dramatic evidence of the responsiveness of slaveholders to market signals."\textsuperscript{920} Cotton was not always "king" in the South.\textsuperscript{921} From 1810 to 1840 there was a dramatic shift toward cotton production, and resultantly, a dramatic shift of slaves to the west (See Figure 3.4). While the 1840s were a depressed economic decade, the westward shift continued in the 1850s as the market rebounded.\textsuperscript{922} Further, Southern farmers were hard-pressed to keep up with the demand for cotton (See Figure 3.5).

\textbf{Figure 3.5. Cotton Demanded versus Cotton Supplied, 1829-1861}\textsuperscript{923}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3_5.png}
\end{center}

The efficiency and responsiveness of the Southern slave system lead Fogel to another conclusion – that any lag in development and industrialization was based on Southern choice,\

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{922} Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery}. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 64-65, 92-95. Critics of slave agriculture often charge that farmers made a mistake of concentrating too much on a few crops, such as cotton. Fogel concludes these are not valid arguments given, for example, the great demand for cotton in the 1850s. Worldwide demand for southern cotton increased rapidly beginning in 1846 and increased about 7 percent a year for next 15 years.
rather than inherent weaknesses in the slave-based economic system itself. Fogel cited studies by Starobin (1970) and Dew (1974) that rejected the "abolitionist charge that slaves could not perform the difficult and delicate operations which most manufacturing and mechanical processes involve."924 The factors most cited to show slavery incompatible with urbanization—increasing cost of control, hostility of whites, and fear of rebellion—supposedly worked to reduce the level of demand.925 Fogel showed, in contrast, that urban demand for slaves actually rose in every decade from 1820 to 1860.926 The key factor was that in decades where demand labor was growing faster than the supply, forcing labor (slave) prices up (such as happened in the 1850s), urban employers tended to go with the cheaper (free) form of labor.927 As Fogel states, "both the city and the countryside reacted to the rise in price, but in substantially different ways. In the rural areas there were no close substitutes for slave labor. In the cities, however, free labor particularly immigrant labor, proved to be an effective substitute. Consequently, as the competition between the cities and the countryside forced the price of slaves up relative to the price of free labor, the cities shifted toward the relatively cheaper form of labor."928

Therefore, the demand for slaves was more inelastic in the countryside than in the cities, a discovery that Fogel considers of major importance.929 He concludes "this highly inelastic demand means that slavery provided masters with a special advantage in the countryside that


928 Fogel, Robert William. Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 108. He adds, "slaves were shifted from the cities to the countryside not because the cities did not want slaves, but because as slave prices rose it was easier for the cities than for the countryside to find acceptable lower cost alternatives to slave labor."

could not be obtained with free labor."\textsuperscript{930}" The discovery of the inelastic rural demand for slaves has raised the possibility that the very advantage that slavery created for agricultural production simultaneously created a barrier to the industrialization of the South." Ultimately, "whereas abolitionists argued that the southern lag in industrialization was the consequence of the weakness of the southern economy, some cliometric theorists now argue that it was a consequence of the strength of its agricultural sector. Their approach implies that, at least for the short run, the policy of specializing in agriculture may indeed have maximized southern per capita income."\textsuperscript{931} See Table 3.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.3. Average Annual Rate of Change in Real Per Capita Income, 1840-1860\textsuperscript{932}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Average 1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast 1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central 1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Could the South have industrialized had it chosen to? Fogel suggests it could have. Industrialization was proceeding in the South, but not at the same rate as the North. As Fogel notes, "the process of industrialization began in the South at about the same time that it began in the North, but proceeded at a slower rate. Between 1820 and 1860 the southern workers engaged in manufacturing increased by 72 percent, but the northern increase was 383 percent."\textsuperscript{933} Many Southern leaders were sure they could be as industrially prosperous as the North, but many also did not think it worth the "degradation" and "corruption" wrought by the Northern manufacturing

\textsuperscript{930} Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery}. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 108. Fogel adds, "the advantage was confined to large plantations based on the gang system, for, as we have seen, slaves working on small farms were neither more nor less efficient than free laborers. The gang system was so obnoxious to free men that they could not be lured to work in gangs even when offered wage premiums to do so."


way of life. In lean years (like the 1840s), when European demand for agricultural products (cotton) was down, Southerners considered a move toward more industrialization. They understood that industrial production was mainly for the domestic market and hinged less on European demand. During other periods, when demand for Southern crops was high, Southern leaders were just as happy to let the North do the manufacturing for them. Echoing Fogel, the central thesis of John Majewski's recent book, *Modernizing a Slave Economy* (2009), is that "many secessionists envisioned industrial expansion, economic independence, and government activism as essential features of the Confederacy. Secessionists imagined that an independent Confederacy would create a modern economy that integrated slavery, commerce, and manufacturing." Whether or not the South would have industrialized given a different course of events is a moot point. What is important is Fogel's overall conclusion – that the economic performance of the South was as impressive as any other region in the antebellum period. Based on per capita data, the accumulation of slaves was highly correlated with accumulation of other forms of wealth. "The big planters of the cotton belt were generally consolidating their economic positions during the late antebellum era. Between 1850 and 1860 the real wealth of the typical gang-system planter increased by 70 percent." When comparing the various regions, the per capita income in North Central states was less than half as high as northeast, but it was 14 percent

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lower than the income of the South.\textsuperscript{941} Per capita income of the South was growing at average annual rate of 1.7 percent from 1840 to 1860.\textsuperscript{942} If one takes out non-earning slaves, per capita income is near equal to the North and the growth rate is 1.8 percent, which exceeds the growth rate of the rest of the nation.\textsuperscript{943}

Table 3.4. Per Capita Income by Region, 1840 and 1860 (in 1860 Prices)\textsuperscript{944}

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & \text{Total Population} & \text{Free Population} & \text{1840} & \text{1860} \\
\hline
\text{National Average} & \$96 & \$128 & \$109 & \$144 \\
\text{North} & 109 & 141 & 110 & 142 \\
\text{Northeast} & 129 & 181 & 130 & 183 \\
\text{North Central} & 65 & 89 & 66 & 90 \\
\text{South} & 74 & 105 & 105 & 150 \\
\text{South Atlantic} & 66 & 84 & 96 & 124 \\
\text{East South Central} & 69 & 89 & 92 & 124 \\
\text{West South Central} & 151 & 184 & 238 & 274 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{map}
\caption{Map of the United States showing regional income distribution.}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{943} Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery}. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 88. Further, the rate of increase of average wages between 1850 and 1860 was greater in the South than in the nation as a whole.

Fogel's overall point, then, is clear. The Southern slave-based, agriculture-centered economy was efficient and profitable (if not diversified) during the antebellum period. "The South, despite the growth of its commercial and manufacturing sectors, remained in 1860 much as it had been in 1820, a society based on a highly developed form of commercial agriculture." Slaveholders were supremely confident in the economic viability of that commercial agriculture system. As Fogel notes, "there was never a time between the American Revolution and the Civil War that slaveholders...became so pessimistic about the economic future of the peculiar institution that their demand for slaves went into a period of sustained decline." There was no expectation that Southern slavery as an economic/labor institution would decay or crumble economically without some sort of outside interference.

At what conclusions have historians arrived since the 1960s when the cliometricians' efforts first sparked the intense debate on American slave system profitability described above? "The issues raised by the work of Conrad and Meyers," as Robert Whaples and Diane C. Betts stated in "The Slavery Debates" (1995), "were not resolved for nearly two decades despite the large number of cliometricians participating in the debate." Fogel's *Without Consent or Contract* is perhaps the definitive fruit of the cliometricians' efforts. With regard to profitability/viability, "most scholars now agree that the slave economy was profitable for plantation owners and provided strong regional growth, as well as a relatively high standard of living for the free population of the South." For all its sociological horror, slavery was an efficient, productive way to produce staple crops in the American South. It was profitable. Many scholars have interpreted the conclusions of Fogel and Engerman as somehow representing an

946 947 Fogel was actually speaking of the Old South in this section, but his overall conclusion is relevant for all of the South as well.
attempt "to rehabilitate slavery." "This is a complete misreading and could not be further from Fogel and Engerman's intention." Calling slavery viable, profitable, or efficient in no way suggests it was moral, virtuous, or acceptable.

And yet the debate continues. For Fogel, the work that followed *Time on the Cross*, while not revising the conclusion that American slavery was profitable, "produced a far more detailed and textured picture, not only of the nature of the slave economy and the forces that influenced its development but also of the free economy." For him, some of the most exciting findings since *Time on the Cross* have to do with demography and slave health. Further, the subsequent *economic* history actually helped better reconstruct slave *culture* by killing the myth of the incompetent black worker. Eugene Genovese's *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (1972) showed slaves worked hard at times, but also stifled efforts to turn them into "clock-punchers." The middle-ground approach to resistance, which accepted productivity but confirmed everyday resistance, "overcame several of the difficulties in the thesis it sought to replace." Genovese's "thesis preserved the notion of slave resistance and even allowed for substantial success of limited goals while at the same time making slave behavior consistent with high levels of productivity."

The work of Gavin Wright, including his latest book *Slavery and American Economic Development* (2006), begins the debate anew. Wright disputes the claim that slavery was more

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efficient than free labor farming.\textsuperscript{55} It's rare to have direct comparison of slave and free workers, but "in the atypical cases where slaves and free laborers did coexist – such as the colonial iron industry or agriculture in the northern colonies – labor performance standards were generally found to be indistinguishable."\textsuperscript{56} The more intriguing assertion of Wright's body of work is that "the economic advantages of slave labor in the antebellum era may be attributed more aptly and consistently to property rights than to work organization and physical efficiency."\textsuperscript{57} His analogy of slavery to the decision calculus of homeowners is particularly instructive: families that buy a house are "usually heavily in debt" and "the value of the property depends on the opinions and prejudices of others."\textsuperscript{58} "Slaves were bought and slaves were sold, but slaveholders as a class were being enriched, and even the smallest holder would find his financial portfolio dominated by the value of his slave property."\textsuperscript{59} "The explanation for secession, then, is simply that

\textsuperscript{55} Wright, Gavin. \textit{Slavery and American Economic Development}. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2006: 83-122. See for example, pages 106-107: "when an unweighted measure of the labor force is used (i.e., all free males and slaves aged fifteen to sixty-four, retaining the assumption that free females were not in the labor force), only the middle-size plantations of the Southwest would have any productivity edge at all over slaveless southwestern farms, and this by less than 10 percent." Therefore, if not much more efficient, slave labor is still not less efficient.


\textsuperscript{57} Wright, Gavin. \textit{Slavery and American Economic Development}. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2006: 122. By "property rights" Wright means: "1. Slavery and the Land Market. Ownership allowed planters to transport labor readily to distant and oft times undesirable locations and promptly to set about clearing the land. These capabilities in turn facilitated economic calculation and flows of capital at long distance, enabling planters to obtain and maintain large holdings of the most fertile farmland in the region. 2. Family Labor Allocation. Owners could override the preferences and family responsibilities of their slaves, assigning them to any tasks in any season of the year. Thus slaveowners could extract much more labor from households than these households would voluntarily have supplied. Or to put the matter more appropriately in historical context, slaveowners could reallocate family labor from household or nonmarket activities into cash crops, using profitability criteria. 3. Peak Labor and Commercialization. Because they possessed a captive labor force, slaveowners could extend the planting and cultivation of cash crops without risk that harvest labor would fall short of peak requirements. Not only did their property rights enable planters to avoid downside risk, but they were in position to take advantage of potential returns in years of exceptional crop yields, such as the census year 1859-60."


\textsuperscript{59} Wright, Gavin. \textit{The Political Economy of the Cotton South}. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1978: 141. Wright adds, "The fact is that virtually every slaveholder who was careful enough to keep his slaves alive made at least a normal profit during the 1850s from capital gains alone... there is no gainsaying the historical fact that up to the moment of secession, slaveholders' wealth had continued to grow to levels that were truly staggering in comparison with the average wealth of any other significant group in the population."
slaveholders owned extremely valuable property and were not only enjoying prosperity but expected their good fortune to continue; the only serious threat to this situation was Northern interference with slavery.”

Here again, then, the conclusions of historians across the spectrum have coalesced around one conclusion: American slavery was profitable and efficient and would have persisted without some sort of political intervention. As Fogel summarized in 2003:

Although there remain differences of opinion cliometricians on various points, and although some traditional historians remain skeptical about some of the cliometric findings, it is now widely agreed that the gang-system plantations were highly profitable and efficient and that the slave economy was thriving on the eve of the Civil War. Moreover, coming to terms with the economic viability of slavery gave a considerable impetus to a reconstruction of the world that the slaves built for themselves and for the remarkable achievements of African Americans under adversity. Slaves were neither lazy nor incompetent. They were energetic and skillful workers, both on their master's account and for themselves... In light of cliometric findings, it now appears that the thriving economic system of the slaveholding South would not have been destroyed without a war or at least a powerful military threat from a coalition of countries.

Part III – The Economics of Slave Systems (The Rest of the Story)

The great bulk of this chapter has been spent recounting the long debate that has raged regarding the economic viability of the British and American slave systems. This section now turns to the other key players in transatlantic slavery. What does one make of the economic prospects of their slave systems? The economics of slavery in the other dominant powers – France, the Netherlands, Brazil, and Cuba for example – have not undergone near the level of scrutiny and debate that the United States and Britain have. This is due in large part to the patchy data available for some of these states, as well as a general historical emphasis on the Anglo-

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American aspect over that of other key players.\textsuperscript{962} Nonetheless, a quick review of some key works such as that by David Eltis (1989) and Laird Bergard (2007) is useful for determining the general historical consensus.

David Eltis's monumental work \textit{Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade} (1989) is the best source for detailed examination of the economic health of the slave system of all the key powers in the period of interest. He details the changes over time, with particular emphasis on the impact on the other key states of the British effort to suppress the trade. His overall conclusion is that despite the significant effort of the British (which will be discussed more in later chapters), the "slave societies in the Americas were very prosperous."\textsuperscript{963} Laird Bergard's study \textit{The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States} (2007) drew similar conclusions.

The turn of the century (1791-1805) were years in which abolitionist agitation was growing in Britain and in which the French slave system was in turmoil due to the rebellion in Saint Domingue and Napoleonic warfare. The chaos in French colonies paid dividends for all the other players. As Eltis states "for the British,\textsuperscript{964} Portuguese and Spanish colonies, the French colonial collapse meant a huge boost in demand for produce and probably, too, a lower African

\textsuperscript{962} Bergard, Laird W. \textit{The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 163-164; and Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 7. Bergard states "The abundance of economic data for the United States has led historians to nearly uncontestable conclusions on the rising profitability and efficiency of slave labor in the southern cotton-producing zones prior to the Civil War. Although these kinds of data are not available in such detail for Cuba and Brazil, the fact that similar slave price curves were found in all three nations suggests that the Cuban and Brazilian slave systems were as rational and profitable as the southern U.S. economy." He later notes there was a particular lack of data for Brazil in the period of the 1850s. The data is better for the 1870s and after. Of this Bergard states, "the economics of Brazilian slavery during the 1850s have not been closely examined by scholars owing to a lack of documentary materials. Studies on the 1870s and after, when abundant documentation has been located, however, have reached the same conclusions concerning the continued high profitability and efficiency of slave labor right up to abolition."


\textsuperscript{964} Eltis, David. \textit{Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 40. Eltis suggests the British colonies gained the most from the turmoil in Saint Domingue and the ongoing industrialization in Britain, echoing Drescher's conclusions.
price for slaves." 965 "British colonial and Brazilian shares of the raw cotton market jumped by 50 percent between 1786-87 and 1796-1800, and the redistribution of coffee production was only slightly less dramatic." 966 In Brazil, beyond cotton production (which actually grew the most in this period) and coffee expansion to other regions, sugar became the leading export again and exports doubled between 1790 and 1807. 967 In Cuba there was a dramatic shift toward sugar in this period and coffee went from being a relatively insignificant player to 2 million pounds per year in 1805 and 1806; exports from Havana were 150 percent greater than the annual average between 1786 to 1790. 968 With France in turmoil, the British were in a superior position to take advantage of the trade in slaves and slave-based production in her colonies. Yet, it was at this very period that Britain (and the United States) abolished the slave trade and (in Britain's case, not so with the United States) moved forcefully to suppress the trade of other countries. Cuban and Brazilian businessmen were the direct benefactors of this decision. 969 As Eltis stated, "Brazil, Cuba, and perhaps the U.S. South, too, would not have been plantation backwaters in the absence of the British abolition, but they would no doubt have experienced a lower rate of growth in the face of continued competition from the massive British plantation sector." 970 Transatlantic slavery had changed dramatically at the turn of the century. The British and Americans had abolished the slave trade. The other great slave power of the era, the French, "had been reduced to fragments of territory and slave imports of a few thousand a year smuggled in during the decade after the

968 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 39. This increase in the importance of coffee was due in large part to refugees from Saint Domingue moving to Cuba and instructing on its production.
Napoleonic wars.\textsuperscript{971} Of the key slave systems, "only two, the Spanish and the Portuguese, had free access to Africa in 1810.\textsuperscript{972}

**Table 3.5. Estimates of Profit Rates per Venture or per Slave\textsuperscript{973}**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Branches of the Slave Trade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757-84</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760-1807</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770-1806</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826-35</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836-45</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856-65</td>
<td>91.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil South</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831-40</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841-50</td>
<td>21.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


The period from 1805 to 1830 produced the same general upward trends in the remaining slave systems that it had in the turbulent period at the turn of the century. In America, the natural rate of production decreased the impact of Anglo-American abolition in 1808. Within a generation after abolition the American slave population had doubled, whereas in British colonies

\textsuperscript{971} Eltis, David. *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 46. Eltis also discusses the Dutch: "A second system, the Dutch, had been partially absorbed by a third, the British, and neither system was allowed even illicitly introduced slaves after 1807. Indeed in the Dutch case few Africans were introduced after 1795."

\textsuperscript{972} Eltis, David. *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 46. Eltis adds "This access did not remain completely free for very long," as will be discussed in more detail, "but the Africans continued to arrive."

it declined by 10 percent or more. In contrast, British planters "were now in a straitjacket." Brazilian and Cuban producers filled much of the resulting gap in non-British markets as their output expanded at from double to quadruple the British rates between 1805 and 1830. "In the long run Iberian access to Africa meant that after 1805 the Iberian and British planter simply did not compete on equal terms. At the very least, planters in the Iberian Americas could have asked for nothing better from the British government (except perhaps to leave their own slave trade untouched) than to abolish first the slave trade and then slavery in the British colonies." 

As Figure 3.6 demonstrates, Brazilian imports went through the roof after British abolition. Cuba imports increased in much the same way. "The full expansive effect of British and U.S. abolition – larger markets for Cuban producers, cheaper prices for slaves and higher costs for British and U.S. plantation owners – did not come until 1814." Slave imports doubled between 1806-1810 and 1811-1815 and tripled again in the next five years. And so it was that the accelerating demand for staples crops and the destruction of the British trade (and the temporary reduction of the French trade) led directly to the growth of the Spanish and Brazilian

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975 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 41. Eltis adds "on the African coast slave prices fell by a little more than half and remained generally below the pre-1807 price for as long as the traffic lasted."
976 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 42. Eltis shows the "strongest growth came after British abolition of the trade rather than before, even though the shift of growers from St. Domingue to Cuba had already taken place by 1808."
slave systems. For Britain, then, "the economic, as opposed to the moral gains of putting down the slave traffic are thus not very obvious." After Napoleon's defeat, the British sought to impose abolition on France. In the first Treaty of Paris, May 1814, French possessions were returned and the best Britain could achieve was for Louis XVIII to resign himself to abolishing the slave trade within five years. The French saw their slave possessions as means toward recouping wartime

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985 Kielstra, Paul Michael. *The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 15, 55. Kielstra notes that in telling the story of French abolition, this is exactly what happened – it was imposed upon them – and this is why the French abolition movement is understudied by French historians. He writes, "unlike their anglophone counterparts, French historians have written little on abolition. Why it happened requires no analysis: the British imposed it. How it occurred has achieved scant attention because, as Robert Stein explains of nineteenth-century authors, 'The rather shameful history of French abolition' gave France's trade less 'intrinsic interest' than Britain's. 'French actions' provided 'little drama and less moral glory.'"
economic losses. Back in the slave trade game, by the mid-1820s the French were re-staking a significant claim to the trade, dominating the Havana and southern part of Cuban slave trade. Emancipation finally came to France by mid-century, but as will be discussed in later chapters, not for economic reasons.

Figure 3.7. Slave Imports into Cuba

Comparing the slave systems in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States, Bergard finds similarities in their 1) expansion into under-populated soil-rich areas; 2) absolute increase in principal slave-based crop; 3) productive expansion paralleled by and related to technological innovation (although less so in case of Brazilian coffee); 4) upward trend in prices in second half of 1850s; and 5) efficient reallocation of slave labor to most productive sectors as result of changes in demand, profitability, and prices, a point which he considered a "critical indicator of slave labor's economic viability in all three nations."

As the 19th century progressed, the Brazilian and Cuban slave systems proved profitable despite Britain's suppression efforts and even in times when produce prices were down and slave

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prices up (see Figure 3.7).

In fact, "in all societies where slavery survived past midcentury... slave prices grew to at least double what they had been at the beginning of the century." Still, even periods of declining produce prices and increasing slave prices did not lead to a long-term decline in profitability/viability of the slave system in either Brazil or Cuba, or the United States for that matter. Examining slavery in all three countries in the 1850s, there were few indicators of impending doom. Irrespective of high slave prices, "slave owners continued actively purchasing slaves. The reaction of businesspeople to changes in prices of commodities or labor is an important indicator of future expectations. The very fact that slave owners continued to buy slaves during periods of steep price increases in all three countries suggests an expectation that their slave-based economic activities would be profitable in the future."

Laird Bergard particularly stressed that part of the reason North American slave systems could stay efficient and profitable even in times of high slave prices was their ability to stay at the cutting edge of technological evolution (despite the high cost of doing so):

During the 1850s, despite sharp escalation in slave costs, Cuban sugar planters imported more slaves and were willing to pay higher prices. There was only one fundamental economic reason for this: not only did slave-based sugar production continue to be highly profitable, its efficiency was increasing notwithstanding the higher costs of both technological innovations and slave labor. This finding is in stark contrast to the interpretation that technological progress and slavery were

991 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 186-187. Eltis identifies "three broad factors that more than offset both the rising price of slaves and the steady increase in demand for plantation produce. They are (1) the exploitation of new land particularly well suited for plantation crops, (2) labor-productivity improvements and (3) economics of scale in marketing crops. The collective impact was to make slaves more productive workers."


994 Bergard, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 158. See also page 163, in which Bergard speaks of the coffee market specifically: "rising real prices for slaves did not act to inhibit increases in coffee production or slave purchases. This, of course, is a clear indicator of the coffee economy's ability to grow profitability regardless of change in the slave market."
economically incompatible. In fact, slavery became more profitable to planters with the resources to utilize new technologies. Empirical economic data reveal this quite clearly.\textsuperscript{995} Bergard specifically mentioned both the Williams thesis and work by Manuel Moreno Fraginals (\textit{El Ingenio}), which argued that technology improvements and slavery were antithetical. According to Bergard, "the conclusions of Williams, Moreno Fraginals, and others on the incompatibility of technological innovation and slave labor, as well as the argument that slavery was becoming economically inefficient, were largely based on theoretical models of economic development rather than empirical evidence."\textsuperscript{996} In a striking example, to ensure their supply of labor in the face of suppression, Cuban planters actually imported indentured servants from Asia. A testament to the efficiency of African slave labor is the fact that, "although slave prices were always higher than indentured contracts during the 1850s, Cuban planters purchased two Africans for every indentured laborer landed from Asia."\textsuperscript{997} Bergard's overall conclusion is this: "with respect to the economic aspects of slave labor, the striking similarities in American slave systems must be stressed. The connections between technological innovations, increased production, and the economic viability of slavery, even during periods of sharp price increases for slaves, were prevalent in all three nations and indicate marked economic parallels between the U.S., Brazilian, and Cuban slave systems."\textsuperscript{998} Even "on the eve of the disruption of the American Union," as Seymour Drescher concluded, "the last two dynamic Ibero-American slave systems appeared to be as robust as ever in their potential for

\textsuperscript{995} Bergard, Laird W. \textit{The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 145-146. See also Eltis, David. \textit{Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 237. Eltis states - "It is hard to conceive of any technology that would have permitted free labor to compete with a slave-labor force supplied from Africa at the slave prices that held in the early 1830s."


future growth. In Cuba, Spain's largest slaveholding colony, planter economic expectations for the future remained high.\(^{999}\)

The conclusion is clear: North and South American slavery did not die a "market death." Certainly at the very end of the Cuban and Brazilian slave systems economic factors likely added to the impetus for their demise. For example, in Cuba in the late 1860s and early 1870s as sugar prices fell the cost of "clandestine" introduction of slaves was "no longer covered by the going price" and in that sense the trade died a "market death."\(^{1000}\) But these conditions were brought about by factors beyond economics. Economically, there is no sign that the American slave systems would have remained anything but prosperous. In Bergard's words, "it is unquestionable that the use of slave labor was highly profitable to plantation owners, or these activities could not have been sustained."\(^{1001}\) As Eltis wrote, "there were few plantation societies in the Americas that voluntarily stopped slave imports into their territories. The likelihood of such action was, nevertheless, greater than those same societies spontaneously giving up slavery itself."\(^{1002}\) Why? – because slavery paid. "Clearly slave owning was in the economic best interests of masters, for if this had not been the case, the slave system would not have persisted for so long."\(^{1003}\) Strikingly, Bergard concludes "slave labor was becoming more economically productive during the very epoch in which slavery was being dismantled."\(^{1004}\)

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Conclusion

Historian Gavin Wright suggested the main reason one studies the economics and/or the profitability/viability of slavery is "to discover whether the system would have collapsed or disappeared for economic reasons." Did transatlantic slavery die a "market death," as Eric Williams's classic *Capitalism and Slavery* suggested, sparking a spirited, controversial debate that has lasted for decades and remains alive to this day? As Wright himself said, "I regard it as essentially settled... it is no mean task to find anyone [left] who actually claimed that slavery would have ended in this way." This chapter's study of British, American, and other key slave systems suggests, like Wright, the definitive answer is no. Purely economic variables—profitability, efficiency, etc.—did not doom slavery. The answer lies not in economic variables, but elsewhere, and so to other variables this dissertation now turns.

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Chapter 4
The Normative Movements Against Transatlantic Slavery, Part I

In his book *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (2006), historian Christopher Leslie Brown perceptively observes that most discussion of normative (or what also has been called "humanitarian"), movement against slavery starts in the period of the 1770-80s and focuses on the Quakers and evangelicals, almost as if the movement, particularly in Britain, developed out of thin air and all but exclusively from these two sources.\(^{1007}\) This is certainly not an accurate representation, as ideas/movements as forceful, lasting, and ultimately successful, as (British) abolitionism rarely spring spontaneously to growth from shallow sources. Such successful movements tend to develop from multiple, deep, and sturdy seeds. Therefore, understanding the British antislavery campaign and its successors involves understanding first, the development of ideas hostile to slavery and the slave trade; and then, second, the development of plans of action to change policy and how those actions actually achieved abolition and emancipation.\(^{1008}\) That, then, is the focus of this chapter – to discuss the underlying ideas behind the antislavery movement in order to then understand how that movement eventually contributed to effecting change. The first section of this chapter discusses the history of slavery/antislavery thought to provide a background to the antislavery movement that developed primarily in Britain in the 1770s and 1780s. It then discusses how that movement was actually translated into effective action, achieving abolition and eventually emancipation (the campaigns of other significant states are discussed in the next chapter).

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Part I – Precursors to Abolitionism: Changes in Thought Pre-1780

Historical tracts often begin their discussion of the abolitionist movement in the 1770s and 1780s, as if that is where it all began.¹⁰⁰⁹ But Christopher Leslie Brown suggests that by 1787-1788, if "the question could have been decided by public opinion, the slave trade would have been abolished at once."¹⁰¹⁰ If this is indeed the case, then clearly ideas about and against slavery had developed and evolved before this period. Normative movements do not spring into action instantaneously and without foundation. David Brion Davis notes, "the legal and moral validity of slavery was a troublesome question in European thought from the time of Aristotle to the time of Locke. It was only in the eighteenth century, however, that discussions of American slavery acquired a prominent place in the standard works of history, jurisprudence, political economy, and moral philosophy."¹⁰¹¹ How did slavery evolve from being overwhelmingly accepted in the ancient world to the point where an effective antislavery campaign could develop in Britain in the last part of the 18th century? How had such a momentous change of ideas taken place?

Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Thought

No historian has done more to illuminate the development and evolution of slavery/antislavery thought than David Brion Davis. As he notes, any examination of the subject must begin with "the heritage of religious, legal, and philosophical tensions associated with slavery – or in other words, with the ways in which Western culture had organized man's

experience with lordship and bondage." Davis's Pulitzer Prize-winning classic, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (1966) is devoted to examining exactly that and only the most cursory shadow of this work can be recounted, albeit liberally, here.

In ancient thought, the inherent contradiction of slavery, as David Brion Davis points out, "lay not in its cruelty or economic exploitation, but in the underlying conception of man as a conveyable possession with no more autonomy of will and consciousness than a domestic animal." One would expect the great philosophers, such as Plato, to be against slavery but as Davis points out, one cannot find solid evidence that that was the case. As Christian doctrine developed, it suggested slavery was a punishment resulting from sin and, hence, a starting point for surrendering to and ultimately coming closer to God. The concept of "Original Sin" was one formulation that kept slavery "rationalizable;" medieval Christianity accepted slavery in principle and any controversies regarding its existence were purely practical questions, such as those regarding baptism – should slaves be baptized so they, too, could be children of God? If one compares the Christian Augustinian view versus ancient Aristotelian ideas of slavery, Aristotle's acceptance of slavery held only if the ignorant slaves were subservient to humble and intelligent rulers; the Augustinian views of slavery and sin were appropriate only if the masters were agents of the divine.

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1013 Davis, David Brion. *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 62. A definition of slave put forward by Davis is the possession of another person outside of the family, coerced into following the will of his owner (see Davis, page 31).
Moving forward into modern history, the Reformation, as momentous an historical event as it was, brought no new ideas when it came to slavery.\textsuperscript{1018} Marin Luther felt slave and free alike must humbly accept their station in this worldly life, and could not conceive of society functioning without some men being free and some being slave.\textsuperscript{1019} By this period (the 1500s), slavery was declining in Europe and yet was being revived in the recently discovered Americas.\textsuperscript{1020} Scholars in Europe were debating slavery's relationship to divine and natural law in an abstract way, while slavery was developing in a very real, concrete, and brutal way across the Atlantic.\textsuperscript{1021} As history made its way into the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, debates moved from original sin and natural rights to questions of national interest, and as they did, the moral discussions largely faded from view.\textsuperscript{1022}

Still, the great thinkers of the day did discuss the issue, even if most did not condemn it. For Hugo Grotius, how could slavery be considered wrong, or against natural justice, if so many states accepted and practiced it?\textsuperscript{1023} For Thomas Hobbes, slavery was just an "inevitable part of the logic of power."\textsuperscript{1024} Jean Bodin was, in contrast, one thinker that was ahead of his time on the subject. Bodin's \textit{Six Bookes of a Commonweale} (1576) came up with what might be considered the first true, practical, antislavery philosophy.\textsuperscript{1025} Bodin asserted that mankind could, due to

flawed reasoning, propagate errant practices for centuries.\textsuperscript{1026} In fact, he meticulously showed that slavery had always historically produced corruption, cruelty, and suffering and thus he called for legislation that would prevent slavery from spreading and in nations where it already existed, suggested providing training in order to make slaves capable of freedom, gradual emancipation, and citizenship.\textsuperscript{1027} Still, as Davis notes repeatedly, the institution of slavery had always shown a proclivity for producing "dualisms" in man's thinking – pitting prohibitions in the theoretical and the abstract against acceptance in the practical and the concrete.

John Locke's view of slavery is another of the many examples of this sort of dualism. Locke thought slavery outside the social contract, and as such, if one man "forfeited his life to another, he could not complain of injustice if his punishment was postponed by his being enslaved." In other words, Locke didn't picture slavery as result of sinful nature, but found it outside the boundaries of a free and rational society. As such, he didn't press the point any further – slavery must be within the bounds of natural law and therefore, as sacrosanct as private property.\textsuperscript{1028} Davis provides a most effective summary of the thinking of the period regarding slavery:

We must conclude, then, that the thought of Grotius, Hobbes, Pufendorf,\textsuperscript{1029} and Locke, while preparing the way for the secular theories of the Enlightenment, provided little basis for criticizing Europe's policy of supporting and extending slavery in the New World. The ancient Stoic dualism of slavery and nature, which had been embodied in Christian doctrine, might have served as a foundation for antislavery thought as soon as men sought to develop a theory of politics on natural principles. But despite the early lead of Jean Bodin, political thought in the seventeenth century did not move in the direction of abolitionism. To be sure, the most original minds no longer justified human bondage as the dark fruit of sin or as a disciplinary force in the divine government of the world. But for Grotius, Hobbes, and Pufendorf the divine order had been at least partly


\textsuperscript{1027} Davis, David Brion. \textit{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 113-114. Of note, "foreign" slaves would be excluded from this citizenship.


\textsuperscript{1029} Davis, David Brion. \textit{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 118. Pufendorf was a philosopher of natural law and social contracts. He felt slavery was based on a compact and was a useful tool for developing social discipline among humans, notorious for their "selfish impulse" as they are.
replaced by a system of law or power in which slavery was a rational and harmonious element. This, after all, was in the great tradition of Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas.\textsuperscript{1030}

In the new world itself, slavery worked on two paradoxical premises: 1) slavery was the key to the economy and therefore it was essential for the government to continue to support it; and 2) African slaves endangered security and therefore it was the government's job to limit slave numbers and control their activities.\textsuperscript{1031} The Christians that played such a crucial role in discovering and conquering that new world were themselves afflicted by contradictions. "The Christian view of slavery accommodated a series of balanced dualisms. Slavery was contrary to the ideal realm of nature, but was a necessary part of the world of sin; the bondsman was inwardly free and spiritually equal to his master, but in things external he was a mere chattel; Christians were brothers, whether slave or free, but pagans deserved in some sense to be slaves."\textsuperscript{1032} Catholics and Protestants had similar assumptions about slavery and both struggled with the dualisms, but perhaps Protestants had more difficulty rectifying "external subordination" with their "expanded notions of religious liberty."\textsuperscript{1033}

As alluded to in Chapter Two, there were voices speaking out against slavery,\textsuperscript{1034} but, as Christopher Leslie Brown suggests, "intellectual and cultural legacies informed and prepared, but did not prescribe" action against the institution of slavery as of yet.\textsuperscript{1035} Further, if no other rationalization was effective, one could always erroneously assert, and often did, that Africans

\footnotesize
were better off in America than in their own backward and savage homeland.  

In the end, then, Europeans still rationalized that slavery was an effective, if brutal, endeavor taking place in a far-off land. Perhaps as one noted voice against the institution of slavery, Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre, pointed out: God "had deprived slaves of half their reason in order to keep them from reflecting upon their wrongs." 

**A Convergence of Ideas, Actors, and Events**

As the 18th century dawned, then, certain contradictions in slavery had been evidenced, and to at least some degree, considered (if usually rationalized away), and the building blocks of future antislavery arguments were present, but no concerted action appeared on the horizon. Several converging factors moved to change this situation in the 1700s: emerging secular "Enlightenment" thought, the efforts and organization of the Quakers, the development of other Christian approaches to and agitation against slavery, and finally, the growing contradiction of slavery in the eyes of the law.

*Secular Thought.* It is often accepted in Western culture that it was the thinking of the Enlightenment period that set in motion the illumination of the most unreasoned and backward conceptions of human thinking and sowed the seeds of overturning humanity's darkest practices. Yet, with regard to slavery, the Enlightenment period perhaps said less and shined more dimly than one might imagine. As Davis has masterfully summarized:

> We have often been told that the Enlightenment emancipated the European mind from a slavish subservience to authority, tradition, and superstition; that it marked an age when reason unveiled the truths of nature, vindicated the rights of man, and pointed the way to human perfectibility and happiness. We might well assume that such revolutionary tendencies would lead directly to militant abolitionism. Yet the traditional justifications for slavery had survived the scrutiny of Humanists and seventeenth-century rationalists. Famous philosophers had shown that a defense of slavery could be reconciled with belief in abstract natural law and natural rights. Hobbes and Locke, who established much of the framework for future social thought, also openly sanctioned

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human bondage. And one must remember that it was in the Age of Enlightenment that the African slave trade and West Indian plantation enjoyed their golden years.1038

Later antislavery leaders would complain that "even the philosophes who boldly attacked most injustices were curiously blind to Negro slavery."1039 Most Enlightenment thinkers followed the reasoning of Aquinas – equality might be the goal but inequality was necessary to keep order.1040 Even radicals feared immediate emancipation; one had to consider the public interest and maintain a sense of pragmatism, even in the face of great injustice.1041

If there was a placing of order over justice, there was also the pesky fact that slavery was effective and profitable. Edmund Burke noted in 1757: "nothing could justify a trade 'which must depend for its support upon the annual murder of several thousands of innocent men... but the necessity we are under of peopling our colonies, and the consideration that the slaves we buy were in the same condition in Africa.'" The typical response to the problem of slavery, then, was to devise plans for regulating the practice in all its phases, and hoping that this then would lead to change over time without damaging an effective economic structure.1042 As Burke later (1792) said: "the cause of humanity would be far more benefited by the continuance of the trade and servitude, regulated and reformed, than by the total destruction of both or either."1043 Even ardent reformers and, later, abolitionists, believed they could work toward their goal over time and without infringing on "legitimate rights and interests."1044

If one ended the story here, the conclusion would be that Enlightenment thinking was a series of monumental ideas overwhelmed and muted by utility and moderation. But for all its pragmatism, the Enlightenment was still a challenge to authority.\textsuperscript{1045} Thinkers of the time were coming around to the idea that history had "polluted the sources of truth and virtue."\textsuperscript{1046} Whether a Godly Protestant looking for divine inspiration, or a worldly thinker looking for reasoned truth, both could agree that the highest power was "a constitutional, benevolent ruler that desired the happiness of his subjects" and would not sanction endless, undeserved suffering of the kind that slaves endured.\textsuperscript{1047}

Roger Anstey concludes that three key ideas/concepts were developing and taking hold by this period – happiness, benevolence, and liberty.\textsuperscript{1048} As Anstey states, "the development of the three concepts, during roughly the first three-quarters of the century, manifests a cast of thought which is increasingly incompatible with slavery and which leans tentatively towards the possibility and desirability of appropriate reforms."\textsuperscript{1049}

Among the many intellectuals and philosophers scholars note of this period, most generally conclude that Montesquieu was at the top of the list of those whose thought did the most to undermine the classical philosophical approach to slavery.\textsuperscript{1050} He was the first important philosopher to subject the trade to the rational thought of the Enlightenment. Montesquieu's \textit{L'Esprit des lois} Book XIV on the influence of climate on mankind considers slavery in terms of

universal principles. Montesquieu said there was a rational, uniform system of law that limited
even God and demonstrated this maxim through concrete relationships. For example,
Montesquieu discussed that slavery meant one man was buying another, but liberty was a
"blessing to its possessor" that could have no price. Further, people of the age no longer believed
armies should kill defeated captives. Bondage had always been a more enlightened alternative to
immediate death, and yet, if armies were no longer murdering their vanquished foes then there
was no longer any need to keep men in bondage. Montesquieu "worked from social utility toward general laws which would guide the
enlightened sovereign" for the public good. Even the death penalty benefited a murderer
because he had lived under and gained protection from the law that then prescribed his death; but
no such universal good benefitted the slave that was arbitrarily imprisoned. "Slavery retarded
the growth of population; debased one class to the detriment of public virtue, and corrupted
another with luxury and excessive power." It was this sense of public good which was
probably Montesquieu's most significant contribution to the discussion. By Montesquieu's
logic, slavery was contrary to the public good (and hence to natural law, happiness, and
benevolence) and so the sovereign power should take action to end the institution.

1052 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810.* Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
1053 Davis, David Brion. *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture.* New York, NY: Oxford University
1054 Davis, David Brion. *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture.* New York, NY: Oxford University
1056 Davis, David Brion. *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture.* New York, NY: Oxford University
1057 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810.* Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
Rousseau echoed Montesquieu's concept of the wrongfulness of selling one's self into bondage and of the need to enslave captives after war, and in doing so, he went beyond Montesquieu and made "the most fundamental attack on slavery."\(^\text{1058}\) He concluded that men were born free and equal; slavery was based on brute force and, hence, the word "slave" and "right" were mutually exclusive.\(^\text{1059}\) To quote:

So, from whatever aspect we regard the question, the right of slavery is null and void, not only as being illegitimate, but also because it is absurd and meaningless. The words slave and right contradict each other, and are mutually exclusive. It will always be equally foolish for a man to say to a man or to a people: 'I make with you a convention wholly at your expense and wholly to my advantage; I shall keep it as long as I like, and you will keep it as long as I like.'\(^\text{1060}\)

Here again, one can see the intermingled concepts of happiness, benevolence, and liberty.

By 1765, the subject of slavery was coming up in the summation of writings of the Enlightenment, and with Raynal's *Histoire des deux Indes* in 1770, the subject was more directly discussed than it had been previously.\(^\text{1061}\) For Raynal, the world outside Europe was developing contrary to Europe's most civilized traditions.\(^\text{1062}\) What distinguished man from beasts, according to Raynal, was freedom of will, but the condition of slaves even under compassionate "Christian" masters was such that if slaves were given freedom, they couldn't live well. Therefore, they had to be given training.\(^\text{1063}\) If leaders did not take action to ameliorate slavery, then the only other way


\(^{1061}\) Davis, David Brion. *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 417-420; and Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 121-123. Anstey astutely noted that educated Englishmen of the time read French, and so French books by these prominent authors would received readership in Britain. Additionally, translated versions were available as well. For example, Raynal's work appeared in approximately fifteen English editions between 1776 and 1806.


to see its demise was for the oppressors to be overtaken by force.\textsuperscript{1064} "In the last analysis, therefore, the oppressors must either be crushed by a superior force, or be persuaded that humanity coincided with their own self-interest."\textsuperscript{1065} As Anstey notes, "Raynal dismisses all the pro-slavery arguments – the rights of captors in war; the right over criminals; that Negroes are happier in America than in their homeland; that in Europe and America the people are slaves anyway; that enslavement is justified by conversion of the slave to Christianity."\textsuperscript{1066}

The French philosophes were not the only ones objecting to slavery. The causes of liberty, benevolence, and happiness were discussed by British philosophers as well, and the concept of liberty was particularly important in Britain.\textsuperscript{1067} As early as the 1730s occasional essays or letters asserted that all men were born free and hence slavery was a violation of natural rights of man.\textsuperscript{1068} Many Britons felt uniquely part of the cause of freedom and so, as we will see, this freedom-based line of argument would have lasting impact on British slavery debates.

Edmund Burke (particularly in speeches in 1775) was concerned with political and civil liberty in England and the colonies. The "happiness of the governed was an avowed criterion of good government" and hence reform was needed when government denied liberty. He thereby opposed the slave trade and later supported the abolition movement.\textsuperscript{1069}

Adam Ferguson's *Essay on Civil Society* (1797) asked "in what sense can a public enjoy any good, if its members, considered apart, be unhappy?" Ferguson's *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* (1769) stated "No one is born a slave; because every one is born with all his original rights. No one can become a slave, because no one, from being a person, can, in the language of Roman law, become a thing or subject of property. The supposed property of the master in the slave, therefore, is a matter of usurpation, not of right."  

James Beattie's *Elements of Moral Science* (1790-1793) said of benevolence, "considerations recommend the great duty of universal benevolence, which is not more beneficial to others than to ourselves; for it makes us happy in our own minds and amiable in the eyes of all who know us." Further, "we have therefore every reason, that the case admits of, to believe, that all the men upon earth, whatever their colour, are our brethren, and neighbours: and if so, both reason and Scripture declare, that is it is our duty to love them, and to do unto them as we would that they should do unto us."  

British scholars were particularly revelatory with regard to the law and slavery, again reflecting the increasing importance of the concept of freedom in Britain. George Wallace *System of the Principles of the Laws of Scotland* (1760) found great profundity in Montesquieu's work on natural law, but being a legal scholar, tried to combine the two fields in an appropriate way. Wallace stated that any positive law that is in conflict with law of nature is unjust, and further, "an institution, so unnatural and so inhuman as that of slavery, ought to be abolished." William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-1769) traced the history of English

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law; Anstey concluded that Blackstone followed Montesquieu's reasoning "slavishly," but is a vitally important figure in that he "played the dominant role in mediating Montesquieu's ideas to England." Blackstone concluded "it is repugnant to reason, and the principles of natural law that such a state (slavery) should subsist anywhere." He later observed, critically, that "a slave or Negro, the moment he lands in England, falls under the protection of the laws..." and therefore becomes a free man. This concept of the "free air" of British soil would become increasingly important as the abolition movement developed, as we shall see.

One could not conclude a discussion of British philosophers of this period without mentioning Adam Smith. Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) placed a rebuke of slavery in two principles: self-interest and natural liberty. In *Wealth of Nations*, Smith famously condemned slavery, saying:

> The experience of all ages and nations, I believe, demonstrates that the work done by slaves, though it appears to cost only their maintenance, is in the end the dearest of any. A person who can acquire no property, can have no other interest but to eat as much, and to labour as little as possible. Whatever work he does beyond what is sufficient to purchase his own maintenance can be squeezed out of him by violence only, and not by any interest of his own.

By slave labor being "dear," Smith of course means that it is more costly, in large part because slaves are less industrious and thereby less efficient. In *Moral Sentiments* Smith developed a principle of sympathetic association, akin to benevolence, saying:
As our sense, therefore, of the propriety of conduct arises from what I shall call a direct sympathy with the affection and motives of the person who acts, so our sense of its merit arises from what I shall call an indirect sympathy with the gratitude of the person who is... acted upon.\textsuperscript{1081}

Together, then, these concepts naturally combine to form one of his more famous dictums – the "invisible hand," which is in keeping with the concept of "Providence" that Anstey noted:

The rich... are led by an invisible hand to make nearly the same distribution of the necessities of life which would have been made had the earth been divided into equal portions among all its inhabitants; and thus, without intending it, without knowing it, advance the interest of the society and afford means to the multiplication of the species. When Providence divided the earth among a few lordly masters, it neither forgot nor abandoned those who seemed to have been left out in the partition. These last, too, enjoy their share of all that it produces.\textsuperscript{1082}

Chapter two elaborated on the fact that in purely economic cost/productivity terms, slavery is actually not a more "dear" system of labor. Nonetheless, this chapter is discussing the power of ideas, and as such, the fact that the growing idea that slavery was less efficient/profitable than free labor was being espoused by the likes of Adam Smith was important for the growing antislavery debate.

Of course it is impossible to capture all the evolving concepts from the Enlightenment in a few short paragraphs. As Roger Anstey noted, "there are clear limitations to the approach we have taken to eighteenth-century ideas as they relate to anti-slavery."\textsuperscript{1083} The texts of the period are so rich with concepts and ideas that to take only a small sample and then to suggest that this sample somehow summarizes the thought of the period is indeed audacious. Further, as Anstey admits, to take such a small sample of ideas and then lump them under arbitrary categories like happiness, benevolence, and liberty, as he did is to vastly over-simplify the bodies of work. The need to summarize the trends in ideas and norms faces us, nonetheless. The simple review does suggest that great thinkers of the day, of various backgrounds, were coming to a similar


conclusion that the concept of slavery was indeed contradictory to philosophy and the law – natural and otherwise. As Anstey states, "what cannot be in dispute is the striking unanimity in the condemnation of slavery by philosophers of great diversity; what cannot be gainsaid is that none of any rank defended the institution." Developing in parallel to this philosophical norm change, there also developed a religious change, to which we now turn.

_The Quakers._ Although the contradictions of slavery had shown themselves to the great minds at various times throughout the ages, average men could not come to grips with the immorality of slavery until a religious transformation changed their concept of sin and freedom. As David Brion Davis suggests, men and women "would not feel it a duty to combat slavery as a positive evil until its existence seemed to threaten the moral security provided by a system of values that harmonized individual desires with socially defined goals and sanctions." Slavery had to threaten the spiritual and ideological security of a majority of people, even those that had no connection to the institution.

Slavery didn't present a problem for most religious sectarians; yet, the growth of the Quaker Society of Friends would take place in parallel with the expansion of British power in a way that ultimately, interestingly, challenged slavery as an accepted institution. For years, the founder of the Quakers, George Fox (1624 to 1691), likely rationalized the contradictions of slavery away in much the same manner as other Protestant and Catholic theologians of the time;

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suffering here on earth was in keeping with the dualism of mind and spirit, body and soul. In his famous letter "To Friends Beyond Sea That Have Blacks and Indian Slaves" (1657), he suggested that master should show "Christian mercy and brotherhood" to their charges. Some fourteen years later while preaching in Barbados, he went so far as to propose that bondage be limited to thirty years. Still, as Davis notes, "there can be no doubt that Fox accepted Negro slavery as an institution which could be rationalized." It should be no surprise, then, that Quakers were involved in the practice of slavery for most of the 18th century. Quakers arrived at a sustained debate on slavery only in the 1750s, and most discussions focused on separatism rather than full abolition itself.

Nonetheless, it was only a matter of time until the key tenets of Quakerism – that Christ died for all men, that all were equal, and that all men must be loved – would lead Quakers to question slavery once a tide began to move in that direction. There were Quaker voices, many of which went unnoticed in their time that spoke out against slavery in the 17th century. In 1676, William Edmundson was one of the first to pose serious questions about slavery. In his general letter to his Quaker brethren, he queried why masters in Barbados allowed their slaves to act in pagan ways but didn't offer them the option of becoming Christian. Even if Africans were descendants of Ham (the age-old biblical justification for their guilt), didn't Christ break down the

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divisions between peoples; wasn't faith what mattered most? In 1688, Dutch-speaking Quakers in Germantown signed an antislavery petition noting that African slaves had been criminally seized. Edmundson's letter was without effect and Germantown petition was considered "too weighty" to be decided upon; it was eventually passed through the Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting to the Yearly Meeting, where it died a "quiet death." In 1693, George Keith of Jersey persuaded his followers to sign "An Exhortation & Caution to Friends Concerning Buying or Keeping of Negroes" similar to the Germantown petition – arguing slavery was against the golden rule and claiming slaves were stolen goods. In 1696 the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting defined principles that would be policy for 50 years: owners were charged with the moral welfare of their slaves, but assured that having property rights over slaves did not negatively impact their religious purity. Purchasing slaves for private use was fine, but one should be cautious about having the importation of slaves constituting a substantial part of one's business. The events of 1712 were perhaps indicative of the overall conflicted-but-guarded Quaker approach to slavery that would last into the mid-1700s. In that year, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting appealed to London Yearly Meeting that some Friends were disturbed about the slave trade and the fact that slaves continued to be imported. London dismissed the issue once again as "too weighty" (this being a particularly inopportune time to discuss slave importations given that Britain was in the

process of obtaining the prized *asiento* from Spain), and rebuked Philadelphia for forwarding a letter without getting the consensus of the rest of the North American meetings.  

By the last years of the 17th century agitation was bubbling up from below – agitation for which the Quaker leadership was not yet prepared to deal, but would be forced to, before the next hundred years had passed. A number of Quaker meetings in America were stirred by antislavery agitation, but we know the names of only a few of the more outspoken abolitionists. Quaker masters had been more beneficent than most, but sustained and ardent action had not yet developed. In 1715 the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting still clung to the policy of 1696 and advised against judging fellow Quakers that owned slaves; but in 1730 the meeting spoke against the importation of slaves. The Quaker leadership was sending mixed signals and the contradiction of slavery continued in the Quaker community. It should be no surprise that men like William Penn bought and owned slaves and that the Pennsylvania government included a rather harsh slave code. Neither should one be surprised that as late in the 1730s and 1740s Quaker merchants were buying and selling slaves. Once Quaker leaders adopted a firm stance on slavery, others would quickly follow. But until that time, no Quaker group should progress too

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1106 Davis, David Brion. *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 305. Davis notes that Quakers did not "Christianize" the institution and in fact it wasn't until 1756 that they instructed their members to convert slaves and provide for their spiritual well-being.  
far beyond any other, and doing so, would appear "un-Quakeresque" by calling official dictates into question.\textsuperscript{1111}

In 1733, Elihu Coleman's \textit{A Testimony Against that Antichristian Practice of Making Slaves of Men} was the first to receive official Quaker approval.\textsuperscript{1112} Coleman's treatise was strikingly similar to John Hepburn's little-noted piece \textit{The American Defence of the Christian Golden Rule} (1715). Both tracts assimilated ideas from the Enlightenment; man was created with free will and a capacity to choose the good/conform to the will of God and that, therefore, moral "perfectitude" could only be achieved via freedom of choice (a freedom slaves were denied).\textsuperscript{1113} These two pieces, using Enlightenment reasoning, shot down all justifications for slavery to date, including the idea that slaves were better off than if they had remained in Africa.\textsuperscript{1114} Still, these two tracts were to remain relatively obscure in comparison to the impact of two other great Quaker abolitionists – John Woolman and Anthony Benezet.\textsuperscript{1115}

John Woolman was born in New Jersey in 1720; a tailor and deeply reflective man, through contact with other Friends buying and selling slaves he came to believe the practice was deeply wrong. He decided to embark on a tour of Southern slave plantations and as a result wrote \textit{Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes} in 1748, not publishing it until 1754.\textsuperscript{1116} Woolman believed slavery was against the will of God and suggested members consider the horror if roles were reversed. He furthered the belief in slavery's depravity to holder and slave alike, and suggested that divine justice would come to those who engaged in slavery, individuals

and nations alike.\textsuperscript{1117} After publishing his book, he became friends with Anthony Benezet, a schoolmaster in Philadelphia, and they both began to raise the issue at the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.\textsuperscript{1118}

Several variables within Quakerism played a role in making it an appropriate time for concerted action and change during the period from 1730 to 1760.\textsuperscript{1119} Quakers believed that the Reformation was the great turning point of history and that their job as religious leaders was to zealously continue the tradition of "purity."\textsuperscript{1120} Yet, factors conspired against purity and passion. Worldliness, apathy, and immorality were the great threats of the second quarter of the 1700s. They had been a persecuted sect and persecution tends to strengthen commitment. Now they were established minorities in most of their communities and relative acceptance diminished passion. Further, they had fallen into the habit of "birthrightism" – people becoming full members just because they were of Quaker descent – and hence the group was populated with an increasing number of un-convicted members.\textsuperscript{1121} The natural organizational response to a decline in commitment is the move toward conservatism, greater hierarchical control, and increased communications between communities.\textsuperscript{1122}

Pennsylvania was the community most conflicted by these developments, because Quakers there had been most influential in the territory's founding; but as non-Quakers inhabited this area and diluted the Quaker numbers, the sect became less powerful. The only way to stay influential was to make political compromises and become more mainstream. So for example, they compromised on being taxed for war purposes (a practice against their pacifist beliefs).

These types of compromises of course added to the impulse for the community to look inward and re-evaluate its place and practice. In this way, the voices of men like Benezet and Woolman, who were keen to reform and purify the actions of their group, were more readily heard and heeded.1123 Added to this, Benezet and Woolman were thoughtful men whose forceful arguments were put forward quietly, without attacks and demonization of those who disagreed with them.

There was one other factor that made the Quakers ripe for leadership on the issue of slavery. They believed that catastrophic events would play a part in revealing God's will and truth to men.1124 The Quakers had no crisis around which to cohere their understanding of God's truth, but raids on their communities by Native Americans and the Seven Years War that followed would provide such events.1125 More taxes were called for in defense against Native American raids, and this led to ruptures in the community and a more stringent review of members and their actions. The greater trigger event came then in the form of the Seven Year War (1756-1763). Given their pacifist principles, the Quakers refused to take sides in the dispute. Opposition to war led to large-scale rebuke, which ultimately led to bleeding of weak members and an overall "refining" effect.1126 During this period, as would happen later during the American Revolution, Quakers were branded as traitors because of their refusal to participate in conflict.1127 As they went through the worst of times, there was a general re-evaluation of the order.1128 The Quaker leadership was compelled to set in stone what it did and did not stand for, and then all members would be asked to stand fast in those principles. Quasi-acceptance of slavery had been questioned for years, but this period of crisis resulted in a hardening of antislavery principles. In 1757 the

London Yearly Meeting became alarmed about Quaker involvement in the trade, the Meeting of
Sufferings appointed a committee to investigate the issue. Then, the renewed examination of
members led to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting excluding from participation any members that
bought or sold slaves and advised all members to set their slaves free. \footnote{Anstey, Roger. \textit{The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810}. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 210-211. In 1779 they called for reparations to former slaves.} In 1760 New England Quakers made importing slaves an offense subject to disciplinary action, and then in 1761 the
London Yearly Meeting stated slave dealers merited disownment. Prohibition on the dealing in
slaves was made official Quaker doctrine in 1774. \footnote{Davis, David Brion. \textit{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 322.} Davis summarizes:

It was, then, in a time of severe crisis that the Society of Friends took the first significant steps of
commitment to antislavery principles. In a period of intense soul-searching, of desire for self-
purification, and of concern over their image in the eyes of others, a decision to refrain from
dealing in slaves was a means of reasserting the perfectionist content of their faith. It was a way of
proscribing a form of selfish economic activity without repudiating the pursuit of wealth; a way of
tightening discipline and organization without severing all ties with outsiders; a way of affirming
the individual's moral will, and the historic mission of the church, without challenging the basic
structure of the social order. \footnote{Davis, David Brion. \textit{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 323.}

The "Quaker International" had already, by the mid-1750s, "devised effective
mechanisms for political action. Originally designed to aid Quaker victims of persecution, the
London Meeting for Sufferings had developed into an executive committee dealing with
important questions between Yearly Meetings.\footnote{Davis, David Brion. \textit{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 329.} The meetings became preoccupied with
colonial laws that infringed upon the interests of American Friends and they appointed a
subcommittee for Parliamentary and colonial affairs. Correspondents updated the committees
regularly. \footnote{Davis, David Brion. \textit{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 329.} Through these mechanisms, the Quaker International was an organization capable of
communication from top to bottom like few others. Roger Anstey states "what was so striking
about the Society of Friends in the eighteenth century is that it was a veritable Atlantic
community."\textsuperscript{1134} In this way, if there weren't appropriate channels for communication in early days of antislavery feelings, by the mid- to late-1700s, the times had changed.

Still, as the antislavery movement was getting under way in America it was still largely silent in Britain in the 1750s and early 1760s.\textsuperscript{1135} It's not exactly clear what moved London forward but it appears it was quiet pressure from the American Friends.\textsuperscript{1136} Once it got moving, evidence suggests it was Benezet that contacted English Friends and suggested pamphlets and tracts be printed, distributed, and even given to Parliament in order to move action forward. In 1767 John Fothergill of the London Meeting of Sufferings suggested re-printing of Benezet's \textit{Observations on the Enslaving, Importing, and Purchasing of Negroes}; 1,500 copies were made with distribution to both Houses of Parliament.\textsuperscript{1137}

The full mechanisms and arguments of an antislavery movement were developing. The increased hierarchy and communication techniques would be crucial for the burgeoning antislavery campaign, and greatly assisted the spread of ideas put forth by the likes of Woolman and Benezet.\textsuperscript{1138} "For Quakers the essential condemnation of slavery and the slave trade was that they were incompatible with Christian truth, and love, and it was therefore largely in these terms that the original Quaker appeal was made."\textsuperscript{1139} Woolman and Benezet also resorted to arguments based in natural rights and benevolence, in keeping with the thinking of the times. It is in Benezet's writings "that we find a rounded case against slavery, of which the inspiration is Quaker but, being directed to the non-Quaker world, also brings into service the moral philosophy

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and the sentiments of the age." Anstey notes that this was important because Benezet's work was authoritative; because it showed slavery was unjust in context of African history and that a more fair trade could develop for other goods; and because the work discussed inhumanity of the trade itself.

It is through these developments that the Society of Friends stood poised, in the 1770s, at the precipice of launching a full social and political movement against the slave trade. The American Revolution would be yet another trying period for Quakers, and the community would emerge at its conclusion fully ready to take on the institution of slavery. Whereas in the early part of the century the rectitude of slavery remained open for debate, by the late 1770s there was "near universal" agreement on its revulsion, at least in North America. The Americans stood poised to press their Friends in London for more direct action.

Other Developments in Christian Thought. The Quakers weren't the only religious and/or morality-centered forces moving toward anti-slavery. Certainly there were forces within the Anglican Church that wished to at least ameliorate the trade and institution of slavery. Ultimately, it would be in large part due to the efforts of powerful "Evangelicals" that antislavery would move forward as a cause. In unison, the various dissenting churches would form another powerful plank in the antislavery foundation. These two groups would come together with other sources

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1 Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 213-217. Anstey notes that this was important because 1) Benezet's work was authoritative, 2) because it showed slavery was unjust in context of African history and that a more fair trade could develop for other goods, and 3) he discussed inhumanity of the trade.

2 Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 213-217. Anstey notes that this was important because 1) Benezet's work was authoritative, 2) because it showed slavery was unjust in context of African history and that a more fair trade could develop for other goods, and 3) he discussed inhumanity of the trade.


and strands of thought – in popular culture, literature, etc – to move the idea of antislavery from the dust heap to the forefront of peoples' minds.

Davis concludes "antislavery was an extension of a noble philanthropic tradition." There had been a disintegration of medieval charity practices, and in the 1500s this led to a rise in private philanthropy. The new ideal of individual responsibility appealed to rising middle/merchant class, who didn't have land/endowments, but could nonetheless prove their "moral worth" by taking care of the less fortunate. In the 1600s this led to a distinct rise in institutionalized philanthropy. The impulse toward philanthropy "made religion meaningful to ordinary people, gave proof through human action of God's benevolent purposes, and conveyed deep joys which were a foretaste of paradise." As Davis notes, the philosophy of benevolence of which Anstey speaks in such detail, "was a product of the seventeenth century, when certain British Protestants, shaken by theological controversy and the implications of modern science, looked increasingly to human nature and conduct as a basis of faith. In their impatience with theological dogma, their distaste for the doctrine of original sin, their appreciation for human feeling and sentiment, and their confidence in man's capacity for moral improvement, these Latitudinarians, as they were called, anticipated the main concerns of the Enlightenment, and laid an indispensable foundation for social reform."

\[\text{1144} \text{ Davis, David Brion. } \text{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture.} \text{ New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 333.}
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\[\text{1145} \text{ Davis, David Brion. } \text{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture.} \text{ New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 334.}
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\[\text{1146} \text{ Davis, David Brion. } \text{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture.} \text{ New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 364.}
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\[\text{1147} \text{ Davis, David Brion. } \text{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture.} \text{ New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 348-349.}
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Still, to conclude that abolitionism was a natural outgrowth of philanthropy alone is a mistake.\textsuperscript{1148} The philanthropy and benevolence of ordinary individuals would make no dent against the machinations of great powers unless leadership developed on the subject, and even then, the odds were slim. Christopher Brown notes, "Antislavery sentiment circulated in the first century of imperial expansion to an extent too often underestimated. Yet, however common, these early reservations made no practical difference when set against the far more powerful forces of inertia and interest that conspired to keep the slave system secure. As a consequence antislavery impulses would be channeled into more modest projects that looked to make slavery gentler or limits its expansion."\textsuperscript{1149} The first religion-based overtures toward slavery hoped to ameliorate and convert slaves rather than abolishing the system.\textsuperscript{1150} The Anglican Church comes in for significant condemnation, like other denominations, for its relative silence on the evils of slavery. Yet, as early as 1720s and 1730s, Anglican Church leaders had criticized slaveholders, but not for their profession; rather they were criticized for not seeing to the spiritual transformations/conversion of their captives.\textsuperscript{1151} Further, the Anglican Church did set up the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in 1701; and they established a college for colonial clergy as well.\textsuperscript{1152} Importantly, Anglican efforts were no doubt assisted by their rivalry with other evangelical and latitudinarian groups.\textsuperscript{1153} Morgan Godwyn's work in the 1680s

\textsuperscript{1148} Davis, David Brion. \textit{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 334. Davis notes "there were doubtless continuities of various kinds between traditional domestic philanthropy and the antislavery movement. But the theory that abolitionism was the natural outgrowth of a continuously swelling social consciousness fails to explain the long period when Negro slavery aroused virtually no protest, and was accepted or regarded with indifference by the most benevolent of men."


\textsuperscript{1150} Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 56-58. And of course, as we've seen and will discuss more, "Christian paternalism" gave slaveholders a rationalization for the practice.


embraces the strains of slavery on religious thought, the foundations of antislavery impulses, and the impact of rivalry.\textsuperscript{1154} Godwyn was opposed to the Quakers, but considered George Fox a friend who had directed him toward concern for slaves. Fox had given him a pamphlet noting the Church of England's refusal to minister to slaves. In this way, a good Anglican was being appropriately preached to by a lowly Quaker (or as Davis says, "this was like Judas being a spokesman for the poor.").\textsuperscript{1155} Reverend Godwyn went to Virginia in late 1667 and came back to preach and write about the need to convert slaves and treat them humanely.\textsuperscript{1156}

Anglican missionary work was actually a sign of the diverging values of colonies and the metropolis.\textsuperscript{1157} Planters had no interest in converting slaves; they saw such activity as a threat.\textsuperscript{1158} There was little danger in countering the clergy's efforts; if anything; there was much more peril in the spread of Christian ideas to the slaves and sheer power of slaves in the form of slave revolts.\textsuperscript{1159} There was a tenuous "settled peace" between missionaries and slave masters, but overall, in the late 1600s and early 1700s slaveholders won out over would-be Christian reformists pushing for conversions.\textsuperscript{1160} In truth, the planters hurt their own interests by refusing to make some ameliorations and cater to the desires of the clergy. As Brown notes "by failing to permit even modest missionary efforts, they convinced an impassioned few in the colonies and in Britain that only comprehensive reforms to West Indian society could make the promotion of

Christianity possible." They could have presented themselves as "benign paternalists," but didn't, and this helped lay the foundations for the standoff that would come, but later.1161

Evangelicals of all types – dissenters and those within the Anglican Church – had a largely similar view of the world and theology and these views have much more in common with the secular thought of the time than is often credited.1162 Evangelical thought was very much in keeping with the themes of happiness, benevolence and liberty discussed by Anstey; they assimilated these thoughts and took them to new levels.1163 Evangelicals "shook off" beliefs in predestination and came to see redemption as a slow, historical process guided by reason and Providence.1164 The concept of benevolence was for them so much more complete in its Christian form – total benevolence in the image of God – than in its secular iteration.1165 Liberty was something only attained through freedom from sin. As Anstey summarizes:

All in all, the Evangelical mind was a dynamic thing. It accepted much of the moral philosophy of the day – notably the belief in liberty as a cardinal virtue, in benevolence as the duty of men and in happiness as a proper goal. But the first the Evangelical deepened by seeing true liberty as founded only on the freedom of the sons of God, the second he saw as only erratically effective unless fortified by the Pauline conviction that 'we love because he first loved us,' and the third he believed vain if sought as an object in itself.1166

With regard to scripture, several key aspects of the Evangelical perspective shaped their views and made them commensurate with antislavery – the idea of redemption; the linkage between physical bondage and bondage to sin, and the idea of love; as Anstey notes, "once the law of love is invoked as the supreme criterion, slavery stands condemned."1167

Evangelical theology, because it incorporated faith and reason, appealed to "well-read, educated men" that would become eventual abolitionist leaders.\textsuperscript{1168} The combination of clear theological dictates and reason combined to focus Evangelical thought like a laser beam on slavery, the "most crying national sin."\textsuperscript{1169} They were involved with other reforms, but believed slavery greater than all other evils and this focus led to intensity, which would ultimately lead to sustainability and success.\textsuperscript{1170} "Thus the Evangelical came to have in abolition a focus for his response to the mercy which God had shown him, and for the payment of the debt which, as a redeemed sinner, he must discharge. All this, and a philosophy of history whose lesson was that the nation was in danger of the judgement [sic], was stamped upon the Evangelical's heart and mind and combined to make him a formidable force when he turned to political action against the slave trade."\textsuperscript{1171}

Adding to this, religious figures were much disturbed by what they saw happening in Restoration England and many looked to the more primitive societies of the world for an example of a more perfect Christian servant.\textsuperscript{1172} The slaves/savages might be ignorant of the gospel, but their untrammeled spirit might be closer to the real Christ than hypocritical Christians that knew the gospel but didn't live it every day.\textsuperscript{1173} This impulse to romanticize the slave ran parallel to developments in popular culture and literature. "Literature, mainly through the anti-slavery

\textsuperscript{1168} Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 154, 177-178; and Anstey, Roger. \textit{The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810}. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 168. One of the most powerful sub-groups of this Evangelical-turned-Abolitionist came to be known as the "Clapham Sect," because they worshipped together at Holy Trinity Church on the north side of Clapham Common, London. This group's ranks included William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, Granville Sharp, John Newton (former slave trader), James Stephen (lawyer and MP), Hannah More (author), and Zachary Macaulay (philanthropist and bookkeeper, later editor of the \textit{Christian Observer}).
implications of the noble savage theme, and through its reflection – appropriation, even – of ideas of liberty and benevolence, sharpened and extended awareness of the problem of slavery, and made its own contribution to the emergence of anti-slavery conviction\textsuperscript{1174} The increasingly prevalent images of both "noble savage" and suffering slave, or as Brown labels them, the "exemplars of wounded innocence," were vitally important.\textsuperscript{1175} Roger Anstey elaborates:

Both figures played an essential role in conditioning antislavery opinion. If the Negro was a terrifying avenger, returning blow for blow, demanding as many drops of blood as he had shed through centuries of oppression, he struck a response in one part of the white man's nature. This would be how the European should want to act if he were a slave. But if the Negro patiently accepted flagellation and torture; if he cut his own throat... rather than resist his master's unjust punishment; if he hung in a cage... appealing pathetically for water, his eyes pecked out by birds – he struck an equally important response of pity and fascination. This was, after all, the way Christians were supposed to behave. In both postures the Negro was unmistakably a sensitive man, and not a brute.\textsuperscript{1176}

The slave didn't deserve his predicament, but rather, represented innocent nature and thereby deserved the benevolent impulses of the reformer.\textsuperscript{1177} By the 1770s and 1780s, slavery and the


plight of the "noble savage" was the subject of poetry and literature.\textsuperscript{1178} "Writers as diverse as Raynal and Wesley were able to exploit a whole range of themes and conventions which portrayed the Negro slave as a man of virtue and sensitivity who was at once oppressed by the worst vices of civilization and yet capable of receiving its greatest benefits."\textsuperscript{1179} This, along with several other strands of religious and philosophical reasoning, were now weighing against the practice of slavery, at least in areas controlled by Britain.

Roger Anstey concludes "by the end of the eighteenth century, then – indeed it was substantially true by the end of the third quarter – little serious intellectual defence of slavery was any longer being offered."\textsuperscript{1180} In other words, by the 1770s and 1780s the idea that slavery was normatively appropriate had largely died off in Britain's dominion. This is critical, but still, the practice lived on and there was little indication that it would falter any time soon. Frankly, few in 1760s and early 1770s thought they could change the British government's approach to slavery; further, they were facing decentralized colonial British governments as well. Brown concludes

\textsuperscript{1178} Davis, David Brion. \textit{The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1966: 481. See particularly Rice, C. Duncan, "Literary Sources and the Revolution in British Attitude to Slavery." In \textit{Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform}, eds. Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1980: 319-332. Duncan Rice's enlightening article attempts to systematically use literary sources to help chart the process by which assumptions on slavery were inverted. Reviewing the works of authors from Daniel Defoe (Robinson Crusoe - 1719), to Jane Austen, Rice suggests "disapproval of slavery ultimately became the kind of cultural assumption which requires no evidential support, with something of the reflexive force of the taboo against incest." Rice suggests the assumptions made by Defoe's generation became less tenable as the humanity of the Negro – which Defoe himself had not denied – came to be accepted all but universally. "As an example, the most widely read novel of the 1750s to 1770s – \textit{Tristram Shandy} (1767) – showed a slave girl in a positive light. "The sentimental revolution against slavery was complete by the 1760s, as indeed was the theoretical argument against it." "By 1816, Jane Austen could assume enough of a consensus against the slave trade to use it to attract attention to the plight of governesses." Additionally, "another sign of the change was the deteriorating stereotype of the planter. At the end of the eighteenth century, he was appearing on the provincial stage as a comedy villain." By the 1850s, "every British writer could assume an anti-slavery consensus... However, it is clear that the 1850s saw the image of the Negro become cheapened, and the active abolitionist impulse weaken, in part as a factor of the emotive forms of anti-slavery enthusiasm stirred up by Harriet Beecher Stowe's visits." With regard to a review of literature, Rice concludes "it is precisely because of their casual quality that they and others like them give a sense of when it was and was not acceptable to write certain things about slavery, and where and when certain standpoints could be taken for granted. What amounts to a cultural revolution cannot be understood without using the evidence, however indirect, which is embedded in that culture's literature."


"comprehensive reform appeared politically improbable and constitutionally impossible."\textsuperscript{1181}

Legal avenues looked unlikely options for making change. Many Britons felt like freedom was a key part of their national heritage but the average citizen had a hard time picturing slaves, however noble, as equal inheritors of that freedom.\textsuperscript{1182} Clearly it was going to take a more concerted form of action – legal or political, or both – not just religious agitation, to curb slavery as an institution.\textsuperscript{1183}

Contradictions in the Law. If fissures in colonial slavery's facade of acceptability and stability were developing in the forms of Enlightenment philosophy and religious/humanitarian appeals, another critical inherent contradiction that had long been present, but hidden, was surfacing as well – that of the legality of slavery. By the mid-1500s, "chattel slavery had largely disappeared within most of the region north and west of the Alps."\textsuperscript{1184} A "freedom principle" was developing in northwest Europe, and it was particularly strong in England.\textsuperscript{1185} As English clergyman William Harrison commented in 1593, "such is the privilege of our countrey by the especiall grace of God, and bountie of our princes, that if any come hither from other realms, so soone as they set foot on land they become so free of condition as their masters."\textsuperscript{1186} The "free air" principle was strong in France as well. "By 1500, the French juridical tradition and the French courts had nationalized earlier urban freedom principles. France, too, could contain no slaves. The French jurist Jean Bodin treated it as a matter of historical record that when slaves

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{1185} Brown, Christopher Leslie. *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 46-48; and Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Brown suggests this British character of freedom was developing as early as the late 1500s and early 1600s. It was reinforced by the revolution and then by the early 1700s Parliament emerged as the protector of the populace's freedom, restraining the power of the monarchy.
\end{footnotes}
reached his country, they were free. Bodin drew a theoretical regional line between slave and free soil. ¹¹⁸⁷ ¹¹⁸⁷

The air was less free on the Iberian peninsula, although there were pockets of free zones there as well.¹¹⁸⁸ As transatlantic slavery was hitting its stride in the 16th century, the Iberians deferred primarily to scripture and Roman Law as the source of legal precedent. Via this Roman precedent, "slavery was literally woven into private law in most of Europe." Slavery persisted in the Iberian metropole, so it certainly received no legal rebuke or second thought across the Atlantic. It's no surprise then that from the 1500s through the 1700s most jurists would defer to Roman acceptance of slavery in the law via "ius gentium – the law of all peoples."¹¹⁸⁹ ¹¹⁸⁹

Like the Spanish and Portuguese, northern European countries, despite their concepts of their own superior freedom, had no problem with overseas slavery. The French drew up their Black Codes, but accepted them overseas only. In this way, "the general principle of separation between a metropole without slaves and overseas possessions governed by the ius gentium was firmly embedded in the French empire."¹¹⁹⁰ Courts were inclined to preserve the spatial and legal differences between the zone of slavery and the land of liberty. In 1716 there was a royal edict that said owners could return to France with their slaves if there was stipulation that they'd only be there temporarily.¹¹⁹¹ Again, the French were trying to maintain the distinction between continental and colonial.¹¹⁹² As some blacks found loopholes in the legal system and became

¹¹⁹¹ Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 94-97. The Dutch had a similar approach, but their colonies "produced even less of a ripple in the Netherlands." Drescher notes, "the line was drawn even more unambiguously in Denmark. In 1802, Denmark's Upper Court ruled that the 'free soil of the mother country did not confer freedom on the enslaved.'"
citizens on French soil, there was a concerted effort to build a color line between mother France and overseas possessions in order to stop blacks from "contaminating France."\textsuperscript{1193} This was the stance that was to last until the Revolution.

When Queen Elizabeth sanctioned Sir Walter Raleigh to establish laws and statutes in overseas colonies in 1584 she mandated that they were to be "agreeable to the laws of England, and be not contrary to the Christian Faith, and so as the said people remain subject to the Crown of England."\textsuperscript{1194} Of course, as Drescher points out, the concept of "agreeability" was ill-defined and not bound to give residents parliamentary representation or automatic "freedom." Thus, overseas, the freedom principle didn't apply - "out of metropole, out of mind."\textsuperscript{1195} Additionally, unlike the French, the British crown never developed a slave code.\textsuperscript{1196} Hence, the relationship between a thriving slave system overseas and a developing "freedom principle" at home was left completely unresolved. "Insofar as English jurisprudence took cognizance of slavery in America, it affirmed that the institution lay beyond the line of Britain and its common law."\textsuperscript{1197}

Still, it's not as if slavery was completely absent in Britain, no matter how popular the notion. Slave sale advertisements could be found in newspapers into the mid-1700s. Nevertheless, when judges had to rule on cases involving slaves they found it difficult to find a consistent line of precedent reasoning.\textsuperscript{1198} Various cases existed, but they were contradictory in their decisions and impact. In 1706 Lord Chief Justice Holt stated "by the common law no man can have

\textsuperscript{1193} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 94-95. As Drescher notes, years of interracial intercourse were making large numbers of individuals that didn't neatly fall in the categories contained in the French Black Codes.


property in another... there is no such thing as a slave by the laws of England." 1199 Drescher elaborates:

Holt's decision seemed as definitive as the affirmation of the 'freedom principle'... There was no slave law in England. The common law did not recognize any special status for black Africans. Nor did they fall within the purview of laws applicable to ancient villeins, or modern indentured servants... The initially clear lines began to be blurred by migration. As slaves began to move across the Atlantic, they might arrive in England as a captain's 'share' in a slaving voyage. 1200

Contradictions increasingly surfaced. Another ruling in 1729 by the Attorney and Solicitor-General suggested that a slave coming from the West Indies, with or without his master, does not become free upon arriving in Britain or Ireland. 1201 Then in 1762 the Lord Chancellor stated "as soon as a man sets foot on English ground he is free." 1202 Two key principles – defense of property and defense of personal liberties – were on collision course in British territories. 1203 From the late 1760s onward, the controversy resided mostly on the civil liberties side, as the principle of habeas corpus was increasingly debated and adjudicated. 1204

So it was that a concept of freedom developing in northwest Europe became increasingly challenged by ambiguous and contradictory laws regarding acceptance of slavery overseas. As Seymour Drescher concluded, "never before had the asymmetry between the legitimacy of the institution in one part of an empire and its illegitimacy in another been so jarringly

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In 1772, the Case of James Somerset would bring this ongoing legal paradox into full public light.

Slave James Somerset had been brought to London by his master, James Stewart. He escaped in 1771, but was captured and placed in irons on a ship on the River Thames bound for Jamaica. Granville Sharp, a philanthropist that was increasingly supporting blacks in bringing cases before the courts, assisted Somerset and his lawyers in attempts to obtain release via a writ of habeas corpus. The case was brought before England's Chief Justice, Lord Mansfield, at the Court of King's Bench. Lord Mansfield pondered the case for 7 months, from January to June 1772, and then ruled that English law did not support keeping of slave on English soil and so to discharge Somerset. The most widely published version of the verdict read:

The power of a master over his slave has been different in different countries. The state of slavery is of such a nature that it is incapable of being introduced on any reasons, moral or political, but only positive law, which preserves its force long after the reasons, occasion, and time itself from

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1205 Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 91. See also Brown, Christopher Leslie. Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 78-83. Brown's discussion shows the early contradictions in the slave system and this early attempt (1720s and 1730s) to prevent slavery from taking hold in the fledgling colony of Georgia. Trustees of the Georgia colony experiment were trying to better the British empire; they wouldn't need slave labor because they wouldn't produce staple crops... in short, the leaders were looking to a "better" form of colony than the others... the colonists themselves mostly felt quite differently, wanting to indulge in profit-making plantation activities. As Brown concludes, "the first British challenge to colonial slavery, then, arose from a dedication among certain elites in London – themselves troubled by the moral shape of their ideals and preventing those societies from evolving in a way that the majority of settlers preferred. The fight to control the direction of the Georgia experiment anticipated the conflicts between metropolitan authoritarianism and colonial autonomy that would resurface repeatedly in struggles over British slavery for a century to come." For Brown, this event is one of most critical (along with the Quaker agitation and the Somerset Case) in the early efforts to curtail slavery.


which it was created, is erased from memory. It is odious that nothing can be suffered to support it but positive law. Whatever inconveniences, therefore, may follow from a decision, I cannot say this case is allowed or disproved by the law of England, and therefore the black must be discharged.\textsuperscript{1208}

Details of the Somerset Case have been largely misunderstood, in part because scholars often reference the law report that was filed four years after the case.\textsuperscript{1209} Historian James Walvin summarizes what the decision actually established: Mansfield "ruled that the master did not have the right forcibly to re-export his slave. What Mansfield did not say was that henceforth all slaves in England were free (the most commonly repeated consequence quoted in historical studies)."\textsuperscript{1210} Similarly, Seymour Drescher concludes that Mansfield's decision dodged the issue; the "verdict eluded comprehensive judgment, but offered no judicial support for slaveholders' claims in England."\textsuperscript{1211}

The myth that this ruling henceforth established all slaves in England as free men took on an importance of its own and there were several important outcomes from the Somerset Case. First, it made Britons think that slavery had been made illegal within English territory, even though it had not and there remained slaves in England/Britain for some time to come.\textsuperscript{1212} "Newspapers ignored the nuances of the judgment to report that Mansfield has struck down slavery."\textsuperscript{1213} In fact, "the decision left the legality of slavery in England as ill defined as

before.\textsuperscript{1214} Seymour Drescher concludes that there have been scores of insightful discussions on
the legal implications of the Somerset Case, but none of them suggest it outlawed slavery in
Britain. Rather, they tend to coalesce around "a few common principles: English did not allow a
master residing in England to deport someone on the grounds that he was legally a slave in some
other region. Slavery was a variety of domination that had to be specifically sanctioned within the
laws of each legal jurisdiction... no monetary or other considerations to slaveowners could
override the absence of positive law allowing slavery.\textsuperscript{1215}

Second, the Somerset case "made these somewhat abstract issues matter in England in a
concrete way. It promoted an intensive public discussion of the rights of slaves and slaveholders
and called attention to the peculiar character of the colonial labor system."\textsuperscript{1216} Prominent
theologians, philosophers, and historians now spoke more publicly against slavery and this helped
spread the concept of antislavery to the public.\textsuperscript{1217}

Third, the idea that slavery was morally undesirable and ugly, particularly to British
character, was reinforced and strengthened. Even slavery supporters admitted after Somerset that
slavery was "repugnant to the spirit of English laws."\textsuperscript{1218} In keeping with Drescher's concept of
the "freedom principle," Christopher Brown's suggests "the Somerset case helped establish the
British Isles, in the minds of the British, as a unique asylum for liberty."\textsuperscript{1219} "The impulse to think
of England as a land of liberty gave the public interpretation of Mansfield's words a clarity the

\textsuperscript{1214} Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The
\textsuperscript{1215} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge
University Press, 2009: 101. Drescher also includes "Charles Steuart was not permitted to forcibly detain
James Somerset within England to transport him back to a place in which he was still recognized as a
slave."
\textsuperscript{1216} Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The
University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 98. And in the decision, as Brown mentions, "Lord Mansfield
went as far as to label the institution 'odious.'"
\textsuperscript{1217} Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The
\textsuperscript{1218} Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The
\textsuperscript{1219} Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The
verdict itself lacked.\textsuperscript{1220}

Finally, it sparked similar cases in Scotland.\textsuperscript{1221} "In 1778, Joseph Knight, an African-born slave who had been brought to Scotland, left his master's service."\textsuperscript{1222} Knight was captured and it was suggested he go back into service. The ultimate decision, after multiple appeals, reaffirmed the central derivative tenets of the Somerset decision: "no legal support for slavery; no deportation; no residual service obligation."\textsuperscript{1223}

Another slavery case argued and publicized by Granville Sharp followed Somerset and likely helped spread knowledge of the horrors of the slave trade.\textsuperscript{1224} The slaver Zong, a Liverpool based ship, had left West Africa heading to Jamaica with over 400 slaves in September 1781.\textsuperscript{1225} Facing a disease epidemic on board and running low on water, the captain had 133\textsuperscript{1226} slaves

\textsuperscript{1220} Brown, Christopher Leslie. Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 97; and Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 102-103. Again, in some cases, it greatly reinforced a conception of British society and law that simply did not exist in actual form. For example, Lord Advocate Henry Dundas, at a hearing before Scottish judges in 1776, claimed "there was not now a slave in Britain, nor could possibly be from its constitution." As Drescher notes, "Dundas felt no obligation to refer to the Somerset case, but to the British constitution itself as the definitive source of freedom."


\textsuperscript{1222} Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 102-103. The Knight decision: "the dominion assumed over this Negro (Knight)... Being unjust [i]t could not be supported in this country to any extent... therefore the defendant had no right to the Negro's service for any space of time; nor to send him out of the country against his consent."

\textsuperscript{1223} Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 102-103; and Walvin, James. England, Slaves and Freedom, 1776-1838. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1986: 42. The Knight decision read: "the dominion assumed over this Negro (Knight)... Being unjust [i]t could not be supported in this country to any extent... therefore the defendant had no right to the Negro's service for any space of time; nor to send him out of the country against his consent." For Walvin, despite again a limited decision on this case, at least it led to some reconsideration to black rights of Habeas Corpus.


\textsuperscript{1226} The exact number seems up for debate. Anstey (1975) suggests 132; Thomas (1997) gives a detailed account and suggests 133 slaves overboard over multiple days; Morgan (2007) claims 131.
thrown overboard. In 1783, the owners of the ship petitioned to collect insurance money for their lost human cargo. They failed to be compensated, but when Granville Sharp attempted to prosecute them for murder in the Court of Admiralty, he too failed. The Solicitor-General, John Lee, "declared that a master could drown slaves without 'a surmise of impropriety.'" Such examples of brutality had happened before, but now there were many more mechanisms through which to make them public. As Hugh Thomas states, the legal status of slaves in Britain in the last part of the eighteenth century remained confused, but "their overall social position improved, primarily because of the dramatic change in public opinion about slavery." Similarly, Walvin suggests "slaves imported into England were caught in a paradoxical position, for while public sentiment undoubtedly swung behind their cause, the law actually strengthened the hands of the slave-owners." It would take "positive law" to bring slaves full legal protection in Britain.

In the end, these cases were vitally important, but as Seymour Drescher and Christopher Leslie Brown point out, they didn't start a cohesive antislavery movement. On one hand they brought the institution to the public, and on the other they also basically left the legality of slavery

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1229 Interestingly, in the case regarding the possible payment of insurance, Lord Chief Justice Mansfield told the jury the real issue was whether the crew truly needed to throw the slaves over; with regard to the morality of throwing slaves overboard, Mansfield said "the case of slaves was the same as if horses had been thrown overboard."
in the colonies on solid ground. Clearly it would take further events to coalesce a sustainable popular campaign. Nevertheless, the ideological underpinnings continued to spread and germinate. The various strands of antislavery forces and thought were present during this period, and synergy, which had been so elusive to this point, was about to develop.

In 1769 a pamphlet written by Granville Sharp made its way to Anthony Benezet in North America. Benezet was impressed and sought to learn more about this legal enthusiast/philanthropist in Britain. In fact, the day the Somerset decision was issued Sharp received a letter from Benezet, encouraging and attempting to coordinate their activities; "that correspondence established the transatlantic networks critical to the success of the subsequent campaigns in both Britain and British America." For his part, Sharp was relieved to learn that organizing of the caliber of Benezet's publications existed, as for all he knew he was working in isolation at this point and wondered if any greater and more substantial efforts were to follow.

"Thus, on the eve of American Independence, there existed a framework of abolitionist correspondents and friends spanning the English-speaking world; a network readily transformed in later years into the massive political organisation which gave abolition such irresistible strength in the years between 1787 and 1807." As it was, it would take another ten years before this robust, coordinated action against slavery would develop in North America and Britain.

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1234 Brown, Christopher Leslie. *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 99. Of course, ultimately these links were important in Britain's success, but one could question its criticality to that success and even more so in the case of the United States, in which slavery ended only following the bloody Civil War.


Part II – Organized Antislavery in Britain

Given all these strands of antislavery thought percolating below the surface, it is no surprise that by the mid-1770s to early 1780s multiple events and forces were conspiring to push antislavery in Britain in directions from which it could not turn back. Many, if not most, prominent slavery historians assert that that American Revolution was a final, critical event in pushing a movement in Britain toward abolition. For Christopher Leslie Brown, slavery became a significant political issue and in doing so, it became fodder for an increasingly literate public.\textsuperscript{1237} In years of crisis, slavery became a talking point in making a case for or against the American cause.\textsuperscript{1238} "Revolutionary era polemic intensified metropolitan awareness of the slave system. It exposed the gulf between a national ideology premised on a distinctively British devotion to liberty and British institutions that depended on the ownership and sale of slaves."\textsuperscript{1239} In America, blame for slavery resided with imperial Britain, who had sent forth their merchants and traders to become the economic breadbasket of the nation. In contrast, for Britons, slavery was an ugly institution practiced "over there," an "American vice" propagated by uncouth and ungrateful Americans.\textsuperscript{1240} In time of war, debating slavery took on a new prominence. Brown concludes, "at some point, perhaps, the British public would have begun to debate the ethics of trading in slaves without prompting from North American propagandists. It may be that a concern with the morals of the slave trade could have arisen, eventually, by some other means. But that is not what happened." Developments in America (including attempts to ban slave imports in some colonies) and the American Revolution "originated the first sustained attention in the British Isles to the

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 114-117; 122-125. Britons, when thinking of slavery, assigned responsibility to colonials, didn't blame the state or think about all the merchants that were making money off it. Americans, conversely, deplored British moral arrogance and judging American colonials.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
problem of the Atlantic slave trade."\textsuperscript{1241} Few Europeans had considered their acceptance of slavery worthy of deep reflection as late as the early 1760s, but by the 1770s that had changed. Slavery was intertwined with the larger debate on the importance and rights of the colonies, and with this increasing dialogue and debate, also came increased introspection on the slavery subject.\textsuperscript{1242} Increasingly, slavery was becoming a custom that "troubled the conscience."\textsuperscript{1243} Further, most in Britain had thought of slavery as unfortunate, but beyond anyone's capability to change. Now increasingly, it came to be characterized as someone's fault – whether greedy planters, or the policies of government officials. Once one paints it as an outcome of choice, then there are options for making different choices.\textsuperscript{1244} Thereby, in Britain at least, by the American Revolution (and certainly after), for the first time slavery would need to be defended rather than simply being accepted as normal.\textsuperscript{1245}

Historians Linda Colley and Hugh Thomas come to similar, if slightly expanded, conclusions regarding the importance of the Revolution. For them, Britons had to come to grips with how and why Britain had lost this war. Given their perceptions of the superiority of British liberty, to lose a war like this must be the act of Providence. Britons felt they were blessed by God, but that Providence would abandon them if they did not comport themselves better. Thereby, ending slavery "was a way of reaffirming their unique commitment to liberty at a time


when war with America, and unsuccessful war at that, had called it widely into question.\footnote{Colley, Linda. Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992: 353-354. Colley's point is that after the loss of the American colonies, Britons were ready for any number of reforms, of which slavery was but one. "The loss of the American colonies also precipitated a rise in enthusiasm for parliamentary reform, for imperial reform, for religious liberalisation, for the reform of gaols [jails] and lunatic asylums: for virtually any change, in fact, that might prevent a similar national humiliation in the future."}

After the loss of the American colonies a movement ending the slave trade would be transformed into a way to rehabilitate the nation.\footnote{Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 487.} "Whereas before the loss of the American colonies opposition to the slave trade had seemed to many Britons incompatible with the national interest, however admirable it might be in moral terms, after the American war anti-slavery was increasingly seized on as a means to redeem the nation, as a patriotic act."\footnote{Colley, Linda. Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992: 354.} Therefore, many of the tracts and ideas authored and spread from the mid-1700s onward, now gained an important currency. The literate public in England learned a lot about slavery from Anthony Benezet's writings in the 1760s and 1770s, but, a still larger audience took notice once these writings were re-published in 1784, after the war.\footnote{Brown, Christopher Leslie. Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 137; and Colley, Linda. Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992: 352; and Hague, William. William Wilberforce: The Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner. London: Harper Perennial, 2008: 146.}

In contrast to these authors, Seymour Drescher feels the Revolution years were certainly important, but that other factors were more critical. For Drescher, there were three key developments that triggered tension – the ambiguity in the law (as discussed above), the concern about the number of blacks in America and its impact on security, and the growing popular public discussion of the morality/correctness of slavery.\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 113-114.} North America, according to Drescher, was the place where slavery had first become a political issue (via the agitation of Quakers and the decisions in some cases of colonies/states to end slave importations) and it would have remained so, with or without the revolution. Further, Drescher suggests the war was perhaps a setback for
abolitionists in Britain.\textsuperscript{1251} "British political abolitionism, when it emerged after the war, had lost what Sharp had so prized: the full weight of North American political support for curtailing the slave trade." Further, "the outbreak of hostilities dramatically subordinated the question of slavery to other priorities... in Britain, antislavery diminished dramatically as a salient issue during both the arrogant early war years and the despondent later war years."\textsuperscript{1252}

Historians will likely continue the debate on the relative importance of the American Revolution in furthering the antislavery movement. What seems agreeable to all is that during this period there was a great ideological movement coalescing and a moral matter was becoming political. As Davis concludes:

Most important in the long run, was the Revolution's legacy of ideology – the popularization among blacks as well as whites of a belief in individual freedom and inalienable natural rights. The period from 1765 to the early 1790s produced countless numbers of tracts, pamphlets, broadsides, sermons, speeches, and editorials that challenged the basic core of slavery: the belief that human beings could be 'animalized,' that they could be degraded to the level of chattel property. In some ways this Revolutionary ideology, epitomized by the opening lines of the Declaration of Independence, showed that the very ideas of slavery is fiction or fraud, since liberty and equality are fundamental rights that no one can legitimately lose.\textsuperscript{1253}

Still, it would take organization to transform this ideological shift into a mass appeal for practical action, to shift, as Robert Fogel says, the initiative from "mystics to rationalists, from saints to politicians."\textsuperscript{1254}

\textsuperscript{1251} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 110-112, 212-213. Drescher asserts the breakthrough wasn't because Britain was resuscitating its nation of liberty image or because it had a confidence problem... "to the extent that moral self-scrutiny became an aspect of the post-war imperial discourse, it did so in the context of revived national self-confidence..." "a survey of London's newspapers in 1786-1787 shows a nation reveling in its prosperity, security, and power." Drescher later adds: "Whatever the zeitgeist may have contributed to transforming abolitionism from a popular sentiment to a political movement in 1787, it was not any widespread notion that the British needed to snatch the role of liberty's torchbearer back from the United States. Popular abolitionism proceeded from a different premise: how could the world's most secure, free, religious, just, prosperous, and moral nation allow itself to remain the premier perpetrator of the world's most deadly, brutal, unjust, immoral offenses to humanity? How could its people, once fully informed of slavery's inhumanity, hope to continue to be blessed with peace, prosperity, and power?"


The Development of Organization

American Quakers had suffered once again during the American Revolution, and they remained committed to pressing their friends in Britain for movement on abolition. In 1778, the Philadelphia Meeting of Sufferings strongly hinted that it was time for British Friends to take national action, to which London replied "blandly."\(^{1255}\) By 1782, Philadelphia had pushed London to the point of finally taking serious action and the London Meeting of Sufferings appointed a special committee which met on the subject multiple times in the next year. American Friends persisted, and sent delegates to the London Yearly Meeting in 1783.\(^{1256}\) They put several issues before the meeting, the most lasting being a push for petitioning of Parliament. By mid-June 1783, buoyed by the fact that a bill to regulate the trade was already active in Parliament, the London Friends presented a petition before Parliament to end the slave trade on grounds of infringing on "Christianity, natural rights, and human justice."\(^{1257}\) The Prime Minster, Lord North, complimented the petitioners on their effort but remarked that all European powers needed to make use of the trade. In other words, interests trumped sentiment; the petition received no other attention and the regulation bill "passed through Parliament without further discussion."\(^{1258}\) The Quakers kept up the pressure, publishing 11,000 copies of Benezet's *The Case of the Oppressed Africans* printed and distributed to Parliamentarians and other prominent members of British society.\(^{1259}\)

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As historian J.R. Oldfield unequivocally states, "organised anti-slavery, at least on a nationwide scale, began in 1787 with the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.\textsuperscript{1260} It was the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, or, to be more precise, the Society's guiding London Committee, which set the movement on its 'modern' course, evolving a structure and organisation which made it possible to mobilise thousands of Britons across the length and breadth of the country.\textsuperscript{1261} The Society officially formed on May 22, 1787;\textsuperscript{1262} the nucleus of the group was Samuel Hoare, George Harrison, William Dillwyn, John Lloyd, and Joseph Woods, who had been connected with the Quaker committee established in 1783.\textsuperscript{1263} Nine of twelve founding members were Quakers, the exceptions being Granville Sharp, Philip Sansom, and Thomas Clarkson, a young Cambridge scholar that had become interested in the concept of the rights of man. Through his efforts to have his own tracts published, he became acquainted with publisher James Phillips and Reverend James Ramsay, forming an important core to the fledgling


Society. Granville Sharp was picked as leader, and he ensured that the Abolition Society would be open to all denominations, not Quaker dominated.

These men were of middle class origins with professions mainly in business and commerce. Sharp, Clarkson, and perhaps Phillips apart, these were not particularly radical men. As with the case of Clarkson, Phillips's publishing business and connections were the channels through which to publish and distribute materials. Joseph Woods had published *Thoughts on the Slavery of the Negroes* in 1784. Its argument to consumers: that one should weigh considerations of humanity against the price of slave products. "The claims of religion and morality ought to be subservient to those of avarice and luxury, and that is better thousands of poor unoffending people should be degraded and destroyed... than that the inhabitants of Europe should pay a higher price for their rum, rice, and sugar." The argument attempted to rectify legitimate business and commerce with an unchristian trade. If Adam Smith had said "humanity" was too much to expect from individual consumers, Woods's treatise argued just the opposite to wealthy merchants and consumers.

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Almost immediately, the debate moved to whether to go after slavery or the slave trade or both. Eventually the group decided to go after the trade (against the objections of Sharp and Ramsay), as it was the most graphic and worst part of the experience and the members felt sure that if it ended, the practice itself would follow thereafter.\textsuperscript{1272} Additionally, members pragmatically realized that going after slavery directly would be too dramatic an attack on the concept of property.\textsuperscript{1273} Samuel Hoare, even at the end, didn't think freeing the West Indie slaves was within their capability.\textsuperscript{1274} "Given the indisputable right of Parliament to regulate a trade carried on in British ships, it was the cutting-off of the supply which would be 'laying the axe at the very root'... of the institution of slavery."\textsuperscript{1275}

According to Clarkson, 'It appeared soon to be the sense of the committee, that to aim at the removal of both would be to aim at too much, that by doing this we might lose all.' Clarkson says he began by believing it didn't matter 'where they began', but on further examination, he came to believe it did matter in terms of laws and the prospects for success. By focusing on the slave trade alone, they would not incur the objection of meddling with the property of the slave owners or 'letting loose an irritated race of beings' who were 'unfit for their freedom'. Moreover, the British government had the indisputable right to regulate commerce but it was doubtful whether it could legally or effectively manage the internal affairs of colonies.\textsuperscript{1276}

The committee's inaugural resolution stated the group '"was resolved that the said Trade was both impolitick and unjust."' As Judith Jennings points out, the question wasn't whether slavery was profitable; it was. The key was that the committee was, again, intuitive enough to know that it was best served by showing the slave trade to be immoral and more, by suggesting

there were better ways to go about doing business.\textsuperscript{1277} As historian and Parliamentarian William Hague notes, "Abolishing the slave trade was not simply a matter of drawing up a Bill and asking a reliable parliamentary majority to pass it. It would be necessary to establish facts which had never been nailed down, to inform people who had never been interested in the subject, and to persuade key individuals who were highly reluctant to act: three requirements which would make the abolitionist campaign exhausting in its length, painstaking in its detail and, for its time, unique in its scope."\textsuperscript{1278}

This was a movement to bring facts of the world, heretofore often unseen by the masses, to light. After all, experience with slavery was often the key to the heart of antislavery feeling.\textsuperscript{1279} Until the 1760s the main opponents to slavery were those that had experienced it first-hand.\textsuperscript{1280} Persons with actual experience with the institution were the most powerful voices for change. "The efforts to inform would necessitate the formation of the first pressure group of the modern age, using every written, verbal and visual means to publicise their case to Parliament and the people."\textsuperscript{1281} The original strategy was to produce cheap publications (15,000 copies of each publication produced by 1788) and conduct lectures.\textsuperscript{1282} They also developed subscription lists; as historian J.R. Oldfield states, that "social emulation was a factor in the mobilisation of public opinion against the slave trade should not surprise us.... the subscription list of August 1788 ran to nearly 2,000 names, a level of support that gave the early abolitionist movement credibility as


\textsuperscript{1279} Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 41. For example, naval surgeon John Atkins spoke out against the slave trade in 1730s after returning from visits to the coast of Africa and the West Indies.


well as respectability. Further, "cheap disposable literature, subscription lists: these were the tactics of men who understood about the market and about consumer choice. These were effective businessmen, developing an effective organization and campaign. The Society continued to add new and diverse members, like Josiah Wedgewood, who ended up designing the "Am I Not a Brother..." medallion (Figure 4.1), which along with the image of the slave ship Brookes (Figure 4.2), would become the iconic symbols of the campaign.

Figure 4.1. "Am I Not a Man and A Brother" Medallion

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The movement developed quickly in 1787 and 1788, receiving support from a wide range of men with different religious and political ideas. The effort received verbal and financial support from all over. Abolitionism held an appeal for men committed to reforms of various kinds – nonconformists, men of science, intellectuals, new businessmen, etc. – these formed the nucleus of abolitionism. "Between 1788 and 1792 the slave trade became a matter of

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absorbing interest to thousands of Britons. The response surprised even abolitionists.¹²⁹¹ Britons were more mobile and better informed than ever before.¹²⁹² By 1800, 60-70 percent of adult males and 40 percent of women in England and Wales could read.¹²⁹³ "By 1760 there were thirty-five country newspapers in England alone; two decades later this number had risen to fifty."¹²⁹⁴ "In short, the eighteenth century witnessed a narrowing of the gap between London and the provinces."¹²⁹⁵ "These different trends – a rapidly expanding middle class, consumerism, better communications, the growth of compassion and sensitivity – made organised anti-slavery, in the shape of the early abolitionist movement, possible."¹²⁹⁶ "Abolition succeeded in bringing together different elements from within the middle classes: dissenters, Evangelicals, radicals, patriots, men, women, and children."¹²⁹⁷ Among the many dissenters that flocked to the movement, Methodists were particularly important.¹²⁹⁸ John Wesley's *Thoughts Upon Slavery* (1774) had been particularly influential, both because he was one of the first religious leaders to speak out against the trade and because he was essentially conservative; Wesley "believed that the proper way to reform society was by transforming the will of the individual."¹²⁹⁹ Methodists had influence with the urban artisans and working class, preaching "abstinence, hard work, and thrift to the lower classes... in Methodism the Puritan ideal

¹²⁹⁶ Oldfield, J.R. *Popular Politics and British Anti-Slavery: The Mobilisation of Public Opinion Against the Slave Trade 1787 – 1807*. New York, NY: Manchester University Press, 1995: 32. Oldfield's conclusion is that it was this development of a middle class in Britain that was key to the timing and impact of the abolition campaign.
was reborn without its political radicalism."\textsuperscript{1300} Including Anglican Evangelicals in this burgeoning, broad, diverse abolition movement was an "even more strategic" and effective move. This group included a bloc in Parliament that cut across party lines, including William Wilberforce, friend of the Prime Minister. As Robert Fogel notes, "here, then, was a combination of parliamentary and extraparliamentary forces that could appeal to centrist politicians striving to gain the reins of power or to maintain them."\textsuperscript{1301}

William Wilberforce first met Thomas Clarkson in 1787.\textsuperscript{1302} The quintessential Evangelical Angican, Wilberforce, fresh from his own spiritual transformation, was anxious to work for social reform, with vice and the slave trade at the top of his list. In coordination with Clarkson, Wilberforce signed on to be the abolitionist representative to the House of Commons.\textsuperscript{1303} Wilberforce was urged to bring the issue of the slave trade forward by Prime Minister Pitt (his close friend) and Lord Grenville.\textsuperscript{1304} Wilberforce was perfect for the role; he was a man of "wealth, ability and charm."\textsuperscript{1305} According to William Hague, whichever person "was to lead this campaign needed to be an eloquent and experienced parliament performer, to have strong convictions consistent with denouncing the slave trade and slavery, to be sufficiently free of ministerial ambition and party affiliations as to be able to win support from all parts of the

Commons, and yet be sufficiently well connected in ministerial circles to have a chance of influencing the government.″

The heart of the abolition movement was the establishment of provincial abolition committees. As J.R. Oldfield's excellent book effectively illustrates, "the earliest committees were set up to orchestrate the petition campaign of 1788. Typically, these committees assumed the task of collecting subscriptions and managing the petitions, which usually meant seeing to it that they were made available for signing and, ultimately, that they reached local MPs in time to be presented to the House of Commons.″ In the beginning, many activists perhaps naively thought the process would be brief, but once they figured out that effecting abolition would be a long struggle, they turned to building more permanent committees like that of Manchester.

"The country committees played an indispensable role in creating an anti-slavery consensus and, just as important, they provided the London Committee with a firm organisational base. Not least of their achievements was their success in raising funds.″ By the end of the year, the movement had networks in Manchester, Bristol, Sheffield, and Leeds – over thirty towns. Manchester's commitment was particularly valuable as, being an industrial town itself, it undercut any perceived dualism between morality and sound, pragmatic commerce policy.

The main reasoning behind local committees was to create petitions to Parliament; as mentioned, this was a normal political activity, but it had gained strength in the latter part of the

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1700s. Petitions to Parliament tended to come in one of three forms: petitions from universities, guilds, presbyteries, and provincial church committees (this was about 20 percent); petitions from counties (in 1788 and 1792 these numbers were fairly small), and petitions from towns and boroughs. "Typically, with county and town petitions the petitioning process began with a requisition from local citizens to the sheriff (county) or mayor (town) to hold an appropriate meeting." Petition meetings usually then turned into resolutions that were then printed in the local press. Newspaper coverage was important in these early stages, it allowed abolitionists to reach a large public, and frankly, during this period most local committees did not apparently coordinate with each other. "Once a meeting had agreed on the form of a petition it was left open for signature, usually at the town hall or exchange. Sometimes petitions were also left in coffee houses and local inns." The whole process might take only a matter of weeks.

In some cases, local committees started almost by accident, but a significant number also started through the work of Clarkson, who traveled the country gathering evidence and witnesses for Parliament in 1787 and 1788. One forgets that there was relatively little published about the practice at the time. Clarkson was looking to discover alternatives to the slave trade with

Africa, so that abolitionists could suggest alternative policies that didn't impinge on the country's wealth.1321

To this point, this study has suggested ways in which the Abolition Society worked to change opinion inside Britain. Historian J.R. Oldfield notes that an "aspect of the opinion-building activities of the London Committee that deserves closer attention was its attempt to create an international movement or coalition against the slave trade. One of the charges most commonly levelled [sic] against supporters of abolition was that it was impolitic; put simply, abolition of the slave trade would allow Britain's competitors to seize her share of the trade and profit accordingly."1322 Not surprisingly, British abolitionist ties with the former colonies were strong.1323 "The real challenge for abolitionists, however, was how to influence the course of events in Europe. France, Britain's greatest commercial rival, figured largely in these calculations – many would-be supporters of abolition thought it impossible to proceed without French cooperation."1324 A few weeks after starting the Society, Phillips had contact with Brissot de Warville in France, and they discussed establishing a committee there as well.1325 In 1788, British abolitionists helped found the Société des Amis des Noirs in France.1326 "Despite appearances, however, the Amis des Noirs bore very little resemblance to its English cousin, either in terms of personnel or public support."1327 It had a weak organizational structure, and as would become

apparent, many of its founding members were soon to be tied up with the destabilizing events of the French Revolution.  

The First Petition Campaign – 1787-1788

Petitioning was an old method of "seeking redress" which had taken on a new power during the last half of the 1700s. The growth of cities, the spread of literacy, the development of newspapers, and improvements in transportation led to the involvement of sections of the middle classes in political conflicts that heretofore had been limited to a few hundred powerful households. Petitions had already been used to some effect by Wilkite Agitators in the 1760s, the Yorkshire Association campaign in the 1780s, and of course the Quakers in 1783. The Wilkite movement was a turning point. John Wilkes, MP and newspaper editor launched an attack on the King's Prime Minister. He was arrested for seditious libel and this sparked demonstrations among the literate public in London. Coffee houses emerged as a place where issues could be debated, and hence, in "this new public which was substantial enough to strike down the warrant against Wilkes, release him from prison, and return him to Parliament, thus emerged a political force with which the Establishment had to reckon." The Wilkes affair demonstrated that politics was no longer confined to Parliament and that campaigns mounted

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outside of Parliament could influence the course of struggles within it." 1333 Of course, to some politicians in the British Establishment, "the rise of extra-parliamentary politics was deplorable, but it became an important feature of the struggle for power in Britain during the late eighteenth century. Opposition politicians within the Establishment had used it to come to power in the 1760s and early 1780s. By then it was clear that no government could stay in power if this form of politics was abandoned to the opposition. 1334 As Walvin notes, petitions had "political clout," and the abolitionist campaigners would take this political device to altogether new level. 1335

The abolition petition campaign of 1787-1788 marked the first nation-wide petition campaign of its kind. 1336 The London Abolition Committee was the movement headquarters, 1337 while Manchester exhibited some of the most passionate support. 1338 "The decision to call for petitions elicited a quite staggering – and totally unforeseen – level of abolitionist sentiment. By the end of May 1788 Parliament had received more than 100 petitions. The original petition from Manchester attracted an extraordinary 10,639 signatures. 1339 "Like the printed word, the abolitionist petition was to remain fundamental to the abolitionist cause for a half a century. It was to remain, despite the changes in political representation, the best – most effective, flexible and manageable – means of expressing public opinion to Parliament. 1340 It should be made clear from the outset, that the inhumane nature of the slave trade was the overwhelming focus of the

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1338 Walvin, James. England, Slaves and Freedom, 1776-1838. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1986: 110. Historians have gone back and forth regarding which committee was the greater force – London or Manchester. Walvin is a particular backer of Manchester, but most historians recognize Manchester's fervor and importance, while accepting London's centrality, direction, and control.
petitions. As Seymour Drescher illuminates, the first petition campaign was clearly focused on issues of "humanity, religion, and justice... less than 5 percent of those petitions to come added any promise of economic advantage." A conservative estimate suggests about 60,000 individuals signed the abolition petitions of 1788.

The startling response of the first wave of petitions put the slave trade on the political agenda. "The London Abolition Committee understood the importance of direct contact with Parliamentary Members," but also realized that they had to avoid appearing to "force" public opinion; Wilberforce was weary of appearing radical and they wanted to also show themselves to be representing the spontaneous outpourings of true British public opinion. In February 1788, the Prime Minister invoked intense popular interest as reason to launch a privy council investigation into the slave trade, marking abolition's transformation into a political issue. In May 1788, Pitt moved to put the issue of the slave trade before the Commons, taking the place of Wilberforce, who was ill. According to Cobbett's Parliamentary History, on May 9, 1788 Mr. Pitt "rose for the purpose of moving a resolution relative to the Slave Trade – a subject which, it was evident from the great number and variety of petitions engaged the public attention to a very considerable extent, and consequently deserved the most serious notice of that House." Pitt stated that based on petitions, there appeared to be two public positions on the trade – some

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wanted it stopped; others wanted it better regulated. He suggested they shouldn't discuss in detail that day, so late in Parliament's session, but announced that the issue would be brought forward early in the next session "in order to enable them to proceed to a decision founded on principles of humanity, justice, and sound policy."\(^{1349}\) Pitt was supported by his opposition, Mr. Fox, and by Edmund Burke, who said of Parliament, "if that House neglected the petitions of its constituents, that House must be abolished."\(^{1350}\)

On May 24, 1787 Clarkson presented evidence of exactly how the slave trade was inhumane and "impolitick."\(^{1351}\) Clarkson had gathered volumes of evidence on the injustice and inhumanity of the trade; but before turning to those, it should be noted that Clarkson also realized that it would be helpful to make a case regarding the ways ending the trade may not significantly hurt British commerce. He methodically and strategically showed that there were other goods in Africa better in which to trade,\(^{1352}\) that ending the traffic would save the lives of seamen, encourage cheap markets, open new markets to goods, eliminate a wasteful drain of capital, and inspire planters to maintain a self-sustaining labor force.\(^{1353}\) The focus of his argument wasn't that planters and traders weren't making money, and certainly not that the country wasn't making


\(^{1351}\) Clarkson, Thomas. *An Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade*. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971 Reprint (First published 1788). Clarkson's evidence and arguments, based on his tour of the country, was published in 1788 and hence that primary document serves as the foundation of his arguments illuminated here. As this study continues to review the evidence put before Parliament over the twenty years after 1788, it should become clear that the evidence — both the moral and the material — that Clarkson found and produced during this period remained the crux of the arguments throughout.

\(^{1352}\) Clarkson, Thomas. *An Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade*. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971 Reprint (First published 1788): 4-7. For example, Clarkson began by asserting "it must surely be the highest impolicy that such a country... should be scarcely known but as a mart for human blood." He suggested that Africa could provide a profitable trade in "gums, wax, ambergris, honey, ivory, and gold;" and "woods."

money through the trade,\(^{1354}\) but rather, that the former could make more money, easier, by adopting practices that led to a natural rate of reproduction;\(^{1355}\) the latter could make as much, or more money, engaging in trade of a different commodity.\(^{1356}\) He also argued that other countries would follow suit if Britain ended her trade.\(^{1357}\) In short, in keeping with lessons learned from the previous chapter, Clarkson wasn't explicitly arguing that the slave trade didn't make participants

\(^{1354}\) Clarkson, Thomas. *An Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade*. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971 Reprint (First published 1788): 132. Clarkson never suggested Britain didn't profit from the trade. He suggested that there were more savory alternatives that could make just as much, or more, profit, and in that way, it was "no emolument to the nation." With regard to individuals, he hinted that there were less risky and less costly ways to make profit. His single reference to the lack of profitability of the trade for individual investors – a premise he failed to prove – was in summation: "It has appeared, that the slave trade, considered abstractedly by itself, is of no emolument to the nation; that it is unprofitable, on the whole, to individuals; and that it is the grave of our seamen, destroying more of them in one year, than all the other trades of Great Britain, when put together, destroy in two. It has appeared, on the other hand, that the trade which might be substituted for it in the natural productions of Africa, if considered in the same light, would, by affording an inexhaustible mine of wealth to our dyers and artificers in wood, by enabling us to break the monopoly of the Dutch in spices, by repaying us for the loss of America, and by becoming the cheapest market for all sorts of raw materials for our manufacturers, be of great national advantage."

\(^{1355}\) Clarkson, Thomas. *An Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade*. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971 Reprint (First published 1788): 91-93. Clarkson wrote, "The first effect, which the abolition of the slave trade must have upon the unfeeling planters described, would be, that their execrable calculations would be stopped. No new generations of men would be then to be had, as before. They must immediately change their plan. They must breed. They must find that resource within themselves, which their avarice has taught them to reject; and they must immediately turn a system of calculated oppression, and murder, into that of lenity, tenderness, and preservation." Slave masters would be forced to treat their charges more humanely, in order to develop a natural reproduction rate. "The effect, which the abolition of the slave trade must have on this second cause, would be this. Every care and attention would be paid to the rearing of the new generation. Convenient rooms would be built on each estate for the accommodation of the women in the last stage of their pregnancy... A third cause of the diminution of slaves in the colonies is the very scanty allowance of provision, which is given them on many plantations... A fourth is the incessant and intolerable labour which they are often obliged to undergo... A fifth cause is cruel and severe usage, such as the constant application of the lash, confinement, torture, and other barbarous treatment, whether for real or imaginary faults."

\(^{1356}\) Clarkson, Thomas. *An Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade*. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971 Reprint (First published 1788): 23-25. Clarkson referred to the Royal African Company, noting that it was invested with great powers and still failed twice. Clarkson suggested that the best way to measure a business venture was to determine its risk, speed of returns, and profitability; he concluded that the slave trade was full of competition, hazardous, and that the round trip took too much time to obtain returns.

\(^{1357}\) Clarkson, Thomas. *An Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade*. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971 Reprint (First published 1788): 129. With regard to whether rivals, such as France, would take up Britain's share if she abolished the trade, Clarkson firmly asserted they would not. Firstly, they were developing their own abolition society; "Secondly, because if no such humane motives impelled the French, as are discoverable among them, they would hardly give us the credit of abolishing the slave trade, however we might deserve it, upon the principle of humanity. They are well aware that nations are guided by motives, that are termed political; that if we were to put a stop to the trade, it would be probably from the consideration of its impolicy; and that if it were politic in us to abolish it, it would be equally so in them."
money, but that as yet undeveloped/underdeveloped trade in other commodities might do better, or at least not any worse. There were volumes of evidence (including eyewitness evidence – this will be discussed in more detail in the coverage of the 1791-1792 campaign) about the inhumanity of the trade; in fact, this was the crux of the argument, but Clarkson also wanted to show that if inhumanity demanded abolition, sound policy also supported abolition. He concluded:

I think it is evident, upon a mature consideration of both, unless a person willfully shuts his eyes, that the slave trade is (as I undertook to shew [show] in the introductory chapter) as impolitick as it is inhuman and unjust. For when we consider that this trade, by destroying our marine, is not only a political evil in itself, but that it hinders the introduction of one, to which if it compared in point of individual or national emolument, it would be like an island to a continent, or a river to a sea; and that it prevents the existence of those important advantages both to the colonies and this kingdom that have been described above; we may safely say, that whatever arguments the moralist is able to collect from the light of reason, or the man of humanity from his feelings, the statesman is able to collect others from the source of policy, that call equally aloud for its ABOLITION.1358

"The first abolition campaign caught allies of the slave interest by surprise. They were stunned by the speed and breadth of the national mobilization. The slave interest was as dismayed by the adhesion to prelates, universities, and other corporate communities as by the large popular base."1359 Frankly, they too knew in the late 1780s and early 1790s that public opinion was swinging against the slave trade. As Drescher notes, "published appeals against the new abolition movement almost always acknowledged that their own 'side has scarce found a single defender."1360 Stephen Fuller, the Colonial Agent for Jamaica, frankly stated in January 1788 "'the stream of popularity runs against us... but I trust nevertheless that common-sense is with us, and that wicked as we are when compared with the abolishers, the wisdom and policy of this country will protect us.' In other words, it was almost universally recognized that the public was repulsed by the slave trade, but he was confident interests and prudence would keep the slave trade alive despite the normative movement against it.

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The abolitionist opposition largely withheld comment in this early debate, understanding that the real battle would come in the 1789 session.\footnote{1361} Still, the anti-abolitionist interests made effective use of the delay tactics (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6).\footnote{1362} This first significant abolitionist foray into Parliamentary politics resulted in the Dolben Act of 1788. This measure, passed right before Parliament let out, was the first to legally restrict the number of slaves that could be carried based on the tonnage of the vessels; it limited five slaves for every three tons up to 200 tons and 1 slave for each ton after. Additionally, it mandated that a surgeon be on board to keep a log of illness.\footnote{1363}

Beyond the Dolben Act, the efforts of the abolitionists (particularly Clarkson) dramatically improved Parliament's (and the public's) understanding of the trade.\footnote{1364} The nature of a previously little thought of, little understood practice was being brought increasingly into light. Parliament was being informed, if not perhaps prepared to move on, the subject of the slave trade. Meanwhile, by 1787-1788, "if the question could have been decided by public opinion, the slave trade would have been abolished at once."\footnote{1365} Years of slow trickles of anti-slave trade information, public legal cases like Somerset, and the increasingly public discussion due to the American Revolution, was now forcefully supported by nation-wide provincial abolition committees, petition campaigns, and Parliamentary debates publicized in the British media.

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\begin{enumerate}
\item Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 160. This was a key first regulatory step (although a similar statute had been passed for Portuguese ships in 1783).
\end{enumerate}
Wilberforce recovered from his illness and went back to work on the issue in late 1788. Wilberforce and Clarkson prepared more witnesses and a resolution for abolition, in anticipation of the release of the Privy Council report. The report was published April 25, 1789 and Wilberforce put an abolition motion forward on 12 May 1789. Yet, the May 12 and May 21 debates were, as Anstey calls them, "non-events." The case was not argued, but shelved, because it was decided that the Commons must hear testimony on the matter, despite the fact that the Privy Council had put forth a lengthy finding. Again, the West Indian interest adroitly delayed movement on the issue; "the aptness of some of their opponents obstruction... and the length of time taken... were such that the substantive motion was unable to be put until April 1791." In the mean time, witnesses were brought before the select committee of the House of Commons; a few pro-slavery witnesses were brought forth to argue for the continuation of the slave trade and to defend the character of colonial slavery, mostly in 1789 and 1790. Then approximately sixty witnesses were brought forward between 1790 and 1791 to provide evidence on the nature of transatlantic slavery. Their eyewitness accounts focused on how slaves were obtained in Africa (focusing on both African theft of Africans and European theft of Africans), the methods of confinement and the horror of the middle passage, the nature of slave labor, and the hardships and punishments slaves encountered in every aspect of their lives.

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1366 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 270. The London Committee had been prepared to call a general meeting to put pressure on Parliament but relented once Wilberforce sent them a letter saying a national meeting, versus local meetings, might appear subversive and thus hurt the cause.


1371 *Abstract of the Evidence Delivered Before a Select Committee of the House of Commons in the Years 1790 and 1791*. Cincinnati, OH: American Reform Tract and Book Society, 1855. A review of the evidence suggests it was strikingly similar, not surprisingly, to the arguments put forward by Clarkson in 1788-1789.

witnesses also briefly discussed the quality character of Africans and how much they detested slavery. Finally, the witnesses offered some evidence of interest-based arguments against the trade – other potential products that could be traded from Africa and of how treacherous the trade was for seamen. One can see that these witnesses match the arguments put forth by Clarkson (not surprising given that he recruited them and based his arguments on their accounts). These accounts were the foundation of abolitionist arguments before Parliament for twenty years. The totality of these witnesses' testimony, unaltered other than to categorize them, was printed in 1791 (and reprinted in 1855). Table 4.1 shows the general chapter subjects; Figure 4.3 shows the relative weight of the arguments – humanitarian versus interest-based – as determined by page numbers.

The day(s) of debate finally arrived on April 18-19, 1791. A relatively detailed review of Wilberforce's arguments is worth including here, for several reasons. First, this debate shows the full culmination and summary representation of the arguments that had been put forward to date, and second, because it should clearly show the humanitarian/normative focus of the complete abolitionist argument. This is an incomplete rundown of the entire speech (which ran nearly 15 pages/30 columns), but the intent is to show the flow, focus, and highlights of the argument.

April 18, 1791: Mr. Wilberforce rose and commenced his presentation. Not surprisingly, and nonetheless effectively, Wilberforce's points followed closely the arguments developed by Thomas Clarkson and the evidence put forth by the eyewitnesses before the House select committee in 1790-91. He suggested that by arguing "point by point" it would "appear by demonstration, that all those propositions, and all the pledges, which he had given to the House, would be made good, and that the slave trade would be found to be contrary to every principle of religion, morality, and sound policy."\(^{1373}\)

Table 4.1. Categories of Evidence Presented to the House of Commons, 1790 and 1791

| Abstract of the Evidence Delivered Before a Select Committee of the House of Commons,  
| In the Years 1790 and 1791,  
| On the Part of the Petitioners for the Abolition of the Slave Trade |

Ch 1 – Manner of Making Slaves From the River Senegal to the River Ambris

Ch 2 – Europeans Frequently Steal and Carry Off Natives

Ch 3 – The Middle Passage/Methods of Confining, Feeding, and Exercising Slaves

Ch 4 – The Labor of Slaves

Ch 5 – Africans Equal in Capacity, Feeling, etc. to Europeans

Ch 6 – Products of Africa

Ch 7 – Spirit of the Africans

Ch 8 – Whether the Trade is a Grave for Seamen

Ch 9 – Barbarous Usage of Seamen in Slave Ships

Ch 10 – African's Detestation of Slavery

His first point regarded the way slaves were captured. Like any good lawyer would, he recounted the testimonies of witnesses: "On the arrival of the slave ships, armed parties were regularly sent out in the evening, who scoured the neighbouring country, and brought in their prey in the night; these wretched victims were to be seen in the morning bound back to back in huts on the shore, whence they were conveyed, tied hand and foot, on board the slave ships." He told a graphic story of the treachery of English traders.

When general Rooke commanded in his majesty's settlement at Gorée, some of the subjects of a neighbouring king, with whom he was on terms of amity, came to pay him a friendly visit; there were from 100 to 150 of them, men, women, and children; all was gaiety and merriment; it was a

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1374 Abstract of the Evidence Delivered Before a Select Committee of the House of Commons in the Years 1790 and 1791. Cincinnati, OH: American Reform Tract and Book Society, 1855. Note that the chapters were not officially labeled, but these heading represent the general subject contained in these pages.


scene to gladden the saddest, and to soften the hardest heart: but a slave captain, ever faithful to the interests of his employers, is not so soon thrown off his guard; with what astonishment would the committee hear, that, in the midst of this festivity, it was proposed to general Rooke to seize the whole of this unsuspecting multitude, hurry them on board the ships, and carry them off to the West Indies... If, in the annals of human wickedness, an instance of fouler treachery were to be found he was happy to be ignorant of it.\textsuperscript{1377}

Wilberforce continued with the recounting of evidence, and then strategically asserted that slavers that remained waiting on the coast could of course say they had little part in obtaining the slaves, and that "it seemed to be an acknowledged maxim in the logic of Africa, that every person who offered a slave for sale, had a right to sell him. However fraudulent the manner might be in which the broker had obtained the slave, if they paid him a just price for him, it was a perfectly fair transaction."\textsuperscript{1378}

Wilberforce then referred to the witnesses that had testified that without slave trade intervention, these people were in fact, if not advanced and civilized, not savages. "One witness spoke of the acuteness of their capacities; another of the extent of their memory; a third of their genius for commerce; others of their good workmanship in gold, iron, and leather... several mentioned, in high terms, their peaceable and gentle dispositions... Were these, then, a people incapable of complete civilization?"\textsuperscript{1379}

Before turning to the discussion of the impolicy of the slave trade, he reminded everyone that the central argument was, and should be, its injustice and inhumanity:

He was aware, that, an opinion had gone forth, that the measure of abolition would be attended with inevitable ruin the West Indian islands. He trusted he should be able to prove that the direct contrary was the truth; but this he must say, was more than any one had a right to require. For his own part, he confessed, that, considering the miseries this trade entailed on Africa, his liberty of choice was take from him; he must at all events determine for the abolition; but surely no man, however free he might deem himself to decide on grounds of expediency, would require more at his hand than that he should show that the measure would not prove absolutely ruinous to the West Indies. No petty, no dubious interest would, by any one, be stated as a sufficient plea to justify the extensive and certain evils he enumerated.\textsuperscript{1380}

Still, he would argue for the impolicy of the trade:

He would not detain the committee for a moment, in arguing against the bringing of new lands into cultivation, by fresh importation of African slaves: for even apart from every consideration of justice and humanity, the impolicy of the measure was indisputable. Let the committee consider the dreadful mortality that attended the opening of the new lands; let them look to the evidence of Mr. Woolrich, and there see a contrast drawn between the slow, perhaps, but sure, progress of cultivation, carried on in the natural way and the attempt to force improvements, which, however flattering the prospect might appear at the outset, soon produced a load of debt and inextricable embarrassments. \(^\text{1381}\)

Wilberforce continued:

...the ground on which were bottomed all the objections of those who maintained the contrary opinion, he apprehended to be this, that the stock of slaves now in the islands, could not be kept up by propagation, but that it was necessary from time to time, to recruit them with imported Africans. In direct refutation of this position, he should prove first, that in the condition and

treatment of the negroes there were causes sufficient for us to expect a considerable decrease; secondly, that this decrease was, in fact, very trifling, or rather, he believed, it had actually ceased; and thirdly, he should urge many direct and collateral facts and arguments, constituting on the whole, an irresistible proof that even a rapid increase might henceforth be expected.\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 259-260.}

Wilberforce then discussed the horrible manner in which slaves were treated:

Above all, the state of degradation to which the slaves were reduced, deserved to be noticed, and from which the worst consequences resulted in a thousand ways, both to their own comfort and to their masters interests. Of this there could not be a more striking proof than the utter inattention to them as moral agents. It was not merely that they were worked under the whip like cattle: but no attempts were ever made to instruct them in the principles of religion and morality... the gentlemen who said they could point out nothing defective in the treatment of slaves, had frankly confessed that their morals were utterly neglected, and that the best consequences might be expected to result from their being attended to; and how could it be but so, when as was declared by these very same gentlemen, promiscuous intercourse, early prostitution, and excessive indulgence in spirituous liquors were materials causes of their decrease?\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 260-261.}

Wilberforce then suggested that instructing slaves in religion pays dividends, and he provided examples. Clearly, he suggested, absentee ownership was a problem (that could be resolved),\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 265-266.} and he argued against slaves being better treated than Englishmen or that they were happier in slavery than at home.\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 265-266.} Then Wilberforce turned to arguments of why, if the trade was ended, slaves could be expected to increase.\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 265-266.} His basic argument was that the more amelioration made by owners post-abolition of the trade, the higher the reproduction rate would become.\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 270-271.}

At this point, Wilberforce turned to arguments that he hoped would suggest that ending the slave trade would not be harmful to Britain's interests. He turned to the effect of the trade on the marine, referring to the loss figures provided by Clarkson.\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 271-272.} He then turned to the effect of abolition on Liverpool and Bristol. Of Liverpool, he said "Long might she be rich and flourishing,
provided it was by fair and honest gains! but it was not by this detestable traffic that she had risen to her present opulence;" without slavery, the ingenuity and industrious of British capital would "command new markets."\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 271-272.}

With regard to the discussion of whether slavery should just be regulated, or ended, he argued that regulation wasn't enough because slaves couldn't bring issue with their masters. "Can you suggest any mode by which the master can be brought to punishment, even if he should give the slave ever so great a number of lashes in a short space of time..." he replied, "I can devise none, while the evidence of slaves continues inadmissible against their masters."\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 273-274.}

Arguing against regulations as an appropriate solution, he suggested to do half measures would be dangerous: "The first return of life, after a swoon, was commonly a convulsion, dangerous at once to the party himself and to all around him. Such, in the case of slaves, might be the consequence of a sudden communication of the consciousness of civil rights. This was a feeling it would be dangerous to impart, till you should release them from such humiliating and ignominious distinctions, as, with that consciousness they would never endure. You must conduct them to the situation in question, having first prepared them for it, and not bring the situation to them."\footnote{Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 274.}

Wilberforce again returned to the crux of his argument – the humanitarian imperative. He said, "When gentlemen coolly talked of putting an end to the slave trade, through the medium of West India legislatures, and of gradual abolition, by the means of regulations, they surely forgot the continent of Africa, and the miseries which this horrid traffic occasioned there, during every
moment of its continuance." Driving his point home, he asserted the slave trade's incoherence with the laws of God:

This consideration was conclusive on his conduct, when called on to decide, whether the slave trade should be tolerated for a while, or immediately put an end to? The divine law against murder was absolute and unqualified, and precluded every consideration of expediency. Whilst we were ignorant of all these things, our suffering them to continue, might be pardoned; but now, when our eyes are opened, can we tolerate them for a moment, unless we are ready at once to determine that gain shall be our god, and, like heathens of old, are prepared to offer up human victims at the shrine of our idolatry.\textsuperscript{1393}

This was a powerful argument, couched well, that again showed that morality and justice were the fulcrum of the abolitionist argument. He then moved to whether the void in the trade would be taken up by other nations; his opinion being that they would not: "if their eyes were opened to the evils he would expect them to move, too."\textsuperscript{1394} Further...

...it became Great Britain, in every view, to take a forward part... As we had been great in our crime, let us be early in our repentance. If the bounty of Providence had showered its blessings on us in unparalleled abundance, let us show ourselves grateful for the blessings we enjoyed, by rendering them subservient to those purposes for which they were intended. There would be a day of retribution, wherein we should have to give an account of all those talents and faculties and opportunities with which we had been entrusted.\textsuperscript{1395}

Notice the inclusion of Providence, retribution, and repentance in Wilberforce's weighty argument. Clearly, this was a man arguing based on the logic of the great philosophers and the religious figures of preceding eras. Their thoughts became manifest in his crusade against the slave trade.

Returning to interest, "He doubted whether it was not almost an act of unbecoming condescension to stoop to discuss the question in the view of commercial interest. On this ground, however, he was no less strong than on every other."\textsuperscript{1396} He discussed the abundance of other goods in which an African trade could develop (a la Clark son's arguments). Wilberforce did not


\textsuperscript{1394} Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXIX (22 March 1791 to 13 December 1792). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 276-278.


stay long on this line of logic before returning to his central focus — justice and humanity —
concluding as Cobbett summarizes:

Interested as he might be supposed to be in the final event of the question, he was comparatively indifferent as to the present decision of the House. Whatever they might do, the people of Great Britain, he was confident, would abolish the slave trade, when, as would now soon happen, its injustice and cruelty should be fairly laid before them. It was a nest of serpents, which would never have endured so long, but for the darkness in which they lay hid. The light of day would now be let in on them, and they would vanish from the sight. For himself, he declared that he was engaged in a work he never would abandon. The consciousness of the justice of his cause would carry him forward, though he were alone... Let us not, he said, despair, it is a blessed cause, and success, ere long, will crown our exertions. Already we have gained one victory; we have obtained, for these poor creatures, the recognition of their human nature, which, for a while, was most shamefully denied. This is the first fruits of our efforts; let us persevere, and our triumph will be complete. Never, never will we desist till we have wiped away this scandal from the Christian name, released ourselves from the load of guilt, under which we at present labour, and extinguished every trace of this bloody traffic, of which our posterity, looking back to the history of these enlightened times, will scarce believe that it has been suffered to exist so long a disgrace and dishonour to this country."\(^{1397}\)

Wilberforce then moved for abolition of the slave trade.

On April 19, 1791, the abolition bill was defeated 88 to 163.\(^{1398}\) It seems apparent that by 1791, the House of Commons was becoming aware that public opinion (expressed through petitions) favored abolition. Nonetheless, even if a large number of parliamentarians were by this period convinced of the inhumanity of the trade,\(^{1399}\) a majority still needed to be convinced that the trade's abolition would not catastrophically impact Britain's interests, particularly with revolution overseas and potential war on the horizon. As one backbencher summarized: "the leaders, it was true were for the abolition; but the minor orators, the pygmies, would, he trusted,

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carry this day the question against them. The property of the West Indians was at stake."

Interestingly, evidence suggests there was less effort toward public opinion/petitions during these months between 1789 and 1791. Perhaps abolitionists expected victory and/or felt they had established the idea that the trade was barbaric; all that was left was for parliament to take action. Either way, Anstey concludes that during these months "the abolition campaign was clearly running out of steam, nothing significant being done to sustain it during this period." With the defeat, the abolitionists were at a turning point. They had made their first foray into a popular/political abolition campaign and had failed; now they would concentrate more forcefully on an even more powerful popular campaign.

The Second Campaign

The London Abolition Committee (LAC) met on April 26, 1791; Wilberforce called for a second, larger petition campaign. Despite the defeat in Commons, LAC met weekly from May, and fortnightly June to August 1791. Once again, Thomas Clarkson toured England and William Dickson was sent to Scotland. Some members even launched a campaign to abstain

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from using West Indian sugar, which Wilberforce and others thought too radical.\textsuperscript{1407} Although ineffective as far as economically "strangling the West Indies," the abstention campaign symbolically showed the depth of popular opinion.\textsuperscript{1408}

The petition campaign started anew in February 1792.\textsuperscript{1409} Support, donations, and petition-signing were again very strong, and interestingly, women became an increasingly important source of passion for the cause.\textsuperscript{1410} The press was largely supporting abolition, and some sources even publicized and supported the sugar boycott.\textsuperscript{1411} "The organizers were clearly less worried about too little popular enthusiasm for abolition than too much. Their most important concern was actually the danger to their own popular mobilization from linkage with other or more radical programs."\textsuperscript{1412} The London Committee wanted to ensure that petitioners were "respectable" sources – local government and churches for example – which sometimes meant women and illiterate labourers were excluded from signing.\textsuperscript{1413} This seems sad or inappropriate now, but it was to prove important at the time. In 1792, pro-slave trade Parliamentarians would


\textsuperscript{1408} Oldfield, J.R. \textit{Popular Politics and British Anti-Slavery: The Mobilisation of Public Opinion Against the Slave Trade 1787 – 1807}. New York, NY: Manchester University Press, 1995: 58; and Jennings, Judith. \textit{The Business of Abolishing the British Slave Trade: 1783-1807}. Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1997: 69. From Jennings: "according to Clarkson's estimates, by the winter of 1791-1792 as many as 300,000 persons across Great Britain were refusing to buy West Indian sugar and rum.


\textsuperscript{1410} Jennings, Judith. \textit{The Business of Abolishing the British Slave Trade: 1783-1807}. Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1997: 70-71. Many historians go to great lengths to show the importance of women's support to the cause and the impact that they made. Time and space prohibit further discussion here, but this was indeed an interesting, important, and remarkable aspect of the campaign.

\textsuperscript{1411} Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 236. This press support was much to the chagrin of the West Indian interest.


challenge the validity of petitions from commoners. Others went further, questioning the authority and competence of the inhabitants of small market towns... to dictate to our Parliament what is proper to done in this affair. Manchester, in particular, was coming to be seen as increasingly radical, and they had produced 20,000 petition signatures. Nonetheless, "the popular response to the great campaign of 1791-1792 indicates that the abolitionists received almost unlimited support within the contemporary boundaries of legitimate signers."

Provincial leaders were warned "to steer the potential petition committees away from any discussion of policy except the most general idea that 'what is unjust must be impolitick.' This is important, because it suggests that campaigners were committed to the main "justice and humanity" argument, and perhaps, that they realized that on pure policy the best they could do was to convince parliamentarians in general terms that abolition was not a detriment to interests (rather than attempting to prove something they likely couldn't – that abolishing the trade was clearly in the best interest of British commerce). Further, leaders worked petitions strategically, timing them to excite attention at key times but not flare out before they could bring about maximum effect in Parliament. "Many of the petitions prepared in 1792 seem to have reached Parliament within a fortnight, creating intense pressure at the grass-roots level, particularly during

1416 Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 274; and Oldfield, J.R. Popular Politics and British Anti-Slavery: The Mobilisation of Public Opinion Against the Slave Trade 1787 – 1807. New York, NY: Manchester University Press, 1995: 113. "As a correspondent in the Gentleman's Magazine put it in 1792: 'A petition from Manchester, or such places, or from a county at large, may be supposed to be formed by gentlemen who are competent to judge; but are men, who never read more than the provincial paper, and whose sumnum bonum is getting drunk at an ale-house, are they fit people to decide on the existence of our Western possessions?"
the later stages of the campaign.\textsuperscript{1420} Although some Parliamentarians were threatened by it, the 1792 petition campaign showed that activists could mobilize British public opinion on a large scale.\textsuperscript{1421} Abolitionists had "transformed petitioning into the central instrument of extra-parliamentary politics."\textsuperscript{1422}

The immense efforts paid dividends. By the end of March 1792, 519 petitions were presented to the House of Commons.\textsuperscript{1423} This was the "the largest number ever submitted to the House on a single subject or in a single session."\textsuperscript{1424} These petitions contained upwards of 400,000 signatures.\textsuperscript{1425} "In some parts of the country, between a quarter and a third of the adult male population petitioned for abolition, with Manchester's proportion reaching nearly 50 percent."\textsuperscript{1426} Overall, 1 out of every 11 adults signed these petitions.\textsuperscript{1427} It was noted that given the state of electoral policy at the time, "Parliament had been elected by fewer people than had signed the petitions. The petitions revealed the remarkable demand for reform."\textsuperscript{1428} All told, between 1787 and 1792, 1.5 million petitions were signed out of 12 million people (1/6 total


population). These campaigns are important because they are one of the only ways to judge British public opinion at the time, and as Seymour Drescher notes, "a table loaded with petitions indicated that the whole people of England felt a legitimate grievance."

It had been made clear to the House of Commons by this point, that popular opinion (expressed through petitions) was fully in favor of abolition. This popular campaign had achieved impressive results as far as mobilization and expression of public opinion, but it did not ultimately achieve, in this period, the total success desired. In April 1792, "the House of Commons voted for gradual abolition by a vote of 230 to 85, and for an immediate end to the British slave trade to foreign colonies." By a far smaller margin, the House of Commons voted to set the date of total abolition at 1796. The House of Lords, however, wanted to hear its own evidence. The motion to gradually abolish slavery by 1796 was shot down in the upper House. Despite falling short, one must see this period as a critical time, which achieved important results and demonstrated that ideas regarding the slave trade had changed in the public's mind, and were taking effect in Parliament as well. As Roger Anstey concludes: "Even from the perspective of the time there were grounds for encouragement: no serious attempt was any longer being made to defend the slave trade in principle." This is critical, because it suggests that even in the minds of parliamentarians, the slave trade itself was now considered

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aborrent, or at least undesirable, to nearly everyone. The House of Commons had said as much through its declaration in favor of gradual abolition. Yet, there was still more to do.

The Threat of Radicalism

The power of the popular abolitionist campaign had reached its highest peak to-date in 1792, but a narrow "window" for action was closing. "Within months, the abolitionist tide receded both in Parliament and in the country." The waging of a people's movement had been popular to the masses, but threatening to the establishment. Further, even as the fervor was growing, events were brewing overseas that would dampen the campaign. By April 1791, even as the Commons was preparing to hear the report of the Select Committee on the Slave Trade, news started coming in about slave insurrection in Saint-Domingue. Events in Revolutionary France added to the angst. As J.R. Oldfield states, a growing threat to abolition "came from events over which the Committee[s] had no control, namely, the French Revolution and the slave rebellion in Santo Domingo [Saint-Domingue]. The rising tide of revolutionary violence caused widespread panic among the propertied classes during 1791-92, so much so that the London Committee had to proceed with great caution." The events of the Revolution in France, added to stories of slave rebellion from the West Indies, made an effective one-two punch against the campaign. For

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1438 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 274. The present author concludes that in this period there was a transition to the ability of the masses to participate in politics, and hence, for the elites that had dominated for years/centuries, to now have an avenue for popular participation was a threat. I don't see this so much as a class issue, although the elites were certainly from the upper class, as it is a popular participation issue. Certainly there was the potential for growing class divide, and this was something with which elites had to potentially contend, but again, the focus should be more on the ability of the masses to associate, speak freely, and thereby, influence the elites; it should not, in my opinion, be on the exact class make-up of those that did speak.

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the government and people alike, there was due cause for concern – events were sending "ripples of fear throughout the Atlantic world."\(^{1441}\)

In 1791, as the debates over slavery were taking place, the outcome of Saint-Domingue was still in doubt and so its effect on parliamentary debates went only so far; but clearly all of these events were of increasing importance, would be used in argument against abolition, and so again, the window was closing.\(^{1442}\) Even as petitions peaked in early 1792, "the counterabolitionist strategy broadened to conflate abolitionism, not only with slave emancipation, but with every potential threat to public order, foreign and domestic."\(^{1443}\) The British press noted that the French National Assembly gave Wilberforce honorary citizenship – which was, increasingly, a kiss of death, and so as Robert W. Fogel notes, "even Wilberforce, staunch conservative, defender of private property, and close friend of the prime minister, was accused of Jacobin sympathies."\(^{1444}\) "Suddenly," noted Thomas Clarkson, "many looked upon the abolitionists as monsters... the current was turned against us."\(^{1445}\) As Walvin states, "the simple truth of the matter was that by early 1792 abolition had firmly lodged itself within Parliament. This was due primarily to the massive public campaign of recent years and to Wilberforce's single minded nagging in Ministers and MPs at Westminster."\(^{1446}\) But, "popular tactics had to be abandoned after the outbreak of war with France in 1793. The widespread revulsion against the excesses of the French Revolution and the patriotic fervor tended to tar all public campaigns."\(^{1447}\)

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"Nothing resembling the great popular agitation of 1792 was repeated before the passage of slave trade abolition acts in 1806-1807."  

Wilberforce introduced measures in 1797, 1798, 1799, and 1802; sometimes, even given the continued war with France, these measures came close to success. Still, the only concrete measures taken against the slave trade during this period came in the form of regulatory measures – the Act of 1797 and Slave Carrying Bill of 1799 – which specified the number of slaves that could be carried based on carrying capacity. In 1804, Wilberforce's abolition motion passed in the Commons, but failed in Lords. It was reintroduced in 1805 in Commons, but was defeated. There were signs that by 1804-1805, fear of radicalism had died down and antislavery was no longer associated with Jacobism or other threatening ideologies. In fact, Napoleon had reintroduced the slave trade in 1802 and hence, "support for abolition could almost bear the colour of patriotism." With fear of external/internal threats subsided, the time had come for a final push.

The Final Push, 1805-1807

In 1805, the London Abolition Committee decided to start popular mobilization again, but in a very strategic manner – confining its tactics to localized appeals. Still, the West Indian interests noticed the increase in propaganda and began their own counter-mobilization once

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again. Then, in 1806, a rather startling development occurred that would re-open the path to total abolition – Prime Minister Pitt's unexpected death. In early 1806, the Fox-Grenville Ministry, known as the "Ministry of Talents," turned to a partial abolition tactic that they suspected would work. On March 31, 1806, Attorney General Sir Arthur Piggott put a bill forward that would prevent the slave trade to possessions of foreign powers. Piggott argued that the bill was in the national interest, saying it "was one in which humanity and sound policy were united." This bill passed on May 1, 1806, reducing a significant portion of the total slave trade (between a third and a half). The Prime Minister of

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1459 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 368-369; and Hansard's Parliamentary Debates. House of Commons Debate 31 March 1806 vol 6 cc598-9; available at [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1806/mar/31/slave-importation-bill](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1806/mar/31/slave-importation-bill). In fact, as will be discussed in the Bureaucratic-Politics chapter, Fox was the only person to speak significantly of this being a humanitarian effort.
the coalition government, Lord Grenville presented the bill to the Lords on May 7, 1806.\textsuperscript{1461} Lord Grenville argued forcefully that this measure was in the best interests of the country.\textsuperscript{1462} When the bill came up for its third and final reading on May 16, 1806, Grenville extended his argument, suggesting that it was a matter of humanity and justice as well, and that there was no reason to disguise that fact (as the opposition had charged). He stated:

> His lordship said that this bill had been represented as abolition in disguise. Were this true, he should be glad indeed, not of the disguise, but of the abolition. It would be an event most grateful to his feelings to witness the abolition of a traffic that was an outrage to humanity, and that trampled on the rights of mankind. But he could see no reason for disguise, on such a subject. He had heard of fraud in disguise, of injustice and oppression in disguise; but justice and humanity required no disguise.\textsuperscript{1463}

The bill passed the House of Lords, 43 for, 18 against.\textsuperscript{1464}

Once the trade to foreign possessions was abolished, attention turned toward total abolition.\textsuperscript{1465} Lord Grenville had urged waiting until after the general election to go after the total abolition of the slave trade. Thereby, public pressure could be brought to bear to get contested ministers' abolition support or opposition on record.\textsuperscript{1466} \textquote{Total abolition in 1807 would have to rely primarily on the original abolitionist arguments grounded on justice sound policy, and


humanity.’ This required another appeal to society.” The election concluded, the critical
debates came in January-February 1807. Lord Grenville introduced the bill in the House of Lords
on January 2, 1807, and critical debates took place between 5 and 10 February. Grenville
recounted arguments of humanity and justice that had been put forth for twenty years. The start of
Grenville's speech is worth re-telling at some length:

I hope I shall be excused by your lordships if I should feel myself obliged, in some instances, to
tread over the same ground which has become so familiar to you in the course of a discussion
which has lasted for 20 years. After the investigation this subject has already undergone, it is
scarcely possible to avoid repeating, in some instances, the same arguments to which we have so
long been accustomed. I will, however, my lords, proceed to the discussion without further
introduction, and, in the first place, to state that argument which is the principal foundation of this
measure, namely, justice. This measure rests upon justice, and calls imperatively upon your
lordships for your approbation and support. Had it been, my lords, merely a question of humanity,
I am ready to admit that it might then have become a consideration with your lordships as to how
far you would extend or circumscribe that humanity. Had it been simply a question involving the
interests or welfare of the British empire in the West Indies, it would then certainly have been a
question with your lordships how far and in what respect you should legislate. But in this instance
I contend, that justice imperiously calls upon your lordships to abolish the Slave Trade. I have
heard some opinions urged to the effect as if justice could contain opposite and contradictory
tenets. Justice, my lords, is one, uniform and immutable. Is it to be endured that the profits
obtained by robbery are to be urged as an argument for the continuance of robbery? Justice is still
the same, and you are called upon by this measure not only to do justice to the oppressed and
injured natives of Africa, but also to your own planters; to interpose between the planters of your
own islands and their otherwise certain ruin and destruction. You are called upon to do justice to
your own planters in spite of their prejudices and their fears, and to prevent them by this measure
from meeting that destruction which is otherwise certain and inevitable.—Was it, therefore, a trade
which was in itself lovely and amiable, instead of being, as it is, wicked, criminal, and detestable,
that you were now called upon to abolish, this would be an unanswerable argument for its
abolition, that its continuance must produce the ruin of our planters. But, my lords, when it is
considered that this trade is the most criminal that any country can be engaged in; when it is
considered how much guilt has been incurred in carrying it on, in tearing the unhappy Africans by
thousands and tens of thousands, from their families, their friends, their connections, and their
social ties, and dooming them to a life of slavery and misery, and after incurring all this guilt, that
the continuance of the criminal traffic must end in the ruin of the planters in your islands, who
vainly expect profit from it, surely there can be no doubt that this detestable trade ought at once to
be abolished.1468

After debate, the vote favored abolition 72 for, 28 against.1469 The House of Lords sent a message
to the House of Commons on February 10, 1807, letting them know that an abolition bill was to

1468 Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords Debate 05 February, 1807, vol 8 cc657-58;
1469 Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810. Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
be passed.\textsuperscript{1470} The critical debate in the House of Commons came on February 23\textsuperscript{rd}, and at that point the mood of the Commons was ripe for passage – abolition was approved 283 for, 16 against.\textsuperscript{1471} “After both the Commons and the Lords agreed to an abolition of the slave trade, George III consented to the bill becoming law. On 1 May 1807 the bill became an Act of Parliament and the British slave trade had officially ended.”\textsuperscript{1472}

General Gascoyne, pro-slavery minister of Liverpool concluded:

The Church, the theatre, the press, had laboured to create a prejudice against the slave trade... The attempts to make a popular clamour against the trade were never so conspicuous as during the last election, when the public newspapers teemed with abuse of the trade, and when promises were required from different candidates that they would oppose its continuance. There has never been any question agitated since that of Parliamentary reform, in which so much industry had been exerted to raise a popular clamour and to make the trade an object of universal detestation. In every manufacturing town and borough in the kingdom all those arts had been tried.\textsuperscript{1473}

As Seymour Drescher notes, "it would be difficult to identify a more anguished register of the weight of public opinion in favor of abolition in the winter of 1807."\textsuperscript{1474}

After Abolition – the Swing Toward International Abolition

In the lead-up to, and then in the years after Britain's abolition, an interesting transformation occurred with regard to British popular opinion on the subject; Britain had gone from the forefront of the anti-slave trade campaign, to a war-torn country looking for stability and security in the face of radicalism, and then back out in front of the abolitionist campaign.\textsuperscript{1475}

Linda Colley asserts "freeing the slaves made large numbers of Britons feel important, benign and


above all, patrons and possessors of liberty," and further, "anti-slavery supplied the British with an epic stage upon which they could strut in an overwhelmingly attractive guise."\textsuperscript{1476} The period from the Treaty of Amiens in 1802, to the Congress of Vienna in 1815 was a turning point – the key powers had been poised to expand their systems and in fact they did the opposite. By 1808 the British were exercising naval and diplomatic pressure against the slave trade. These efforts will be discussed in much greater detail in later chapters, but by the summer of 1814 the British public had again showed itself fully behind efforts to end the trade internationally. After Napoleon's defeat (recall that Napoleon had re-introduced the trade/slavery after it had been abolished in the Revolutionary era) Lord Castlereagh came to the Commons with the Treaty of Paris in hand and Wilberforce protested against the "Additional Article" that allowed the French to remain engaged in the trade for 5 years. Another popular campaign was launched and the outcome was resounding – a total of 1,370 petitions reached Parliament (between a fifth and a third of all those eligible to sign, did so, out of a country with 4 million males over the age of 16).\textsuperscript{1477} This campaign "launched Britain into a long-term international, moral, and political campaign against the transatlantic slave trade. It was a pioneering development in the link being forged between the terms of public discourse and the mobilization of public opinion."\textsuperscript{1478}

Lord Castlereagh's evaluation: "the nation is bent upon this object. I believe that there is hardly a village that has not met and petitioned."\textsuperscript{1479} Lord Wellington admitted he wasn't aware how strong the feeling in the country was, but that he found it foolish to go to war over the trade.\textsuperscript{1480} "The great popular mobilization of 1814 shocked the British government into making

\textsuperscript{1476} Colley, Linda. \textit{Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837}. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992: 359-360. She adds, "acknowledging that this was so does not detract from what was achieved."


abolitionism a foreign policy priority.\textsuperscript{1481} The Congress of Vienna issued a joint declaration that the slave trade 'desolated Africa, degraded Europe and afflicted humanity' and should be ended.\textsuperscript{1482} In 1814, the Edinburgh Review called Britain "the public... before whose tribunal the conduct of courts and nations is best canvassed."\textsuperscript{1483}

Britain had arrived at a decision point, it could be satisfied at its own success in ending its trade and leave the rest of the world to catch up to its "moral superiority" on its own, or it could now spend millions of pounds to force abolition on others. British public opinion, at least during this period, demanded the latter course. Britain would work, at great cost to itself, to end the slave trade in other countries.\textsuperscript{1484} Meanwhile, abolitionists had always assumed that once the trade was abolished, slavery would die within British territories soon thereafter. Reality proved rather different.

\textbf{Emancipation}

The years following the passage of total abolition and the defeat of France were not conducive to revival of abolitionist activity. Politics was dominated by the Tories, who were resistant to social change, and there was the typical post-war recession which led to more radicalism, keeping "antislavery off the main political agenda" as Kenneth Morgan puts it.\textsuperscript{1485}

\textsuperscript{1484} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 233. Drescher concludes, "the moral premise that had dominated British abolitionist discourse was endlessly reiterated by the British government... Humanitarian and economic motives clearly overlapped once the British had abolished their own slave trade... the British could have dispensed with the costs of abolition to both their taxpayers and planters. By simply suspending their own act in 1814, pending international agreement, their new tropical colonies in both hemispheres could easily have sustained and improved the British Empire's position in the slave plantation complex. Of course, the British government's theoretical option to use, or even threaten to use, such an alternative was foreclosed by British civil society."
Still, abolitionists pushed for ameliorative measures at the end of the Napoleonic wars, particularly registration of slaves (which would allow them to monitor illegal imports and treatment) started pushing for registration at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The colonies again resisted and obstructed these efforts, and they continued to spark friction with missionaries. Missionary reports sent back to Britain suggested planters were a corrupt class that would resist the best interests of slaves in order to maintain their own narrow interests; yet, like planter-missionary friction before, missionaries would ultimately have to "make their peace" with the planters and co-exist. Still, in Robert W. Fogel's opinion, missionary work "may have been the most important stimulus to the popular campaign for emancipation which began in 1823." The reasons for his assertion will become evident.

By 1822, abolitionists old and new were figuring out that end of the trade wasn't producing the results expected – a withering away of slavery as an institution. It was time to return to their tried and true methods; the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery (popularly known as the London Antislavery Committee) was formed in 1823, with Thomas Fowell Buxton as the main parliamentary leader, replacing an aging William Wilberforce. The ultimate aim of the group was emancipation, but the initial goal was improving conditions through regulation – the end of corporal punishment, no labor on Sundays,

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1488 Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 219; and Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 252-253. There seems to be a difference of opinion on the relative forcefulness of reports coming back from missionaries. Fogel seems to stress continued condemnation, but Drescher stresses their silence. For him, their most effective tactic was to convert and educate slaves, who would take action for themselves as will be discussed. Drescher concludes, "the most significant innovation provided by religious activity beyond Britain was the public space opened up by missionary activity among slaves."
legal redress for slaves, opportunity for manumission, and religious instruction to slaves.¹⁴⁹¹
Within seven years, seeing that gradualism wasn't working, the Society would call for immediate
emancipation.¹⁴⁹²

The cycle was familiar: "propaganda and popular petition campaigns followed by
abolitionist motions in Parliament, which elicited governmental responses mediating between
abolitionist demands and the colonial masters' protests of hardship. The cycle would commence
with another round of popular agitation."¹⁴⁹³ The committee was more broadly based than ever
before.¹⁴⁹⁴ Women had always been active and important, but they took on new importance in this
campaign. They were crucial to the petition campaign; the legitimacy of their signatures was still
sometimes challenged, but in 1820s and 1830s a massive amount of women's signatures appeared
on petitions. There was an abstention campaign once again, and this time, activists boycotted
cotton too. As Drescher asserts, "British abolitionists continued to set the standard for what
constituted the 'weight' of mass opinion in 1823, 1831, 1833, and 1837-1838. They continued to
set the records in terms of numbers of petitions, signatures and, above all, in their ability to
overwhelm counterpetitions."¹⁴⁹⁵

The emancipation movement of 1820s and 1830s was also in some ways more religiously
based, at least with respect to the distinction of denominations. Earlier campaigns developed in
town halls and meetings, but the latter campaign was segmented: "the drift toward
denominationalism became apparent in the first great petition for 'immediate' emancipation in
1830-1831, when the Methodists and Baptists organized the drives for signatures within their own

¹⁴⁹¹ Fogel, Robert William. _Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery._ New
¹⁴⁹⁴ Fogel, Robert William. _Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery._ New
congregational units."\textsuperscript{1496} Nonconformists were critical; "seventy percent of the 5,500 documents reaching Parliament originated in nonconformist congregations."\textsuperscript{1497} The Methodists, for example, had the signatures of 90 percent of their membership on petitions.\textsuperscript{1498}

Drescher states boldly that "the nation's newspapers universally acknowledged that public opinion had spoken definitively at each stage in the dismantling process."\textsuperscript{1499} The changes in the British public's concept of slavery were marked at each turn, by this formulation, by the changes that they forced on the institution and ultimately its demise. One of the clearest signs that British public opinion had forcefully swung into the antislavery camp was their reaction to slave insurrections. For most of history, abolitionists feared rebellions, expecting news of them to hurt the cause.\textsuperscript{1500} In 1791, the Haiti rebellion had provoked mass fear and condemnation of the slaves. In 1823, the reaction was quite different.

On August 18, 1823, slaves in Demerara (numbering approximately 77,000 to 5,000 whites) launched a rebellion. They were aware that Thomas Fowell Buxton was pushing for emancipation, but that amelioration was the best that could be achieved at that time and even this was not being implemented. The conspirators worked out of a chapel and used their positions within Missionary John Smith's organization to communicate and make their plans. The launching of the conspiracy was a direct result of the colony's governor not publicizing amelioration measures. "Both in planning and in action the rebels talked of presenting their grievances to the governor." Once they launched their campaign, they showed themselves uninterested in radicalism or brutality. The rebels disarmed and incarcerated their masters, seized

\textsuperscript{1500} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 254. Drescher notes "Bloody uprisings on ships had little place in abolitionist propaganda... before the 1820s, slave uprisings usually placed British abolitionists very much on the defensive."
plantations, and committed no atrocities; only a couple of white planters died (a startling figure
given the disparity in numbers and in comparison to other slave insurrections to this point).\textsuperscript{1501} As

Drescher describes it:

The exemplary moment of the Demerara uprising was most evident at the crisis point of
confrontation. Five hundred advancing British troops and mobilized auxiliaries came face to face
with, and were surrounded by, 3,000 to 4,000 slaves. They were asked by the commanding officer
about their grievances. The responses ranged from demands for time off to attend Sunday services
to clarification about rumours that they had been freed. Jack Gladstone, one of the slave
organizers, handed the British colonel a document signed by captured managers and masters
testifying to their good treatment. Colonel Leahy responded by reading the governor's formal
declaration of martial law. He ordered the rebels to lay down their arms and return to work. After a
long, silent standoff, the British troops opened fire. Their disciplined barrage broke the deadlock.
Then began the process of suppression. On-site round ups of slave leaders and summary
executions were followed by formal, but equally summary trials and, in later stages, by more
formal trials of the slave leadership.\textsuperscript{1502}

The story was much-publicized in Britain.\textsuperscript{1503} The pro-slavery lobby accused the agitators
of being traitors. Their attacks had little effect, as the real story was the way the largely peaceful
insurrection was suppressed. Authorities had once again resorted to the tactic of teaching slaves a
lesson so they'd never try insurrection again; "this included exemplary executions of individuals
chosen at random, decapitating them, and placing their heads on poles along the roads."\textsuperscript{1504} The
planters also reacted by attacking white missionaries; "even the established Anglican Church in
Demerara was vandalized and its minister pressured into giving up his position."\textsuperscript{1505}

The slaves' use of the "language of liberation" carried weight across the Atlantic.\textsuperscript{1506} The

\textit{Edinburgh Review} asserted that the slave "commotion" far more resembled "a combination of
European workmen to strike for wages for time or other indulgence than a rebellion of African
slaves. Even an officer active in the repression duly testified that: some wanted three days and

\textsuperscript{1501} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge
\textsuperscript{1502} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge
\textsuperscript{1503} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge
\textsuperscript{1504} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge
\textsuperscript{1505} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge
\textsuperscript{1506} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge
Sunday for church.\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 258-259.} Clearly, there was no massacre because the slaves were looking for dialogue. The *Christian Observer* said of the insurrection: "Let us suppose that the miners of Cornwall, or the iron-workers of Wales, or the keel men of the Tyne, or the weavers of Lancashire had conceived themselves whether justly or not to have been aggrieved by their masters... had struck work... and... had even gone the length of threatening violence... Would it be tolerated that these men should be forthwith attacked by a military force, killed in cold blood by hundreds, hunted down like wild beasts, tried and executed by scores as traitors?"\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 259.}


The emancipation movement was clearly heating up in the late 1820s, and this can only be fully comprehended if one understands the other changes that were happening at the time.\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 220.} This was an age of reform. Taxes and tariffs were lowered, international trade restrictions eased, the Combination Acts (which prevented unions) were repealed, and criminal law reformed (to remove some capital offenses).\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 220-221.} In 1828, Parliament repealed the Test and Corporation Acts.
(which prevented Catholics and Nonconformists from holding public office).\textsuperscript{1514} In 1829, Parliament passed the Catholic Relief Act, which gave Catholics more rights, including the right to sit in Parliament, and kept Britain and Ireland together.\textsuperscript{1515} All these reforms were forced by the politicization of the masses.\textsuperscript{1516} The country faced recession from 1829 to 1832, which was a significant catalyst for lower class agitation. Trade union numbers shot up; there were food riots and strikes.\textsuperscript{1517}

By 1830, the conservative Tories were in disarray. The Whigs won the general election, driving the Tories from power and foreshadowing the possibility of more reform to come.\textsuperscript{1518} Abolitionists increased their pressure vigorously from 1830-1833.\textsuperscript{1519} There was record mass petitioning in 1830-1831 (more than 5000 petitions) and a national lecture campaign. The emancipation campaign's fervor intermingled with the call for parliamentary reform (increasing the enfranchisement) and so many MPs had pledged their support in the lead up to the 1830 general election.\textsuperscript{1520}

The movement for emancipation was then assisted (again, a historical paradox) by the insurrection in Jamaica 1831 – popularly know as the "Baptist War."\textsuperscript{1521} Samuel Sharpe had long contemplated an orderly and peaceful rebellion, entailing work stoppages mainly. The

\begin{itemize}
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insurrection was launched in December 1831, and lasted until January 1832. Sharpe had planned for an orderly campaign, but the rebellion was so large (about 60,000 slaves joined) and decentralized to be fully controlled. Property damage was severe (worth about £1.3 million all told), but only 14 whites were killed (impressive for the size of the campaign). Seymour Drescher summarizes:

This pattern of slave behavior in the British colonies suggests that the looters and burners were aware that a metropolitan public that had massively petitioned in favor of immediate abolition a few months earlier would weigh any massacre of whites into the equation of the slaves' 'readiness' for freedom. An insurrection of Haitian proportions might well have delayed the emancipation process... Once again the rebels were far exceeded in brutality by their successors. More than 300 slaves were summarily tried and executed. Planter assaults on the missionaries also reached new heights... Churches were burned and Wesleyans and Baptists were forced to leave Jamaica.  

The severity of the repercussions on white religious leaders (and to black demonstrators) once again shocked the nation. Abolitionists invoked these insurrections as "cycles of violence" that needed immediate redress. In other words, movement leaders argued that the brutality of slavery and the planters' refusal to ameliorate conditions, even when mandated to, meant that these insurrections would continue. When they did occur, slaves behaved more favorably and in the spirit of "Britishness" than the authorities. "By 1832... British public opinion was so primed for continuous agitation that abolitionists could turn planter vengeance into fuel for liberation."  

Moving in parallel, the Reform Act became law in June 1832. There was a change in representation – re-lining of boroughs, a decrease in the amount required for property qualification (one had to have so much wealth to be able to vote – after reform it became £10) –

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and this led to a doubling of contested constituencies (this will be discussed more in later chapters).¹⁵²⁷ “The Reform Act of 1832 represented a fundamental concession to popular sovereignty, which became increasingly important over the subsequent decades.”¹⁵²⁸

With the high priority Reform Act passed, emancipation was back on the agenda.¹⁵²⁹ Sparked by the Baptist War, abolitionists became more militant in 1832 and 1833. Churches of all stripes were united in their call for emancipation.¹⁵³⁰ Activists once again turned their attention to pledging politicians to emancipation for the upcoming 1832 election.¹⁵³¹ “Never had antislavery been so broadly debated. Upwards of 200 pledged candidates were elected, about 95 percent of them liberals.”¹⁵³² Petition numbers skyrocketed – there were between 1.3 and 1.5 million pro-emancipation on signatures petitions to Parliament in 1833.¹⁵³³ Thomas Fowell Buxton was asked to draw up a plan for emancipation.¹⁵³⁴ His plan was announced to the Commons in May 1833, and months of debate ensued.¹⁵³⁵ A compromise was reached on July 5, 1833.¹⁵³⁶ The King signed the bill on August 28, 1833 and emancipation became operative on August 1, 1834.¹⁵³⁷

The Final Emancipation Act stipulated that all slaves would be freed without constraints after serving a period of 4 to 6 years in what would come to be termed apprenticeships. Slave masters would receive financial compensation of £20 million pounds (a staggering sum for the period). "The revenue to ensure that a compensation fund was to come from higher sugar duties and a virtual monopoly for British colonial sugar in Britain." Apprenticeship was never as effective or as humane as it was supposed to be, and so activists agitated again to try to ameliorate these conditions. It took five years, but on August 1, 1838, apprenticeship was abolished.

The long struggle had produced a rather unprecedented result: on a single day in 1834, between 750,000 and 800,000 slaves were "freed." It had not been a smooth course; "turbulence there was, but" as Seymour Drescher concludes, "it was the modern kind of contention – downed tools and strikes... Henceforth, as far as the world was concerned, Britain and her former Atlantic slave colonies were a zone of free soil and free labor. They had been made so by the ordinary legislative processes of the West's most stable polity."

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1538 Morgan, Kenneth. *Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 190. Emancipation stipulated all slaves under 6 were free and others would spend time as apprentices before freedom. The Apprenticeship was to be overseen by 132 magistrates.


1540 Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 264. Drescher says, "In other words, civil liberty was to come at the expense of limited free labor for the ex-slaves, increased prices for consumers, and higher taxes for metropolitans."


the act was met with enthusiasm and patriotic fervor.\textsuperscript{1545} In the rest of the world in the succeeding decades, the "impression of the British process remained very potent."\textsuperscript{1546}

**Figure 4.4. A Graphic Snapshot of British Popular Abolitionism**

**Conclusion**

This chapter suggests that a series of ideological, normative factors converged over time to produce the highly effective and organized British popular abolition and emancipation campaigns. Ideas (benevolence, Providence, liberty, rights of man, theology), actors (Quakers, fledgling abolitionists, parliamentarians), and events (American Revolution, war with Napoleon) developed in such a way that popular opinion in Britain, once the world's leading slave state,


pushed the government to first abolish the trade, then to emancipate the slaves, and then finally to force similar conditions on other countries.

**Figure 4.5. British Abolitionism's "Norm Cycle"**

Recalling Martha Finnemore's and Kathryn Sikkink's theoretical model, an emerging norm tends to go through three stages – "norm emergence," "norm cascade," and ultimately, "norm internalization." The critical characteristic of the first stage is "norm entrepreneurs," normally operating through organizational platforms, attempting to persuade a critical mass to accept a new norm.1547 Norm entrepreneurs spread and popularize ideas until, typically, a "tipping point" occurs that leads to the second stage – "norm cascade" – as more and more people (including key leaders) are socialized to accept the new norm.1548 Then comes Stage 3, "internalization," a time in which "norms acquire a taken-for-granted quality and are no longer a matter of broad public debate."1549

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The extended history contained in this chapter suggests that British abolition and emancipation movements clearly went through respective "norm cycles." As Finnemore and Sikkink note, "Norms do not appear out of thin air; they are actively built by agents having strong notions about appropriate or desirable behavior in their community." There were clearly foundations of abolitionism based in secular enlightenment and religious thought and these forces became organized in the 1770s and 1780s. The popular campaign helped finalize a shift in British public opinion – expressed through petitions to Parliament – and ultimately Parliamentary opinion. It appears this period – 1791 to 1792 – was the "tipping point" of this norm's emergence, as during this period the public petition campaign hit record highs and as Walvin stated, by early 1792, abolitionist sentiment had lodged itself in Parliament. Yet, external factors would delay effecting abolition – impending war with France and the threat of radicalism moved abolitionism to the backburner until the early 1800s. By 1805-1806, though, abolitionists were back in position to finalize the end of the trade, and the critical votes came in 1806 and 1807. It then became clear that abolitionism was becoming internalized by the British public and government, as by 1814-1815 they were committed to bringing abolition of the trade to other countries.

It is instructive to return to the words of General Gascoyne in describing the movement against the slave trade:

The Church, the theatre, the press, had laboured to create a prejudice against the slave trade... The attempts to make a popular clamour against the trade were never so conspicuous as during the last election, when the public newspapers teemed with abuse of the trade, and when promises were required from different candidates that they would oppose its continuance. There has never been any question agitated since that of Parliamentary reform, in which so much industry had been exerted to raise a popular clamour and to make the trade an object of universal detestation. In every manufacturing town and borough in the kingdom all those arts had been tried.

The tenets of a norm cycle are all contained in this summation. He detestably delineates norm entrepreneurs – church, press, etc. – working to make "the trade an object of universal

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detestation" through organization (petitions, forcing candidates to commit to opposing the traffic) and "popular clamour." It is ironic that a conservative, avowed defender of the trade could so effectively summarize the tenets of a normative cycle of change.

A similar norm cycle can be distinguished regarding emancipation. By the early 1820s, abolitionist norm entrepreneurs began to organize again to force slave emancipation. The slave uprising of 1823 assisted the cause, and a number of factors contributed to the tipping point, which came in the period from 1831-1833 following the Jamaican uprising of 1831. From that period forward, as will be discussed in future chapters, the British people/government was the most active international force for the end of the trade and practice of slavery.

Figure 4.6. British Emancipation's "Norm Cycle"

Were normative factors sufficient, in-and-of-themselves, to produce this result? At this point, it seems clear that the British case offers a forceful example of antislavery norm emergence through Finnemore and Sikkink's "Norm Cycle" and that this norm cycle likely played a significant (but perhaps not exclusive) causal role. Later chapters will incorporate domestic-
political and geostrategic variables in an attempt to more completely answer the critical question of causality. Before then, this dissertation now turns the normative/ideological movements in other key slave systems. Did these states develop similar antislavery ideas and movements? To that question, this dissertation now turns.
Chapter 5
The Normative Movements Against Transatlantic Slavery, Part II

The previous chapter provided a history of anti-slavery ideas prior to the 1770s-1780s and then proceeded to discuss the British normative anti-slavery movement, which developed from these ideas and ultimately ended British slavery in 1838. That chapter concluded by discussing the ways in which the British movement followed the normative model developed by theorists like Finnmore and Sikkink; that is, the pattern of norm emergence, norm cascade, and ultimately, norm internalization. Having looked at the British movement in detail, it is time to examine the history of normative movements in other transatlantic slave systems to see if a similar pattern is discernable. The first section of this chapter discusses Britain's rival – France, before turning to the United States, Spain (and her colonial possessions) and Brazil.

Part I – The Normative Movement in France

Many of the critical underlying concepts that helped spark the British ideological movement in Britain had come from the great works of French philosophy. One might expect, then, that France's anti-slavery movement would follow a similar trajectory. This section will examine France's normative abolition movement to determine how it developed and ascertain whether anti-slavery ideas were sufficient to end the slave trade/institution of slavery there.

For context, it is important to remember that heading into the turn of the century France was a leading practitioner in the slave trade and plantation slavery. The key to the French West Indian system was Saint-Domingue, who imported over 300,000 slaves in the decade before the French Revolution. French abolitionist writings had, like their British counterparts', increased significantly in the 1760s and 1770s; but also in keeping with Britain, other priorities took

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precedence – particularly the need for revenue and maintenance of the colonies. For this reason, it was clear to those who lamented the slave trade that it would take active effort to bring the issue to prominence and effect change.1554

Table 5.1. Imports of Slaves into the Americas, 1781-18501555

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importer</th>
<th>1781-1790</th>
<th>1791-1800</th>
<th>1801-1810</th>
<th>1811-1820</th>
<th>1821-1830</th>
<th>1831-1840</th>
<th>1841-1850</th>
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<td>141,300</td>
<td>327,700</td>
<td>431,400</td>
<td>334,300</td>
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</tbody>
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*This was the total to all Spanish-American colonies. Cuba's figures for this year are included here; for the remaining years, these figures pertain specifically to Cuba.

Early Years

The first French abolitionist movement centered around the Société des Amis des Noirs, which was founded in 1788 by journalists Pierre Brissot and Etienne Clavière in collaboration with Count Honoré de Mirabeau.1556 Other noted members included Abbé Henri Grégoire, philosophe Antoine de Condorcet, and Marquis de Lafayette.1557 Clearly, this organization was based on its British counterpart, and indeed, there was significant communication between the

two. The organization copied the use of the "Am I not a Man and a Brother" medallion. Like in Britain, there was internal debate about whether to go after slavery itself or the trade, and similarly, the Société des Amis des Noirs decided to go after the trade first.

In many ways, however, the similarities end there. Seymour Drescher has developed two models of abolitionist movements – what he calls the Anglo-American and the Continental models. The Anglo-American version is a social movement with broad public appeal exerting pressure through petitions, meetings, and lawsuits. The supporters were often local, decentralized, and inclusive committees that pushed their agenda as a moral and political "imperative." In contrast, the Continental model, of which the Société des Amis des Noirs is a strong example, consisted of very small groups, usually of cultural elites. The continental strategy tended to work from within – submitting plans to government, conducting debates within the capital and commercial centers, and serving as brokers between government and interest groups.

1559 Dorigny, Marcel. "Mirabeau and the Societe des Amis des Noirs: Which Way to Abolish Slavery?" in The Abolitions of Slavery, ed. Marcel Dorigny, 121-132. New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2003: 127; and Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 151-152. According to Dorigny, Clarkson counseled Mirabeau that if a strategy was to work it should limit its ambitions to ending the slave trade, not the whole institution. He wrote: "My opinion, like that of all who have looked closely at the subject, is that one ought to demand only the abolition of the slave trade. It is the source of all evils and if the axe is applied to it, slavery in the islands will fall after it, and will fall advantageously for the planters and for the slaves without any need to touch it... This reasoning compels us to put aside any idea of emancipation." Condorcet was, perhaps not surprisingly, committed to going after the institution, saying "We have shown that the master has no right over his slave; that the action of detaining his servitude is not enjoyment of property but a crime; that by freeing the slave the law is not attacking property but ceasing to tolerate an action which it ought to have sanctioned with capital punishment. The ruler therefore owes no damages to the master of slaves, just as he owes none to a thief deprived by a judgement [sic] of possession of the thing stolen."
1561 Drescher, Seymour. "Two Variants of Anti-Slavery: Religious Organization and Social Mobilization in Britain and France, 1780-1870." In Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform. eds. Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1980: 43. By using the term inclusive, I am referring to the fact that British antislavery groups tended to include members from various levels of society, as well as including women. Their inclusiveness – being willing to involve about anyone who was willing to help – was quite a remarkable aspect of this movement; it may not seem so now, but for the period, it was quite remarkable.
The Société des Amis des Noirs was in fact elitist.\textsuperscript{1563} Historian Lawrence Jennings notes, "the society, like later French abolitionist groupings, was elitist in character, and tended to center its activities in the legislative chambers. It avoided appeals to public opinion except through the published media, and never had more than 150 adherents.\textsuperscript{1564} Large entrance fees hindered participation.\textsuperscript{1565} There was a narrow recruitment base and poor attendance at meetings.\textsuperscript{1566} As historian Daniel Resnick summarizes, the Société des Amis des was "small, select, and nonparticipant."\textsuperscript{1567}

The Society was from the first hindered by the nature of the absolute monarchy in France. The group couldn't hope to have a journal of its own because the press "was tightly controlled by the administration, and the various colonial lobbies were sufficiently powerful to bring pressure to bear on the Ministry concerned" and render useless any attempt to obtain license to publish a periodical. Count Mirabeau was essential in getting around this restriction; through his connections he was able secure authorization of a journal as long as it "publish only information from England and translated from English newspapers."\textsuperscript{1568} The resulting publication – Analyse des papiers anglais – was almost always forced to make some reference to British efforts. Thus, proslavery interests would from the outset use these connections to the British movement – in

\textsuperscript{1565} Resnick, Daniel P. "the Société des Amis des Noirs and the Abolition of Slavery," French Historical Studies, Vol. 7, No. 4, (Autumn) 1972: 562. As Resnick notes, "the society was designed on the model of the elitist société de pensée. A large entrance fee and required references for admission kept the society small, select, and nonparticipant. This was an appropriate body for a prerevolutionary literary society, but it would have had and did have difficulty mobilizing a less homogeneous urban population in a period of revolution."
publication, inspiration, membership, and thought – as an argument against abolition. As Dorigny notes, the...

...undeniable Anglophilia on the part of the Amis des Noirs in Paris, accentuated the role of the London Committee in the French anti-slavery movement and had the effect of making Brissot, Claviere and other Amis des Noirs 'English agents', an argument seized on by the colonists to discredit French abolitionists. This charge that the Amis des Noirs associated with enemies of French interests, sacrificed to English greed, would remain a constant feature of the colonists' counter-attack, both during the Revolution and long after, under the Restoration and the July Monarchy in particular.

The French movement was also hindered by its lack of support from church doctrine and organizations. According to Drescher, "religious organization remained a primary form of cosmopolitan social organization, linking communities to the larger national and international world. Thus, the response of religious organizations of each society to the social potential of abolitionism" is important to understand. The Catholic Church was dominant and France lacked significant Protestant/evangelical organizations. Its dominant Catholic Church was largely reliant on the government and this, too, reinforced the pressure to reform from within.

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1573 Drescher, Seymour. "Two Variants of Anti-Slavery: Religious Organization and Social Mobilization in Britain and France, 1780-1870." In Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform. eds. Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1980: 49-51. One might ask "why would inclusion of one church support reform from within compared to any other." The present author, based on the literature reviewed here, would suggest that the Catholic Church was inherently hierarchical and conservative. Any reform that would take place would happen from within (not popular mobilization), and so one could expect the same with regard to slavery, particularly given the Church's closeness with French government officials.
founding the Société des Amis des Noirs did not attempt to use religious organizations to mobilize French public opinion.1574

The French public did, nonetheless, forward calls for reform. There were collections of grievances (cahiers de doléances) – akin to petitions – sent from the countryside to the National Assembly.1575 But, French abolitionists were able to produce only a relative handful of cahiers. In 1789 more than 600 were produced, for example, but less than fifty made reference to slavery/the slave trade and none called for its immediate abolition.1576 As Drescher notes, in Britain in 1788, abolitionist petitions accounted for about half of all types that arrived in Parliament; in contrast, in France, it was less than 10 percent. Serge Daget suggests literacy played a role: "As to any popular support for these philanthropic ideas, it must be noted that the masses, though not totally illiterate, read very little, and only the simplest matter, so that the possibility of getting their ideas across against the entrenched traditions of the slavers were remote."1577 Whatever the cause, the slave trade and slavery were nowhere near the top of the list of debated grievances. As Drescher concludes, in general, "at the parish level, slavery simply did not register at all as a cause for concern."1578

The Amis des Noirs was unwilling, and largely incapable, of launching a popular campaign. "An attack on slavery would antagonize both the commercial and the slaveholding

interest," so when abolitionists did make forays, they faced effective counter-mobilizations by merchants, planters, navy men, and others. These groups were more successful in grabbing the peoples' attention and making their case, assuring them that slavery was good for trade. "Proslavery forces were quite explicit in their alarm about the economic cost of abolition, as a circular for distribution through the Comité de Commerce of the National Assembly indicates:"

The Société des Amis des Noirs wishes to bring into question in the National Assembly the abandonment of our colonies, the abolition of the slave trade and the liberty of our Negroes. If only one of these points is decreed, there would no longer exist either commerce or manufacture in France. Agriculture itself would fail, for lack of consumers and means of exchange for our agricultural surplus. The countryside will be crowded with millions of men today occupied by navigation and manufacture; it will be deserted by them, because they will be unable to work and live. Or emigration will depopulate France of one quarter of its inhabitants. There is the alternative. 

Abolitionists needed a forceful, effective counter-argument. Historian Daniel Resnick asserts that French abolitionists might have been more successful if they had followed the British model of presenting a predominantly ideological case, backed by presenting economic alternatives to slavery. Unfortunately, the Société des Amis des Noirs had not laid the groundwork for making sophisticated arguments. They had not scoured the country, like Clarkson, to gather eyewitnesses and formulate talking points. As Resnick states, "French abolitionists did not make French participation in the slave trade a matter of intense investigation and were thus unable to

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1584 Resnick, Daniel P. "the Société des Amis des Noirs and the Abolition of Slavery," French Historical Studies, Vol. 7, No. 4, (Autumn) 1972: 563. According to Resnick, "any critique of slaveholding or slave trading, to be politically effective, had to be argued in economic as well as moral terms." Of course, this conclusion is debatable, and the point of this work is to suggest whether this is indeed true.
develop cutting arguments that only a knowledge of that trade could produce."\textsuperscript{1585} \textsuperscript{1585} As a group these French abolitionists shied away from economic analyses or counteranalyses [sic] and rested their critique of slavery on a moral foundation.\textsuperscript{1586} \textsuperscript{1586} Certainly, being the home of the great philosophes, the ideas were in the fabric of the country, but abolitionists lacked the organization to effectively spread a moral argument and the strategy and capability to drive such an argument home. Drescher concludes that for France, by 1789 "at the outbreak of the French Revolution, its antislavery movement was ideologically robust and institutionally weak."\textsuperscript{1587} \textsuperscript{1587} One is struck, as Daniel Resnick writes, "by the weakness – in commitment, strategy, and organization – of the first carriers of the abolitionist program in France."\textsuperscript{1588} \textsuperscript{1588}

The French Revolution commenced in May 1789, and as David Brion Davis notes, "as the French Estates General gave way to the Constituent Assembly, in the spring of 1789, domestic issues inevitably pushed colonial affairs to the extreme margins of concern."\textsuperscript{1589} \textsuperscript{1589} The revolution and the uprising in Saint-Domingue will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, but it should be made clear that "from the calling of the Estates-General to the eve of the Saint-Domingue slave revolution in 1791, both slavery and antislavery remained beyond the interest of most politically active provincials."\textsuperscript{1590} \textsuperscript{1590} The Constituent Assembly refused to consider petitions

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against the slave trade and planters were assured that Paris wouldn't impinge on their practice.\textsuperscript{1591} The Constituent Assembly reaffirmed separation between continental and colonial institutions; the merchant lobby had won the day and cut off the leading abolitionists, like Abbé Grégoire and Count Mirabeau.\textsuperscript{1592}

The efforts of the Société des Amis des Noirs had helped secure a law that gave rights to free blacks of mixed blood in the colonies in April 1792.\textsuperscript{1593} Yet the society was dealt a blow when Robespierists outlawed the "Brissotin" faction in the legislative assembly in 1793; this group had been so intertwined with the Société des Amis des Noirs that this blow was one from which there would be no substantive recovery politically.\textsuperscript{1594} Brissot and Claviere were guillotined, Condorcet committed suicide, and Lafayette surrendered to the Austrians; other members dispersed and the society was defunct by the end of 1793.\textsuperscript{1595}

Popular abolitionist organization played little to no role in France's first abolition of slavery; this had come about due primarily to events overseas.\textsuperscript{1596} The revolution in Saint-Domingue had resulted in ongoing chaos there and war with Britain commenced in 1793; Anglo-French conflict lasted from 1793 to 1801, ceased via the Peace of Amiens in 1802, and resumed

\textsuperscript{1591} Davis, David Brion. *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 161-162; and Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 157. Drescher states: "The nation not only assigned complete authority over the institution of slavery to the colonies, but assured them against any interference in the transatlantic slave trade." Davis notes that the planters continued to receive an official subsidy until 1793, even after the monarchy ended and Louis XVI was executed.


until 1815. Spain invaded Saint-Domingue from the east; Britain invaded the west of the island from the sea in September 1793. By April 1794 the British had gained temporary control of French Martinique, Guadeloupe, Saint Lucia and a third of Saint-Domingue. Needing the support of slaves in the military effort, the French National Convention outlawed slavery on 16 Pluviose Year II (February 4, 1794) and guaranteed citizenship rights regardless of color. “In undertaking these moves they had hoped to rally blacks to the Republic and preserve French control over Saint-Domingue, for the colony was menaced by British and Spanish intervention once France had declared war upon these two powers in early 1793.”

If fully and successfully implemented, this decree would have freed three-quarters of a million slaves. In actuality, "some of its colonial areas (St. Domingue-Haiti) would be liberated after years of struggle. In others (Martinique and the Mascarines), slaves would never experience a single year of freedom. In still others (St. Lucia, Guadeloupe, Guyana) the liberation of 1794 would be reversed.” Whatever its flavors, emancipation was not to last long and the impact of the Saint-Domingue insurrection in particular is still much debated. David Brion Davis suggests Saint-Domingue was a turning point comparable to Hiroshima, saying its memory "could be rationalized or repressed but never really forgotten, since it demonstrated the possible fate of

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every slaveholding society in the world. For his part, Drescher thinks the Haitian revolution did more to slow abolition than speed it up, given that the stories of blacks rising up and killing whites would be burned into the minds of the French public (and the citizens of other countries as well) for a long time to come. Still, whatever its impact, this first abolition had not started with popular mobilization. As Drescher states, "there is no evidence whatever of a large-scale nationwide campaign to open the question of abolition in the two years before or after the mass slave uprising. The broadest popular antislavery manifestations in France came only in the wake of the abolition of slavery on 16 Plüviose – a total of nineteen or twenty celebrations." 

Another abolitionist organization attempted to rise from the cinders of the Amis Des Noirs. A small contingent calling itself the Société des Amis des Noirs et des Colonies began to meet again at the instigation of Grégoire. It had little influence and few members. Eventually headed by economist Jean Baptiste Say and ex-Jacobin Léger Félicité Sonthonax, the group's main goals were to encourage free labor ideology. It was put down by Napoleon in 1799.

In fact, Napoleon Bonaparte "effectively stifled abolitionism in France from 1799 until his fall in 1814-1815. Napoleon reasserted the fundamental difference between continental

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and colonial policy, and then reversed abolition on 30 Floreal Year X (20 May 1802). Civil liberty and equality were alive for citizens of France, but slavery was back in the colonies. Additionally, blacks were not allowed to live in continental France, and thereby, ultimately any gains of free blacks in colonies were reversed, and then some. There was little public antislavery sentiment at this point; few balked at the institution's reinstatement.

Napoleon attempted to re-conquer Saint-Domingue. His failure and the attention given to black-on-white/white-on-black violence there further reduced empathy for blacks in France. "Napoleonic officialdom gave full support to a whole series of publications promoting colonial interests while systematically blocking any organized abolitionist effort." There was very little public outcry against slavery at this point and little that could be done from an organizational standpoint to change this fact. Lawrence Jennings notes "only Abbé Grégoire, a member of Napoleon's senate, dared go beyond side remarks and innuendo in reiterating his principles in print, though he too was prevented from making public statements on the issues. In his De la littérature des nègres, written in 1808, Grégoire stressed the unity of the human race, criticized the slave traffic, and claimed that black violence in Saint-Domingue had been provoked by the

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Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 167-168; and Daget, Serge. "A Model of the French Abolitionist Movement and its Variations." In Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform, eds. Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1980: 68. According to Champion, "the law made a de facto situation official: slavery was maintained where it had never been abolished; it was not restored, or not yet restored, where it had been abolished." In essence, where slaves had been freed they could remain free. Where they had not, they would remain slaves. Eventually Napoleon's advisers – many of which were colonial administrators and sailors connected to the colonial interest – advised him that being ambiguous and setting up a dual system in the colonies was unwise and potentially dangerous.


planters.\textsuperscript{1616} Grégoire's publication had been tolerated only because he had connections with Napoleon's minister of police.\textsuperscript{1617} Ultimately, then, French anti-slave trade sentiment before 1815 was limited to a few publications arguing that the trade was inhuman, but effective organization and public opinion shaping had been suppressed.\textsuperscript{1618}

1814-1815

"When Napoleon faced defeat and abdicated in 1814, the restored monarchy of Louis XVIII continued to scorn abolitionism, which it identified with republicanism."\textsuperscript{1619} After the peace of 1814, Drescher concludes, "the restored Bourbon monarchy fulfilled its reputation for having learned nothing and forgotten nothing."\textsuperscript{1620} Louis XVIII's foreign ministry negotiated for return of most slave colonies and reasserted sovereignty.\textsuperscript{1621} Abolitionists were somewhat encouraged when Napoleon returned to power for the "Hundred Days" in 1815, as he about-faced and proclaimed he would abolish the trade. But this was short-lived.\textsuperscript{1622} After Waterloo, "the British made retention of Napoleon's decree of abolition an implicit condition for Louis XVIII's uncontested return to the thrown;" enforcement was something else.\textsuperscript{1623} "In the decade after

\textsuperscript{1622} Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 56-57; and Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 6. Napoleon's exact aims with this decree are unclear, but it seems likely that he was trying to improve Britain's impression of him (public and parliament alike) and thereby perhaps split them from their allies. He had little intention of enforcing any decree. This appears to have been a strategic move, certainly not a change of heart or stance.
Waterloo, the (now illicit) French slave trade climbed to levels rivaling those reached by French slavers in the 1770s.\textsuperscript{1624}

During restoration, ejected planters and shipbuilders pressed for re-conquest of Saint-Domingue and the reinstatement of slavery. The government hesitated, but popular feeling was swept up in a wave of anti-British sentiment following the peace terms of 1815.\textsuperscript{1625} Opinion was on the side of private interests. "Abolition had been imposed by the British cabinet and hence was insufferable, however honourable its motives, and the French did not think Britain's motives were honourable.\textsuperscript{1626} As Paul Michael Kielstra writes, "from the beginning of British agitation for abolition, Frenchmen generally had believed the English were self-interested, promoting a measure far more harmful to France than to Britain."\textsuperscript{1627} Given their defeat at Waterloo, the memory of Saint-Domingue, and the fact that their sworn enemy was pushing for abolition, anti-slavery became tantamount to anti-patriotism.\textsuperscript{1628} "Abolitionists were isolated and accused by the new Ultraroyalists of being the allies of France's conqueror."\textsuperscript{1629} From the second decade of the 1800s, French abolitionism was hindered by association with British supremacy, Anglophile Protestantism, radicalism.\textsuperscript{1630} Further, the few abolitionists that were left had to rely on the British

for support – reinforcing charges against them. Abolitionism in France was too weak to take on colonists, merchants, manufacturers, and reactionary patriotism. There were two key obstacles – economic facts and the fact that abolitionist leaders weren't revered. "Abbé Grégoire had been one of Napoleon's senators and a bishop that had taken an oath to the revolution." As Drescher notes, comparing Britain and France, Wilberforce was a national hero by 1814, but his closest counterpart in France – Abbé Grégoire – was mostly vilified.

The regulation against the trade enacted under pressure from the British in 1814 and 1815 wasn't strong enough to deter slave traders, and it was haphazardly instituted by French officials who were much more concerned with restoring economic viability. The French public discourse was dominated by the merchants, and the new King wanted to keep the large lobbies happy. The French commercial interests thought the slave trade the cure for its restoration, and the key to returning France to international prominence. "With few colonies, and the menacing memory of Saint-Domingue dominating French minds, the issue of slavery receded into the background in France." Once Britain forced France to abolish the trade, the French government was unable, and largely unwilling, to do anything further until after the 1830s.

Abolitionists were stymied by the anti-free press laws put forward and by the weak state of their

organization.¹⁶⁴⁰ No French popular abolitionist movement would rise in the first five years after
Restoration.¹⁶⁴¹

1820-1830

Contact between British and French abolitionists continued from 1815 through the early
1820s. Thomas Clarkson traveled to France in 1819-1820.¹⁶⁴² British abolitionists, led by Zachary
Macaulay, were pushing for the French activists to organize once again.¹⁶⁴³ In truth, it didn't
appear at the time like much was happening, and the British were discouraged; but here again, the
practical experiences of men encountering slavery and the slave trade would prove a powerful
impetus for change.

Joseph Morenas and Abbé Juge Guidicelly had worked in Senegal and witnessed the
horrors of slavery there. Upon return to France, Morenas was vocal about the trade practices and
its continuance there. His accounts were published, through British support, in the New Times on
March 31, 1820.¹⁶⁴⁴ Morenas went further, petitioning the Chamber of Deputies. His petition
came up for debate on June 14, 1820; the Deputies discussed the petition and rejected it
forcefully, even calling it libelous and inviting those mentioned to sue Morenas.¹⁶⁴⁵

This petition, although rejected, still had significant results, good and bad. Inside the
government, it strengthened the conservative royalist faction, painting abolition as a liberal policy

¹⁶⁴⁰ Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France,
University Press, 2009: 178-179; and Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the
¹⁶⁴³ Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France,
of Anti-Slavery: Religious Organization and Social Mobilization in Britain and France, 1780-1870." In
Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform. eds. Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher. Hamden, CT: Archon
exclusively. As historian Paul Michael Kielstra notes, Morenas's petition revealed that "friends of the colonists controlled the Chambers; the public knew or cared little about the traffic; and nationalists opposed abolition."

Outside government, the petition had stirred the pot. Zachary Macaulay recommended forming an anti-slave trade society, but Frenchmen were sure such a group would not be permitted by the government, nor would it be politically feasible. Nonetheless, after Morenas's petition in 1820, the abolitionists attempted to inform the public for the next two years. Their techniques were to produce pamphlets and lobby the government. Therefore, British abolitionists published French works, British government dispatches, African Institution (British organized group to help educate/civilize Africa) reports, speeches and letters on the horrors of the trade. Grégoire and Broglie were busy disseminating British publications, and they also produced their own works, in their own way given France's press restrictions. For example, they added long forewords to re-published British works. The popular pro-slavery argument of the time was that anti-slavery was a Machiavellian British ploy, and therefore, French abolitionists spent a lot of their time trying to counter this assertion. Certainly the Frenchmen were active, if not officially organized, and with Morenas and Giudicelhy they had their own sources of information.

Nonetheless, they still relied heavily on the British. Kielstra concludes that during this period they were led as much by Macaulay and Clarkson as by the likes of Grégoire.

French and British activists lobbied statesmen, but the political climate in France was against the movement. The police were opening mail and the government was extremely restrictive. French abolitionists focused their political activities on the Chambers. "Their real goal was not the unfeasible one of changing the law, but the practical one of spreading information

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1647 Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 97-98. Kielstra notes the main disagreement between the British and French was in methods – the French were against the right of search and making the slave trade piracy, opting instead for their own laws.
through parliamentary debates. Newspaper reports of these discussions reached far greater
audiences than pamphlets, and thence sometimes found sympathetic authors to republish
them.\textsuperscript{1648} Morenas put forward a second petition in April 1821, but the report from the Deputy of
Chambers suggested they weren't making a dent in attitudes in the chamber. Further, demands
from the British government for the right of search hurt their chances.\textsuperscript{1649} As Kielstra notes, "for
all these well-intentioned ideas, only a new law was going to stop the traffic, but legislation
meant the Chambers, and the Chambers meant the ultra[royalist]."\textsuperscript{1650}

French activists were poised to start taking control of their own movement. French
Protestants called for formation of a new group, but it was realized that the group needed to be
open and that given the religio-demographics of the country, Catholics should lead it.\textsuperscript{1651} The
Société de las Morale Chrétienne (Society of Christian Morality) was formed in 1821 and
continued, in diminished form, until the early 1860s.\textsuperscript{1652} Lawrence Jennings describes this group
as a "liberal, nondenominational philanthropic society, inspired by both universalist
Enlightenment and religious principles, which devoted itself to advancing moral and social issues
through education, propaganda, and political activism, while in the process indicting the

\textsuperscript{1648} Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848.
\textsuperscript{1649} Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848.
\textsuperscript{1650} Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848.
\textsuperscript{1651} Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France,
of Anti-Slavery: Religious Organization and Social Mobilization in Britain and France, 1780-1870." In
Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform. eds. Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher. Hamden, CT: Archon
\textsuperscript{1652} Daget, Serge. "A Model of the French Abolitionist Movement and its Variations." In Anti-Slavery,
Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France,
1802-1848. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 8-9; and Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A
Interestingly, Gregoire didn't join because he was a stalwart Catholic that didn't want to be associated with
Protestants. It might have been just as well, as he was scorned in society for his activities during Napoleon's
reign.
government's retrograde social policies. The society's efforts were organized around its roughly nine active committees, which dealt with liberal issues such as ending the death penalty, improving jails, and the like. Its members included the likes of Auguste de Staël, François Guizot, Louis duc de Broglie, and Alexis de Tocqueville. All told, the society was comprised of about 300 liberal businessmen, academics, lawyers, professors, politicians, and intellectuals. The government had misgivings about this liberal group, but it survived nonetheless due to its "well-placed, moderate leadership." It was not specifically developed to take on the slave trade/slavery, but one of its sub-committees would become the central organization activists had hoped for.

On March 28, 1822, Broglie made a three-hour address to the Chamber of Peers; it touched on British anti-slavery efforts, the fact that the French trade existed and the profits it yielded, lack of public anger against it, and suggested new laws and more active enforcement. Based on persuasion of the chamber, he thought it was largely a failure; but again, his true audience was the rest of the country. He prepared the speech for publication and this speech was used as the foundation of the anti-slavery sub-committee (founded April 1822) inside the Société de las Morale Chrétienne.

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This anti-slave trade sub-committee – Comité pour l'abolition de la traite des Nègres – was formed in April 1822. It contained 16 members (5 of which were foreign). The society was the liberal, "aristocratic" wing of abolition; it had little contact with republicans. In fact, Morenas remained outside the organization, needing contacts to obtain introductions to Broglie and De Staël despite the fact that Morenas was attempting to write a history of abolitionism similar to Clarkson's. Entrance entailed nomination by two members and payment of 25 francs, which allowed the group the latitude to exclude many. In 1823, membership stood at 255; by November 1824 it stood at 332. This was a small, elite group and would remain so (by 1829-1830, membership had grown to only 388). De Staël, for example, had remarked that they certainly didn't want to deal with populists.\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 115-116.}

Historians like Jennings and Drescher have stressed that this elitist society lacked popular support.\footnote{Jennings, Lawrence C. \textit{French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 10. According to Jennings, the society had little popular support, and given its own elitist nature, it felt little compulsion to deign itself in an appeal to the general public.} Elitist it was, and frankly, there were many people, and even some abolitionists, that thought the institution of slavery was too important to the life of the colonies to be attacked, at least in an immediate manner.\footnote{Jennings, Lawrence C. \textit{French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 13.} But Kielstra suggests that the group concentrated on changing both government opinion and popular opinion the best it could given the repression of association in France at the time.\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 117.} He contends that the population was their main target. Guizot told the Marine Minister as much, saying that the whole society "since its foundation has striven to excite the public opinion of France."\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 116-117.} Once abolitionism had been branded a "liberal" cause, popular
humanitarian activities were bound to be curtailed by the government. Given this, Kielstra feels working within the government was "the only game in town."\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 115; and Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 10. Jennings contends that even if this was "the only game in town," the committee wasn't winning the game since it was largely ineffective at changing legislation.}

The slave trade committee did play the leading abolitionist role in France in the 1820s, whether one feels it maximized its potential or not. "By the second year of its existence the slave trade committee had clarified its stance and defined its objectives concerning slavery. Blacks, it was agreed, who were in no way inferior to whites, must be gradually prepared for their eventual freedom by instruction and moralization. Immediate emancipation would be dangerous and counterproductive, but a gradual process would achieve slave liberation without upheaval."\footnote{Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 14.} The committee kept close relations with the British, sponsored publications, and sent member Auguste de Staël on a fact-finding trip, a la Clarkson.\footnote{Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 12. Jennings concludes the efforts probably sparked the anti-slave trade speeches of de Neuville and Constant in the Chamber of Deputies and the famous tirade by Broglie in the Chamber of Peers (March 28, 1822).} This trip would pay huge dividends. Abolitionists tried to reach a wide audience and newspapers were a main source of education.\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 117. Some of the journals in which they achieved support were the opposition dailies Journal du Commerce, Constitutionel, and the Courrier. Journalists from Courrier Francois, Lettres Normandes, and Tablettes Universeless were in the society. The Revue Encyclopedique, Revue Britannique, Journal des Voyages, and of course Journal de la Societe de la Morale Chrétienne published articles.} They also engaged in publishing pamphlets, public essay contests, and even mimicked publication of a slave ship diagram, like Clarkson's use of the Brookes.\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 117; and Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 10. Among the critical elite were Francois Guizot and the duc d'Orleans – the future King Louis Philippe.} As the British experience showed, "for the public, education was necessary before agitation."\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 117.} Yet, "the
authorities, fearing that these [education and agitation] were one and the same, greatly restricted what campaigners could print."\textsuperscript{1671} In short, the society \textit{was} attempting to copy the British popular mobilization tactics, but in a way that comported to the reality in France. According to Kielstra, they achieved less not because they weren't trying, but because the political environment in France constrained their efforts so dramatically.\textsuperscript{1672}

The effect wasn't obvious immediately, but "a subtle but important change did occur."\textsuperscript{1673} "By the mid-1820s, the French were still largely apathetic and believed that the British abolition had some machiavellian paternity. On the other hand, campaigners thought that ordinary Frenchmen had accepted that the commerce itself was wrong and should be outlawed. He would not act himself, but would give moral support if others did so."\textsuperscript{1674} Given what we know about the British campaign, this latent transition is critical to future success, even if hard to observe and measure. Working on public opinion takes time. "The Société de la Morale Chrétienne now had to use its popular support, albeit shallow, as a lever in the more conservative political community."\textsuperscript{1675}


\textsuperscript{1672} Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 117. Without question, the realities in France curtailed what the French abolitionist could accomplish as compared to their British counterparts. At the same time, given certain aspects of the French movement – its generally elitist nature, for example – it remains perfectly legitimate to compare and contrast the goods and the bads of the French versus British campaign, as they were very distinct. In this way, the present author would contend that the Drescher model – popular versus continental – is an appropriate representation of the distinctions.


In early 1824, the leading abolitionists of the society considered petitioning the chambers and in the next session in 1825, did so. Here again, one had to adapt British tactics to the reality of French politics. Large-scale petitions campaigns were not possible, but activists hoped to impress through petitioner clout, rather than through numbers.\(^\text{1676}\) That year, "42 Parisian merchants, 13 of whom were members of the Chamber of Commerce, asked parliament to investigate the state of the trade, examine British and American laws declaring it piracy, and enact harsher legislation."\(^\text{1677}\) The somewhat liberal Chamber of Peers recommended the petitions to the Marine Minister, Comte de Chabrol, but the petitions were effectively squelched.\(^\text{1678}\)

The petitions from notables had been a step forward, but De Staël was about to pull off an epic coup. By 1825, the slave trade traffic out of Nantes (the trade's leading port) was becoming widely known. De Staël visited personally and found that slave vessels were active in plain sight. He boarded *La Bretonne* and spoke with ordinary sailors about how many slaves it carried, bought shackles at the local blacksmith, and brought the information and shackles back to Paris. The society sent the information to Marine Minister Chabrol and reproduced the evidence in pamphlets.\(^\text{1679}\) De Staël displayed the irons to the royal family, and Charles X, now King, told his ministers to clean up the trade in Nantes. Further, and critically, he also told commissioners handling the claims of former Saint-Domingue colonists that "the slave trade is abolished, it must


\(^{1679}\) Kielstra, Paul Michael. *The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848.* New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 125-126, 131. Everyone knew Nantes was the capital of the French trade. This incident came in close proximity to the *Deux Nantais* affair: Macaulay had gone to Nantes in January 1824 and saw numerous ships fitted out for slave voyages. He sent information back to London which was then forwarded to Paris. Paris ordered Nantes authorities to arrest the ship, but the information leaked and the ship escaped, embarrassing the French government badly.
and shall be abolished. The government appeared to have been roused from its slumber. The King told his ministers to start working on an anti-slave trade law. Nonetheless, after news of the situation in Nantes spread, petitions came in from around France. In Paris, 130 merchants and other notables signed a petition; in Le Havre 49, in Ceste and Montepelier 71, Marseille 32, and Caen 13. Their basic argument was: the current anti-slave trade laws/regulations were ineffective and the nature of the trade "offended humanity and compromised French honour." The Marseille petitions stated, "Honour no less than the security of the French flag is compromised by evidently illusory legislation." Kielstra suggests several reasons for the change. First, economically, French trade was returning to pre-revolution levels and so perhaps merchants felt a reduction in the slave trade increasingly feasible, it no longer being needed for recovery. Further, it appears that the education campaign the abolitionists were attempting was slowly sinking in, and in addition, despite resenting them, the French population was likely annoyed by constant British searches on the high seas and pridefully wanted France to take control of its own affairs. This all combined to produce pressure from powerful elites; as Kielstra notes, "men of weight and standing were petitioning: the government had to take notice."

Between 1825 and 1826 government measures were having some effect – perhaps even cutting the trade in half – even without a new slave trade law. Marine Minister Chabrol put a new

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anti-slave trade bill (to replace feeble measures coming out of the peace settlement of 1814-1815) forward at the end of December 1826. Merchants, captains, insurers – everyone involved in outfitting slave ships – would face banishment, loss of the vessel and the cargo. Participating sailors got three to five months in prison, but if they gave evidence they could be cleared of punishment. The bill passed fairly easily.\textsuperscript{1687}

Based on discussion of the bill inside the chambers, there appeared to be three factions – some pro-slavers who were also royalists, abolitionists, and those in the middle. The first group was small. They utilized the old pro-economics arguments and fear tactics (ending the trade would ruin French commerce), and of course the assertion that abolition was just a Machiavellian British ploy; this minority group clearly "had not accepted the death of the slave trade."\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{1688}} The abolitionists felt the Chabrol bill was still too weak but voted for it. The last group was the largest – members that had pragmatically come around to the bill without fully supporting it. They conceded, reluctantly, that the trade was horrible. The first act of 1818, which essentially declared the trade illegal smuggling and little else, "had gone as far as public opinion would then allow, but clearly was insufficient. Now popular views had progressed. Delays in implementing a policy already a decade old would be improper and, indeed, bring all laws into disrepute."\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{1689}} The middle ground argument rejected harsher penalties as "too advanced for public opinion." As Kielstra states, the "assembly did not embrace abolition, but was reconciled to it."\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{1690}}

The critical element here is the apparent sense that public opinion had swung toward abolition. Given the state of French civil society and restrictions on association and petitioning, it's very difficult, if not impossible to gauge what the true state of public mindset was. But,

\textsuperscript{1687} Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 134-135. Kielstra suggests the Nantes trade was reduced by 60 percent in the years leading up to the new legislation.


"nearly every speaker supporting the 1827 law agreed that the French people insisted the shameful commerce must stop.\textsuperscript{1691} This change matters; it appears to represent some kind of turning point. Broglie wrote to British abolitionists: "this change is complete; the public has come over completely to the truth."\textsuperscript{1692} The effort wasn't over, but now abolitionists turned more to the slavery institution itself. "The question in England and France was no longer whether to abolish, or whether the traffic continued, but how best to end it."\textsuperscript{1693}

Documentation from the society shows that "from 1822 to 1827 its slave trade/slavery committee had been one of its most active and prominent lobbying groups."\textsuperscript{1694} Unfortunately, De Staël died in November 1827 and with this "prime mover" gone, the effort would slow. Review of annual group assembly sub-committees activity reports suggests little if anything happened from 1828-1831 regarding efforts on the slave trade/slavery.\textsuperscript{1695} As Lawrence Jennings notes, "quite clearly, the Société de las morale chrétienne was structurally weak, and overly dependent upon individual initiative."\textsuperscript{1696}


1830-1840

In July 1830, a three-day revolution toppled the Restoration and Charles X fled to England, replaced by King Louis Philippe (the duc d'Orleans).¹⁶⁹⁷ King Louis Philippe was a true liberal, and he quickly reintroduced the tricolor and expanded the electorate from 94,000 to 166,000 (0.5 percent of the total population in 1830). Further, many members of Société de las Morale Chrétienne formed the governing elite of the July Monarchy.¹⁶⁹⁸ Still, belief in rapid change failed to take into account the fact that the leaders of the new July Monarchy were elite notables, too, who feared "popular participation in governmental affairs, were legalistic in their approach, and were conservative in their social orientation."¹⁶⁹⁹ Further, the post-revolution political situation in France was not conducive to tackling "emotive issues" like slavery, and hence, civil servants went about implementing existing policies quietly.¹⁷⁰⁰

The Société de las Morale Chrétienne still played a role in moving the agenda forward. The group had been interested in suppressing the trade; now it was increasingly interested in the

¹⁶⁹⁷ Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-1848. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 132; Jennings, Lawrence C. French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 22-23; and Daget, Serge. "A Model of the French Abolitionist Movement and its Variations." In Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform, eds. Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1980: 70-71. As Kielstra describes the event: Charles X agreed in November 1829 to a request to appoint over 70 new Peers, and to an election of new Deputies. "Opposition on the left and right cooperated against the government, which received a minority of seats. In January 1828 the King formed a new, more moderate government under the de facto leadership of the Vicomte de Martignac. Charles, however, intrigued against Martignac and, in August 1829, appointed an ultra ministry under Prince Jules de Polignac. This cabinet was far more appealing to the King than to the country, where each member was either unpopular or unknown. Elections in 1830 failed to give the government a working majority. Charles ordered another vote, but this time unilaterally imposed great restrictions on the already limited franchise. A violent popular reaction ensued, which snowballed into full-fledged revolution."


treatment of free blacks and this was bleeding over into the treatment of slaves as well.\textsuperscript{1701} The July Monarchy put forward a bill that fully legalized the rights of free blacks, but receiving strong push-back from the colonies, the government balked. It put forward, instead, an ordinance that suppressed taxes on planters freeing slaves.\textsuperscript{1702} The Société de las Morale Chrétienne published a pamphlet that spoke out against the trade and pushed for tougher measures on offenders. A new law was presented to the Peers in December 1830. The bill was everything the abolitionists wanted; it "recognized three stages in the slave trade, which all became criminal offences: initial preparation, departure from port, and the purchase of slaves in Africa." Outfitters, insurers and captains faced 2-5 years hard labor; if captured at sea they faced 10-20 years. Imported slaves were liable to seizure, and established apprenticeship for freed blacks. The bill banned the manufacture and sale of irons.\textsuperscript{1703}

The debate in the chambers says a lot about mindset. The bill passed with only minor amendments. "The debate in the Peers was lifeless." There was little opposition to the measure overall, and it passed the Peers 100 to 6. It was more heavily debated in the Deputies, but for the most part it is clear that abolition was no longer a controversial issue in the halls of government. A few objectionists trotted out tired old arguments about English perfidy, but D'Argout stated bluntly: "it is not to England that this law was promised, but to humanity." In short, "government spokesmen easily responded that the question was no longer the trade, but effective implementation of a decided policy."\textsuperscript{1704} The bill passed 190 to 37.

The July Monarchy then sought to put an end to the problem of British seizures on the high seas, which had sparked tensions for years. They signed an agreement to patrol the ocean

and establish mixed commissions with Britain in November 1831. The agreement, interestingly, was met largely with apathy in France. The Orleanist government was happy to give the treaty little publicity, and the press paid it little attention. In fact, "throughout the 1830s, the French press largely ignored Anglo-French suppression efforts, and those few references it made were favourable." Importantly, "French apathy gave the arrangements space to work, which to some extent they did." Between the new domestic anti-trade law and the international agreement, "the French slave trade collapsed quickly, never to re-appear."

A Colonial Reform law passed in April 1833, finalized a plan by which colonies would have their Conseils Coloniaux to pass local laws and colonial delegates sent to represent them in Paris. This law also gave free blacks theoretical equality in civil and political affairs. An ordinance passed on April 30, 1833 outlawed branding/mutilation of slaves. Beyond this, measures on the practice itself were slow and cautious. Entering the scene at this point was an eventual hero of French abolitionism, Victor Schoelcher. He published a book in 1833 which showed the evils of servitude, suggested emancipation within the next 50 or 60 years, and called for better treatment in the mean time. In short, through these modest reform measures and fresh strands of abolitionist thought, the humanitarian argument against slavery was alive, if quietly so, in

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France.\textsuperscript{1712} Nevertheless, it is telling that even the likes of Schoelcher suggested that if emancipation was to come, it would be decades away.

Of course during this period British abolitionism was agitating again, and had won over the British public. Some French observers were aware of these developments, but French officials were largely ambivalent about the events in Britain. The Société de las Morale Chrétienne tried to model itself again after the British agitation, but the French public opinion and most of the press remained "ignorant of, or uninterested in, anti-slave trade and slavery matters in England prior to 1834."\textsuperscript{1713} With Britain working to emancipate its slaves, the response of the July Monarchy was to protect its own possessions from any negative repercussions from the British actions, certainly not to imitate them. An internal navy-colonial office memo shed light on the government approach. The document pointed out that in freeing their slaves, British authorities had been "forced to yield' to religious-inspired movements that had won over public opinion."\textsuperscript{1714} It said, however, "in France, while the great mass of the population is little concerned with the colonial regime, protests against slavery only have reverberations within the circle of philosophical discussions, and our government remains... almost free in its choices."\textsuperscript{1715} Paris was certainly not ready to pay large reparations, like London had. Perhaps they'd be willing to introduce \textit{rachat} – the right of slaves to purchase their own freedom – in an effort to eliminate slavery slowly, but beyond that, the memo concluded by recommending that the July Monarchy continue on its course and see what came of the British experiment. An addendum to the memo confirmed its conclusion, noting "in France, where very few people know what the colonies are, or concern themselves with the fate of the slaves,' the legislature 'would not decide to increase the public

debt in favor of the colons, for whom, it must be said, the country has very little sympathy, only to satisfy morally a few philanthropists. These memos summed up the situation in France and the approach the government would follow for the foreseeable future: that "France could not afford to pay the requisite indemnity to the slave holders, that it was necessary to await the result of British emancipation, that the administration must follow the gradualist path toward eventual slave liberation, and that the French abolitionists had disdainfully little political influence." The French government set up a system to gain information on British efforts, and prepared to wait to see what emancipation wrought.

"In Great Britain in the early 1830s emancipationism was at its height and on the eve of achieving its great accomplishment of slave liberation. This was not, however, the case in France." The French government had decided to take the cautious approach to British emancipation, and so had most French abolitionists. Key leaders were still more worried about free blacks than freeing the slaves; future leaders like Schoelcher weren't yet fully engaged and would have more influence in the late 1830s and early 1840s. The Société de la morale Chrétienne had other liberal reforms ahead of slavery on its agenda.

Nonetheless, British emancipation accelerated the tempo of French emancipation efforts. The liberal French press suggested this was a humanitarian achievement and that the example should be followed. The free black activist Cyrill Bissette and his colleagues launched

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the most staunchly abolitionist periodical, *La Revue des colonies*. In August 1834, coinciding with British emancipation, activists formed the Société Francaise pour L'abolition de L'esclavage (French Society for the Abolition of Slavery); the duc de Broglie was put in charge. The group developed its Prospectus in December 1834. It denounced slavery as a violation of Christian charity and called for all well-intentioned men to work together to end it. The Prospectus suggests the group was committed to amelioration of slave treatment and eventual, "progressive" liberation – which really meant "gradually staged emancipation achieved in a cautious fashion."

Immediate abolition had no place in 1834 French discussion. "The statutes of the Société francaise pour l'abolition de l'esclavage also reflected this cautious, conservative approach." Its membership would be restricted and dominated by legislators. The society probably never had more than 100 or so people in fourteen years, but many key members of the July Monarchy were among its ranks. There were government laws against association, but given its membership it could get around it. The society "would operate largely as an appendage of the Chamber of Deputies and seek to employ the legislative process to achieve its goals." It met in that chamber and was tied to its legislative schedules. Therefore, when the chambers let out in

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1725 Jennings, Lawrence. *French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 54. "They stipulated that the twenty-seven founding members would control the society, with new members having to be introduced by two of the original founders. Annual membership dues were set at a minimum of twenty-five francs (at the time there were approximately five francs to a dollar), a goodly sum when the standard daily wage of French workers was two francs."


later summer, the committee did as well. Inevitably this led to a "lack of continuity, steadfastness, and momentum."\textsuperscript{1729} Frankly, at this point abolitionists didn't believe slaves were ready for immediate emancipation.\textsuperscript{1730} They were certainly cautious about, and at times given government restrictions incapable of, courting public opinion.\textsuperscript{1731}

In March 1835 due de Broglie was asked to form a government; thus, abolitionists were in a strong political position (it wouldn't last long – Broglie fell from power in February 1836).\textsuperscript{1732} It quickly became clear that power dampened the fervor of abolitionists; de Broglie urged the government to wait to see the result for the British before moving forward.\textsuperscript{1733} Colonialists were also organizing to resist abolitionism.\textsuperscript{1734} Some staunch defenders suggested emancipation would ruin the colonies and, thereby, France itself.\textsuperscript{1735} Here again, though, the general tactic was to accept emancipation in theory, but suggest the country wasn't ready and employ the delay tactic.\textsuperscript{1736} Colonial delegate Francois Mauguin conceded in April 1835 that slavery "could not be justified, but insisted that slaves were far from being prepared for freedom, and that this would require a slow process of amelioration over many years."\textsuperscript{1737}

To its credit, the government did start developing plans for long-term emancipation in 1835. In 1836, the society attempted to persuade the 86 departments that "freeing the slaves was

both a humanitarian issue and one of national interest. Because society members believed that the principle of emancipation was now an established one, all that remained was to 'decide upon its mean of execution.' Only 5 out of 86 departments responded; a second attempt netted 8 of 86. At the same time, the members that were part of both societies (the Société française pour l'abolition de l'esclavage had largely replaced the Société de las morale chrétienne in anti-slavery influence/activities by this time) submitted a petition to the upper house in favor of emancipation.

Anti-slavery efforts in the mid-1830s, which consisted of petitions and appeals to departmental councils, appear to have had some effect, however limited. They had shown some ability to publicize their efforts in the press and to lobby ministries. Yet, they were hindered by government measures that blocked public meetings, and "unlike in Britain, French opinion remained distant from the slavery question." The years 1835-1837 had clarified the positions of pro-slavery and anti-slavery forces – the pro-slavery forces had accepted eventual emancipation and would not defend slavery, but would delay for as long as possible. Abolitionists' opinions changed repeatedly and the one they were unified on was that emancipation would be gradual and cautious. Both sides would be cautious. The

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1740 Jennings, Lawrence. *French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 87-89. There were two new ordinances passed in May 1836 – one that re-assured (given past laws) that any slave brought to the mainland would be free; the other facilitated the freeing of slaves by regulating the process. Still, this wasn't getting them closer to emancipation – "the government's proposals were still limited to amelioration, preparation, and manumission, rather than emancipation, and would remain so for the remainder of the regime."
government decided that it would wait to see the outcome of British emancipation before taking any decisive action itself. The reports that came back from the British colonies suggested there was good reason to be cautious. The results of emancipation varied; the slaves' conditions had generally been improved, but emancipation had been an economic failure. Determined not to repeat Britain's mistakes, the July Monarchy contented itself with commissions, reports, and postponement.

1840-1848

International events would intervene to subvert public opinion against slavery in 1839-1840. Britain and France had achieved a thawing of relations in the 1830s, but this came to an end over the Egypt Crisis. In July 1839 Mehmet Ali, Pasha of Egypt rebelled against the Ottoman Sultan. Most great powers backed the Sultan, but France backed Ali. The French press reacted by returning to their traditional Anglophobia, and this proved an impediment to the abolitionist movement that had always been so closely identified with the British. Further, the crisis led to a new government, led by Thiers, which was largely devoid of abolitionists. Then, Britain's seizures of suspected French slave ships in 1840 and 1841 sparked more Anglophobia.

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British articles dominated the French newspapers during this period; the tension over right-of-search had returned. 1752 As Jennings notes, "by churning up French nationalistic sentiment, it [the right-of-search controversy] was also alienating Frenchmen from the British emancipation model. As a result, even staunch supporters of slave liberation in France were having second thoughts about the wisdom of rapid, immediate antislavery measures as advocated by the British." 1753 The period from 1840 to 1843, had been a low point for French emancipationism. There was a bright spark in January 1844, when the Parisian newspaper L’Union issued a petition for immediate abolition. It was then run by other newspapers and ultimately 11 petitions, with nearly 9,000 signatures total were put before the Chamber of Deputies by May 1844. 1754 Sadly, there was no follow-up and the effort died. 1755 The government answered any momentum by passing the Mackau Law, which regulated slavery without having any real effect. 1756 Divisions were mounting inside abolitionist circles, as more radical activists pushed for immediate emancipation. 1757

The right-of-search tensions were settled in 1845 and abolitionists commenced a petitioning campaign in 1846. The first petition (300 signatures) was put before the Chamber of Deputies in September 1846. This effort was followed up with 24 petitions from Paris and 39 from other towns sent by April 1847. Most had relatively few signatures (from a few dozen up to


about 300), but still, this was progress as far as French popular mobilization goes. The Chamber of Peers near unanimously rejected the petitions, but the Deputies did accept them. The petitions sparked a dissension between Minister Guizot and the Navy-Colonial Minister, and in that sense, it was a loss for the colonialists.1758

Even the success caused tension inside abolitionist circles. Yet, overall, this was a period of positive momentum. By summer 1847, it appears the Société française pour l'abolition de l'esclavage had finally resigned itself to an immediate emancipation.1759 With assistance from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS), abolitionists drew up a new petition for use in the 1848 legislative session.1760 This was a less elitist, more diverse effort.1761 The society called on abolitionists throughout France to form local committees and push for immediate abolition through publications and petitions.1762 Interestingly, this petition "affirmed that French honor could not permit the nation to remain behind Britain, Tunis, Sweden, Valachia, and Egypt, all of which had taken measures of some kind against slavery over the previous dozen years."1763 It further "beseeched daughter societies that might form in the provinces to communicate with Paris, for it acknowledged that until now French anti-slavery had lacked 'unity of action.'"1764

Jennings concludes, "by late 1847 it appears that the French had finally developed a sustained and

multi-faceted petition movement that promised to gather many more signatures for presentation in 1848 than in 1847 or 1844. The elements of an anti-slavery network were finally beginning to coalesce in France.1765

It took another revolution in Paris to finally bring about the abolition of slavery in France.1766 In response to a government shutdown of a large reform banquet, crowds took to the Paris streets in February 1848. Within three days the monarchy fell and the Second Republic was established.1767 After two months of study and debate, the Provisional Government signed an abolition decree on April 27, 1848.1768 The decree ordered emancipation within three months, French citizens everywhere were forbidden to own slaves, and the National Assembly would decide on possible indemnities in the future.1769 There was no national celebration of slavery's end, and popular French anti-slavery activity largely disappeared.1770

With regard to norm cycles, certainly France had norm entrepreneurs; they were predominantly, but not exclusively, elites. The tipping point toward abolition appears to have come in the late 1820s. When the government debated the slave trade enforcement bill in 1827, speakers were largely in agreement that the public had had enough of turning a blind eye to the trade, and an even more forceful anti-trade measure in 1830 met little resistance. The French waited and watched as Britain emancipated her West Indian slaves, and by the period 1835-1837,

it was clear to anti-slavery and pro-slavery forces alike that French slaves too would be emancipated eventually. The public was not mobilized for emancipation during most of the 1840s, although the movement was making popular inroads by the time the revolution occurred in 1848. In the end, though, it appears that just as the French abolition movement was predominantly orchestrated by elites, it would take a revolution and political maneuvers in the wake of that revolution to ultimately emancipate the slaves. In that vein, the domestic politics of French antislavery will be discussed in detail in future chapters.

Table 5.2. A Summary of French Abolitionism

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<td>Emancipation's Internalization:</td>
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<td>1845-1848?*</td>
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* It is difficult to pinpoint the tipping point and internalization of emancipation. The movement against slavery was becoming more popularized in the late 1840s, but full internalization likely did not come until years later.

Part II – The Normative Movement in the United States

The previous chapter discussed the rise of British abolitionism, and in doing so, made significant and appropriate reference to fledgling activity in the United States, led particularly by the Quakers. In a sense, Anglo-American abolitionism is inextricably related. As historian Christopher Leslie Brown states, "the campaigns emerged from a shared set of conditions – a dynamic interplay of politics, ideology, and values."\(^{1771}\) Both British and newly-independent Americans took pride in civic institutions, common law, and protection of individuals. There was an abundance of institutions, what is today considered civil society, in both countries – free

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newspapers, religious networks, clubs, etc.; "in short," as Seymour Drescher concludes, "Anglo-Americans shared the most highly developed public sphere on the face of the earth." And yet, the Revolution sent these two countries off on their individual, albeit, interrelated courses. The last chapter recounted the normative movement to bring about abolition and emancipation in Britain; but what of Britain's American cousins? While we know that Britain eventually achieved abolition/emancipation without bloodshed and America's fate was vastly different, this section examines what happened to its normative movement after independence.

**The Revolutionary Period to 1800**

The North American rebels couched their revolt in terms of universal principles and natural rights. Consistent with these concepts, in 1774 the First Continental Congress proposed a series of sanctions to cut economic ties to Britain that included ending the slave trade. This ban was supported by the Second Continental Congress in 1776 as well. The ban was some part moral objection and likely a more significant part "vigorous resistance to British authority." The first critical American document – the Declaration of Independence – stated the rebels held certain "truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." If Jefferson (a slave owner himself) had had his way, the passage would have included this passage (a draft ultimately excluded):

> He [the King] has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither... Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought & sold, he has

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prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce.1776

The passage was deleted, Jefferson concluded, in deference to South Carolina and Georgia and as historian Don E. Fehrenbacher asserts, "Jefferson's paragraph may have been especially disturbing to many southerners because, unlike the earlier resolutions of Congress on the subject, it was written in a tone of moral denunciation that could easily extend beyond the slave trade to the institution of slavery itself."1777

Talking of freedom while brewing a revolution is one thing, actually implementing a truly free society, particularly one in which large numbers of Africans – perceived to be inferior – resided, was something else. As Robert William Fogel notes, "the quandary between the natural rights of masters and of slaves made it difficult to turn rhetorical declarations against slavery into concrete action."1778 Apparently all men were created equal, but slaves were also protected property and it was best not to dive into the issue if the rebels could help it; clearly there was enough on their plates. First things first – if the rebels could successfully pull off a revolution, they would then deal with turning their inspiring words into practical implementation. In the short term, the abolitionist Quakers were isolated due to their pacifist beliefs, and the Pennsylvania antislavery society they had helped establish would go stagnant from 1775 to 1784.1779

The slavery issue did rear its head in a more practical manner during the Revolution,1780 as warfare on the continent disrupted plantation discipline and the British reached out to slaves as

allies, offering them freedom in return for bearing arms against the rebellion. The Continental Congress approached the slave issue pragmatically, also enlisting slaves and offering eventual manumission when it was in desperate need of additional troops.  Many northern states abolished slavery during and immediately after the Revolution. Such moves were not particularly destructive economically for northern states, but another aspect tends to get downplayed – there was widespread racism, security concerns, and fear of "tainting" the cultures through overpopulation. These concerns existed, north and south, but the northern racism tends to get downplayed. Many national leaders thought the United States would be a wholly better place without the blight of slavery; a better place if not housing a population of blacks, whom "most white leaders associated with all the defects, mistakes, sins, shortcomings, and animality of an otherwise perfect nation." The Americans – who had espoused these inalienable rights as a cause for revolution – would have some internal examination to do if they were indeed capable of attaining independence. If there were in fact inalienable rights for all men, then the accepted practice of slavery was a "fraud."

**Constitutional Struggle**

Having defeated the British governmental system, the Americans were faced with establishing their own. The future of slavery in America was very much in doubt, and would ultimately hinge on the Constitution. Events didn't bode well even before debate on the

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Constitution began in earnest. The Confederation Congress approved the peace treaty that ended the war in 1783; one clause of this treaty stated the British should withdraw from the United States without "carrying away any negroes or other property of the American inhabitants." Note the concept of slaves as property. Additionally, with the end of war came revival of the economy, with New England providing most of slave trading ships and the Carolinas and Georgia getting most of the imports. Efforts to end the trade would likely have caused alarm in many sectors.

Then, in 1784 the Confederation Congress had to deal with problem of slavery in the new territories. A bill drafted by a Jefferson-led sub-committee proposed ending the slave trade to these regions by 1800, stating "after the year 1800 of the Christian era, there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any of the said states, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted to have been personally guilty." The clause was eventually removed and the 1784 ordinance didn't mention slavery. The issue of slavery in the territories would prove a lasting conundrum.

When the Constitutional Convention met to improve the Articles of the Confederation (eventually they would decide to build an entirely new Constitution) in 1787, most states had their own legislation against the trade and few delegates felt the slave trade needed to be dealt with at the national level. The example of Benjamin Franklin is telling: he was both a delegate and the President of Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, but he felt it inappropriate to broach slavery at this meeting. Nonetheless, slavery did play a prominent role in

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1788 Fehrenbacher, Don E. The Slaveholding Republic. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 25. Thus it was a casual acceptance of blacks as "property."
the negotiations.1793 In trying to determine proper methods of representation, lower southerners (particularly South Carolinians) argued that slaves produced wealth and ought to be represented in government, which is "instituted primarily for the protection of property." Pennsylvania delegates argued that any representation of slaves would be illogical, unacceptable to Pennsylvania, and would encourage the trade.1795 Delegates struck the 3/5 Compromise – not to call slaves 3/5 persons, but rather, as a compromise between giving Southern states no representation "credit" for their slave "property" and giving them full representation for their slave populations.1796

Another critical convention topic related to oversight of international and inter-state commerce, and hence involved the slave trade. Most delegates believed this role fell to the national government, but Southerners feared Northern factions would use that power to restrict southern commerce (and the slave trade).1797 John Routledge of South Carolina put forward a platform that would clearly benefit the South and prohibited Congress from ever prohibiting the slave trade or taxing such activity.1798 This sparked rebuke from several circles, and elicited a most powerful denunciation of slavery from Governor Morris of Pennsylvania, who called slavery a "nefarious institution," and "the curse of heaven' on the states wherein it prevailed."1799 Nonetheless, the Convention eventually decided to compromise and delay judgment on the slave


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trade until 1808.\textsuperscript{1800} Frankly, with the war over, popular interest in the fate of slavery declined significantly.\textsuperscript{1801}

The deliberations at the Constitutional Convention and subsequent factional fighting that these debates spawned will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. One would note several details pertinent to this chapter here, however: first, there were already northern factions suggesting moral revulsion to slavery and the slave trade. Second, there was already southern resistance, particularly from the lower south, to any measure that insinuated moral repugnance or could eventually lead to national curtailment of the institution. Finally, when there came a choice between national unity and the issue of slavery, at this point, national unity prevailed.\textsuperscript{1802} As Don E. Fehrenbacher states, "in direct confrontation, the proslavery determination of certain delegates, notably the South Carolinians, usually proved somewhat stronger than the diffuse antislavery sentiment of many others."\textsuperscript{1803} Between 1784 and 1791, abolitionist societies were organized in all states except for the Carolinas and Georgia, but nonetheless, in its totality, the Constitutional Convention had weakened the antislavery movement in America.\textsuperscript{1804}

\textbf{1790s – Country Before Cause}

The first abolitionist agitation against slavery at the national level came in 1790, and the result would reveal "both the potential explosiveness of the question and the reluctance of almost all legislators to pursue issues related to slavery."\textsuperscript{1805} "In the first federal Congress in 1790, the Society of Friends from Pennsylvania and New York, supported by another appeal from the Pennsylvania Abolition Society (signed by Benjamin Franklin), petitioned Congress to curb the

slave trade and to consider the condition of those in perpetual bondage. They worded the petition gingerly, asking Congress to "step to the very verge of the power vested in you" and "to countenance the restoration of liberty to those unhappy men, who alone, in this land of freedom are degraded into perpetual bondage. The reaction of the Southern states was swift and virulent. This was a "weathervane pointing at the storms to come. The lower Southern states reacted with fury, treating the petitions as tantamount to calls for civil war. "Above all, they reacted against the implication that slavery itself was morally wrong. Congressman James Jackson of Georgia "asserted that slavery was not only allowed by the Savior but positively commended by the Bible." The petitioners were put on the defensive, and critically, no northern Congressmen argued in their defense; the impression was clear: petitions against the slavery issue were not welcome before Congress.

Petitions were put forth again in 1791 and 1792, receiving no response. In 1793 the Pennsylvania Society of Friends decided to suspend their petition campaign until a time when a better response could be expected. In 1794, a conference of nine abolitionist societies called the American Abolition Convention decided strategically to argue against the trade between

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Africa and foreign powers. This was an issue that clearly fell within the national government's purview. They gathered intelligence on how such a petition would be received by Congress; the answer returned was that the movement would get full consideration in return for assurance that abolitionists would not attempt to further curtail the slave trade or other issues that would limit "the rights of private property' within the United States." The law prohibiting American citizens from participating in the trade to foreign possessions passed in 1794. It appears that pro-slavery forces accepted this modest bill, which had no impact domestically and suggested little overt moral condemnation of the institution, as an acceptable measure in return for an expected quelling of abolitionist activity. It worked. Abolitionists had taken on the one aspect of the trade they felt vulnerable, and then after that there was no organized activity for the rest of the 1790s. Little literature was produced in the state abolitionist societies either. This first round of abolitionist forays in the new United States had been most effectively blunted.

Abolitionism in Retreat – 1800-1830

In America, the Revolution had a repressive influence on many of the influences and forces that were pushing antislavery forward in Britain during the same period. The sudden concentration of power into the hands of committed rationalists, the tendency for Quakers, Anglicans, and Methodists to be identified as loyalists, and the perils besetting devout mystics in other denominations who failed to embrace fully the Revolutionary spirit all combined to repress evangelical fervor. For most denominations the Revolutionary era and the early years of the new

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nation were a period of decline," if temporary ones.\textsuperscript{1821} Churches lacked vitality and most of their attention was spent on internal theological struggles and consolidating congregations.\textsuperscript{1822}

By early 1803 all states had prohibited the further introduction of black slaves.\textsuperscript{1823} The country had come to consensus that it was best not to import more slaves, not so much because there developed as yet a predominant normative movement against the slave trade (although some circles were certainly repulsed by the practice), but because slavery was less economically important in the north, new slaves were less needed in the south due to natural reproduction rates there, and all territories felt better if the percentages of Africans were kept at a manageable level.\textsuperscript{1824} Drescher summarizes: "the implicit national and racialist consensus against further migrants of African descent, whether slave or free, appears to have been accepted without dissent."\textsuperscript{1825} Given this consensus, it's no surprise that slave trade abolition passed without much fanfare at the conclusion of the end of the twenty year moratorium on discussion in 1807.\textsuperscript{1826} But again, when any government or civilian organization pressed against the slave trade in a way deemed threatening to Southern interests, those interests dug in their heels. For example, when federal authorities attempted to enforce anti-slave trade measures in Charleston South Carolina in 1803, the legislature reacted by re-opening the slave trade.\textsuperscript{1827} As had happened before and would

happen again elsewhere, Southern merchants stocked up on slaves in the lead up to national abolition in 1807.  

American civil society was subdued in the lead-up to abolition. There was "almost no pressure from antislavery societies or the press" and little celebration once it passed. In fact, there were no published contemporary accounts of the slave trade's abolition. The lopsided vote in favor of slave trade abolition demonstrated that the nation at large was overwhelmingly opposed to further importations of Africans." Still, Southerners weren't ready to admit slavery was evil; any discussion "that tended to imply a moral condemnation of the institution elicited a new outburst of threats of disunion from the lower Southern States." African-American communities celebrated abolition the most, but even they were told by authorities to steer clear of implying slavery was a sin, not to disrupt the peace, and they were to be reminded that slave trade had done a lot of good for "multitudes... brought from the darkness of paganism, to a Christian land."

Nonetheless, "abolitionist attempts to impair the effectiveness of slavery through congressional action had come to naught... the proslavery bloc in Congress won decisive victories in every major confrontation with the antislavery bloc." The stringent Fugitive Slave Act was particularly important legislation, among many, that served the proslavery cause. The losses inside Congress tended to demoralize abolitionists and activists in upper southern states stood

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alone against an increasingly capable proslavery faction. Toward the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century, only the abolition societies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware were still active, and they were 'weak and discouraged.' The church-based forces that had provided ideological support, fervor, and personnel to the movement were hurting during this period as well. In short, "the question of slavery itself did not take hold on any significant scale among the general public in the early nineteenth century." In contrast, slavery was increasingly entrenched in the South and gave rise to pro-slavery lobby that could forcefully counteract abolitionist activities. "The power of the southern states, in the national government was such that every attempt to pass legislation limiting slavery was decisively defeated in the first two decades of the republic's history."

Despite the setbacks, ardent abolitionists continued to look for new ways to counter slavery. Quakers continued to work against the practice, and one of their oldest schemes to reduce slavery – colonization – came into the fore in the years after abolition of the trade. Prominent abolitionists like Anthony Benezet, as well as non-Quakers like Sharp, Macaulay, and Wilberforce endorsed colonization, in part because they believed blacks would always have problems assimilating and in part because they thought it an effective method of evangelization.

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1841 Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract.* New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989: 251-252. Sharp, Macaulay and other members of the so-called "Clapham Sect" had established the Sierra Leone Company to return blacks to Africa and show that Africans could succeed economically and culturally if given the chance.
The American Colonization Society (ACS) was established in 1817.\textsuperscript{1842} The organization hoped to send free blacks and those that would be free back to Africa with help from federal and state governments. The ACS was able to rally the largest mobilization of free blacks prior to the emergence of radical abolitionism, but over time, most blacks rejected the opportunity to leave the United States and return to Africa.\textsuperscript{1843} James Forten, a wealthy African American, rallied blacks against the ACS; in fact, a January 1817 rally of 3,000 blacks against the ACS in Philadelphia would be remembered when plans of colonization were proffered in later years.\textsuperscript{1844}

The mobilization of colonization societies helped re-invigorate abolitionism nonetheless, and they were particularly important in the Southern border states. The state legislatures in Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia endorsed these schemes initially.\textsuperscript{1845} Colonization societies were careful not to cause alarm in proslavery circles or suggest slavery was illegal, although the ultimate goal was to increase manumission and eventual elimination of servitude.\textsuperscript{1846} Ardent abolitionists like Quaker Benjamin Lundy thought this approach might work, or at least it would create a favorable environment for full-scale abolitionist campaigns.\textsuperscript{1847}

"During the decade of the 1820s both colonization societies and more openly abolitionist societies greatly increased in number and membership," but ultimately the fierce reaction by proslavery

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forces stymied their efforts and it was becoming clear that these efforts wouldn't work.\textsuperscript{1848} In fact, historian Don E. Fehrenbacher asserts that the country as a whole was resigning itself to the acceptability of slavery. He writes:

the nation's fundamental creed underwent a subtle transformation. During the Missouri debates \textsuperscript{1849} [1819-1820], the presumed national purpose of spreading the blessings of liberty had been frequently raised by northerners engendering a southern response that the founding national vision embedded in the Declaration of Independence was a mere 'fanfaronade of metaphysical abstractions.' Following the Missouri Compromise, Americans in general, other than those of a firm antislavery persuasion, seemed to subscribe to a new southern understanding that the Declaration of Independence did not in fact proclaim universal human rights, but rather applied to whites alone. Indeed, during the decade following the crisis, the Jacksonian movement celebrated an equality reserved for white men only. Gradually, the slaveholding republic came to acquire a revised national ideology suitable for maintaining sectional peace.\textsuperscript{1850}

As Fehrenbacher stated, most Americans didn't think blacks were equal to whites. Nonetheless, if a sustained, popular abolition campaign could develop it would indeed threaten America's sectionalized peace. After all, nearby Canada was a free zone, as were the northern states; and even some of the population in the border states was resigned to eventual emancipation.\textsuperscript{1850}

Certainly the problem of slavery was being debated in Europe, as Seymour Drescher concludes:

A new gap was emerging in Western perceptions of the institution's temporality. Even European conservatives in post-Napoleonic Europe were reconfiguring the history of Europe to demonstrate that the great expansion of European overseas slavery was an anomaly, an aberration within the long durée of Christianity. The increasing currency in the South of references to their 'domestic institution' reflected a paradigmatic shift. In civil law tradition, slavery was axiomatically held contrary to the law of nature, but conventional in the law of nations. Its position within the laws of 'civilized nations' was now under siege.\textsuperscript{1851}

By the late 1820s, radical abolitionism was just around the corner in America and this would lay further siege to southern slavery. In 1829, free African-American David Walker's publication \textit{Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World} [and]... \textit{especially those of the United States} shocked northerners and southerners alike by claiming the sin of slavery would be avenged by

\textsuperscript{1848} Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract}. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989: 253-254. "After more than a decade of effort, under 1,500 blacks had been settled in Liberia, and very few of them were manumitted slaves."

\textsuperscript{1849} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 265-266.


divine justice.\textsuperscript{1852} The deep South was still vehemently against any measure that might even hint at eroding their slave system. "From the lower South came an intensifying counterpoint of vociferous dissent arising from the existential fact that slavery was now a problem in search of practical resolution almost everywhere in Western civilization."\textsuperscript{1853}

**The 1830s – Revivalism and Immediatism**

A new abolitionist movement developed in the early 1830s.\textsuperscript{1854} This was aided in part by the religious revival known as the Second Great Awakening, which developed in the late 1700s, surged in the 1820s and 1830s, and continued into the 1850s.\textsuperscript{1855} This movement was sparked by changes in Calvanist/Congregational/Presbyterian theology (which stressed salvation through struggle against sin and corruption) and the rise of the Methodist and Baptists denominations in America.\textsuperscript{1856} In the 1830s, these religious transitions became increasingly important politically as the new evangelical wave aggressively countered deism, developed powerful societies of laymen and clergy, and the evangelical vigor hit every corner of the country as the population continued its move westward.\textsuperscript{1857} "The enormous success of the united front of missionary and educational organizations in reviving religious zeal led evangelicals to return to their broader goal of shaping

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\textsuperscript{1856} The First Great Awakening was the revivalist movement in New England in the 1730s to 1760s.


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the moral and political character of the American nation.\textsuperscript{1858} The sin of slavery made a natural
target. David Brion Davis notes that abolitionists shared a general conviction that since all men
and women had the capacity to do right they were accountable for their actions, that the evils of
society degrade men, and that the goal of all reform is to free men from manipulation.\textsuperscript{1859}

This abolitionist movement that developed in the 1830s was the first to take sustainable
hold in multiple factions. "The emergence of an abolitionist crusade required not just an idea, and
not just a corps of missionaries ready to spread the idea, but a public ready to receive it. By the
mid-1830s such a public existed in the evangelical churches of New England" and the Northern
settlers spreading out across the country.\textsuperscript{1860} This new crusade consisted of three main groups: the
American Anti-Slavery Society (AAS) developed at the end of 1833 (led by Arthur and Lewis
Tappan and allied with Theodore Weld); almost all the people in this faction were
Congregationalists, many taking part in the temperance movement.\textsuperscript{1861} The most influential group
was led by William Lloyd Garrison, who founded the \textit{Liberator} in 1831 and the New England
Anti-Slavery Society in 1832.\textsuperscript{1862} This group was more diverse religiously and had more ties to
black abolitionists; in fact, this connection is what led Garrison to break with the Colonization

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{1859} Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York,
\bibitem{1862} Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York,
NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 258-259; and Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and
\end{thebibliography}
movement. The third group was led by Gerrit Smith, a wealthy landholder from upstate New York, who was active in the temperance and peace movements.

The collective slogan for all of these groups was immediate emancipation, which suggested gradual abolition had been a failure, a "shield" for slavery and a "compromise with sin." It is no coincidence that this immediatist movement developed in America about the same time emancipation was taking place in Britain. As David Brion Davis notes, "while American politicians exploited a continuing tradition of Anglophobia, American liberals, who prided themselves on their defense of freedom and human rights, were suddenly faced with the fact that the monarchic, aristocratic mother country, long blamed for 'forcing' slavery on the South, had taken the lead in liberating some eight hundred thousand colonial slaves." In fact, American abolitionists would model their movement on Britain, producing distinct similarities and critical differences.

Like the British movement, as Seymour Drescher points out, the American case was "another instance in which a major assault on the system of slavery began at the height of its relative value to the global economy in which it was deeply embedded." Further, like the British "there had already been a long history of American antislavery writing and organization."

Yet, unlike in Britain, American abolitionism lacked a line of continuity running from the 1780s

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efforts to the 1830s; further, many new generation abolitionists failed to recognize the widespread racism that had existed and still did exist in the North.\textsuperscript{1869}

American abolitionists grasped the need to replicate one aspect of Britain's movement—popular organization—from early on. In May 1833 Garrison went to Britain and was impressed with the breadth of activity there; he "hailed British slave-trade abolition 'as an epochal victory of 'right over wrong, of liberty over oppression,' achieved through astonishing feats of organization. By contrast, the United States Abolition Act of 1807 was a grudging fulfillment of a twenty-year-old bargain—a 'silent abolition' without heroes or popular inspiration."\textsuperscript{1870} In many ways, Americans were well-disposed to re-produce the British model. America's civil society was similar: there was a belief in individual agency, ability, as well as the desirability of collective action, all of which would be married to a religious awakening.\textsuperscript{1871} Thus with similar foundations and the British model in mind, the popular movement grew rapidly in America in the 1830s despite strong opposition. By 1838, there were 1,346 local antislavery associations with 100,000 members (in 1840 the population in the North was 9.7 million).\textsuperscript{1872} In 1834 the movement—which included 70 paid leadership positions—distributed 122,000 pieces of literature; this number shot up to 1.1 million in 1835 and 3 million by 1840.\textsuperscript{1873} In many ways, this effort

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dwarfed that of the British;\textsuperscript{1874} as Seymour Drescher writes, "the decentralized organization of British abolitionism was quickly replicated and surpassed in the United States."\textsuperscript{1875}

Abolitionists launched a large petition and pamphlet campaign in 1835. By July 1836 175,000 pamphlets were delivered to the New York City Post Office for delivery to Southern clergy and laymen.\textsuperscript{1876} "The new movement was expected to exert an irresistible moral pressure on slaveholders who would either repent and voluntarily free their slaves, or else be forced to bow to the will of an antislavery majority that was prepared to abolish slavery by law."\textsuperscript{1877} What it actually provoked was a significant Southern backlash. Mobs threatened to burn post offices delivering abolitionist literature, and individuals/organizations offered rewards for killing abolitionist leaders.\textsuperscript{1878} Such revolting acts reinforced the abolitionist message that slavery had corrupted Southern society.\textsuperscript{1879} But the country's sectional divisions were reinforced by the Federal Government. After pro-slavery mobs threatened Southern post offices, the Postmaster-General decided each state could block literature it deemed likely to incite disorder. President Jackson supported the policy, and the division between free and slave territory was reinforced.\textsuperscript{1880}

The abolitionists adopted the petition tactic. By Spring of 1836 antislavery petitions were being circulated from Maine to Ohio. The initial campaign put 35,000 names before Congress; the second wave came at the same time as British emancipation and the number of adherents was


likely in the hundreds of thousands. By the end of 1830s one activist thought there were 2 million signatures on American petitions.¹⁸⁸¹ There were, however, key differences between British and American petitions, as Drescher illuminates:

Unlike British abolitionists, whose petitions were designed to follow the ancient handwritten tradition and local inspiration, American organizers generated printed petitions for rapid circulation. In Britain, where such a high proportion of even adult males were still disenfranchised, petitioning could claim to be a more accurate measure of popular will. Great care was exercised to prevent children from delegitimizing petitions. Unlike the female petitioners in Great Britain, the intrusion of women into abolitionist public sphere in the United States came at the beginning, not the end, of the great antislavery mobilization. In Britain, recognition of the legitimacy of women's signatures had followed thirty-five years of massive petitioning on the subject. Precisely because the adult male suffrage was so broad in the United States, it was clearly evident from the names of the signatories that a majority of the petitioners were not voting citizens, and sometimes included children.¹⁸⁸²

Importantly, Northern politicians weren't supporting the petition campaign. "The petitions of 1835-1838 actually demonstrated that abolitionists did not constitute the northern mainstream of the electorate.¹¹⁸⁸³ Therefore, now the Southerners were no longer willing to accept the petitions and Congressman James Hammond put forward a motion to "bar petitions at the door." For the next eight years (1836-1844), Congress accepted a "gag rule" against even acknowledging that they had been received.¹¹⁸⁸⁴ "Refusal to hear petitions was not just an assault on abolitionism, but on a fundamental Anglo-American link between civil society and the legislature."¹¹⁸⁸⁵ Right of petition had been accepted far longer than other rights, such as freedom of the press. "In major centers of abolition, only a minority (8 to 20 percent) of eligible male voters were willing to subscribe to abolition petitions. That proposition rose to 37 percent when the petition protested

¹¹⁸⁸¹ Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 307. This movement was heavily feminized. Of the 400,000 petitioners in the 1836-1837 campaigns, about 286,000 were female names. In a sampling of 67,000 names found more than 2 to 1 were feminine.
the imposition of the gag rule. Southern lawmakers appeared to be reaching across the sectional
divide and attempting to suppress the institutional liberties of free northerners. 1886

Clearly then, abolitionists in the United States had attempted to follow the British model
of popular mobilization. With regard to numbers and methods, they had mostly matched and
sometimes even exceeded what the British had done. Nonetheless, for all the similarities, the
differences between movements in America and Britain were critical. First, "the sheer magnitude
of the institution of slavery in America had always been the most formidable barrier to
envisioning any practical, peaceful means to its rapid end." 1887 In 1840, the United States
provided 60 percent of the world's cotton. 1888 By 1860, this would rise to 80 percent and this
industry was driven by the approximately 4 million slaves working in the country by that year.
Further, as was already discussed, the slave system was economically effective. 1889 Yes, the South
was under-industrialized compared to the North but compared to the rest of the world it was fairly
advanced. Further, two-thirds of American males with estates over $100,000 in worth lived in
slave states. 1890 Slavery was ingrained and massive, and it paid. Doing comparative calculations
in 1836, James Henry Hammond of South Carolina calculated that the £20 million ($100 million
American) in compensation Britain paid its planters at emancipation was 60 percent of the slave's
market value at the time. He conservatively valued 2.3 million slaves at $400 each in 1836; that
represented $920 million dollars, nine times more than the British compensation fund. Even if

University Press, 2009: 308.
slaveholders took 60 cents on the dollar, the American compensation fund would have had to be 5.5 times greater than its British counterpart.\textsuperscript{1891}

Further, the British had written an emancipation bill that gave slaves full political and social rights. After all, most blacks in Britain were "over there" – in far off lands out of sight and personal contact.\textsuperscript{1892} Britons need not worry about post-emancipation socio-political changes and/or problems. In America, race and racism was a national, not just a sectional issue. In the 1830s racial exclusion happened everywhere, even the North.\textsuperscript{1893} "Some of the major initiatives against slavery such as the ban on African slave imports in 1807 and the launching of the American Colonization Society a decade later, were premised upon a widely shared hostility toward the presence of blacks in America."\textsuperscript{1894} Worries about the post-emancipation future argued against immediate outcomes – people could see that emancipation hadn't led to equality in the northern states and one had to fear the results and possible violence of emancipation in the South.\textsuperscript{1895} As an example of this mindset: upon meeting with leading pro-slavery Senator John C. Calhoun, British abolitionist Joseph Gurney was surprised to find that Calhoun "unreservedly acknowledged the general superiority of freedom over slavery, even from a pecuniary point of view."\textsuperscript{1896} He noted, though, that Britain had been an outside, controlling actor in the process. Calhoun suggested America's republican federation meant there was no equal controlling power and that "whites and blacks were so distinct as races – so incapable in the nature of things of being amicably mixed' that no peace could be maintained between them on any terms other than

\textsuperscript{1891} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery.} New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 296-297. By Drescher's calculations, it was essentially "a sum equal to five times the federal government's annual receipts every two or three years for a century."


'those which already subsisted... that the whites should hold the blacks in slavery.'\textsuperscript{1897} This outlook – in such contrast to the approach in Britain – was certainly prevalent in the South, but also in the North as well. As Drescher writes, "that fifty years of British parliamentary debates had produced almost no allusions to black racial inferiority was a constant counterpoint to American legislative discourse."\textsuperscript{1898} By natural extension, therefore, even though abolitionism was spreading in the 1830s, abolitionists were not received with the same support that British abolitionists eventually accepted. "In Britain, abolitionists were welcomed with respect and crowned by overwhelming success... Abolitionist petitioners were regarded as the voice of the British people."\textsuperscript{1899} Abolitionists in America were, in contrast, linked to national/societal subversion in many circles.\textsuperscript{1900} In Britain, antislavery lectures were usually supported by cheering crowds; in America, they were often received by angry mobs.\textsuperscript{1901} Another difference between American and British abolitionist efforts was the way in which British abolitionists were able to hold the movement together, while American dissension was a critical self-inflicted wound. The various American abolitionist branches were looking to turn this back into a moral crusade, not just the secular/political one it had been since the Revolution.\textsuperscript{1902} This was very much a movement that felt compelled to shock people into understanding the sin of slavery as a means to the end of no less than salvation for black and

\textsuperscript{1900} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 305. In 1835 there were forty-six riots related to slavery, and all but eleven of the riots were directed against abolitionists. The rest were responses to insurrectionary scares.
whites. The weighty nature of this task lent itself to calls for "doctrinal purity" and absolutism. Slavery was a sin to be eradicated – not just, or most importantly, because of Constitutional or economic or political reasons, but simply because it was a sin. Therefore, if slavery was a sin, then those who took part in it must be purged from the church. This would ultimately lead to sectional divisions within church denominations. The first occurred within the Presbyterian Church in 1837 – "old school" churches versus "new school" (abolitionist) congregations in the North. The second split hit the Methodists in 1844, despite the 1836 General Assembly admonishment against abolitionist interference in civil/political activities. The Baptists split in 1845, despite the fact that the northern churches developed a platform that was "equally free from slavery and antislavery." Even after southern churches rebelled and left the larger groups, northern clergy often continued to argue against abolitionism, citing practice, biblical references, and other rationalizations. Clearly, abolitionism threatened church unity and threats to congregational unity would be resisted. Of course these were discouraging to the abolitionists, and for the most radical activists, like Garrison, this was just

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further proof of how sinful corruption had permeated all facets of society – even churches.\textsuperscript{1912} The other abolitionist factions were more willing to move away from fundamentalist theological arguments toward more open, pragmatic, and less threatening appeals.\textsuperscript{1913}

A final difference related not to abolitionist efforts, but to the pro-slavery reaction. In the end, the British model had had a tremendously positive impact on abolitionists' efforts in the United States, but offered an equally worrying model to pro-slavery forces there. It was a double-edged sword. Seymour Drescher states, "slaveholders as well as abolitionists recognized the implications of the fact that no civil war or bloodbath marred the final contest for or implementation of British emancipation. Even South Carolinian leaders in the national legislatures recognized the subversive potential of a long-term moral crusade on the British model. The 'moral power of the world is against us,' Francis Pikens warned his fellow Southern representatives during the first British-style assault on slavery at the end of 1835.\textsuperscript{1914} John C. Calhoun concluded "a contest in which slaveholders were incessantly arraigned before the public opinion of the world would be 'beyond mortal endurance. We must, in the end, be humbled, degraded, broken down, and worn out.'\textsuperscript{1915} In short, even though Southern leaders were by this period largely aware that slavery was normatively problematic, they had seen through the British example that any normative/humanitarian movement must be nipped in the bud, before it gained

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\textsuperscript{1912} Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989: 276-277. "The willingness of northern churchmen to temporize with slavery and their use of the Bible to justify their actions led Garrison to denounce corruption of the clergy and to repudiate certain biblical passages 'as contrary to God's true intent.' The Methodist General Assembly was 'a cage of unclean birds and a synagogue of Satan'; the Baptist clergy behaved as 'sophisticated bigots' and refused to see 'self-evident sin'; the Congregational Church was led by 'clerical despots' and bedfellows 'of the most implacable foes of God and men.'"


any ground whatsoever. American abolitionist calls for immediate emancipation only accentuated the immediacy of the problem. British abolitionists had focused their initial efforts on the trade and only expanded their goals over time. Their American counterparts were taking the opposite approach, and this reinforced pro-slavery forces' understanding of the need to develop forceful counter-movements to lay axe at the root of American abolitionism. As Seymour Drescher writes, the abolitionist petition campaign...

accelerated the development of what came to be known as the proslavery ideology. Whether or not many of its components were largely extrapolations of earlier notions, Southerners clearly developed a more comprehensive defense of the institution and a decidedly more intensive effort to gain regional consensus for upholding slavery as a positive good. A wider range of empirical economic evidence, scientific racial theorizing, and political nationalism was added to the religious, classical, and humanitarian arguments in the apologetic quiver. As the ideas of human progress and the civilizing process deepened their hold on the Western imagination, Southerners sought to fit the development of their own slaveholding societies into the new metanarrative of European development. One of the outstanding characteristics of slavery's defenders in the U.S. South is that their arguments became increasingly unyielding and pervasive. In most other Western societies after the age of revolution, even those who benefited most from an institution of personal bondage tended to become less inclined to defend it as a positive good. They approached their systems of bondage as temporary and inherited problems, focusing on the most orderly, if often the most extended, means of ending the institution. In no other society was the institution of slavery to become as central to the communities [sic] self-definition as in some of the writings of U.S. southerners. Under increasingly systematic attack, they developed an increasingly systematic apologetic. By the end of the 1830s, the future of the movement was becoming clear to both sides. The sectional divide was increasingly obvious. No constituency in the South would support anti-slavery's right to preach or petition for emancipation. Southern pro-slavery forces were increasingly recalcitrant against any activity that gave the slightest hint of curtailing slavery as an institution. Abolitionists were, for their part, divided. Some crusading radicals pressed even more drastic measures, and others became increasingly convinced that only some sort of final

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"cataclysm" would end slavery.\textsuperscript{1920} Still others developed a more moderate, political approach to ending slavery. This would become ever-more important in the 1840s and especially the 1850s.\textsuperscript{1921} As Seymour Drescher writes, "by the end of 1838, the contrast in outcomes [between American and British popular campaigns] was both clear and devastating. Hundreds of thousands of signatures could not do in Washington what they had done in London."\textsuperscript{1922} "It was the ballot, not the petition," that would be the "ultimate identifier" of public opinion in America.\textsuperscript{1923} In other words, given the sectional divide and development of American politics, a popular abolitionism alone would not prevail. The effort to end slavery in the United States would ultimately have to be a (abolitionist-supported) political one. Abolitionists would have to develop some kind of congealed, cohesive political platform to force the slavery issue to a political head. They would do so through a forceful mixing of abolitionist principles with hot-button political issues (slavery in the territories, the annexation of Texas, California's entry into the Union, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, the Dred Scott decision of 1857) and through development of political alliances (the small Liberty Party through the Free Soil and Republican Parties) that ultimately fractured the country's two-party system, brought the Republican Party to victory in 1860, and thereby sparked the Civil War that would end slavery in the United States in the 1860s.\textsuperscript{1924}

\textsuperscript{1923} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 310. "Voter turnout in America rose to its extraordinary nineteenth-century heights during the generation after 1836. Between 1840 and 1860, almost every presidential election brought between two-thirds and three-quarters of the eligible electorate to the polls. In many states of the cotton South, the turnout was usually higher. In every off-year election between 1838 and 1858, the South exceeded the North in the percentage of its electorate that cast its vote."
This study will suspend its discussion of America's popular abolitionist campaign here – at the end of the 1830s – and return to it in the next chapter on domestic politics. Interestingly, of all the normative movements discussed in this chapter, the one in the United States probably most closely resembled that of Britain. Norm entrepreneurs were clearly able to use a popular campaign to spread anti-slavery ideas to a large swath of the population. However, the unique development of America's immense, sectionalized slave system prevented an effective popular anti-slavery mobilization from effecting change throughout the country and via the channels of representative government. It was clear to abolitionists during the 1830s that any popular movement would have to enmesh itself with political realities in order to effect real change. How they did so will be discussed in the next chapter. As we know from history, despite a robust normative movement it took a bloody Civil War to end slavery in the United States.1925

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.3. A Summary of American Abolitionism to 1840</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>American Abolitionist Movement to 1840: A Summary</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nature of Movement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular, broad-based in the North, following and at times exceeding the British model; repressed in the South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factors Aiding the Movement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Philosophical history (lineage with Britain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relatively open public sphere and representative democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Natural Reproduction Rate among Slaves (the slave trade was a secondary issue and could be abolished with little argument)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factors Hindering the Movement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Structure of government and implementation of U.S. Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sectionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relatively representative democracy (because of structure and sectionalism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Natural Reproduction Rate of Slaves (slave trade was a secondary issue and could be abolished without delving into the horror and unacceptability of the practice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Magnitude and Success of Slavery as an Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trade's Abolition Tipping Point:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800 (certainly by 1807-1808), but not primarily for normative reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abolition's Internalization:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 1810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emancipation's Tipping Point:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Be Determined*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emancipation's Internalization:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Be Determined*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1925 The decision to end the exclusive discussion of the normative movement in the United States at the beginning of the 1840s is in keeping with the practice of some of the most noted historians in the field. For example, see for example Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract.* New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989; and Davis, David Brion. *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006.
Part III – Normative Movements in Spain and her Colonial Possessions

Table 5.4. Cuban Cane Sugar as Percentage of World Production, 1820-1900\textsuperscript{1926}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>13.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>18.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>20.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>28.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>31.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>42.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>32.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>24.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>5.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this examination turns to the Spanish Empire, it is important to remind ourselves of where Spain and her most prominent colonies stood regarding the slave trade and the institution of slavery. The first years of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century produced the abolition of the British trade and rebellion in French Saint-Domingue; these two developments led directly to the growth of the Spanish and Brazilian slave systems.\textsuperscript{1927} Cuba had gone from a minor possession to the "jewel of the Spanish crown."\textsuperscript{1928} "The island developed into the world's premier sugar export economy, and constant technological innovation made it the most productive and profitable as well."\textsuperscript{1929} Cuba was at its most prosperous in the mid-1830s – 1833-1838 – as the end of slavery in British colonies forced Jamaica off the scene.\textsuperscript{1930}

Puerto Rico had swung into sugar production later than Cuba, but benefited from the slavery/sugar nexus in the first four decades of the 19th century just as Cuba did.\textsuperscript{1931} Cuban and Puerto Rican elites had similar outlooks on slavery until 1840s, despite the fact that Cuban imports and total slave population dwarfed that of Puerto Rico.\textsuperscript{1932} The eventual divergence between the two colonies will be discussed in further detail later, but suffice to say that for most of the first half of the 19th century, slavery was a thriving, accepted system that sparked the economic development of both colonies.

Table 5.5. Slave Imports to Cuba, 1791-1870\textsuperscript{1933}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1791-1800</td>
<td>69,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801-1810</td>
<td>74,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811-1820</td>
<td>168,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821-1830</td>
<td>83,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831-1840</td>
<td>181,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841-1850</td>
<td>50,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851-1860</td>
<td>121,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861-1870</td>
<td>31,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 780,000

Table 5.6. Populations of Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1817-1862\textsuperscript{1934}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Free Blacks</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1817</td>
<td>239,830</td>
<td>114,058</td>
<td>199,145</td>
<td>553,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>311,051</td>
<td>106,494</td>
<td>286,946</td>
<td>704,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>425,767</td>
<td>149,226</td>
<td>323,759</td>
<td>898,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>793,484</td>
<td>232,433</td>
<td>370,553</td>
<td>1,396,470</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population of Puerto Rico

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Free Blacks</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>102,432</td>
<td>106,460</td>
<td>21,730</td>
<td>211,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>190,699</td>
<td>126,399</td>
<td>41,818</td>
<td>358,836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>216,833</td>
<td>175,791</td>
<td>51,265</td>
<td>443,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>300,430</td>
<td>241,015</td>
<td>41,736</td>
<td>583,308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Most historians conclude that there was no effective normative/ideological movement against the slave trade and slavery in the Spanish empire until the last decades before emancipation.\textsuperscript{1935} While this is generally accepted it would be a mistake to not at least touch on some of the forerunners to the movement that eventually developed there. There were humanitarian abolitionists in Spain and her colonial possessions – Cuba and Puerto Rico most importantly – but they were confined primarily to intellectual elites and a very few religious figures.\textsuperscript{1936} Protestant denominations had little to no power in Spain and her possessions. Catholicism was the religious authority and attempts at Protestant evangelization were squelched.\textsuperscript{1937} With regard to anti-slavery arguments, Catholic "clergy were conspicuous by their absence. With rare exceptions, neither in Spain nor Cuba did they take up the abolitionist cause."\textsuperscript{1938} Historian Arthur Corwin has openly questioned the lack of official Catholic anti-slavery agitation, particularly given the fact that Spanish theologians like Las Casas and Sepúlveda had argued for Native American rights in the 1500s. As Corwin wrote, "it is intriguing to ponder why a nation with precedents of this kind should be so indifferent to the cause of the Negro slave."\textsuperscript{1939} Yet, "nowhere in the study of Spain's problem of Negro slavery does one find a protest of religious conscience equal to, say, that of the Quakers."\textsuperscript{1940}

The slave trade was ostensibly abolished, under British pressure, by Spain in 1817 and again in 1835. Nonetheless, slavery was accepted in every corner of Spanish Cuba and her other

\begin{footnotes}


\end{footnotes}
possessions. Slavery was not uniformly important in the colonies (as shown by the graphics above, it was much more important in Cuba than Puerto Rico), but even where it had negligible importance "few people questioned its legality or desirability."

Further, like in the United States and Brazil, the inferiority of Africans was an accepted maxim. As historian Laird Bergard states, "in Cuba and Brazil there were few doubts about condescending and racist attitudes toward slaves and free people of color. There was fairly universal agreement among whites, especially the power elites, that peoples of African descent were inferior because of race and thus not deserving of full participation in political, economic, and social institutions." Further, unlike in the United States, which was born out of a revolution for individual freedom, there was no concept of democracy in monarchist Spain and its territories. Again, Bergard sums up this ideological outlook perfectly, stating there was a "nearly complete absence of democratic myths and symbols that could have raised any doubt among elites who wielded power about their assumptions of a natural hierarchical social order in which all men were not created equal, especially those of color." If anything, the one key issue that pushed for abolition of the trade, as we shall see, was that belief of inferiority and the desire to have a more uniform, civilized, "white" culture in Cuba. But that said, the most powerful sectors of Cuban colonial society and the Spanish merchant class were all tied to the slave system via the production/sale of sugar, coffee, and the slave trade that sustained nearly all the Cuban elites.

Silenced Ideas and the Forerunners of Abolitionism

The person perhaps most identified with the seedlings of Cuban anti-slave trade ideas was José Antonio Saco. Saco was a young Cuban Creole (person born in New World) educated in the ideas of the enlightenment and coming to prominence in Cuba, like other liberals, in the late 1820s and early 1830s.1446 These Creole liberals came to see the slave trade as a way for Spain to hold onto power there. Increasingly, intellectual Creoles became associated with reform and Cuban nationalism, while Peninsulares (born in Spain) were seen as traditionalists beholden to the crown.1447 Saco and other liberal intellectuals spoke out against the slave trade in the late 1820s and early 1830s.1448 “Saco condemned the slave trade for various reasons, and there is no question that humanitarian ideas and European-inspired liberalism and abolitionism influenced his thinking.”1449 As José Luis Alfonso wrote in the 1830s that "while slavery was productive for Antillean planters, it was becoming politically and ideologically indefensible in the broader Atlantic world, as slave rebellions and abolitionist movements challenged not only the legitimacy but also the very existence of slavery and slave trade."1450 Still, he and other liberals such as Saco, were most concerned with the future demographics of Cuba and fear of possible slave revolts as Africans kept arriving to the island in droves.1451 They believed the increasing number of slaves hurt Cuba's potential for freedom/independence because the high volume of slaves increased the threat of insurrection, which in turn led to legitimization of Spanish control.1452 Therefore, Saco

1446 Corwin, Arthur F. Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 56. Corwin lists figures such as Delmonte, Caballero, Escobedo and others.
and others pushed for Cuba to be better represented back on the Spanish peninsula and for the end of the slave trade.1953 These liberals certainly weren't suggesting ending slavery. After all, they too felt that Africans were inferior and they wanted to develop a more civilized, European-style society in Cuba; but they did suggest that an end to the slave trade should be considered.1954 Nonetheless, as Corwin notes, "the few Creoles... who might have been capable of cultivating an abolitionist sentiment were ignored, silenced, or exiled" during this period.1955 Saco, for his part, was permanently exiled from Cuba in 1834.1956 From this period on, the Spanish government saw antislavery ideology as a threat to their sovereignty, wrapped up with liberalism, Creole patriotism, and other subversive ideologies. Antislavery was further seen as a British-inspired concept and for this reason too, it was resented and suppressed.1957

These liberal ideas were only circulated among small group of intellectuals and some progressive planters; the Spanish colonial regime did not permit public debate of any sort and the press was tightly controlled.1958 Most people were illiterate, there was no antislavery preaching in Catholic circles, no Protestant voices to speak of, and therefore, any vocal opponents of slavery were quickly silenced.1959 As Laird Bergard states, "The Cuban anti-slave trade movement had produced very little since its first appearance in the 1820s and 1830s except for the marginal

1954 Corwin, Arthur F. Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 57; and Bergard, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 275. "Cuban liberals adhered to racist conceptualizations of Africans and their descendants, and these were bound together with anti-slave trade rhetoric. Indeed, racism was widespread among the white population of all social classes, and the fear of Africanization could be used to appeal to elites and masses alike."
1955 Corwin, Arthur F. Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 57. He mentions Arango, who sent communications to the government from 1828 to 1832 urging the end of the traffic and better treatment of the slaves, but whose efforts were "filed away and never known outside official circles."
circulation of unpopular and unacceptable ideas in both Cuba and Spain. It is not surprising, then, that little public support emerged for progressive ideas, and no political movement of any significance developed against slavery in Cuba.

A Suppressed Public, 1840-1850

As mentioned, the Spanish government signed a new treaty with Britain outlawing the slave trade to her dominion in 1835 (it essentially echoed the same abolition sentiment of the treaty they had signed in 1817). The treaty changed the tactics used (less open use of the Spanish flag, more subterfuge, etc), but certainly did not end the trade. Progressives had significant influence in Queen Isabella's Court and not only did Spain ostensibly end the trade, Isabella issued a royal decree in March 1836 that ended whatever remained (which wasn't much) of the institution of slavery on the Spanish mainland that year as well. This was the official stance, but every Spanish official received a "rake-off" from the slave trade to the Caribbean in return for looking the other way toward non-compliance with the treaties. Some Progressives went so far as to develop a plan for gradual abolition throughout the empire, but it was never discussed in official government channels. The slave trade went on, and the royal decree had no impact on Spanish colonies. As Corwin notes, "even liberal sentiment in Spain could defend

1965 Blackburn, Robin. The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 398. Blackburn suggests even Queen Isabella herself invested in the slave trade in the 1840s, even as she was observing treaties with Britain.
the economic benefits of the slave trade."  

Whatever liberal sentiment that existed was largely squelched by the revolution in Spain in 1843, which brought a moderate regime, more opposed to abolition, to power.  

Leopoldo O'Donnell became Governor of Cuba; he was more devoted to securing Spanish power there and, thus, to encouraging the slave economy. A slave insurrection broke out soon after O'Donnell arrived in 1843, and another – the Escalera Conspiracy – was uncovered soon after. Creole liberals/patriots were accused of fostering dissent and insurrection and in the crackdown against slave revolts, Creoles were removed from public office, "thus virtually extinguishing" for the time being any fledgling Creole independence or abolition movement. For his part, Saco (in exile on the mainland) continued to write/speak out against the slave trade. He wrote la supresion del trafico de esclavos en las isla de Cuba in 1845, citing the internal and external dangers of continued importation of slaves and the need for increasing white numbers in Cuba. Slaveholders spoke out against his work, suggesting "it was obviously unpatriotic to abolish the slave trade." In the 1840s, the time was not yet ripe to move forward on abolitionism.

A More Open Society: the 1850s and 1860s

The revolution in Spain in 1854 was a liberalizing one – replacing the moderates with progressives. Centuries of absolute monarchy had had a stultifying effect on the public sphere in Spain through the first decades of the 19th century. There was certainly little public space for

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intellectual discussion and association in the late 1830s when colonial representatives were thrown out of the Cortes, and this continued through the 1840s and the early 1850s. The coming years were to be different, however. Periodicals in Madrid increased seven-fold.\textsuperscript{1972} Intellectual institutions sprang up and, indeed, historian Alberto Gil Novales called the 1850s and 1860s the "age of societies" in Spain.\textsuperscript{1973} Some of the most important associations – such as the Free Society of Political Economy (\textit{Sociedad Libre de Economia Politica}) and the Association for Tariff Reduction – developed around the question of free trade.\textsuperscript{1974} An increasingly heated debate developed between free trade and protectionist interests.\textsuperscript{1975} Some economic interests (typically those engaging in the booming joint stock companies and railroad construction) wanted to follow the free trade model of the world's most powerful economy at the time – Great Britain – while other economic interests (industrialists that didn't want to openly compete with European goods and agriculture) pushed for protectionism.\textsuperscript{1976}

Even despite the stunted public sphere, seeds of abolitionism developed in Puerto Rico. As mentioned, for first half of the century, Cuban and Puerto Rican elites took a similar approach to the slavery question, but their paths were diverging by mid-century. Puerto Rico came to sugar production late, never had as high a percentage of slaves as Cuba, and the slave trade came to effective end there in the 1840s. In this period, Puerto Rican intellectuals began to suggest that Spain was ready for abolition.\textsuperscript{1977} By the early 1850s, Puerto Rican sugar exports were plateauing


(for example, exports went from 118.8 million pounds in 1851 to 123.4 million in 1868) and although coerced labor was still central, and in fact, some planters pushed for resumption of the slave trade during this decade, influential Puerto Rican elites were attempting to come up with alternative forms of labor and were implementing plans that helped move the island toward free labor (discussed more in the domestic politics chapter). Most Puerto Rican planters still clamored for slaves but a small number were increasingly learning the value of free labor. With the slave trade under pressure and the home country and powers like France and Britain having abolished the institution by this time, some planters interpreted the writing on the wall to say that slavery was ultimately doomed and perhaps the best option for the future was to move toward free labor and push for indemnification at emancipation. With Puerto Rico's smaller slave numbers, they could ask for indemnification with some hope of success, while Cuba's huge slave numbers, if indemnified, would break Madrid's bank. An influential group of Puerto Rican intellectuals, such as Baldorío de Castro and José Julián Acosta, trained in Madrid and/or Europe or America, studied the issue of Puerto Rican slavery and increasingly concluded that free labor was the best alternative for the future. 1978

Inside Spain, the liberalization of the 1850s and 1860s also facilitated the emergence of a Spanish abolitionist movement. 1979 Abolitionism garnered little to no support from Spanish elites, but some journalists, doctors, engineers and other professionals held a more "European"


perspective on the subject of enslaving humans. 1980 "They agreed that Spain lagged behind most advanced societies of the West socially, economically, and culturally. Whatever its relative profitability, slavery was clearly not lifting Spain out of underdevelopment nor raising its standing in the civilized world." 1981 All this said, abolition still had not made a dent in the Spanish government. A few voices had raised the slavery question (they had done so as early as 1855) in the Cortes, but as Corwin notes, "from 1855 to 1864 these men were as a voice in the wilderness of Spanish politics." 1982

Puerto Rican Julio Vizcarrondo had arrived in Madrid in 1863, and set about forming the Spanish Abolitionist Society (Sociedad Abolicionista Española) in December 1864. 1983 Its first official meeting would take place in April 1865, its original members including many of the "brightest stars in the liberal firmament." 1984 Vizcarrondo, with the assistance of another great abolitionist leader – Rafael Maria de Labra – built a solid organization in Spain. This Spanish Abolitionist Society was established around the following objectives: 1) "to propagate the principle of the immediate abolition of Negro slavery. To discuss the means to carry this out without infringing on the right of anyone, and to prevent disturbances in the moral and material order of the Antilles"; 2) to be "absolutely above all party interests... exclusive doctrines and

1983 Corwin, Arthur F. Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 154-158; and Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 337-338. Vizcarrondo was a journalist who had traveled to America, married an American, and returned to Puerto Rico to discuss the fruits of a more liberal society. He was frustrated by censorship there, and this prompted his move to Madrid. Interestingly, he would attempt to form a Lutheran congregation in 1869, before religious freedom was once again repealed.
Church obligations”; 3) commitment to free labor and the "moral redemption of the slave; and 4) to be formed "of all persons who inscribe themselves as members."\(^{1985}\)

The Society attempted to pattern itself after the British and American campaigns, adopting the symbolic kneeling slave as its symbol.\(^{1986}\) Abolitionists hoped to mimic all the forms of popular mobilization – popular press, petitioning, rallies, and the like.\(^{1987}\) They founded localized chapters in Seville, Leon, Valencia, Saragossa, Barcelona, and other cities.\(^{1988}\) There were critical differences and shortcomings, however. Although Vizcarrondo's American wife started a women's chapter, there's no evidence of female activity after 1865. Additionally, as has already been mentioned, there was little to no popular religious aspect to this campaign.\(^{1989}\) "Membership in the Spanish antislavery movement appears to have been overwhelmingly secular and usually anticlerical in its affiliations as well as its rhetoric."\(^{1990}\) One critical result of this lack of religious (read: Catholic) leadership was the inability to mobilize the working class.\(^{1991}\) As Drescher notes, one mass rally in Madrid attracted between ten and sixteen thousand people, but

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abolitionist organizers noted the lack of workers. They might have converted a significant section of the middle class, but that was it. Further, against this abolitionist grouping was arrayed the full panoply of merchants, bankers, shippers, manufacturers and other industrialists. As Robert Whitney and Drescher note, a list "that read like a who's who of Spain's most prominent capitalists and political figures" was arrayed against abolition. Within Spain, these elites were "able to organize a metropolitan countermobilization that equaled, if it did not surpass, the abolitionist effort."  

Inside Cuba, despite the lack of free press, Cubans were fairly well-versed in world affairs and through their interactions they increasingly developed an affinity for American and British "civilization." In this way, some fledgling calls for reform were in the works. The late 1850s were an opportune time for discussion on slavery, as temporary downturns in the sugar market and continued increases in slave prices had contributed to the depression from 1856-1858. As Corwin writes, "the economic crisis, therefore, coupled with the growing sense of a national destiny among the Cubans, first clearly expressed by Saco, was gradually working against the Cuban slave market." Still, the primary target was the trade, not the institution of slavery. When General Francisco Serrano took over as Cuban Governor (November 1859-December 1862), he was under instructions from Madrid to keep reform hopes (such as achieving

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representation in the Cortes) alive so long as they didn't become "dangerous." Serrano and his successor, Domingo Dulce (December 1862 – July 1865), allowed a reform party to develop in Cuba. The reformers took advantage of the years of tolerance to form a liberal newspaper – *El Siglo* – in May 1863. Liberals pressed for reforms, including a "gradual solution to the slave problem," through this publication. The fledgling elements of anti-slavery mobilizations were by this time, then, present in mainland Spain, Puerto Rico, and even Cuba.

The start of the American Civil War certainly signaled that slavery was likely doomed as an institution. Spain hoped for Southern victory and a divided America, which would solidify control of their colonial possessions. At the same time, liberal Creole reformers identified with Lincoln, even though their abolitionist sentiment was much more about resistance to Spanish domination than humanitarian feelings for the slaves. As the American conflict continued on in great violence, many Cubans began to wonder if a gradual solution wasn't better than armed struggle; hence, they began drawing up plans for gradual abolition. As one Cuban planner wrote, "Look at the example of the United States... a disastrous civil war was not necessary. A plan of gradual emancipation with compensation was possible and much more intelligent."

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1999 Corwin, Arthur F. *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886*. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 131-134. Of note, Saco was offered the editorship but he decided he could do more good in Madrid.
By the mid-1860s, in addition to its own internal and public examination of its future relationship to the colonies, Spain was under pressure from both Britain and the United States to effectively deal with the question of slavery. All of these pressures helped force the government to once again declare the slave trade abolished in early 1866 (this measure was echoed in Cuba in September 1867).\textsuperscript{2006} The government also enacted a liberal reform that had been in the works for years – bringing representatives from the colonies to the mother country to discuss the future of the relationship (including the slavery).\textsuperscript{2007} Commencing in October 1866, this commission – the Junta de Informacion de Ultramar – was immediately forced to deal with the divisions between the Puerto Rican and Cuban delegates.\textsuperscript{2008} The Puerto Ricans were ready for immediate emancipation, while the Cubans warned that immediate emancipation would destroy the sugar industry; they could admit slavery would end eventually, but they pushed for gradual emancipation with indemnification.\textsuperscript{2009} There is no measure of exactly how the masses felt about abolition, but there were certainly indications from both islands, but particularly Cuba, that people (whites) felt the delegates to the Junta had already given too many concessions in that direction.\textsuperscript{2010} As Bergard puts it, "there was minimal elite or mass support among the white population for ending slavery before or after 1868 in Cuba."\textsuperscript{2011} For Spain's part, they were too

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poor to follow the British model of reparations.\textsuperscript{2012} Once the Junta was disbanded, despite its recommendations, the Spanish government delayed implementing even gradual emancipation.\textsuperscript{2013} The Spanish Abolitionist Society's activities were suppressed and the abolitionism's immediate future looked bleak.\textsuperscript{2014}

Near-simultaneous revolutions in 1868 would bring the slavery issue back into focus, even though it was a secondary issue overall. In September 1868, a military-led coup ended the Bourbon monarchy via the "Glorious Revolution."\textsuperscript{2015} The new government was a liberal coalition; it finalized a liberal constitution in 1869.\textsuperscript{2016} The new government was conflicted in deciding on a number of key issues – republic versus monarchy, free trade versus protectionism, nature of colonial representation, and what to do about slavery.\textsuperscript{2017} Ultimately, it allowed universal male suffrage and representation for colonial possessions. The Spanish Abolition Society was free to associate again, and took advantage, asking for abolition.\textsuperscript{2018} Puerto Rican representatives backed this call for abolition, but Cuban reformers hedged.\textsuperscript{2019} Like its predecessors, the new government was certainly concerned over possible reparation costs. Critically, the debate was no longer over whether to emancipate slaves, but rather, how best to do so.\textsuperscript{2020} The ultimate result of the deliberations regarding slavery was the Moret Law, which was

passed in July 1870.\textsuperscript{2021} All children born slaves as of September 1868 were free, as were slaves reaching the age of sixty.\textsuperscript{2022} Everyone in between would toil as slaves until 1928.\textsuperscript{2023} Frankly, this law, as implemented, didn't change life much for those slaves left in bondage and didn't really change the numbers of working age slaves.\textsuperscript{2024}

There was a revolution in Cuba commencing a month after the one in Madrid. It came to be known as the Ten Years War (1868-1878). Although coincident in time, the movements had developed independently of one another.\textsuperscript{2025} The western half of Cuba had benefited most from the sugar-slavery nexus.\textsuperscript{2026} In the east, Creole Carlos Manuel Céspedes and a small group of planters declared the Republic of Cuba. Céspedes ultimately declared abolition, although he did so in a manner as not to alienate all propertied elites. He backtracked and said a "free Cuba was incompatible with a slavist Cuba," but added that all sides would work to come up with a plan once Cuba was free.\textsuperscript{2027} “The revolution now stood for abolition as well as independence.”\textsuperscript{2028} The rebels didn't have a plan, but nonetheless their suggestion of emancipation brought fugitive slaves


\textsuperscript{2025} Corwin, Arthur F. \textit{Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886}. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 222.

\textsuperscript{2026} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 342-343. In the period from 1864 to 1868 there has also been an influx of Asian indentured workers from China.


to their ranks. Ultimately, the Cuban revolution would have several effects on slavery. It would destroy the institution in some sectors and both sides would have to make concessions to slaves in order to keep them in their respective ranks. Additionally, the whole ten-year span of events forced all Spanish parties – colonials and metropolitans alike – to face the fact that emancipation was inevitable.

Given its new, post-1868 freedoms, the Spanish Abolitionist Society was free to organize once again. Progressive reformers and abolitionists were deeply disappointed with the Moret Law. In 1872 and 1873, abolitionists allied themselves with the most radical parties. In the early 1870s the cause of abolition was becoming closely identified with the liberal revolution, as pitted against those conservatives still hoping for a return to the more dictatorial past. Internal upheaval reigned in Spain (and Cuba for that matter) in 1872 and 1873, and with this backdrop the most progressive factions inside Spain were able to bring a bill for abolition in Puerto Rico forward to the Cortes in December 1872. Spanish conservatives balked. Anti-abolitionist forces were powerful; pro-slavery petitions outweighed pro-abolition petitions significantly. Agitation persisted. The Spanish Abolitionist Society attempted a full-scale petition campaign in 1872-1873 calling for immediate abolition in Cuba and Puerto Rico. They organized public demonstrations in half a dozen major cities. When Spain was declared a Republic in February 1873, one of the

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2032 Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 339-346. An insurrection had broken out in Puerto Rico in 1868 as well, but was quickly quelled. Still, Puerto Rican abolitionist pushed for a decision on emancipation, noting that doing so would not pose a threat, given that slavery was relatively insignificant there.
liberal regime's first acts was to declare abolition in Puerto Rico (March 22, 1873). The Puerto Rican delegates remained the most ardent advocates of similar measures for Cuba, but with the island still in the midst of revolution, emancipation solutions would have to wait.

The Revolution in Cuba ended with a Spanish colonial victory in 1878. Even though some slaves hadn't revolted and hadn't been freed, particularly in the western sections of the islands, all slaves were aware of the Moret Law and the concept of freedom was very much alive in Cuba. As Bergard notes, "Peace between Spain and the insurrection was one thing, but for slaves to go back to the old parameters of their lives prior to rebellion was impossible." Discipline was greatly reduced, slaves ran away in droves, and masters were increasingly negotiating with their slaves for the continuance of their labor. There was no going back.

By 1879, abolitionist pressure was rising inside Spain again. Government officials were still concerned not to disrupt their economies through immediate abolition. "While there was now great unanimity on the inevitability of abolition, there was far less abolitionist zeal or liberal language." These were pragmatists. "In keeping with the tenor of Spanish politics of this period, this was a conservative gathering to discuss problems of labor and social control, not an occasion

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for principled antislavery pronouncements." They still had to figure out a way to provide
continued labor continuity, and they still had the problem of lack of funds for indemnities. A
"pragmatic" abolition bill was put forward in November 1879; it proposed establishing patronato
– patronage or wardship – which was a step between freedom and slavery, which would give
master some remuneration and slave some training/tutelage. Patronato would last 8 years
(thus ending slavery in 1888); regional boards would oversee the transition, slaves could purchase
freedom, and if masters didn't follow its guidelines slaves would be freed. The bill passed
February 13, 1880. The law was actually carried out with minimal disturbance, and relative
effectiveness. Slave numbers did decline as hoped, and this fact, along with continued
abolitionist pressure, helped end slavery two years early. On October 7, 1886, emancipation was
enacted in Spain and Cuba with little strife.

**Summary of Imperial Spain's Normative Movement**

Movements against the slave trade and slavery developed very late in Cuba, Puerto Rico,
and mainland Spain. The Spanish monarchy kept a lid on free association in the mainland and
colonies through the first half of the 19th century. Those anti-slavery ideas were centered mainly
around independence and fear of black overpopulation in the colonies, not in any inherent
revulsion to slavery as an institution. Further, "slavery and the slave trade to Cuba were vital and

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2039 Scott, Rebecca J. *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899.* Princeton,
2040 Scott, Rebecca J. *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899.* Princeton,
2041 Scott, Rebecca J. *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899.* Princeton,
Brazil, Cuba, and the United States.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 282; and
2042 Scott, Rebecca J. *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899.* Princeton,
University Press, 2009: 346-348; and Scott, Rebecca J. *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to
lucrative enterprises until their final abolition (the slave trade in 1867, slavery in 1886).” It should be no surprise, then, that antislavery thought developed only in the late 1850s and 1860s, when there was considerably more freedom to associate and more active civil society. Nor should it be a surprise that the most forceful organization against slavery came from Puerto Rican elites. Slavery had never been as important in Puerto Rico; the sugar industry was leveling off, and farmers there had already started moving toward free labor. Both Cuban and Puerto Rican liberals "were infected by the revolutionary currents of Europe and America. Seductive concepts of nationalism, independence, republicanism, the rights of man, and free thought made subtle inroads among a small group of Creole intellectuals.” Schmidt-Nowara notes that, comparatively, the Spanish normative movement against slavery resembled Drescher's continental model. Eventually, particularly after the 1868 revolution(s), it more closely resembled the British model, resorting to extra-parliamentary mobilization.

With regard to a norm cycle, it would appear that each of the three – Puerto Rico, the Spanish mainland, and Cuba – accepted the norm against slavery at different times. For Puerto Rico, the tipping point likely came between the first suggestion of emancipation at the Junta in 1867, and the passing of the Moret Law in 1870. In the Spanish mainland, the tipping point likely occurred sometime between the revolutions (1868) and the passing of the Moret Law, by which time most elites had resigned themselves to eventual emancipation (if still wanting to delay it as long as possible). The turning point had certainly arrived on the Spanish mainland by the time Puerto Rico abolished slavery in 1873. Finally, Cuba was the last to accept slavery and it would

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take the rebellion there to tip the scales; in that way, the tipping point is probably best placed somewhere between the latter half of the Ten Years War and the passing of *Patronato* in 1880. In all three cases, it is difficult to determine the exact period of internalization. Given the fact that *Patronato* ended early and with little fanfare in 1886, this study will accept that date as the time of internalization.

**Figure 5.1. The Spanish Empire's "Norm Cycle"**

Despite this discussion and development of a norm cycle, it would be misleading to suggest that a normative movement was the deciding factor in Spanish abolitionism. As will be seen in future chapters, it took a healthy mix of international pressure, the negative example of America's civil war, and sophisticated political maneuvers to finally secure emancipation throughout the dominion. This study will spend significant effort delineating the domestic politics
and geostrategic considerations that helped prompt Spanish abolition, but before then, this chapter ends by discussing the last critical state to abolish slavery: Brazil.

**Part IV – The Normative Movement in Brazil**

As has been discussed in previous chapters, Brazil's slave system was going strong through the middle of the 19th century and it was only under extreme British pressure that the government decided to finally, effectively end the transatlantic slave trade via the Queiroz Law. Through the 1850s and into the early 1860s the institution of slavery was largely stable within Brazil; political leaders paid relatively little attention to the subject and popular abolitionism itself was nearly non-existent. As Seymour Drescher notes, by the late 1850s Brazil "had experienced no major sectional conflict of interest, social movement, or ideological offensive that threatened the immediate future of the institution of slavery in the manner of crisis in the United States." Planters were very secure in the future of slavery at the time of the American Civil War, and by all available measures, they had reason to be. Unlike other slave systems, in Brazil, the most developed regions were the ones where slave labor predominated. Railroads, infrastructure, and cities grew in areas dense with slavery. Yes, industrialization remained "modest," but industrialists aligned their interests with the landed slavemaster interests and political power remained concentrated in the hands of the slaveholders, the monarch, and

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their allies.\textsuperscript{2055} Almost no sectors among elite social classes ascribed to the ideas of human freedom and slave emancipation.\textsuperscript{2056}

What about popular public opinion? Dale Torston Graden's study of Bahia suggests that reformers were aware of the aggressive British naval actions against the trade in 1850-1851, and according to him, those actions made an "indelible impression" on Brazilian citizens in the region.\textsuperscript{2057} They further understood the general condemnation of the practice internationally, and in fact, a few abolitionist societies sprang up in the Bahia region in the 1850s.\textsuperscript{2058} These efforts were short-lived, however, and historians such as Laird Bergard have suggested that in Brazil overall there were little to "no religious or secular institutions within colonial society advocating emancipation, which might have resulted in the development of a popular movement against slavery."\textsuperscript{2059} Brazil was a highly hierarchical society, with slaves at the bottom of the social scale.\textsuperscript{2060} As such, there was little moral outcry publicly about the institution, at least until very late.\textsuperscript{2061} As in France and Spain, the Catholic Church remained largely silent on the issue of slavery, and there were no Protestant organizations of which to speak.\textsuperscript{2062} No large-scale abolitionist organizations existed as yet, and given that most citizens were illiterate, even if an abundance of publications were available (say, from foreign sources), only elites would see

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them. In general, "there was little sympathy for, or even consideration of, emancipation for slaves." What little there was resided among a few elites.

If there had been popular movements, Pedro and other members of the oligarchy would have likely been aware of them. The emperor and his cabinet/government relied on the "political press" – "summaries filtered up through the provincial executive's private correspondence or gathered from trusted advisors and highly structured encounters with less-connected commoners." The emperor wanted to dispel the idea that he and his government were tone-deaf to the will of the people and keeping a relatively free press – in contrast to Spain and even France – was part of keeping tabs on that will. For these reasons, the various newspapers had the ability to critique the government and the institution of slavery, and sometimes did, in ways that would have received rebuke in Cuba. That said the press was notoriously prone for gaining support from, and therefore providing support to, the various pressure groups and interests, of which the slave-owning class was the most powerful; so it should be no surprise that even given this relatively "free" press, Brazil did not produce a popular movement against slavery until later.

The first nudging toward emancipation came from the narrow realm of political elites, including Dom Pedro II himself. The emperor was particularly interested in Brazil's standing

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in the rest of the civilized world; he wanted Brazil to be "an outpost of European culture and civilization" as Drescher notes, and his "whole political position derived from a constitution modeled on the French monarchy."\(^{2071}\) Dom Pedro's "cultural capital was Paris" and he was "more sensitive to a strongly worded petition for abolition" from the outside world than from his own literati.\(^{2072}\) Pedro II was to be a "pivotal figure" in the path to abolition; his inclination was to civilize Brazil toward the example of Europe and this required progressive measures. But he had to avoid crippling the interests of Brazil's landowning elites, and this resulted in his occasional abandonment of abolitionist principles.\(^{2073}\)

Pedro was not the only one concerned about Brazil's image in the rest of the world. Robert Toplin suggests European diplomatic pressure (including Britain's threatened use of force) was important but perhaps "Europe's most important contribution was also more subtle; it came from the impact of ideas rather than direct political interference."\(^{2074}\) Diplomats, businessmen, and other elites were concerned about how they were viewed by the world's most powerful countries – particularly Britain and France – and they were aware that "the best minds in Europe condemned slavery unflinchingly."\(^{2075}\) "Whether judged against the principles of modern philosophy or the ideals of Christianity, slavery now appeared to run clearly against the current of opinion in the 'civilized' nations."\(^{2076}\)

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\(^{2072}\) Drescher 354-355. Drescher particularly notes a petition arriving from a French abolitionist committee in July 1866.


\(^{2074}\) Toplin, Robert Brent. *The Abolition of Slavery in Brazil*. New York, NY: Atheneum, 1975: 42; and Drescher 354. Britain had blocked Rio de Janeiro for six days in January 1863 in order to pressure Brazil to free *emancipados*.


The 1860s: A Convergence of Factors

Into the early 1860s, political leaders paid relatively little attention to the issue of slavery inside Brazil. Two events would rouse them from their slumber. First, witnessing the tide turning toward the abolitionist North in the American Civil War sparked Brazilian attention; many Brazilians – what percentage is impossible to tell – saw the U.S. Civil War as an example as the "foolishness of resisting reform." Politicians and other elites certainly saw the American Civil War as an example of what could happen to Brazil, particularly if regional differences were allowed to grow to the point of conflict.

At the same time, in October 1864, the Brazilian army had intervened in an internal Uruguayan dispute, leading to a conflict with Paraguay – known as the Paraguayan War – that would last into 1870. As Dale Torston Graden notes, "the often-brutal recruitment of soldiers for the war effort caused upheaval throughout the empire. Hundreds of free inhabitants in cities and countryside reacted with hostility when forced to enlist. They protested in public squares, scorned Pedro II, lambasted provincial officials, and hid from recruiters." Brazil moved to press slaves into military service – freeing them in return starting in 1867 – and yet, no slaveholders were willing to give up their slaves for the country. Given that they would be freed if serving in the military, Nabuco de Araujo (the father of the future abolitionist movement) suggested doing slaves the "favor" of capturing them and pressing them into service.

For the first time, the Brazilian masses began empathizing with the plight of slaves.

Graden summarizes:

Living in a patriarchal society ruled by influential families and small elite, they felt their marginalization and lack of power. The insecurities of the war years corroded differences that separated the free underclass from slaves. The abuses of recruitment enhanced ties between lower-class free persons and slaves. As a result, support for the slave regime weakened and interest in abolition widened.  

Abolitionist societies developed throughout the Brazilian empire, but unfortunately for the cause, they proved to be "short-lived and of secondary influence." Most disappeared after 1871, but nonetheless, the first seeds of a broad-based abolition movement had been sowed.

The two wars certainly had an impact on Dom Pedro. In July 1865, the Brazilian Emperor had traveled to war zone and met with British officials who again pushed for an end to slavery. The Emperor was convinced of the need for change; He finally freed *emancipados* – these were slaves "freed" via the mixed commissions and put in Brazilian custody – in 1864, as well as forbidding punishment of slaves by whipping that same year. In 1866, slaves were no longer allowed to work in government public works projects. Pedro II asked his trusted adviser, Jose Antonio Pimenta Bueno, to prepare a slavery reform bill. It was quickly squelched. Another bill, put forward in 1867, called for emancipation by the end of the century; it too, was killed. Indeed, between 1866 and 1868, Pedro II and like-minded politicians met fierce resistance from the alarmist slave-holding interest. An anonymous writer speaking for the slave-holding class spoke out via the press against the Emperor's interference on the slavery issue,

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admitting that slavery was a mistake, but asserting "it was 'a sanctioned, tolerated and legalized mistake.' " The government,' he warned, 'does not know the danger it runs in putting itself like an apostle at the forefront of this idea." Pedro, knowing better than to go all-in against the slave-holding interest, relented; the move toward eventual abolition was temporarily foiled.

This reversal strengthened the emancipationist movement. With the issue out in the open, it was now more prominent in the public discussion. As Toplin writes, the incident "became a cause célèbre among reformist groups. Dissident Liberals formed reform groups and produced anti-government polemics in their A Reforma newspaper." An 1869 Liberal manifesto called for more individual liberty and electoral reform to reduce the power of the oligarchy. As Conrad notes, it had been decades since "a political crisis aroused such anger against the monarch and the imperial system, coming now from a new force in Brazilian society: a revived liberalism identified with democratic reforms including liberation of the slaves."

The Rio Branco Law

The war in Paraguay ended in 1870, and with it over, the government could turn back to the emancipation question. In the last years of the 1860s, however, a strong conservative anti-reform movement had developed within the government. An emancipation bill was brought to the legislature in May 1871. Known as the Rio Branco law (after the leader of the cabinet), it emancipated all slaves born after its passage. The master would be forced to raise children born

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of slaves after the law for eight years and then could receive indemnification, or they could keep them for 21 years and take the service provided during that time as payment/remuneration for freedom. Those slaves that remained had the option of buying out the value of their remaining service. This "law of the freedom of the womb" followed the precedent of Spain's Moret Law and even had some key additional provisions, but it too was flawed for several reasons. The Rio Branco law was inadequate in that "free" children were still treated like slaves. Further, slaveholders stretched the boundaries of the law despite government-appointed regulation. Finally, the law didn't free slaves in a rapid rate and therefore slavery was going to be around for a very long time. Beyond these flaws, a social justice question arises when one considers, as Toplin suggests, "what kind of free man would come out of twenty-one years of slavery?"

Still, the bill was a significant step forward, and one must be impressed with how quickly Brazil was moving ahead given that its elites and public were both seemingly so pro-slavery as late as the mid-1860s. Clearly, the 1860s witnessed the first hints of a popular liberal movement. Still, a student of British abolitionism, such as Seymour Drescher, suggests this period was conspicuous by its lack of widespread popular agitation. As he summarizes:

In a comparative perspective, popular mobilization before the Rio Branco law appears unimpressive. Setting aside the mass movements of the Anglo-American world, even French abolitionism just before the revolution of 1848 and Spanish abolitionism in the decade after 1865 played larger roles in placing emancipation on their national parliamentary agendas. Some Brazilian antislavery societies appeared briefly after 1871, but then languished... The most detailed account of the passage of the Rio Branco law offers evidence that both abolitionists and their opponents in the Chamber of Deputies spoke as though 'public opinion' was not in favor of the gradual emancipation bill.

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The more significant "popular" movement came from pro-slavery forces – petitions from merchants and planters. Even after gradual emancipation was decided, these interests put forward a set of petitions attempting to contain and forestall the threat to the institution and landed interests as long as possible.\textsuperscript{2103} As Drescher notes, "the conservatives opposed to the Rio Branco bill could still depend upon the hostility of most of the landed class and the nonparticipation of the free population at large."\textsuperscript{2104} By this point, some slaveholders admitted that slavery was immoral and ultimately doomed, but "antislavery sentiment had not yet become politicized public opinion."\textsuperscript{2105} Public opinion regarding slavery had been piqued, but had not yet become hardened and sustained. Despite the Rio Branco Law and consensus building among elites that slavery was immoral and doomed, slaveholders still believed the institution would last for many more decades.\textsuperscript{2106}

\textbf{The 1880s and the Collapse of Brazilian Slavery}

For years after Rio Branco, neither political leaders nor the public discussed the slavery issue in any great detail.\textsuperscript{2107} Yet, it was slowly becoming clear that Rio Branco wasn't moving the country to emancipation quickly or effectively enough. It dawned on even moderate abolitionists, like Senator Joaquim Nabuco, that more effort was required. In communication with American abolitionist Charles Sumner, Sumner warned "I hope Senator Nabuco will forgive me, if I express the opinion, that he too is wrong in not requiring it [abolition] \textit{at once}." As Sumner, said, 

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\textsuperscript{2106} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 358-360. Drescher suggests they expected it to last 40 more years. Slaves were relatively passive about the future as well, given that there were minimal slave revolts or conspiracies during this period. It's unclear whether this was because they knew little about Rio Branco; expected it to have minimal impact; anticipated waiting out its provisions; or some other reasoning, or a combination of these.
\end{flushright}
"the will only is needed," and in the late 1870s and early 1880s, the will to effect real change was finally developing.  

The call for liberal reforms was in the air as the government opened in 1879. The speech of Jeronimo Sodré on March 5, 1879 had the power to start the process of developing a real dialogue on liberal reform and the problem of slavery in Brazil. Speaking of slavery, he stated, "Everyone knows it, Brazilian society is sitting on a volcano. Let us not delude ourselves." His solution was emancipation, rather than continued repression. He tied emancipation to all liberal proposals, claiming that "the plans to reform and modernize the country would prove fruitless unless Parliament tackled the central issue of slavery." He declared:  

'You are asking for educational reform? You are asking the government to guarantee the rights of non-Catholics? You are asking for liberation of the citizen through direct elections? You want all these things while conserving the cancer which deteriorates all, and corrupts all!" This challenge sparked debate inside government and, critically, outside it as well. For the rest of the year, Senator Nabuco was the leading government figure pushing for emancipation. Outside government, Sodré's speech and follow-on government deliberations triggered "discussions among many people who previously had not given voice to their inclinations." In 1880, an anti-slavery movement developed in Brazilian cities. Anti-slavery leaders built organizations and "laid the foundations for a dynamic, viable movement."

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The reaction was swift. Any increase in abolitionism outside government led to increasing denouncement of such movements inside government.²¹¹⁷ There was "a powerful reaction to abolitionism which showed up in the Assembly, in the press, and in the 1881 elections. The abolitionists, having dramatically revealed their presence in 1880, slackened their pace the following year, perhaps startled by the rage of their opponents."²¹¹⁸ In the capital, particularly, abolitionist momentum had been stymied.²¹¹⁹

The Ceará region was to take the lead in maintaining abolitionist momentum and forcing events. By mid-1881, anti-slavery societies had formed in multiple towns there; they closed the port, gathered and dispersed funds to purchase manumissions, and "launched a town-by-town" effort to expand "free-soil zones."²¹²⁰ By Spring of 1884 abolitionists in the province sent out their telegraph message: "Ceará is free."²¹²¹ The establishment of a free soil zone in Ceará led to similar actions in the surrounding areas and it changed the way that slaves and free citizens looked at abolition in Brazil.²¹²² The province of Amazonas abolished slavery like Ceará had, and several cities in the Rio Grande do Sul and Paraná regions were freed of slaves as well.²¹²³ The presence of entire free regions and, thereby, asylums for fugitive slaves was a particularly disturbing development for planters.²¹²⁴ To date, the free soil movements had taken place predominantly in the north, where slavery had become less important over time. That said, abolitionist activity was taking hold in the main cities again as well, including Rio de Janeiro and  

São Paulo. In fact, the Abolitionist Confederation led by João Clapp was working to bring fugitive slaves to Rio. The underground movement there included all the "machinery of intrigue" – falsified documents, secret agents, etc.

In the cities, the ideas of modernization excited people and outward-looking leaders wished to emulate the "civilized" nations. As Toplin notes, "in the eyes of new urban elites, slavery was a vestige of the old Brazil." Part of this move resulted from Brazil's being "swept up" in "capitalist expansion." In Rio de Janeiro Sao Paulo and other cities, new businesses were developing, railroads and other infrastructure was being built to expand and meet new demand, and new industries created new capitalists. "These developments – the rise of new businesses and industries and the growth of port and interior cities – produced an enlarged group of managers and small proprietors who associated themselves with popular nineteenth-century concepts of 'liberal' economics." Naturally, then, the belief in free labor was part of this new liberal thinking. "The idea that free labor was more productive and profitable than slave labor became axiomatic in the thinking of Brazil's new business elites. Slavery seemed glaringly incompatible with the goal of expanding modern capitalistic enterprise." Increasing ties with Europe and the United States contributed significantly to making the cities into centers not only of the exchange of goods but also for the exchange of ideas. Publications increased, railroads expanded, and the telegraph helped spread ideas and news of events. Joaquim Nabuco, the public figure most associated with abolitionism in Brazil, helped found the Sociedade Brasileira Contra a Escravidão (Brazilian Anti-Slavery Society) in Rio de Janeiro" in 1880, and began publishing the monthly

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journals O Abolicionista. Other organizations sprang up as well, including Sociedade Cearense
Liberadora (Cearense Liberator Society) in 1880, the Sociedade Abolicionista Ouropretana
Abolitionist Society of Ouro Prêto) in 1882, and the Sociedade Libertadora Bahiana (Bahian
Liberator Society) in 1883.

Brazil was opening up and pushing for development. "Diverse groups found places in the
movement which appealed to a great variety of people of high, middle, and low social and
economic status." Writers, professor, students – all these groups came together to start pushing
for change. "For the first time in Brazilian history, large groups of people worked together to
mount a broad-based, organized, and popular campaign to attack slavery in the most fundamental
way – that is, to challenge its right to exist."

This was now finally developing into a popular movement. In the rural regions, and
indeed overall, the "Brazilian Underground Railroad" was developing into a much larger
operation than its American counterpart and it was much less "underground." In the mid-1880s,
slaves were using the developing Brazilian railroad and at times fleeing in mass groups rather
than as singles. In this way, Brazil's slavery institution was disintegrating at the local level.
In the cities, abolitionists were conducting public meetings (in theaters and concert halls rather
than the churches and town halls used in Anglo-American mobilizations) and newspapers were
increasingly supporting abolitionist reporting, particularly the fairly radical Gazeta da Tarde.

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2130 Bergard, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New
York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 283-287; Toplin, Robert Brent. The Abolition of Slavery in
University Press, 2009: 364; and Toplin, Robert Brent. The Abolition of Slavery in Brazil. New York, NY:
As Drescher points out, this abolitionist movement "had to grow province by province, municipality by municipality and block by block across the length and breadth of civil society." The Brazilian movement was much more geared toward festivals and cultural events like music, plays, and other rallies. These events opened an avenue for large-scale mobilization of women, the likes of which had not been seen since the Anglo-American movements. Interestingly, the Brazilian movement did not rely heavily on petitions to the legislature. From the outside, it appears that Brazilians had no faith in successful appeals to their representatives and this "may be indicative of the gap felt by participants in the civil and political orders in Brazil."

In June 1844, Emperor Dom Pedro chose Senator Manoel Pinto de Souza Dantas to form a ministry and charged him with developing a reform program that would satisfy the abolitionists, hopefully without alienating the slave-holding interest. The rise of Dantas, a noted Liberal (but a pragmatic one), angered the planter interest. Dantas presented a program for slavery's reform that included "liberation for all slaves over sixty years of age (the sexagenarians), an increase in the emancipation fund through new taxes, a total end to the interprovincial slave trade, immediate liberation of slaves not properly registered, and an official table for the progressive amortization of slave values." Even though the plan was not all they wanted, abolitionists rallied to its support. Debates inside Parliament raged for months and resulted in some violent

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demonstrations. There was a growing impression that the process was getting out of control, and Dantas fell as a result of the 52-50 no confidence vote. Dom Pedro put forth Jose Antonio Saraiva for Prime Minister. Saraiva put forward a new reform plan. He had been brought forward to quell the fears of the planter class and campaign for a moderate reform plan; once his campaigning was done he resigned. The Emperor made the Baron of Cotegipe – a Conservative Minister – the Prime Minister. He quickly passed the Saraiva-Cotegipe Law in September 1885. All slaves over sixty were free, but forced to give three more years of service. A fund was established to liberate slaves in return for more years of service and to subsidize the importation of foreign labor to keep a continuous workforce. At best, slaveholders expected slavery to last to the end of the decade.

Cotegipe's execution of the law sparked continued abolitionist agitation. His agricultural minister implemented it without regard for public opinion. Locally, the police had begun to search private homes for runaways by the authority of the bill. Each decision seemed to favor pro-slavery interests all the more. The national election of January 15, 1886 only increased abolitionist fervor. Carried out under the direction of the Cotegipe regime, and hence its

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2143 Toplin, Robert Brent. *The Abolition of Slavery in Brazil*. New York, NY: Atheneum, 1975: 103-104. In the city of Sao Jose a huge crowd led by Jose Mariano marched on the government building. A security official discharged a warning shot to quell the crowd; confusion ensued, including the rumor that Mariano had been killed, and led to the crowd storming building and killing the security official and one other. The violence embarrassed abolitionists and suggested that the process was veering out of control.


patrimonial electoral control, its result was a Conservative-dominated Chamber that appeared even less sympathetic to slavery reform.\textsuperscript{2150} As Conrad notes,

the Liberal and abolitionist reaction to this electoral travesty took the form of a rebuke of the political system itself. In a country of twelve million people, complained abolitionist editors, where fewer than two hundred thousand persons, mainly slaveowners and government employees, were eligible to vote, it could not be said that the legislature represented national opinion. The nation was abolitionist, said a newspaper of the port city of Santos in proof of this charge, but slavery was supported in the Assembly.\textsuperscript{2151}

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<th>Table 5.7. A Summary of Brazilian Abolitionism</th>
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<td><strong>Brazilian Abolitionism Movement: A Summary</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Nature of Movement</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Factors Aiding the Movement</strong></td>
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* It would appear that the trade's abolition was internalized relatively quickly after 1851.

* Considering Pedro II was deposed in 1889, in part because he was blamed for letting slavery disintegrate, it is difficult to say that emancipation was fully internalized by 1890. One would certainly expect that watching the institution crumble before its eyes in 1887-1888 helped Brazilians accept and internalize the institution's moribund status.

Abolitionists were increasingly ready to take emancipation into their own hands by inciting and assisting escape.\textsuperscript{2152} "Abolitionists had built an effective organization able to go out to the plantations themselves and enjoin slaves to abandon estates en masse."\textsuperscript{2153} By 1887, the slaves' abandonment of their estates was such that there was little action planters or the local authorities could do.\textsuperscript{2154} Slaves simply declared themselves free; planters made desperate attempts to strike bargains with them, offering wages, eventual emancipation, and or even land if they

would remain and continue to provide labor. By late 1887 to early 1888, the retrieval of fugitive slaves was beyond the control of the police, and as the public witnessed these raids, it turned the issue into a personal one; the general public started interfering with efforts to re-capture slaves. The Cotegipe regime met the chaos and public pressure for change with more repression. "Slavery collapsed throughout Brazil as the abandonment of plantations by slaves" intensified.

Figure 5.2. Brazil's "Norm Cycle"

By April 1888, politicians of all stripes could no longer sit by and watch slavery ended by violence and anarchy. When Parliament came back in session in May, politicians could no longer

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2155 Bergard, Laird W. *The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 288; and Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 369. The planters were forced in 1886-1888 to turn to imported labor from overseas to fill their labor needs. Immigration into Sao Paulo (particularly from Italy) went up dramatically during this period. It rose from 6,500 in 1885, to 32,000 in 1887, and 90,000 in 1888. The combined arrivals almost equaled the 107,000 slaves still registered in the province on the eve of abolition. The planters' successful importation of free labor within a year and a half converted the chief defenders of slave labor into leaders in the final thrust towards legal emancipation.


resist the tide of events. The Conservative Party wanted the bill to include compensation for planters and attempt to extend some labor agreements through the next harvest. In the end, "the Golden Law" passed May 13, 1888 and the majority Liberal party made sure slavery ended in Brazil "without any residual obligations." It stated "from the date of this law slavery is declared abolished in Brazil" and "all contrary provisions are revoked." The law formally abolished slavery and emancipated 700,000 Brazilian slaves.

**Summary of Brazil's Normative Movement**

Britain forced Brazil to abolish the slave trade in 1850-1851. The trade to Brazil had dropped off dramatically; only slightly more than 6,000 slaves were imported by mid-decade, whereas nearly 400,000 had been imported the decade before. This abolition was executed by elites, with little impetus from the general population. Emancipation would be another story; it sparked little interest in Brazil until the 1860s, when the bloodshed in America and the war with Paraguay brought both a fear for Brazil's future and new empathy for the slaves. The Rio Branco law was a first step, and it largely quelled popular abolitionism through the late 1870s. The period from 1880-1885 was the turning point. The mobilization for emancipation became popularized and with the authorities unable to stop the masses of fleeing slaves, the institution disintegrated.

**Part V – Preliminary Conclusions**

This chapter and the last have attempted to retrace the process of norm emergence through the prism of Finnemore and Sikkink's "norm cycle" formulation in order to determine if
normative movements played a causal role in slavery's decline in the countries of interest. The overall conclusion is a mixed one. On the one hand, the British case offers the best example of a sustained popular campaign developing against a practice and being carried through to abolition and then emancipation. As examined in Chapter 4, the British case appears to offer an archetypal example of a successful normative movement playing a significant (the exact level of causality will be more clear after examining other variables) causal role in effecting institutional change.

The other cases are less clear cut. Like Britain, Imperial Spain and Brazil exhibited some semblance of a norm emergence cycle. That said, in Imperial Spain's case the preliminary analysis suggests the normative factor was a secondary causal mechanism to the slave trade's/slavery's decline at best. In Brazil's case, the normative factor played a negligible role in the trade's end, and a more significant role in the end of the institution overall. In the cases of France and the United States, political factors intervened in the histories presented in ways that made it particularly difficult to effectively recreate a norm emergence cycle for these societies. In this way, it would appear that primary causality for these societies resides with other variables, and these variables will be examined for all countries in the coming chapters in an effort to complete the picture of causality this study is attempting to paint.

Before turning to the other variables, it would be remiss not to suggest a couple of other lessons learned from the cases presented here. The first is that the transnational power of normative movements appears to have had a mixed result at best. Certainly there were transnational ties between activists in the United States and Britain, and Britain and France, but the impact of these transnational ties were moderate at best and counterproductive at other times. The best example of a positive relationship seems to be that between American activists (particularly Quakers) and their British colleagues. These connections undoubtedly furthered the movement, particularly in the early stages. On the other hand, British activists' relationship with

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their French colleagues produced a mixed result. Certainly, at some points the British influence was primary in keeping the French movement going; yet, at other times, the French public resented the connection between French and British activists and these connections actually set the French movement back. The point of this is not to suggest that transnational ties never or even usually hurt a normative movement; the point is that many theorists, particularly constructivists, stress the importance of transnational ties in normative movements and the impact of such ties was decidedly mixed and certainly not determinate in the cases presented here.

Additionally, the "Norm Cycle" model has helped recreate the stages of change for the societies examined here in which such change took place, but the recreated cycles do not in and of themselves explain the why and the how of that change. There must be more to the story; the case studies presented here suggest that there are "facilitators" to norm emergence. Historian Christopher Leslie Brown suggests that for any normative movement against an institution to develop and ultimately succeed, the institution in question must, first, be considered unacceptable; second, the unacceptable practice had to be important enough to force action; third, those concerned had to have avenues through which to act; and fourth, individuals and groups (norm entrepreneurs) had to make the normative action sustainable.\footnote{Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 29.} The preceding two chapters appear to suggest two factors that facilitate the development and sustenance of such a movement. The first is what the present author will call the "societal inclination;" that is, the idea or norm that is developing has a better chance of germinating and taking hold if it is consistent with the identity, values, and self-perceptions of society overall. The second is the nature of the public sphere.\footnote{The nature of the public sphere is thus important for the normative variable, as well as the domestic-political variable as already discussed in the introductory chapter.} It is difficult for ideas to spread and take hold, even if they're internally consistent and/or appealing to the identity/values of society as a whole, if that society's public sphere is closed off and/or freedom of association is blunted. Societal inclination facilitates the
first (determining unacceptability), second (reinforcing importance), and fourth (sustainability) parts of Brown's formulation, and the open public sphere provides the avenue through which the movement/ideas can spread and be sustained. A review of the specific case studies may illuminate the role these facilitators appear to have played.

**Britain**

The previous chapter suggested a series of ideological/normative factors converged over time to produce the highly effective and organized British popular abolition and emancipation campaigns. The ideas of the age (benevolence, providence, liberty, rights of man, evangelical theology) took powerful hold in Britain and helped provide Britons with a self-identity centered on freedom and justice. This identification with freedom helped facilitate the emergent questioning of the bondage of Africans. Further, the open nature of British society and the peoples' ability to associate and promote ideas facilitated the spread of this crucial premise: that it may be inconsistent and unjustifiable for a freedom-focused society/state to engage in the enslavement of other human beings. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the country that offers the best example of an effective counter-institutional normative movement had both facilitators in abundance.

**France**

Given its historical and philosophical background, France possessed a "societal inclination" at least as, if not more, fertile than that of Britain. In fact, this foundation helped spark the French Revolution that would result in it being the first transatlantic power to abolish the institution. Unfortunately, as it turned out, the revolution that this confluence of ideas sparked would lead to the rise of Napoleon and years of war to follow. Defeated, the French public had come to associate anti-slavery ideology with the upheaval of revolution (including the searing images of the Saint-Domingue insurrection) and defeat at the hands of their long-standing British enemy. France would be forced to accept abolition of the slave trade, if in word and not in deed.
The independent-minded French public was loath to learn morality from the British and keenly interested in restoring their own economic fortunes and forgetting the extreme days of the past, even if that meant continuing the slave trade/practice. In addition, unlike British evangelicals, the dominant French Catholic Church remained largely silent on the issue of slavery; thus, an important aspect of the British campaign – religious ideological and organizational support – was absent in France. All told, for a decade after Napoleon's defeat the French – government and people alike – paid only lip-service to the idea of abolition.

Arrayed against this government and popular sentiment was a cadre of elite abolitionists who worked predominantly through government channels. The reasons they worked within the system were two-fold; first, both the government and elites alike feared the wrath of the masses and a return to revolutionary instability, and secondly, in order to prevent this the government kept tighter control of the public sphere. Any change in France would come from elites, elites operating within the acceptable/controllable channels of government. As Lawrence Jennings summarizes:

The ranks of the Amis des Noirs, of abolitionists under the Empire and early Restoration, and of the Morale chrétienne were all drawn from the same social, political, and intellectual elite, persons of noble or elevated status who had little confidence in the masses and who had great difficulty appealing to popular mobilization for the anti-slavery cause. Their methods were those of personal or legislative initiatives aimed at advancing their objectives through the action of governments to which they themselves often belonged. Their primary means of propagandizing was via the printed media, with the hope of persuading like-minded members of the upper classes to support their efforts... Unlike their British anti-slavery brethren, they had much difficulty bringing themselves to resort to the tactics of popular appeal, mass mobilization, and large-scale petitioning of the sort that had swayed the British parliament to eradicate the slave trade and begin the process of undermining British colonial slavery.²¹⁶⁵

For historians like Jennings, their elite nature was a noose around the necks of French abolitionists. Yet, Paul Michael Kielstra suggests that given the French government's repression of civil society and fear of agitation, indeed fear of repeat revolutions, this elite-based approach was about the best the French could do. Even Seymour Drescher, the great chronicler of popular

anti-slavery movements, admits "French manifestations of popular support for anti-slavery were
either aborted by larger revolutionary events, or nipped in the bud by repression."^2166

By the mid-1820s it seems that various developments helped make the environment more
conducive to truly effecting abolition of the trade. Abolitionists believed their campaign to
educate the public via the free press was having some effect, even if it was hard to measure. The
personal efforts of Auguste de Staël were critical. His trip to Nantes in 1825 and his ability to
bring back eyewitness accounts and evidence of the ongoing trade there clearly roused the King
and other politicians to action. The anti-trade petitions the elites and notables produced during
this period showed that opinion was clearly changing. Additionally, by this time as well the
French economy had largely recovered from the revolution/war years and Kielstra hypothesizes
this factor further improved the environment. The people were apparently far enough removed
from the war years that they could separate their hatred of Britain from the larger issue of the
trade, and the elite abolitionists' efforts to publicize the cause through the press (yes, a far cry
from the popular mobilization in Britain) had had an impact. When the government debated the
slave trade enforcement bill in 1827, speakers were largely in agreement that the public had had
enough of turning a blind eye to the trade. The fact that virtually no counter-argument was
offered following the proposal of an even more forceful measure in 1830 suggests antipathy
toward the trade was now the norm.

British example in the early 1830s sparked French efforts toward emancipation. Yet, even
activists were divided on how the process should develop, and certainly it would be gradual, if
anything. By the period 1835-1837, it was clear to anti-slavery and pro-slavery forces alike that
the slaves would be emancipated eventually. The question was when and how, and most elites
were content to watch the British model unfold and take a cautious, gradual approach to the
solution. There was good reason to be cautious and methodical – there are no indications that the

^2166 Drescher, Seymour. "Two Variants of Anti-Slavery: Religious Organization and Social Mobilization in
Britain and France, 1780-1870." In Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform. eds. Christine Bolt and Seymour
French public was particularly educated on or interested in the subject in the 1830s. In fact, the press and public was much more agitated by the right of search controversies with the British in the early 1840s. Once again, nationalism was proving a roadblock to the anti-slavery cause. It was only in the years right before the 1848 revolution that abolitionists were finally starting to develop a popular movement that in any real way matched that of the British. Yet, when emancipation was declared by the provisional government, there was no fanfare in the streets; apparently by that date slavery was still a subject yet to fully capture public sentiment; emancipation was, like other French anti-slavery measures before it, a top-down measure in the wake of revolution.

With regard to norm cycles, certainly France had norm entrepreneurs. The history of anti-slavery thought was almost as rich there as in Britain. Yet, post-French Revolution, anti-slavery efforts were hindered by societal factors like nationalism and government suppression of participatory civil society. The French public wasn't compelled to abolitionism by the teachings or ideology of the dominant, but largely silent, Catholic Church. Nor were they efficiently educated on the subject through a popular information and association campaign like the British public had been. Again, this was partly because of government repression, and partly because of the elitist nature of French abolitionist norm entrepreneurs. Over time, it seems that just the sheer knowledge of the nature of slavery, acquired predominantly through press accounts of elite debates, convinced notable and common man alike that slavery was unacceptable and ultimately doomed. The discussion above suggests that France's societal inclination was a mixed bag of some facilitative factors (enlightenment philosophy), but many more hindrances (fear/memory of revolution, anti-British nationalism, a dominant Catholic Church not motivated theologically to question slavery, elite domination and/or fear of the masses) and any roadblocks were exacerbated by a stymied public sphere. Given all this, is it any surprise that it took over fifty years and two more revolutions to effect the second, and final, slave emancipation in France?
The United States

Given that the United States was part of Britain until the period that started public abolitionism (1770-1780s), it's of course not particularly surprising that many of the same ideological foundations (benevolence, Providence, liberty, rights of man, theology) and norm entrepreneurs (Quakers, etc) that helped spur the British abolition campaign existed there. Not only this, but when the United States moved to separate from the British empire its leaders couched rebellion in the philosophy of individual freedom; thus one would expect a societal inclination toward the questioning of the practice of slavery.

Nonetheless, it appears that when Thomas Jefferson stated that "all men are created equal," not all Americans agreed that this included black African slaves. Once it achieved independence, the United States would have to decide what its declaration of independence had really meant and how to implement its ideological underpinnings in the new constitution. By this period already, almost all northern states had prohibited the slave trade, in part because it was an ugly institution, but at least as importantly because they found the presence of significant numbers of blacks in their midst undesirable. Many northern states were also moving toward gradual emancipation. In the south, too, natural reproduction rates negated the economic need for an international slave trade. That said, southern representatives fought to delay decision on the future of the trade for twenty years, until 1807. They wanted no part of any measure that might hint at slavery's moral repugnance or lead in any small way to the institution's future demise. For most southerners, particularly lower southerners, then, emancipation was absolutely out of the question. The founding fathers were struggling to hold together the new nation, and therefore, the slavery question took a back seat to national unity.

The twenty years between the founding of the nation and the abolition of the slave trade only reinforced the south's position – the federal government was to stay away from discussion of slavery in the United States. When abolitionist activists broached the subject via petition in the early 1790s, the southern response was quick and aggressive. The abolitionists were put on the
defensive; southern leaders said calls for abolition were tantamount to calls for disunion, and northern leaders, fearing these threats, gave petitions no support.

Activists turned their attention to colonization efforts, but these fell flat. It took until the 1830s for American abolition efforts to re-take forms similar to their British brethren. The United States was in the midst of the second religious revival and like had happened in Britain, Protestant churches took the lead in spearheading a renewed, popular anti-slavery campaign. The foundations of and approaches to civil society and association in Britain and the United States were strikingly similar, and they both achieved some levels of success. In many ways – number of associations, number of publications, etc – the American surpassed that of the British. But there were critical differences as well. In Britain, it was a large and successful institution, but one "over there" in the colonies, unseen by most. In America, slavery was a massive, highly successful, domestic socio-economic institution. The country was increasingly sectionalized. Abolitionist norm entrepreneurs could organize and spread their anti-slavery ideas in the north, but after the mid-1830s the South was able to shut down the influx of anti-slavery literature and activists. All anti-slavery thought was repressed in the south, and further, Southern interests were able to press for a "gag rule" against petitions inside of Congress. Given these developments, the only hope for activists was to develop a new political platform/coalition that could effect change in sectionalized America. For that reason, this chapter left the discussion of America's popular, normative anti-slavery movement at the end of the 1830s. The normative movement in the bifurcated United States was, by necessity, so intertwined with domestic politics in the 1840s through the 1860s that it would be futile and counter-productive to separate the two. The next chapter will pick up the rest of the discussion.

Before moving on, it is worth repeating that of all the normative movements discussed in this chapter, the one in the United States probably most closely resembled that of Britain. In other words, factors of societal inclination and the nature of the American public sphere should have both been facilitative to the cause of anti-slavery. Norm entrepreneurs indeed were clearly able to
use a popular campaign to spread anti-slavery ideas to a large swath of the population. However, the unique development of America's immense, sectionalized slave system prevented an effective popular anti-slavery mobilization from effecting change throughout the country and via the channels of representative government. As we know from history, despite a robust normative movement it took a bloody Civil War to end slavery in the United States. Thus, while normative factors played at least some supportive role in slavery's demise in the United States, the primary causal factors must reside elsewhere (and will thus be examined in future chapters).

**Imperial Spain and Brazil**

In both Imperial Spain and Brazil, societal factors served as roadblocks to effective normative movements, at least until the late 19th century. In fact, as historian Laird Bergard suggests, while the nature and orchestrations of slave labor systems of the United States, Spanish Cuba, and Brazil were strikingly similar, the nature of their overall societies were distinctively different. As he notes, "most citizens of the United States sincerely believed in democracy, freedom, and humanitarianism despite its application to white males exclusively."2167 In contrast, in Spain/Cuba and Brazil "there was also the nearly complete absence of democratic myths and symbols that could have raised any doubt among elites who wielded power about their assumptions of a natural hierarchical social order in which all men were not created equal, especially those of color."2168 Slavery was accepted in every corner of Brazil and Cuba, and even where the institution had negligible importance "few people questioned its legality or desirability."2169 As Bergard concludes, "perhaps this, among many other factors, distinguished colonial Cuba and imperial Brazil from the United States. There were no democratic pretensions, especially among elites, and the theoretical concepts of equality and citizenship did not exist for

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most people across the social hierarchy.\footnote{Bergard, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 272.} In these ways, the societies of Imperial Spain/Cuba and Brazil were not inclined toward effective normative campaigns.

In Spain and her possessions, no significant normative/ideological movements developed against the slave trade and slavery until the 1860s. For the most part, elites (and thereby, the masses of these hierarchical societies) throughout the realm had no compunction about the institution of slavery. Here again, the dominant Catholic Church provided little impetus for questioning slavery and even if/when elites developed anti-slavery ideology, the repressive nature of the Spanish monarchy gave them little avenue for expression and popular mobilization. There were a few norm entrepreneurs, like Saco, speaking against slavery during earlier periods but they were generally much more concerned with maintaining security and "civilizing" (read: "whitening") their territories than expressing larger ideological qualms with servitude. Further, such voices were suppressed by the metropole in order to ensure imperial domination and the continued provision of wealth from the colonies. It was only after the death of the American slave system, via warfare, that elites in the Spanish empire began to re-consider the future of slavery. The rejection of slavery by other "civilized" countries was a powerful one. Activists like Vizcarrondo started the Spanish Abolition Society in the mid-1860s, and the revolution in 1868 in Spain, which produced a more liberal regime, opened up more avenues for popular expression. The Spanish Abolitionist Society was able to achieve some successes. More importantly, the revolution in Cuba in 1868, and the resulting Ten Years War, brought the subjects of slavery and freedom to public light in Cuba, where the subject had been little broached before. It was during the ten to fifteen years from the American Civil War to the end of the Ten Years War, that it became clear to elites throughout the Spanish Empire that emancipation was inevitable. It was left to them to enact gradual emancipation, which they did via the Moret Law and, later, \textit{Patronato}. Slavery was abolished in Puerto Rico in 1873, and 1886 in Cuba.
Like Spain, there was little to no popular movement against slavery until very late in Brazil. In a hierarchical society dominated by the land-owning/slave-owning elite, there was little questioning of slavery as an institution. Further, the public sphere, while relatively open (at least compared to Cuba's), was still dominated by the land-owning class. In fact, elites inside Dom Pedro's government and the Emperor himself – all very attuned to the norms of other powers like Britain and France and closely watching the Civil War in the United States – were the first to have some inclination toward modernization and were the first to make any reforms regarding slavery in the 1860s. The Paraguayan War, too, brought slavery to the public mind as slaves were needed for military service. Still, the hierarchical nature of society meant any change would be slow; the Rio Branco Law of 1871 moved to only very gradually free slaves via birth. Given all the forces weighing against a normative anti-slavery movement, it was only in the 1880s that effective local abolitionist societies developed, and as they did so some regions were freed from slavery. Eventually, slaves fled, often en masse, and abolitionist societies developed an effective "underground railroad" to spring slaves and bring them to free regions. The institution of slavery disintegrated under the weight of this pressure, ending finally in 1888. In this way, a review of Brazilian history suggests the country did follow a norm cycle and that a normative movement, however late, was a significant causal factor in slavery's decline there (the same can't be said for the demise of the slave trade). It took until the mid-1880s before popular abolitionism hit a tipping point inside Brazil, and once it did, the norm cascade came quickly as slavery fell apart.

In conclusion, the case studies presented in these two chapters suggest that the normative variable played a causal role most clearly and forcefully in the case of Britain. There, societal factors facilitated the development of a sustained normative movement and an open public sphere provided an arena in which the movement could spread and flourish. In other societies, the normative movements' impacts were not quite so definitive. Normative movements eventually developed/followed norm emergence cycles in Imperial Spain and Brazil. In the former, the normative movement played some supportive role in both the end of the trade and practice. In the
latter, the normative movement played a significant role in the end of the institution, if all but no role in the end of the trade. Finally, both the United States and France provide examples in which certain societal factors seemed to provide a natural breeding ground for movement development, and yet, the normative movements there played only a secondary role in slavery's demise.

What then do the case studies presented here say about the possible impact of norms on warfare? First, (as Chapter 3 demonstrated) slavery was a viable/profitable institution, and so the fact that effective normative movements could (in some cases) develop against it and lead to its decline suggests that the same could happen with regard to warfare, even if it is perceived to remain cost effective and/or viable as an institution. Further, the stories presented here suggest that societal inclinations and the nature of the public sphere may play a role in which, when, and how societies/states develop norms against certain institutions. Still, the case studies make clear that not all slave systems declined primarily through the normative variable, and thus, the study now turns to other variables in order to more fully develop the causal path of slavery's demise in all these countries.
Chapter 6
Domestic Politics and the End of Transatlantic Slavery, Part I

The last two chapters illuminated the ways in which normative movements developed and transformed ideas in the major countries engaged in transatlantic slavery. This chapter and the next examine an alternative causal variable – domestic politics. A domestic politics explanation would expect slavery to decline when anti-slavery domestic interest groups and/or political players and bureaucrats gained more influence over the national policymaking and legislative processes than the pro-slavery factions. The focus of these chapters is the nature of a state's public sphere and the public's ability to interact with government; they further identify players within a government's structure, determining interests and then tracing how these interests and positions ultimately yield government decisions and actions.\textsuperscript{2171} In this way, three sub-factors reside within the domestic political variable: the nature and/or openness of the public sphere, the domestic political structure, and bureaucratic politics. All three will be described below before turning to the case studies of Britain and the United States; then the next chapter will discuss France, Imperial Spain (including Cuba and Puerto Rico), and Brazil.

The Domestic Politics Variable

The domestic politics variable encompasses three sub-aspects that will be examined and illuminated in the case studies that follow: the nature of the public sphere, the domestic political structure, and bureaucratic politics. The public sphere has already been discussed a bit in the normative chapters; it is covered here again because, in part, it lies at the nexus of the society and government. It relates to the ability of persons within society to associate with others, and to formulate, discuss, and spread ideas free of oppressive state/government intervention. This sub-variable has to do with what in more recent years has come to be called civil society or "social

capital.\textsuperscript{2172} This concept was popularized by Alexis de Tocqueville in his reflections on America, which stressed that society's "public spirit," active civic association, and free press.\textsuperscript{2173} As he stated, "the most natural privilege of man, next to the right of acting for himself, is that of combining his exertions with those of his fellow-creatures, and of acting in common with them."\textsuperscript{2174} De Tocqueville asserted that free and active association helped bind Americans together and strengthened the quality of their democracy.\textsuperscript{2175} He further noted the importance of a free press for the health of society, particularly those societies pursuing egalitarianism.\textsuperscript{2176}

Follow-on theorists have taken their cues from de Tocqueville and have dived deeply into the concepts of civil society. Political scientists Marcia Weigle and Jim Butterfield have described civil society as a society's "independence of self-organization" and the ability to "engage in public activity to pursue individual, group, or national interests."\textsuperscript{2177} Inherent in this formulation is the concept that as persons engage in an open public sphere, there is an interactive relationship with government. Weigle and Butterfield suggest that there are two aspects of civil society: a legal/institutional government framework that allows organization as a basis of civil society, and the nature, identity and goals of individual and group actors exhibit what they call the "orientation" of civil society/public realm.\textsuperscript{2178} Similarly, theorists such as Theda Skocpol have

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{2172} Recently, Robert Putnam has popularized the notion of social capital. See for example, Putnam, Robert D. "Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America." \textit{PS: Political Science & Politics}, (December) 1995: 664-683.
  \item \textsuperscript{2173} Tocqueville, Alexis de. \textit{Democracy in America}. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2001: 91-95; 105-108. De Tocqueville states "an association consists simply in the public assent which a number of individuals give to certain doctrines; and in the engagement which they contract to promote in a certain manner the spread of those doctrines" (page 95).
  \item \textsuperscript{2174} Tocqueville, Alexis de. \textit{Democracy in America}. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2001: 98. He added, The right of association therefore appears to me almost as inalienable in its nature as the right of personal liberty."
  \item \textsuperscript{2175} Tocqueville, Alexis de. \textit{Democracy in America}. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2001: 91-94, 102-108. Alexis de Tocqueville wrote, "in no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used, or applied to a greater multitude of objects, than in America." He added that the liberty, equality, and "political activity which pervades the United States must be seen in order to be understood."
\end{itemize}
noted that voluntary associations are not just local apolitical associations, but develop in
interaction with government structure, and for this reason, observers need to understand the nexus
between society and the state.\textsuperscript{2179} Weigle and Butterfield have delineated different types of public
spheres, from those in a defensive state in which association and expression is stunted, all the way
to an institutionalized sphere in which independent association and action is guaranteed by the
relationship between state and society.\textsuperscript{2180}

The public sphere, then, interacts with the institutions of government, which leads to the
second key sub-factor in the domestic politics variable – the domestic political structure.
Institutional theorists stress that institutions matter.\textsuperscript{2181} Institutional thinking emphasizes the part
institutions play in shaping, and thereby ordering, social interactions.\textsuperscript{2182} State/government
institutions are not only affected by society, but these institutions in turn affect society.\textsuperscript{2183} As
Skocpol notes, recent research on civil society has asserted "the co-determining role of, on the
one hand, states and political organization and, on the other hand, social ties and attitudes."\textsuperscript{2184}

Societies can be differentiated by examining their structures and the interactions between
government and civil society. In authoritarian states, as Michael Mann notes, "all social power

\textsuperscript{2179} Skocpol, Theda. "Bringing the State Back In: Retrospect and Prospect." Scandinavian Political Studies
\textsuperscript{2180} Weigle, Marcia A. and Jim Butterfield. "Civil Society in Reforming Communist Regimes: The Logic of
Emergence." Comparative Politics, Vol. 25, No. 1 (October) 1992: 5-19; and as summarized in Randall,
Vicky, and Robin Theobold. Political Change and Underdevelopment: A Critical Introduction to Third
World Politics, 2nd Edition. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998: 203-206. This study was related to
the civil societies emerging from crumbling and/or former communist regimes, but the loose
differentiations apply here as well as this study examines state becoming more and more representative as
they emerged from authoritarian monarchy.
\textsuperscript{2181} See also March, James G. and Johan P. Olsen. "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in
Political Life." The American Political Science Review, Vol. 78, No. 3 (September) 1984: 747. As March
and Olsen stress, institutionalism argues "that the organization of political life makes a difference."
\textsuperscript{2182} March, James G. and Johan P. Olsen. "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political
\textsuperscript{2183} March, James G. and Johan P. Olsen. "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political
\textsuperscript{2184} Skocpol, Theda. "Bringing the State Back In: Retrospect and Prospect." Scandinavian Political Studies
are "elected and recallable," and thereby politicians are influenced by civil society. In this way, "sociocultural and political processes come together to shape citizen attitudes and influence the political stances of elites and interests groups."^2192

The last aspect of domestic politics is bureaucratic politics; that is, how players in the institutions of government interact to decide upon and execute policy. As bureaucratic-politics theorists Graham Allison and Morton Halperin state "what a government does in any particular instance can be understood largely as a result of bargaining among players positioned... in the government."^2193 Just as the interaction between members of society and the government matter, so too does the interaction of players within the government structure. Looking at bureaucratic politics entails understanding the governmental procedures that produce particular actions, the activities of government players that lead to decisions and policy, and then the actions that execute policy once government decisions have been made.^2194


[^2194]: Allison, Graham T., and Morton H. Halperin. "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm." In American Defense Policy, 7th Edition. Peter L. Hays, Brenda J. Vallance, and Alan R. Van Tassel, eds. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997: 26-31. As Halperin and Allison note, the bureaucratic politics model focuses on actions channels – "regularized sets of procedures for producing particular classes of actions; decision games – "activity of players leading to decisions by senior players;" policy games – "activities leading to policy;" and action games – "activities that follow from, or proceed in the absence of, decisions by senior players." Their basic unit of analysis is "actions of a government that we define as the various acts of officials of a government in exercises of governmental authority that can be perceived outside the government" (page 26-27).
This model/variable focuses on the internal processes of each state, and in this way, suggests an alternative to the widely accepted rational choice explanation of how states interact with each other. The rational approach assumes that government individuals seeking to determine what's in the national interest of a country list and prioritize objectives, examine policy alternatives, do cost-benefit analysis, and then develop, adopt, and execute policy solutions.

According to theorists Morton Halperin, Priscilla Clapp, and Arnold Kanter, "seldom do

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participants, in fact, engage in such research to determine what is in the national interest." Rather, the adoption of policy is a much more haphazard process that is affected by both the interaction with domestic interest groups (as discussed via the first two sub-factors discussed above) and the interaction within government institutions. By this formulation, "the actions of a nation result not from an agreed-upon calculus of strategic interests, but rather from pulling and hauling among individuals with differing perceptions and stakes." With regard to interaction within government, the members of the various institutions and bureaucracies within institutions interact with each other and often seek to further organizational interests, rather than national interests. A perception of "organizational essence," a form of groupthink, develops in each institution as to the organization's own interests and what the proper roles, functions, and policy actions should be. In this way, "an organization favors policies and strategies that its members believe will make the organization as they define it more important;" thus, members will attempt to keep functions that are seen as part of the organizational essence, and shed those that are not.

"Domestic political considerations and personal interests are an inescapable part of the decisionmaking process," and yet, they are not often considered in the policy analyses, particularly those related to national security and international relations. As Allison and Halperin summarize, the bureaucratic politics model's focus on internal government processes "stems not only from the fact that individuals within nations do the acting but also from the


observation that the satisfaction of players' interests are to be found overwhelmingly at home.\textsuperscript{2201}

The more representative a government is, the more "political leaders of a nation rise and fall depending on whether they satisfy domestic needs."\textsuperscript{2202}

Part I – British Domestic Politics and the End of Transatlantic Slavery

The British Constitutional Monarchy at the Turn of the Century

Emerging from the period of the English Civil War in the 1660s and 1670s, the four nations of the British Isles were ruled by three Parliaments: one for England and Wales, one for Scotland, and one for Ireland. In 1707, the Scottish Parliament was abolished and given representation in Westminster, and a similar result occurred for Ireland in 1801.\textsuperscript{2203} The Westminster Parliamentary system included the Monarch and the two Houses of Parliament – the House of Lords (or House of Peers) and the House of Commons. Peers were generally appointed via heredity and by the Monarch.\textsuperscript{2204} They were a naturally conservative group, representing the height of the establishment.\textsuperscript{2205} Ministers to the House of Commons were elected from boroughs and counties. This was not a truly representative body, as obtaining franchise depended on owning land (one needed land worth 40 shillings/year) and so a very small percentage (3-4


\textsuperscript{2204} McCahill, M.W. The House of Lords in the Age of George III (1760-1811). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009: 14-15. Additionally, a few were actually elected. The number of Lords increased over time, going from under 100 to over 200 in the time period of concern here. For example, 181 Peers took seats in 1760, 267 in 1800, and 284 in 1810.

\textsuperscript{2205} McCahill, M.W. The House of Lords in the Age of George III (1760-1811). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009: 3. As McCahill states, "Its members' commitment to the preservation of existing institutions and political practices was the natural outgrowth of their rank, their status and their bountiful resources."
percent) could actually vote. In some towns, only a handful of men met this criterion; more men usually met this mark in the cities. Given these figures, one can understand how the term "pocket boroughs" – meaning those boroughs in which the elected seat was controlled by a single or small number of local patrons – gained prominent usage. In this way, the local gentry and aristocrats largely determined representation. In some cases, no true election, or ballot counting was actually held because the outcome was a foregone conclusion.

The period of interest to students of slavery's abolition also marks a transition in the history of British politics. During the early 1700s the question of who was most powerful – the Monarch or Parliament – was still largely unresolved, but by the end of the century Parliament was supreme. Further, the purview of Parliament had historically been focused on diplomacy, defense and revenue. But, in the period after the victory of the Seven Years War, Britain was emerging as an increasingly powerful industrializing state, which presented a new set of challenges for the government. These included the potential for class conflict, the need for integration of agriculture, industry, and commerce, and how to deal with a growing/urbanizing

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2206 Hague, William. William Wilberforce: The Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner. London: Harper Perennial, 2008: 31; and Roskin, Michael G. Countries and Concepts, 6th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1997: 27-28; and Jupp, Peter. The Governing of Britain, 1688-1848. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006: 236-237. Jupp puts the percentage at 4.3 to 4.6 percent before the Reform Act. He puts it at between 7 and 11 percent after. Roskin notes the Reform Act of 1832 doubled enfranchisement to 7 percent. As William Hague notes, "In some constituencies only the members of the corporation (the local council) or owners of certain properties or burgages possessed the vote, with the result that there were sometimes only a handful of voters; in others, like the city of Westminster and the counties, the franchise extended to all forty-shilling freeholders, and would generally include a good few thousand males with property above the rental value.


population. Added to this, Parliament was challenged to deal with religious issues (integrating Protestants and Catholics), and by how to deal with a burgeoning, increasingly active public sphere. From this period (1760s-1770s) through the turn of the century the activity of the public sphere was growing exponentially. Newspapers were springing up and there was a surge of clubs and associations (see Table 6.1). Additionally, as was discussed in Chapter 4 (and will be discussed more below), petitioning was becoming an increasingly utilized and useful form of public expression (see Table 6.2). As Peter Jupp states, by the 1820s there was a realization "that a new form of 'public opinion' had become a permanent and independent force in the body politic.”

Table 6.1. Numbers and Sales of Newspapers, 1750-1840

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Published in...</th>
<th>1750s</th>
<th>1780s</th>
<th>1828-1830</th>
<th>1836</th>
<th>1837</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England and Wales</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Number of Newspapers Produced | 10.7 million | 12.8 million | 25 million | 35.5 million | 53.4 million |

As the public sphere changed, so too did the interaction between the public and government players/institutions. At the turn of the century and into the mid-1800s Parliament was becoming a more representative, if not fully democratic, body. The 1750s and 1760s were the heights of patronage politics in Britain, but this was changing and would never be so high.

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2215 Jupp, Peter. The Governing of Britain, 1688-1848. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006: 109, 231. Jupp notes in earlier period, there was public pressure but it was rarely a threat to elites... "structure of public opinion changed enormously" during the period of interest for slavery... "to some extent this was due to exponential growth in the sheer number of pressure groups, petitions, newspapers and various types of clubs and societies" (page 231).
again.\textsuperscript{2218} Given the low voting percentages, it's easy to take the view that the system was completely unrepresentative and Parliamentarians need pay little attention to the masses. But during this period, locals did begin to resist the politicians put forward by landowning patrons and Ministers of Parliament (MPs) were increasingly expected to represent the local interest at Westminster.\textsuperscript{2219} Further, commercial pressure groups played an increasingly important role in the Commons, and an important aspect of the legitimization and increasing power of the House of Commons was its ability to adjust to and accept the emerging mercantile/industrial interests.\textsuperscript{2220} In this way, as historian Jeremy Black concludes, during this period "Parliament was the crucial nexus of political, social, and economic relationships."\textsuperscript{2221}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Petitions Presented, 1785-1841\textsuperscript{2222}}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Time Period} & \textbf{Number of Petitions Presented} \\
\hline
1785-1789 & 880 \\
1801-1805 & 1,026 \\
1811-1815 & 4,498 \\
1827-1831 & 24,492 \\
1837-1841 & 70,369 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

In today's world, party politics tends to come to mind when one thinks of government systems. But, party politics did not exist in a recognizably modern way at the turn of the 18\textsuperscript{th} to 19\textsuperscript{th} century. As historian and parliamentarian William Hague notes, "political parties were not remotely as well developed in the late eighteenth century as they were to become only a few


\textsuperscript{2220} Black, Jeremy. "The Rotten Borough Commons, 1734-1832." In \textit{The House of Commons: Seven Hundred year of British Tradition}. Robert Smith and John S. Moore, editors. London: Smith's Peerage Ltd., 1996: 111, 113. Additionally, increasingly the Parliament was important as a "legitimiser" of the Constitution and of Hanoverian rule, as well as the "harnesser" of "national resources for conflict."


decades later. Party lines were not clearly formed when the crusade against the slave trade began in the late 1780s. The term "Whig" and "Tory" weren't meaningful in the 1780s, and it was difficult to distinguish a distinct Whig or Tory "creed." It was not until 1794 that the Tory party would develop (as an anti-reform party) under Pitt, and it would be in power for most of the next thirty years.

Discerning implicit party distinctions was best achieved in the 1780s through an understanding of the developing coalitions between the respective "leaders" in Parliament. For example, one could clearly perceive the battles between Pitt supporters and Fox supporters in 1784. Nonetheless, these battles didn't produce a party platform for which parliamentarians were obliged to vote. It would take until the 1830s for party politics to develop and, in fact, by 1840 party politics dominated the discourse at Westminster in a way that modern observers would certainly recognize.

Further, the role of Prime Minister had not yet taken the form it embodies today. The First Lord (or First Minister), usually the First Lord of the Treasury, took on an increasingly leading role during this period but it was not the dominating role it is today. Pitt (First Lord, but for continuity we will use the modern term – Prime Minister, from 1783-1801, 1804-1806)

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2226 Jupp, Peter. *The Governing of Britain, 1688-1848*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006: 118. According to Jupp, the real divide in politics from 1770 to 1810 was between those that saw King as having a legitimate role in politics, and those supporting eventually Fox, who called themselves Whigs, who thought the King had little rightful role.


didn't have "the ability of a late-nineteenth or twentieth-century Prime Minister to bludgeon most or all of his party into voting for the measures that he wanted, by virtue of control over the party's membership and most of the key positions in the state," because as Hague notes, that ability "simply had not yet arisen."\textsuperscript{2230} Parliamentarians might be expected to keep their implicitly chosen leader in office, but not to support any particular piece of legislation.\textsuperscript{2231} In fact, around a third of the House at that time (1780s and 1790s) regarded themselves as independent to some degree; indeed William Wilberforce considered himself "no party man," despite his deep friendship with Prime Minister Pitt.\textsuperscript{2232} "The view that it should be 'measures not men' that determined one's political conduct was frequently invoked to legitimate opposition."\textsuperscript{2233} The whole notion of party was thought unpatriotic; a parliamentarian should go to parliament and represent his constituency and the national interest in general, not a hard-and-fast party platform.\textsuperscript{2234}

**What Abolitionists Were Up Against**

*Procedure and Parliamentary Politics.* For a bill to be enacted as law, it needed to pass (achieve a majority) through three readings in the Commons, proceed to committee stage, and then pass the House of Lords within a single parliamentary session.\textsuperscript{2235} Given the state of parties discussed above, it is easy to see how it would be difficult to pass a reform bill through a

\textsuperscript{2233} Brewer, John. *Party Ideology and popular politics at the accession of George III.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1976: 68, 115. Plus, by opposing measures and not men one could avoid countering the King's men and/or avoid forcing actions against the King's perceived will. As Brewer notes (page 115), "the agreement that existed over the relationship between ministerial responsibility and the royal prerogative was primarily abstract and theoretical, confined to tomes of constitutional theory or the most general utterances." So, even given the increasing power of the Parliament relative to the King, it was still a delicate maneuver to be seen as countering royal stances.
Parliament with no clear party lines and/or party discipline. This was not the only obstacle. In this period, parliamentarians got most of their understanding of domestic and international policy measures through the debates in Westminster. In fact, analysis shows that "only a small number of MPs became partisan of either pro- or anti-abolition forces, and that the vast majority of them formed an impressionable and persuadable group in the middle." As R.A. Austen and W.D. Smith (1969) note, "While there were plenty of specific interests represented in the Commons, of which the West Indian slave holding interest was one of the more important, when a question at issue touched neither a Member's particular concerns nor those of his party he could be expected to vote according to his conceptions of 'principle' and the national good." For abolitionists, this could have been a curse because as William Hague illuminates, "emerging facts about the slave which might persuade such an impressionable majority were not widely known or discussed." The writings of Clarkson and events like the Somerset case had been noticed, but weren't foremost in people's minds. Newspapers were increasingly important in Britain in the 1700s, but only a few articles had appeared regarding the slave trade. "Eighteenth-century debate took place without the plethora of independently audited statistics to which politicians of a later age are accustomed." "For most parliamentarians, therefore, the trade remained as it always had been: something which did not intrude into daily thoughts or conversation." This factor ultimately

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proved a blessing for the abolitionists because of Clarkson's diligent effort to provide information and Wilberforce's prowess at presenting it. In that sense, it was the organization and persistency of the effort that turned this potential weakness into strength.

Parliamentary Lifestyle. Another limiting factor was the Parliamentary cycle and lifestyle. This lifestyle was filled with lots of gambling, drinking, and womanizing. \(^{2242}\) "Once in London, the MP was subject to many other distractions. The theatre, the gaming-table, clubs, the pleasures of sexual dalliance and of 'society' all offered more immediate gratification than weary hours on the hard benches of the lower House."\(^{2243}\) Additionally, the travel time required meant that parliamentarians were gone for much of the year. As historian John Brewer notes,

Parliamentary politics was, moreover, only a part of the life-style (the term is scarcely an anachronism in the eighteenth century) of the average politician. It was almost impossible, as every political organizer knew, to discuss major matters of policy or business in the House before Christmas and after Easter because of the difficulties of securing the attendance of the country gentlemen... Even well-organised political parties found it hard to secure the attendance of their supporters except in the first four months of the year.\(^{2244}\)

Abolition's Opponents. As discussed above, most Parliamentarians were neither for or against abolition as the debate started in the 1780s and 1790s. Nonetheless it is important to understand the faction that did stand against it before turning to the actual debates and countertactics used by these factions. The King was certainly committed to stability and empire.\(^{2245}\) As William Hague notes, enlightened ideas were "by no means the governing influences in the minds of older members of the political establishment, whether in the cabinet or the royal family itself. King George III was noted for rigid adherence to whatever upheld the constitution and the

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\(^{2242}\) Hague, William. *William Wilberforce: The Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner*. London: Harper Perennial, 2008: 38-43. For his part, one of Wilberforce's strengths was his ability to refrain from these vices, to be present in session, and yet be liked and to socialize among other parliamentarians. As has been discussed before, he was the perfect mix of attributes.


Empire.\textsuperscript{2246} Even though Pitt was pro-abolition, he could not take an overtly strong stance on the issue given pressure from the King and dissent within his own cabinet. In Pitt's coalition cabinet, Home Secretary Lord Sydney was pro-slavery and Lord Chancellor Lord Thurlow "saw it as his business to puncture and obstruct almost all of Pitt's progressive ideas."\textsuperscript{2247}

The House of Lords was a tough sell as well, particularly when compared with the Commons. Although in the Commons the abolitionists wielded the best orators in the likes of Wilberforce (and at times, Pitt) this wasn't the case in Lords.\textsuperscript{2248} More importantly, the House of Lords also had the ingrained concern for imperial interests.\textsuperscript{2249} Overall, at the beginning of the debate the House of Lords seemed disposed against abolition, seeing themselves as "defenders of the traditional constitutional order."\textsuperscript{2250} The King's son in particular - the Duke of Clarence - "was moved by his time in the navy to become an ardent defender of the slave trade."\textsuperscript{2251}

The House of Commons seemed the most fertile for change, given the quiet support of Pitt and leadership of Wilberforce. Yet, there were significant obstacles there as well. The number of committed abolitionists in the House Commons was likely only around 30 in the period up to 1796.\textsuperscript{2252} In the same period, the anti-abolition планter interest likely numbered between 20 and 30, perhaps about ten more if you count other constituencies in Bristol.

\textsuperscript{2252} Anstey, Roger. \textit{The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810}. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 283. There was no party basis for abolition; there were 3 or 4 independents, 9 for Fox, 16 for Pitt.
Liverpool, Lancashire, and London that were likely to oppose. At first, the anti-abolitionists were somewhat reserved in their opposition, but the force and effectiveness of the abolitionist campaign forced them to organize and vigorously defend their positions. As discussed below, the ardent pro-slavery interest would engage in argument and delay tactics in every way possible to defeat the abolitionist effort in the House of Commons.

As William Hague has pointed out, it may seem strange to readers in today's world that it took so long for the effort against slavery to succeed, particularly given the fact that Prime Minister William Pitt was pro-abolition. Yet, given the intricacies of Parliament at the time (the power of the King and the Lords, for example) and the factors mentioned above, one can understand why this was such an immensely challenging undertaking. As Hague cogently summarizes, "to win a majority in Parliament for slave-trade abolition it would be necessary to secure the votes of country gentlemen whose attendance was erratic, friends of the King who took their cue from Windsor rather than Downing Street, and members of the House of Lords whose first instinct was to be suspicious of change." Further, taken together, these factors meant that abolishing the slave trade was not simply a matter of drawing up a Bill and asking a reliable parliamentary majority to pass it. It would be necessary to establish facts which had never been nailed down, to inform people who had never been interested in the subject, and to persuade key individuals who were highly reluctant to act: three requirements which would make the abolitionist campaign exhausting in its length, painstaking in its detail and, for its time, unique in its scope.

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Having examined the structure and forces shaping this political battle, this study now turns to examining some of the key counter-abolition motions and tactics and some key events that turned the tide for the anti-slavery forces.

**The Battle in Parliament**

As discussed in Chapter 4, when the abolitionists launched their petition campaign they were utilizing an old method of seeking redress, but one that had taken on increased power in the late 1700s. The King and Minister could no longer completely ignore the will of the people, and thus the startling response of the first wave of petitions forwarded in 1788 and 1789 put the slave trade on the political agenda. The first abolition campaign caught the pro-slavery interest by surprise, and they largely withheld comment in this early debate but made effective use of delay tactics nonetheless. The delay tactics employed in 1788 combined a mix of calling for more information, labeling the bill as false and insulting to legitimate and honorable constituents, and suggesting that a bill of ameliorations was a better option than total abolition of the trade. For example, in the debate on May 9, 1788, Mr. Gascoyne suggested he thought abolition "unnecessary, visionary, and impracticable; but he wished some alteration and modification of the Trade to be adopted. In considering the subject, however, he hoped the House would not forget the trade, commerce, and navigation of the country." Then on May 26, 1788 after Mr. Dolben had put forth a regulatory bill, Mr. Gascoyne "objected to the mode of regulation proposed in the Bill, [concluding that] even if regulation were necessary, as being neither practicable in itself nor

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adequate to its proposed object.\textsuperscript{2263} If the bill went forward he thought his constituents should be made aware and more evidence presented before reading the bill a second time in 3 months. Other pro-slavery members then seconded the motion.\textsuperscript{2264} In the same way, on 9 May Lord Penrhyn called for an immediate inquiry of more evidence so that the House could rectify the reputation of the merchants involved in the trade, calling it counterintuitive to think they would abuse slaves given that they made their money by delivering them safely.\textsuperscript{2265} Then during the May 28, 1788 debate, Lord Penrhyn brought forth petitions from Liverpool, citing as evidence against anti-trade measures "the long existence of the African Slave Trade; the essential benefits the country derived from it; the encouragement that the legislature held out to individuals to embark their fortunes in it; and the injury that they must necessarily suffer from any sudden measure being taken respecting it."\textsuperscript{2266} Eventually Pitt relented and called for the debate to continue in the next session, with his opposition – Mr. Fox – stating flatly that there should be no delay and that the West Indian interest was clearly engaged in delay tactics.\textsuperscript{2267} The delay had worked.

The special Privy Council report that had been ordered to answer the call for evidence came out in April 1789. Wilberforce put a motion for abolition forward on 12 May 1789; the 12 May debate and the one that followed on 21 May were "non-events," in that the anti-abolition forces once again made effective delay.\textsuperscript{2268} On May 12th, Lord Penryhn said it was too late to fully counter the evidence put forth, but that Wilberforce had misrepresented facts and was

\textsuperscript{2266} Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXVII (14 February 1788 to 4 May 1789). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 579. Mr. Ewer brought forward petitions from London supporting the same arguments.
therefore not credible. 2269 Mr. Alderman Newnham argued that if abolition was effected, London would be "awash with negroes." Mr. Dempster then asserted that the evidence suggested abolition would result in wealth and property loss, and that therefore, given that the government had pushed the trade, reparations were needed. Pitt was quick to say that he had not proposed reparations. Once again, the pro-slavery interest suggested regulation was a better alternative. On 21 May, Mr. Alderman Newnham suggested that "the report of the privy council ought not be made a ground of proceeding in that House." 2270 Others supported him, suggesting the Privy Council evidence was not enough. Mr. Alderman Watson said, "as the question was of the utmost importance, it ought not be decided upon but from the fullest and most satisfactory evidence." 2271 Ultimately, the case was shelved, not argued, because it was decided that the Commons must hear testimony on the matter, despite the fact that the Privy Council had put forth a lengthy report. 2272

As Anstey then well summarizes, the "the aptness of... [West Indian] obstruction, however, and the length of time taken by a number of weighty West Indian witnesses, were such that the substantive motion was unable to be put until April 1791 – the abolitionists had to fight to secure a hearing for their witnesses before the Commons Committee." 2273 In the April 1791 debate, anti-abolition forces argued predominantly that the trade was too valuable to abolish. Sir William Young argued forcefully against abolition, concluding "I shall sit down in full confidence, that the event of this night will show, that the good sense and true benevolence of a British House of Commons are not to be fascinated by eloquence, or drawn aside by any influence, when the road to the true interests and welfare of their country and of mankind is before them, and clear, and

2271 Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803, Vol XXVIII (8 May 1789 to 15 March 1791). London: TC Hansard, 1816: 82-91. Mr. Henniker supported the call for further evidence, and that regulation might do the trick... he then read a lengthy letter from African King of Dawhomayians suggesting the utility of the trade for all.

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direct: it leads to a rejection of the present motion." Pro-slavery Lord John Russell "admitted, that the ideas attached to slavery were repugnant to our feelings, yet conceived that all the advantages which were supposed to result from the present motion would prove visionary and delusive." In this way, despite the planning and weight of arguments brought forward by the abolitionists, the West Indian interest had been able to stave off effective anti-trade measures through 1791.

The abolitionists hit a low point in this period, as much of the agitation, petitioning, and organization ceased. When the second great popular campaign kicked off in 1792, the pro-slave trade parliamentarians would challenge the validity of petitions from commoners. Others went further, questioning the authority and competence of the inhabitants of 'small market towns... to dictate to our Parliament what is proper to be done in this affair." Nonetheless, it had been made evident to the House of Commons by this point that popular opinion (expressed through petitions) was fully in favor of abolition. Following Wilberforce, Pitt too made an eloquent speech in favor of abolition. Smart Parliamentary tactics once again took the day. As the debate went back and forth, Henry Dundas, Secretary of State for Home and Colonial Affairs (and as such, no ardent friend of abolition), stepped in to recommend that the word "gradually" be added to Wilberforce's motion. This was a weakened compromise that left the motion largely

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2276 Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 273. The motion for abolition came again in April 1791, but was again defeated 88 to 163. In the mean time, "as a reform movement, the abolition campaign was clearly running out of steam, nothing significant being done to sustain it during this period."
without teeth, and it passed by a vote of 230 to 85.\textsuperscript{2280} By a far smaller margin, the House of Commons voted to set the date of total abolition at 1796.\textsuperscript{2281} As William Hague notes, "it was an anti-climax: the Commons had voted for the first time for abolition, but it was not clear what their vote would mean."\textsuperscript{2282} Further, the House of Lords, wanted to hear its own evidence. The motion to gradually abolish slavery by 1796 was shot down in the upper House.\textsuperscript{2283}

The abolitionists had gone a long way toward convincing parliamentarians that the trade was an ugly practice, something even pro-slavery forces would now largely admit; but, they hadn't yet achieved a definitive abolition measure and international events would set their effort back. With the revolution in France and in Saint-Domingue, abolitionists were now associated with threatening, radical politics. "The counter-abolitionist strategy broadened to conflate abolitionism, not only with slave emancipation, but with every potential threat to public order, foreign and domestic."\textsuperscript{2284} The British press noted that the French National Assembly gave Wilberforce honorary citizenship – which was, increasingly, a kiss of death, and so as Robert Fogel notes, "even Wilberforce, staunch conservative, defender of private property, and close friend of the prime minister, was accused of Jacobin sympathies."\textsuperscript{2285} "Suddenly," noted Thomas Clarkson, "many looked upon the abolitionists as monsters... the current was turned against us."\textsuperscript{2286} As historian James Walvin notes, "popular tactics had to be abandoned after the outbreak


of war with France in 1793. The widespread revulsion against the excesses of the French
Revolution and the patriotic fervor tended to tar all public campaigns.  Nothing resembling
the great popular agitation of 1792 was repeated before the passage of slave trade abolition acts in
1806-1807.

By 1804, several factors suggested the time was ripe for another push for abolition. The
threat of French invasion had largely passed; fear of radicalism had died down and the antislavery
position was no longer associated with Jacobism or other threatening ideologies. In fact,
Napoleon had reintroduced the slave trade in 1802 and hence, "support for abolition could almost
bear the colour of patriotism." Additionally, Ireland was now sending its Parliamentarians to
Westminster and its Ministers were expected to support abolition en masse. Wilberforce put
his abolition bill forward in May 1804, and it passed in the House of Commons (with votes of
124 to 49, 100 to 42, and 99 to 33); the new Irish members had strongly supported abolition.
"But the old obstacles of the lateness of the session and the insistence of the upper house on
hearing evidence in a matter of this kind remained insuperable." It failed in the House of
Lords. The motion was reintroduced in 1805 in Commons, but was defeated; this time, the pro-


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University Press, 2009: 223; Davis, David Brion. *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the
University Press, 2009: 223; and Morgan, Kenneth. *Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to
by 1805 the island had ostensibly been recaptured, and hence, fear had died down. This will be discussed
more in the geostrategic case study chapter.
2290 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
Harper Perennial, 2008: 317; and Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-
2292 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
2293 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
slavery interests had convinced several of the Irish members that a vote against slavery was a vote against private property rights.\textsuperscript{2294}

Prime Minister Pitt's unexpected death in 1806 proved to be a startling development that would re-open the path to total abolition.\textsuperscript{2295} Pitt's death was beneficial for abolition principally because the "coalition ministry which came to power was dominated by men who favoured abolition" – Grenville and Fox.\textsuperscript{2296} Lord Grenville had called for years for a broadly-based government containing all the factions, including particularly Fox. The King had always resisted allowing Fox in the cabinet, but now, with no strong alternative available, he relented. "In February 1806, the Grenville-Fox Ministry, a "coalition of three parliamentary factions" known as the "Ministry of Talents," took power.\textsuperscript{2297}

This was a reform government, consisting of a majority of abolitionists. Fox and Grenville had argued for abolition from the beginning. As a reform government, "the administration could hardly feel comfortable without some reforming cause to espouse, especially as the largest single group in it were Foxites."\textsuperscript{2298} "All that remained of unifying [reform] causes were Catholic emancipation – and abolition."\textsuperscript{2299} No one believed Catholic emancipation would pass while George III was still alive, and so abolition was perhaps the last reform issue that could unite the government and actually pass.\textsuperscript{2300} This time, they would not resort to a full frontal assault on abolition, but rather, a more strategic argument in its favor. In 1805, James Stephen


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had published his book *The War in Disguise*, which had stated that despite British naval
dominance their enemies' colonies had continued to thrive due to their use of neutral shipping.
Therefore, this policy needed to be overturned and the Royal Navy needed to be free to interdict
shipping between Britain's enemies and their colonies. Wilberforce had already been able to
secure a moratorium on shipping slaves to Dutch Guiana in 1805. Wilberforce wrote to
Grenville in March 1806 and suggested a new strategy that built upon recent measures taken
(government prohibition against populating newly captured islands with new slave numbers) and
the needs of a country at war. He suggested the government put a motion forward to stop the
trade to foreign colonies, thus ending a large segment of the trade without ever bringing up a
general abolition.

On March 31, 1806, Attorney General Sir Arthur Piggott put a bill forward that would
prevent the slave trade to possessions of foreign powers. Piggott argued that the bill was in the
national interest, saying it "was one in which humanity and sound policy were united." The
Slave Importation Bill slipped through the House of Commons quietly; when a few members

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Harper Perennial, 2008: 332-333; and Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-

1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 346-349. He was able to secure this in part by
playing on West Indian economic self-interest. If new slaves came to this newly captured island they would
be a competitor for older planting islands, so planters would support such a measure against a new leg of
the trade.


2304 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
Humanities Press, 1975: 368-369; and *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*. House of Commons Debate 31
March 1806 vol 6 cc598-9; available at [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1806/mar/31/
slave-importation-bill](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1806/mar/31/slaw-importation-bill); and Morgan, Kenneth. *Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America*.
bill forward but it had been decided that the Attorney General, Sir Arthur Piggott should do so.

2305 Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
Humanities Press, 1975: 368-369; and *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*. House of Commons Debate 31
March 1806 vol 6 cc598-9; available at [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1806/mar/31/
suggested it was abolition in disguise, Fox said that was nonsense.\(^{2306}\) Others asked Wilberforce when he would put forth his annual abolition bill; he kept quiet.\(^{2307}\) "Taken together, the silence of Wilberforce and the denials of Fox amounted one of the most masterly exercises in laying smoke in the long annals of parliamentary manoeuvres."\(^{2308}\) As Anstey notes, "the real testimony to the success of the agreed strategy, low-key approach, was not just the successful result on 1 May – thirty-five to thirteen on the third reading – but the small size of the vote." The impression was propagated that this was a routine measure of government business in clear support of the national interest.\(^{2309}\) Once passed, it reduced a significant portion of the total slave trade (between a third and a half).\(^{2310}\) The Prime Minister of the coalition government, Lord Grenville presented the bill to the Lords on May 7, 1806.\(^{2311}\) Lord Grenville argued forcefully that this measure was in the best interests of the country.\(^{2312}\) The main opposition came from the Duke of Clarence, who asserted that there was great economic advantage to the foreign trade.\(^{2313}\) When the bill came up for its third and final reading on May 16, 1806, Grenville extended his argument, suggesting that

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it was a matter of humanity and justice as well, and that there was no reason to disguise that fact (as the opposition had charged). He had determined that the bill was safe and decided to push the envelope a little farther, boldly asserting the traffic an "outrage to humanity, and [one] that trampled on the rights of mankind." The bill passed the House of Lords, 43 for, 18 against. As William Hague notes, the abolitionists now had "three fresh advantages" in the House of Lords. First, the Prime Minister now resided there. Second, Grenville used effective arguments based on the past work in the Commons and on the national interest arguments made by James Stephen. Lastly, it was becoming clear that the (humanitarian) arguments were finally having an effect on a significant number of peers. As mentioned in Chapter 4, by 1792 the idea that the slave trade was immoral had taken hold in the House of Commons and among some in the more conservative House of Lords. For example, that year Bishop Porteus of London told the House that thirteen months of testimony had proved that "the slave trade was unfit to be carried on or protected by any nation professing religion, morality or even common justice." But again, this was a conservative body and it would take longer to convince the larger whole and move them to motion. By 1804, the humanitarian sentiments were echoed by Horsley, Bishop of St. Asaph, who dismissed those that pressed to hear more evidence on the trade, stating that years of evidence "had established that the trade was 'subversive to humanity.'" Clearly the arguments had had an effect. The long debate had worn down many, even in the conservative upper house.

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Once the trade to foreign possessions was abolished, attention turned toward total abolition.\textsuperscript{2319} Unfortunately, Fox died before he could see it come to fruition, passing in September.\textsuperscript{2320} Grenville replaced him with Charles Grey (now Lord Howick).\textsuperscript{2321} Lord Grenville had smartly urged waiting until after the general election to go after the total abolition of the slave trade. Thereby, public pressure could be brought to bear to get contested ministers' abolition support or opposition on record.\textsuperscript{2322} It proved to be a wise move. Grenville's government gained forty-six seats in the election. Of particular importance, Lord Sidmouth had been one of the strongest opponents of abolition remaining. Yet, his followers lost seats in the election, such that he felt weakened and unable to counter the upcoming move for total abolition.\textsuperscript{2323} The way ahead was largely cleared.

When the election concluded, the critical debates came in January-February 1807. Grenville had calculated that the mood in the Lords had been changed over the past several months, and he strategically decided to put the bill through the more conservative upper house first. If it passed there, it would be assured of quick passage in the Commons.\textsuperscript{2324} Lord Grenville introduced the bill in the Lords on January 2, 1807, and critical debates took place between February 4\textsuperscript{th}, 5\textsuperscript{th} and 10\textsuperscript{th}. Grenville started the first reading by asserting that there was no call for further evidence, hence eliminating any further delay tactics. He said

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that for the purpose he then had in view, it would not be at all necessary to enter into the general question; the simple enquiry was, whether, in the present situation of things, it was or was not expedient to hear the depositions of the witnesses, according to the recommendation of the learned counsel. In his opinion, there could be no ground for this mode of proceeding, unless their lordships thought that this was a subject utterly unknown to them; and that in consequence of the deficiency of all former experience and information, it was necessary to go into a long and formal examination of the matter. This was not the first time, or the first year, that the enquiry was made before their lordships: it was the 20th year in which it had been brought under their consideration; and there was no one session during that long period in which it had not been, in some form or other, submitted to the investigation of parliament.\footnote{Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates. House of Lords Debate 04 February 1807 vol 8 cc613; available at \url{http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1807/feb/04/slave-trade-abolition-bill}.}

He then, in the second reading on 5 February, went on to recount the arguments of humanity and justice that had been put forth for twenty years, saying:

in this instance I contend, that justice imperiously calls upon your lordships to abolish the Slave Trade. I have heard some opinions urged to the effect as if justice could contain opposite and contradictory tenets. Justice, my lords, is one, uniform and immutable. Is it to be endured that the profits obtained by robbery are to be urged as an argument for the continuance of robbery? Justice is still the same, and you are called upon by this measure not only to do justice to the oppressed and injured natives of Africa, but also to your own planters; to interpose between the planters of your own islands and their otherwise certain ruin and destruction. You are called upon to do justice to your own planters in spite of their prejudices and their fears, and to prevent them by this measure from meeting that destruction which is otherwise certain and inevitable.—Was it, therefore, a trade which was in itself lovely and amiable, instead of being, as it is, wicked, criminal, and detestable, that you were now called upon to abolish, this would be an unanswerable argument for its abolition, that its continuance must produce the ruin of our planters. But, my lords, when it is considered that this trade is the most criminal that any country can be engaged in; when it is considered how much guilt has been incurred in carrying it on, in tearing the unhappy Africans by thousands and tens of thousands, from their families, their friends, their connections, and their social ties, and dooming them to a life of slavery and misery, and after incurring all this guilt, that the continuance of the criminal traffic must end in the ruin of the planters in your islands, who vainly expect profit from it, surely there can be no doubt that this detestable trade ought at once to be abolished.\footnote{Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates. House of Lords Debate 05 February 1807 vol 8 cc657-660; available at \url{http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1807/feb/05/slave-trade-abolition-bill}.}

As a counterargument to the interest argument, he added:

My lords, an argument was used against this measure last session, which I cannot conceive entitled to the least weight. It was said that we ought not to abolish this trade, unless other powers would agree likewise to abolish it; that is to say, that we should not do an act of justice, unless other powers would consent or rather that we should continue to commit injustice, and persist in guilt, in criminality, because if we did not, other powers would. As well might it be said, that a man could be justified in robbing another, because if he did not, he knew there was a banditi ready to commit the robbery; or that an assassin would be justified in committing murder, because he knew that if he did not, others were ready to perpetrate it. This argument, however, bad as it is, fails in its own grounds. The United states of America, who had fixed the period of the abolition to take place in 1808, have anticipated that period (I wish we had had the glory of being the first in the race), and there is already, according to the last accounts, a bill in its unresisted progress through the legislature, for the immediate abolition of this trade, in which it is declared that death shall be the punishment of those who deal in the blood of their fellow creatures. With respect to
the European powers, how are France and Spain to carry on the trade? Sweden never engaged in it. There remains only Portugal, and how is that power to carry on the trade? Is it to our own islands, where we prohibit it; is it to the French islands, which we block up; is it to the Spanish islands, where we prevent it; and where is Portugal to find capital to carry it on?2327

The Duke of Clarence put forward a last gasp attempt to convince the peers that the charges of harm to the slave were unfounded, and again made a case for national interest.2328 He was supported by the Earl St. Vincent, who said "from his own experience, he was enabled to state, that the West-India island formed Paradise itself, to the negroes, in comparison with their native country."2329 The anti-abolition arguments were thin and ineffectual by this point. In the last reading of the bill, the debate centered largely on whether the preamble should state that the trade was "contrary to the interest of justice and humanity." The pro-slavery interest made one last pitch to leave out all indication that the trade was, indeed, an evil. They failed. After debate, the vote favored abolition 72 for, 28 against (28 proxies for, 6 against for a total of 100 to 34).2330 The House of Lords sent a message to the House of Commons on February 10, 1807, letting them know that an abolition bill was to be passed.2331 The critical debate in the House of Commons came on February 23rd, and at that point the mood of the Commons was ripe for passage – abolition was approved 283 for, 16 against.2332 Interestingly enough, the reform government that had so strategically and effectively pushed it through was gone within months (it fell at the end of

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March), but nonetheless, “after both the Commons and the Lords agreed to an abolition of the slave trade, George III consented to the bill becoming law. On 1 May 1807 the bill became an Act of Parliament and the British slave trade had officially ended.”

**Emancipation, 1832-1838**

The years following the passage of total abolition and the defeat of France were not conducive to revival of abolitionist activity. Politics was dominated by the Tories, who were resistant to social change, and there was the typical post-war recession which led to more radicalism, keeping "antislavery off the main political agenda" as Kenneth Morgan puts it. By the early 1820s, abolitionists old and new were figuring out that end of the trade wasn't producing the results expected – a withering away of slavery as an institution. It was time to return to their tried and true methods; the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery (popularly known as the London Antislavery Committee) was formed in 1823, with Thomas Fowell Buxton as the main parliamentary leader, replacing an aging William Wilberforce. By 1830, seeing that gradualism wasn't working, the Society was calling for immediate emancipation. The cycle was familiar: "propaganda and popular petition campaigns followed

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2333 Blackburn, Robin. *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 313-314; and Hague, William. *William Wilberforce: The Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner*. London: Harper Perennial, 2008: 354-356. The administration was under heat for the prosecution of the war with France, and the last straw was Grenville's proposed bill to let Catholics serve as officers in the military. As mentioned, the King would never agree to Catholic emancipation, but he nonetheless felt compelled to accept the abolition law (which was being rushed through Parliament before the government fell) given that it passed with such sweeping majorities.


by abolitionist motions in Parliament, which elicited governmental responses mediating between abolitionist demands and the colonial masters' protests of hardship.\textsuperscript{2338}

A new King acceded to the thrown – William IV – in June 1830.\textsuperscript{2339} With this development came new elections, and politically, the conservative Tories were in disarray. The Whigs won the general election, driving the Tories (under Wellington from power) and signaling that more reform was to come.\textsuperscript{2340} Abolitionists increased their pressure vigorously from 1830-1833.\textsuperscript{2341} There was record mass petitioning in 1830-1831 (more than 5000 petitions) and a national lecture campaign. The emancipation campaign's fervor intermingled with the call for parliamentary reform (increasing the enfranchisement) and so many MPs had pledged their support in the lead up to the 1830 general election.\textsuperscript{2342} "By 1832... British public opinion was so primed for continuous agitation that abolitionists could turn planter vengeance into fuel for liberation."\textsuperscript{2343}

It is important to note the parallel development of the call for parliamentary reform and emancipation. The period from 1824 to 1832 had been a time of economic dislocation and social change.\textsuperscript{2344} Britain witnessed an increasingly open and contentious public sphere, which beget some increasingly radical factions. The anti-slavery issue was one in which both radicals and more moderate activists/politicians could agree, with the anti-slavery activists tending to remain


on the more conservative side. Passage of a reform bill would both head off more radical protest and hopefully separate more moderate, middle class reformers from the radicals. Further, the Whig Party (led by Lord Grey) felt they had a special, historic mission to give more freedom to the people. As historian Linda Colley notes, "by this they did not mean, it goes without saying, one man one vote. Rather, the people were to be rescued whenever they fell into the corrupt clutches of an over-powerful executive, and governed by those with sufficient property and intelligence to know what was best for them." If the bill passed, Britain would remain an oligarchy, albeit a much reformed one.

The story of the reform bill's passage is interesting in what it tells of British politics in the period. Lord Grey put forward a reform bill in March 1831, which ended up being defeated in the Commons on its second reading. The population was outraged and Grey declared an election, which returned a pro-reform majority. The reform bill passed the House of Commons, but faced opposition in the Lords. The peers attempted to kill the bill by amendment (again sparking protest), and Grey, disheartened, resigned. Wellington was asked to form a government, and found difficulty doing so, as Tories felt compelled, based on popular pressure, to pass reform but had no desire to be a part of it. The King recalled Grey and it passed both Houses (with many Tories abstaining). The British constitutional monarchy had faced popular protest and possible revolution (how close they had come is "unknowable"), but had passed the reform act and averted anarchy.

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2345 Blackburn, Robin. *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 438-449. Radicals tended to compare working-class wage labor to slavery for example, while the anti-slavery activists, many of whom were in national leadership, took a more "rosy view."

2346 Blackburn, Robin. *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 447. As Blackburn notes, the Hanoverian monarchy was concerned that a revolutionary-level movement was developing. The July Monarchy had occurred in France in 1830 and the result appeared to be a more representative government (one can debate whether this was true), and so this furthered some level of resignation to the need for reform.


As discussed, the old electoral system had been based on a piecemeal system and it produced a very unseemly electoral process, with "pocket" (in the hands of a small number of landowners) and "rotten boroughs" (over-represented areas – locales that had high representation despite a reduced number of citizens). The new system was based on the census of 1821; 56 boroughs lost representation in Parliament completely, and 30 more had it halved. Sixty-four seats were given to commercial and industrial centers in the Midlands and the north instead of still being biased toward the southeast, and there were 8 new boroughs for Scotland and 5 more for Wales.\(^{2349}\) There was a new, uniform franchise strategy: every adult male who occupied a house worth £10 per year or more had the right to vote.\(^{2350}\) The number of voters increased (to 656,000 – but nonetheless well over 80 percent of all men in Britain were left without a vote, as were all women), as did the number of contested elections.\(^{2351}\) While the increase in enfranchisement isn't that impressive from a numbers perspective, it was an important improvement nonetheless. As Linda Colley summarizes:

>a representative system which had been weighed in favour of England, in favour of the south, and in favour of the centrifugal forces of local interests and individual electoral patrons, had been replaced by one more uniformly British, more closely supervised by the state, and considerably more democratic. The most obvious abuses and anomalies had been swept away, and social groups and regions that contributed massively to Britain's wealth but had previously lacked direct representation now gained it. By European standards, the new British electorate of 656,000 was


\(^{2350}\) Fogel, Robert William. *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery.* New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 222-223; and Colley, Linda. *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992: 347. So for example, as Colley notes before this, typically, the rich landowners had constituencies such that MPs were often declared elected without contests being held (pocket boroughs, as already discussed). As an example, there were 22,000 franchised people in Wales but only 546 had actually voted in 1826 (before Reform Act of 1832). The rest lived in places where they saw MPs appointed by local oligarchies.

very large indeed, bearing in mind that Austria, Denmark, Russia and Greece still had no
popularly elected national legislative assemblies at all.2352

Further, before 1830 most elections only strengthened the party in power; after the Reform Act,
they really began to determine which party would govern.2353 Historians Norman McCord and
Bill Purdue further state:

Parliament was far from being simply the agent of vested interests, as the increasing amount of
interventionist legislation demonstrated. Vested interests might impede or slow down the process
of change; they were never able to frustrate it entirely. Much of the legislation of these years
[1830-1850] embodied a disregard for existing interests, and a willingness to suppress them when
they seemed to stand in the way of progress.2354

Elections during and after this period began to have an effect not only on who would govern, but
how they would govern; that is, they actually had an effect on policy decisions.2355

The Slavery Abolition Act was one example of many that "destroyed long-standing,
traditional, or chartered, rights."n2356 With the higher priority Reform Act passed, emancipation
was back on the agenda.2357 Sparked by the Baptist War, abolitionists became more militant in
1832 and 1833. Activists once again turned their attention to pleading politicians to emancipation
for the upcoming 1832 election.2358 "Never had antislavery been so broadly debated. Upwards of
200 pledged candidates were elected, about 95 percent of them liberals."n2359 Petition

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347-349. It was still biased toward the propertied class, and there was as yet no secret ballot. "Not until the
1884 Representation of the People Act would all the component parts of the United Kingdom be reformed
as a single unit, in accordance with one set of rules." Nonetheless, it was passed with great fanfare and
patriotic fervor and it was only after "the smoke had cleared" did anger develop over how far Britain still
had to go. Still, from 1832 to 1865, Great Britain was one of the most democratic places in Europe. It
would then take further reforms in the World War I period for it to again right itself democratically.
University Press, 2009: 263; Fogel, Robert William. Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of
American Slavery. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 227; and Blackburn, Robin. The Overthrow of Colonial
University Press, 2009: 263.

The Final Emancipation Act stipulated that all slaves would be freed without constraints after serving a period of 4 to 6 years in what would come to be termed apprenticeships.\footnote{Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 190. Emancipation stipulated all slaves under 6 were free and others would spend time as apprentices before freedom. The Apprenticeship was to be overseen by 132 magistrates.} Slave masters would receive financial compensation of £20 million pounds (a staggering sum for the period).\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery}. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 228; Morgan, Kenneth. \textit{Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007: 191; and Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 264.} Only 2 of 31 MPs associated with the West Indian interest voted against the bill; the rest were satisfied that they had received a good compensation. The bill passed with wide majorities in both Houses; the King signed the bill on August 28, 1833 and emancipation became operative on August 1, 1834.\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery}. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989: 228; and Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 238.} The apprenticeships were abolished on August 1, 1838.\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 264.}
Bureaucratic Politics After Abolition

The paragraphs above have shown how the British political system engaged the slavery issue and ultimately ended the institution inside its realm. The domestic politics story doesn't end there. As Peter Jupp illuminates, bureaucratic politics played an increasingly important role in British politics during this period. As he states, "after the onset of the French wars in 1793, there was a huge increase in what we might call the execution of secondary policy and routine business coupled with a significant but more modest increase in the number of officials."\textsuperscript{2368} The result was that that "senior officials in certain departments did acquire a significant influence over the development of policies that while they did not become cabinet issues, were nevertheless important in their own right. This was the case with the advancing of the anti-slavery cause within the Colonial Office in the 1820s and 1830s,"\textsuperscript{2369} as is discussed briefly below.

From a purely economic standpoint it would have been best at the time if Britain had never abolished the trade. As David Eltis illuminates, they had the option in 1806 to simply go after the foreign trade only, or to at least have allowed an intercolonial slave trade (so that slaves could be transferred to newly acquired territories that needed labor).\textsuperscript{2370} But, given that Britain had abolished the slave trade, and later slavery, it was then prudent for it to coerce other countries to do so as well.\textsuperscript{2371} The British tried for a comprehensive treaty at the end of the war with Napoleonic France, and then moved to gain concessions by treaties with individual powers.\textsuperscript{2372} Ultimately, as will be discussed in more detail in the geostrategic chapter "the campaign against the slave trade was fought on two not always compatible levels. There was the physical or naval

confrontation... and, more important, there was the ideological struggle.\footnote{2373} For twelve years after abolition, the British government had no special group for handling the slave trade issue.\footnote{2374} In 1919, the British Foreign Office decided the job of imposing the British view of progress on the world was too important, and difficult, to leave to others, and it thereby established the Slave Trade Department, which was meant to be temporary but ultimately became permanent.\footnote{2375} This effort started as a way to monitor treaties and courts, but developed into a much greater, more complex system.\footnote{2376} The Slave Trade Department would become an information network, replete with secret funds, foreign informants, methods for influencing other countries' press, and other activities beyond the pale of international law. They tended to try to limit the use force, and stopped short of funding slave insurrections, but their efforts were clandestine, vast, and varied.\footnote{2377}

With the end of the war with France, the British public made it clear that it saw abolition as a national triumph and supported British efforts to end the trade elsewhere. Over the years, after the establishment of bureaucratic institutions to further a coercive end to the trade/practice, there occurred "the institutionalization of antislavery – its absorption into the 'official mind.'\footnote{2378} Given that the electorate was willing to expend some money and effort to effect the trade's/institution's end elsewhere, Ministers and Foreign Office officials at times used this cause

\footnote{2374} Eltis, David. \textit{Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 104. As Eltis notes, "although the British saw abolition as in the national and indeed international interest, it was not a matter of national survival and honor, nor was it even likely to result in any short-run gain for the country."
to extract money and material from Parliament.  Although it can be shown that government officials and bureaucrats sometimes used the cause to further other agendas, at the same time, a review of the history shows that they worked quite consistently against the trade in the decades after abolition and emancipation, even when it was expensive and/or complicated diplomatic efforts.  Indeed, for decades there was little consideration of the value of the effort. Suppression of the trade was expensive, and sometimes supported no patently obvious British interest.  Yet, it took until the 1840s and 1850s for governments (usually Whig governments) to question the utility of the practice. Clearly, the direction suggests skipping the suppression effort would have been good for British business and budgets, and would have made foreign policy much easier.  Nonetheless, the effort ebbed and flowed (and achieved varied measures of effectiveness), but never went away. Britain remained faithful to the cause, and "when all is said and done," as historian Suzanne Miers points out, "she did more [to end the trade/practice] than any other power."

**Summary of British Domestic Politics and the End of Transatlantic Slavery**

Britain was far from a perfect, representative democracy during the late 18th and early 19th century. This was a constitutional monarchy with a limited franchise biased toward property

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2379 Miers, Suzanne. *Britain and the Ending of the Slave Trade*. New York, NY: Africana Publishing Company, 1974: 316-317. She adds, "an individual who appealed to the humanitarian, if parsimonious, instincts of the British people could usually get action. Government reaction was determined by the personal predilections of ministers, by their parliamentary position and by the international situation."

2380 Miers, Suzanne. *Britain and the Ending of the Slave Trade*. New York, NY: Africana Publishing Company, 1974: 316. This was particularly true, for example, of suppression efforts on the African coast/in Africa.


2382 Miers, Suzanne. *Britain and the Ending of the Slave Trade*. New York, NY: Africana Publishing Company, 1974: 317. For a more critical review of British efforts, see Sherwood, Marika. *After Abolition: Britain and the Slave Trade Since 1807*. New York, NY: I.B. Taurus & Co. Ltd, 2007. Sherwood's impassioned and borderline conspiratorial work excoriates Britain for its hypocritical lack of effectiveness in combating slavery. While one must admit that Britain's efforts were at times hypocritical and that they sometimes "looked the other way" in order to further their own interests, Eltis's book goes a long way toward disavowing any treatise that suggests that somehow Britain surreptitiously gained more than it lost economically by engaging in the trade suppression efforts.
owners. In this "mixed" system, in which the weight of governing was shared between the King and Parliament, power shifted from the former to the latter as this period of interest unfolded. Historically, Parliament had been fully capable of disregarding expressions of mass opinion when it wanted, but the discussion above highlights the important factors that brought change. Britain had freedom of the press and a culture of civic association – and open public spheres – to a level not experienced by other European polities. The capabilities and power of popular association and pressure tactics (such as petition) grew with every successive issue (from the Wilkite movement on), manifested most clearly in the abolition movement. The agitations against the slave trade/slavery were persistent and strategic, and this issue most clearly demonstrates the increasingly effectual impact that a popular campaign could have in shaping the opinion and actions of Parliament. Peter Jupp suggests there was a growing "recognition that public opinion was a legitimate political force and that holding public office was a matter of public trust and accountability." Historian M.W. McCahill adds, "by the late 18th century some politicians and peers had come to appreciate that rather than being a force they could exploit for their political convenience, public opinion could achieve an independent existence and integrity which might compel the political elite to accept measures that they had earlier rejected." The work of Anstey and others reviewed in Chapter 4 and above has shown that most members in the House of Commons lacked knowledge of and/or commitment for or against the slave trade when the

abolitionist movement started. The same is true of the House of Lords.\textsuperscript{2389} What is clear is that the popular movement against the slave trade/institution succeeded in first educating the public officials, and then convincing them to take action demanded by the population.

Yet, one must realize that even given the persistence and effectiveness of the abolition campaign, it took politicians and political maneuvers to effect change. Peter Jupp states that in the normative cases such as Catholic relief and the slave trade/slavery, "there is no doubt that sustained pressure-group campaigns helped to convince a sufficient number of MPs and ministers of the political, moral or humanitarian cases for concession. On the other hand," he notes, "it would be a mistake to ignore high-political factors."\textsuperscript{2390} It took a series of strategic, incremental political moves – barring population of the newly captured foreign islands, ending the slave trade to the foreign possessions, and then finally ending the trade – to effect an end to the trade. The timing of the success is due in no small part to the unique conflagration of political realities in the form of the accession of Irish ministers to Westminster, Pitt's death, and the temporary rise of the "Ministry of Talents."\textsuperscript{2391} Their leadership, and the increasing realization on the part of MPs and the King that continued rejection of public sphere decreased the government's legitimacy, brought

\textsuperscript{2389} McCahill, M.W. \textit{The House of Lords in the Age of George III (1760-1811)}. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009: 266. McCahill asserts one needs to establish a connection between the popular movement and the change in opinion, particularly in the House of Lords. He finds 72 peers voted in second reading of 5 February 1807 and 26 to 28 gave proxy. 58 of 98 had either voted for or written/spoken for abolition. Given this, he suggests "Parliamentary debates and personal correspondence confirm that the opinions of 40 or more were shaped at least in part by the testimony of witnesses, by abolitionist publications, by the public's sustained support or close association with various members of the movement."


\textsuperscript{2391} McCahill, M.W. \textit{The House of Lords in the Age of George III (1760-1811)}. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009: 272; and Jupp, Peter. \textit{The Governing of Britain, 1688-1848}. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006: 253. Jupp states, "in the case of the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, Lord Grenville took advantage of special political circumstances at Court and in Parliament to produce the desired legislation with Wilberforce and others." McCahill particularly stresses the importance of Grenville and Fox, and then the King's decision not to block the slave trade ban. He also clearly asserts the power of the abolition campaign.
a final end to the slave trade in Britain.\textsuperscript{2392} Later, a similar series of events finally produced the end of slavery itself. The King reluctantly accepted Lord Grey's strategically orchestrated Reform Act in 1832, producing a slightly more representative electoral system. Abolitionists then organized for a final push at emancipation, pledging large numbers of parliamentary candidates to the cause and securing the long-awaited measure in August 1833.

This history, then, shows the critical interaction between the public sphere and domestic political structure. One last aspect of domestic politics requires mention. After emancipation, an accomplishment in which the population of Britain took great pride, commitment to anti-slavery was institutionalized in British ministries, particularly the Foreign Office. As will be discussed in more detail in the geostrategic chapter, in the decades that followed emancipation, the British bureaucracy stayed largely stalwart in its anti-slavery mission, even when public opinion wavered. The British case is an example where all three sub-factors in the domestic politics variable – the public sphere, domestic political structure, and bureaucratic politics – interacted to bring about the end of slavery.

**Part II – The Domestic Politics of Slavery's Demise in the United States**

In the case of Britain, one was discussing a state and polity that had developed over hundreds of years. In contrast, in the periods of interest the United States was a newly forming state breaking free of its British motherland. For this reason, the discussion below begins even before the rebel victory over the British. The domestic political structure was formed in these

\textsuperscript{2392} McCahill, M.W. \textit{The House of Lords in the Age of George III (1760-1811)}. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009: 272-273. McCahill writes, "the campaign for slave trade abolition proved not only to be a harbinger of the future but also a disconcerting constitutional lesson... the abolition episode established that the upper chamber could not indefinitely hold out against the reiterated will of the public and the house of commons." He later writes of Wellington's view of the nexus between Parliament and public opinion, noting that Wellington, who took the lead in Lords in 1828, had long held that the upper chamber could hold up legislation in order to bide time and gain better understanding... but he acknowledged by the time he took over that "the Lords could not, in the end, thwart a majority in the house of commons on an issue that enjoyed broad, sustained public support. In short, by the beginning of the 19th century even the crown's hereditary counsellors had to accommodate their conduct to clear expressions of public opinion."
early years, and that structure would impact the institution of slavery from the time of the revolution all the way until the institution was ended by force of arms. As will be discussed below, the structure of government and its interaction with an open public sphere both helped and hindered the effort to end slavery in the United States, and for this reason, it would ultimately take "policy by other means"\textsuperscript{2393} – a bloody civil war – to end slavery there.

\textbf{The Revolution and Slavery}

In the lead up to rebellion, the North American rebels couched their revolt in terms of universal principles and natural rights. In practical reality, as historian Robin Blackburn asserts, when the Declaration of Independence stated "all men" were created equal it really meant "all men like us," – white Europeans.\textsuperscript{2394} In fact, as mentioned in a previous chapter, Jefferson's original draft condemned slavery in more explicit detail but was deleted so as not to offend the southernmost colonies which were so heavily engaged in the practice and unwilling to accept any hint of moral condemnation against the institution.\textsuperscript{2395} Yet, from the outset the First Continental Congress moved to cut economic ties with Britain, to include ending the slave trade. Why end a trade that fed an economic institution that was the lifeblood of several states? Certainly, one likely reason was an inherent understanding that the slave trade was a brutal and inegalitarian practice; another was the desire to express "vigorous resistance to British authority."\textsuperscript{2396} But, beyond these lay two lesser noble reasons to restrict the slave trade. First, a great many Americans were concerned with the potential security and cultural risks of filling the continent with Africans. There was widespread racism and fear of "tainting" the cultures through overpopulation.\textsuperscript{2397} These concerns existed, North and South, but the northern racism tends to get

\textsuperscript{2395} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 17. \\
\textsuperscript{2396} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 16. \\
\textsuperscript{2397} Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 152-153. \end{flushleft}
downplayed. Many national leaders thought the United States would be a wholly better place without the blight of slavery; a better place if not housing a population of blacks, whom "most white leaders associated with all the defects, mistakes, sins, shortcomings, and animality of an otherwise perfect nation. Second, most states had little need of further imports given either the modest contribution the slaves made to their given economies, or because they expected to maintain appropriate numbers via natural reproduction.

The Second Continental Congress once again made mention of a trade ban, but ultimately execution would fall to the individual colonies via the Articles of Association, and slavery's ultimate fate in America would be left to the prerogative of the states for the time being. In the mean time, the slavery issue reared its head as the fighting raged on. Warfare on the continent disrupted plantation discipline and the British under Lord Dunmore reached out to slaves as allies, offering them freedom in return for bearing arms against the rebellion. The Continental Congress approached the slave issue pragmatically, also enlisting slaves and offering eventual manumission when it was in desperate need of additional troops. In general, though, both sides tried to avoid the issue of emancipation. Nonetheless, the future of slaves that had joined

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2404 Fehrenbacher, Don E. *The Slaveholding Republic*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 28; and Blackburn, Robin. *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 112-114. As it were, neither side was quick to trust a black with a weapon, and Africans were assigned predominantly to support roles.
and/or were captured by the British would become a sticking point in the peace treaty negotiations.

As the states worked to establish how to govern themselves and to construct an effective confederation the question of slavery could not be avoided. Many northern states abolished slavery during and immediately after the Revolution. Vermont (not an original colony) was the first to abolish slavery, in 1777, including an anti-slavery provision in their constitution. Pennsylvania, hotbed of Quaker anti-slavery efforts, adopted the first "free womb" emancipation scheme in 1780 and Rhode Island and Connecticut followed course in 1784. In Massachusetts and New Hampshire slavery was abolished via legal precedent. The only holdouts in the northern states were New York and New Jersey, who would follow suit several years later. As Blackburn states, it "was the spirit of the times;" in fact, even southern states like Virginia had manumission societies. But again, the end of slavery in the north was part ideology and part socio-economic/political calculation as such decisions were not particularly destructive economically for these states.

The Constitution, the Fledgling Government and Slavery

Having defeated the British governmental system, the Americans were faced with the difficult task of establishing their own. The Constitution would set out a governmental form that

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2409 How many slaves Vermont actually contained, or freed, is not known.
2412 For the sake of comparison, the exact number of slaves in Vermont, Rhode Island, and Connecticut are not known, but thought to be small. Numbers in Massachusetts are unknown as well. Pennsylvania had 6000 slaves at the time of enactment (2.5 percent of the population). New York and New Jersey had 20,000 and 10,000 slaves in the 1780s.
exists largely unchanged to this day. The legislature consists of a House of Representatives, the
number of which is determined by state population, and the upper house – the Senate – that is
comprised of two representatives from every state regardless of size. The executive is embodied
in the person of the President, who is selected by the electoral college, and the Judiciary rounds
out the federal government. The U.S. system is a federation, with a division of power between
state and federal jurisdiction.

The future of slavery in America would, of course, ultimately hinge on the Constitution
as well. Events didn't bode well even before debate on the Constitution began in earnest. The
Confederation Congress approved the peace treaty that ended the war in 1783; one clause of this
treaty stated the British should withdraw from the United States without "carrying away any
negrres or other property of the American inhabitants." Note the concept of slaves as
property. Then, in 1784 the Confederation Congress had to deal with the problem of slavery in
the new territories. A bill drafted by a Jefferson-led sub-committee proposed ending the slave
trade to these regions by the end of the decade, stating "after the year 1800 of the Christian era,
there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any of the said states, otherwise than in
punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted to have been personally
guilty." The clause was eventually removed under pressure from southern delegates and the
1784 ordinance didn't mention slavery. In 1786, Congress began debating a law providing for
the government of the territories ceded by Virginia – the Northwest. The original draft contained
no mention of slavery, but later Nathan Dane of Massachusetts added an amendment that stated
"There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory." Added to this,
however, was a concession that allowed re-capture of slaves that moved into the territories from
their original states. The Northwest Ordinance passed, and was re-affirmed in 1789. The next

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2413 Fehrenbacher, Don E. The Slaveholding Republic. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 25. Thus it was a casual acceptance of blacks as "property."
year, North Carolina ceded western land via the Southwest Ordinance, which omitted the anti-slavery clause. In this way, the Congress had both shown itself empowered to regulate slavery within the United States, and had shown no inclination to do so in southern territories.\textsuperscript{2416} Given this history, it is no surprise that the issue of slavery in the territories would prove a lasting conundrum.

When the Constitutional Convention met to improve the Articles of the Confederation (eventually they would decide to build an entirely new Constitution) in 1787, most states had their own legislation against the trade and few delegates felt the slave trade needed to be dealt with at the national level.\textsuperscript{2417} The example of Benjamin Franklin is telling: he was both a delegate and the President of Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, but he felt it inappropriate to broach slavery at this meeting. Nonetheless, slavery did play a prominent role in the negotiations.\textsuperscript{2418} In trying to determine proper methods of representation, Lower Southerners (particularly South Carolinians) argued that slaves produced wealth and ought to be represented in government, which is "instituted primarily for the protection of property."\textsuperscript{2419} Pennsylvania delegates argued that any representation of slaves would be illogical, unacceptable to Pennsylvania, and would encourage the trade.\textsuperscript{2420} Delegates struck the 3/5 Compromise, not to call slaves 3/5 persons, but rather, as a compromise between giving Southern states no

\textsuperscript{2416} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 254-256. As Fehrenbacher notes, historians have greatly debated why the southern delegates allowed the Northwest Ordinance to proceed with an anti-slavery clause. He assumes the fugitive slave clause made it more palatable, and that perhaps it has something to do with the fact that in this period, while southern delegates were certainly fearful of any change in the status quo, they did not feel under full-scale threat and hence a clause that banned slavery in the north, where perhaps they didn't expect the institution to expand anyway, was not seen as a huge concession. The debate will continue. Whatever the cause – the decisions in 1878 and 1790 left in place stipulations that would set in motion great struggle over slavery's future in the territories.


representation "credit" for their slave "property" and giving them full representation for their slave populations.\textsuperscript{2421}

Another critical convention topic related to oversight of international and inter-state commerce, and hence involved the slave trade. Most delegates believed this role fell to the national government, but Southerners feared Northern factions would use that power to restrict southern commerce (and the slave trade).\textsuperscript{2422} John Routledge of South Carolina put forward a platform that would clearly benefit the South and prohibited Congress from ever prohibiting the slave trade or taxing such activity.\textsuperscript{2423} This sparked rebuke from several circles, and elicited a most powerful denunciation of slavery from Gouverneur Morris of Pennsylvania, who called slavery a "'nefarious institution,'" and "'the curse of heaven' on the states wherein it prevailed."\textsuperscript{2424} Nonetheless, the Convention eventually decided on August 25, 1787 to compromise and delay judgment on the slave trade until 1808.\textsuperscript{2425} Then, on August 28\textsuperscript{th} the South Carolina delegation added in one more proviso that would require the return of slaves that crossed state lines – the Fugitive Slave Clause. As historian Don E. Fehrenbacher notes, "quickly and almost casually, the framers burdened the Constitution with a passage that was to have corrosive effects on national unity."\textsuperscript{2426}

What, then, did the American Constitution determine with regard to slavery? In the 1840s, anti-slavery activists made the case that the Constitution had been deliberately pro-slavery through its provision of several critical stipulations; the 3/5 compromise, the twenty-year delay in

abolishing the slave trade, and provision for recovering slaves seemed to favor the institution particularly.\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract}. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989: 276-277; and Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 40. They also note the clause authorizing the use of militia to quell insurrections and the clause promising states federal protection against domestic violence.} Fehrenbacher suggests that to label the document either "proslavery or antislavery is more an act of volition than of judgment." In truth, the Constitution only dealt peripherally on the subject and was thus "open-ended." As Fehrenbacher notes, "its meaning with respect to slavery would depend heavily upon how it was implemented."\footnote{Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract}. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989: 47.} One thing appears certain through this review, however, when there came a choice between national unity and the issue of slavery, during this period, keeping the Southern states included and maintaining national unity prevailed.\footnote{Bergard, Laird W. \textit{The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States.} New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007:256; and Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 18.}

reaction was swift and virulent – a "weathervane pointing at the storms to come." The lower Southern states reacted with fury, treating the petitions as tantamount to calls for civil war. Critically, northern Congressmen were largely quieter and cautious; the committee to which the petitions were forwarded asserted that the constitution prevented Congress from emancipating slaves, abolishing the trade until 1808, or even interfering with their management or re-enslavement. They did accept that Congress could regulate the trade, but even the committee report was cleared of any language offensive to the southern interests. The writing on the wall was clear: petitions against slavery were likely to incense southern representatives and, hence, were not welcome before Congress. Petitions were put forth again in 1791 and 1792, receiving no response.

The one anti-slavery success came in 1794; a conference of nine abolitionist societies called on Congress to prohibit Americans from partaking in the trade between Africa and foreign powers. This was an issue that clearly fell within the national government's purview; and Congress would consider it if given assurances abolitionists would not attempt to further curtail the slave trade or other issues that would limit "the rights of private property' within the United States."

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possessions passed in 1794. Southern pro-slavery representatives accepted that such a law was within federal purview, all states had already enacted their own prohibitions against such foreign traffic/participation (although they were often ineffective), and most slave owners thought further importations were counter to their economic interests (they reduced the price/value of slaves they already owned), so passing such a law that was clearly in keeping with already-accepted stipulations in return for a guarantee of no attempts to further the subject probably seemed a fair bargain. Nonetheless, Southern representatives were adamant not to change what they perceived to be a constitutional status quo in their favor. For example, when Indiana tried to revoke the ban of slaves into their territory, slaveowners re-affirmed the provision; they felt it a dangerous precedent to make changes to established law, which would likely lead to further debate that could end up hurting their interests. As things were, their rights to slaves seemed untouchable; no reason to rock the boat. The 1794 bill against participation in the foreign slave trade passed.

Indeed, the southern position was significantly strengthened by the turn of the century. In 1793, Congress "implemented the fugitive slave clause of the Constitution by affirming more explicitly the right of recapture across state lines and reinforcing it with a measure of federal sanction. Recovery of fugitives remained essentially a private undertaking, but one now modestly facilitated and marginally restrained by judicial supervision." The law lasted for fifty-seven years, Congress playing little to "no part in the handling of the fugitive slave problem during the

2443 Fehrenbacher, Don E. The Slaveholding Republic. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 209-214. Ironically, it was the effort to free a wrongly-held slave named John – a story which Fehrenbacher cogently re-tells in these pages – which sparked the debate that led to the fugitive slave law. Once the issue was broached, the federal government could either force local and state officials in free states to capture runaway slaves or confirm the right to recapture and fine free state personnel for interfering. As Fehrenbacher notes, the debate in the Senate moved the bill from the first method closer to the second, with only (federal, state, and local) judicial officers involved in the process.
first half of the nineteenth century." Congress did play a part – through both commission and omission – in other steps that strengthened slavery's hand in the union. As historian Robert William Fogel recounts, in addition to the Fugitive Slave Act Congress...

...refused to act against the kidnapping of free blacks by slave traders in 1796; it refused to prevent the reenslavement of manumitted slaves in 1797; and it nearly passed a bill in 1802 that would have compelled an employer who hired a black anywhere in the country to publish a description of him in two newspapers and would have put the burden of proving that he was actually a free man on the black and his employer. 2445

As Fehrenbacher stated, the Constitution was open-ended with regard to slavery and the implementation was critical in determining the direction; the implementation at this point in United States history was decidedly pro-slavery. The pro-slavery faction was strengthened during the early decades of the 19th century by the election to the Presidency of Democratic Republicans Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809) and James Madison (1809-1817). 2446 The Virginian Presidents "were not particularly proud of slavery," but that did not mean they could foresee any reasonable end to America's slave system. 2447 Jefferson felt it unwise to have imported so many blacks, but felt the problem could only be ameliorated over time as the country expanded. Toward the end of his life he made the analogy: "We have the wolf by the ears; and we can neither hold him nor let him go. Justice is in the one scale, and self-preservation in the other." 2448 Madison, too, "did not allow private reservations about slavery to cloud his public defence of slaveholder interests or to prevent him from grasping the reasons for its economic vitality." He agreed that slavery was a "moral, political, and economical" evil. 2449 But slavery remained the "most convenient and rapid" path to

American agricultural, and thereby economic, expansion.\textsuperscript{2450} For these Presidents, at least, America had little choice but to continue with slavery.

In the early 1800s, "the implicit national and racialist consensus against further migrants of African descent, whether slave or free, appears to have been accepted [largely] without dissent."\textsuperscript{2451} An 1803 bill drafted by Southern representatives explicitly forbade importing "any negro, mulatto, or other person of color" into any state that had already prohibited such an entry.\textsuperscript{2452} The seeds of this re-affirmation of the prohibition on imports lay in the events in Saint Domingue and the fear (including, and perhaps largely, southern fear) that there would be an increase of free blacks and "troublesome slaves" from the French territories.\textsuperscript{2453} The law passed with significant (southern) support, but when a federal customs official in Charleston tried to actively enforce the law, this was a bridge too far. Late in 1803 the South Carolina legislature repealed the ban on slave importation in a narrow vote of 55 to 46.\textsuperscript{2454} The vote count shows that South Carolinians were divided on the proposal; many farmers did not want to see the value of the slaves they already had decrease and feared that cotton prices might dip as well. Nonetheless, this repeal set off a slave trade boom in Charleston, with more 40,000 slaves landed over the next four years.\textsuperscript{2455} Interestingly, South Carolina's repeal was condemned in the rest of the country.

North Carolina, Tennessee, and Maryland passed resolutions calling for a Constitutional


\textsuperscript{2452} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 141-142.

\textsuperscript{2453} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 141-142. Of note, the statute never explicitly mentioned the word "slaves."


Amendment to end the trade earlier than 1808.\textsuperscript{2456} Pennsylvanian David Bard proposed a ten dollar tax on newly imported slaves, but this measure then re-galvanized southern opposition (and some northern Congressmen were against it as well) to some degree and ultimately it was delayed and never finalized.\textsuperscript{2457}

Several bills for the end of the slave trade were put forward in the Congress in late 1805 and early 1806 but considered "premature," it would take until Thomas Jefferson's mention of the trade ban in his annual message to Congress for the body to forcefully act.\textsuperscript{2458} Jefferson was committed to the maintenance of America's slave system, but that did not mean it was in America's interest to continue importing slaves.\textsuperscript{2459} By that time, it should be made clear, there was consensus that the trade should end (again, in the south it was because of economic and racial interests, in the north it was part humanitarian and part economic/racial – there was no need for more blacks in the territories). As Fehrenbacher notes, "no one in Congress dissented from the general purpose of terminating slave importations," but when it came to details, sectional divisions would surface.\textsuperscript{2460} Congressman Peter Early reported a bill from his committee that would have slaves illegally imported forfeited and then sold on an open market. James Sloan of New Jersey put forward an amendment that would give such slaves their freedom. Southerners responded fiercely, asserting the federal government had no right to liberate slaves in any territory. Early said the entire southern population would rise up against such a law.\textsuperscript{2461} Debate ensued over punishment for those engaging in the illegal trade as well; an amendment to make

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{2457} Fehrenbacher, Don E. The Slaveholding Republic. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 142-143. It had passed the House, but never went beyond.
\textsuperscript{2459} Blackburn, Robin. The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 286. As Blackburn notes, Jefferson's abolition move was "studiously disassociated from emancipationist or pro-black sentiment."
\textsuperscript{2461} Fehrenbacher, Don E. The Slaveholding Republic. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 144-145. Further, he warned that no freed slave would be alive in a year.
\end{footnotesize}
such activity a capital offense was also struck down (northern support was mixed, southern
opposition complete).\textsuperscript{2462} Southern concerns assuaged, the bill passed and went to the Senate
where little is known about the debate, but it emerged with provisions outlawing coastal trade and
again calling for forfeiture of contraband slaves followed by indentured servitude in a free
territory. Congressman Early once again resisted, amendment supporters relented, and a more
slavery-friendly bill passed the House 113 to 5.\textsuperscript{2463} The Conference Committee then added a
provision to prohibit coastal slave trade in vessels of "less burthen than forty tons."\textsuperscript{m2464} Southerners again resisted this conference bill, and it only passed 63 to 49 in the House. Most
northerners voted for the conference committee bill; three-quarters of southerners resisted it,
fearing that it might cut into property rights and "might at some future time be made 'the pretext
of universal emancipation.'\textsuperscript{m2465} The bill had passed, but the debate had foreshadowed the fact that
a bill that included provisions that in any way curtailed southern perceptions of property rights
would be resisted.\textsuperscript{2466} Further, as historian Seymour Drescher writes, any measure "that tended to
imply a moral condemnation of the institution elicited a new outburst of threats of disunion from
the lower Southern States."\textsuperscript{m2467} The end result was clear: to this point, "attempts to impair the
effectiveness of slavery through congressional action had come to naught... the proslavery bloc in

\textsuperscript{2462} Fehrenbacher, Don E. The Slaveholding Republic. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 144-
145.
W.W. Norton & Company, 1989: 248; Fehrenbacher, Don E. The Slaveholding Republic. New York, NY:
Oxford University Press, 2001: 145-146, 151; and Blackburn, Robin. The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery,
authorities, which meant in southern states that they'd be put back up on the auction block.
\textsuperscript{2464} Fehrenbacher, Don E. The Slaveholding Republic. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 146-
147.
\textsuperscript{2466} Fehrenbacher, Don E. The Slaveholding Republic. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 146-
147, 151. Via this bill, illegally imported slaves, once detained, would be given back to the states and
again, slave states would likely sell them to planters. This would last until the act of 1819, which
passed during the initial debate on Missouri statehood. It made several important changes regarding the slave
trade. It allowed American vessels to patrol the African coast and established rewards for navy personnel
that captured slave ships. It also changed the status of slaves that were found imported illegally, taking
them out of the hands of states and into the hands of federal marshals; the president then was to make
arrangements for them to be returned to Africa (and funds were set aside to pay for this).
Congress won decisive victories in every major confrontation with the antislavery bloc.\textsuperscript{2468} Laird Bergard summarizes, "the power of the southern states, in the national government was such that every attempt to pass legislation limiting slavery was decisively defeated in the first two decades of the republic's history.\textsuperscript{2469}

President Jefferson had tried to delay conflagration over the slavery issue for as long as possible in deference to slavery's importance to the south and the union, but in executing the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, he set in motion events that would bring the issue of slavery and the territories into collision course.\textsuperscript{2470} The founders had tried to maintain a sectional balance, but with vast new stretches of territory it had to be decided once again – would the new western states be slave or free? The first key decision point arrived in 1819, as the Missouri territory applied for statehood (as a slave state).\textsuperscript{2471} Given that Missouri stretched far north of the Ohio River, admitting it as a slave state would upset the slave-free state balance. In February 1819, New York Congressman James Tallmadge Jr. added an amendment to the Missouri statehood bill that forbid further introduction of slaves and that slave children born after the date should be freed at the age of twenty-five.\textsuperscript{2472} Tallmadge appealed to the Constitution's guarantee clause (Article IV, Section 4) which said that every state would have a republican form of government. This was a new, provocative broadside. It implied that all slave states were not truly republican, and thereby

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\textsuperscript{2471} Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract}. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989: 290-293; and Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 263-266. As Fehrenbacher notes, it was really a series of crises starting with admission of Illinois as a state in 1818 and not concluding until Missouri was admitted in 1821. Alabama and Maine were also admitted during this period.  
\end{flushleft}
opened an avenue for a greater attack on slavery. Most northerners voted for the amendment and had enough to carry the House, but the Senate was different.\textsuperscript{2473} Interestingly, the heated debates that ensued brought forth response from aging founding fathers from both sides of the divide – north and south.\textsuperscript{2474} Eventually, despite a lot of heated rhetoric,\textsuperscript{2475} it was clear that the northern opposition was less than stalwart. There was no attempt to block Alabama as a slave state in late 1819, nor was there a scuffle when the Arkansas Territory was established with no limits on slavery. The deal was struck to admit Missouri and Maine as states – thus keeping the balance – and then an amendment by Jesse B. Thomas of Illinois suggested dividing the rest of the Louisiana Purchase at 36° 30' latitude, thus hopefully maintaining the balance for the foreseeable future.\textsuperscript{2476}

Once the Missouri scuffle was over, most northern politicians wanted to end the acrimony and return to more pressing issues, leaving slavery to lie for the foreseeable future. The press and population felt the same; the banking crisis of 1819 led to a deep national economic downturn in 1820 and most people wanted the Congress to work on those issues, not slavery, which many saw as a "waste of time."\textsuperscript{2477} In the short term many southerners, including the eventual leader of the pro-slavery faction John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, felt the compromise


\textsuperscript{2474} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 264. For example, Rufus King and John Jay offered arguments for Congress's power to limit slavery, while James Madison, Charles Pinckney, and of course, Jefferson (although not at the Constitutional Convention) argued the southern case.

\textsuperscript{2475} Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 277. For example, during the later heat of the debate, Tallmadge declared "Sir, if a dissolution of the Union must take place, let it be so! If civil war, which [Southern] gentlemen so much threaten, must come, I can only say, let it come!... If blood is necessary to extinguish any fire which I have assisted to kindle, I can assure gentlemen, while I regret the necessity, I shall not forebear to contribute my mite... If I am doomed to fall, I shall at least have the painful consolation to believe that I fall, as a fragment, in the ruins of my country."


had settled the slavery issue as well. Indeed, for a while it looked like it had; the "Missouri Compromise removed antislavery as a serious issue in national politics for a quarter of a century."2478 But for many Jeffersonian Democrats, including Jefferson himself, the Missouri debate was an ominous sign of things to come. Some northern Democrats had shown a willingness to split with the party in support of sectional interests. Further, northern arguments had moved toward constitutional attacks (via the new state clause or slave importation issues) that had been temporarily quelled, but would likely come back again and as Jefferson foresaw, likely sound the "death knell of the Union."2479 Finally, in speeches like those put forth by Rufus King, who said "no human law, compact or compromise can establish or continue slavery!" and those that did were contrary to the law of God and thus void, northerners would eventually find an avenue of absolutist attack on the South that could not be negotiated away.2480

On these predictions Jefferson and his southern Democrats were most prescient. As David Brion Davis notes, the overall effect of the debates and ensuing compromise was two-fold: it united "most whites in the Deep South in the suppression of any dangerous discussion of slavery, wholly apart from their other political differences;" and it strengthened the hand of both states' rights extremists and the defenders of slavery as a positive good.2481 Nevertheless, in the short term, for the most part the country was glad the controversy was over and ready to move forward on other issues. As mentioned last chapter, historian Don E. Fehrenbacher asserts that during this period a majority of the country had even become convinced that when the Declaration of Independence said all men were equal, it really only intended to mean whites and

in that sense there was little cause for further divisive talk over slavery. In that sense, then, the Southerners had little over which to worry. And yet, they were increasingly drifting in the late 1820s and after toward an absolute reflexive denouncement of any measure, however remotely connected, that appeared to threaten the institution of slavery. One of the first displays of this new commitment to staunch any new abolitionist/anti-slavery proposal came in 1827, when the American Colonization Society asked Congress to help fund efforts to re-settle blacks in Africa (ACS was having a hard time finding enough blacks willing to do so and wanted some federal money to be put aside for use toward this goal). Southern slaveholders had been relatively supportive of the colonization scheme, but by 1827 they saw such a scheme and such a request as a "entering wedge" to re-start the slavery debate. South Carolina's Senator Robert Y. Hayne summed up the emerging philosophy, stating "the only safety of the Southern States is to be found in the want of power on the part of the Federal Government to touch the subject at all."  

New Issues: 1830s to Early 1840s

As discussed last chapter, the Second Great Awakening helped spark a popular abolitionist campaign in the late 1820s and throughout the 1830s in the United States. The abolitionists would find political success an elusive goal. Going on four decades of debate (in fits and starts) on slavery had suggested to most northern politicians that the institution was largely protected by the Constitution, and further, that slavery was a secondary issue, unlikely to bring popular support at the ballot box and yet increasingly likely, given increasing Southern recalcitrance, to spark potential disunion and conflict. "The issues that exercised the public and

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that determined victory or success in electoral contests were," as Fogel notes, "matters of the pocketbook rather than of Christian principles." Yes, many politicians, as Christians, found slavery a less-than-desirable institution; but what could legitimately be done and at what cost? The 1830s and 1840s would be decades where abolitionists maneuvered to force politicians to test those boundaries. As they did, a powerful pro-slavery countermovement, whose foundation had been set in the early years of the Union and tested in the Missouri debates, developed into an increasingly staunch, secluded, and perhaps even paranoid force in the South. Eventually, new issues, and new parties would develop that would bring these forces into direct confrontation and ultimately force change.

**Abolitionism Hits Congress, and the Southern Reaction**

Abolitionists launched a large petition and pamphlet campaign in the mid-1830s. The new movement was expected to exert an irresistible moral pressure on slaveholders, but what it actually provoked was a southern backlash. Coming out of the Missouri debates southern elites had proposed programs of southern development, including the first southern universities (such as the University of Virginia), in order to train southern elites in the southern way of life and thinking. By the late 1820s, leaders like John C. Calhoun, who had been willing to compromise on territorial issues just years before, were now calling for increased retrenchment against northern trespasses on southern rights. A particularly hot topic of this period was tariffs, a mechanism through which Calhoun foresaw that an "oppressive majority in Congress would use its power of 'taxation and appropriation' against 'the peculiar domestick [sic] institutions of the

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Southern States. Increasingly through the late 1820s and early 1830s, southern elites, led by South Carolinians, saw the development of a great abolitionist conspiracy against the institution of slavery. They witnessed the British campaign and read its history carefully, concluding that Wilberforce and his associates had engaged in a long, drawn-out campaign to chip away at slavery and that ultimately it had won by taking over the parliament. These southern elites, then, were committed to stopping an infringement upon their institution so as to ensure that any move against slavery, however small, never gained any traction. The end of slavery in Britain in the mid-1830s was current, prominent proof of the wide conspiracy against slavery that southerners feared. When, inspired by the British model, American abolitionist launched a large pamphlet and petition campaign from 1835-1837, it should be no surprise that the South reacted forcefully.

When abolitionist pamphlets arrived in the South, mobs threatened to burn post offices and kill abolitionist leaders. Efforts to block mail delivery were supported by the federal government; after pro-slavery mobs threatened Southern post offices, the Postmaster-General decided each state could block literature it deemed likely to incite disorder. President Jackson supported the policy, and the division between free and slave territory was reinforced. When petitions arrived in Congress in spring, federal politics again stymied abolitionist efforts. Critically, many northern politicians weren't supporting the petition campaign; they didn't feel the petitions reflected the majority opinion of the regions or certainly larger country, and did not want to risk further divisive confrontation. When southern Congressman James Hammond put forward a motion to "bar petitions at the door," no majority – northern or otherwise – stopped him. For the next eight years (1836-1844), Congress accepted a "gag rule" against even acknowledging that

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these petitions had been received.\textsuperscript{2493} "Refusal to hear petitions was not just an assault on abolitionism, but on a fundamental Anglo-American link between civil society and the legislature."\textsuperscript{2494} How had a burgeoning pro-slavery southern sectional faction been so successful in stymieing these abolitionist efforts? Given the political landscape of the period it is perhaps not hard to understand how this had occurred.

**The Political Landscape of the 1830s and 1840s**

The Democrats and Whigs were the two primary parties of the 1830s and 1840s. These were not sectional parties, but rather, coalitions brought together from across the regions. Whigs did tend to be strongest in the Northeast; Democrats in the South and North-Central states. The Democrats tended to push for less government, carried out as much as possible at the state and local levels. They pushed for increased enfranchisement (with the exception of free blacks). The Whigs on the other hand believed in government's role in promoting economic progress and welfare. They were the self-anointed "conservative" party, dedicated to hard work and private property. Whigs were suspicious of the masses, but nonetheless pushed for voting rights for free blacks. Whigs tended to be evangelical Protestants, while Democrats pushed for separation of church and state – secular government – and, thus, received some support from minor denominations like Catholics, Lutherans and the like. "Each party included both pro- and antislavery men who, because they accepted the federal consensus, originally kept the direct question of slavery out of the internal struggles for control of Congress and the presidency."\textsuperscript{2495} This was the political landscape in the 1830s and early 1840s, and it would take new issues and


\textsuperscript{2494} Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 308. Right of petition had been accepted far longer than other rights, such as freedom of the press.

ever deepening reactionary southern pro-slavery beliefs and strategies to break this party system into sectional pieces.2496

New Issues: Effects of Economic Growth and Immigration

The economies of both the North and the South were actually generally strong from the mid-1840s into the 1860s. It seems paradoxical that this strength would lead to disintegration of the Union. America continued to gain new western territories and as it did, it expanded the waterway and rail networks into these territories and made new centers of commerce. The whole movement west reoriented the axis of commerce from one that had been North-South, to one that was now east-west. This exacerbated the divide between North and South as new slave states developed south of the post-Missouri Mason-Dixon Line (36-30 latitude), new free states to the North. In the North, urbanization brought with it a whole new set of social and political problems, whereas, in the South, the relationship between city and countryside remained largely the same: the south was still largely agrarian.2497

Immigration to America, which escalated significantly after 1825, was more than 5 times the pre-1820 rate in the 1830s and the total number of immigrants in the 1840s exceeded the number that arrived in the entire history before that decade.2498 Here again there was a regional difference. Fourteen percent of immigrants lived in all the slave states, and sixty percent lived in just four free states (New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Massachusetts). Immigrants were mainly for industrial labor, and thus, the northern labor markets were put under the most stress. Native-born workers and artisans tried to defend their jobs and status against the influx of new immigrant rivals, and this competition sparked a new form of more localized politics that would

help unleash forces that would shatter the American two party system as it was known at the time.\textsuperscript{2499}

The territorial issues brought the sectional divisions to a head once again. The future of Texas became an issue in the early 1840s and eventually the Mexican-American War in 1848 led to a greater focus on slavery's future in the territory debates. This had been an issue since the time of the Northwest Ordinance, but America's continued move westward and the acquisition of territory from Mexico brought territories and slavery to the front burner. The inclusion of Texas into the United States had been delayed in the 1830s in order to forestall a divisive sectional battle over its status.\textsuperscript{2500} When James K. Polk won the Democratic nomination for President in 1884, he called for simultaneous statehood for Texas balanced by inclusion of Oregon. Annexationists called for immediate inclusion of Texas (which happened via joint Congressional resolution), and eventual inclusion of Oregon seemed all but guaranteed (although details would have to be worked out with Great Britain, another particularly sticky situation). The annexation of Texas sparked war with Mexico, and given Mexico's vast territories, the outcome would bring into question not just Texas, but California and other Mexican territories as well. In 1846, while at war with Mexico, Northern Congressman David Wilmot (Pennsylvania Democrat) put forward a provision as an amendment to the military appropriations bill, that stated that no territories taken from Mexico would become slave territories/states.\textsuperscript{2501} This provision repeatedly passed the House, and was repeatedly defeated in the pro-South Senate. Facing stalemate, voices came forth to shed light on the future of the western territories. Supreme Court Justice John McLean ("a rare antislavery presence on the proslavery Court") suggested that under the Constitution "freedom was national, while slavery was only local."\textsuperscript{2502} Antislavery forces suggested the Fifth Amendment protected individual liberty, while pro-slavery forces suggested that the Fifth

\textsuperscript{2500} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic.} New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 266.
Amendment protected individuals from federal meddling like the Wilmot Proviso. President Polk, for his part, hoped to just keep the 36°30’ latitude line from the Missouri Compromise.\textsuperscript{2503} Lewis Cass, who was the Democratic choice to succeed Polk, asserted it was up to the territories/states to determine their own futures regarding slavery. Even though he lost the election of 1848 to Whig Zachary Taylor, he had shaped the public discourse toward local/states' rights in the new territories.\textsuperscript{2504} California adopted an antislavery Constitution in 1849, and President Taylor recommended California's immediate acceptance into the Union, hence kicking off another slavery crisis over the territories.\textsuperscript{2505}

In order to get California admitted as a free state, antislavery politicians had to give a number of concessions which came to be termed the Compromise of 1850. California could have its antislavery Constitution, but in other territories/states ceded from Mexico (Utah and New Mexico) the people would decide. Also in the mix, the slave trade (not slavery) was finally abolished in the District of Columbia, and a stringent Fugitive Slave Law was enacted.\textsuperscript{2506} This Fugitive Slave Act made northern federal authorities responsible for policing up suspected runaway slaves.\textsuperscript{2507} As Fehrenbacher notes, given its draconian tenets\textsuperscript{2508} it never could have

\textsuperscript{2508} According to Fehrenbacher, page 231-232: "A pursuing slave owner or his agent could himself seize an alleged fugitive or else obtain a warrant for his arrest by a federal officer. In either case, the captive was to be brought before a commissioner or federal judge, who would conduct a summary hearing and, if the claimant's ex parte evidence proved satisfactory, issue a certificate of removal. Testimony from the prisoner was expressly barred, and the certificate was declared to be 'conclusive,' making its holder immune to 'molestation' by court processes of any kind. Thus anyone taken into custody as a fugitive slave was cut off from the traditional legal resorts of an accused person. As for extralegal action in his behalf, the new law made it more hazardous by increasing financial penalties and adding the threat of imprisonment. Furthermore, if there was reason to fear an effort at forcible rescue, the claimant could have the fugitive delivered to him in his own state at government expense – the task to be performed by the marshal or other arresting officer and as many specially hired subordinates as the situation seemed to require."
been passed except as part of a grand design of compromise at a time of national crisis.\textsuperscript{2509} It had essentially put the federal government in the "business of man-hunting."\textsuperscript{2510} This "was the most intrusive action ever taken by the federal government on behalf of slavery," and for many northerners it was a clear sign of the threat of Southern "slave power."\textsuperscript{2511}

If the compromise quelled a crisis, it wouldn't last long. In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act nullified once and for all the bargain met at the Missouri Compromise and gave these states the right to pick whether they were slave or free. Pro-slavery and anti-slavery factions rushed to the territories to make sure the decision/elections went as they would like and inevitably, clashes and violence resulted, particularly in Kansas. The outpouring of violence and anarchy came to be known as "bleeding Kansas." It was somewhat matched in the debates in the halls of Congress. Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts was bludgeoned by Preston Brooks of South Carolina. As Seymour Drescher notes, "the nation was traumatized by the pitched battles that accompanied the settlement of Kansas."\textsuperscript{2512}

The Converging Political Crises in the mid-1850s

What was taking place as the country headed into the 1850s, was a near perfect storm of state and local issues (immigration, economic change, etc.) and national/sectional issues (the future of the territories) that came together in a way that shattered the two-party system in the United States and allowed for the rise of Republican Party. That rise, then, would lead to a Southern backlash that spiraled the country into civil war and eventually marked the end of slavery in America. How did this perfect storm develop?

This work has already discussed the changing demographics and economic factors inside the United States from the 1830s to 1850s. One result of these changes was a growing sense that the national parties were not serving particular interests at the state and local levels. As a result, many smaller parties sprang up and gained seats at these levels. Some of the more prominent smaller parties were associated with the nativist movement – a backlash against mainly Catholic immigrants. The American Republican Party was formed in 1844 on a working class nativist platform, and was able to achieve some success in New York and Philadelphia. The 1844 election was its high water mark, but it was succeeded in the 1840s and 1850s by the Know-Nothing Party and this party would be a prominent player in American politics in the early 1850s. Anti-slavery parties were popping up as well. Abolitionists developed the Liberty Party in 1840; its only issue was slavery and it remained a fringe group – only garnering 3 percent of vote in the 1844 elections; it was unable to garner broad popular support but was succeeded later by the Free Soil Party. It was most active from the late 1840s through mid-1850.

The two main parties, the Democrats and particularly the Whigs, were challenged to both adjust to local issues like nativism and to maintain party cohesion in the face of the increasingly sectionalized territorial issue. This was particularly true for the Whigs. Economic issues had shaped the rise of the Whig party in the 1830s and yet there was now little salient difference between the Whigs and the Democrats. Some Northern Whigs started moving toward the Know-Nothing Party, maintaining their anti-slavery beliefs but showing greater concern for

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socio-demographic issues.\textsuperscript{2518} And so, state and local movements started to tear at the fabrics of both the main parties, but the Whigs were jolted by the anti-slavery movement as well. In the Congressional election of 1854, seventy or so Know-Nothing members made their way to the House; the two-party system was seriously challenged and some expected the Know-Nothings to take the White House in 1856.\textsuperscript{2519}

Party cohesion had been challenged by issues in the period from the 29\textsuperscript{th} Congress (1845-1847) to the 32\textsuperscript{nd} Congress (1851-1853), and it was the introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska bill and the ensuing five-month debate "that transformed the struggle for power in the North."\textsuperscript{2520} Southern Whigs voted with Southern Democrats for the bill, and nearly half the Northern Democrats voted against it.\textsuperscript{2521} Sectionalism was ruling the day. The Whigs were in disarray and gains could be made if a national party could join nativist tendencies (embodied in the Know-Nothings) with anti-slavery/free land parties (like the Free Soilers). Neither Party was a perfect fit to make the crossover and the Free Soilers joined forces with ex-Whigs, Know-Nothings and other nativists, and anti-Nebraska Democrats to form "anti-Democratic fusion tickets that were generally called 'Independent,' 'Fusion,' 'People's ticket,' or 'Republican,'" of which the Know-Nothings were the best organized.\textsuperscript{2522} Know-Nothings dominated the elections of 1854 and 1855, but the Free Soilers were uncomfortable with their nativist tendencies and tried to take back control of the effort to form a national party coalition. As Fogel notes, the turnaround came within a period of six months (starting at the end of 1855 and ending in early 1856) the anti-

\textsuperscript{2518} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 276-278. This was a natural fit for the Protestant/evangelical-dominated Whigs.
\textsuperscript{2520} Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract}. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989: 320, 370. As Robert William Fogel notes, "the extent and the suddenness of the collapse of the coalitions embodied in the Whig and Democratic parties are evident in the shift of congressional voting patterns between the 29\textsuperscript{th} Congress (1845-1847) and the 32\textsuperscript{nd} Congress (1851-1853)."
slavery side/Free Soilers seemed to have the advantage.\textsuperscript{2523} "The antislavery faction, representing the bulk of Northern Know-Nothings, was absorbed by the Republicans, while the rest joined with southern Know-Nothings to form the American party that nominated Millard Fillmore (conservative Whig and ex-President) to oppose the Republican candidate."\textsuperscript{2524}

The Republican party would ultimately represent many shades of anti-slavery opinion, most of which did not start by promising to end the institution of slavery at all, but rather, to end its expansion. They "wanted the West to become culturally northern and entrepreneurial in spirit."\textsuperscript{2525} The Republican Party wanted "a nation guided by one cultural standard rather than being a 'house divided against itself,'" as Lincoln had famously and effectively called the Union.\textsuperscript{2526} This cultural homogeneity played to the nativist Know-Nothing crowd, without coming forward as definitively nativist. Hence, when the Know-Nothing Party went into free fall Republicanism was a natural place for its members to land.\textsuperscript{2527} The final key political move to unite the Republicans was building a coalition to take over the role of Speaker of the House of Representatives in late 1855 and 1856. "By putting forth [Nathaniel] Banks, a former Democrat and a popular Know-Nothing, the Republicans were able to rally enough anti-administration Democrats and northern Know-Nothings to beat the candidate" of the Democrats and southern Know-Nothings by three votes.\textsuperscript{2528} During this internal struggle, the Republicans pushed the sectional struggle over Kansas-Nebraska to the forefront and gave themselves a thrust of momentum as they moved toward the national convention that would consolidate the Republicans

\textsuperscript{2525} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 278.
\textsuperscript{2526} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 279.
\textsuperscript{2527} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 279.
as a serious national-level party capable of challenging the Democrats.\textsuperscript{2529} As Robert W. Fogel summarizes, this incredible Republican rise to power hinged on four key, fortuitous developments. First, the Know-Nothing Party was split between its sectional factions and thereby, second, smart Free Soil leadership was able to take full advantage. Third, the long recession of 1853-1855 had reduced immigration, thus taking away some focus from the nativist angle of the party; and by 1856 the northern recovery was in swing and so that factor "permitted northeastern and midwestern workers to focus" their attention on the events in Kansas. What they saw was, fourth, the violence in Kansas and in the Congress (the attack on Sumner), which galvanized Republicans most forcefully behind the territorial (and thereby, the slavery) issue.\textsuperscript{2530}

The outcome of the 1856 presidential election was a mixed marker for the Republicans. They had lost, but it was clear the Democrats were no longer a powerful majority party in the North.\textsuperscript{2531} There were still many obstacles before the Republicans could turn a weakened Democratic Party into consistent electoral victories.\textsuperscript{2532} How they moved from obscurity to the Presidency in 1860 is quite a story of political skill, opportunity, and fortune.

The Republicans were assisted by the Supreme Court's \textit{Dred Scott} decision of 1857. In it, the court had ruled that excluding slavery from the territories (which had been the dividing line in the Missouri crisis and which had been the \textit{raison d'être} of the Republican Party) was

\textsuperscript{2529} Fogel, 378. As Fogel points out, this incredible Republican rise to power hinged on four key, fortuitous developments. First, Know-Nothing Party was split between its sectional factions and thereby, second, smart Free Soil leadership was able to take full advantage. Third, economic changes


\textsuperscript{2532} Fogel, Robert William. \textit{Without Consent or Contract}. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989: 381. For example, as Fogel notes, it was difficult to capture all the Know-Nothing voters and still keep in all the Catholic immigrants – Germans and Irish for example – who weren't particularly keen on joining forces with a faction that was clearly against them (and another faction not yet mentioned was the temperance movement faction, which was another strike against many Irish and Germans).
unconstitutional.\textsuperscript{2533} As Fehrenbacher writes, the court had forcefully asserted that the Constitution was "indeed a proslavery compact."\textsuperscript{2534} The decision had challenged the foundation of the Republican Party, and thereby, had given them a new weapon to wield against their opponents. They could point to "slave power" conspiracies and suggest to Northerners that this was all part of a movement that could end up making slavery the law of the land, not just the South.\textsuperscript{2535} The likely Democratic nominee for President in 1860 – Stephen Douglas of Illinois – had been a sponsor of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and, thereby, the idea of popular sovereignty (people picking their own future in their state regarding slavery). \textit{Dred Scott} had limited popular sovereignty and the public waited to see how Douglas would respond. He ended up trying to have it both ways – supporting \textit{Dred Scott} but speaking of the "empty legal right to bring slaves into a territory" without "the necessary public support to enforce such as right," and this way, "Douglas denied any meaningful contradiction between the \textit{Dred Scott} decision and his own principle of popular sovereignty."\textsuperscript{2536} Abraham Lincoln took the opportunity to challenge Douglas's conclusion, saying the \textit{Dred Scott} decision was erroneous and that Republicans should work to reverse it. He was chosen to run for Douglas's seat in 1858.\textsuperscript{2537}

The Douglas-Lincoln contest became a spectacle of which the entire country took note.\textsuperscript{2538} Lincoln believed the slavery issue would continue, unsolved, if the government continued to make concessions. He made his famous "House divided" speech, which stated:


A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved – I do not expect the house to fall – but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery, will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new – North as well as South.\textsuperscript{2539}

Lincoln and Douglas engaged in seven debates. In them, Douglas tried to portray Lincoln as a radical that was trying to force the morality of one section of the country on the other. Lincoln tried to portray himself as a moderate that, while admitting blacks were not equal to whites in moral and intellectual qualities, nonetheless asserted that they had the natural rights of life and liberty contained in the Declaration of Independence.\textsuperscript{2540} The election was extremely close and Douglas won, but his remarks during the campaign would come back to haunt him. Douglas had again asserted the right to local self-rule on the slavery issue, which Southerners saw as a long-term threat to the institution (they wanted it to be considered an absolute individual right via the Constitution). Southern Democrats held that the Constitution prohibited Congress and/or a state/local legislature from denying slave property, while the Republicans believed the Constitution gave Congress the power to stop the spread of slavery, which denied individuals their freedom. Given this, as David Brion Davis notes, as the 1860 election neared the Democrats, if they could hold their Northern and Southern faction together, held the only chance of maintaining a national level majority party. They couldn't hold. Starting in April 1860, the Democratic began tearing itself apart. Southern Democrats didn't trust Douglas, and Northern Democrats didn't want to continue to bend over backward to make concessions to keep Southerners happy. Southern Democrats broke with the North and nominated John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky; Northern Democrats stuck with Douglas.\textsuperscript{2541}


Lincoln overcame Senator William Seward to become the Republican nominee for President; there were ultimately, then, four primary candidates for the office. Lincoln of the Republicans, Douglas of the Northern Democrats, Breckenridge of the Southern Democrats, and John Bell – leader of the Whigs (and put on the ballot as a candidate for the Constitutional Union Party). This was not really a national election, but rather, a sectional one. It was Lincoln against Douglas for the North and Bell against Breckenridge for the South. Lincoln won 180 electoral votes (without a single Southern vote), 57 more than the combined total of his three opponents (Bell took Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia; Breckenridge took the rest of the South and Delaware and Maryland). Lincoln and the Republicans had achieved an ever-so-unlikely victory.\textsuperscript{2542}

Lincoln rushed to assure Southerners that he was no immediate threat to slavery, particularly in states where it already existed. Even if Southerners took no solace in his words, the Democratic Party controlled the House and Senate and the Supreme Court remained pro-slavery in nature. If one examined the situation, it appeared the only true way Republicans could enact radical solutions to slavery was if the South retreated from the scene and left the Federal government to total Republican leadership. Such reasoning did not matter. The election had shown the South that their worst fears had come true. The only answer was to secede from the Union, which South Carolina was the first to do on December 20, 1860.\textsuperscript{2543}

One could say at this point, that "the rest is history," and yet even at this late date such was not the case. Some Northerners proposed Constitutional amendments guaranteeing the permanent security of slavery as an institution in order to avoid conflict.\textsuperscript{2544} Republicans could


not abide this, nor would they under Lincoln make another compromise on slavery's extension into the West.\textsuperscript{2545} No, the Republican-led North would commit itself to fighting to preserve the Union. Still, even this was less a campaign to destroy slavery.\textsuperscript{2546} Indeed that is not what the North had set out to do. It was only a couple years into the war, in 1862, with the war having lasted much longer than any had expected, that Congress abolished slavery in all U.S. territories. It later enacted a Confiscation Act that emancipated the slaves of all rebels.\textsuperscript{2547} Lincoln finally decided that after a major Union victory, he would make the Emancipation Proclamation.\textsuperscript{2548} On January 1, 1863, after the victory at Antietam, he did so. As Dwight L. Dummond noted one hundred years later at a ceremony commemorating the event, "the President of the United States pronounced the death sentence upon slavery in a country which had been dedicated to freedom eighty-seven years before."\textsuperscript{2549} As David Brion Davis notes, "given the economic growth and vitality of Southern slavery in 1860, it is difficult to imagine any other historical scenario that would have led to full and universal slave emancipation in the nineteenth or even early twentieth century."\textsuperscript{2550}

**Summary of American Domestic Politics and the End of Transatlantic Slavery**

The importance of domestic politics variable in ending slavery is undeniable in the case of the United States. The discussion above has highlighted the public sphere and domestic political structure specifically. Like Britain, the civic culture in the United States was one of active association and free press. Electorally, the United States was more representative than Britain in the period of interest. Yet, America's unique federal system served as a roadblock to


\textsuperscript{2548} Fehrenbacher, Don E. *The Slaveholding Republic*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 322. The initial, preliminary announcement came after the battle. This is the date of the official proclamation.


peaceful resolution of the slavery issue. As discussed, the Constitution was not in-and-of-itself a pro- or anti-slavery document, but it was/is a living document, open to interpretation and the vagaries of implementation. From the earliest stages, the Southern states used the threat of disunion to ensure states rights and protect the institution of slavery. As the country expanded, the issue of slavery in the new territories continued to plague policymakers and the successive compromises only delayed the final struggle. As the popular abolitionist movement developed (along the lines of the British model) in the 1830s, Southern politicians, understanding the history of antislavery in Britain, became ever more protective of slavery, moved to stymie any policy that might remotely threaten it, and to quell even the slightest assertion of the institution's moral impropriety. Despite an open public sphere, when Northern abolitionists attempted to influence popular opinion through petitions and other media, Southern politicians manipulated the domestic political structure to block these efforts, enacting gag rules in Congress and blockades of the U.S. postal system. As the population of the North increased during the great influx of immigrants in the 1830s-1850s, one would have expected the expanding political weight of North to eventually overturn the South's "peculiar institution." Yet, the form of the House of Representatives and particularly the Senate (two Senators for every state regardless of size) stalemated progress on the issue. It was only a unique confluence of political events – the rise of nativist parties, the disintegration of the Whig party, events in the newly acquired western territories – supported, but not driven by abolitionist agitation, and related, but certainly not exclusively focused on the institution of slavery, that produced the improbable election of Republican Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency in 1860. Even then, slavery's political doom was not pre-ordained, as Lincoln was content to resolve the issue of slavery in the territories through negotiation and certainly without threatening the institution of slavery itself. Only the secession of the Southern states and the large-scale and prolonged bloodshed that followed compelled the federal government to end slavery once and for all. The United States, then, is a clear example in which domestic politics – the unique interplay of domestic political structure and the public sphere – played a crucial role in
the decline of slavery. Unable to resolve the issues surrounding slavery – particularly western expansion – politically, the Northern and Southern factions engaged in war to determine the fate of the Union, and thereby the fate of slavery as an institution, once and for all.

**Summary**

This chapter has examined two countries in which domestic politics was a key causal variable in the decline of slavery. In the case of Britain, an increasingly responsive domestic political structure interacted with an open public sphere in a way that ultimately brought about slavery's demise domestically. Once the slave trade and slavery were abolished, anti-slavery sentiment became a part of the organizational mindset of British bureaucratic institutions and this mindset helped sustain British anti-slavery efforts for decades. In the United States, a more representative domestic political structure and equally open public sphere produced a distinctly different outcome. There, the unique structure of politics and its interplay with an increasingly sectionalized public ultimately produced an impasse regarding slavery – one part of the country committed to limiting the spread of the institution to new territories and another committed to blunting any measure that hinted at even the slightest curtailment of the right to own slaves. That impasse would only be overcome by a bloody civil war.

Britain and the United States share a common historical lineage and a similar public sphere, but they represent distinct domestic political/bureaucratic structures. The next chapter discusses the domestic politics of three other states – France, Imperial Spain, and Brazil, each distinctive domestically in its own way. To that examination we now turn.
Chapter 7
Domestic Politics and the End of Transatlantic Slavery, Part II

The last chapter discussed the domestic politics of Britain and United States, focusing particularly on the sub-factors of domestic political structure, the nature of the public sphere, and bureaucratic politics and their impact on slavery's decline. In those two countries, domestic politics proved critical. This study now turns to the domestic politics of France, Imperial Spain, and Brazil to see if this variable had a similarly critical impact in those three polities.

Part I – French Domestic Politics and the End of Transatlantic Slavery

The modern history of France starts with the revolution. In the chaos of radical revolt and the rebellion in Saint-Domingue France went from absolute monarchy, to Napoleon's dictatorship, and then emerged as a constitutional monarchy. These turbulent years left a lasting, if not permanent, mark on French politics and so this section starts with a brief history of the period before completing the review of domestic politics and its impact on French anti-slavery.

The French Revolution and Saint-Domingue

One can debate exactly when the French Revolution began; the meeting of the Estates-General – the all but defunct elected assembly – in May 1789 is often considered the start. Before 1789 France had had an absolute monarchy. For the first three years of Revolution the King remained head of state and the developing constitutional monarchy that lasted from 1791 to 1792 – with a small, wealthy elite obtaining voting rights – was the model for the restoration after 1815. In August 1792 France became a Republic and remained Republican until 1804. The Jacobins then tried to legitimize the revolution by electing a representative Convention by almost universal male suffrage in September 1792; the King was then executed in 1793. Power then

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passed from the revolutionary assembly to a Jacobin-led 12-person Committee of Public Safety (with Robespierre in the lead). The ardently revolutionary Jacobins then pushed the French army from defense to offense. In 1795 a new assembly – the Directory – replaced the Jacobins' democratic constitution with a return to suffrage for a limited, wealthy elite. In 1799 internal squabbles and fear led them to develop a three-man Consulate, which included Napoleon, and in this way he was ultimately in control, only declaring a French Empire under his Emperorship in 1804. The exact end of the revolution, then, is debatable as well; one might consider the fall of the Jacobins in 1794 as the end, while the case can also be made that Napoleon's demise was the rightful conclusion. Whatever its accepted end, the revolution and the war(s) that ensued, as historian Pamela Pilbeam notes, began as a path to liberation of the nation and ended in obligatory military service for all French males and warfare's oppressive and constant funding as a duty for all Frenchmen. In the same way, the Declaration of the Rights of Man proclaimed liberty, equality, and fraternity as the obtainable ideal, but in the revolutionary era these rights and principles were all too often curtailed or all together ignored.  

As one considers the impact of the French Revolution, it is important to recall how important and profitable France's colonial system was. Between 1770 and 1790 the slave population of the French Antilles rose from 379,000 to 650,000 and by 1789 French exports from the region reached £9 million, while British exports were £5 million (produced by 480,000 slaves). Saint-Domingue prided itself on being the richest colony in the world, containing 465,000 slaves (30,000 whites and 28,000 free people of color). It was 40 percent of French trade, absorbed 10-15 percent of North American exports, and grew 2/5 of world's sugar and 1/2 the world's coffee. By comparison, other French colonies such as Guadeloupe (90,000 slaves, 14,000

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and whites, 3,000 free blacks) and Martinique (83,000 slaves, 10,600 whites, and 5,000 free blacks) were important but secondary.\textsuperscript{2553}

The factional divisions in the French Caribbean, and particularly Saint-Domingue, were complex and many, and once the revolution at home started, this factionalism contributed to the devolution of events there. French Antillean producers were under a more mercantilist economic policy – known as \textit{exclusif} – that reduced their profits in comparison to their British rivals, who were obtaining premium market prices for their goods.\textsuperscript{2554} In that way, in general, all had a natural resentment of and resistance to the metropolis. That said, most broadly, the planters and merchants in the French Caribbean were split into two groups – those closest to the metropolis and those, typically creoles, who wanted autonomy and in some cases independence.\textsuperscript{2555} More specifically, the hierarchy of factions went from whites, to free blacks, and then slaves, with divisions in each. There were the \textit{grand blancs} – richest plantation owners; \textit{petit blancs} – lesser merchants and proprietors; \textit{gens de couleur} – an intermediate group (some even more important than \textit{petit blancs} and all thereby a group that all whites distrusted) and even below this level blacks were internally divided group (based on skin color). Finally, one could note divisions within the slave population based on terms/history of enslavement.\textsuperscript{2556} Both whites and free blacks could be insensitive to the plight of slaves.\textsuperscript{2557} These divisions are important because revolution would likely not have come to Saint-Domingue without the revolution at home, but nonetheless, all the divisive ingredients of upheaval were there, waiting for a strong enough


\textsuperscript{2557} Knight, Franklin W. "The Haitian Revolution." \textit{American Historical Review}, 105, 1 (February) 2000: 109.
catalyst.\textsuperscript{2558} As historians A.J. Williams-Myers and Franklin Knight have noted, the evolutionary process of revolution peaked in Haiti; there were nearly 500,000 slaves to 30,000 whites, with divisions in each of these categories. Each faction of the population believed in basic tenets of the revolution (liberty, equality, fraternity), but emphasized individual aspects as it suited them. Once the power of revolutionary ideas were unleashed, the results were predictable.\textsuperscript{2559}

The events of 1789 and storming of the Bastille elicited great excitement in the colonies. The more autonomous-minded colonials pushed for colonial representation in the French Assembly in 1788 and then when the Estates General formed in May 1789; they also of course sought better terms in the \textit{exclusif}. The colonial policy from 1789 to 1791 was run largely by a triumvirate (Duport, Lameth, and Barnave) which was committed to continued property rights of the colonies (meaning slaves) but not to radical changes to the \textit{exclusif}. The Committee on Colonies was established in March 1790 and its report guaranteed local self-government and no "innovations" to the commercial relationship of the metropolis to the colonies and their property. In the end, while mercantile policy was not explicitly changed, there were increasing leaks in the system.\textsuperscript{2560}

Most of the Constituent Assembly wanted to avoid the subject of slavery and their bottom line desire was to have a strong, profitable colonial system. The Assembly allowed for Colonial Assemblies that would be voted upon by property-owners (those with more than 52 livres/year in taxes). In this way, the Declaration of the Rights of Man was distinctly less than egalitarian, but any complaints were answered with the retort that "active citizenship' could only be responsibly

\textsuperscript{2558} Knight, Franklin W. "The Haitian Revolution." \textit{American Historical Review}, 105, 1 (February) 2000: 109.
conceded to shareholders in the national enterprise and control of public funds could only be conceded to those who principally provided them.\(^{2561}\)

All white factions in Saint-Domingue distrusted the revolutionary metropolis. They thought it was radical regarding slavery (out to restrict or destroy the system) and conservative on colonial policy (colonial administration and mercantile policy). This resentment led to the igniting of embers that would end in full-scale revolt on the island. The western Saint-Marc-based assembly pushed to make its own mercantile and administration laws and this was suppressed by the French Governor General. Events on the island forced the metropolis to deal with mulatto rights (which again put the Declaration to the test), as Paris needed to maintain support from this group in order to maintain control of the island. On May 15\(^{th}\) 1791 the Constituent Assembly voted to give qualified mulattos rights. When the colonial whites resisted, the order was rescinded. These mulatto issues and the factions that were developing between autonomist ("patriot") and royalist factions led to increasing chaos on the island, which in turn set the stage for slave rebellion. The slave uprising began on August 21 in Le Cap (and eventually the Colonial Assembly was under siege there) and spread rapidly across the northern plain; there was violence in the south and west as well.\(^{2562}\)

In April 1792, the Jacobin-led Assembly declared full rights for all free blacks and mulattos in the French colonies.\(^{2563}\) The Civil Commission of Sonthonax, Polverel, and Ailhaud was dispatched with a force of 6,000 men in July 1792 to quell the factional fighting. They arrived in September and set about to stamp out rebellion of any kind (Sonthonax in North,


Polverel in South, and Ailhau in South).\textsuperscript{2564} France was on a course to war with Britain and Spain, and this would give autonomists potential allies. With the trial of the King in November 1792 and execution in 1793, the British were ready to use the chaos to conduct counter-revolutionary operations in Europe and the Caribbean. Royalist French planters negotiated in London and Britain made plans for an expeditionary force to Saint-Domingue. It arrived in September 1793 and Spanish troops from the Spanish-controlled Santo Domingo side of the island invaded as well.\textsuperscript{2565} Four years of revolution had frayed the French colonial structure and blacks had begun to openly contest their enslavement; the intensity of the fighting between patriots and monarchists, whites and mulattos, creole autonomists and partisans had all weakened order, as had the call for help to other powers.\textsuperscript{2566} In the coming years, the other powers would be all too willing to take advantage of that chaos. For, as historian Robin Blackburn notes,

As of the spring of 1793 all contenders for power in the French Caribbean were still committed to the defence of slavery: this was true of the British, despite the abolitionist protestations of Pitt and Wilberforce; of the Spanish, despite their bold alliance with black rebels; of the French Republicans; of the colonial Patriots, despite their vaunted detestation of tyranny; of the free people of colour, despite the calls of racial solidarity; of the black generals, despite their resistance to their own enslavement.\textsuperscript{2567}

In 1793 and 1794 Saint-Domingue was gripped in factional revolutionary fighting and international warfare.\textsuperscript{2568} As events progressed, factions and alliances continued to shift, but over time the balance of power shifted toward the weight of the population (slaves fighting for

\textsuperscript{2564} Blackburn, Robin. \textit{The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848}. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 197-199. This shows how important the colonies were; during this period a counter-revolutionary Prussian army was preparing to attack France, but Paris sent forces 3,000 miles away nonetheless.

\textsuperscript{2565} Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 164-165; and Blackburn, Robin. \textit{The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848}. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 203-205, 215. The first contingent arriving in September 1793 was small British contingent a few coastal sections of the island. The main force of 7,000 men captured Trinidad St. Lucie and blockaded Martinique and Guadeloupe before taking them in February and March. By April 1794 there were 3,600 troops in Saint-Domingue


\textsuperscript{2568} Knight, Franklin W. "The Haitian Revolution." \textit{American Historical Review}, 105, 1 (February) 2000: 112; and Blackburn, Robin. \textit{The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848}. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 215. As Knight notes, in the chaos between 1791 and 1802, at least six different factions: slaves, free persons of color, petit blancs, grand blancs, English and Spanish fought on the island, with the alliances constantly shifting.
freedom. The British blockade cut off normal commerce and increasingly isolated and in need of soldiers in the North, Sonthonax tried to enlist the support of black soldiers. He tried to obtain the support of black generals fighting on the Spanish side, including Toussaint Louverture, the brilliant black general that would come to symbolize black independence, but at first little support was forthcoming. Desperate, he sent a letter to the Convention and said it was time to free the slaves. On August 29, 1793 Sonthonax freed the slaves in his jurisdiction himself, and the word spread to all parts of the island. The early months of 1794 were chaotic, with large-scale slave revolts running rampant. The French Convention decreed emancipation in all French colonies on February 4, 1794. These early months of the year, particularly April and May would prove decisive, as during this period Toussaint decided to end his association with the Spanish and fight for black independence.

Ultimately, the modern history of France commenced with the start of the Revolution in May 1789 and due to these events, France was the first European power to abolish slavery. Yes, the ideas of liberty, fraternity, and equality formed the core of the revolutionary fervor, but in

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2571 Blackburn, Robin. The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 217-220. Initially, black commanders such as Toussaint rejected Republican appeals, given the faction-switching and the fact that they had overthrown their King, it was hard to trust these measures as anything but desperation. Over time, however, many became increasingly identified with black resistance. Toussaint tried to convince the Spanish authorities whom he served to enact a similar emancipation measure, but to no avail. Spain was intent on maintaining the plantation system.
reality, as discussed above, these ideas had very little to do with France's first abolition.\textsuperscript{2576} The revolution and ensuing foreign invasions of Saint-Domingue had put France in dire straits and, while keeping with the revolutionary ideals, the abolition on 16 Pluviôse Year II (February 4, 1794) was more about strategic expediency.\textsuperscript{2577} The chaos resulted in Napoleon's rise to power, and once in power, economic expediency convinced him to reverse abolition on 30 Floreal Year X (20 May 1802). In fact, Napoleon Bonaparte "effectively stifled abolitionism in France from 1799 until his fall in 1814-1815."\textsuperscript{2578} Napoleon reasserted the fundamental difference between continental and colonial policy; as "Napoleonic officialdom gave full support to a whole series of publications promoting colonial interests while systematically blocking any organized abolitionist effort."\textsuperscript{2579}

**France and Constitutional Monarchy**

Once Napoleon was defeated, the victorious allies (particularly the British) were instrumental in restoring a Bourbon dynasty to power. Not surprisingly, the constitutional monarchy established in France via the Constitutional Charter of 4 June 1814 looked strikingly

similar to Britain's parliamentary system.\textsuperscript{2580} The King was again the executive, given legislative power with an elected Chamber of Deputies and appointed Chamber of Peers.\textsuperscript{2581} The King could decree an emergency and overturn laws (via Article 14), erect new taxes, call for votes in secret, and any number of other measures deemed necessary to ensure effective policy implementation and good order.\textsuperscript{2582} Below the Executive/Legislative Level, the government looked strikingly similar to the Revolutionary/Napoleonic form. As historian Pamela Pilbeam writes, the Charter of 1814 "tacked the Bourbon monarchy onto the new institutions of the revolutionary and imperial decades."\textsuperscript{2583} Lacking an acceptable revolutionary model, the constitution-makers adopted a bi-cameral parliament not unlike that of England.\textsuperscript{2584} All the institutions (except the political) remained: council of state, departments, prefectures, judicial, monetary, educational, etc.\textsuperscript{2585} Below the monarchy were the King's chosen Chief Minister, the King's Council of State (legislative advisors) and the various Ministries. Each Ministry had its own bureaucratic hierarchies; at the base of the governmental pyramid were the 84 departments (from provinces) run by prefects appointed by the Minister of the Interior. With regard to Ministries, the Colonial and Marine (Navy) Ministries were particularly critical to the institution of slavery. Further, the regimes that were restored in the colonies were similar to those that had been there before the


Revolution. The larger military, for its part, generally supported the maintenance of colonies overseas, and thereby, the institution of slavery.2587

In essence, then, every person in the system was appointed by Paris.2588 Yes, there were elections for the Chamber of Deputies but from 1814 to 1830 there were never more than 100,000 male property-owners qualified to vote out of a total population of over 32 million.2589 There was not a fully developed party system.2590 The Ultra(-Royalists), Royalists, and Left were the primary political factions during this period (1814-1830), but it was often difficult to tell exactly where the dividing lines fell.2591 If nothing else, there was a simple ideological system: people were either for or against the Revolution and/or for or against the power of the Church.2592

During Napoleon's reign, Louis XVIII was in exile with an exceedingly large number of potential notables with which he could have filled his ministries upon return, and yet, he retained

2590 Pilbeam, Pamela. *The Constitutional Monarchy in France, 1814-48.* New York, NY: Pearson Education Limited, 2000: 21. Ultras stood for traditional values, and many supported Artois (the future Charles X). There were two generations of the Left: the ones there during the Napoleonic era and committed to him/the Revolution, and the younger liberals that came of age during the Napoleon's reign. Finally, the largest group was dubbed Royalists, and they had no real claim to any cause, but rather just to making the Bourbon dynasty effective.
2591 Pilbeam, Pamela. *The Constitutional Monarchy in France, 1814-48.* New York, NY: Pearson Education Limited, 2000: 3; Tombs, Robert. "Inventing politics: From Bourbon Restoration to republican monarchy." In *French History Since Napoleon.* ed. Martin Alexander. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999: 76-77; and Gemie, Sharif. *French Revolutions, 1815-1914: An Introduction.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999: 37. Gemie suggests that one result of the 1830 Revolution was the demise of the Ultras as a viable political faction. Robert Tombs states, "The precise point of division between right and left shifted continually according to circumstance. Hence, liberal monarchists were still on the left before 1830, but many were on the right afterwards. The easiest definition is probably that the left were those that did not accept that the revolutionary process begun in 1780 had yet been completed; the right were those who either regarded the Revolution as disastrous, or at least believed that it was, or should be, over."
2592 Pilbeam, Pamela. *The Constitutional Monarchy in France, 1814-48.* New York, NY: Pearson Education Limited, 2000: 21. Ultras stood for traditional values, and many supported Artois (the future Charles X). There were two generations of the Left: the ones there during the Napoleonic era and committed to him/the Revolution, and the younger liberals that came of age during the Napoleon's reign. Finally, the largest group was dubbed Royalists, and they had no real claim to any cause, but rather just to making the Bourbon dynasty effective.
all those Napoleonic officials willing to serve.\textsuperscript{2593} This, too, added to the feeling that little would change in approach – other than a reduced lust for conquest – under the new regime. It is no surprise, then, that "the restored monarchy of Louis XVIII continued to scorn abolitionism, which it identified with republicanism."\textsuperscript{2594} After the peace of 1814, Drescher concludes, "the restored Bourbon monarchy fulfilled its reputation for having learned nothing and forgotten nothing."\textsuperscript{2595} Louis XVIII's foreign ministry negotiated for return of most slave colonies and reasserted sovereignty.\textsuperscript{2596} Britain made "abolition an implicit condition for Louis XVIII's uncontested return to the thrown."\textsuperscript{2597}

Enforcement was something else. During restoration, ejected planters and shipbuilders pressed for the reinstitution of slavery.\textsuperscript{2598} Opinion was on the side of private interests. "Abolition had been imposed by the British cabinet and hence was insufferable, however honourable its motives, and the French did not think Britain's motives were honourable."\textsuperscript{2599} As Paul Michael Kielstra writes, "from the beginning of British agitation for abolition, Frenchmen generally had believed the English were self-interested, promoting a measure far more harmful to France than to Britain."\textsuperscript{2600} Given their defeat at Waterloo, the memory of Saint-Domingue, and the fact that their sworn enemy was pushing for abolition, anti-slavery became tantamount to anti-

\textsuperscript{2597} Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 176-177. "In the decade after Waterloo, the (now illicit) French slave trade climbed to levels rivaling those reached by French slavers in the 1770s."
patriotism."\textsuperscript{2601} Abolitionists were isolated and accused by the new Ultraroyalists of being the allies of France's conqueror.\textsuperscript{2602} From the second decade of the 1800s, French abolitionism was hindered by association with British supremacy, Anglophilic Protestantism, and radicalism.\textsuperscript{2603} Economic interests outweighed ideas.\textsuperscript{2604} The regulation against the trade enacted under pressure from the British in 1814 and 1815 wasn't strong enough to deter slave traders, and it was haphazardly instituted by French officials who were much more concerned with restoring economic viability.\textsuperscript{2605} The French public discourse was dominated by the merchants, and the new King wanted to keep the larger, more powerful constituents sated.\textsuperscript{2606} The French commercial interests thought the slave trade the cure for its restoration, and the key to returning France to international prominence.\textsuperscript{2607} "With few colonies, and the menacing memory of Saint-Domingue dominating French minds, the issue of slavery receded into the background in France."\textsuperscript{2608} Once Britain had forced France to abolish the trade, the French government was unwilling, and in some ways, incapable of taking effective action against it for years.\textsuperscript{2609}

As discussed in the Chapter 5, French activists lobbied the Chambers, but the political climate in France was against the movement. The Restoration Monarchy was, above all, afraid of the masses and committed to rejuvenating the state and ensuring stability. The government was

restrictive and cracked down on associations that hinted at radicalism. Limited in the less than fully free press, French abolitionists focused their political activities on the Chambers. "Their real goal was not the unfeasible one of changing the law, but the practical one of spreading information through parliamentary debates. Newspaper reports of these discussions reached far greater audiences than pamphlets, and thence sometimes found sympathetic authors to republish them." Kielstra states, "only a new law was going to stop the traffic, but legislation meant the Chambers, and the Chambers meant the ultra[royalist]s" who were committed to the powerful interests, not effective abolition.

Charles X peacefully succeeded Louis in 1824. One could expect a similar approach to slavery from the new King. It was true that by the mid-1820s activists believed they were getting their anti-slave trade message through to the average citizen, but there certainly appeared to be no movement strong enough to compel action from the King and/or Chambers. The limited petition campaign of 1825 – which relied on petitions from notables, not the French masses – made its way through the Chamber of Peers and was recommended to the Marine Minister, Comte de Chabrol, but the petitions were effectively squelched. It took a publicity ploy from abolitionist leader De Staël to bring about an epic abolitionist coup. De Staël visited the port of Nantes (the commonly recognized leading port in the slave trade) personally and found that slave vessels were active in plain sight. He boarded La Bretonne and spoke with ordinary sailors about how many slaves it carried, bought shackles at the local blacksmith, and brought the information and shackles back to Paris. The society sent the information to Marine Minister Chabrol and

reproduced the evidence in pamphlets.\textsuperscript{2615} De Staël displayed the irons to the royal family in person. This was an embarrassment to the oligarchy. They could not afford to look weak and ineffective in the eyes of the public. Charles X told his ministers to clean up the trade. Critically, he also told his commissioners handling the claims of former Saint-Domingue colonists that "the slave trade is abolished, it must and shall be abolished."\textsuperscript{2616} The ministers were instructed to start working on an anti-slave trade law.\textsuperscript{2617} Chabrol said implementation of an effective bill would take time; the cabinet backed away from taking action, and the Chambers, containing few liberals after the 1824 election, would likely not back a new bill.\textsuperscript{2618} The governmental anti-slave trade efforts appeared to be cooling.

Still, the public seemed increasingly concerned that the government was incapable of ending a trade that called into question France's honor.\textsuperscript{2619} Men of standing were beginning to be convinced of the need to end the trade.\textsuperscript{2620} Between 1825 and 1826 government measures were having some effect – perhaps even cutting the trade in half – even without a new slave trade law.\textsuperscript{2621} Marine Minister Chabrol put a new anti-slave trade bill (to replaces feeble measures coming out of the peace settlement years before) forward at the end of December 1826.

Merchants, captains, insurers – everyone involved in outfitting slave ships – would face banishment, loss of the vessel and the cargo. Participating sailors got three to five months in

\textsuperscript{2615} Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 125-126, 131. Everyone knew Nantes was the capital of the French trade. This incident came in close proximity to the \textit{Deux Nantais} affair: Macaulay had gone to Nantes in January 1824 and saw numerous ships fitted out for slave voyages. He sent information back to London which was then forwarded to Paris. Paris ordered Nantes authorities to arrest the ship, but the information leaked and the ship escaped, embarrassing the French government badly.


prison, but if they gave evidence they could be cleared of punishment. The bill passed fairly easily. Based on discussion of the bill inside the Chambers, there appeared to be three factions—some royalists, abolitionists, and those in the middle. The first group was small, using arguments as if the trade hadn't yet been abolished; this minority group clearly "had not accepted the death of the slave trade." The abolitionists felt the bill was still too weak but voted for it. The last group was the largest—members that had pragmatically come around to the bill without fully supporting it. They conceded, reluctantly, that the trade was horrible. The first act of 1818 "had gone as far as public opinion would then allow, but clearly was insufficient. Now popular views had progressed. Delays in implementing a policy already a decade old would be improper and, indeed, bring all laws into disrepute." The middle ground argument rejected harsher penalties as "too advanced for public opinion." As Kielstra states, the "assembly did not embrace abolition, but was reconciled to it." Given the state of French civil society and restrictions on association and petitioning, it's very difficult, if not impossible to gauge what the true state of public mindset was. But, "nearly every speaker supporting the 1827 law agreed that the French people insisted the shameful commerce must stop."

The July Revolution and the Orleanist Constitutional Monarchy

France was in economic crisis from 1827 to 1832, due in part to poor harvests and financial bankruptcies. Given this fact, it is perhaps no surprise that a liberal revolution took

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place in July 1830, but as Pilbeam writes the ensuing events were a classic case of "two stationary cars colliding.\(^\text{2628}\) Charles X (who had an inclination toward the Ultras) had been accused of electoral fraud during the election of 1827, in which the Liberals had taken 160 to 180 seats (equal with Royalists, the Ultras had the rest). This was a significant electoral victory, but the King refused to match the Ministers with the results. He formed the government around the center-right Comte de Martignac, and when he couldn't get issues passed through the perturbed assembly, the King replaced him with the Ultraroyalist prince de Polignac. In March 1830, the Liberals voted for unprecedented "no confidence." The King called a new election, lost, and then invoked Article 14 of the Charter for emergency powers to take control; he forced liberal newspapers to close, dissolved the assembly, and then tried to force an election where only the richest, more conservative members could vote. When protests developed, the whole situation blew up, particularly when the National Guard refused to put down the protests.\(^\text{2629}\)

The Liberals had no real, cohesive political agenda; they were mainly held together by their "hostility to de Polignac [who distrusted and suppressed the press] and their suspicions of Charles X."\(^\text{2630}\) With the revolution over and Charles X in exile in England, the Liberals chose the


duc d'Orléans to become King Louis-Philippe. The Charter was modestly amended (Article 14 emergency powers were revoked) and King Louis-Philippe quickly reintroduced the tricolor and expanded the electorate from 94,000 to 166,000 (0.5 percent of the total population in 1830). Louis-Philippe was a Liberal, but one had to work pretty hard to present him as a revolutionary; the Liberals tried the best they could to sell this miniscule change in government to the masses. However, anyone expecting rapid change failed to take into account the fact that the leaders of the new July Monarchy were elite notables, too, who feared "popular participation in governmental affairs, were legalistic in their approach, and were conservative in their social orientation." All politicians were afraid of the masses. True, an increased number of males could vote after 1830 but there was a great fear of public association and the press. The simplest activities took on, or appeared to politicians to take on, a political dimension. "The Napoleonic penal code," which was maintained and tightened in 1834, "severely limited their

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[association] size, prevented public activities and forbade wide affiliation. Nonetheless, a sphere of suspicion and protest had grown between 1815 and 1830, and grass-roots political associations were beginning to develop. Therefore, the post-revolution political situation in France was not conducive to tackling "emotive issues" like slavery, and hence civil servants went about implementing existing policies quietly in a way to not provoke popular upheaval.

With regard to slavery, the July Monarchy attempted to put forward a bill that fully legalized the rights of free blacks, but receiving strong push-back from the colonies, the government balked. It put forward, instead, an ordinance that suppressed taxes on planters freeing slaves. Under pressure from abolitionists, a new anti-slave trade law was presented to the Peers in December 1830; it was everything they wanted; it "recognized three stages in the slave trade, which all became criminal offences: initial preparation, departure from port, and the purchase of slaves in Africa." Outfitters, insurers and captains faced 2-5 years hard labor; if captured at sea they faced 10-20 years. Imported slaves were liable to seizure, and established apprenticeship for freed blacks. The bill banned the manufacture and sale of irons.

The debate in the chambers says a lot about mindset. The bill passed with only minor amendments. "The debate in the Peers was lifeless." There was little opposition to the measure overall, and it passed 100 to 6. It was more heavily debated in the Deputies, but for the most part it is clear that abolition was no longer a controversial issue in the halls of government. The bill

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passed 190 to 37. The July Monarchy then sought to put an end to the problem of British seizures on the high seas, which had sparked tensions for years. They signed an agreement to patrol the ocean and established a French adjudication authority on the island of Fernando Po in November 1831. The agreement, interestingly, was met largely with apathy in France. The Orleanist government was happy to give the treaty little publicity, and the press paid it little attention. In fact, "throughout the 1830s, the French press largely ignored Anglo-French suppression efforts, and those few references it made were favourable." French apathy gave the arrangements space to work, which to some extent they did." Between the new domestic anti-trade law and the international agreement, "the French slave trade collapsed quickly, never to re-appear." 

A Colonial Reform law passed in April 1833 finalized a plan by which colonies would have their Conseils Coloniaux to pass local laws and colonial delegates sent to represent them in Paris. This law also gave free blacks theoretical equality in civil and political affairs. An ordinance passed on April 30, 1833 outlawed branding/mutilation of slaves. Beyond this, measures on the practice itself were slow and cautious. Of course during this period British abolitionism was agitating again, and had won over the British public. Some French observers

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were aware of these developments, but French officials were largely ambivalent about the events in Britain.\textsuperscript{2652} Apparently so were the press and the public. French public opinion and most of the press remained "ignorant of, or uninterested in, anti-slave trade and slavery matters in England prior to 1834."\textsuperscript{2653} With Britain working to emancipate its slaves, the response of the July Monarchy was to protect its own possessions from any negative repercussions from the British actions, certainly not to imitate them.\textsuperscript{2654} An internal navy-colonial office memo shed light on the government approach. The document pointed out that in freeing their slaves, British authorities had been "forced to yield' to religious-inspired movements that had won over public opinion."\textsuperscript{2655} It said, however, "in France, while the great mass of the population is little concerned with the colonial regime, protests against slavery only have reverberations within the circle of philosophical discussions, and our government remains... almost free in its choices."\textsuperscript{2656} The Marine Ministry and larger military was in no hurry to end slavery – they believed the colonies expanded the power of the state and gave them power and another reason to exist. Paris, too, had no desire to irritate economic interests and was certainly not ready to pay large bank-busting indemnities, as London had.\textsuperscript{2657} Perhaps they'd be willing to introduce rachat – the right of slaves to purchase their own freedom – in an effort to eliminate slavery slowly, but beyond that, the memo concluded by recommending that the July Monarchy continue on its course and see what came of the British experiment. An addendum to the memo confirmed its conclusion, noting "in France, where very few people know what the colonies are, or concern themselves with the fate

of the slaves,' the legislature 'would not decide to increase the public debt in favor of the colons, for whom, it must be said, the country has very little sympathy, only to satisfy morally a few philanthropists.' These memos summed up the situation in France and the approach the government would follow for the foreseeable future: that "France could not afford to pay the requisite indemnity to the slave holders, that it was necessary to await the result of British emancipation, that the administration must follow the gradualist path toward eventual slave liberation, and that the French abolitionists had disdainfully little political influence." The French government set up a system to gain information on British efforts, and prepared to wait to see what emancipation wrought.

In March 1835 due de Broglie was asked to form a government; thus, abolitionists were in a strong political position (it wouldn't last long – Broglie fell from power in February 1836). It quickly became clear that power dampened the fervor of abolitionists; de Broglie urged the government to wait to see the result for the British before moving forward. Colonialists were also organizing to resist abolitionism. Some staunch defenders suggested emancipation would ruin the colonies and, thereby, France itself. Here again, though, the general tactic was to accept emancipation in theory, but suggest the country wasn't ready and employ the delay tactic.

Colonial delegate Francois Mauguin conceded in April 1835 that slavery "could not be justified, but insisted that slaves were far from being prepared for freedom, and that this would require a slow process of amelioration over many years."

This was a Liberal government containing several abolitionists that worked for change within the Chambers, but it quickly became clear that power dampened their fervor. For example.

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even the committed (but moderate) abolitionist de Broglie (who briefly headed the government from 1835-1836) urged the government to wait to see the result for the British before moving forward. This appears to be a classic example of fervor being quelled once power is obtained and the complexity of issues/governance fully grasped by those chosen to govern, a la bureaucratic-politics models and Michel's "Iron Law of Oligarchy"("power is always conservative").

Outside government, abolitionists worked to move the government forward through petitions and the press, but were hindered by government measures that blocked public meetings. "Unlike in Britain, French opinion remained distant from the slavery question."

Frankly, even abolitionists were cautious, as, certainly, was the government. The reports that came back from the British colonies suggested there was good reason to be cautious. The results of emancipation varied; the slaves' conditions had generally been improved, but

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emancipation had been an economic failure.\textsuperscript{2668} \textsuperscript{2669} “Determined not to repeat Britain’s mistakes, the July Monarchy contented itself with commissions, reports, and postponement.”

To be sure, the government did start developing plans for long-term emancipation and several prominent politicians put forward proposals. Hyppolite Passy proposed gradual emancipation via "free womb" in 1837, but it was buried. In 1839, Alexis de Toqueville made a proposal similar to the British emancipation scheme, but once again it was slow-rolled. By May 1840, the King made it clear that this government would produce more of the same policies regarding slavery. In a discussion with a delegation of British abolitionists, the King noted his commitment to "prompt amelioration" of slavery conditions and the need for "an intermediary stage" before emancipation, but made no mention of any upcoming government proposal for emancipation.\textsuperscript{2670}

\textbf{1840-1848}

International events – the Egypt Crisis and right of search issues with Britain – roiled public Anglophobia and distracted the government from possible movement on slavery. Nevertheless, de Tocqueville pushed the Thiers government to move on the slavery issue. Thiers announced that the government would form a commission, headed by Broglie, to study the subject. In this manner, he had prevented already-proposed plans from being debated and put the subject through the slower and more cumbersome committee process.\textsuperscript{2671} The Broglie Committee was balanced between abolitionist politicians and pro-slavery interests (from the Navy/Colonial Ministries for example).\textsuperscript{2672} From the outset, the commission was inclined toward being

methodical and deliberate; in other words, slow.\textsuperscript{2673} It met a couple of times in 1840 and decided on three possible courses of action – one that resembled that proposed by Passy, one like de Tocqueville's, and one other. It then decided that each method should be sent to the colonial governors for their review and comment. Given their penchant to reject emancipation schemes, the governors were almost certain to comment negatively on these proposals and, further, it was clear that the review process would be lengthy. As historian Lawrence Jennings notes, "the task of the Broglie commission was not to implement emancipation as the abolitionists had hoped, but to study the question ad infinitum."\textsuperscript{2674} The committee members all agreed that some form of indemnity be provided the planters, and so when they finally submitted their proposal to the government they arrived at two possibilities: 1) a general abolition of emancipation after ten years (by which time the reparations would be paid off through slave labor) and, 2) a progressive abolition through "free womb" and rachat (slaves purchasing their own freedom), with the institution lasting a maximum of twenty more years.\textsuperscript{2675}

Even despite the moderate nature of the proposals, the pro-slavery backlash was substantial and the government backed off emancipation.\textsuperscript{2676} New Minister of the Navy and Colonies, Admiral Mackau, a pro-slavery former governor of Martinique developed a bill to placate abolitionists in 1845.\textsuperscript{2677} This bill was ameliorative in nature and theoretically facilitated


greater avenues for slave manumission.\textsuperscript{2678} It was a stall tactic, little more significant than similar laws of the past. As one leading colonial official in Guadeloupe reacted to the bill, "the magistrates are satisfied with the colonists and the colonists are satisfied with the magistrates. This reciprocity is certainly significant."\textsuperscript{2679}

The simple fact is that despite being liberal, the François Guizot-era (he was either foreign minister or prime minister from 1840 to 1848) governments were cautious pragmatists, who in general had very little desire to make decisive changes (regarding slavery and otherwise), but rather, to maintain stability.\textsuperscript{2680} The way in which the Orleanist regime slow-rolled emancipation efforts shows how paralyzed they were by their own moderation, by bureaucratic politics and interest groups, and by their commitment to protecting private property.\textsuperscript{2681} Frankly, even the King realized his government's paralysis looked bad and was potentially threatening. In 1846 he issued an ordinance that freed all slaves in royal service.\textsuperscript{2682} Strategic thinkers within the administration realized, despite the presence of pro-slavery factions and interests, that the complicated issue of slavery needed to be taken care of once and for all.\textsuperscript{2683} Yet, it would take another revolution to carry the motion through. As French historians André Jardin and André-Jean Tudesq state:

The effectiveness of the central power was neutralised by opposing pressure groups representing either material interests... or moral interests. The Guizot government was favourable to the abolition of slavery in the colonies, and so was public opinion... but since no agreement about its methods could be reached, the status quo continued.\textsuperscript{2684}

\textsuperscript{2679} Blackburn, Robin. \textit{The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848.} New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 486-487. As Blackburn adds, the planters rallied against the Mackau bill nonetheless because it gave slaves some rights and was sold, to placate abolitionists, as an emancipation scheme.
Revolution and Final Emancipation

The July Monarchy faced a couple of challenges in the period leading up to 1848 in the form of economic depression and the increasing frequent banquet campaigns of 1847-1848 (discussed more below). The depression had started in 1845 and had increased social polarization. There were increasing bread riots and local authorities were more frequently utilizing police and military to keep order. The cautious Orleanists were seen as uncaring toward the poor, and overly repressive to demonstrations of their plight. There was talk of corruption within government; in reality, Guizot was not corrupt, he was just part of a cautious government incapable of dealing with the many problems of the time (including of course, slavery). The parliamentary opposition was divided (between republicans and more conservative members that wanted reform within the system) and increasingly frustrated by the defeat of their reform proposals in the Chambers. Given the suspicions of public gatherings, the opposition was reduced to engaging in large banquet campaigns with which to publicize their cause. As the number of banquets increased, authorities became increasingly concerned. Finally, in February 1848, a government crackdown on a Paris banquet ignited the revolution. In and of itself it should not have been enough to bring change, but when troops fired on marchers the National Guard again deserted (as with 1789, a key turning point came when the troops no longer protected the government). Within three days the monarchy fell and the Second Republic was established.2685

A provisional government was convened on 24 February in order to maintain order. Abolitionists filled several top positions. Navy Minister Arago (an abolitionist) asked radical abolitionist Victor Schoelcher to become Chief of the Colonial Bureau of the Ministry;

Schoelcher accepted and immediately worked to convince Arago (who, stuck between his abolitionist inclination and his desire to keep the colonials in line had already signaled to worried colonials that their "property" would be safe) to decree an end to slavery. Schoelcher's draft of 3 March stated:

"In the name of the French people, the provisional government of the Republic, considering that no French territory can any longer hold slaves, Decrees that: a Commission is to set up within the provisional Ministry of the Navy and Colonies to prepare within the shortest time possible an act of immediate emancipation in all the colonies of the Republic. The Ministry of the Navy is charged with execution of the present decree." 2686

Several other provisional governors balked at the measure but Schoelcher was able to argue forcefully for it. He was appointed Under-Secretary for the Colonies and President of the Commission on Slavery. By 15 April the commission had developed a plan for emancipation within two to three months, with indemnification to be decided later. The emancipation decree was approved by the provisional government on April 27, 1848. Schoelcher had moved quickly and forcefully to enact emancipation, before the politics of a new republican government could block it. Interestingly enough, the Republic's first election (entailing universal male suffrage) returned largely conservative members to the National Assembly and Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte to the Presidency, and Schoelcher's influence was greatly curtailed. In July 1849 the National Assembly agreed to pay indemnification of half the value of planters' slaves in cash (6 million francs) and bonds (120 million francs at 5 percent). Revolution, and quick, effective provisional government action via Schoelcher produced an end to slavery that had gone long unrealized in the face of endless discussion in the Orleanist Chambers and despite general public acceptance. 2687


Summary of Domestic Politics and the Decline of Slavery in France

Despite the fact that France modeled its government structure on Britain's constitutional monarchy following Napoleon's defeat, her path to abolition/emancipation followed a distinctly different course. The critical difference between the two rivals appears to be in the nature of the public sphere in France and its capacity to mold popular opinion and then force political action in the Assembly. France had a more hierarchical society and French elites, with the French Revolution fresh in their historical minds, were afraid of the masses. Abolitionists and politicians alike were committed to working for change via government structures, not through a public campaign like that in Britain. Even when they did attempt to move for a more popular movement, the government was prone to limit the public expression and association in fear of revolution. Further, the government bureaucracies – particularly the Marine and Colonial Ministries – were largely committed to stalling abolition/emancipation for as long as possible in deference to the merchant/colonial interest. Even with abolitionists in the leading government positions of the Orleanist regime, change was not quick in coming. It would ultimately take a revolution and quick, efficient political maneuvers by an abolitionist-turned temporary insider (Schoelcher) to achieve change.

Part II – The Domestic Politics of Abolition in Spain and her Imperial Possessions

Political Scientist Juan Linz asserts that modern Spanish history can be encapsulated by a recurring pattern: "short periods of high revolutionary enthusiasm carried by the hopes of broad segments of the citizenry, activation of radical masses pushed by poverty, withdrawal of the moderate reformist element, defeat of the forces of change by the intervention of the army, establishment of a conservative government, and a relatively prolonged period of peace and prosperity – without, however, arriving at a solution of basic underlying problems or creating
fully legitimate institutions." Slavery was one such underlying problem, and the following section looks at the domestic politics of Spain and shows how a public sphere closed until the 1850s-1860s, a centralized oligarchy stuck with the mindset of absolute monarchy, and conservative cabinets and ministries (particularly the army) relying on revenue from the colonies led to repeated upheaval that would help keep slavery alive in the empire until very late.

Like much of Europe, Spain was ruled by absolute monarchs during the first several centuries of the slave trade. The death of Charles II in 1700 ended Hapsburg rule in Spain, which was eventually followed by the Bourbon monarchy. The Bourbons looked to consolidate the power of the state and increase Spain's international standing, while following a largely "Eurocentric" strategy. For the first half of the eighteenth century, Spain's colonial possessions were ancillary monarchical concerns. As a result, influential creole (Hispano-American) landowners held significant power in colonial government affairs. During the second half, the crown was more concerned with shoring up colonial defenses militarily and attempting to maintain more centralized control of government and economics.  

Spain's attempt to become "a great mercantile nation" and to exercise more effective political control over the empire was stunted by the Napoleonic wars. With the monarchy deposed in 1808, local groups of notables formed juntas (committees) to perform localized rule and resist French occupation (which became known as the Spanish War of Independence). In 1810, Spain's Central Junta summoned a Cortes of regional deputies, and in March 1812 this group finalized a liberal constitution that established constitutional monarchy in Spain. The backlash toward liberalism was swift; Ferdinand VII, who had no intention of being constrained by a constitutional monarchy and who was backed by the Army and the Church, took power back

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in May 1814. In the mean time, Spanish colonies in North America took advantage of the upheaval to launch many of their own independence campaigns.2600 As Simon Barton notes:

The War of Independence left Spain in the grip of a profound political, social and economic crisis. The rebellion of the American colonies had cut off the supply of silver which had helped sustain state finances for the best part of 300 years, reducing the Crown to bankruptcy. Agriculture, trade and industry were in a parlous state. The ideological divisions that separated the servants of enlightened absolutism, the reformist liberals and those who sought the full restoration of the privileges and power of the aristocracy and the Church were more pronounced than ever.2601

In January 1820, a Spanish military revolt again forced Ferdinand to accept the constitution of 1812. This was short-lived, as a French Army joined by Spanish loyalists returned Ferdinand to the crown in 1823. Multiple factions were active inside Spain: In the liberal group, there was a split between moderate liberals (moderados), who were looking for a pragmatic power-sharing arrangement with the monarchy (an oligarchy based in a watered down form of the 1812 constitution), and more radical liberals (known first as exaltados, and then after 1834 as progresistas) who wanted representative democracy based on the 1812 constitution. On the royalist side, following Ferdinand's crack-down some moderate conservatives looked for stability through a more conciliatory treatment of the liberals, while some ultra-conservatives pushed for a return to absolute monarchy. This latter group hoped that Ferdinand's brother Charles would take the thrown upon the King's death. In May 1829, Ferdinand married María Cristina and their daughter, Isabella, was born in 1830. Within weeks of Ferdinand's death in 1833, supporters of Charles – known as Carlists – plunged Spain into another civil war.2602 The years 1833-1844 saw those fighting for Isabella pitted against those for Carlos.2603 Unable to defeat the Carlists quickly, the winter of 1833-1834 "witnessed the emergence of an unlikely [liberal] coalition in support of

some move in the direction of constitutionalism. The new moderate constitution of 1834, the Estatuto Real, was modeled after the French charte of 1814. It didn't last long. With continued jockeying for position, the government returned to the 1812 constitution in 1836.

The Spanish government signed a new treaty with Britain outlawing the slave trade in 1835 (it essentially echoed the same abolition sentiment of the treaty they had signed in 1817) in the Crown's dominion. The treaty changed the tactics used (less open use of the Spanish flag, more subterfuge, etc), but certainly did not end the trade. The Crown/Regency issued a royal decree in March 1836 that ended whatever remained (which wasn't much) of the institution of slavery in mainland Spain. The royal decree had no impact on the colonies, and the slave trade carried on there. As Arthur Corwin notes, "even liberal sentiment in Spain could defend the economic benefits of the slave trade." Even more pressingly, the return of constitutional monarchy had given the colonies hope of even greater political liberalization and representation

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in the metropole, but in 1837 a commission of the newly elected Cortes voted to expel Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Filipino deputies; colonial hopes were dashed.2703

With the war with the Carlists still raging and chaos in the countryside, it became clear that whichever general could finally defeat the Carlists would be the most powerful man on the peninsula. After the surrender of the Carlists in 1839, General Espartero was hailed the Duke of Victory; internal squabbles resulted in Espartero taking over as interim Regent in 1840, which lasted until a coalition of Moderados and the Army (under General Narváez) deposed him in 1843.2704 The revolutions of the first half (1810-1814, 1820-1823, and 1833-1840) of the century had "consolidated a centralized state, with a strong executive in the form of the Bourbon monarchy and a legislature with an extremely limited franchise."2705 In other words, despite moves toward liberalism and away from an absolute monarchy, Spain remained a centralized oligarchy. As Spain moved forward, the foundation was being lain for a more capitalist economy based on private property and free trade, and yet to fund the military (to fight off the challenges of the Carlists, for example), the central government had been paradoxically forced to rely on, and hence to control, the politics and wealth of her Caribbean colonies.2706 Even though slavery had been abolished at home, and the slave trade abolished in theory via treaty, its role as wealth provider ensured its continuation in the colonies.

After Espartero's fall Isabella took over the Crown at the age of 13 and ruled with Narváez. The period from 1844 to 1854 became known as the Moderate Decade. The Constitution of 1845 enhanced the power of the monarchy and replaced an elected Senate with one of appointed notables. In addition to the Moderados in power and the Progresistas out, a more

radical Democratic Party (Democratas) Party formed in 1847. Some of the forays it made into mobilizing popular support only strengthened the Moderados' efforts at repression and centralization.²⁷⁰⁷

The Situation in the Colonies

Cuba. The death of Ferdinand VII and the restoration of constitutional monarchy brought hope for political and economic liberalization in the colonies. The Cuban elites – Spanish-born and creole – had maintained an important and unique element in the Spanish colonial empire – they had been accustomed to a high level of relative local control in the late 18th and early 19th century and remained loyal to the Spanish metropole while other colonies rebelled. The potentially seditious creole elites had maintained allegiance to Spain for several reasons. Cuban creole planters (mainly in the slavery-dominated West) maintained their loyalty to Spain because they thought association would ensure continuous support for slavery and the slave trade. Other creole professionals (mainly urbanites or landowners from less slavery-dominated regions) maintained loyalty to Spain because they feared the increasing size of the slave population and they thought a strong Spain would protect them from the threat of slave revolts and revolution. Intellectuals like Saco looked to use the upheavals and changes in Spanish politics to carve out a more powerful niche for Cubans in the developing constitutional monarchy. In the early 1830s, as constitutional monarchy was restored in Spain, the "ideal" for Cuban elites of all stripes was as Christopher Schmidt-Nowara writes, "the United States' South, where slaveowners enjoyed local

dominance and national representation. Maintaining loyalty to the increasingly liberal Spain appeared to offer them such an option.

The Cuban Captain General was Miguel Tacón, an anti-creole Spanish military officer that had fought to suppress the rebellions on the South and Central American continent (members of this clique were known as ayacuchos). He considered himself surrounded by separatists and feared the kind of liberal, anti-slave trade ideas put forward by the likes of José Antonio Saco in the 1820s and 1830s (as detailed in Chapter 5). He saw signs of sedition, real and imagined, all around him. In 1836, soon after the "Sergeant's Revolt" in Spain had forced the return of the 1812 constitution, without orders from Tacón, the governor of the eastern Oriente Province including Santiago in Cuba – General Manuel Lorenzo – declared constitutional monarchy and called for local and regional elections for the first time in 15 years. The outcome was the election of the exiled Saco.

This outcome represented a clear threat to both Tacón and the powerful pro-slavery planters in Cuba. Saco had been based in Santiago Cuba before exile and now he was in the mainland campaigning against the slave trade. In Madrid, Saco forwarded what were in Tacón's ayacucho mind seditious political ideas, and what were in the eyes of powerful traders and planters (creole and Spanish alike) in Havana and the slave-dominated western provinces, economically dangerous anti-slave trade ideas. Cuba was particularly prosperous in the mid-1830s (as British Jamaica's sugar industry declined) and this only heightened any perceived threat to economic interests. Supported by the powerful western planter interests, Tacón launched an expedition to suppress Lorenzo's regime and sent back to Spain alarmist reports of the threat that

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constitutional monarchy and thereby colonial representation, represented to the colonial system. These reports helped convince the Cortes to expel Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Filipino deputies as mentioned above. As Schmidt-Nowara summarizes:

As Tacón had suppressed the Santiago regime in Cuba, so too the Spanish deputies voted to delay colonial constitutional government indefinitely. Powerful interests and forces shaped these decisions: military revanchism, peninsular economic interests, civil war in Spain, slave rebellion and emancipation in the Caribbean. Added to the constitution of 1837 – and to that of 1845 – was an amendment saying that the overseas provinces were to be ruled by special laws to be determined at a later time. For the rest of the nineteenth century, Cubans and Spaniards would struggle over the nature of colonial government.

The Revolution in Spain in 1843 brought a moderate regime, more opposed to abolition, to power. Leopoldo O'Donnell became Governor of Cuba and he was more devoted to securing Spanish power there and, thus, to encouraging the slave economy. A slave insurrection broke out soon after O'Donnell arrived in 1843, and another – the Escalera Conspiracy – was uncovered soon after. Creole liberals/patriots were accused of fostering dissent and insurrection and in the crackdown against slave revolts, creoles were removed from public office, "thus virtually extinguishing" any fledgling creole independence or abolition movement. Some planters, unsure about which way a more liberal Spain would go regarding slavery, began to see hope in being annexed by the United States. Such a move, it was thought, would end any threat to slavery.

The revolution in Spain in 1854 was a liberalizing one – replacing the Moderados with Progresistas. Yet, ultimately it "had the paradoxical effect of reaffirming the metropolitan

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government's commitment to colonial slavery. In the Cortes, the new Spanish Foreign Ministry asserted "The Government... is convinced that slavery is a necessity and an indispensable condition for the maintenance of the territorial property of the island of Cuba." Thereby, through the 1850s, Cuban planters were largely assured of the secure future of the institution and slaves continued to flow into the island until the trade was outlawed in 1867.

**Puerto Rico.** For first half of the century, Cuban and Puerto Rican elites took a similar approach to the slavery question: the islands were committed to its use as a labor source and any critics of the slave trade that did exist, and there were a fair number of them, pushed for abolishing the trade in order to "whiten" the islands in order to clear up potential demographic/social problems (too high a percentage of blacks, which could lead to revolt) and "political marginalization" (more importance and equality in the Spanish colonial realm).

"Distinct social, political, and economic conditions by midcentury, however, produced divergent attitudes toward slavery." Slavery did not become a central feature of Puerto Rico's sugar production until the beginning of the 1800s (it had started and become entrenched earlier in Cuba), and coming to it late, Puerto Rico never had as high a percentage of slaves (see Table 7.1) as Cuba and the slave trade came to effective end in the 1840s. By the early 1850s, sugar exports were plateauing (for example, exports went from 118.8 million pounds in 1851 to 123.4 million in 1868) and although coerced labor was still central, and in fact, some planters pushed

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for resumption of the slave trade during this decade, influential Puerto Rican elites were attempting to come up with alternative forms of labor.\textsuperscript{2724}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Year} & \textbf{White} & \textbf{Free Blacks} & \textbf{Slaves} & \textbf{Total} \\
\hline
1817 & 239,830 & 114,058 & 199,145 & 553,033 \\
1827 & 311,051 & 106,494 & 286,946 & 704,491 \\
1846 & 425,767 & 149,226 & 323,759 & 898,752 \\
1860 & 793,484 & 232,433 & 370,553 & 1,396,470 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Populations of Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1817-1862\textsuperscript{2725}}
\end{table}

In 1849, the Puerto Rican Captain General Juan de la Pezuela established a Special Regulation for Day Laborers (Reglamento Especial de Jornaleros) that required all landless laborers and smaller landowners to contract with employers. All free workers had to carry a book \textit{– libreta} – that showed they were fully employed. In addition, the statute set up a lottery-determined monetary reward for the best workers. Each district's local government chose about one-hundred worthy workers to have their names placed in a vase and the name chosen received fifty pesos.\textsuperscript{2726} A ceremony, which typically included a speech by a local notable extolling the virtues of hard work, accompanied the awarding of the monetary sum.\textsuperscript{2727}

By the 1850s, then, most Puerto Rican planters still clamored for slaves to work their leveling off, but still lucrative, sugar fields but a small number of planters were increasingly learning the value of free labor. With the slave trade under pressure and the home country and powers like France and Britain having abolished the institution by this time, some planters


interpreted the writing on the wall to say that slavery was ultimately doomed and perhaps the best option for the future was to move toward free labor and push for indemnification at emancipation. With Puerto Rico's smaller slave numbers, they could ask for indemnification with some hope of success, while Cuba's huge slave numbers, if indemnified, would bankrupt Madrid. An influential group of Puerto Rican intellectuals, such as Baldoríorty de Castro and José Julián Acosta, trained in Madrid and/or the rest of Europe or America, studied the issue of Puerto Rican slavery and increasingly concluded that free labor was the best alternative for the future. They took advantage of the divide in planter opinion and forcefully argued that Puerto Rico was more stable socially than Cuba because of the smaller percentage of slaves and that the free labor market was already functioning there and represented the preferred path to the future.\textsuperscript{2728}

**The Developing Public Sphere in the Metropole in the 1850s and 1860s**

Centuries of absolute monarchy had had a stultifying effect on the "public sphere" in Spain through the first decades of the 19th century. There was certainly little public space for intellectual discussion and association in the late 1830s when colonial representatives were thrown out of the Cortes, but by the 1860s decisive changes had taken place. During that time, periodicals in Madrid had increased seven-fold (see Table 7.2). Intellectual institutions sprang up and, indeed, historian Alberto Gil Novales called the 1850s and 1860s the "age of societies" in Spain.\textsuperscript{2729} The idea of the public as "a group of individuals gathered together to promote a common interest or concern had decisively entered the language.\textsuperscript{2730}


Throughout the Moderate Decade the Moderados had ruled in close coordination with Isabella. They had come to agreement with the Catholic Church and further pressed the centralization of the state; in particular, they developed the Civil Guard and stationed it throughout the peninsula and eventually into the colonies. The Moderates knew the economy had to modernize, but they resisted fully free trade. In contrast, the Progressives resisted the power of the Monarchy and the Church, pushed for democratic reform (greater voter representation/enfranchisement), and called for free trade capitalism. The Progressives came to power in 1854 by allying themselves with the military (again under Espartero), only to be deposed in 1856 by the Liberal Union, which was a mix of Moderates and Progressives. The Liberal Union mixed the Moderates' centralized government with Progressive approaches to economics. Emerging intellectual institutions sprang up during this progressive period. Liberal associations for everything from the arts (Fomento de las Artes) to women's education (Asociación para la Educación de la Mujer) developed, thrived, and changed the public sphere and politics of the country. Some of the most important associations – such as the Free Society of Political Economy (Sociedad Libre de Economía Política) and the Association for Tariff Reduction – developed around the question of free trade. An increasingly heated debate developed between free trade and protectionist interests. Some economic interests (typically those engaging in the booming joint stock companies and railroad construction) wanted to follow the free trade model of the world's most powerful economy at the time – Great Britain – while other economic interests (industrialists that didn't want to openly compete with European goods and agriculture) pushed for protectionism. In this sense, the new intellectual "Economists" pushed for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Periodicals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.2. The Increase in Madrid's Periodical Press
free trade (and not surprisingly often pushed for abolition as well), while the more traditional interests (agriculture and more long-standing industrialists) pushed for protection (and being more traditional, thereby, the historical institution of slavery).\textsuperscript{2731}

The political settlement of the 1830s had assured a protectionist economy in the colonies and an increasingly centralized government in the capital. These interests were firmly entrenched, as Schmidt-Nowara summarizes:

Spanish and Antillean landowners and merchants built their fortunes on chattel slavery, the most glaring symbol of the old regime. Spanish industrial and agricultural producers who had fought for the protection of the national market in the fifties and sixties considered the Antilles an extension of that market. [Further,] The preservation of the Antillean market was a policy that resonated deeply among the Spanish population, especially in the Spanish periphery, from the mightiest hacendado [landowner] and slave trader to the humblest Basque and Galician employee in a relative's merchant house in Havana or Ponce.\textsuperscript{2732}

Arrayed against them, the intellectual "Economists" rejected slavery and found the protected colonial markets stifling anachronisms, but "any threat to the colonial status quo, of which slavery was the anchor, therefore provoked powerful opposition."\textsuperscript{2733} Important as this free trade debate was, it was enmeshed with the larger question of what the future of liberal Spain was.

With the Liberal Union dominating politics in the period from 1856-1868, the intense debate over the future of Spain's economics and the colonies continued. O'Donnell was forced out of the premiership in 1863 and from that time to 1868 the Queen made a series of moves to try to get control of a difficult domestic political (the topsy-turvy turmoil of a progressive, liberalizing, developing democracy) and economic situation (Spain's finances were increasingly precarious – the investments in railroads were not paying the dividends expected and Spain had spent itself into debt via military expenditures), none of which worked. One of the most important


developments during this period was the Colonial Reform Commission – the Junta de Información de Ultramar.\textsuperscript{2734}

By the mid-1860s, in addition to its own internal and public examination of its future relationship to the colonies, Spain was under pressure from both Britain and the United States to effectively deal with the question of slavery. All of these pressures helped force another O'Donnell-led government (led by his colonial ministers – Lozano and later Canovas) to bring to fruition a liberal reform that had been in the works for years – bringing representatives from the colonies to the mother country to discuss the future of the relationship, including the slavery.\textsuperscript{2735} The call for representatives for the Junta went out in November 1865.\textsuperscript{2736} The outcome was a victory for reformers – of the 16 Cuban delegates, 12 were reformers (including Jose Antonio Saco); for Puerto Rico, 3 of 4 were reformers.\textsuperscript{2737}

The Junta was set to meet in October 1866. Canovas realized that eventually the question of slavery as a whole would have to be dealt with, but in the mean time, he would make a concession on the slave trade (outlawed previously but not enforced) that he hoped would lessen international pressure.\textsuperscript{2738} In April 1866 the Cortes began debating Canovas's anti-slave trade law, the "Law for the Suppression and Punishment of the Slave Trade." Debate on the law inevitably turned to the broader look at the whole of the colonial program, but government officials, led by Canovas, were firm in returning the question to only that of the slave trade, not overall political reforms. Bowing to international pressure, the commission that developed the law started the


\textsuperscript{2735} Corwin, Arthur F. \textit{Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886}. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 174-175.

\textsuperscript{2736} Corwin, Arthur F. \textit{Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886}. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 177, 185.

\textsuperscript{2737} Corwin, Arthur F. \textit{Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886}. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 185-188.

\textsuperscript{2738} Corwin, Arthur F. \textit{Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886}. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 177.
discussion with the words "the infamous slave traffic... a fact unexplainable to the eyes of Christian civilization." Collectively, the Cortes was behind the new law but even then Canovas had to resist fierce debate from pro-slavery factions. Nonetheless, in July 1866 the Cortes approved the law, the details of which more explicitly stated the definitions of, and harshly punished those complicit in, the slave trade than had the law of 1845. Still, the law was sure not to suggest that the institution itself was in jeopardy, stating "Slavery has to exist in the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico as a pre-existing fact." When the Junta de Información de Ultramar convened in October 1866 the Spanish government was intent on keeping the topics limited to 1) discussion and perhaps modification of the "special" status of the colonial holdings, 2) the means for regulating the work of blacks (and others) and improving immigration, and 3) the treaties of commerce with other nations (and the tariff and customs system). The Cuban delegation had arrived with orders to discuss primarily the relationship between Spain and her colonies – constitutional rights of citizens, representative government and localized control (end of special status), and customs and tariffs. They also came willing to discuss how to effectively end the slave trade, but this was last on the priority list. The government, realizing this, moved to discuss slave regulations first and a review of government plans suggests these discussions were hoped to be limited to the simplest regulation

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questions – treatment, work hours, religious instruction, etc. The Puerto Rican delegation's move would send the Junta into frenzied panic; they declared slavery a "miserable institution" and that the time was right to abolish slavery in Puerto Rico. The President of the Junta proposed discussion of the proposal, but as a Cuban representative stated with great angst: "There is no motion more radical than this one; there no greater cry of alarm for Cuba." The Cuban delegation moved to table a much more gradual approach to emancipation, proposing to finally effectively suppress the slave trade, establish a law of free womb (and freeing older slaves and those not properly registered), lotteries for the purchase of freedom, and tutelage during a transition period; lastly, they made sure to say that emancipation could not occur without reparation, knowing that given the large number of slaves on their island any such indemnification would surely bankrupt Madrid (and thus be refused or at least delayed).

To say that "there was minimal elite or mass support among the white population for ending slavery before or after 1868 in Cuba," as historian Laird Bergard has, is putting it mildly. It's probably more appropriate to say that there was outrage in Cuba when word came back that something so daring as gradual abolition had been proposed. Economically this was out of the question and further, Cubans had seen the Junta as an avenue to further their own political

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and economic interests (relaxing tariffs, etc), not strike a blow to their lifeblood slave system. In Puerto Rico, the delegates received angered rebuke from some pro-slavery factions as well, although as discussed the anti-slavery/free trade-free labor faction was much stronger there. As it would turn out, Cuba's acceptance of the concept of gradual emancipation, forced upon it by the immediatism of the Puerto Rican delegates, signaled the ultimate death knell of Spanish colonial slavery, but not in the near term. Once the Junta was disbanded, despite its recommendations, the Spanish government, on the precipice of another revolution, delayed implementing even gradual emancipation.²⁷⁴⁹

The Glorious Revolution and its Aftermath

By 1868, Isabella II had alienated large swaths of Spanish society. The population suffered from severe recession, high taxes, high prices, and food shortages. She had suppressed the Progresistas and Democratas, and there were even more radical movements developing as well. Still, the progressives were as a whole divided, and as had happened increasingly the past few decades, the army again stepped in to change the government via pronunciamiento, Progressive General Juan Prim taking over in September 1868.²⁷⁵⁰ There was certainly agreement that Isabella had to be removed, but no one knew exactly what form should replace her. Constitutional Monarchy seemed the appropriate choice for most, but others suggested a republic. As Charles Esdaile notes, "given the manifest divisions within the revolutionary movement, in short, whatever else happened, Spain was unlikely to be entering a period of either concord or stability."²⁷⁵¹

This period was a critical moment for Spanish liberalism. The Constitution of 1869 was one of the most progressive in Europe for the period, establishing a Constitutional Monarchy, universal suffrage for all males over 25, religious and associational freedom, a reformed judicial system, and freedom of the press.\textsuperscript{2752} The period from 1868 to 1874 were known as "the six revolutionary years."\textsuperscript{2753} In 1870 General Prim offered the crown to Amadeo of Savoy.\textsuperscript{2754} Prim was assassinated in late 1870 and his progressive coalition disintegrated, sparking more radical movements. By 1873, Amadeo had resigned and a Spanish Republic was declared. The following year, Spanish General Campos once again issued a pronunciamiento that brought back the Constitutional Monarchy and installed a Bourbon – Alfonso XII – back on the Spanish thrown. The first Prime Minister, Canovas, established a two-party system modeled on Britain's Parliament and was to produce a peaceful alteration of power – turno pacífico. The Constitution of 1876 re-established joint sovereignty between the Cortes and the monarchy. The electoral system was overseen by local governors appointed from the capital – caciques – who ensured the alteration of power happened peacefully at the King's discretion. In this way, the Spanish Restoration government was to remain in the hands of a select oligarchy until its overthrow by the military in 1923.\textsuperscript{2755}

Despite the recommendations of the Junta in 1867, given the conservatism of Isabella and then the chaos in Spain that followed her overthrow, it appeared unlikely that any emancipation measure – immediate or gradual – would be forced from Madrid in the short term. But, the Spanish Abolition Society took advantage of the liberal nature of the new Constitution (free press, free association) and called for the abolition of slavery. Puerto Rican representatives


\textsuperscript{2754} Barton, Simon. \textit{A History of Spain}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edition. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009: 205-206. He had previously offered it to an heir to the Hohenzollern Dynasty, which helped spark the Franco-Prussian War.

echoed their calls, but the Cubans balked.\textsuperscript{2756} The new government recognized that action had to be taken, but was certainly concerned over possible reparation costs, committed to making the process gradual and to reducing upheaval as much as possible.\textsuperscript{2757} The ultimate result of the deliberations regarding slavery was the Moret Law, which passed in July 1870.\textsuperscript{2758} It followed closely those tenets of gradual emancipation put forth by the Cuban delegates – as a stall tactic – in 1867: a free womb law/all children born slaves as of September 1868 were free, as were slaves reaching the age of sixty.\textsuperscript{2759} Everyone in between would toil as slaves until 1928.\textsuperscript{2760} Government officials – \textit{sindic\'os} – were supposed to travel the territories regulating application of the law and representing slaves in complaints, but in reality, the Havana government tended to keep reins on them, preventing the law’s successful implementation.\textsuperscript{2761} Ultimately, this law performed exactly as it had been designed: there was little upheaval and life for those slaves left in bondage didn't change, nor really did the numbers of working age slaves in the short term.\textsuperscript{2762}

Cuba faced rebellion simultaneously with the Glorious Revolution in Spain, agitation commencing there one month after the one in Madrid. Although coincident in time, the Ten Years

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War (1868-1878) and Glorious Revolution had developed independently of one another. The Spanish government had passed new taxes and these combined with nationalism to spark overt resistance to Spain among some landholders, planters, and professionals in the east. The western half of Cuba had benefited most from the sugar-slavery nexus. In the east, Creole Carlos Manuel Céspedes and a small group of planters declared the Republic of Cuba. Céspedes ultimately declared abolition, although he did so in a manner as not to alienate all propertied elites. He backtracked and said a "free Cuba was incompatible with a slavist Cuba," but added that all sides would work to come up with a plan once Cuba was free. The revolution now stood for abolition as well as independence. The rebels didn't have a plan, but nonetheless their suggestion of emancipation brought fugitive slave to their ranks. Ultimately, the Cuban revolution would have several effects on slavery. It would destroy the institution in some sectors and both sides would have to make concessions to slaves in order to keep them in their respective ranks. Additionally, the whole ten-year span of events forced all Spanish parties – colonials and metropolitans alike – to face the fact that emancipation was inevitable.

Meanwhile, progressive reformers and abolitionists were deeply disappointed with the Moret Law. In 1872 and 1873, abolitionists allied themselves with the most radical parties. In the

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early 1870s the cause of abolition was becoming closely identified with the liberal revolution, as
pitted against those conservatives still hoping for a return to the more dictatorial past. Internal
upheaval reigned in Spain (and Cuba for that matter) in 1872 and 1873, and with this backdrop
the most progressive factions inside Spain were able to bring a bill for abolition in Puerto Rico
forward to the Cortes in December 1872. Spanish conservatives balked, but when Spain was
declared a Republic in February 1873, one of the liberal regime's first acts was to declare
abolition in Puerto Rico (March 22, 1873). Progressives (and abolitionists) pushed for
emancipation without indemnity, but a compromise with conservatives ultimately forced Puerto
Rico's 29,000 remaining slaves to sign labor contracts for three more years and paid each slave
owner 200 pesos/slave. The Puerto Rican delegates remained the most ardent advocates of similar
measures for Cuba, but with the island still in the midst of revolution, emancipation solutions
would have to wait.2770

A successive series of international and domestic events, starting with the American Civil
War and the end of slavery there (discussed more in the geostrategic chapter), then proceeding
with the Junta and the end of slavery in Puerto Rico in 1873, put the writing on the wall that
slavery was ultimately doomed in Cuba. Nonetheless, the Spanish government was not prone to
make any decisive move until the insurrection in Cuba was ended. Further, in 1874 the Spanish
republic was ended through another military coup and Alfonso XII restored as the Spanish
Monarch. The Cortes was momentarily suspended, free press and association restricted (as was
the Spanish Abolitionist Society), and the reformist cause in Spain was generally stalemated from
1874 to 1879.2771

2770 Schmidt-Nowara, Christopher. *Empire and Antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874.*
Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999: 136-156; Corwin, Arthur F. *Spain and the Abolition of
Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886.* Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1967: 273-291; and Scott,
Rebecca J. *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899.* Princeton, NJ:

2771 Scott, Rebecca J. *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899.* Princeton,
NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985: 111-113; and Corwin, Arthur F. *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in
The rebellion was finally put down in late 1877 and negotiations of a truce began in early 1878. By February, representatives from both sides signed what has come to be known as the Peace of Zanjón. The treaty gave Cuba similar political concessions as those given to Puerto Rico: autonomy just short of independence, representation in the Cortes, forms of amnesty for past political crimes and to those slaves that fought in the insurrection. The overall question of slavery was left to be discussed once Cuban representatives joined the Cortes. Therefore, Cuba could look forward to developing the first legitimate parties in their history, which resulted in the formation of the Liberal-Autonomist Party (a descendant of the creole reform movement, naturally aligning with the Liberal Party in Spain) and the Spanish Party, or Constitutional Union Party (a group aligned naturally with conservatives in Spain). The conservative Spanish government, naturally distrustful of the creoles, tried to ensure a sweeping conservative victory in the Cuban election of August 1879, but ultimately, a number of reformers were sent to the Cortes. They were there to push the Spanish government on a number of issues, of which slavery was but one. In reality, if one focuses on the slavery issue both the Liberal-Autonomists and the Constitutional Union Party took the same approach: they accepted the end of slavery (the destruction wrought during the war, as well as the freedom given to some slaves that fought had done as much to damage the institution as the Moret Law), but wanted to ensure some form of indemnification for the slaveowners. All that was left to do was develop and implement an emancipation law.2772

Given that Cuba still had a significant number of slaves at the core of their labor system (200,000 or so, as compared 30,000 or so that were indemnified in Puerto Rico), and that Cuban agriculture was still an important part of the overall imperial economy, Spain's government was pressed to come up with a program that neither broke the bank nor crippled Cuba's labor system and its transition. Therefore, in November 1879 Prime Minister Campos presented the abolition

bill. Its first article abolished slavery in Cuba – promising “immediate abolition,” but its second article established an intermediate stage between slavery and freedom – patronato. This form of "tutelage" was to last eight years, in which time the work would repay the slave masters for the ending of the institution (thus, no monetary reparation was paid). Naturally, Spanish abolitionists were disgusted by the patronato. But, this was a conservative Spanish government trying to do the inevitable in a gradual way that pacified Cuban interests (slavery, and the more pressing political/reform issues alike) and prevented economic disaster. As Rebecca Scott notes, "while there was now great unanimity on the inevitability of abolition, there was far less abolitionist zeal or liberal language. In keeping with the tenor of Spanish politics of the period, this was a conservative gathering to discuss problems of labor and social control, not an occasion for principled antislavery pronouncements.”

The law was approved on January 30, 1880. The Patronato law had set in motion a scheme for gradual emancipation (one in every four patrocinados was to be freed in descending order of age every year starting in 1884), set up the right of self-purchase, established that masters' abuses could result in immediate emancipation, and developed local and regional councils/officials to oversee the transition and look for abuses. Spanish abolitionists (although still restricted by the government) and liberal politicians continued to document abuse cases and push for better oversight/immediate emancipation. In 1883 the reformers secured a victory when the government passed a bill outlawing the use of stocks and iron punishment. By 1886, there were less than 50,000

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patrocinados and the abolitionists "pushed on to a final victory."\textsuperscript{2775} In October 1886, the
government officially ended the patronato, two years early.\textsuperscript{2776}

**Summary of Domestic Politics and the Decline of Slavery in Imperial Spain**

As Political Scientist Juan Linz encapsulated, Imperial Spain's government was a
relatively unstable system residing somewhere in the realm between absolute monarchy,
constitutional monarchy (and then even Republic), and near-dictatorial oligarchy for the period of
interest covered here.\textsuperscript{2777} It endured repeated army-led takeovers to maintain/return to the status
quo and this of course was not conducive to progressive change and development. For most of the
history covered, Madrid concentrated most forcefully on maintaining the order, security, and
wealth-production of her colonies. To do so, they limited representation and dissent from those
realms. It was only in the 1850s and 1860s (under the Liberal Union) that a public sphere with
some level of freedom of expression and association could develop, and in this period the seeds
of abolitionism were born. The reform impulse started first in Puerto Rico, where slavery was
relatively less important, and eventually the ideas formed there and in the creole movement in
Cuba would help build an abolitionist society inside Spain. When a liberal government finally
allowed the colonies representation via the Junta de Información de Ultramar, it was the Puerto
Rican delegates that struck a blow – calling for immediate emancipation – that would lead to a
cascade of events resulting in slavery's ultimate end. That political maneuver, followed quickly
by simultaneous revolutions in Spain (The Glorious Revolution) and insurrection in Cuba (and

\textsuperscript{2777} Linz, Juan. "Early State-Building and Late Peripheral Nationalisms Against the State: The Case of Spain." In *Building States and Nations*, Volume II. S.N. Eisenstadt and Stein Rokkan, Editors. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1973: 56. Recall Linz's characterization of Spain's governmental history as "a recurrent pattern in modern Spanish history appeared: short periods of high revolutionary enthusiasm carried by the hopes of broad segments of the citizenry, activation of radical masses pushed by poverty, withdrawal of the moderate reformist element, defeat of the forces of change by the intervention of the army, establishment of a conservative government, and a relatively prolonged period of peace and prosperity – without, however, arriving at a solution of basic underlying problems or creating fully legitimate institutions."
the freeing of some slaves there that it produced), compelled Spain's reluctant, conservative government to first enact the Moret Law and then finally end slavery via patronato. The domestic-political variable, then, was a critical one in the prolonged life of slavery in Spain, and particularly, her colonial jewel, Cuba. As Schmidt-Nowara concludes, "Cuban planters reaped tremendous wealth from slave-produced sugar and continued to expand the slave system until it was [finally] politically nonviable."^2778

**Part III – Domestic Politics and Abolition in Brazil**

Before discussing the history of Brazilian domestic politics in the mid- to late-1800s it is necessary to recall how Brazil came to be independent from Portugal, which in turn dictated the political structure that would endure until 1889. In August 1807, Napoleon gave Portugal the ultimatum of closing their ports to Britain or facing invasion; when Napoleon invaded in November 1807, the royal family fled to Brazil on British ships and thereafter Portugal/Brazil was largely dependent on British troops for protection of the empire.\(^2779\) With the monarch and his court (and increasingly the weight of relative power) residing there, Brazil was raised to a co-equal part of the Portuguese-Brazilian united kingdom in 1815.\(^2780\) In late 1821 a liberal uprising calling for constitutional monarchy, and more Portuguese control over Brazil, took hold in Lisbon.\(^2781\) Dom João accepted the constitutional monarchy (the Cortes, or Parliament, now meeting back in Lisbon), and agreed to return to Portugal, leaving his son Pedro behind as regent

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^2779 Bethell, Leslie. *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1970: 7-9. In 1810, Portugal's Dom João, residing in Brazil, signed a commerce and navigation treaty which put a max 15 percent tariff on British goods entering Brazil and a treaty of alliance which said they, too, were convicted against the "injustice and disutility" of the slave trade. This set the boundaries for the relationship between Britain and Portugal, and later, Britain and Brazil; it was the first concession and from that period forward Britain would continue to exert influence over both (as will be seen particularly in the next chapter).


in Brazil.\textsuperscript{2782} When Portugal tried to force the dismantling of government functions in Rio De Janeiro (essentially – re-colonizing Brazil) and the return of Pedro, a faction of strong Brazilians (conservative landowners and merchants) resisted and Pedro, too, refused to return.\textsuperscript{2783} He appointed José Bonifácio de Adrada e Silva to head a Brazilian Cabinet.\textsuperscript{2784} The Portuguese forces in Brazil were outnumbered and in September 1822, Pedro declared independence for Brazil and by the end of the year was crowned Emperor Pedro I.\textsuperscript{2785}

Brazil was ruled by a Constitutional Monarchy from 1822 until 1889, and on paper, the functioning of government didn't change much during that period; significant changes were taking place in practical functioning terms, however.\textsuperscript{2786} Under the Constitution of 1824, the Emperor was head of state.\textsuperscript{2787} He was a stabilizing, moderating force among political factions.\textsuperscript{2788} The Emperor was advised by a Council of State, a group of experienced politicians which he chose and who had lifetime appointments.\textsuperscript{2789} There was a bicameral Parliament consisting of a Senate (in place for life) and Chamber of Deputies (elected for 4 year terms), an independent

juliciary, and a cabinet-style government. The Emperor selected the Prime Minister and the
Cabinet. The bureaucratic ministries included the Imperial Court, Justice, Foreign Affairs,
Finance, War, and Navy; and after taking power, Dom Pedro II added the Ministries of
Agriculture, Commerce, and Public Works. The Constitution allowed for municipal or district
councils to run provinces. These councils debated issues, but the real power in each province
was in the hands of a Provinicial President appointed by the Emperor.

The Emperor, Dom Pedro II (after 1840) was at the top of what has been called a
pyramid-like system. As established in the Constitution, he was to have "moderating
power." He appointed the Council of State and relied on their advice, and that of the Prime
Minister (whom he also chose), to advise him on cabinet and policy decisions. He further
retained the power to select life-term senators (from among lists of three candidates nominated by
electors in the province), dissolve the Chamber of Deputies, name/dismiss ministers, and suspend
judges.

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2793 James, Herman G. *The Constitutional System of Brazil.* Washington, DC: Carnegie Institute, 1923: 4-5. According to James, district councils had 21 members (or 12 members for smaller districts) elected to 4
year terms.
Dom Pedro II was more alert than his father to social and economic developments throughout the country.\textsuperscript{2799} He played crucial role in political system – only the Emperor, by dismissing one Prime Minister and bringing in another, could change party control and thus produce an electoral victory for the opposition; but that said, in this system, a change of leadership did not necessarily result in the automatic promotion of the opposition's shadow government.\textsuperscript{2800} As Graham notes, "since the political parties relied on virtually the same social and economic constituency – and in some cases alternating support from identical voters – Pedro II did not threaten any social group or economic interest when he switched the party in power."\textsuperscript{2801} The Emperor, as mentioned, filled a paternal role, and even his somewhat arbitrary choice of Prime Ministers kept peace and order.\textsuperscript{2802} "He responded to the rhythms impelling or restraining modest changes in direction among political and bureaucratic leaders closely in touch with regional and local concerns and, by peacefully arbitrating among them, maintained – perhaps unwittingly – the secure political dominance of the economically entrenched."\textsuperscript{2803} From 1850, as he came to assert his own style, he used the prerogatives vest in him by the Constitution with care not to offend the economically powerful; indeed, he worked toward their predominance. To be sure he constantly advocated moderate reforms, but Cabinet members heeded his advice only as it fit the interests of their class; he was never able – and rarely wished – to impose changes that would endanger the property that sustained authority.\textsuperscript{2804} Pedro II accepted the

\textsuperscript{2800} Graham, Richard. \textit{Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil}. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990: 56. For example, "in 1874, Liberal politicians then out of office met to plan their strategy, and some proposed to name a head of the party so he would become Prime Minister once Pedro II ousted the Conservatives, a wiser member of the groups admonished, 'We must not forget that we are in Brazil and not in England... Here the head of the Cabinet will be whomever the Emperor chooses.'"
Parliament's role as legitimate participants in governing and he used his moderating role to take "the edge off legislative-executive friction." He didn't possess enough power to ever effect change that went against the interests of the landowning class, but at the same time, he "remained the balance wheel of the system."

The Emperor appointed the Council of State, which had developed in 1841 to serve as a sort of privy council. The Council of State was composed of twelve experienced politicians appointed for life. They had a role in advising on selection of senators and the cabinet. Further, any law required the Emperor's ultimate approval and so in that sense, the Council of State played a legislative advisory role as well. Finally, the Council of State also served as an arbitration court when disputes developed between the factions of government. The Emperor also chose the Prime Minister (Presidente de Conselho, or President of the Council of Ministers) and, thereby, the Cabinet. The Prime Minister selected/recommended the Cabinet based on competing ambitions, regional interests, and skills and contacts. The Cabinet then guided policies – drew up budget, proposed legislation, drafted speech for throne. Most importantly, the Cabinet picked all administrative officials – police, National Guard officers, judges, bishops, and most military promotions, and so in this way it too was in alliance with local oligarchs.

The appointed Provincial Presidents and Security Apparatus were the other key role-players outside of central government. The Provincial Presidents carried out the central government's laws in the provinces. As Graham notes, their "chief function, however, was to

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produce electoral returns favorable to the Cabinet, and they used patronage as the principal tool in accomplishing that task. Their primary method of enforcement was through the chief of police in each province, commissioners (delegados) in each county, and deputy commissioners (subdelegados) in each parish.

As mentioned, the National Guard was established by the Liberals in the early 1830s to counteract/supersede the power of the Regular Army. The Guard grew to over 200,000 men by the late 1830s, but by the 1850s officers were appointed by the central government and this way they played little decentralizing role. The "Guard's formal purpose was 'to maintain or reestablish order and public tranquility,'" and it quickly became "the chief arm for maintaining law and order outside the major urban centers." In time of war they reverted to war-fighting duties. The Regular Army, too, could also be used to keep stability and order, but it remained weak until the mid-1860s. Eventually, it would play a major role in the 1870s and 1880s, and through much of the rest of Brazil's governmental history.

One final player – the Catholic Church – is worth mention. Similar to the central government, the Church engaged in patronage and avowed the same commitment to order. There were twelve bishoprics. Provincial Presidents nominated priest and bishops and Church salaries were paid by the government (not by collection) – the only source of outside income were land ownership and slaves, of which the Church owned many.

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Brazil was mostly rural during this early period after independence. The measure of a man was the loyalty owed him by others (including the number of slaves owned). All social interactions were hierarchical and suggested loyalty in return for protection. Hierarchy was absolutely critical; as historian Richard Graham notes, "the family paradigm oriented social relationships between leader and led, and within it force and benevolence intertwined." Appointment (and for that matter, as we shall see, election) to public service wasn't based on merit; courtiers, friends, aristocratic families, and particularly owners (fazendeiros) of plantations/farms (fazendas) dominated the political class. The political and bureaucratic elite belonged to the same classes and families. The upper classes took on the role of fathers and so, too, the Emperor filled that role of benevolent patriarchal father to all of society. Senators, judges, police, other officials all took on role of paternal authority and the propertied classes invoked familial metaphors in their political discourse. In short, the primary draw of public service in this highly hierarchical society was power and status. Political parties were non-existent in the modern sense – legislatures were "advisory councils" and participation in elections was for nobility and members of the propertied

class. The limited role of government at the federal, state, and local level kept bureaucracy small, at least in this early period. “The state, like the family, stressed obedience and deference in exchange for benevolent protection. In the first instance this emphasis bolstered the institutions of state; but ultimately it reinforced the entire network of patronage and the position of all patrons. Like any other measure of social control in Brazil, government action worked to strengthen a hierarchical society and to further the interests of the few.”

Given this hierarchical society and the constitutional outline of 1824 discussed above, one would expect there to be a high level of centralized control in the fledgling Brazilian state. In reality, between 1822 and 1834 there was a significant move for more local autonomy. There was enough leeway that powerful local officials could oppose the central government and remain largely outside the control of Rio de Janeiro. Pedro I "lacked the temperament for prolonged political infighting." Dom Pedro's predisposition toward the Portuguese (he appointed many ministers of Portuguese origins) and his autocratic cabinet made him unpopular with the local power players. As happens so often in expansive, decentralized systems, the local provinces didn't perceive any benefits coming their way from the capital. In April 1831, Brazilian leaders and mobs in the streets of Rio persuaded Pedro I to abdicate. Pedro II was only five at the time, and Parliament chose a three-person Regency to govern while the young Emperor matured.

This was a liberal victory; "the central government had suffered a severe blow." Liberal leaders brought about a series of reforms that strengthened the power of local officials.

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They created positions for local justices of the peace (over crown judges), gave them broader local police powers, and created the National Guard (formed of local citizens and elected officers) to counter the Army, whose size was reduced.\textsuperscript{2834} The regency period was marked by localized separatist and republican revolts, troop mutinies, and other types of agitations and instability.\textsuperscript{2835} The Additional Act of August 1834 again attempted to limit the power of the centralized government, allowing provincial legislatures to vote on police, public moneys, works, highways, and the like.\textsuperscript{2836} Historians like Ronald Schneider and Herman James suggest these were significantly Liberal reforms, whereas Richard Graham suggests any real change was short-lived and/or illusory.\textsuperscript{2837} Later, in April 1835, the Regency was reduced to one – Father Diogo Antonio Feijo.\textsuperscript{2838} The single regency brought no greater levels of stability, as insurrections and uprisings sprang up in Rio Grande do Sul.\textsuperscript{2839} Feijo resigned in 1837. In Parliament reactionaries and moderate Liberals built conservative opposition and replaced Feijo with Senator Pedro de Araujo Lima; this was a conservative victory that once again led to reduction in the autonomy of the provinces via the Interpretive Law of 1839. The Liberals, in retaliation, engineered the arrival to


\textsuperscript{545}
the throne of the young Pedro II, who took over in July 1840 (even though he was still a teenager).  

The sum total of all this agitation, upheaval, and transfers of power was that by the late 1830s local elites began to fear disorder more than centralized government. As Richard Graham writes, "the political history from that point [1837] until 1850 is characterized by the successful elaboration of those institutions that would ensure social order under the firm control of men of property." In late 1841 Parliament passed the Reform of the Code of Criminal Trial Procedure, which gave power to appointed district judges; the electoral law of May 1842 put local police officials on election boards, ensuring the methods and results of elections. In this way, the power of the central government was making its way to every corner of Brazil. Pedro (really his advisers) was fulfilling the moderating role in government – in 1844, Dom Pedro's advisers recommended changing the Cabinet to resolve an intra-ministerial dispute; he replaced a conservative cabinet with a moderately liberal one. In 1848, he exchanged liberals for conservatives. By this period, the provincial revolts had lessened and/or been successfully quelled. In 1850, the conservative cabinet "ended the election of officers in the National

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Guard, making such posts appointive. This government thus completed the task of creating the institutions of tight central authority that would remain in effect for decades.  

As discussed above, there was a bicameral Parliament consisting of a Senate (in place for life) and Chamber of Deputies (elected for 4 year terms). The two key parties for most of the monarchy's rule were the Conservative and Liberal parties, but one must understand the unique nature of parties and elections in Brazil during this period. The Conservative Party formed in 1836 from Moderates and supporters of Pedro I. Most historians agree that it was dominated by wealthy, mostly rural landowners (who wanted no change to the labor/slave system) and was supported by the National Guard. Other historians have also suggested that the bureaucracies were largely conservative, interested in ensuring that they dominated changing regional and economic interests and maintained their budget power within the system. It was the key party of power for most of the monarchy, but in reality, there wasn't much difference between the Conservative and Liberal parties and loyalties could easily and often switch. The term "party" simply meant an affiliation among Deputies, and not a lasting commitment to program or policy. The Liberal party relied more heavily on the urban middle class, professionals, merchants, and the like; and in general, Liberals tended to push more for regional autonomy. In practical reality, however, "the differences between the parties subsequently came to be chiefly in

2845 Graham, Richard. Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990: 54, 70. "That alliance between the central government and the locally powerful explains the longevity of the system. After 1840 and 1850 any presumed division between the state and men of wealth in the various provinces must be doubted; by that time most of the rural potentates throughout Brazil had come to recognize the value of central authority, not least because it bolstered their own."


terms of personalities and power considerations" which made possible coalition efforts and
peaceful transitions of power.\textsuperscript{2850} Both parties were dominated by wealthy landowners and their
related interests, and in this way, both were committed to the slave system for most of the period
discussed here. As Schneider notes, the Conservatives and Liberals were strikingly similar; they
were "almost mirror images."\textsuperscript{2851} Richard Graham summarizes, "citizens divided politically not
because of party loyalties, much less ideological considerations, but because of personal ties,
making party labels seriously leading at both the local and national level.... power flowed
simultaneously 'downwards' from the Cabinet through the provincial president and 'upward' from
local bigwigs to the president and Cabinet in eddies and swirls that defy simple summary."\textsuperscript{2852}

Graham asserts politicians/élites were faced with three conflicting impulses: they knew they
generated the need for a system that appeared legitimate, but that let élites dominate in influence; they
recognized the social issues in the vast country and keeping order was a priority; and knew they
were a hierarchical, clientelistic society and as such, relied on demonstrations of loyalty.\textsuperscript{2853}
Elections were composed of a two-tiered system -- voters chose delegates to form the Electoral
College that in turn chose Deputies to Parliament.\textsuperscript{2854} The percentage of registered males ebbed
and flowed and at times was quite high; for example, in 1870 50.6 percent of males aged 21 or
older appeared on roles of registered voters.\textsuperscript{2855} Still, as Richard Graham notes, "a broad suffrage
did not signify a democratic polity," but it did serve to provide a theater and air of legitimacy.\textsuperscript{2856}

\textsuperscript{2850} Schneider, Ronald M. "Order and Progress: A Political History of Brazil. Boulder, CO: Westview
\textsuperscript{2851} Schneider, Ronald M. "Order and Progress: A Political History of Brazil. Boulder, CO: Westview
\textsuperscript{2852} Graham, Richard. Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil. Stanford, CA: Stanford
\textsuperscript{2853} Graham, Richard. Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil. Stanford, CA: Stanford
\textsuperscript{2854} Graham, Richard. Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil. Stanford, CA: Stanford
\textsuperscript{2855} Graham, Richard. Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil. Stanford, CA: Stanford
\textsuperscript{2856} Graham, Richard. Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil. Stanford, CA: Stanford
Elections ultimately "tested and displayed the local patron's leadership." Ballots consisted of lists of names put in an open ballot box in view of everyone, and in this way, the vote was highly open to influence. Further, certain Cabinet posts controlled aspects of the electoral process; persons that held these posts could exert influence over voters, and voters/electors could be had by giving them positions in public offices.

The Emperor dissolved Parliament eleven times from 1840 to 1889 (seven parliaments held for full four-year terms), with eighteen general elections held during this period. This would suggest a lack of stability at first glance, but as Ronald Schneider states, "in this system, controlled elections for the national legislature were a means of ratifying, and to some extent legitimizing, a ministry that in fact had already been chosen and installed in office by the emperor in his exercise of moderating power." Everyone played their assigned role, but "elections repeatedly affirmed the gradations of society" and machinations of the same elites, committed to stability. Thus, "while contributing to a prolonged period of internal peace and stability, this system had negative implications for further political development, due to the central fact that the parties had lost any capacity to serve as major vehicles for modernization and change."

Having established the form of government, it is important to touch upon one final element – the planter class. As the system evolved toward more centralized control, it did so organically to ensure that the propertied, particularly the planter class, dominated the levers of

powers. According to Richard Graham, "centralization, rather than being imposed from the capital city, grew out of the proprietors' active participation in politics in all levels, even the highest. Men of substance learned that struggles on behalf of regional autonomy often threatened to unsettle their position of authority over others. They eventually resolved that dilemma by throwing their weight behind the institutions of central authority, while carefully maintaining their control over them."\textsuperscript{2864} The Emperor was a symbolic moderating power, but the overall focus of power in the country was the network of landowning interests dedicated to maintaining "hierarchy, deference, and obligation."\textsuperscript{2865}

Historian Robert Brent Toplin categorizes Brazil's planter class into traditional, hard-core, and progressives. The traditional planters had been in the business for generations; they were typically found in the northeastern provinces, like Pernambuco and Bahia. They had begun their rise with the cultivation of sugar and the dominant class in their communities, but they would ultimately decline economically and politically by the 1880s. By the 1870s, coffee had surpassed sugar in importance and as it did so, and as slave prices increased (discussed below), traditional planters became more and more open to emancipation. In contrast, the hard-core slaveholders were fully committed to slavery, to the very end. Typically these were the coffee planters, based in São Paulo, southern Minas Gerais, and Rio de Janeiro – particularly.\textsuperscript{2866} As Toplin writes, "slavery represented a way of life to them – a leisurely and comfortable existence that gave the senhor of the plantation prestige and influence. The attitudes of the Hard-Core Slaveholders of Rio de Janeiro represented a classic example of the slavocrat mentality."\textsuperscript{2867} As some regions moved to develop free labor in the 1870s and 1880s, hard-core planters dug in their heels, more committed to slave labor than any other group. Progressive planters could be found in

various regions – such as planters in Rio de Janeiro and central and western sections of São Paulo. They approached the slavery question "cautiously and defensively." The progressive moniker was mostly of their own making, as they liked to espouse that slavery was clearly in decline but their intention was to keep the institution viable for as long as possible to serve their own economic interests. These groups/interests, collectively dominated the political class and so it was that effecting abolition would entail forcing a dominant majority of these planters to such an undertaking. As Toplin outlines:

Until the 1880s, slaveholders succeeded in holding the allegiance of diverse free classes, and, despite some economic difficulties and rumblings from the servile population, it appeared that they could maintain control over slavery for a considerable length of time. Beneath the surface, however, existed realities which posed threats to their hegemony: divaricating interests among planter groups, the growing disillusionment of some non-slaveholders with the system of slavery, and the pent-up frustrations of restive, potentially rebellious bondsmen. The appearance of a well-organized antislavery movement would bring these conditions out into the open, splitting traditional loyalties and, eventually, triggering the breakdown of the slaveholders' regime.

The Early Domestic-Political History of Brazilian Slavery

As discussed above, Brazil achieved independence from Portugal in 1822 and from the beginning, Britain wanted Brazil to abolish the slave trade in return for formal recognition from London. Under Portuguese rule, there were limited concessions to the British in 1810, 1815, and 1817 while the Portuguese court was in Brazil. Brazilian interests, particularly the northeastern planters, had been furious about this and, in fact, through independence they hoped to escape the constant anti-slave trade pressure from the British. Dom Pedro I and his chief advisor José Bonifácio de Adrada e Silva realized that "the political dangers which were likely to arise from premature abolition would be even greater than those that might result from non-recognition; they would find themselves opposed by the most powerful economic interests in the country and,

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whereas they might resist the pressure exerted by the traders (most of whom were Portuguese), to alienate the great Brazilian plantation owners could endanger the stability and perhaps the very existence of the new régime.\footnote{2873} The Brazilian Assembly was committed to delaying, if not nullifying, any attempts to end the trade. Any enactment of abolition could not occur for at least a period of 4 years. At this early date, a few proposals for ending slavery were actually put forward, but they didn't make it far. The draft constitution of September 1823 condemned slavery and agreed to gradual abolition of the trade but it was never adopted; the eventual Constitution (1824) made no mention of slavery.\footnote{2874} The Anglo-Brazilian anti-slave trade treaty was ultimately signed in November 1826. It bound Brazil to keep former agreements between Britain and Portugal and stipulated that Brazil would outlaw the slave trade by 1830.\footnote{2875} On May 3, 1830, the Emperor announced that the slave trade was abolished in keeping with the treaty of 1826. Yet, by April 1831 the Emperor had abdicated and the regency established to hold power until Dom Pedro II could take over.\footnote{2876} In truth, in the early 1830s the trade was relatively slight due to an economic downturn, but by 1833 the trade was in full bloom again.\footnote{2877} As Leslie Bethell writes, "during the mid-thirties the slave trade continued to expand steadily with little or no interference from the Brazilian local authorities along the coast until it eventually reached and passed its pre-1826 level."\footnote{2878} As already detailed, there was a move toward decentralization and regional interests – which would look to ensure the continuance of the slave trade – during this period. For all of these reasons, as Bethell summarizes, "it was 1850 before the Brazilian government was fully

prepared – and, it should be added, fully able – to fulfill its treaty engagements of 1826 and launch a full-scale and ultimately successful effort to suppress the illegal slave trade.\textsuperscript{2879}

\textbf{The Early 1850s and the Demise of the Slave Trade}

The 1830s and early 1840s had seen a glut of slaves flood the Brazilian market and this, combined with repeated promises by the government to curtail the trade and British pressure, had reduced the trade temporarily in this period to "a mere shadow of its former self."\textsuperscript{2880} Britain was putting extraordinary pressure on Brazil to stop the trade, including both threats of force and offensive action against slave traders in territorial waters.\textsuperscript{2881} British incursions on Brazilian sovereignty were forcing the issue to a head. As Robert Conrad writes, "humiliated by British incursions into Brazilian harbors and their seizure and destruction of slave ships in Brazilian territorial waters, faced with threats to legal shipping, military conflict, and even a blockade of Brazilian ports, the government of the Empire was compelled in July 1850 to bow to British demands in exchange for a promise to suspend the naval attacks."\textsuperscript{2882}

On 12 July, Eusebio de Queiroz brought an anti-slave trade bill (one he had originally proposed in 1837, again in 1848, and which had been extensively modified over time) before the Chamber of Deputies. On 15 July, Brazilian Foreign Minister Paulino Soares de Souza, a Conservative from an avowed slaving region in Rio de Janeiro, stood before the Chamber to make a case for ending the trade in the face of British pressure.\textsuperscript{2883} He started by asserting that the present crisis was not the current government's fault, but rather the result of both Liberal and

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Conservative governments allowing the trade to continue in deference to the "interests and prejudices of the Brazilian landed and slave-owning classes." He made no qualms that the current measure was largely a result of British pressure, vice any internal Brazilian movement. "'Brazil,' he declared, 'is now the only nation which has not acquiesced in this [anti-slave trade] system... The traffic is now almost exclusively carried on under our flag.' With the whole of the civilised world now opposed to the slave trade, and with a powerful nation like Britain intent on ending it once and for all, 'Can we resist the torrent?' he asked – and answered, 'I think not.'

The Queiroz law made its way quickly through the Chamber of Deputies; those few in opposition were quickly shouted down and passage occurred on 17 July. There was more opposition in the Senate, but the bill finally passed in mid-August and became law on September 4, 1850. In this way, under heavy pressure, the Brazilians had decided to abolish the slave trade – now treated as piracy via the past treaty of 1831 – themselves while trading was at a low ebb in order to avoid being crushed by the British. Even then, however, the government itself was less than enthused about enforcing the trade ban and it would take one more threat from the

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British in 1851 before the Brazilian government would swing against the trade in full. 2890 "Once it had begun, however, the Brazilian anti-traffic campaign was effective and serious." 2891

An abrupt end of slave trade in 1850s didn't seem to pose a long-term threat to slavery. 2892 It should be remembered that earlier in the year, Pedro Pereira da Silva Guiamaraes of Ceará proposed the liberation of the children of slaves, freedom for slaves that could pay, and a ban on separating couples; the vast majority of his colleagues disapproved, sometimes with hysterical rebuke. 2893 The legislators and the country as a whole weren't ready to change things, and it took outside pressure to secure the ending of the trade. 2894 The executive, for its part, was more open to change, and given the strengthened position of the central government, it was now prepared to enact abolition. 2895 Nonetheless, "belonging as they often did to the planter class, Brazilian politicians and statesmen were little motivated toward reform or enforcement of laws intended to protect the slave population or to secure the freedom of the illegally enslaved." 2896 Abolishing the trade was one thing; there seemed to be little threat to the institution itself.

Conrad concludes, however, that a "decisive blow had been delivered to Brazilian slavery." 2897 The slave population of Brazil did not achieve natural reproduction and, therefore,

planters were dependent on the trade for its labor source. In Brazil, slave prices went up 50 percent in 5 years and 130 percent over the decade. Planters searched for ways to meet their labor needs, and so began an inter-regional slave trade within Brazil. According to Seymour Drescher, there was no tangible or growing rift between regions. Economically, "in the late 1850s, there was a temporary decline in sugar output but cotton and coffee continued their upward climb in value and volume over previous decades. In response to rising slave prices, productivity also increased." Still, in the late 1850s it was becoming clear that coffee sector (south-central Brazil) was "tangibly more buoyant" economically than other products/zones of the country. If a sectional rift wasn't noticeably present yet, the seeds were certainly being sown.

**Toward Emancipation?**

For the rest of the 1850s, and into the early 1860s, political leaders paid relatively little attention to the issue of slavery inside Brazil. Brazil's slumber on the issue was ended by war in Paraguay and inside the United States. Most Brazilians saw the U.S. Civil War as an example of the "foolishness of resisting reform" and some politicians recognized in that conflict the peril that can result from letting regional differences grow to the point of conflict. The Emperor's minister in Washington kept him informed of the tide of the war; in fact Dom Pedro brought one

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2902 Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge, University Press, 2009: 348. Drescher concludes that the internal slave trade took place from smaller slaveholders to larger, more successful proprietors both inter-regionally (northeast to south-central) and intra-regionally (within the coffee zones in south-central Brazil) and that therefore, there was as yet (into the 1860s) no sectional rift.
of the dispatches to his cabinet's attention in January 1864: "Events in the American Union require us to think about the future of slavery in Brazil, so that what occurred in respect to the slave trade [in 1850] does not happen again to us."²⁹⁰⁶

Brazil faced this danger itself, as the ending of the slave trade had raised prices and the "agricultural elite of some provinces, particularly northern and western ones, had less reason than the planters of Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo, or even Espírito Santo, to insist upon a continuation of slavery when that institution began to be challenged."²⁹⁰⁷ Legislation had been proposed as early as 1854 to shutdown the internal slave trade in order to assuage growing differences. It had been rejected, but by the 1860s the potential for inter-regional tension was becoming clear as "the coffee provinces finally began to recognize the threat to their system inherent in the widening regional differences caused by the inter-provincial slave trade."²⁹⁰⁸ In early 1860s Aureliano Candido Tavares Bastos began publishing articles in Correio Mercantil under the byline of Solitario about the plight of the slaves and interests of northern constituents.²⁹⁰⁹ Devoid of cheap slaves, northern planters were receiving quality labor through a free labor system. Events were developing in a way that would eventually cast some doubt on the economic imperative of slavery.²⁹¹⁰

In October 1864, the Brazilian army intervened in an internal Uruguayan dispute, leading to a conflict with Paraguay – known as the Paraguayan War – that would last into 1870.²⁹¹¹ In July 1865, the Brazilian Emperor traveled to war zone and met with British officials who again

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pushed for an end to slavery. The Emperor was convinced of the need for change; Pedro had already freed the *emancipados* (slaves interdicted in the slave trade suppression efforts) in 1864.\textsuperscript{2912} By the end of 1865 he had asked his adviser, Jose Antonio Pimenta Bueno, to prepare a slavery reform bill.\textsuperscript{2913} Bueno's bill called for liberation of newborns, provincial emancipation councils, effective slave registration, and liberation of state-owned slaves. This measure was opposed by Viscount Olinda, the Prime Minister (President of Council of Ministers), and therefore Pedro was forced to wait to try again. In the mean time, early in 1866 he ended the use of slaves in government works.\textsuperscript{2914} Further, in July 1866 the French Abolitionist Society petitioned the Emperor requesting the abolition of slavery in Brazil.\textsuperscript{2915} He replied that the new Cabinet under Zacarias de Gois was strongly in favor of ending slavery and the Foreign Minister announced it was "nothing more than a question of method and opportunity."\textsuperscript{2916}

In February 1867, Prime Minister Zacarias de Gois presented a government reform bill that called for emancipation by the end of the century.\textsuperscript{2917} The Council of State was deeply concerned and met with the Emperor in April 1867.\textsuperscript{2918} The Emperor pressed the need for reform, and most admitted that need but they were all cautious and concerned about the potential for

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domestic disorder and economic ruin. There were hints of regional differences within the Council of State; the three most prominent anti-slavery members had ties to the North, including Jose Tomas Nabuco de Araujo. Ever the pragmatist, Nabuco de Araujo suggested immediate emancipation would send "Brazil into a profound and infinite abyss," nonetheless, he saw the need for the government to take action and control the situation. He favored adopting a law based on free birth, an emancipation fund for annual manumission, and further regulations to improve conditions; he also pushed for sending slaves to work locations in the countryside so they could attract white immigrant laborers into the cities.

Soon after meeting with the Council of State, Pedro appointed a committee led by Nabuco de Araujo to develop a bill and in his Speech from the Throne the following month he urged the legislature to tackle the issue of slavery "at an appropriate time." The Emperor was concerned about international and internal affairs; he had taken on the dominant slave-holding class but had attempted to do so in a way that was not brash, but reassuring. Nonetheless the slaveholders were alarmist; an anonymous writer speaking for the slave-holding class spoke out via the press against the Emperor's interference on the slavery issue. The writer admitted slavery was a mistake, but asserted "it was 'a sanctioned, tolerated and legalized mistake." He warned, 'does not know the danger it runs in putting itself like an apostle at the forefront of this idea.'

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"On the question of slavery, in fact, Pedro was a pivotal figure, sometimes recommending progressive steps but avoiding rapid action, occasionally even abandoning his emancipationist posture in favor of other considerations.\textsuperscript{2926} For example, his liberal Prime Minister (Zacharias) was for slavery reform, but Brazil was in the middle of a war and Pedro's powerful Defense Minister (Duke of Caxias) was against it.\textsuperscript{2927} The Council of State soured on Zacharias and Dom Pedro accepted his resignation and asked a Conservative (Viscount of Itaborai) to form a Cabinet despite the fact that Liberals held the Chamber of Deputies.\textsuperscript{2928} In parting, Zacharias supporters passed a resolution of "no confidence" in the government and Pedro had to dissolve the Chamber and call for new elections.\textsuperscript{2929} Since the successor controlled the apparatus the Conservatives won; and thereby, a more Conservative Chamber would not bring any slavery reforms to fruition in the near term.\textsuperscript{2930} Dom Pedro was caught in the middle.\textsuperscript{2931} "By personal sentiment, the Emperor inclined toward emancipation reform, but he could not disregard the vehement outcries of powerful pro-slaveholder advisers and political leaders."\textsuperscript{2932}

This reversal strengthened the emancipationist movement in 1868.\textsuperscript{2933} With the issue out in the open, it was now prominent in the public discussion.\textsuperscript{2934} Toplin writes that the incident "became a cause célèbre among reformist groups."\textsuperscript{2935} An 1869 Liberal manifesto called for more

individual liberty and electoral reform to reduce the power of the oligarchy. As Conrad notes, it had been decades since "a political crisis aroused such anger against the monarch and the imperial system, coming now from a new force in Brazilian society: a revived liberalism identified with democratic reforms including liberation of the slaves." Nonetheless, a substantial change to the slavery system would not come while war still raged in Paraguay; in the mean time, the government attempted to take steps to limit the public outcry. In 1869 many slavery reform bills were put forward; most went un-debated, but the government did pass a law against public sale of slaves (they could still be sold privately, and hence, the inter-regional slave trade persisted) and separation of husbands, wives, and children under fifteen. The war in Paraguay ended in 1870, and with it over, the government could turn back to the emancipation question; in the years between 1868 and 1870, however, a strong conservative anti-reform movement had developed within the government. The Prime Minister promoted caution, but events outside Brazil were having an effect on government opinion. In the summer 1870, Spain passed a law granting freedom to newborns and aged slaves and this brought the need for similar change in Brazil to a head. In August 1870, inspired by the example in Spain, a group in the Chamber of Deputies pushed for a return to a slavery reform bill. Rodrigo da Silva of São Paulo spoke for the conservative planters, stating, "the interests of

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agriculture are the interests of our society; it cannot have others more important because all its vitality is there." The Prime Minister, Viscount Itaborai, agreed, and for that reason no reform would come until a new government was formed. The question for the Emperor was whether to form a Liberal government and face the strong opposition that would inevitably result or to appoint a more pliant Conservative.

Senator Nabuco then helped resolve the situation through a brilliant political move; in a major speech he said only a conservative cabinet could enact the reforms needed. He was willing to let Conservatives lead on the issue. Later, he further asserted that many Conservative members wanted to take action but that only the Itaborai government impeded that reform. Nabuco said the "Chamber of Deputies, the provincial assemblies, the Council of State, the people, and even the slaveowners were ready for prudent legislation." Whether this was true or not was debatable, but under pressure, Itaborai resigned and was replaced by another Conservative ministry led by Viscount Sao Vicente. He soon resigned, and Dom Pedro smartly put the Viscount of Rio Branco in his place. Rio Branco was more flexible on the slavery issue than many others in his party. Conveniently, the difficult decision made, the Emperor "slipped out of the picture by traveling to Europe before the great debates. This would help relieve him of association with the decision, whatever the outcome of the discussions."

"National leaders such as Rio Branco, who a few years earlier had seen little justification for change, had been swung over by the Emperor, by their experiences abroad, and by growing internal demands. Any reform, however, even one intended to give the slavery system a few more decades of life, was certain to be opposed by some politicians, particularly those who represented

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parts of the country where slaves were greatly concentrated in 1871." The complex bill was introduced in May 1871. As Conrad states, "it was expected to set the stage for evolution toward a free-labor system without causing much immediate change to agriculture or economic interests, to patch up a failing system while eliminating its last source of renewal, to protect its interests of the living generation of masters while it redeemed the next generation of slaves. Hailed as a great reform, it was in intricate compromise." The bill freed newborn slaves, obligating master to care for them until the age of 8 and, in exchange, masters could receive indemnification of 600 milreis in six-percent thirty-year bonds or of making use of the labor of the minors until they reached age 21. It also created emancipation fund for manumission. Further, slaves were granted the right to keep savings for the first time, which then in theory, with labor assured, the slave had the right to eventually buy freedom. Finally, it freed slaves owned by the state and ordered a nationwide registration of slaves (if the master failed, within one year slaves were considered free). In the end, it was the prospect of freeing future children of slave mothers that most disturbed Conservatives.

The bill sparked bitter debate inside Parliament. The generalized anti-reform counterargument was "that government interference in matters of slavery was unnecessary, unconstitutional, and dangerous." Most opponents would have agreed that slavery was condemned by religion and perhaps even opinion, but they were concerned about the economic

consequences of hasty emancipation. Slavery was an economic necessity, and while reform opponents could admit the institution was doomed in the long term, it had been legal in Brazil for years and it was dangerous to quickly end it by decree. With regard to particular aspects, opponents threw every argument they could – from indemnification, to property rights, to fear of rebellion, all the way to the oddly humanitarian claim that the bill would result in abandonment and death of thousands of babies. Some went so far as to suggest the bill would threaten the very existence of Brazil. A tremendous amount of rebuke was sent the Emperor's way. "Pedro had imposed his ideas upon the ministry, and both he and the Council of State had overstepped their constitutional powers." Ultimately, this intra-governmental debate set off a national, extra-governmental debate like no other in the history of Brazil to that time.

Within Parliament, the debate of 1871 was an intra-party dispute. The Conservative party controlled the Chamber but it couldn't be assured of passage given that the lower house was more susceptible to local interests than party loyalty; in fact, there was a threat to break apart the Conservative Party. In Rio de Janeiro, members of Conservative Party put together the Club da Lavoura e do Commercio (Commercial and Agricultural Club) in July to defend slavery against members of their own party. Further, there were renewed forms of Republicanism, which had been dead since the 1840s. The debate was also an inter-regional dispute. The coffee-growing regions were unprepared for any reform, and hence they waged what abolitionist Joaquim Nabuco called "an organized war against the Government and the Emperor." Meanwhile, political

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leaders in other province had resigned themselves to some level of moderate reform. So for example, of the 25 senators and deputies that delivered speeches against the bill, 19 represented the coffee provinces or the capital.\textsuperscript{2963}

Some politicians that had previously supported abolitionist measures were forced to pull back. For instance, Augustinho Marques Perdigão Malheiro had condemned slavery as immoral and illegitimate, but as a Deputy in Parliament in this period he represented powerful slaveholders from Minas Gerais, and so he had to backtrack. He feared the Rio Branco plan would lead to anarchy. Malheiro stressed that it was one thing to discuss the legality of an issue, it was another to legislate on it. He maintained that slavery was illegitimate but nonetheless legal; he thought it best to leave this moral idea to "natural extinction."\textsuperscript{2964} From a very different perspective, another well-known spokesman for slavery reform, Zacharias de Goes Vasconcellos, refused to support the bill because he thought it too weak.\textsuperscript{2965}

Rio Branco pushed hard for the measure, stressing to opponents that the bill wouldn't spell slavery's imminent doom.\textsuperscript{2966} The debate ended in late September and the bill passed in the Chamber of Deputies 65-45 (two-thirds of the Deputies against it came from the coffee provinces).\textsuperscript{2967} In the Senate, Liberals joined the Conservatives to pass the bill 33-7.\textsuperscript{2968} Nabuco said it was "conciliation between the country's economic interests and the pressing humane considerations of the century."\textsuperscript{2969} It didn't take long to understand that the bill was insufficient. A decade after its passage the failure of the Rio Branco Law was recognized: "Even pro-slavery spokesmen admitted that the law had not been implemented energetically, that its provisions no


longer corresponded with national aspirations, and that its results were insignificant compared  
with the effects of private initiative and the high costs of administration.\textsuperscript{2970} 

\textbf{The Final Chapter of Brazilian Slavery Politics} 

The slavery issue was dead inside government for a number of years following Rio  
Branco. As Robert Toplin states, "for eight years after Rio Branco's success, political leaders  
maintained general silence on the slave question, while the public expressed little concern for the  
cause of the captives."\textsuperscript{2971} In 1879, conservative, staunchly pro-slavery fazendeiros called for new  
legislation to increase their power of coercion inside plantations, ostensibly to ensure continued  
order and discipline. This effort drew a strong response from Liberals in the Chamber of Deputies  
like Sodré, Nabuco, and Barbosa. The Chamber of Deputies opened in 1879 with a call for a  
Liberal mainstay – electoral reform – but the debate bogged down into discussion of maintaining  
discipline on plantations.\textsuperscript{2972} Then, on March 5, 1879, Jeronymo Sodré gave a speech that set off  
"a political explosion."\textsuperscript{2973} He said, "'Everyone knows it, Brazilian society is sitting on a volcano.  
Let us not delude ourselves.'"\textsuperscript{2974} His solution was emancipation, rather than continued  
repression.\textsuperscript{2975} He tied emancipation to all liberal proposals, claiming that "the plans to reform  
and modernize the country would prove fruitless unless Parliament tackled the central issue of  
slavery," saying:  

'You are asking for educational reform? You are asking the government to guarantee the rights of  
non-Catholics? You are asking for liberation of the citizen through direct elections? You want all  
these things while conserving the cancer which deteriorates all, and corrupts all!'\textsuperscript{2976} 

\textsuperscript{2970} Conrad, Robert Edgar. \textit{The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850-1888}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Edition. Malabar, FL:  
\textsuperscript{2973} Conrad, Robert Edgar. \textit{The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850-1888}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Edition. Malabar, FL:  
This challenge sparked debate inside government and, critically, outside it as well. As discussed last chapter, popular abolitionism was taking hold.

Yet, in the capital by 1881, the first abolitionist wave had receded and while antislavery sentiment was most prevalent in the Liberal party, the overall differences between the two parties were still faintly noticeable.2977 In fact, Liberals held power from 1878 to 1885, and yet did little for the antislavery cause.2978 The Liberal ministry of the Bahian senator, Jose Antonio Saraiva, committed to electoral reform and a balanced budget, led the defense of the status quo, brandishing the free vote in one hand, in the words of a critic, and the lash of slavery in the other.2979 His government would assert that all Brazilians were liberators but necessity forced them to engage in slavery. In other words, the government wanted to end slavery, but economic and social issues blocked such a move in any precipitous timeframe.2980 Any increase in abolitionism outside government led to increasing denouncement of such movements inside government.2981 The conservative argument – that all Brazilians wanted freedom but that emancipation would spell doom for the country – was persistent. As late as 1884, the Rio News echoed the same drumbeat: "The belief that the abolition of slavery will necessarily bring ruin upon the country is so widespread and so deeply implanted in the minds of the Brazilian planters that there is probably little use in trying to prove the contrary."2982 Further, with the government firmly against movement on the slavery issue, parts of the press started a slander campaign versus

abolitionists. "There was, then, a powerful reaction to abolitionism which showed up in the Assembly, in the press, and, in the 1881 elections."

In 1882, the Emperor picked Martinho Campos, a pro-slavery politician, as Prime Minister. In July he was succeeded by Viscount Paranaguá, who was more flexible on slavery and promised to work toward more free labor. A renewed, second phase of abolitionism was developing in 1882 and 1883. Antislavery societies were popping up; some provinces, like Ceará, were declaring themselves free zones and the police and army were inadequate to stop large-scale uprisings if they developed. Increasingly the regular army was turning abolitionist, and the government tried to stop this development while the Emperor sent mixed signals on the subject. For example, in 1881 an Army unit from Ceará declared itself pro-abolition, and was quickly transferred. They noted in confusion that the Emperor had sent them a congratulatory note. By 1884, slavery was dying in many regions in the country, with many Provincial Presidents taking matters into their own hands.

In a speech in May 1884, Dom Pedro didn't hint that he was moving in an abolitionist direction. Caught between factions, the Emperor made no mention of the monumental abolitionist victories in Ceará and elsewhere, but as was about to become clear, he must have committed himself to slavery reform measures during this period. When Prime Minister Pereira's government fell in June 1884, Pedro turned to Senator Manoel Pinto de Souza Dantas. This move showed Pedro's "recognition that the Brazilian government could no longer offer palliatives." The move to put Dantas, a noted Liberal (but a pragmatic one), into power

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angered the planter interest, which, although "harassed, condemned, perhaps already rejected by public opinion," as Conrad notes, "was far from defeated."

During his first address to the Assembly, Dantas said it was time to act on the slavery problem. His proposal included "liberation for all slaves over sixty years of age (the sexagenarians), an increase in the emancipation fund through new taxes, a total end to the interprovincial slave trade, immediate liberation of slaves not properly registered, and an official table for the progressive amortization of slave values." The reform bill – known as the Dantas Project – was introduced to the Chamber on 15 July, sparking angry rebuke from the pro-slavery faction and leading to furious intra-governmental debate much like that which had occurred over Rio Branco. This significant opposition prevented serious consideration of the bill. Dantas was catching it from both sides – Liberals and Conservatives. "Seventeen Liberals, ten from the three major coffee provinces, rejected their party's ministry, while four Conservatives, all from outside the coffee region, voted for the Liberal government. Only ten deputies from coffee provinces, all Liberals, supported Dantas while 28 others from these regions rejected him. "Thus," as Conrad notes, "the four coffee provinces as a group strongly rejected the reformist administration, although deputies from the other provinces supported Dantas by a broad margin. The

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emancipation bill had split the Liberal Party in the coffee region, ten deputies supporting Dantas and ten expressing loyalty to their constituents' economic interests.\textsuperscript{2992}

Increasingly besieged, Dantas was given a vote of no confidence on 28 July.\textsuperscript{2993} Critically, Dantas asked Dom Pedro to disband the chamber and he did so. "The result was a lionization of both Dantas and the Emperor among abolitionists. At the Chamber session of July 30 the public silently heard official explanations for the dissolution of the Chamber, then spontaneously applauded Dantas, creating an impression among those in attendance that they were witnessing the climax of an important historic event."\textsuperscript{2994} Pro-slavery forces continued to denounce abolitionists and the Emperor. Sousa Carvalho rejected the sexagenarian bill as a "communist principle," asserting the "the Dantas Bill was 'the incarnation of the... new abolitionist position, created exclusively by the Crown to cause the triumph of ideas contrary to the dominant position of the Council of State, the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate, and the two great parties."\textsuperscript{2995}

Even if most Brazilians eligible to vote for a new Chamber on December 1, 1884 (140,000 of 12 million – all powerful landowners) were not sympathetic to emancipation, the results showed that many were resigned to some form of moderate reform. The election resulted in 67 Liberals, 55 Conservatives, and 3 Republicans. The outcome was billed as an abolitionist victory. In reality, pro- and counter-reform returned to Parliament in about equal numbers. Republicans had been relatively, tentatively, supportive of the bill. A review of the voting records of the winners suggests they were "moderate to conservative on the slavery issue."\textsuperscript{2996} Only 28 showed a consistent willingness to accept reform. Regional differences were apparent (if less

\begin{flushleft}


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clear) 2/3 in coffee districts were opponents to change. In others, only about 1/3 were clearly resistant to change. 2997

As the Parliament opened in March 1885 it was clear that the bill would come up and if so, indemnification would be a key debate. Debate began on 13 April and this was indeed the case. Dantas stated plainly that if the opposition wanted indemnification for elderly slaves, that was something his government wouldn't accept. The vote that followed went 50-50, which kept Dantas in power but showed the bill wouldn't be passed; another no confidence vote brought down Dantas in May 1885 (52 to 50). Only 3 Conservatives supported and 9 dissident Liberals went against. Dantas again asked Pedro to dissolve the Chamber but this time, he refused. The Emperor called on Liberal Jose Antonio Saraiva to form a ministry and make the Dantas Bill more acceptable; thus, the first concerted attempts at slavery reform were stopped by an effective opposition. Saraiva said he would push for change while giving planters time to solve labor issues. 2998

Saraiva presented a revised bill on 12 May. Opponents liked the bill; abolitionists hated it. There were some provisions for fining those who aided runaways and all versions contained provisions that forced slaves to keep working for 5 years. What abolitionists should have liked was ending of internal slave trade and the progressive reduction in slave numbers that would have likely resulted in the end of slavery in 13 years. "The Saraiva Bill created a whole new alignment in the Chamber of Deputies. Dantas had been opposed by most Conservatives, but Saraiva had the support of most members of that party. Two small groups of Conservatives opposed Dantas... Most of the Liberal dissenters who had opposed Dantas supported Saraviva [sic], while Liberal abolitionists formed a new and larger anti-government faction within the Liberal Party." 2999

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weak in fact was Saraiva after the bill passed the Chamber in mid-August, so much had the
project depended for passage upon the Conservative minority that he and his ministry felt
compelled to resign. Unable to find a Liberal leader who could reunite the fragmented Liberal
Party, Pedro chose to stage another 'imperial coup,' asking a prominent Conservative, Baron of
Cotegipe, to form a minority government. This bill – now called the Saraiva-Cotegipe Law –
was then rushed through the Senate in time for the Emperor to pass/endorse it on the anniversary
of Rio Branco.

Newspapers reported Brazil had abolished slavery internationally, but locally the police
had by the authority of the bill begun to search private homes for runaways. Cotegipe's weak
execution of the law revived abolitionism. His agricultural minister implemented it without
regard for public opinion and each decision seemed to favor pro-slavery interests all the more.
Abolitionists were increasingly ready to take emancipation into their own hands by inciting and
assisting escape. The national election of January 15, 1886 only increased abolitionist fervor.
Carried out under the direction of the Cotegipe regime, and hence its patrimonial electoral
control, its result was a Conservative-dominated Chamber that appeared even less sympathetic to
slavery reform. As Conrad notes, "the Liberal and abolitionist reaction to this electoral
travesty took the form of a rebuke of the political system itself. In a country of twelve million
people, complained abolitionist editors, where fewer than two hundred thousand persons, mainly
slaveowners and government employees, were eligible to vote, it could not be said that the

legislature represented national opinion. The nation was abolitionist, said a newspaper of the port
city of Santos in proof of this charge, but slavery was supported in the Assembly.\textsuperscript{3005}

With the abolitionist movement revived and active, anti-slavery politicians could attempt
action themselves. Dantas brought forward a bill that ended whipping as a legalized form of slave
punishment. It is likely that the Assemblymen were influenced by the recent end of slavery in
Cuba, but whatever the cause, the bill passed quickly and without much fanfare; this despite the
fact that many warned that such a move would be the end of slavery, as such an institution could
not long last without corporal punishment.\textsuperscript{3006}

Indeed, with this action, "they had all but ended slavery itself."\textsuperscript{3007} By 1887, the slaves'
abandonment of their estates en masse was such that there was little planters or the local
authorities could do. Critically, even the coffee plantations in the São Paulo region were losing
the fight against slave abandonment and thus the only region left hanging on to slavery was Rio
de Janeiro. In September, cracks finally formed in the ardently pro-slavery Conservative Party.
Previously unrepentant politicians like Antonio Prado and Joao Alfredo Correia de Oliveira
began praising individual and provincial emancipation as a way to stop the chaos. Cotegipe
maintained his stance against change, not wanting to lose the support of powerful Conservatives
from the Rio de Janeiro region. In October, the Army leadership signaled that troops would
continue to keep the peace, but would not participate in the re-capture of fugitive slaves. It was

\textsuperscript{3005} Conrad, Robert Edgar. \textit{The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850-1888}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Edition. Malabar, FL:
\textsuperscript{3006} Conrad, Robert Edgar. \textit{The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850-1888}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Edition. Malabar, FL:
\textsuperscript{3007} Conrad, Robert Edgar. \textit{The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850-1888}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Edition. Malabar, FL:
abolitionists and the example of Cuba, abolished corporal punishment, the key to the slave system."
clear that slavery was collapsing throughout Brazil as slaves increasingly abandoned their plantations.  

By late 1887-early 1888 the retrieval of fugitive slaves was beyond the control of the police, and as the general public witnessed these raids, it turned the issue into a personal one. Many average citizens began interfering with efforts to re-capture slaves. The Cotegipe regime met the chaos and public pressure for change with more repression. Public demonstrations were answered with government repression throughout the country. In March a relatively minor incident finally pushed the "discredited" Cotegipe regime to resign and Princess Regent Isabel (her father was in Europe) chose the Conservative Oliveira. He called on Prado to join him as defense minister and they immediately began working on emancipation proposals. Their plan was to enact immediate emancipation with stipulations, such as some forms of reparations and fixed term labor agreements, that would keep the most powerful planter interest happy. The Princess Regent publicly supported such a plan in her May 1888 speech from the throne, but abolitionists balked and Liberal Party representatives made it clear that they would only support emancipation with no additional stipulations. Oliveira accepted the mandate and put an immediate abolition bill forward on 8 May. In the Chamber of Deputies, the only opposition came from politicians from Rio. In the Senate, only the hardest core pro-slavery Senators – like Cotegipe and Paulina de Souza – made speeches against abolition, and even they knew the effort was futile. The "Golden

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Law" passed on May 13, 1888.\textsuperscript{3011} The Conservative Coelho e Campos summarized the state of politics and the country regarding slavery by this point, saying...

'I voted as I did... because, as the law itself said, the question was nothing more than the acceptance of a reality practically then in existence. I voted because there was no other solution..., because generally speaking the only alternative was insubordination, turmoil, the disruption of labor and everything else, and, as a member of the party of order, I did not the right to refuse my vote to a law of order.'\textsuperscript{3012}

Accepting a de facto reality is not same as celebrating that reality. A coup deposed Pedro II in 1889. "Influential planters, believing that Pedro failed to act in their best interests during the final years of the slave regime (1880-1889), helped to bring about his downfall."\textsuperscript{3013}

**Summary of Brazilian Domestic Politics and the Decline of Slavery**

Brazil was a constitutional monarchy dominated by a land-holding/slave-holding elite committed to slavery. The electoral process was controlled by the elites and thereby, the system was minimally representative and largely unresponsive to the popular will until late. Even if it had been responsive, the slaving class dominated the thinking of the country. This was a hierarchical/patriarchic society with limited association and while the press was relatively free, it too was mostly shaped by elites and used to keep tabs on the masses. While the Emperor and some other politicians were open to European influence and ideas, they realized that they would pay politically for any change that went against the interests of the slave-holding class. The slave-holding interest was a solitary bloc (the term Liberal and Conservative mattered little) for most of Brazil's history from independence to emancipation. All of these domestic-political factors conspired against abolitionism. It was only when, forced by British military pressure to end the

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trade (discussed in more detail next chapter), that any sectional divide developed. As slave prices rose, the coffee planters in the south and central regions (particularly São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro) purchased slaves from the less slave-reliant northeast and it was there that the first anti-slavery agitations eventually took hold. Watching the bloodshed in the United States over slavery and the use of slaves for defense in the Paraguayan War also sparked debate on slavery; as detailed in Chapter 5, urbanites began organizing for abolition as well. Still, most of the land-holding/slave-holding class felt that emancipation would be disastrous for Brazil. They continued to stall against change, passing only laws such as Rio Branco, a "free womb" scheme that was implemented poorly and produced meager results. Facing slave defections and province-wide emancipations in the northeastern provinces, the oligarchy reluctantly passed the Saraiva-Cotegipe Law in 1885, and when the security forces could no longer maintain order and plantation discipline in the face of a crumbling slave institution, it was only then that the Parliament put a final end to slavery there.

**Part VI – Preliminary Conclusions on Domestic Politics**

Preliminary analysis suggests all three sub-factors in the domestic politics variable played at least some role (for or against) in the process of slavery's decline in the countries covered. The nature of the public sphere appears critical. Britain had the most open and eventually powerful public sphere and not surprisingly, it was this realm that shaped an increasingly responsive government's view of slavery and moved it toward abolition and emancipation. The United States, even more electorally representative and with a similarly open public sphere, developed sectional divisions that would ultimately lead to civil war. In each of the other three countries, a stymied public sphere delayed the end of slavery as an institution. In France, government fear of public association left abolitionism in the hands of slow-moving elites. In Spain, the public sphere was closed until the 1850s and 1860s, and it was in those decades that the seeds of abolition were
first sown. Finally, in Brazil, the land-owning/slave-holding class dominated the thinking of most of society and with this powerful interest group committed to slavery, it would take until the very end for a popular abolition movement to develop.

The nature of the public sphere is of course reflective of, and interacts with, the domestic political structure. In Britain, an imperfectly representative but increasingly responsive constitutional monarchy accepted the will of the people, ended the slave trade and the institution of slavery domestically, and then influenced the governments of other states to do the same. Conversely, in the even more representative (for whites) democracy in the United States, the structure and nature of the Union formed at the time of its founding gave states considerable rights, led to a strong Southern bloc in Congress (particularly the Senate), and allowed the development of a distinct sectionalism which ensured that the slavery issue would not be resolved peacefully. The political climate became one that deferred to maintaining the political Union; the South's slave institution was pacified until at last in the 1860s, a myriad of popular and political factors conspired to end the institution via civil war. In the other three polities – France, Imperial Spain, and Brazil – maintaining a constitutional monarchy in name did not automatically signify an open, representative political system in practice. France looked to recover its empire and, ever fearful of the masses after 1789, moved only slowly to rid itself of slavery. In Imperial Spain, as the government moved from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy, the priority remained bankrolling Madrid through the colonies (particularly Cuba). It was only when the public sphere was opened that anti-slavery ideology developed; then, when Madrid allowed colonial representation the sectional divide between Puerto Rican and Cuban delegates appeared. Ultimately, the simultaneous revolutions in Spain and Cuba led to slavery's eventual demise throughout the empire. Slavery lasted the longest in Brazil despite a monarch that was relatively open to European influence and ideas. In that patriarchic, moderately representative but certainly not responsive system, slavery was so ingrained in the land-owning interest, and therefore the general public living under them, that any moves against it were slow to develop. The land-
owning oligarchs tried to hold onto the institution to the very end, even as popular will eroded and slavery disintegrated around them.

**Table 7.3. Summary of Domestic Politics Variable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Public Sphere</th>
<th>Domestic Political Structure</th>
<th>Bureaucratic Politics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Britain</strong></td>
<td>- Free press</td>
<td>- Stable Constitutional Monarchy</td>
<td>- Institutionalized abolition into the &quot;official mind&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Open, active civil society/association</td>
<td>- Imperfectly, but increasingly representative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Increasingly responsive to public opinion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United States</strong></td>
<td>- Free press</td>
<td>- Stable Republic</td>
<td>- Institutionalization geared toward maintaining the Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Open, active civil society/association</td>
<td>- Representative (for whites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Increasingly sectionalized</td>
<td>- Responsive to public opinion, but sectionalized</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Structure reinforced states' rights/Southern power; focused on maintaining Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>France</strong></td>
<td>- Intermittently open, off-limited public sphere</td>
<td>- Moderately Stable Constitutional Monarchy</td>
<td>- Key ministries against abolition/emancipation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Great fear of public association</td>
<td>- Restrictively representative</td>
<td>- Delayed/curtailed enactment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperial Spain</strong></td>
<td>- Mostly stifled public sphere until 1850s and 1860s, and even then, intermittently</td>
<td>- Relatively unstable Constitutional Monarchy/Republic</td>
<td>- Generally, particularly the army, conservative and against change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Relatively/ restrictively representative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Relatively unresponsive to popular will</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brazil</strong></td>
<td>- Patriarchic society with limited association</td>
<td>- Stable Constitutional Monarchy</td>
<td>- Subservient to oligarchy until very end (when couldn't keep institution of slavery together)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Relatively free press (used by oligarchy to keep tabs on population)</td>
<td>- Restrictively representative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Elite-dominated, relatively unresponsive to popular will</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Slave-/land-owning, elite-dominated oligarchy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bureaucratic politics proved important in the case of Britain in that anti-slavery became a part of the official bureaucratic mindset and the commitment to the suppression campaign was sustained and perhaps even prolonged by the fervor. Bureaucratic politics were also distinctly important in the colonial countries examined. In France and Spain, the ministries (those related to the navy/colonies in France, more-so the army/colonial in Spain) were committed to maintaining overseas colonial wealth and power and they were quite effective at delaying change to those interests. The importance of bureaucratic politics was less overtly demonstrated by the
examination of the United States and Brazil produced here, but taken as a whole, the preceding two chapters have certainly shown overall that domestic political structure, the nature of the public sphere, and bureaucratic politics interacted in crucial ways to help determine the fate of slavery in the countries studied. The importance of the domestic-political variable in terms of the public sphere and the "societal inclinations" discussed earlier will be addressed further in the conclusion chapter.

What does all this suggest for warfare? The histories presented in these domestic politics chapters suggest that this was a critical causal variable in the decline of the slavery institution. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that domestic politics would play a similarly important role in the decline of warfare. This is in keeping with democratic/liberal peace theorists, but counter to the assertions of liberal/constructivist theorists like John Mueller and structural realist theorists that treat states as like units. Having uncovered two variables that played a causal role in slavery's decline – normative and domestic politics – this study now turns to examination of the geostrategic variable to see what if any role it played.

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3014 Although in the case of the United States, the willingness of the Post Office to forego delivery of abolitionist literature to southern states shows their complicity in the overall mindset to maintain the peace of the Union. Further, in Brazil, the dominance of the land-owning oligarchs/slave-holding interest permeated all aspects of the government ministries and this certainly played a role in the prolongation of the institution there. It was only at the end, when the security/police forces could no longer stem the tide of slavery's demise that the government enacted emancipation.
Chapter 8
Geostrategic Calculations and Slavery's Decline

While countless historians have discussed the humanitarian and economic aspects of transatlantic slavery's abolition, the international relations aspect of that history has perhaps been under-appreciated. This chapter discusses the decline of the slave trade/slavery in the context of geostrategic politics. In international relations theory, the dominant realist framework would posit that an institution such as slavery would only become obsolete if it was deemed that its continuation would reduce a state's strategic power relative to other states in the international system, or alternatively, if ending the institution was expected to increase a state's power in that system. The critical factors of power center around economic, diplomatic, and military/security capabilities. Chapter 3 suggested that as an institution, slavery continued to be profitable, remained viable economically, and thereby contributed to state power. This chapter attempts to complete the picture. Did geostrategic considerations lead to transatlantic slavery's demise?

Part I – The Strategic Landscape: A Multipolar World

As historian Paul Kennedy has written in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, "the most significant feature of the Great Power scene after 1660 was the maturing of a genuinely multipolar system of European states." The primary European powers were Britain, France, the Habsburg Empire (Austria and German lands), Prussia, and Russia, with some fluctuating importance remaining with declining powers such as Spain and Portugal. Of these, Britain and France were emerging as the greatest rivals of the period, both harnessing the key power

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variables: financial and military might. France's larger population, agriculture base, and army
(which outnumbered any rival) seemed to give it the edge on paper, but Britain's financial system
was much more advanced and its geographical location (off the European mainland and hence
less vulnerable) and naval prominence would ultimately prove decisive.\textsuperscript{3018}

The 18\textsuperscript{th} century was inherently competitive and conflictual (36 interstate wars in the
Europe-centric international system);\textsuperscript{3019} the fortunes of countries and alliances varied from
conflict to conflict. Nonetheless, geography proved critical, as being a "hybrid" power –
attempting to remain competitive in both land and sea warfare – was extremely difficult.\textsuperscript{3020} For
France, every conflict against maritime powers (such as her main rival, Britain) made land war
more difficult (on the continent and elsewhere). Britain developed a strategy of aiding countries
against France economically and militarily when necessary in order to check French continental
power; at the same time, Britain continued to develop her navy. This "janus-faced strategy" of
trimming French power on the continent while increasing her maritime dominance was greatly
assisted by Britain's overseas trade and financial prowess, which allowed it to raise the funds
necessary for execution.\textsuperscript{3021} Thus, France was the greatest of the continental European states but
was not big enough or organized well enough to be a hegemonic power, and it always faced
shifting (British-led) coalitions to keep it at bay. Thereby, in the period from 1660 to 1815 it was
maritime Great Britain which made the most decisive advances and replaced France as the
greatest power overall.\textsuperscript{3022}

The Seven Years War (1756-1763) was a world war, with an Anglo-Prussian alliance
pitted against France, Austria, and Russia. On paper the French would have the better bargain, but

\textsuperscript{3019}Holsti, Kalevi J. "The Decline of Interstate War: Pondering Systemic Explanations." In \textit{The Waning of
95-96. As Kennedy points out, only under Napoleon was France able to impose its will on the rest of the
continent and this only temporarily.
"leadership, financial staying power, and military/naval experience" gave Britain and Prussia the edge. Under the direction of the elder Pitt, Britain aided Prussia financially as she fought the Austrians and Russians and the Seven Years War cost London £160 million. This led to rising national debt in Britain – which eventually led to Pitt's political demise – but the constantly increasing revenue from overseas possessions kept her afloat. Eventually, the French were compelled to accept a peace treaty that returned the status quo to Europe, and the peace ultimately benefited Britain substantially. Britain returned Gorée, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Belle Isle, Desirade, St Lucia, and Marie-Galante to France and Havana to Spain. Britain retained Fort St. Louis and other trading ports in Africa, kept St. Vincent, Dominica, Tobago, and Grenada; she passed Louisiana on to Spain, and took Florida. "Even after returning various captured territories to France and Spain, it had made advances in the West Indies and West Africa, had virtually eliminated French influence from India, and, most important of all, was now supreme in most of the North American continent." As it turned out, with rebellion brewing in the North American colonies, the good fortune was not to last long.

The fifteen-year peace after the Seven Years War was good for the slave trade everywhere, and particularly beneficial for the British West Indies. France's commerce had all but ceased during the war, but with the Treaty of Paris and Britain's return of many of her key

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possessions, France's slave trade continued.\footnote{Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 266-274. Britain returned Gorée, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Belle Isle, Desirade, St Lucia, and Marie-Galante to France and Havana to Spain. Britain retained Fort St. Louis and other trading ports in Africa, kept St Vincent, Dominica, Tobago, and Grenada, passed Louisiana on to Spain, and took Florida.} In fact, in the decade following the war France was beginning to overtake Britain as a sugar producer; in 1767, France exported more of the commodity than the British for the first time (77,000 tons to 71,000 tons).\footnote{Knight, Franklin. "Imperialism and Slavery." In \textit{Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World}. Verene A. Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles. Princeton, NJ: Marcus Wiener Publishers, 2000: 163; and Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 275. For comparison sake, Knight notes sugar and its products, rum and molasses, was over 80 percent of the exports from the British portion of the Caribbean in 1770. In the French Antilles sugar was 49 percent, coffee 24 percent, indigo 14 percent, and cotton 8 percent. See also Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition}. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977.} Further, with Britain's temporary influence in Havana, Cuba began its ascent as a slave-based sugar producer – transforming itself from a place with a moderately balanced economy to one in which sugar was the economic commodity.\footnote{Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 272-273.} This was the most important slave-centered development for the declining Spanish empire in this period. Cuban sugar was increasingly important and in fact the island became the main purchaser of slaves during the period of the 1770s and 1780s.\footnote{Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 266-281. Spain struggled along, both producing sugar in some areas but also buying it from France. Strikingly behind the times, the declining Iberian power still believed the key to the trade was holding the monopolistic asiento.} African slavery was also the accepted answer to Brazilian labor shortages in this era; the Brazilian slave trade accounted for 160,000 slaves between 1760 and 1770.\footnote{Thomas, Hugh, \textit{The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870}, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997: 278.}

**The American Revolution**

There was breathing space for about a decade following the Seven Years War. Britain and France turned attention to their internal domestic issues. The French built up their navy and their foreign policy "remained distinctly anti-British and committed to extracting advantages from
any problems which Britain might encounter overseas. All participants scrambled for revenue to pay for the Seven Years War. The tax increases that followed helped to spark the American Revolution. Strategically, despite their recent victory, Britain was in a weaker position by the time the American Revolution struck. The 1770s and 1780s were a time of increasing factionalism in Parliament, the public was divided over the war, and frankly, the navy was overstretched. Britain's strategy had always been to build alliances to counter French continental strength, and yet, Britain was alone in its efforts to put down the American rebellion. Both France and Spain eventually supported the Americans. Further, London was feeling the difficulty of fighting a land war 3,000 miles from home. Hence, Britain was overstretched and ultimately defeated.

The revolution would put the slave institution in America under scrutiny. Warfare on the continent disrupted plantation discipline and the British reached out to slaves as allies, offering them freedom in return for bearing arms against the rebellion. The American Continental Congress also approached the slave issue pragmatically, enlisting slaves and offering eventual manumission when it was in desperate need of additional troops. Strategic manumission never became widespread, however. Many Britons sympathized with the

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Americans, and the rebels' invocation of natural rights gave those inclined toward abolition cause for hope; but with concern over the war overseas and maintenance of the empire, most antislavery tracts disappeared.\textsuperscript{3042} It was in the period after the loss of the American colonies particularly, that slavery and the nature of the British Empire came under deep circumspection in Britain.\textsuperscript{3043} The future of slavery in the newly-free United States remained very much in doubt and would ultimately hinge on the Constitution. Early signs suggested slavery would indeed survive and thrive there as well. The American Confederation Congress approved the peace treaty that ended the war in 1783; one clause of this treaty stated the British should withdraw from the United States without "carrying away any negroes or other property of the American inhabitants."\textsuperscript{3044} Britain and the United States would continue to feud diplomatically over slaves taken during the war and, later, slaves captured on the high seas; despite their espousal of universal rights, the accepted American government stance was and would continue to be that slaves were "property."\textsuperscript{3045}

In the larger picture, while the revolutionary fighting was raging it had negative consequences for perpetrators of the slave trade, as wars always seemed to. France's trade numbers were only slightly diminished during this period and the other neutrals kept up their trade as well; British slavers, merchants, and planters suffered. Yet, these were short-term fluctuations and "the long-term prospects for the slave trade appeared excellent in, say, 1780, provided only that the nations could live in peace."\textsuperscript{3046} In fact, the overall slave trade attained some of its highest levels during the 1780s. France's support for America and the subsequent defeat of the British returned some of the strategic momentum to France that it had lost during the


Seven Years War. On the British side, the setback was not crippling. The loss of American colonies made the West Indies all the more important for the British empire. Additionally, trade with the new United States actually remained strong and trade with Britain's Indian market out-paced what French possessions could total. Therefore, the trade in African slaves remained "an essential part of the economies of all advanced countries." Further, there was a fledgling power on the strategic scene in North America and the competition between great power rivals Britain and France was as hot as ever. It would only get hotter.

The Strategic Impact of the French Revolution and Saint-Domingue

The French Revolution and the rebellion in Saint-Domingue that ensued were covered in previous chapters of this dissertation, but it is appropriate to discuss the geostrategic importance of those events, particularly Saint-Domingue, in this chapter as well. At first glance, this may seem inappropriate, as this study has treated slave rebellions as both domestic-political concerns, and as catalysts to the normative movements within states. However, of all the slave-led/executed revolts, Saint-Domingue/Haiti is the one that had the most significant geostrategic implications. In fact, in considering this impact, one should recall just how important and profitable France's colonial system was to its overall geostrategic power. Between 1770 and 1790 the slave population of the French Antilles rose from 379,000 to 650,000 and by 1789 French exports from the region reached £9 million, while British exports were £5 million (produced by 480,000 slaves). Saint-Domingue prided itself on being the richest colony in the world, containing 465,000 slaves (30,000 whites and 28,000 free people of color). It was 40 percent of French trade, absorbed 10-15 percent of North American exports, and grew 2/5 of world's sugar and 1/2 the world's coffee. By comparison, other French colonies such as Guadeloupe (90,000 slaves, 14,000

and whites, 3,000 free blacks) and Martinique (83,000 slaves, 10,600 whites, and 5,000 free blacks) were important but secondary.\footnote{3049} The factional divisions in the French Caribbean, and particularly Saint-Domingue, were complex and many, and once the revolution at home started, this factionalism contributed to the downward spiral of events there. Each faction of the population believed in basic tenets of the revolution (liberty, equality, fraternity), but emphasized individual aspects as it suited them. Once the power of revolutionary ideas were unleashed, the results were predictable.\footnote{3050} In April 1792, the Jacobin-led Assembly declared full rights for all free blacks and mulattoes in the French colonies.\footnote{3051} The Civil Commission of Sonthonax, Polverel, and Ailhau was dispatched with a force of 6,000 men in July 1792 to quell the factional fighting. They arrived in September and set about to stamp out rebellion of any kind (Sonthonax in the North, Polverel in the West, and Ailhau in the South).\footnote{3052} France was on a course to war with Britain and Spain, and this would give the autonomists on the island potential allies. With the trial of the King in November 1792 and execution in 1793, the British were ready to use the chaos to conduct counter-revolutionary operations in Europe and the Caribbean. Royalist French planters negotiated in London and Britain made plans for an expeditionary force to Saint-Domingue. It arrived in September 1793 and Spanish troops from the Spanish-controlled Santo Domingo side of the island invaded as


\footnote{3052} Blackburn, Robin. *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 197-199. This shows how important the colonies were; during this period a counter-revolutionary Prussian army was preparing to attack France, but Paris sent forces 3,000 miles away nonetheless.
well. Four years of revolution had frayed the French colonial structure and blacks had begun to openly contest their enslavement; the intensity of the fighting between patriots and monarchists, whites and mulattos, creole autonomists and partisans had all weakened order, as had the factional calls for help to other powers. In the coming years, the other powers would be all too willing to take advantage of that chaos. For, as historian Robin Blackburn notes,

As of the spring of 1793 all contenders for power in the French Caribbean were still committed to the defence of slavery: this was true of the British, despite the abolitionist protestations of Pitt and Wilberforce; of the Spanish, despite their bold alliance with black rebels; of the French Republicans; of the colonial Patriots, despite their vaunted detestation of tyranny; of the free people of colour, despite the calls of racial solidarity; of the black generals, despite their resistance to their own enslavement.

Figure 8.1. The Caribbean in the Late 18th Century

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In 1793 and 1794 Saint-Domingue was gripped in factional revolutionary fighting and international warfare. As events progressed, factions and alliances continued to shift, but over time the balance of power shifted toward the weight of the population (slaves fighting for freedom). The British blockade cut off normal commerce and increasingly isolated and in need of soldiers in the North, Sonthonax tried to enlist the support of black soldiers. He tried to obtain the support of blacks fighting on the Spanish side, including Toussaint Louverture, the brilliant black general that would come to symbolize black independence. At first little support was forthcoming. Desperate, he sent a letter to the Convention and said it was time to free the slaves. On August 29, 1793 Sonthonax freed the slaves in his jurisdiction himself, and the word spread to all parts of the island. The early months of 1794 were chaotic, with large-scale slave revolts running rampant. The French Convention decreed emancipation in all French colonies on February 4, 1794. These early months of the year, particularly April and May would prove

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3060 Blackburn, Robin. The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 217-220. Initially, black commanders such as Toussaint rejected Republican appeals, given the faction-switching and the fact that they had overthrown their King, it was hard to trust these measures as anything but desperation. Over time, however, many became increasingly identified with black resistance. Toussaint tried to convince the Spanish authorities whom he served to enact a similar emancipation measure, but to no avail. Spain was intent on maintaining the plantation system.


decisive, as during this period Toussaint decided to end his association with the Spanish and fight for black independence.\textsuperscript{3064}

As Blackburn notes, "if the execution of Louis XVI had outraged the monarchies of Europe, the decree of Pluviôse ranged the new Republic not only against all the European colonial powers but also against its one remaining potential ally, the United States."\textsuperscript{3065} A French relief expedition arrived in April 1794 and continuous warfare ensued. In 1794 and 1795 the French scored victories primarily against the Spanish, while the British navy could conduct effective operations off the coast of Saint-Domingue. In the summer of 1794 the Spanish invasion across the Pyrenees was halted, and in July 1795 Spain concluded peace with Paris, ceding the Santo-Domingo side of the island to France.\textsuperscript{3066} Britain was afraid that Jacobin (and thereby at this time, abolitionist) principles would threaten the stability of the western world, and so sought to take control in Saint-Domingue.\textsuperscript{3067} In 1796, three years after first sending troops there, the British sent another strong force of nearly 100 ships and 30,000 troops to occupy Saint-Domingue and re-secure any islands facing Republican and/or black insurrection.\textsuperscript{3068} By 1798 the British force was in desperate straits and it was clear that facing a motivated black resistance (under Toussaint and other black generals), there was little hope of winning Saint-Domingue and that the whole effort was costly and ineffective. They had lost about 35,000 troops there, and all told Britain had lost between 50,000 and 60,000 troops and upwards of £16 million in the Caribbean

\textsuperscript{3064} Blackburn, Robin. \textit{The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848}. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 220-222; and Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 164-165. The French emancipation decree seems likely to have influenced Toussaint's decision, although this fact has not been established with certainty.


campaign. In July-August 1798, they reached an agreement with Toussaint to withdraw from Saint-Domingue.

Toussaint had effectively brought about an independent black state in Saint-Domingue by playing the great powers off against each other. With a backdrop of constantly changing factional fighting, free blacks had defeated Spain and Britain and once Toussaint broke with Sonthonax (in 1797), he was certain he would have to face France. Toussaint was the ruler of Saint-Domingue from 1798 until a French expedition, sent by Napoleon, landed in 1802. At that point the fate of Haiti hung in the balance. France had gained Louisiana through the Treaty of San Ildefonso and Bonaparte's strategy was to build a new French empire in America, with a renewed Saint-Domingue at its center. Napoleon reinstated slavery on Floreal An X (May 19, 1802). France was back at war with Britain in 1803 (the Treaty of Amiens had lasted only a year). She regained good relations with the United States by selling Louisiana to them that year, but Napoleon had no intention of giving up Saint-Domingue, and in fact, the fighting there was some of the most intense and unrestricted yet seen. The French captured Toussaint, but with the blacks united

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against a return to slavery, the French forces were defeated in late 1803. The Republic of Haiti was declared on January 1, 1804.\textsuperscript{3071}

What was the impact of the Haitian aspect of the French Revolution, an insurrection in which black slaves actually succeeded in defeating world powers and obtaining freedom, bringing about a complete social, political, intellectual, and economic revolution?\textsuperscript{3072} Ideologically, it was certainly a powerful image of self-sufficiency and capability for millions of blacks around the world. Undoubtedly the idea that blacks could cast off their chains and attain their own freedom gave hope to thousands. But, it wasn't a catalyst for further near-term slave revolts, and certainly didn't pave the way for more successful slave mobilizations over the long haul. As Seymour Drescher writes, "Haiti was both unforgettable and unrepeatable."\textsuperscript{3073} After all, Haiti didn't have the power to impose change on the rest of the western world (and in fact, increasingly isolated by the surrounding powers, Haitian leaders promised not to incite insurrection in other slave systems).\textsuperscript{3074}

The Haitian revolution had many psychological/ideological effects, but perhaps most important was the fear it burned into the minds of white slaveholders everywhere.\textsuperscript{3075} As David

\begin{itemize}
\item Blackhurn, Robin. \textit{The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848}. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 239-251; Davis, David Brion. \textit{Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006: 166; and Davis, David Brion. "Impact of the French and Haitian Revolutions." In \textit{The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World}. ed. David P. Geggus. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2001: 6-8; and Fick, Carolyn E. "The Haitian revolution and the limits of freedom: defining citizenship in the revolutionary era." \textit{Social History} 32, 4 (November), 2007: 411-412. Interestingly, under Toussaint and the at independence, Dessalines, blacks had freedom but the plantation (and thereby, a colonial form) system was continued in order to maintain the viability and profitability of the agriculture sector. For example, Toussaint made a distinction between freedom from slavery and full freedom to be a citizen, which entailed obligation and without which, there could be idleness and decay. Some of the plantation structures were further militarized after independence in order to protect the agricultural sector. See Fick and Blackburn for further discussion.
\item Knight, Franklin W. "The Haitian Revolution and the Notion of Human Rights." \textit{The Journal of the Historical Society}, 3 (Fall), 2005: 390-394. Knight goes so far as to call Haiti one of the first human rights movements.
\item Knight, Franklin W. "The Haitian Revolution." \textit{American Historical Review}, 105, 1 (February) 2000: 114.
\end{itemize}
Brion Davis notes, the revolution "could be rationalized or repressed but never really forgotten, since it demonstrated the possible fate of every slaveholding society in the world." He adds, "in general, the Haitian Revolution reinforced the conviction that slave emancipation in any form would lead to economic ruin and to the indiscriminate massacre of white populations." Even Robin Blackburn admits that the best that could be said for its impact was it weakened slavery where it was already weak and alerted planters to take more control where slavery was strong, in places like Cuba, Brazil, and the United States.

Haiti's impact on developing slave systems, like Cuba and Brazil, was negligible (other than reinforcing fear in overpopulating and losing control), as was its impact in Africa. In the United States, which considered itself the vanguard of freedom, the increasingly violent French and Haitian revolutions tended to bleed revolutionary zeal of its fervor. As political parties developed there, they increasingly sold themselves not as revolutionaries but as "friends of order." Ultimately, the overthrow of slavery in the United States would be rooted in domestic politics (as discussed previously), not in events in the Caribbean.

For the great powers, particularly France and Great Britain, the psychological/ideological impacts are mixed, the geostrategic impact more tangible. Napoleon dreamed of an American

Empire, with the previously highly profitable Saint-Domingue at the core of that strategy. The Haitian defeat helped seal that strategic vision's demise, but nonetheless, subsequent leaders looked to continue the trade in order to build its recovery after Napoleon (discussed more below). As Drescher points out, not once but twice French rulers re-instituted the slave trade before 1815 (Napoleon and then the restoration government).\textsuperscript{3083} Defeat in Haiti did not immediately spark or assist an effective abolitionist movement. In fact, it would take time for the abolitionists to overcome the memories and impacts of Haiti in order to move the effort forward.

Geostrategically, the loss of Haiti was a blow to France economically, and that taken with Napoleon's ultimate defeat, secured British geostrategic dominance. Additionally, the selling off of Louisiana helped spark, or at least continue, the United States on its path to it self-appointed "manifest destiny."

This, then, leads to a discussion of the most important geostrategic state of the period, and the one that would emerge as the world's foremost proponent of abolition – Britain. What impact did the Saint-Domingue revolution have on Britain? Slavery historians such as David Brion Davis have suggested that the revolution's impact was at best "ambiguous," because "it would be difficult to show that fear of another Haitian Revolution motivated Parliament's crucial votes in 1806 abolishing the slave trade to rival foreign markets, which prepared the way in 1807 for abolishing the British slave trade altogether."\textsuperscript{3084} This author would go further and say that, geostrategically, the loss of troops in Haiti was certainly a minor blow but that the outcome that ultimately developed (once Napoleon was defeated in Europe) was that Britain was left as the dominant world power. Geostrategically, then, it was a positive for Britain. From an abolitionist

\textsuperscript{3083} Drescher, Seymour. "The Limits of Example." In \textit{The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World.} ed. David P. Geggus. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2001: 11. "Europe's most traumatized rulers, the Bourbons, are classically said to have learned nothing and forgotten nothing from the Revolution in France."

standpoint, however, it was an absolute negative because the fear that the French and Haitian
Revolutions sparked crippled the abolitionist movement from 1792 until the 1804-1805.

**British Abolition and the Overseas Threat: From Collapse to Victory**

As discussed in Chapter 4, Wilberforce brought forward motions for abolition starting in
1787. In 1791 the House of Commons debated the motion but voted against it 163 to 88.\(^\text{3085}\) In
1792, Wilberforce and his allies secured an agreement in the Commons for ending the supply
of slaves to foreigners and "gradual abolition of the slave trade" starting in 1792 and complete
termination of the trade by 1796; the measure was defeated in the House of Lords.\(^\text{3086}\) The power
of the popular abolitionist campaign had reached its highest peak to-date in 1792, but a narrow
"window" for action was closing. "Within months, the abolitionist tide receded both in Parliament
and in the country."\(^\text{3087}\) Overseas events would dampen the campaign. By April 1791, even as the
Commons was preparing to hear the report of Select Committee on the Slave Trade, news started
coming in that black slaves were in full-scale rebellion in Saint-Domingue.\(^\text{3088}\) Events in
Revolutionary France, as the King was first deposed and then executed in 1793, only added to the
angst. As J.R. Oldfield states, a growing threat to abolition "came from events over which the
Committee[s] had no control, namely, the French Revolution and the slave rebellion in Santo
Domingo [Saint-Domingue]. The rising tide of revolutionary violence caused widespread panic
among the propertied classes during 1791-92, so much so that the London Committee had to
proceed with great caution."\(^\text{3089}\) The events of the Revolution in France, added to stories of slave
rebellion from the West Indies, made an effective one-two punch against the campaign. For the

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University Press, 2007: 162.

\(^{3086}\) Anstey, Roger. *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810.* Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
Humanities Press. 1975: 275; and Thomas, Hugh, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade


\(^{3088}\) Jennings, Judith. *The Business of Abolishing the British Slave Trade: 1783-1807.* Portland, OR: Frank

\(^{3089}\) Oldfield, J.R. *Popular Politics and British Anti-Slavery: The Mobilisation of Public Opinion Against
government and people alike, there was due cause for concern – events were sending "ripples of fear throughout the Atlantic world."  

As the debates over slavery were taking place in 1791, news was trickling back from Saint-Domingue and the nature and likely outcome of the struggle was in doubt. Clearly all of these events were of increasing importance and would be used in argument against abolition. Even as petitions peaked in early 1792, "the counterabolitionist strategy broadened to conflate abolitionism, not only with slave emancipation, but with every potential threat to public order, foreign and domestic." The arguments worked. The events in revolutionary France crippled the abolition movement in Britain, as "any change in the status quo could now be easily presented by them as potentially subversive of public order." When parliament resumed in 1793, war with France was about to commence. This was no time for abolitionist adventure, and "every attack on the slave trade could be represented as an attack on ancient British institutions, apparently everywhere under attack, precisely because of the French Revolution – and the war." The British press noted that the French National Assembly gave Wilberforce honorary citizenship – which was, increasingly, a kiss of death. "Suddenly," noted Thomas Clarkson, "many looked upon the abolitionists as monsters... the current was turned against us." "Popular tactics had to be abandoned after the outbreak of war with France in 1793. The French

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Revolution and then war with France, along with an Irish rebellion in 1798, all combined to force a conservative approach from Pitt's government.  

These developments, and particularly events with/within France, caused the British public to label opposition to the slave trade unpatriotic. The widespread revulsion against the excesses of the French Revolution and the patriotic fervor that it produced tended to tar all public campaigns.  

On Wilberforce pushed, motioning for abolition again in 1795 and looking to achieve it by 1796; but by that time the mood had changed due to the revolution. The carry-over of the French Revolution would have a long-term impact. As Kielstra explains: "to triumph, the movement had to become acceptable to British society: one of the biggest problems British campaigners ever faced was dissociating themselves from former radical supporters after the French Revolution made Westminster more conservative." Wilberforce and his colleagues tried repeatedly, again in 1796, 1797, 1798, and 1799, but they were stigmatized by association with radicalism and running out of new arguments to put forth.  

Historian Linda Colley makes the case that war with France and the very real threat of invasion helped form in fire the power of British patriotism. The danger of French invasion was great after 1793; indeed, the invasion of Britain was Napoleon's primary objective right up to his defeat at Trafalgar in August 1805. Therefore, in Britain, and indeed in the rest of Europe, the danger of Revolutionary/Napoleonic war forced the arming of the citizenry – of which heretofore...  

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the ruling elite had been more afraid than foreign armies – on a whole new level. This summoning to defense transcended most all dividing lines, including class and social issues, not excluding the anti-slavery movement. With Britain in peril, any measure that could be argued to weaken/threaten Britain, including abolishing the slave trade, was unlikely to pass. In this way, the popular campaign against abolition was firmly stalled in the face of overseas threats to Britain's existence.\footnote{Colley, Linda. Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992: 283-319.} As Colley notes, "mass arming in Great Britain during the wars against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France had provided irrefutable proof that patriotism – in the sense of an identification with British independence against those foreign forces that threatened it – transcended the divisions between the social classes."\footnote{Colley, Linda. Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992: 283-319.}

Under Napoleon, France re-instituted slavery and the slave trade in 1802. Suddenly, with France fully engaged in the slave trade, as Roger Anstey notes, "support of abolition could almost bear the colour of patriotism."\footnote{Anstey, Roger. The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition 1760-1810. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1975: 343.} In the next push for abolition, the abolitionists would not resort to a full frontal assault on abolition, but rather, a more strategic argument in its favor.

Parliamentarian Henry Brougham's Inquiry into the Colonial Policy of the European Powers (1803) pushed to make a case for abolition based on "sound policy." Brougham made the case that maintaining slavery threatened security in the colonies and overstretched defensive resources. He asserted that the slave trade was not absolutely necessary to the colonies or home country, and that any manufacturing/jobs that would be lost through abolition could be quickly recovered in other sectors. As Robin Blackburn notes, "he did not deny the past profitability of the trade, nor question the present value of West Indian commerce."\footnote{Blackburn, Robin. The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848. New York, NY: Verso, 1988: 300-303.} From Brougham:

"The fruit of our iniquity has been a great and rich empire in America. Let us be satisfied with our gains, and being rich, let us try to become righteous – not indeed by giving up a single sugar cane of what we have acquired, but by continuing in our present state of opulence, and preventing the
further importation of slaves... Surely it is abundantly sufficient to have proved that the termination of by far the most criminal traffic which humanity has ever carried on, will be attended by no injury to interests already in existence.  

Abolitionist James Stephen, too, pushed for halting the foreign trade overall and linking it to national interest. Stephen promoted a "conscious, major concern to promote abolition by the advocacy of measures whose overt appeal was that they served the national interest, and to avoid prejudicing the abolition cause by yet another appeal to a humanity which, after nearly two decades of campaigning, still had not melted enough hearts." In 1805, he published his book *The War in Disguise*, in which he asserted that despite British naval dominance their enemies' colonies had continued to thrive due to their use of neutral shipping. Therefore, this policy needed to be overturned and the Royal Navy needed to be free to interdict shipping between Britain's enemies and their colonies.

By 1804-1805, with the invasion threat receding and having come through the conservative clampdown of the mid-1790s, some support for abolition was returning from neutral observers. Wilberforce had been able to secure a moratorium on shipping slaves to Dutch Guiana in 1805. In 1805 Pitt issued an Order-in-Council stopping the trade to foreign

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colonies. Then, in 1806, a rather startling development occurred that would re-open the path to total abolition – Prime Minister Pitt unexpectedly died. The "coalition ministry which came to power was dominated by men who favoured abolition" – Fox and Grenville. Wilberforce wrote to Grenville in March 1806 and suggested a new strategy that built upon recent measures taken (government prohibition against populating newly captured islands with new slave numbers) and the needs of a country at war. He suggested the government put a motion forward to stop the trade to foreign colonies, thus ending a large segment of the trade without ever bringing up a general abolition. In early 1806, Fox-Grenville "Ministry of Talents" put their support behind this partial abolition tactic. Wilberforce put forth a bill that would prevent the slave trade to possessions of foreign powers; he argued that it was in the national interest to do so. This bill passed in May 1806, reducing a significant portion of the total slave trade (between a third and a half).
Leading Parliamentary members then moved to abolish the slave trade, and at the same time committed to ensuring diplomatically that other countries followed Britain's lead.3120 Prime Minister Grenville put forth a motion to abolish the slave trade in January 1807; it was eventually passed in March 1807, abolishing the British slave trade after May 1807.3121 As Robin Blackburn notes, "in Britain, in 1806-7 every political issue was either borne aloft or dashed down by the gale force of the wider conflict then engaged."3122 In the case of abolition, the war had first thwarted, and then eventually been strategically manipulated to enact, the trade's prohibition.

At War with Napoleon (and Slavery?)

Having abolished the slave trade herself, Britain faced a challenge in convincing the other maritime powers of the day – Portugal (and its Brazilian colony), Spain (and Cuba), France, and even though it had outlawed the trade, the United States – to end the rest of the transatlantic trade.3123 Even while war was raging with France, once the slave trade was abolished in Britain, London then turned to work on the other powers over which she exerted influence. Smaller powers like Sweden and the Netherlands signed bilateral agreements outlawing the slave trade toward the end of the war.3124 The United States had a third of all slaves in the Americas, but the trade had been abolished there in 1808 and because of natural reproduction rates the trade into

that country was somewhat miniscule.\textsuperscript{3125} This was not the case with regard to Portugal and Spain, and particularly their colonies in Brazil and Cuba. The Brazilian and Cuban agricultural sectors benefited the most from British abolition and the Haitian Revolution, as they stepped to produce sugar and coffee (and, in the same way, the United States produced the cotton) that the British and French/Haitian planters could no longer provide.\textsuperscript{3126} As Eltis notes, "Brazil, Cuba, and perhaps the U.S. South, too, would not have been plantation backwaters in the absence of the British abolition, but they would no doubt have experienced a lower rate of growth in the face of continued competition from the massive British plantation sector."\textsuperscript{3127} The abolition of Britain's West Indian slave trade (and subsequently, the demise of its slave system there) had helped propel the dramatic rise of Brazil's and Cuba's slave systems, and ironically, the die – British abolition – having been cast, London would spend millions of pounds endeavoring to end the slave trades to these two countries.

London put anti-slave trade pressure on its Portuguese ally first (and in subsequent decades, more consistently and strongly than that which it could place on Spain); within weeks of attaining abolition itself, British officials pressed Portugal to do the same.\textsuperscript{3128} In August 1807, Napoleon gave Lisbon the ultimatum of closing Portuguese ports to the British or facing invasion; when he invaded in November, the royal family fled to Brazil on British ships.\textsuperscript{3129} Hence, the


Portuguese were largely dependent on British troops for protection of the empire. On February 19, 1810 Dom João signed a treaty that gave Britain most-favorable-trade status and committed Portugal to a gradual ending of the "injustice and disutility" of the slave trade. In 1815, increasingly powerful Brazil became equal in the empire with Portugal, and then in 1822 Brazil gained its independence – an arrangement which the British helped broker. For this entire period, and indeed in the decades that followed, British pressure would be forceful and near constant. Britain couldn't achieve the same concessions from Spain during this period, and indeed for reasons clarified more below, the general trend was that Britain would always be able to exert more influence on Portugal and Brazil than Spain and Cuba.

The conflict with Napoleon would exhaust the continent for two decades. These were times for desperate measures, as the ideas of the age led to adoption of mass/total warfare and consumed the national resources of all powers involved. The period was a great strain on Britain economically and militarily, and yet, the economy continued to grow – in part because of the industrial revolution and in part because of the overseas empire – during this period. On the other hand, Napoleon's campaigns showed the ultimate weaknesses of the French economy. France's was an agricultural economy, and there was no agricultural revolution. Further, Britain's naval blockade and the loss of Saint-Domingue further turned the French economy inward. The defeat at Trafalgar showed Britain's unparalleled naval superiority. Although when Prussia declared war in 1806 she was crushed within a month, the revolution in Spain against Napoleon in 1808

helped, as did Russia's split with Russia in 1811-1812 and Napoleon's subsequent defeat there. 
"Thus, the security of the British Isles and its relative prosperity on the one hand, and the 
overstretched and increasingly grasping nature of the French rule on the other, at last interacted to
begin to bring down Napoleon's empire."\textsuperscript{3134} Napoleon's losses in Russia were enormous, and by
1814 the country, and even Napoleon's marshals, had had enough. He abdicated on March 30,
1814; France was defeated. On land in Europe, there remained a relative balance of power, while
at sea Britain was supreme.\textsuperscript{3135} "Napoleon's hubris and refusal to compromise ensured not only
his downfall, but his greatest enemy's supreme victory." As Gneisenau concluded:

'Great Britain has no greater obligation than to this ruffian [Napoleon]. For through the events
which he has brought about, England's greatness, prosperity, and wealth have risen high. She is
mistress of the sea and neither this dominion nor in world trade has she now a single rival to
fear.'\textsuperscript{3136}

Before turning to a discussion of Britain's hegemony following the defeat of Napoleon and its
effect on slavery and the slave trade, it is important to examine one "sideshow" of the period – the
War of 1812 – and its ultimate geostrategic implications for the nineteenth and early twentieth
centuries.\textsuperscript{3137}

**Britain, America, and the War of 1812**

The Treaty of Paris in 1783 which ended the American Revolution had not clearly settled
the boundary or power issue in North America. In the United States, the nature of relations with,
and fear of, Britain was a primary aspect of foreign policy thinking. The Americans were already
developing a strong sense of exceptionalism, with Americans wanting to be disentangled from
European foreign policy and wars. The British realized the Americans were largely unwilling and
unprepared (as they attempted to consolidate their own government) to meddle in European


139; and Blackburn, Robin. The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848. New York, NY: Verso, 1988:
295-320.


\textsuperscript{3137} Black, Jeremy. The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma
affairs. For Britons, the revolution had been a traumatic event but once it was lost there was little call to retake the United States. Britain was able to pursue imperial growth elsewhere without worrying about the governance problems of America. Further, trade came back quickly after the war and so the United States still played an effective role in building the British economy.\textsuperscript{3138} Overall, the general theme from the British side was reconciliation; in fact, in 1785 when John Adams met with King George personally, he noted the monarch's stating:

'I have done nothing by the late contest but what I thought myself indispensably bound to do, by the duty which I owed to my people... I was the last to consent to the separation; but the separation having been made, and having become inevitable, I have always said, as I say now, that I would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an independent power... let the circumstances of language, religion, and blood have their natural and full effect.'\textsuperscript{3139}

Relations were naturally sticky in the first years after the revolution, but under the Federalists, America pursued a relatively pro-Britain foreign policy. Relations improved substantially in 1794-1795 with the negotiation of Jay's Treaty, which eased commercial and territorial disputes and improved trade with the West Indies. Britain was at war with France from 1793 to 1802, 1803 to 1814 (and then again in 1815) and so effective commerce with the United States was important, as the French war was paramount. The Jay Treaty ensured peace with Britain and ushered in good years of trade, particularly with the British, which was disturbing to the French. The French found the Americans, who they had helped so instrumentally during the revolution to be unreliable and ungrateful. No lasting alliance was developing and the Americans revived their trade with Britain. Between 1798 and 1800 there was animosity between the United

\textsuperscript{3139} Black, Jeremy. \textit{The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon}. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press, 2009: 19. Black notes, "In hindsight, relations with the USA appear more important than they did to the British and other Europeans at the time. To Britain, the war was an aggravating sideshow to the much larger conflict in Europe."
States and France, as the French sank or captured over three hundred American ships in response to Anglo-American trade (the "Quasi-War").

After winning in 1800, the Democratic Republicans (Jeffersonians) tried to repeal the pro-British policies. A defining theme of the era was economic warfare, and as Britain waged war against France in the early 1800s, they became more forceful in pushing their supremacy on the high seas. The Jay Treaty had kept peace through mid-1800, but trade and neutrality again became an issue as the British – actively carrying out their embargo of France – increasingly seized American ships and impressed American sailors. Anglo-American relations steadily deteriorated.

The United States passed non-importation (1806) and then embargo (1807) acts, which hurt the American economy and were replaced when Jefferson left office in 1809 with a Non-Intercourse Act (with both Britain and France), which had the unforeseen effect of West Indies trade going to Canada. For their part, the British issued an order-in-council in November 1807 prohibiting indirect trade between enemy states and their colonies using neutral ships (mostly American); an order in 1809 was even stricter, and so the Americans were increasingly resistant to the blockade. In 1810 the Americans dropped their crippling embargoes and replaced them with a plan to give preference to whomever respected American trade rights better; Napoleon manipulated this plan in his favor, and with American anger turned toward the British once again, the Americans passed another non-importation act in February 1811. This again had a terrible


3141 Hickey, Donald R. The War of 1812: A Short History. Chicago, IL: The University of Illinois Press, 1995: 6-9; and Black, Jeremy. The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press, 2009: 18. When the Jeffersonians took over their focus was on the defensive (plans to build the navy were cut), and hence, the U.S. was not very well prepared to invade Canada when war came.

3142 Latimer, Jon. 1812: War with America. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007: 25; and Black, Jeremy. The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press, 2009: 26. The Chesapeake incident in 1806 (HMS Leopard tried to take a deserter off the USS Chesapeake and this led to 10 minute engagement) was a famous inflammatory case.
effect on the American economy, and this, with frequent naval incidents, and the outbreak of Indian wars on northwestern frontier (which the Americans felt Britain sponsored) led to rumors of war with Britain by 1811. There had been talk of war at various times in this twenty-year period (1794, 1807, 1808), but diplomacy had always prevailed; this was not to be the case this time.  

Jefferson and his successors over-estimated American power following the acquisition of Louisiana (in 1803). He also mistook America's leverage in the relationship between Britain and France – America was not yet a great power. Nonetheless, the Jeffersonians were sure Britain would back down if war preparations were made. The Americans also misjudged Napoleon, as they assumed war was bound to continue (which was not to be the case for long following Napoleon's invasion of Russia). In a message to Congress in June 1812, Madison asked for war citing infringements on commerce (suggesting the war had already begun). On June 18, 1812, War was declared via an exceedingly close vote (79 to 49 in the House, 19-13 in the Senate) in Congress.  

The war lasted from June 1812 to February 1815. It was a complete misreading of British intentions, as the British government did not want war in the United States in 1812. News of declaration of war hit London on July 30, 1812. The government had already lifted the order-in-council regarding commerce that angered the United States so much, but it was too late; fighting had already begun. A speedy end was not to come. The Americans were to find in the 1812 to 1813 period that their weak and divided military was not capable of successfully invading Canada


– their chief war aim. In the 1814-1815 time-frame, the American military acquitted itself better in its defense against the British incursions (which led to mythmaking that America had actually won the war). For their part, the British met a lot of tactical success, but the long-term difficulty of completely "defeating" America was crucial. Britain considered sending Wellington to Canada in order to achieve final victory, but even he (he was at the Congress of Vienna at the time) suggested it was futile. Wellington replied that victory required greater control of the Great Lakes and hinted overall at the great difficulty and resources necessary to fully pacify the United States. In short, he suggested that it was illusory to attempt to dominate America.

Once it became clear that Britain couldn't gain a decisive victory in 1814, London was ready for negotiations. Britain had been at war for twenty-two years, was war-weary, and had no desire for it to go on. They couldn't carry on taxing the people to fight an American war. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool wrote to Castlereagh that "I think we have determined, if all other points can be made satisfactorily settled, not to continue the war for the purpose of


\[3151\] Black, Jeremy. *The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon.* Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press, 2009: 210. In response to the request for advice (and consideration of his going to America), Wellington answered: "There are troops enough there for the defense of Canada forever, and even for the accomplishment of any reasonable offensive plan that could be formed from the Canadian frontier. I am quite sure that all the American armies of which I have ever read would not bear out of a field of battle the [British] troops that went from Bordeaux [in France] last summer, if common precautions and care was taken of them. That which appears to me to be wanting [to Britain] in America is not a general, or general officers and troops, but a naval superiority on the lakes. Till that superiority is acquired it is impossible, according to my notion, to maintain an army in such a situation as to keep the enemy out of the whole frontier, much less to make any conquest from the enemy, which, with those superior means, might, with reasonable hopes of success, be undertaken... I think the whole history of the war proves its truth."

\[3152\] Latimer, Jon. *1812: War with America.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007: 389. America was also greatly in debt; the American debt went from 45 million in 1813 to 127 million by the end of 1815.
obtaining or securing any acquisition of territory.3153 In concluding the war, British leadership took domestic pressure and more pressing foreign policy interests into account.3154

In treaty negotiations, Britain tried to attain a frontier (separation) between the United States and their Native American allies, but it was not to be. They also pressed for removal of American warships and forts from the Great Lakes. Overall, however, the British were pushing to end the struggle so they could end taxation and get their fiscal house back in order. In the wider context, this was in keeping with the British approach at the Congress of Vienna – they wanted to retain some strategic positions but were willing to return territory in order to end hostilities.3155 As Jeremy Black notes, "a sense of imperial sufficiency was important in this, as was a view that only so much was necessary in order to ensure colonial and maritime security, and imperial predominance."3156 News of America's agreement arrived March 13, 1815, four days after Napoleon's return from Elba; this allowed troops bound for America to head to Belgium and thereby helped produce Napoleon's final defeat.3157

The Treaty of Ghent ended the War of 1812.3158 In retrospect, this was a war that shouldn't have happened. Some claim it was a war forced on America by arrogant Britain, but the evidence is flimsy. "Britain's sole objective throughout the period was the defeat of France, and all its actions must be seen through the prism of a twenty-two-year struggle whose scope threatened its continued existence as a pre-eminent world power."3159 The overall outcome was a

3157 Latimer, Jon. 1812: War with America. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007: 4, 392. Of note, there was very little discussion of America in any sides' dispatches to the Congress of Vienna. The French didn't consider America a viable ally compared to other European powers. This, in part, bears out the feeling of over-confidence and over-importance the Americans had felt, and signifies. As historian Jon Latimer notes, "for Britain the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars were wars of national survival and the war in America an irritating distraction" (page 4).
bit obscure, as neither side achieved its full objectives. The Americans couldn't take Canada (and on the other hand, retaining her was a victory of Britain), but they did break the link between Britain and the Native Americans which London supported. "America's position as an independent power had been consolidated." Slavery was a secondary issue, but both sides did agree to work toward ending the trade.

Geographically, it was the conflict between Britain and France that ensured France couldn't hold position in North America and resumption of war with Britain doomed France's ability to recapture Haiti. At the same time, war with France meant Britain couldn't devote its full weight to the war it didn't want in America; hence America was very fortunate in the overall outcome. Further, in America this conflict helped build nationalism and myth-making. The myth developed that the war was an American victory and "second independence," but given that America's main aim was taking Canada, it could be considered a failed war of conquest. The war allowed America to see itself as a nation and stoked its nationalism based on its perceived external threat; anglophobia remained important and led to unfounded fear on issues like Texas in the 1830s and 1840s. In fact, anglophobia continued to be a part of American foreign policy for generations; America had wanted to conquer Canada and the loss secured that country's future

3162 Fehrenbacher, Don E. *The Slaveholding Republic*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 94; and Black, Jeremy. *The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon*. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press, 2009: 219, 237. The wording of the treaty reinforced the concept that slaves were property and the United States were to bicker over compensation for slaves that left with the British (4,000 or so), before the British finally relented and paid compensation.
3163 Black, Jeremy. *The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon*. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press, 2009: 229-236; and Latimer, Jon. *1812: War with America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007: 403-404. Having the French and Spanish on America's side had been a key to their winning the revolution. The state and regional loyalties and factionalism that hurt American performance during the war would continue to challenge political and military cohesion. Overall these weaknesses helped make the United States more amenable to stronger central government and a stronger standing military and led to sea coast fortifications. After the war politically, as Jon Latimer notes, both political parties were redundant, as the Republicans had brought about a stronger centralized government, a stronger military, taxes, etc.
as an independent nation.\textsuperscript{3165} Canada, and fear of Britain overall, would remain important issues in American foreign policy right up to World War II.\textsuperscript{3166} Immediately after the war, however, Americans were geared more toward moving west than any threat to Canada. The lack of success in the North meant America's "manifest destiny" was west and south; in that sense, then, the war was crucial to the future of Spanish-American relations.\textsuperscript{3167}

For Britain, the result of the war was an overall withdrawal of British interference in the interior of America – clearing the way for America to expand.\textsuperscript{3168} America, particularly its navy, had earned some level of respect from Britain and the rest of Europe (adding to American myth-making).\textsuperscript{3169} As Jon Latimer writes, "during the recent conflict Britain had expanded its economic and territorial horizons... its strategy had been, and would continue to be, based on the power of economic warfare conferred by its navy, and should not be wasted in chasing sterile battlefield glories."\textsuperscript{3170} Britain wanted a stable settlement of nation-states to ensure long-term peace and this overrode any desires for gains on the Canadian border and/or the retrieval of pride over the War of 1812.\textsuperscript{3171} "Castlereagh could see that the Americans would always hold the upper hand in local

\textsuperscript{3166} Latimer, Jon. 1812: War with America. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007: 407-408. Until 1940, Anglothophobia and the take-over of Canada remained on America's mind. In Pre-World War II warplans, Britain remained one of America's targets via War Plan Red. In this plan, the United States would invade Canada, bomb Halifax, Montreal, and Quebec were all part of the program, and hold the territory, thus ending the Northern dominion.
issues, so that British were happy to limit naval forces on the Great Lakes and to keep their side
on any agreements.\footnote{172}

As the century moved forward, Britain was content not to challenge the Monroe
Doctrine; their main concern was checking French and Spanish power in the western hemisphere
(and frankly, America couldn't truly stop them if they interfered in Latin America).\footnote{173} The
Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 settled disputes over Maine, New Hampshire, and other parts
of the northern border.\footnote{174} As historian Jeremy Black notes, "allowing for the serious Anglo-
American disputes, again mainly over neutral rights, stemming from the Civil War (1861-65), the
so-called North American Question in fact had been settled by the War of 1812. Partly due to the
lessons of that war, a fresh conflict in the 1860s was anyway less likely."\footnote{175} In the aftermath of
the conflict a pattern emerged that held for the next one-hundred-plus years.\footnote{176} Black notes,
"despite imperial rivalry and crises, there was a clearly discernible trend in Anglo-American
relations after the War of 1812 to resort to arbitration, in large part because war was now
recognized as too problematic."\footnote{177} "The realization that Canada could not be conquered greatly
eased subsequent relations with Britain... the outcome was a standoff that initiated a long-term

\footnote{172} Latimer, Jon. 1812: War with America. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007: 401; and
Black, Jeremy. The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press,
2009: 236-237. In fact, with Ferdinand VII's assumption of power in Spain (Britain's ally) in 1814, Spain
hoped in the future to regain their strength in North America, but Britain wasn't willing to risk a new
American war. Further, on the United States side, it was increasing learning that it had to play the game
within the international system.

228-229; and Latimer, Jon. 1812: War with America. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007:
404.

\footnote{174} Black, Jeremy. The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma

\footnote{175} Black, Jeremy. The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma


\footnote{177} Black, Jeremy. The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma
willingness by both powers to settle their mutual grievances short of war.\textsuperscript{3178} From 1815 to 1945, there was continuous rivalry between the United States and Britain but little conflict, and ultimately the failures of the war caused them both to be more cautious and prudent.\textsuperscript{3179}

**Figure 8.2. Comparative Power Index, 1816-1880\textsuperscript{3180}**

The long period of rivalry without European conflict allowed the United States to move west and grow as a power. Ever-astute, Napoleon had summarized well America's rise and the


\textsuperscript{3180} This data comes from "National Material Capabilities" 2010 Update (v4.0), Correlates of War Project available at www.correlatesofwar.org; for original see Singer, J. David, Stuart Bremer, and John Stuckey. "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965." In *Peace, War, and Numbers*, ed. Bruce Russett. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1972: 19-48. In These power indices are determined by comparing a number of factors, including iron and steel production (in thousands of tons), military expenditures (in British pounds), military personnel (in thousands), energy consumption (in thousands of coal-ton equivalents), total population (in thousands), and urban population (population living in cities with population greater than 100,000; in thousands).
future of great power politics coming out of the period; In 1816, he prophetically quipped to the governor of Helena:

'Your [British] coal gives you an advantage we cannot possess in France. But the high price of all articles of prime necessity is a great disadvantage in the export of your manufactures... your manufacturers are emigrating fast to America... In a century or perhaps half a century more: it will give a new character to the affairs of the world. It has thriven upon our follies.'

Conclusion

The 18th century had been characterized by conflict and multipolarity. The two great power rivals of the period, France and Britain, had taken the lead in the slave trade and that trade/institution had helped them increase their power. But France underwent a bloody revolution at home and in its richest colony, which it subsequently lost. Napoleon's rise would take France to the precipice of hegemonic power, only then to fall to defeat in a way that left Britain as the world's predominant great power. A time-bounded review of national material capabilities (population, manufacturing, military expenditures, etc.) shows Britain as the greatest of powers for most of the period covered here. As Napoleon prophetically stated, as time moved the United States would continue to rise as a challenger. But, after the defeat of Napoleon, Britain was in a position to set a new order. Given this power position, from a strategic perspective Britain turned its back on the slave trade at exactly the wrong time; if continued, London could have reaped unprecedented gains from that trade. Once abolishing the trade itself (critically, only after the threat from radicalism and Napoleonic invasion had passed), it was in Britain's interest to make sure other powers adopted the same measures. London would find that its effort to end the trade would be complicated by the demand for slaves in Cuba and Brazil and the presence of a significant slave system in the emerging power, the United States.

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Setting a New Order

Given that one defining theme of the Napoleonic era was total economic warfare, it is of significant importance that Britain carried on with total abolition while victory over Napoleon was still in doubt and after having used strategic considerations (restricting foreign trade) to finalize in Parliament the curtailment of a considerable part of the traffic.\textsuperscript{3182} As Chapter 3 demonstrated, in purely economic terms, slavery paid. Therefore, in geostrategic terms, the last thing the British should have done in the Napoleonic period – during which time they were the leaders in the trade, controlled more slave-labored land than before, and were at war for great power supremacy – was to end the trade, and certainly not, having ended rival trade, to then in 1807 voluntarily end their own. Revolution and war had put Britain in charge of more plantation land than they'd had to that point or would have again, and as historian David Eltis asserts, "in 1800, if one were to argue in terms of economic self-interest, the British should have been actively encouraging the slave trade and slave settlements throughout the world."\textsuperscript{3183} In fact, in Eltis's magnificent study of the slave trade's suppression – the pre-eminent scholarly work on the subject – he examined at least three other courses of action that would have been more strategically sound than completing total abolition. These are briefly discussed below.

\textit{Option 1: Laissez-faire Approach from the Start, or, Re-Opening the Slave Trade.} As Eltis notes, "of the three policy options discussed, this is the most difficult to visualize if only because contemporaries never considered it [re-opening the trade] as a possibility."\textsuperscript{3184} If Britain would have left access to the African (slave) trade open it would have allowed Britain to maintain the economic domination, and particularly its domination of plantation agriculture, that it had

acquired at the end of the 18th century. Further, prices would have been lower and the Cuban and
Brazilian share of the market – which increased dramatically after Britain ended their trade –
would likely have remained small. It cost a significant portion of the national treasure to carry on
an abolition/trade suppression campaign that was always difficult, and in enacting some levels of
suppression, Britain hurt its own markets.3185 "Within Britain... abolition of coerced labor and the
system that supplied it reduced British incomes. Prices of foodstuffs were increased, employment
was lowered and domestic social tensions were exacerbated by reduced exploitation of Africans
in the New World."3186 David Eltis concludes, "the real interests of most groups in Britain before
1850 would have been best served by policies that encouraged the use of coerced labor in lightly
populated transoceanic regions."3187 Seymour Drescher concurs. As he states, "by simply
suspending their own act in 1814, pending international agreement, their new tropical colonies in
both hemispheres could easily have sustained and improved the British Empire's position in the
slave plantation complex. Of course, the British government's theoretical option to use, or even
threaten to use, such an alternative was foreclosed by British civil society.3188 Therefore, Britain
did indeed end the slave trade at a peak of its power, never considered re-opening it even though
it would have boded well economically; it then went on to suppress the traffic, a difficult and
unfulfilling task, at great cost to her own treasury.3189

3185 Lambert, Andrew. "Slavery, Free Trade and Naval Strategy, 1840-1860." In Slavery, Diplomacy and
Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975. eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick
3186 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY:
3187 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY:
3189 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY:
Oxford University Press, 1989: 10-12; Lambert, Andrew. "Slavery, Free Trade and Naval Strategy, 1840-
1860." In Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975. eds.
Option 2: Allowing an Intercolonial Slave Trade. The unpursued option listed above was not the only one available. Having abolished the transatlantic slave trade, Britain could have developed an intercolonial slave trade so that the slaves already in their colonies could be most effectively utilized. A "free market" approach to slave trading in already established colonies would likely have led to a shift in slaves from older colonies to those of newer captured territories like Trinidad and Demerara, which would then have been more effectively utilized. They could likely have enacted this policy without the same level of moral condemnation as, say, re-opening the slave trade, and Eltis's calculations suggest they would have received a significant increase in agricultural productivity. As Eltis concludes, "at virtually no additional cost in either economic or (by then-contemporary international standards) moral terms, the British could have captured for their own possessions all of the gains made by the Cuban producers after 1807."3190

Option 3: No Post-War Suppression Effort. Finally, if not willing to re-introduce the slave trade and/or allow for an intercolonial trade to maximize the benefits from the slaves they already possessed, the British could have at least cut their losses by not undertaking such a massive diplomatic/suppression effort. When the Whigs took office in 1831 they immediately questioned the net gains of the millions of pounds spent on suppression of the slave trade, particularly to Cuba and Brazil, in the years since 1815. The expenditures on outfitting a naval squadron utilized in suppression, in making payoffs for foreign treaties signed, and executing the mixed commission courts (including compensating the wrongly accused) ended up being very high. If Britain had simply allowed other powers to trade (and with themselves out of the way, then, Brazil, Cuba (Spain), and the United States (and perhaps France, although lost Saint-Domingue was the real prize) would have gained but British manufacturers would have utilized the raw materials produced there to their own advantage (as, indeed, they did with American

3190 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 8-9. Eltis calculated a productivity increase of 24 percent, and thus he states "of all the British abolitionist moves, the strangulation of the intercolonial traffic is the hardest to explain in terms of direct economic gains."
cotton) without the great effort expended. As Eltis notes, although the sum total of gains in national income would have been modest, "the direction of the effect is clear."\textsuperscript{3191}

Frankly, any one of these options would have elicited much less animosity and in addition to the economic benefits, would have made the conduct of British foreign policy much easier.\textsuperscript{3192} As naval historian Andrew Lambert summarizes, "the diplomatic and legal complexities of conducting what were, in essence, warlike operations on the high seas against the merchant ships of many nations ensured that the abolition of the slave trade would cost the Royal Navy a great deal of blood, sweat and treasure over the fifty years that followed the British legislation."\textsuperscript{3193}

Napoleon abdicated on April 7, 1814. When peace negotiations began, abolition was on the agenda because British public opinion wanted it there, while the French public certainly did not. The French public and ministries still held dreams of quick recovery, in part through the return of colonial riches (particularly from Saint-Domingue, which they still hoped to reconquer). The Parliament and the Marine Ministry opposed abolition, while the new King – Louis XVIII – and critical ministers like Foreign Minister Prince de Talleyrand, knew the trade would end eventually. Spain and Portugal also didn't want to agree, but since they were saved by the British during the war, London felt they'd have to agree eventually.\textsuperscript{3194}

The British Foreign Minister, Lord Castlereagh, was under instruction to include immediate abolition as part of the treaty. Lord Talleyrand immediately objected to the subject even being discussed. Castlereagh understood that domestically France was under pressure not to bow to British demands and he therefore felt some kind of arrangement that saved French face

would be more apt to promote peace over the long haul. Talleyrand made clear that for the new government to have a chance at survival, "it is necessary for us to have, I say, a wording which presents the engagement... as resulting from an entirely free and voluntary decision." It appeared that the choice was one of continued war with France or a softening on the slave trade article; British diplomats were willing to back off and take a lesser concession with an eye to eventual abolition if it averted war. Castlereagh gained permission from London to negotiate lesser terms, and eventually the diplomats compromised and agreed to return some former colonies to France and in return Paris would end the trade in five years. The First Treaty of Paris – concluded May 30, 1814 – made no mention of universal abolition and was couched in such a way to suggest that such omission was agreeable to both parties; abolition was not forced overtly upon a prostrated French government.

Abolitionists were outraged at the treaty. When Lord Castlereagh came to the Commons with the Treaty of Paris in hand, Wilberforce immediately spoke of the "Additional Article" that extended French trade for 5 years. Wilberforce and the influential African Institution went to work to make sure the government would push for immediate abolition in the upcoming Congress of Vienna. Once the public was roused to the realities of the treaty they reacted strongly, pushing to force abolition on France. Another popular campaign was launched and the outcome was "resounding:" a total of 1,370 petitions reached Parliament, with signatures from between

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3198 Kielstra, Paul Michael. *The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 12-15. As discussed previously, the African Institution had been founded to promote African development, but it turned into an anti-slave trade society. It developed into a very powerful lobby because it was eventually composed of some of the most powerful persons in and out of Parliament. With such powerful members, the Institution came to have a powerful unofficial influence on the cabinet and the ministries.
750,000 and 1,375,000 people (out of a country with 4 million males over 16 years of age). By this time, Britain was taking national pride in its role as champion of abolition, and so this, mixed with a lack of understanding of the domestic situation in France and a perhaps overconfidence in Britain's own ability to force terms on other powers, led to an unrelenting stance. As Paul Michael Kielstra notes, "a combination of misinformation, unrealistic hypernationalism and moral absolutism" all congealed to produce an outcry against the provision to let France continue the trade for five years. Popular opinion had put abolition on the international political agenda; future governments would have to work for it or pay a domestic political price, for as Kielstra states, "universal abolition had joined control of the seas and a select few other goals as fundamental, negotiable [sic] interests of British foreign policy." Lord Castlereagh was certainly aware of the power of abolitionist sentiment; as he said, "the nation is bent upon this object. I believe that there is hardly a village that has not met and petitioned." Given that fact, British diplomats would be forced to push for harder measures at Vienna.

In contrast to Britain, the threat of abolition brought a public onslaught from the defenders of the trade in France. Pro-trade merchants and colonists had the public on their side. Many saw the return of the French colonies, and trade there, particularly Saint-Domingue (if it

3199 Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 228-229; and Kielstra, Paul Michael. The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 7-15, 23-33. The large figure comes from Kielstra. Whatever the exact number, these figures suggest that between This means that between a fifth and a third of the eligible signatories did, in fact, sign. This far outpaces other petition campaigns of the era, as it outpaces the average annual number of all other petitions sent to Parliament during 1811 to 1815.


could be re-conquered) as the fast track to return French power. Kielstra states, "just as abolitionism had mixed with British nationalism, anti-abolitionism was diffusing into its French counterpart, thereby heightening friction." A healthy dose of hatred for old rival Britain mixed with national pride and practical commercial sense combined to produce a healthy pro-slavery concoction.

The Duke of Wellington was the British Ambassador to Paris; he was ordered to try to achieve an agreement on complete abolition in the lead-up to the Congress of Vienna. Louis XVIII politely refused to accept complete abolition, citing clear public opinion in favor of the trade. In correspondence with Castlereagh, Wellington admitted that he hadn't been aware of how strong the feeling in the country was, but he found it foolish to go to war to end the trade. Personally, Castlereagh felt it "wrong 'to force it [the abolition of the slave trade] upon nations, at the expense of their honour and of the tranquility of the world. Morals were never well taught by the sword." But, given the public outcry at home Castlereagh, Wellington, and their diplomats developed an interesting alliance with abolitionists to try to build a popular French abolition movement and swing public opinion there. Wellington was operating in a way that was bordering on interference in French domestic affairs, but he had cover from Talleyrand and Louis XVIII, who accepted the publication of anti-slave trade tracts in order to weaken public opposition to negotiation. In the short run, however, all these efforts failed and as Wellington was entered

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3205 Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 229. Wellington's exact quote was "I was not aware till I had been some time here [London] of the degree of frenzy existing here about the slave trade. People in general appear to think that it would suit the policy of this nation to go to war to put an end to that abominable traffic."
negotiations at Vienna he was stuck between an unmoving French government (particularly the ministries) and British public opinion at home, which demanded a definitive end of the French trade.\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 39-47; Bethell, Leslie. \textit{The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1970: 11-13; and Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 229. With regard to the French, Kielstra notes that after years of absolute monarchy, Louis XVIII and other French governing officials were adjusting to a form of government that was at least to some degree answerable to the people – however flawed the constitutional monarchy was.}

The Congress of Vienna officially convened from November 1, 1814 to June 9, 1815; originally it was to include negotiations primarily between the four victorious powers – Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Austria – but Talleyrand was able to work his way into the negotiations on the French side and the negotiations included most all the states of Europe. The aim of the congress was to resolve outstanding issues (particularly territorial issues) coming out of the Napoleonic Wars and set up a new order in Europe, including a future "Concert of Europe" with regular meetings among the great powers.\footnote{Dupont, Christophe. "History and Coalitions: The Vienna Congress (1814-1815)." \textit{International Negotiation} 8, 1, 2003: 170-171.} Britain tried to secure a declaration for immediate abolition from all the powers, and to attain right of search for an international policing force so that they could effectively implement a ban on the trade. Castlereagh put pressure on the French first, figuring if he could secure it, Spain and Portugal would follow have little choice but to follow.\footnote{Hamilton, Keith and Farida Shaikh. "Introduction." In \textit{Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975}. eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon. Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2009: 5-6.} All three resisted. Further, even supposed supporters such as Tsar Alexander of Russia utilized the issue for the purposes of \textit{realpolitick}, knowing that given opinion at home, the slavery issue was a soft-underbelly for Castlereagh and his ministry. As Kielstra notes, "Europe's rulers had an issue with which to weaken a British government or to wring concessions from it at little cost to themselves."\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 34.} The best Britain could achieve was a joint declaration against the
slave trade, but no final date for its end. On February 8, 1815, Britain, Russia, Austria, Prussia, France, Spain, Portugal, and Sweden signed an Eight Power Declaration that stated the slave trade was "repugnant to the principles of humanity and universal morality," that 'the public voice in all civilised countries call aloud for its prompt suppression,' and that all the Powers possessing colonies acknowledge the 'duty and necessity' of abolishing its as soon as practicable." No right of search powers were granted, and the powers agreed to conduct further negotiations for a final cessation date. As diplomatic historians Keith Hamilton and Farida Shaikh conclude, the signatory countries "were agreed that the trade was morally wrong and that it ought to be abolished, but reluctant to say how and when. As so often in humanitarian diplomacy, it was easier to proclaim principles than to settle on means for their practical application." It was a significant milestone to get the powers to agree that the trade was repugnant and ultimately


doomed and in that sense, "a precedent had been set," but it was far less than Britain and its public expected.\textsuperscript{3214}

In a surprising turn of events, Napoleon abolished slavery during his return to power in his "Hundred Days" (March to July 1815). He was hoping to soften British public opinion and perhaps divide the alliance arrayed against him. This forced Louis XVIII to officially concede abolition, but the French remained far from actually fully enacting abolition. The government adopted a two-pronged strategy with regard to the slave trade: they would have diplomats frustrate multinational efforts (at the Congress of Vienna) and delay direct talks on a final abolition date, and then introduce (weak) domestic legislation to keep Britain pacified. After conceding official abolition, Louis left it to the Marine Ministry to implement, and of course, this meant it would be stalled indefinitely; the French navy was "neither effective nor enthusiastic" about curtailing the trade.\textsuperscript{3215} In early June 1815 (just before Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo) the joint declaration against the slave trade became part of the \textit{Acte Final} of the Congress of Vienna. An anti-slave trade article was added to Second Treaty of Paris. Hence, in principle Britain, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and France agreed to "concert their efforts for the 'entire and definite' abolition of the trade."\textsuperscript{3216}


Historian Seymour Drescher concludes that the period from the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 to the Congress of Vienna in 1815 was a turning point for Britain domestically, and for the slave trade internationally. The key powers had been poised to expand their systems and in fact, under British leadership, they had done the opposite. By 1808, the British were exercising naval and diplomatic pressure against the slave trade. In the summer of 1814, the British public showed itself fully behind efforts to end the trade internationally and this domestic opinion would influence policy in the decades to come.\footnote{Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 228-229.}

\textbf{Britain Against the Trade: A Multi-Pronged Approach}

Given that public opinion compelled Britain to stop the slave trades, with rival France's being first on the agenda, London was faced with a strategic policy dilemma. It could go about suppression through multilateral negotiations, unilateral negotiations, or by adopting an aggressive stance and taking suppression into its own hands. As Paul Michael Kielstra summarizes, "Besides diplomatic protests, it could seize ships itself or seek to apply unilateral or multinational pressure on France [and the other powers], both to toughen its laws and to accept the right of search."\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 63.} London "tried each option with varying success."\footnote{Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 63.} As already discussed, Britain had attempted multilateral action at the Congress of Vienna, meeting very limited success. Its multilateral efforts would continue, but given Vienna's limited outcomes, London was forced to attempt the other two policy options – ship seizures and bilateral treaties – as well.

In the closing days of the Napoleonic Wars, the British Royal Navy had orders to seize all French ships, whether slavers or not. To the great dismay of the French this policy continued after the war, even though such measures appeared to go against international law. British
domestic jurisprudence remained ambiguous. "In the precedent-setting case of the Amédie, an American slaver taken in 1810, Judge Sir William Grant had ruled that the traffic 'cannot, abstractly speaking... have a legitimate existence.'\textsuperscript{3220} The general thrust of the ruling was that if a country's domestic law didn't allow the trade then British ships could confiscate and try captured vessels. The government and its ministries needed the right of search to clarify the issue, and hence, they tried to attain that right at the Congress of Vienna. Those efforts had failed. London would spend the next generation continuing the effort, at first via multinational negotiations and then bilateral ones when necessary. In March 1816, Lord Castlereagh again attempted to coax Austria, Prussia, Russia and France to resume negotiations. France wanted nothing do with the discussions. Their merchants were still trafficking. In fact, despite the fact that Talleyrand had promised an ordinance (to keep it out of the Chambers, which were pro-trade), no such ordinance had been developed and the Marine Ministry hadn't sent any naval officers orders regarding the trade. "Having conceded abolition to appease Britain, nobody in the government gave it further thought."\textsuperscript{3221} Inevitably, however, the French would have to negotiate. Castlereagh was looking for a time-limited (seven years to start) maritime alliance confined to the waters off Africa to suppress both the slave trade and piracy. The last article had also included a right of search provision. Naturally, given her naval dominance, the British understood that their navy would be the main one on patrol, as did the other powers. The French didn't want to reject the treaty outright, and thus risk a row with Britain, and ultimately Russia and Austria decided to object to the issue (without letting it appear that they were in collusion with France). Clearly the European powers would not easily acquiesce to such a British led proposition that would likely


\textsuperscript{3221} Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 62; and Eltis, David. \textit{Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 56. As Eltis notes, as the British trade declined the French, seeking an economic recovery, got back in. By mid-1820s the French were dominating the Havana and southern part of Cuban slave trade. In less than 10 ten years there had been almost complete turnover due to the termination of the British and American trades.
only enhance London's ability to impose its will on the other powers. Nonetheless, Castlereagh
had scored a victory, for although the treaty wasn't signed, the terms of the treaty would at least
serve as a starting point for further negotiations.  

The parties re-convened in London to discuss the issue in December 1817. The French
could stand aside as the other powers, particularly Russia and Austria, crippled the anti-slave
trade measures. They immediately moved to separate them from the anti-piracy laws. At the same
time, the Le Louis incident complicated the negotiations. The ship had taken on slaves in Africa
and was overtaken by the British ship Queen Charlotte, after a battle in which eight British
sailors were killed. Taken to Sierra Leone for adjudication by British courts, the news arrived in
France in early December. The French asserted the British should admit that, with the war over,
British ships no longer had any jurisdiction over French shipping. Judge Sir William Scott's
decision asserted that right of search in international law only occurred in time of war (and in
dealing with pirates, who warred against humanity). It was illegal to search a ship in international
waters in peace time and hence no evidence of slave-trading could be brought forward. Through
this ruling, Britain's assertion for right of seizure for international ships was no longer viable. In
conference negotiations, despite evidence of the continuing trade, Castlereagh's effort to broker a
final agreement was met with silence. As David Eltis notes, by 1818 it was pretty clear that "joint
international action on the slave trade would not go beyond empty declarations."  

A multilateral anti-slave trade/right of search convention was dead in the water.  

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Oxford University Press, 1989: 111; and Hamilton, Keith and Farida Shaikh. "Introduction." In *Slavery,
Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975*. eds. Keith Hamilton
that year and, again, it was clear there would be no concerted anti-trade effort agreed upon in a multilateral
fashion by the great powers.
During these multilateral negotiations, and certainly once they failed, the British attempted to bolster slave trade suppression through bilateral treaties; what couldn't be done multilaterally, Britain attempted in one-on-one negotiations. While the war raged, because Britain was protecting Spain and Portugal/Brazil, they were in a dominant position to pressure them on the slave trade. In 1810 Portuguese Brazil (the Prince Regent being in exile) had made a commercial treaty with Britain and an empty declaration against the slave trade. In the Treaty of Madrid, signed with Spain in July 1814, Spain officially agreed that the trade was unjust and inhumane, that Spain wouldn't supply slaves to other countries, and that eventually they'd abolish the trade altogether. Any concession on abolition was met with horror in Spain's Cuban colony, for, in the last half of the 18th century and particularly after Saint-Domingue fell into chaos, Cuba had gone from a minor possession to the "jewel of the Spanish crown." As Spain was steadily stripped of its imperial possessions, the Cuban sugar trade became the main source of funding for Madrid's treasury. Ultimately, then, Spain paid lip-service to anti-slave trade agreements with Britain but no hard and fast measures had come to pass. Clearly the aim of the Treaty of the Madrid was to pacify the British and to continue to stall the ending of the trade – another agreement without teeth. Britain pressured Portugal and Brazil even more forcefully. In January 1815, Britain agreed to pay a sum of £300,000 and forgive some loans in return for

ending the Portuguese trade north of the equator; their merchants could still transport slaves south of equator.3232

At the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the British made return of Danish, Swedish, and Dutch colonial possessions contingent upon their renouncing the slave trade and all three European states largely acquiesced.3233 Eventually, Sweden and Denmark initiated emancipations in their few, small colonies from 1846 to 1847. The Netherlands signed a right of search convention in May 1818 and made appointments to the British mixed commission system discussed below. In this way, one could contend that of all the countries only the Netherlands "seemed ready to observe the spirit as well as the letter" of the treaty agreements it had made.3234 Under British pressure and following their model, the Dutch introduced gradual emancipation in 1847. Gaining abolition and eventual emancipation from these countries, who possessed relatively small and/or economically marginal slave systems was one thing; gaining concessions from larger systems like Brazil and Spain's Cuba was quite another.3235

Despite the treaties with Spain (1814) and Portugal (1815), London wasn't pacified. She kept up the pressure and in July 1817 Portugal signed a new deal with Britain that again said they could carry on south of equator, but allowed Britain right of search and brought Lisbon into the

3233 Drescher, Seymour. Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 280. As Drescher notes, "with small plantation colonies and an aging slave population, Sweden and Denmark initiated emancipations in 1846-1847. Popular mobilization in the two Baltic states was nonexistent and unnecessary. So unproblematic was slavery in the small Swedish colony of St. Bartholomew that Sweden's ambassador to France claimed to be simply unaware of the slaves' existence when British abolitionists approached him in the early 1840s. The Swedish Abolition Society subsequently rejected any public petitioning on the subject in favor of a private appeal to the king."
mixed commission system. The Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1817 had become the model, and Spain agreed to a similar treaty in September 1817. In return for an indemnity of £400,000, Spain agreed to end the trade north of the equator and to completely stop the trade (including south of the equator) by 1820.

As David Eltis summarizes, over the course of the next fifty-plus years Britain generally utilized four different types of bilateral treaties to restrict the slave trade, of which the 1817 treaties were examples of the first and favored variety: allowing right of search and adjudicating captured vessels via mixed courts, or commissions. In 1819 appointments were made to mixed commissions in Rio de Janeiro, Havana, Surinam, and Freetown Sierra Leone. The mixed commissions had a commissary judge and commissioner of arbitration from each nation, and a secretary and registrar appointed by the government in which the commission sat. For example, in Sierra Leone a British judge sat next to Spanish, Brazilian, and Dutch colleagues, and

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the other commissions had one British judge and at least one from the mother countries. The commissions would decide if a captured ship was a slaving ship, and either "condemn" it and confiscate its goods and free its slaves, or give back vessel and slaves and make up losses to owners. In essence, Britain was trying to establish an international judicial system backed by a cooperative "international police force" to combat the slave trade. In reality, British naval dominance meant they were more or less the only ones patrolling. Because the Royal Navy focused on the African coast, most cases were adjudicated in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

According to Farida Shaikh, "some 528 cases were handled there during the years 1819-45: 241 by the Anglo-Spanish commission, 155 by the Anglo-Portuguese commission, 111 by the Anglo-Brazilian commission, and 21 by the Anglo-Netherlands commission. In the same period the commissions at Havana and Rio de Janeiro were responsible respectively for 50 and 44 adjudications and that at Surinam for one." Over the long haul, Britain had some success in achieving this first type of agreement. New treaties or additional articles were agreed to with the Netherlands (1822), Sweden (1824), Norway (1835), Brazil (1826), Spain (1835), Portugal (1842), and the United States (1862). In

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3245 Shaikh, Farida. "Judicial Diplomacy: British Officials and the Mixed Commission Courts." In *Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975*, eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon. Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2009: 48-51. "In total, nearly 65,000 slaves were liberated in Freetown, and more than 10,000 and 3,000 were freed in Havana and Rio de Janeiro respectively." Of note, the make-up of the courts (including the country of origin of the commissioner of arbitration which was chosen by lots) often determined the outcome of the case. Britain's courts/lead judges tended to be the harshest. For example, between 1831 and 1841 the Freetown Court tried 272 cases and condemned 98% of those tried. In contrast, the Havana court tried only 30 cases (released 3) and Rio Court tried over 100 cases and released 32%.
addition, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Chile, and Ecuador agreed to this type of treaty between 1839 and 1841. As Eltis notes, at various times over the succeeding decades the outright refusal to agree to such terms, evasion of treaties already assigned, and/or general delay tactics in deference to economic/planter interests of Portugal, Spain, the United States, and France ensured that at different times in the century the respective flags of these states each dominated the slave traffic. Quite naturally, the strongest countries – France and the United States – were the last to agree to these sets of terms, particularly balking at the right of search.\textsuperscript{3246}

The second type of British bilateral treaty was the right of search without mixed commissions, the models of which were the Anglo-French agreements of 1831 and 1833. Under this structure, states were granted mutual right of search without the mixed commission system, and the suspected slavers were turned over to domestic courts. Denmark, Sardinia, Hanse towns, Tuscany, Two Sicilies, and Haiti became part of the Anglo-French Treaties mentioned above. Later, Venezuela, Texas, Mexico, and Belgium, signed similar treaties, as did Austria, Prussia and Russia under the Quintuple Agreement of 1841 (France signed but didn't ratify).\textsuperscript{3247}

In 1845 France replaced the 1831 and 1833 treaties with a new convention, which served as an example of a third type of treaty: no right of search, but mutual obligation to station naval forces on the African coast to suppress the trade. The French treaty compelled them to station a force equal to that of the British off the West African coast (a huge increase from their starting presence there). Article 8 of the Anglo-American Webster-Ashburton Treaty (1842) was similar in make-up. One other agreement type requires mention: those made with African powers. As Eltis notes, "initially treaties were intended not only to commit African rulers to end the slave


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trade but also to ensure a most-favored-nation status for British commerce, freedom of religion, protection for British property and freedom to trade with any individual group within the African territory. In the end, they did little to suppress the trade.

The Strategic and Tactical Problem of Slave Trade Suppression

Once Britain was committed to suppression of the slave trade (and later slavery itself), London had both strategic policy decisions: whether to combat it multilaterally, bilaterally, or unilaterally; and tactical decisions: whether the campaign would be diplomatic only, or whether they could resort to use of force. As David Eltis notes, ultimately, the slave trade suppression campaign "was fought on two not always compatible levels." There was the naval suppression campaign: physically enforcing suppression through the navy; and the ideological campaign: changing other states'/peoples' world views on the subject of slavery. Britain's world view was one that embraced rule of law, freedom, and increasingly, free labor. And so inherently there were two key problems: "whether to use extralegal means where legal means had failed," and how to impose the Britannic world view on other states, many of whom were reluctant "to behave as the British wished them to."

Although the British government increasingly saw abolition as in their national and international interest, as Eltis notes, "it was not a matter of national survival and honor, nor was it even likely to result in any short-run gain for the country." Therefore, for twelve years London had no special group for handling the issue of the slave trade. As discussed earlier, in negotiations

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in 1814-1815, the abolitionists became an unofficial arm of Wellington's efforts to secure French agreement. In 1919, the Foreign Office decided the job of imposing the British view of progress on the world was too important, and difficult, to leave to either the governments of lesser countries or to the unofficial efforts of humanitarian abolitionists. Therefore, it established the Slave Trade Department; its aim, an intriguing one for a Foreign Office, "was not the winning of territory or trade concessions, but rather the imposition of a conception of freedom, specifically a system of labor that had proved highly successful in England and that, it was believed, would prove even more so if the rest of the world could be persuaded to follow suit." 3253

James Bandinel was the first head of the department. A true believer, he saw suppressing the trade as a duty of "Christian morality." 3254 The department's first, small staff was paid lower than their Foreign Office colleagues, and their skills were more administrative than analytical. It was never meant to be a permanent department, but of necessity, became so over time. The sheer volume of work steadily increased: dispatches and letters received/sent the department went from 844 in 1830 to 2,205 in 1840, to over 4,000 in 1845. Between 1830 and 1845 the number of published papers the department put before parliament rose from 338 to 1,335 pages. 3255 The Slave Trade Department started as a way to monitor treaties and courts, but over time developed into an information-gathering organization. Later, in Lord Palmerston's hands this was exactly the role the Slave-trade Department played, as government officials found they had to develop an information network to pressure governments and report evidence of the trade. The growing

collaboration between this department, the Mixed Commission Courts, colonial administrators, and the diplomatic services overall, became invaluable.  

Yet, for all its knowledge and successes, the department's role went from temporary to permanent and continued to grow in part because "the British government was far too optimistic in its estimate of the impact of diplomacy and naval action upon the slave trade." In order "to bring about the modern goal of making other parts of the world ideologically compatible with the dominant culture" as Eltis calls it, "required constant persuasion and a constant demonstration of the benefits of an alternative system." The slavers of other nations "responded to the requirements of the market" and the market was good. London was left in a quandary: it could and would use negotiation to effect an end to the trade, but should other means be utilized, particularly clandestine operations and the use of overt force? Such methods could be counterproductive. In 1815 there was little precedent for such action, and the Foreign Office turned to abolitionists for help. As the suppression efforts progressed in the 1820s and 1830s, the Slave Trade Department was increasingly an arm of infiltration and coercion. Interestingly, Eltis goes so far as to suggest that the Foreign Office was "embroiled in what turned out to be a traditional war and failing (as many did) to comprehend the novelty of the task," the government had initially turned to the abolitionists, but later developed their own methods.

As it turned out, the government's decision to develop its own capabilities was fortuitous.

"Humanitarian and economic motives clearly overlapped once the British had abolished their own

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slave trade," and this put abolitionists in a compromising position.\textsuperscript{3260} "Benevolent intentions, passionate commitment, a less than rigorous observation of legal niceties and recalcitrant foreigners produced consequences disastrous alike for the internal consistency as well as the cause of the abolitionist."\textsuperscript{3261} Nonetheless, the fact of the matter was that in many situations/states, the spread of abolitionism could only be successful if covert operations were utilized and force brought to bear, or at least threatened. As early as 1810, parliamentarian and abolitionist Henry Brougham had asked why force could be used to get colonies and execute the slave trade, but then not to fight it. Later, in the lead up to the Verona Conference, Foreign Secretary George Canning, who was generally against interfering in the domestic politics of smaller countries, asked in a letter to Wellington:

'If it be true that no combination of great Powers can justify an infliction of injury upon a smaller Power: it may be affirmed on the other hand that no Power has the right (nor has it at all the more for being insignificant in strength) to interrupt by its single act, the consenting policy of all the civilized world on a matter on which the dictates of Christianity and morality are clear; and to perpetuate to a large portion of their fellow creatures misery and sufferings which all other Powers are conspiring to heal.'\textsuperscript{3262}

If in diplomatic circles the use of force to stop the trade was increasingly accepted, not everyone agreed. William Wilberforce, and even James Stephen, whose influential treatise on the intersection of national and humanitarian treatment had helped secure abolition, did not support such talk. Yet, with the formation of the African Institution in 1807, designed to support trade to Africa and later becoming like an arm of the Foreign Office, the dividing line was blurring between strategic government and humanitarian abolitionists. Early on, the blurring lines over the slave trade did not spark much protest, but the internal conflict would continue.\textsuperscript{3263} So, as Eltis notes, at least in this early period, "for the Evangelicals the eradication of sin was ultimately more


important than individual rights and the rights of nations. The blurring of lines would both aid and complicate the jobs of the Foreign Office and abolitionist activists alike.

Changing the attitudes of other societies, even for the offices of the most powerful state in the world at the time, would prove rather challenging. The British government stressed the moral vector of its actions, but after 1815, foreign governments were quite aware that abolition had caused the decline of the British sugar colonies and, therefore, "in their perspective, Britain needed international abolition either to protect its own planters or, still more deviously, to shift the center of tropical production from the Atlantic to its Asian dominion in India." Even as anti-slavery became "institutionalized," entering the government's 'official mind' and becoming its all but unquestioned policy position, this did nothing to make the task at hand any easier or to resolve the tensions of forcing other states toward one's own concept of "progress." Despite the network of officials, treaties, courts and cruisers centered on the most powerful nation in the world, the slave trade and slave society in the Americas entered what was probably the most expansionary phase in their existence after 1820. The challenges of international suppression were indeed immense, and both inside and outside government circles, the realization was taking hold that effective suppression of the trade and traditional diplomatic methods were at odds, if not incompatible.

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3264 Eltis, David. *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 110. "The point here is not that the abolitionists consciously broke the law, either domestic or international, in their quest for suppression – though it is hard to conclude that this never happened."


3266 Drescher, Seymour. *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 233. As already illuminated, "such arguments," in Drescher's words, "ignored the fact that the British could have dispensed with the costs of abolition to both their taxpayers and planters."


Britain Against the Trade, 1820-1840

Britain had committed itself to suppressing the slave trade, and in November 1819, sent a naval squadron to the West Coast of Africa to do just that. Nonetheless, slave imports doubled between 1806-1810 and 1811-1815 and tripled again in the next five years. The stronger countries – like France and even the United States – could suppress their slave trades if they put their mind to it. The question was, did they want to? In France's case, the answer was no. In other countries, such as Portugal and Spain, the central governments probably didn't have the capacity during the 1820s to fully put down the trade to their Brazilian and Cuban colonies, nor did they want to. The Verona Conference of 1822 was the last of the Vienna-style international congresses, and once again Britain failed to sway the other powers on any number of issues, including curtailing the slave trade. London would have to continue its approach of working bilateral treaties and using its navy and ministries to suppress the trade on its own. British naval commanders felt with enough ships and support they could end the trade, but there would always be limits to what Britain was willing to do. As Lord Wellington (now Prime Minister) told Lord Foreign Minister Lord Aberdeen in 1828, the whole question "is one of impression. We shall never succeed in abolishing the foreign slave trade. But we must take care to avoid to take any step [sic] which may induce the people of England to believe that we do not do everything in our

3271 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 45. "In this last period there was an additional temporary stimulus to slave imports provided by the 1817 treaty between Spain and England that set 1820 as the last year for legal imports. But the treaty probably had a small effect relative to these long-term underlying factors."
3272 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 82. Eltis suggests that "most governments could put an end to the involvement of their own nationals in the traffic or at least reduce it to nominal levels if they really wished to do so." Full suppression is doubtful, though, during this period for both Spain and Portugal/Brazil even if they wanted.
power to discourage and put it down as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{3274} Still, Britain was doing far more than any other country.\textsuperscript{3275}

During the first decade of the restored French constitutional monarchy, public opinion and wounded nationalism was on the side of the slave trade. Merchants, planters, and shipbuilders pressed for re-conquest of Saint-Domingue and a continued slave trade. Popular feeling was swept up in a wave of anti-British sentiment following the peace terms of 1815. Abolition had been imposed by the British cabinet and was, therefore, unacceptable. Further, few Frenchmen believed British intentions were honorable.\textsuperscript{3276} Given their defeat at Waterloo, the memory of Saint-Domingue, and the fact that their sworn enemy was pushing for abolition, anti-slavery became tantamount to anti-patriotism. The French continued to reject Britain's right to search ships for slaves, continuing to insist that it was a breach of international law.\textsuperscript{3277} It took until the late 1820s for anti-British feeling to subside/pro-abolitionist sentiment to permeate French thinking to such a degree that effective anti-trade measures could be instituted by the government. After the anti-trade bill passed in 1827, the French Marine actually tried to crush the slave trade, 


\textsuperscript{3277} Kielstra, Paul Michael. \textit{The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48}. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000: 122-124; and Bethell, Leslie. \textit{The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1970: 24-25. Britain turned to the United States for help in convincing the French; Congress was concerned about the illegal slave trade in the early 1820s and even flirted with declaring it piracy in 1824. The Britons and Americans tried to convince the French, but after the Senate refused to ratify an Anglo-American right of search treaty, the heat was off. Washington was largely out of the international anti-slave trade game for the foreseeable future.
and they achieved some level of success. A critical element was overcoming anti-British nationalist sentiment.\textsuperscript{3278}

Added to this, in July 1830 a three-day Revolution toppled the Restoration and the last of the Bourbons, Charles X, fled to Britain; the July Monarchy, under King Louis Philippe, took power.\textsuperscript{3279} This was an opportune time for furthering the anti-slavery agenda; by the late 1820s many French citizens at the grassroots level had come to believe that the trade/practice was wrong, and given the July Monarchy's "liberal/reformist" credentials, it hoped to maintain good relations with "liberal" Britain while the regime got its legs under it. In late 1830 Paris proposed a bill making taking part in the slave trade a crime (it passed in 1831).\textsuperscript{3280} The July Monarchy then sought to put an end to the problem of British seizures on the high seas, which had sparked tensions for years. In 1831, the American ambassador in Paris was urging them to declare the traffic piracy. The French navy realized it couldn't on its own fully stop the French trade, and yet, it was a humiliation to have the British continue to search French ships, which it had been doing for over a decade. Further, the new July Monarchy was largely on friendly terms with London at the time, so the option was clear. The two countries finally agreed to a limited right of search agreement and for France to patrol the African coast in November 1831. It would take almost two


years, until April 1833, for all the diplomatic details to be worked out.\textsuperscript{3281} By this time, interestingly, the agreement was met largely with apathy in France. Between the new domestic anti-trade law and the international agreement, "the French slave trade collapsed quickly, never to reappear."\textsuperscript{3282} Between 1833 and 1840, there was relative cooperation between Britain and France on slave trade suppression; the interests of these two similarly-oriented governments converged domestically and internationally for a time and the result was a move forward regarding anti-slave trade measures (it wouldn't last). The French, in fact, wanted to move toward making the treaties international law, but once the United States refused to join Anglo-French agreement, the two powers went their own ways, working to develop bilateral treaties with various countries.\textsuperscript{3283}

Frankly, there was little trade to the French and British West Indies in the 1820s, and in the case of the French, even less in the late 1820s and 1830s once they agreed to end/enforce an end of the trade. With regard to the United States, in some periods of the 1820s American ships patrolled the African coast and in the early 1820s Washington and London almost came to agreement on declaring the trade piracy and providing right of search, but the accord was ultimately rejected by the Senate in 1824. The United States had always been concerned with British encroachments in the western hemisphere, with particular concern over Cuba. There was great protest when British ships captured American slavers in the 1820s and 1830s.\textsuperscript{3284} On several


\textsuperscript{3284} Fehrenbacher, Don E. \textit{The Slaveholding Republic}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001: 104-111. See in Fehrenbacher, for example, disputes over the \textit{Comet, Encomium, Enterprise,} and \textit{Creole}. 641
claims, Britain agreed to repay reparations in order to quell the disputes. In the end, Britain usually promised to exercise more restraint in detaining American ships but always asserted that it did not recognize in its own jurisdiction any foreign government's claim that slaves were property.  

There was still plenty of trade to the thriving Portuguese and Spanish colonies. All had signed treaties, but the trade continued for economic and political reasons. In Portugal's case, Lisbon feared intransigence on the slave trade would be a pretext for London seizing her overseas colonies; further, the economies of both Portugal and Brazil were tied to Britain and both governments longed for British political support. For these reasons, both Portugal and Brazil were liable to British coercion. Yet, it was hard to turn one's back on such a strong market. This was particularly true in Brazil.

Brazil declared its independence from Portugal in 1822 and established Dom Pedro as emperor. The Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1826 reiterated the stipulations of the 1817 treaty and extended the provisions to 1845. In November 1826, Brazil agreed to the same stipulations as the Portuguese treaty, outlawing the slave trade after 1830 in return for British

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recognition of the new Brazilian state. Nonetheless, few Brazilians believed that British efforts were based on humanitarian motives; pro-slavery interest groups moved to build their strength and stall abolition efforts, while slavers rushed to stock their assets.

Dom Pedro was forced from his throne and returned to Portugal in 1831, leaving five-year old Dom Pedro II as heir to Brazilian empire. In the years from 1831 to 1840, three regents ruled the country ("the Regency") until the young emperor could take over. The Brazilian central government was weak during this period, and the slave trade continued to expand until it eventually passed its pre-1826 levels. Violations of the ban on the slave trade were rampant in the 1830s, particularly utilizing the Portuguese flag. Sugar was the number one staple crop until the 1830s, when coffee took off. Cotton was important as well. In fact, in the mid- to late-1820s the United States and Europe bought enough Brazilian coffee that demand for slaves in the coffee regions grew substantially. Interestingly enough, "the supply of credit and manufactured goods in this system came largely from the British." Despite an economic downturn in the early 1830s,
by 1833 the trade was flowing again and it continued to flow in the 1830s and 1840s, as coffee
cultivation became more and more prominent.3294

Spain, too, was liable to British coercion, but less so than Portugal and Brazil. Cuba's
history in the early 19th century was defined by sugar and slavery. "The island developed into the
world's premier sugar export economy, and constant technological innovation made it the most
productive and profitable as well."3295 Constant technical innovation in the 1820s and 1830s made
Cuba's sugar industry productive and profitable, and coffee was competing with sugar as well by
mid-century.3296 Cuba was at its most prosperous in mid-1830s as the end of slavery in British
colonies forced Jamaica off the scene.3297 Spain was complicit in the illicit slave trade during this
period as well.3298 Spanish and British ships were supposed to both be seizing slaves, but
between 1820 and the early 1840s, the Spanish had seized a grand total of two ships.3299 Cubans
believed the slave trade was essential to their island's well-being, and further, they believed the
British anti-slavery movement was a Machiavellian ploy.3300 The Spanish continued to pay lip-
service to abolition, but resisted taking firm steps that were counter to its empire's interests. Still,
Britain's Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary (1830-1834, 1835-1841, 1846-1851) was a

3294 Bethell, Leslie. The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade
Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New York, NY: Cambridge
University Press, 2007: 9; and Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave
3295 Bergard, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New
3296 Bergard, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New
York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007: 18; and Corwin, Arthur F. Spain and the Abolition of
3297 Corwin, Arthur F. Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886. Austin, TX: The University
3298 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY:
3299 Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY:
3300 Thomas, Hugh, The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870, New York, NY:

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*This was the total to all Spanish-American colonies. Cuba's figures for this year are included here; for the remaining years, these figures pertain specifically to Cuba.

Britain reached a crossroads as the 1830s drew to a close. London had ended the institution of slavery on August 1, 1834, and over 3/4 million slaves were technically set free by 1838. By the end of the early 1840s slavery had for all intents and purposes ended in the British empire. Overall, Britain had used diplomatic influence and imperial treasure to suppress the slave

trade, but the efforts weren't achieving enough. The British Royal Navy had become moderately more effective in monitoring and curtailing the slave trade, but the trade lived on. There were still open markets and demand in the Americas and ships to provide the slaves to fill that demand.\textsuperscript{3305} The Royal Navy couldn't stop American ships, and couldn't touch Brazilian and Portuguese ships below the equator. Further, the patrol off the African coast was small and did not have most technologically advanced/appropriate ships for the job (and London never considered increasing the size of its navy to effect full suppression). Most importantly, the abolition of the trade must always be viewed in "the wider context of British domestic and external policy."\textsuperscript{3306} More pressing foreign policy goals always took precedence. "Ending the slave trade was not an absolute priority: it was subordinate to the maintenance of peace and stability in Europe, and the economic interests of the state."\textsuperscript{3307} Despite command of the sea, Britain was never willing in this period to push right of search/suppression to the point that it destroyed relations and/or sparked conflict with other powers. When there were large numbers of ships on slave trade patrol, it was usually in times of peace elsewhere. Further, given the balance of power, Britain might be willing to take on Portugal and Brazil, but not the United States and France.\textsuperscript{3308}

\textsuperscript{3305} Lambert, Andrew. "Slavery, Free Trade and Naval Strategy, 1840-1860." In \textit{Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975}. eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon. Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2009: 65. The ships themselves were often made in America. As for the continued demand, Lambert compares this situation to that of the narcotics trade. Does one stop supply, or will one ever be able to stop the supply when there is strong demand?


Britain Against the Trade: 1840-1860

The three dominant plantation societies in the Western Hemisphere at mid-century were Spain's Cuba, Brazil, and the American South. Sugar, coffee, and cotton comprised between 80 and 90 percent of the exports of these countries, respectively. Of these, only Brazil and Cuba still had a thirst for slave imports, but being at odds with old allies (Portugal and Brazil) and given American interest in Cuba, the challenge of how best to effectively suppress the trade without crippling other strategic priorities remained for the world's most powerful country.\(^\text{3309}\)

Portugal was Britain's oldest ally, in part, because Lisbon was a key deep water harbor that was in a perfect location to attack British shipping should it fall into an enemy's hands.\(^\text{3310}\) Britain historically had great leverage on Portugal (and Brazil), but there were limits, and Britain found itself increasingly frustrated by Lisbon's intransigence on the slave trade. Portugal had signed treaties against the trade in 1815, 1817, and 1826, but into the late 1830s her flag was flagrantly used to conduct illicit trading operations. Lisbon again outlawed the traffic in 1836, but commercial interests still pushed her to engage in the trade. Frustrated by the flouting of treaties and suppression's ineffectiveness, Lord Palmerston decided to take a more aggressive stance. He was willing to use force against Portugal. In 1839, Palmerston proposed domestic legislation that became known as the Palmerston Act. This act took the fetters off the Royal Navy.\(^\text{3311}\) British ships could search Portuguese ships and those with no flag and take them to British courts if they contained slaves or equipment. This was an unprecedented, aggressive step. Portugal could either

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\(^\text{3310}\) Lambert, Andrew. "Slavery, Free Trade and Naval Strategy, 1840-1860." In *Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975.* eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon. Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2009: 69. In Lambert's exact words, "The key reason why Portugal was Britain's oldest ally, and why the Peninsular war had been fought, was to prevent the Tagus falling into French hands. British statesmen knew that Lisbon, the only secure, easily accessible deep water harbour between Brest and Cadiz, was an ideal base for attacks on British shipping. In the hands of an active enemy it would stretch the Royal navy beyond breaking point."

accept British action, or go to war; and Palmerston "warned Lisbon that war would result in the seizure of all their colonies in Africa, India and China." Palmerston's Act made it possible that "Spanish, Portuguese and Brazilian ships could be searched north and south of the equator, and detained if they carried slaves, or slaving equipment." The African squadron was reinforced to 12-13 ships, some more modern and effective. Portugal relented; the Palmerston Act had worked; "the act was largely responsible for coercing the Portuguese into accepting British terms embodied in the 1842 Anglo-Portuguese Treaty." The Portuguese couldn't resist determined British power.

The United States was a somewhat different story, and thereby, so too was Britain's efforts against the trade to Spain's Cuba. There was great rivalry between Britain and the United States in the 1830s and 1840s, as America expanded west. American Anglophobia was rampant and complicated Anglo-American relations, inflating British threats to American designs on Texas and further west. Britain had many issues with Washington but wanted to avoid war.

One particular flare-up, stemming from the activities of a U.S. diplomat in Cuba, particularly threatened the peace. Official British reports out of Cuba suggested that American Consul Nicholas P. Trist was providing slavers papers that allowed them to operate flying the

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3312 Lambert, Andrew. "Slavery, Free Trade and Naval Strategy, 1840-1860." In Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975. eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon. Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2009: 68-69. In Lambert's words, "this was the very thing that had alarmed the Portuguese for so long," and option that was threatening and one Lisbon couldn't refuse.


American flag. The Trist affair sparked undue tension with London and it, along with constant use of the American flag in the slave trade, were sources of embarrassment for Washington. The government moved to resolve the issue and remove any "pretext" for British ships to board American vessels. In December 1839 President Van Buren announced a credible force would be sent to Africa, the first time in a decade. American officials passed official blame by pinning responsibility for the trade on "Iberian rogues," but in order to end the embarrassment Washington finally sent a small American force (two ships) to the African coast. It was never meant to be effective, but was sent nonetheless.

Britain's chief rival, France, had been cooperating in slave trade suppression in the 1830s, but this came to an end over the Egypt Crisis. In July 1839 Mehmet Ali, Pasha of Egypt rebelled against the Ottoman Sultan. Most great powers backed the Sultan, but France backed Ali. The French press reacted by returning to their traditional Anglophobia, and this proved an impediment to Anglo-French cooperation. Then, Britain's seizures of suspected French slave ships in 1840 and 1841 sparked more Anglophobia. Anti-British articles dominated the French

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newspapers during this period; the tension over right of search returned. As Lawrence Jenning notes, "by churning up French nationalistic sentiment, it [the right of search] was also alienating Frenchmen from the British emancipation model."

Foreign Minister, Lord Palmerston, concluded the Quintuple Treaty with France, Austria, Prussia, and Russia in late 1841. It was a permanent, expansive treaty that came just short of right of search (it delineated search procedures in great detail) and committed Europe's great powers to slave trade suppression. However, with tensions high between Britain and France over right of search infractions from 1840 to 1842, there was little chance of the French Parliament ratifying the treaty. Further, tensions were high between Washington and London in 1841 over a number of issues (the northern border, the fate of Texas, etc.), and Washington moved to stop what it perceived to be Britain's move toward naval domination, fearing isolation if all Europe's powers agreed to the accord. Washington pushed Paris to reject the treaty, which they did. As historian Suzanne Miers notes, the treaty thus fell victim to national pride and Anglo-French rivalry. The Anglo-American rivalry played a part as well. It took until the mid-1840s, once tensions had been resolved and Anglophobia quelled, before France would return to constructive participation countering the trade. Then, in early 1848, another French revolution set in motion events that

would ultimately lead to a French emancipation decree in April of that year. Slavery was dead in the territories of Britain's strategic rival. The only power standing in the way of furthering London's agenda was the United States.  

Anglo-American relations continued to ebb and flow, and in fact, the tensions at the turn of the decade had been somewhat quelled by 1842. In that year, new British Foreign Minister Lord Aberdeen (1841-1846) sent Lord Ashburton (who had good American connections) to Washington to resolve outstanding issues. The Webster-Ashburton Treaty (1842) settled several northern border disputes, mostly positively for the United States. In return, America once again agreed to send a naval squadron to Africa to suppress the trade (the size and nature of the force was delineated in the text of the treaty). London knew that if Britain and the United States went to war, no matter who actually won, the French would gain in the balance of power. The long-term frictions wouldn't end in 1842, but they were quelled for the moment. Tension over the slave trade (read: the balance of power in the Caribbean) wouldn't be resolved, in fact, until the conclusion of the American Civil War.

The Anglo-Portuguese agreement of 1842 had included the much more stringent (and thereby risky, from the slavers' perspective) equipment clause and ships sailing to Cuba started using the American flag (or ran without papers), precipitously (it had increased after the Anglo-Spanish Treaty of 1835 as well). This hurt the British efforts. Further, in this period Lord Aberdeen toned down the activities carried out under Palmerston (coastal raids, for example),

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doubting the Palmerston Act's international legality. The Anglo-Portuguese Treaty signed, Aberdeen further hoped to reduce the heat on Lisbon. Stuck with limited options in the United States, and thereby Cuba/Spain, Aberdeen looked to work on the Brazilian trade.\(^{333}\)

Past treaties with Brazil were up for renewal in 1845, and London feared they would not be continued. As Lord Aberdeen forecast in 1844, "relations with Brazil would soon become 'unpleasant and complicated.'\(^{333}\) By 1845 Britain had 21 ships operating off the Brazilian coast. The anti-slave trade pressure was rising, but as one would expect, the Brazilian domestic slaveholding interest exerted great pressure in response. "Offended by high-handed British action, the Brazilian government refused to extend the current treaties, and looked to the forthcoming renewal of trade treaties to exert leverage."\(^{333}\) In addition, the government closed the mixed commission at Rio. In March 1845, Brazil ended the treaty Britain had used to act against the Brazilian trade. As mentioned, Aberdeen had initially taken an inherently less aggressive anti-slave trade stance than Palmerston, but recognizing the weak state of the Brazilian government and its unwillingness to enforce past measures, he decided to take unilateral action, putting forward the Aberdeen Act in August 1845. This measure was similar to the Palmerston Act, permitting British ships to seize, search, and adjudicate Brazilian vessels. He based the policy's legitimacy on the 1826 treaty that any Brazilian ship trading in slaves was a pirate and thereby


liable by international law to seizure and trial in British courts, not mixed commissions. Yet, even Aberdeen admitted "the law was certainly a great stretch of power and open to many objections on principle." The Aberdeen Act "struck a massive blow to Brazilian self-esteem. In effect the national flag had been declared a worthless rag, and the rights of the state were null and void at sea." Between 1845 and 1850 over 400 ships were seized. Demand persisted nonetheless. Palmerston wanted to do more, but more forceful measures against Brazil would have to wait (if temporarily).

By 1850, then, there were clearly conflicting pressures facing Britain as it continued its effort to bring about the end of the slave trade and practice. Britain's desired international police force was finally coming to some level of fruition, with British, French, and U.S. ships on patrol. Further, Mixed Commissions continued to adjudicate cases at courts throughout the western hemisphere. That said, even as it was being combated, in some ways the trade, and certainly the practice, was as prevalent as ever. At the end of the decade, the British government called for an investigation into the effectiveness of the trade. The published results were pessimistic. The

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Lambert, Andrew. "Slavery, Free Trade and Naval Strategy, 1840-1860." In Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975. eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon. Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2009: 71. He "wanted to send ships to the Brazilian coast, but could not move them from the African blockade, where the size of the squadron was determined by treaties with France and the United States, and the Navy had no spare ships" due to a series of smaller incidents in the east. But, the British Navy was concerned with the Turkish Straits Crisis, Don Pacifico Incident, and of course, repercussions coming out of the French Revolution of 1848. London's eyes were turned toward the east.

findings suggested that the Royal Navy couldn't stop the trade (indeed, the numbers at least matched what they had been in the 1700s) and the suffering of the slaves during the middle passage was worse for all the steps taken. The conclusion, as Eltis summarizes, was that "the traffic would continue as long as slavery survived in the importing countries or at least until the local and national governments of those countries decided to suppress it." European desire for sugar ensured a continued need for labor overseas. Free traders were restless; they pressed the British government to not do anything that threatened relations in a way that would thereby threaten trade with Brazil and elsewhere. "A trade so profitable, they argued, could not be suppressed by force, and naval interference was simply exacerbating the horrors of the middle passage by encouraging overcrowding and the use of inadequate vessels." An economic slump made the pressure on the government even worse. British imports were subject to no more than 15 per cent duty, while Brazilian 'slave grown' sugar paid 250 per cent more duty in Britain than British West Indian 'free grown' sugar." The Anti-Corn Law League faced the loss of a 3 million pound market and they protested the suppression patrols as well.

In the effort's defense, the government stressed what the numbers might have been trade-wise, had suppression not been enacted. Most naval officers believed the squadron should not be withdrawn, but operations could be scaled back until such a date as strategic considerations and legislation permitted an unfettered suppression effort. Even abolitionists, oddly enough, were by

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3341 Eltis, David. *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 27-28. As David Eltis notes, "in what was perhaps the ultimate irony in the antislavery story, the free-market element of abolitionism had developed to the point where suppression of the slave trade separate from the suppression of slavery no longer appeared possible. Some who shared this approach came back to support naval intervention after the final suppression of the Brazilian trade. But abolitionist support for the policy was weakest in the late 1840s at the very time that the free-trader attack on the cruiser squadron was at its strongest."
this time turning against this action because they thought it was too forceful and risked war.

Being pacifists, Quaker abolitionists did not support the use of force to suppress the trade. The British suppression effort was under attack from all sides, domestically, and its options were constrained internationally. With limited options regarding the Cuban trade due to concerns about American designs on that island and the stability of Madrid), Britain was left to focus on Brazil, if anyone. And, as historian Hugh Thomas summarizes, the pertinent questions there was whether Britain was ready to go to war "with her newest protegé, Brazil, over the issue of the slave trade?" With Palmerston back as Foreign Secretary, the actions of 1850 and 1851 suggested the answer was a definitive yes.

Despite all the anti-suppression pressure, Lord Palmerston notified the Admiralty in April 1850 that the Aberdeen Act removed the limitations on their operations. James Hudson, the chargé d'affaires in Rio, thought an effective blockade could end the trade. There were only a few ships on patrol, freed up from the River Plate, but they utilized intelligence brilliantly. "Hudson had an agent within the slaving community; paying a percentage on all seizures in return for priceless intelligence on sailings, operators and markets." The British were financing antislavery groups and Brazilian abolitionist newspapers, which stressed "a growing sense of unease in Brazil at the sheer scale of the illegal industry, and of the potentially rebellious servile population."

In June 1850, the British Royal Navy instigated a series of assaults against slave ships in Brazilian harbors. Hundreds were seized. On 29 June 1850, the HMS Cormorant entered the

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Paraná River at Paranaguá. It subsequently found four slavers, and proceeded to scuttle one of
them. Brazilian coastal forts fired on the ship. The British then burned two more slavers in front
of the fort and sent one to the island of St. Helena. Brazil couldn't stand up to the British, and the
government knew it. The Brazilian government hoped they'd received some international support,
but when they queried France, help was refused. London was threatening further force to stop the
illegal trade, but pulled back and gave Brazil room to save face. The Brazilian leadership hoped
to avoid war with Britain, which in Lambert's words, "could only be disastrous." Rather than
waiting to be crushed, they agreed to fully abolish and enforce the trade themselves (in reality,
trading was relatively light; slave imports were such in the 1840s that Brazil was relatively sated
by the 1850s). They blamed the trade on Portuguese and other foreigners and committed to
stopping it. The Queiroz Law – outlawing the transportation of slaves from Africa – was passed
that year. "As the Brazilian foreign minister conceded in 1852, his country could not any longer
"resist the pressure of the ideas of the age in which we live." If the "ideas of the age" hadn't
been clear in the late 1840s, the British Navy made them so in 1850-1851. Britain shared
information with the Brazilians, but left the Aberdeen Act in place in case the Brazilians did not
suppress the trade. Ultimately, the Brazilian government moved to enforce the anti-trade laws; in
the fifteen months after mid-1850 the Brazilian navy and police raided depots, confiscated ships,
and searched estates for illegal Africans.

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3349 Lambert, Andrew, "Slavery, Free Trade and Naval Strategy, 1840-1860." In Slavery, Diplomacy and
Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975. eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick
3350 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY:
3351 Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY:
1840-1860." In Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-
Bethell, Leslie. The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question,
799; and Harmer, Harry. The Longman Companion to Slavery, Emancipation and Civil Rights. New York,
Brazilians were outraged by the British actions initially, but the tide turned quickly.

Following the government's lead, the Brazilian population blamed not the British, but the Portuguese and Portuguese-born Brazilians who dominated the trade for bringing their country to the brink of war.\textsuperscript{3352} The local population, which had reacted negatively to British ships on patrol and in port before 1850, started turning over slave traders and even welcomed British ships in port.\textsuperscript{3353} It was the British naval intervention of 1850-1851 and the Brazilian government action that followed that put the import of slaves to Brazil on the road to extinction. This would bring about significant changes within the country. The planters, if sated in the late 1840s, would not remain so forever. Slave prices increased 50 percent in 5 years and 130 percent over the decade, which gave rise to an external trade from the northeast to the coffee growing regions.\textsuperscript{3354} It took decades, but the impact would be important to slavery's ultimate end. For Britain's part, the squadron off the Brazilian coast could be reduced after 1851, and forces transferred to other strategic locations, such as Asia and the Crimean.\textsuperscript{3355}

Britain certainly couldn't have gotten away with the same sorts of aggressive tactics against Cuba, nor would it have tried. "Unlike Brazil Cuba was the centre of complex diplomatic and strategic issues, and these could not be resolved by the application of force against the

government in Havana." Cuba was "the Spanish colony," as Eltis notes, and the profits from that colony sustained Spain's economy. It was in Britain's national interest to maintain the stability of the regime in Madrid, and its continued liberal inclination. In Lambert's words, it was "critical to the maintenance of European stability, low defence estimates, and the concomitant cheap government that all nineteenth-century administrations sought." Some cabinet members and foreign officers wanted strong action against Spain and Cuba, but most realized that being too aggressive might prompt a Cuban rebellion, an American invasion, or Madrid's move back toward absolutism. Inside Cuba, planters were fairly confident that the need for their sugar would preclude decisive action against the trade; if the trade did get pinched, they hoped the United States would move to annex Cuba so they would be rid of the self-righteous and hypocritical British influence once and for all.

The United States, particularly southern politicians, had long desired Cuba. In 1848 Washington offered to buy Cuba. When the offer was rejected, "agitation" expeditions, "hoping to exploit local rebellions, overthrow the Spanish regime, and invite American annexation," were mounted from New Orleans. The threat of Cuba falling into America's hands had always been

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3356 Lambert, Andrew. "Slavery, Free Trade and Naval Strategy, 1840-1860." In Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975. eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon. Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2009: 73; and Eltis, David. Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 210. Similarly, Eltis states, "Cuba was the center of a subtle three-handed international card game that precluded serious naval operations," because "Spain was obsessed with the fear of losing its last major colony in the Americas and saw slavery and the slave trade as helping to bind tight the colonial ties. Some in the United States were just as obsessed with acquiring the island or at least keeping it out of British or African hands. Britain, the third player, wished to see the end of the slave trade and slavery, but above all wished to keep Cuba out of U.S. hands and most logically, therefore, within the Spanish Empire."


troubling to Madrid. Spain rebuilt their navy in the 1840s and kept tight wraps on independence movements there for just this reason. Cuba was important for Britain as well. Commercially, if America took Cuba, it could destroy British West Indian trade. Even more important, strategically, "Havana was the finest harbour in the West Indies, and by far the most powerfully defended.\footnote{3360} A dispatch from the Bahamas summarized the danger to Britain, stating "she would, in time of war obtain the complete control over the navigation of this vast gulf... they could shut us from the Gulf of Mexico."\footnote{3361} For Britain, as Eltis states, "nothing should disturb the existing balance of power in the Caribbean."\footnote{3362} London was content not to challenge the Monroe doctrine, they were most concerned to check French and Spanish power in the western hemisphere. The United States could maintain its strength in the Caribbean as it stood, but London would not let the United States engage in any aggressive moves that could curtail Britain's strategic power and hegemonic position.\footnote{3363}

It was a difficult tightrope for London to walk. As ever, Palmerston was serious about suppression. Still, he knew he couldn't be overly aggressive against Cuba; he couldn't bully Spain and he couldn't risk war and/or American annexation. In June 1848 he allowed a single ship to patrol off Cuba to curtail the recent increase in slaving ships operating there. In September 1849 British intelligence got wind of more American agitation expeditions, and the British diverted another ship to Havana. Over the next decade Britain was sure to keep ships in Cuban waters, even though they were not popular with local elites. As the Lord of the Admiralty remarked in


1851, "the interests of England are strongly concerned in America not having Cuba – whether Spain retain the island or not." The government came under attack for their aggressive actions, but after 1850 the British continued to "push on with their programme of defending Cuba against American intervention, and it was this, rather than the suppression of the slave trade, that determined the deployment of British warships in Cuban waters." Of interest, the British ships patrolling often weren't even appropriate for anti-slaving; larger and slower, they were much more suited to crippling would-be invasions. Ironically perhaps, all the while Britain was buying massive amounts of Cuban sugar.

Britain kept some level of maritime presence off Cuba for the next decade. There were of course occasional flare-ups. For example, between 1857 and 1858 Britain posted four warships in Cuban waters and the result was a spike in seized American ships. Washington and the American press/public were outraged, and demanded compensation. Britain deftly reduced its contingent and eased the tensions. London would keep up pressure via other means, proposing in 1860 a conference of the great powers (Spain, Britain, France, the United States, Portugal, and Brazil) to put an end to 'an increasing traffic [in slaves] and finally to assure complete abolition." In the end, Britain would do what was practicable against the trade, always keeping its eye on the larger strategic picture. The United States was key to resolving the slave trade to Cuba, and sure to

avoid war, Britain could limit the trade, attack the supply, and keep America out.\(^3\) As Lambert summarizes, "British naval power could not stop the Cuban slave trade: instead it ensured Cuba remained Spanish. While this outcome may have lacked the drama of the Brazilian intervention the outcome was highly significant for British strategic and commercial interests.\(^4\)

**Figure 8.3. Slave Imports and Selected Events/Treaties\(^5\)**

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**The End of the Slave Trade**

As the 1860s dawned, events in American politics were changing and the Civil War there would soon bring a final striking change of fortunes for transatlantic slavery. With the Union in


peril, Washington was looking for help, or at least neutrality, from the British. By 1862, the two sides agreed that no ships were to be fitted for slaving in U.S. ports, that both sides could search each other's vessels, and if slaving equipment was found, culprits would be taken to courts in New York, Cape Town, or Sierra Leone. After years of resisting, in the face of a crumbling Union, the United States finally agreed to full right of search.

Still, Britain had a dilemma regarding which side to fully support. From a national interest standpoint, Britain's best course of action was far from clear. London had been crusading for an end to the slave trade and slavery for more than half a century, but she was importing cotton from the American South in massive quantities and her manufacturers were highly dependent on these raw materials. Further, if the United States was divided into two territories, it would be much harder to hold and enforce the Monroe Doctrine. In reality, Britain had little territorial ambition, but they did want stability for trade and to keep other European powers out of the Western Hemisphere.

There was tension during the war, as Britons expressed sympathy for the Confederate cause and anger as the Union blockade hurt British commerce. British public opinion was divided and cautious overall. Britain's help to the Southern cause was modest; London recognized the

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Confederacy in May 1861 but stopped short of full recognition/support and didn't balk at the Northern blockade. When a British warship carrying secretly dispatched Southern representatives was stopped and the delegates seized, leading to public outcry, it could have meant war. In the end, Lincoln diffused the situation. London continued to move cautiously, watching how the situation and tide of war developed. Any chance of intervention on the southern side was complicated by Lincoln's emancipation proclamation. In 1863 the building of Confederate warships in British ports was banned, and for all intents and purposes, the chance of active British participation was averted.3376

The American Civil War shows how difficult it can be to discern national interests. According to historian John Clarke, "most assessments of self-interests still pointed to the desirability of Southern success."3377 Peter Thompson concurs, stating:

if British foreign policy had been based solely on the distribution of power and balancing considerations, Britain should have intervened in the Civil War; the United States itself was weakened, Britain had other European powers willing to go along with the intervention, Britain would have been able to secure unfettered access to the South’s cotton supply and it would have contained a rising regional hegemon.3378

In contrast, Brian Holden Reid suggests Britain didn't want to see the balance of power disturbed by events in America and didn't want other powers intervening there. A weakened Union could have provided a "playground" for European powers, something Britain sure didn't want.3379

Further, John Clarke adds that...

Arguments based on morality generally favoured the North. Rightly or wrongly the war was perceived as being about slavery. Anti-slavery was a cause to which Britain was deeply committed. It could not support a cause whose real raison d'etre was the maintenance of slavery, or oppose those who, whatever their shortcomings, wished to bring emancipation to the South.


This feeling was widespread out of doors, even amongst the Lancashire cotton workers suffering from the effects of the blockade. 3380

Jeremy Black concludes that despite tension during the Civil War, for Britain, "the so-called North American Question in fact had been settled by the War of 1812. Partly due to the lessons of that war, a fresh conflict in the 1860s was anyway less likely." 3381 His argument's core is that, having given up on territorial ambitions in North America in the early part of the century, and then having crusaded against slavery for most of that century, war to support continent's great bastion of slavery was not in the cards. 3382 Peter Thompson suggests that Britain's failure to act was due to London's respect for precedents and conventions. More pressingly for international relations theorists, Thompson asserts it is a case that is clearly at odds with the realist framework, particularly offensive realism. 3383 The picture painted here is one of mixed motivations. Power projections certainly played a role, as did normative reasoning and domestic politics. These mix of calculations caused Britain to remain on the sideline, waiting for the result of the Civil War to determine its policy; in reality, the cautious waiting was a prudent, strategic course of action in and of itself.

The early 1860 agreement with the United States brought the international force to as wide and strong as it would ever be. 3384 Lincoln had ordered the stoppage of supply of saving ships from American shipbuilders/ports and agreed to right of search for Britain. "Without American ships and markets Cuba was too small a market to support the trade. In 1869 the West

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3381  Black, Jeremy. The War of 1812 in the Age of Napoleon. Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press, 2009: 228-229. Black notes that after the war, the Americans were geared more toward moving west than any threat to Canada, which was still a concern to the British. The treaty of Washington of 1871 helped reduce any other possible tensions, as the British further decreased its military presence in North America (leaving just coaling stations in Canada).
African Squadron was abolished because there were no slave ships to catch.\textsuperscript{3385} The Cuban slave market had closed the same year. As the 1860s advanced, a number of factors pointed to slavery's ultimate demise. There were no great powers still committed to slavery. Spain would slow-roll the institution's demise, and certainly wait until the rebellion in Cuba was quelled, but with slavery abolished in Puerto Rico, it was only a matter of time.\textsuperscript{3386} In Brazil, the Emperor's minister in Washington had kept him informed of the tide of the war. Dom Pedro II brought one of the dispatches to his cabinet's attention in January 1864: "Events in the American Union require us to think about the future of slavery in Brazil, so that what occurred in respect to the slave trade [in 1850] does not happen again to us."\textsuperscript{3387} Viable anti-slavery movements were finally developing in both empires, given history, viability, and entrenched domestic interests, it would take years for the institution to finally be eradicated.\textsuperscript{3388}

\textbf{Part III – Geostrategic Calculations and Slavery's Demise: Preliminary Lessons}

The history presented above suggests several conclusions related to geostrategic calculations and the ending of slavery. First, the balance of power most definitively mattered. The most powerful norm entrepreneur pushing for an end to the slave trade and practice was the most powerful state in the international system – Great Britain. Norm entrepreneurs inside Britain built a popular movement to end the slave trade/slavery, even though it was still a profitable and viable institution, and then once achieved domestically, Britain worked to end that same institution in the rest of the system. This is in perfect keeping with Ethan Nadelmann's formulation of

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
international norm development. Nadelmann notes that norm entrepreneurs are critical in developing and spreading norms, and as he says, these entrepreneurs "include governments, typically those able to exert 'hegemonic' influence in a particular issue area."3389 He adds that "their agitation takes many forms, ranging from diplomatic pressures, economic inducements, military interventions, and propaganda campaigns."3390 Britain exerted all these influences during its multi-decade international campaign to end the slave trade. While the histories of transatlantic slavery's demise tend to emphasize domestic norm entrepreneurs and/or their cooperation internationally, it should be stressed that the powerful British state did more than any other to bring about system-wide abolition/emancipation.

Britain's power was not limitless, however; the balance of power mattered. It is no coincidence that Brazil and Cuba were the last two powers to engage in the slave trade. Both entities had a market-driven, (intermittently) insatiable appetite for slaves for most of the 19th century. In Brazil's case, Britain was in a dilemma as to how to bring about change inside the country of a lesser ally with which it did substantial trade. London tried the diplomatic approach for decades and despite the word of those treaties, the trade continued. It was Britain, then, that through the use (and continued threat) of force finally put an end to the slave trade there. That end, along with Britain's (and the rest of Europe's) force of example, would help influence Brazilian domestic politics and lead to the development of an indigenous abolitionist movement that would ultimately bring the institution's end.

Britain could not exert the same types of influence over Cuba. London was constrained by its desire to keep a stable, liberal monarchy at the helm of its Spanish ally, and thereby, it could not push against Cuba – Madrid's great colonial funding source – too hard. At the same

3390 Nadelmann, Ethan A. "Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society." International Organization Vol. 44, No. 4, (Autumn) 1990: 485. On the individual, domestic moral entrepreneur side, the activities include "transnational lobbying, educational, organizational, and proselytizing efforts of individuals and nongovernmental organizations."
time, after the War of 1812, Britain was content to maintain the present balance of power in the
Caribbean – accepting the Monroe Doctrine and thereby putting primacy on the objective of
operating freely and keeping other European powers out of the area. Britain had little territorial
objectives inside the United States, nor did it want to go to war with United States, knowing that
no matter the outcome, the only winner (from the balance-of-power perspective) would be other
European powers. Thus, given that the United States had long desired the annexation of Cuba, the
best Britain could do was keep the pressure on Madrid, suppress the trade off the African coast,
keep Cuba in Spanish hands (through shows of force and at times, threats), and let events unfold.
Britain watched and waited as the United States engaged in its own Civil War. In historian
Andrew Lambert's formulation "the American civil war 1861-65 ended the Atlantic trade." Once slavery ended in the United States, the slave trade, and eventually the institution, would
follow.

The first notable lesson of this chapter was, in keeping with realist theory, that the
balance-of-power matters. Similarly, the second is that external threats and perceived existential
threat can trump normative movements within a domestic polity. There were several instances of
this exhibited in this chapter. For example, abolitionist agitation went into recession at the turn of
the 19th century because there was a greater concern about the threat posed by
revolutionary/Napoleonic France. Similarly, with Napoleon defeated, French citizens and elites
for years pressed for the continuance of slavery in order to revive their economy, even though
there was increasing normative pressure to end the trade/practice. Certainly the same can be said
for the American South, Cuba, and Brazil; while it was increasingly clear in the decades of the
19th century (whereas, it had once been fully accepted and little questioned) that slavery was an
unsavory institution, it survived because of the proffered notion that ending the institution would
threaten the economic viability and thereby the very fabric, and perhaps existence of, those

3391 Lambert, Andrew. "Slavery, Free Trade and Naval Strategy, 1840-1860." In Slavery, Diplomacy and
Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975. eds. Keith Hamilton and Patrick
societies. In these examples, and thus likely in general, survival trumps other factors, even normative ones.

Of note, if the first two lessons of this chapter support a realist framework, they support a defensive realism over an offensive realism. One would expect that if the powers of this period, particularly Britain, were to have followed strategies shaped by offensive realism the events and outcomes would have been very different. For example, given the tenets of offensive realism, it is hard to imagine Britain ending the slave trade at exactly the period in which that practice could have greatly extended Britain's power. Yet, this is what Britain did. In the same way, an offensive realist would have expected Britain to behave differently regarding the United States throughout this period. One would have expected Britain to endeavor to stymie the rise of the United States, a likely eventual regional hegemon, and to maximize its power on the North American continent wherever possible. This was not the course Britain followed. Further, once the United States was divided by its Civil War, an offensive realist would have expected Britain to keep that potential hegemon divided, side with the southern side, and reap the rewards after the southern victory. Again, this is not the course Britain followed. In short, this case study has revealed several examples that support tenets of the realist framework, but it is distinctively a defensive rendering of that framework, not an offensive one.

A third lesson from this section is that nationalism is a powerful force that can cut both ways when it comes to normative movements and international relations in general. At times, nationalism was a critical boon to the abolitionist cause. For example, once antislavery became internalized in Britain, it was accepted as a tenet unique to that society's culture and was a source of pride moving forward. That feeling of normative superiority helped fuel Britain's zeal to end the slave trade/practice. At the same time, when British anti-trade measures were perceived to infringe on rival countries' sovereignty, the nationalist resentment felt in those countries crippled domestic normative movements for years after. In fact, there were times when nationalist pride prevented states from adopting measures that would have otherwise been in their interest; for
example, the right of search skirmishes between Britain and France in the 1830s and 1840s stymied cooperation at a time when French elites had accepted joint efforts as the prudent course of action. In short, nationalism is a powerful force, and in fact, it should be considered a geostrategic/power variable. This is in keeping with tenets of classical realism. Hans Morgenthau in particular has stated the power of nationalist sentiment and that power was certainly demonstrated here. In many cases, in fact, nationalism (and sense of threat – as already discussed) trumped the normative unacceptability of the slave trade/slavery.

A fourth lesson is the great difficulty in developing, implementing, enforcing compliance with conventions against a practice that is still in the economic interest of the countries engaged in it, particularly when those conventions are grounded in a view of morality. After the defeat of Napoleon, Britain followed a neoliberal/institutionalist strategy for ending the slave trade (and eventually slavery), attempting set up institutions and treaties to end that practice. It received tacit agreement to these principles in a myriad of documents, and yet, the slave trade continued. Most countries didn't believe that Britain was actually committed to morality, but rather, to its own interests. Some agreements received immediate compliance (Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, for example) and received little attention in this chapter. But for most, only continuous pressure eventually reaped compliance (France for example). In still others, it would require the threat and/or use of force (Brazil). "The lesson," in Lambert's words, "was obvious, ending the slave trade required a careful combination of diplomacy and force, tailored to specific situations."

When one uses power and influence to help spread morality, however, criticism tends to come from all sides. Those who engage on a policy course that attempts to spread morality must expect constant criticism on the methods which they use. To this day some historians suggest

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Britain's suppression efforts were hypocritical, Machiavellian ploy.\textsuperscript{393} While one must admit that Britain's efforts were at times hypocritical and that they sometimes "looked the other way" in order to further their own interests, the work of David Eltis and others outlined above go a long way toward disavowing any treatise that suggests that somehow Britain surreptitiously gained more than it lost economically by engaging in the trade suppression efforts. The problem is only further compounded when one uses force to compel compliance. Returning to Castlereagh – "morals were never well taught by the sword," a better phrasing might replace the term "well" with "easily." Ardent abolitionists, like the Quakers, wanted the trade stopped but they didn't want violence used to further that end. In all of these ways, pursuing a normative foreign policy agenda is a complicated, arduous task. Again quoting Lambert, "sometimes morality has a place in diplomacy, but it is a currency too rare to be employed often, and too easily debased to be used in haste."\textsuperscript{394}

While engaging in counterfactual analysis certainly has its pitfalls, it may be useful here to consider what the future of transatlantic slavery would have been if the most powerful state in the system had not been compelled by a normative movement and domestic politics to abolish its own slave trade and then to endeavor to suppress the trades of other states. While one cannot calculate if, how, and when slavery would have ended in this scenario, it seems safe to say that the trade in particular (and slavery after) would not have ended as early as it had if Britain, the most powerful international norm entrepreneur possible, had not used its own power – economic, diplomatic, and military – to further that cause.

What, then, does this history say about the decline of warfare? It certainly suggests that the international balance-of-power has likely played some role in that decline. In addition, one


would expect that domestic norm entrepreneurs have played a role in that norm's development (as they did in Britain), but that if a norm against warfare developed it likely did so under the leadership/sponsorship of the most powerful state(s) in the international system. Further, the path of such a state – engaging in the spread of a normative/morality-based convention – was/is likely fraught with criticism, questioning of motives, and second-guessing, as Britain's was. Finally, the history above suggests that even if a strong norm against aggressive warfare exists, it may be overcome if a given state polity/population fears an existential threat. Further, this norm or norm reversal may be both helped or hindered by nationalist ideology. The final chapter provides examination of these lessons and those garnered from the other chapters as well, and to that we now turn.
Chapter 9
Slavery and Major Power Warfare: Similar Paths to Obsolescence?

The seeds of this study were sowed by the intriguing analogy proffered by various theorists and most forcefully and effectively by Professor John Mueller: that major power warfare is declining and indeed may become obsolete just as [transatlantic] slavery did before it. For Mueller, war "is both abhorrent – repulsive, immoral, and uncivilized – and methodologically ineffective – futile."\(^{3396}\) Inherent in this formulation is the concept of war as both normatively unacceptable and irrational from a cost-benefit analysis.\(^{3397}\) By his calculation, a phenomenon first "becomes rationally unthinkable – rejected because it's calculated to be ineffective and/or undesirable. Then it becomes subrationally unthinkable – rejected not because it's a bad idea but because it remains subconscious and never comes up as a coherent possibility."\(^{3398}\) For Mueller, war is declining because the idea of it is becoming unacceptable; it is no longer an attractive option, and so people are turning away from it.

Spurred on by Professor Mueller's formulations, the previous seven chapters have examined the history of transatlantic slavery's decline through the prisms of economic, normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic variables in order to better understand that decline process and determine what, if any, lessons its decline might hold for the perceived decline of major power warfare. With this historical review complete, this study can now return to the two research questions it endeavored to answer. First, having examined the institution of slavery in

\(^{3395}\) Mueller is less than clear in delineating which slavery institution he is referencing in his work. Many scholars would note that slavery still exists in several parts of the world. For his part, Mueller suggests he is referring to slavery as a practice in “developed countries.” This is a vague delineation. Therefore, the present author has chosen to narrow the study to the transatlantic slave trade and eradication of the slavery practice in the western hemisphere/western world, the dominant region of the global world in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries of interest.


\(^{3398}\) Mueller, John E. Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War. New York, NY: Basic Books, 1989: 240. Mueller adds "An idea becomes impossible not when it becomes reprehensible or has been renounced, but when it fails to percolate into one's consciousness as a conceivable option."
detail, are transatlantic slavery and major power warfare sufficiently analogous cases to warrant comparison? This question was answered in Chapter 1: slavery and warfare are sufficiently similar to warrant comparison, and this conclusion is summarized again below. Second, if they are analogous cases, what process(es) caused slavery's decline. Further, what lessons does that decline process offer the case of major power warfare?

Part I – Transatlantic Slavery: Analogous Case to War? What Process of Decline?

Research Question 1 – Analogous Case:
Is the decline of the transatlantic slave trade/practice an appropriately analogous historical case to study in order to understand the proposed decline of major power warfare?

This study set out to determine if this analogy is appropriate and if Mueller’s causal mechanism applies, or if an alternative explanation is appropriate. With regard to the former question, this study determined that slavery is a socio-economic institution entailing a structure of coerced domination of the life of one (or many) by another for the purpose of exploitation, usually in the form of labor. War is the organized use of force or coercion between two groups (states) to achieve a desired objective/interest usually related to some form of control or domination. Both slavery and warfare are institutions. Slavery is a socio-economic institution with geostrategic/geopolitical implications; warfare is a geostrategic/geopolitical institution with socio-economic implications. Because war is a two-state game, because it involves the interaction of group/states in the system, it is best analyzed at the state and system levels. This is, in contrast to slavery, an intra-state game entailing how a state forms its own economic and social functions within its borders. There is, as political scientist James Lee Ray notes, a historical connection between war and slavery based on their shared concept of forced violence. In Ray's terms, "slavery and international war both involve the use of brute force to control behavior and extract

benefits.\textsuperscript{3400} Given this summation, are slavery and warfare perfectly analogous cases for study? The short answer is no; the reason they are not is that slavery is an individual- and state-level institution and warfare is a state- and system-level institution. Nonetheless, the preponderance of other characteristics, as delineated in Table 9.1, suggests that the study of transatlantic slavery's decline could indeed provide some insight into the decline of major power warfare.

\begin{table}[ht]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Case Characteristics: Slavery and Warfare} & \textbf{[Transatlantic] Slavery} & \textbf{[Major Power] Warfare} \\
\hline
\textbf{Fundamental Category} & Institution & Institution \\
\hline
\textbf{Institution Type} & Socio-Economic & Geostrategic/Geopolitical \\
\hline
\textbf{Means} & Coercion, Force & Coercion, Force \\
\hline
\textbf{Ends} & Exploitation, Domination & Achieving Interest (which usually entails control, exploitation, and/or domination) \\
\hline
\textbf{Level of Analysis} & Individual, State & State, System \\
\hline
\textbf{Level of Implications} & Individual, State, Systemic & Individual, State, Systemic \\
\hline
\textbf{Type of Implications} & Social, Economic, Geostrategic & Social, Economic, Geostrategic \\
\hline
\textbf{Historical Context} & Widely Accepted for Millennia, Now Obsolete & Widely Accepted for Millennia, Now Declining \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Table 9.1. Case Characteristics: Slavery and Warfare}
\end{table}

\textbf{Research Question 2 -- Analogous Process:}
\textit{What variable(s) led to the decline of the transatlantic slave trade/practice in the Western hemisphere?}

Having established that warfare and slavery were sufficiently analogous cases for comparison, this study went on to analyze the process of transatlantic slavery's decline, both the decline of the trade and the institution. The purpose of this research question was to determine which variables did and did not contribute to the decline of transatlantic slavery as a precursor to examining how similar variables might be contributing to the decline of major power warfare.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Professor John Mueller asserts that major power warfare is in decline and this decline process is similar to that which brought about the obsolescence of slavery in civilized countries. By his logic, "an idea becomes impossible not when it becomes reprehensible or has been renounced, but when it fails to percolate into one's consciousness as a conceivable option." Mueller's formulation triangulates somewhere between a realist's rational utility model, a constructivist's power-of-ideas-centered explanation, and that of a norm-based, liberal-institutionalist model. In the first instance, Mueller asserted in his early work that war has become a self-evidently ineffective or futile policy option. As he says,

From a rational standpoint, then, major war seems to have become unthinkable. It lacks the romantic appeal it once enjoyed, and it has been substantially discredited as a method. Moreover, there has been a shift in values: prosperity has become something of an overriding goal, and war – even inexpensive war – is almost universally seen as an especially counterproductive method for advancing this goal.

On the other hand, Mueller asserts that institutions decline because people, for want of a better term, tire of them; the idea of some institutions loses salience. As Mueller notes, the abolitionist argument was that "slavery was no longer the way people ought to do things," and "as it happened, it was an idea whose time had come." In the same way, therefore, because the idea of war is becoming repugnant – a constructivist-style argument – warfare is in decline. In fact, following this constructivist-type line of reasoning, in The Remnants of War (2004) Mueller actually disavows a classical norm-based argument for warfare's decline because as he says, war-averse countries/people seek to "enshrine" a norm against aggression; that norm's existence does "not cause them to be war-averse but rather the reverse." Yet, on the other hand, when it comes to the mechanism by which ideas spread, Mueller follows a model put forth in norms literature by the likes of Nadelmann (1990) and Finnemore and Sikkink (1998). On this note,

3401 Mueller, John E. Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War. New York, NY: Basic Books, 1989: 240. Mueller adds "An idea becomes impossible not when it becomes reprehensible or has been renounced, but when it fails to percolate into one's consciousness as a conceivable option."


Mueller puts all the emphasis on domestic "idea," or "norm," "entrepreneurs." For him, war is ugly; idea/norm entrepreneurs help reveal that ugliness, and thereby it is an institution in decline.

In the same way, Mueller's explanation of [transatlantic] slavery's decline resides around the concept that slavery was an ugly, miserable institution that had past its prime with regard to appeal, legitimacy, and efficacy and for this reason once idea entrepreneurs in Britain and elsewhere committed to revealing its nature the institution then slipped into obsolescence.

There are a myriad of proposed causal explanations for warfare's decline, and as discussed above, Mueller's explanation spans several of them. This study examined four possible causal variables for slavery's decline – normative (which equates most closely to Mueller's constructivist/norm component), economic (which somewhat equates to Mueller's "war as futile" suggestion), domestic-political, and geostrategic – in an effort to shed as much light as possible on the current state of the warfare decline literature. Having spent the better part of six chapters examining the process of slavery's decline, this study can now offer a summary of the impact of the four respective causal mechanisms on that process. The results are summarized below.

**Economic Indicators:**

**H Ein – Slavery declined when it was perceived as no longer economically profitable.**

In Chapter 3, this study examined whether slavery died a "market death;" that is, whether transatlantic slavery declined (and ultimately became obsolete) because it was no longer

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a profitable, viable form of labor. The answer is quite simply "no." The profitability of the British slave system – the first in which the trade and then institution were outlawed – had varied over the years but its long-term viability was not in doubt. In fact, the British commenced abolition of the slave trade at a period when they were poised to expand the rewards and economic benefits of that system to unparalleled levels. Yet, they did not do choose this course, but rather, abolished the slave trade anyway. True, Britons moved forward with abolition only after being convinced that ending the slave trade would not cripple them economically. Given that they had already ended the trade to their foreign rivals in time of war, it appeared to them that they could end the rest of the trade without dealing themselves a debilitating economic blow. The options before them were: continue their trade and maximize economic benefits or abolish the trade and reduce potential economic benefits at a level they were convinced could be overcome. They chose the latter.

With the slave trade abolished in Britain's West Indian colonies (and France having lost its economically powerful Haitian colony), Spain's Cuba and Brazil were left to fill the economic vacuum and fill it they did, utilizing slave labor. In this way, as Britain's West Indian system met its self-imposed demise, the economic power of these other two colonies rose. Additionally, in the United States, which had abolished the slave trade as well, a natural rate of reproduction meant that slavery could continue to flourish despite the lack of new slave imports. In fact, of all the slave systems studied the United States is the one that comes closest to ending an aspect – the slave trade – for economic reasons; that being, given the natural reproduction rate the American South had little need for further massive slave imports. In this limited way, an economic sub-factor – the fact that they had a natural rate of reproduction in their labor supply – played some role in the slave trade's demise to the United States. Still, this in no way suggests that the slave trade declined because slavery was no longer viable (as the variable is formulated). On the contrary, the United States continued to utilize slave labor effectively in several agricultural sectors, most notably cotton, and efficiently shifted labor resources to the most profitable sectors.
The American South lagged behind its northern brethren in industrialization (but this was an economic choice and one that could have been reversed if necessary), but there is no indication that slavery would have ended without political intervention. The socio-economic system of slavery was viable in the American South and it would take a concerted humanitarian and, ultimately, political action – civil war – to bring about its demise. In Cuba and Brazil, it would take until the last part of the century for the slave trade and institution – under domestic-political, geostrategic, and ultimately normative pressure – to be abolished. The economic interests in these two regions fought hardest for its continuation.

Two other aspects of the economic variable – free labor/free trade theory and technology – require brief discussion here. Theoreticians certainly espoused the virtues of free trade/free labor during the first fifty years of the 1800s; in contrast, practical reality demonstrated clearly that slavery was not only viable, but that moving to a free labor colonial system usually spelled colonial economic decline. Adam Smith famously stated that slave labor was the "dearest" (most expensive/less efficient) of all labor forms, but real world application suggested otherwise. British abolitionists hoped to demonstrate the superiority of free labor, but were smacked in the face with contrary demonstrated realities in places like Sierra Leone and post-French Haiti. The other powers watched Britain's experience with abolition and emancipation and the lesson was clear: successful transition from slave labor to free labor was difficult and economically perilous.

With regard to technology, the tomes of the past have often suggested that slavery was a retrogressive institution. The research contained here has suggested that in most transatlantic slave systems, planter/slave-owners operated efficient operations that remained on the cutting edge of technology. One can argue whether continuing a slave system stymied overall societal "development," and indeed it probably did; but one is much more hard-pressed to prove that, agriculturally, slavery was inefficient, unprofitable, or nonviable. Yes, those societies studied here that maintained a thriving system of slavery – particularly the American South, Cuba, and Brazil – remained focused on agriculture and in this way their economies were not diverse and
well-rounded. But again, this was an economic/societal choice. Saying a society's overall economy is one-dimensional or lacking industrialization does not automatically prove that slavery was backward or inefficient; the evidence presented here suggests just the opposite. As historian Laird Bergard notes, "the connections between technological innovations, increased production, and the economic viability of slavery, even during periods of sharp price increases for slaves, were prevalent in all three nations and indicate marked economic parallels between the U.S., Brazilian, and Cuban slave systems." In fact, in Brazil it was only after Britain forcibly shut down the slave trade in the early 1850s that Brazilian planters in less-thriving regions began to examine free labor alternatives. As Seymour Drescher concludes, even "on the eve of the disruption of the American Union the last two dynamic Ibero-American slave systems appeared to be as robust as ever in their potential for future growth... planter economic expectations for the future remained high." The overall conclusion is clear: transatlantic slavery did not die a "market death." Economics was not the causal variable in transatlantic slavery's decline. In fact, if anything, the economic case study shows that an institution can become obsolete despite remaining profitable and/or viable. The explanation for slavery's demise resides with other variables, on to those variables we turn.

**Normative Indicators:**

$H_N$: Slavery declined when its idea became normatively/morally unacceptable.

Chapters 4 and 5 detailed first the British normative/humanitarian movement against the slave trade and slavery, and then that of other pertinent powers such as France, the United States, Spain (Cuba), and Brazil. Recalling Finnemore's and Sikkink's (1998) theoretical model of norm development, an emerging norm tends to go through three stages – "norm emergence," "norm cascade," and ultimately, "norm internalization." Critical to the first stage, "norm entrepreneurs,"

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typically operating through organizational platforms, attempt to persuade a critical mass to accept a new norm. Norm entrepreneurs spread and popularize ideas until, typically, a "tipping point" occurs that leads to the second stage – "norm cascade" – as more and more people (including key leaders) are socialized to accept the new norm. Then, stage three develops, "internalization," in which "norms acquire a taken-for-granted quality and are no longer a matter of broad public debate."

The examination contained in Chapter 4 suggests that a series of ideological, normative factors converged over time to produce the highly effective and organized British popular abolition and emancipation campaigns, and that the British abolition and emancipation movements clearly went through respective "norm cycles." Ideas (benevolence, Providence, liberty, rights of man, theology), actors (Quakers, fledgling abolitionists, parliamentarians), and events (American Revolution, war with Napoleon) developed in such a way that popular opinion in Britain turned against the slave trade and slavery. There were clearly foundations of abolitionism based in secular enlightenment and religious thought and these forces became organized in the 1770s and 1780s. The popular campaign helped finalize a shift in British public opinion – expressed through petitions to Parliament – and ultimately Parliamentary opinion. The period of 1791 to 1792 was the likely "tipping point" of Britain's anti-slavery emergence, as during this period the public petition campaign hit record highs and by early 1792 abolitionist sentiment had lodged itself in Parliament. External factors would delay effecting abolition until the early 1800s, but once they did, a "norm cascade" occurred and by 1814 to 1815, with Britain emerging as the world's dominant power having defeated Napoleon, the concept of re-instituting the slave trade never even surfaced despite the fact that it would likely have expanded British

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power. The norm was internalized to such a degree that the idea of reintroducing the trade was never seriously considered. A similar norm cycle can be distinguished regarding emancipation. By the early 1820s, abolitionist norm entrepreneurs began to organize again to force slave emancipation and the tipping point came in the period from 1831-1833 following the Jamaican uprising of 1831. From that period forward, the British people/government was the most active international force for the end of the trade and practice of slavery.

If Britain's normative movement followed a distinctive norm cycle, what has this examination determined about the rest of the central transatlantic slave powers? The French had a foundation of as much, if not more, anti-slavery thought as the British in the last decades of the 1700s. In fact, this foundation helped spark the French Revolution that would result in France being the first transatlantic power to abolish the institution. Unfortunately, as it turned out, the revolution that this confluence of ideas sparked would lead to the rise of Napoleon and years of war to follow. With regard to norm cycles, certainly France had norm entrepreneurs. Yet, French anti-slavery efforts were hindered by nationalism and government suppression of participatory civil society. The French public wasn't compelled to abolitionism by the teachings or ideology of the dominant, but largely silent, Catholic Church. Nor were they efficiently educated on the subject through a popular information and association campaign as the British public had been. Again, this was partly because of government repression, and partly because of the elitist nature of French abolitionist norm entrepreneurs. Over time, it seems that just the sheer knowledge of the nature of slavery, acquired predominantly through press accounts of elite debates, convinced notable and common man alike that the slave trade (and later slavery) was unacceptable and ultimately doomed. By the mid-1820s, French abolitionist efforts to educate the public via the free press were having some effect, even if it was difficult to measure. When the government debated a strong slave trade enforcement bill in 1827, speakers were largely in agreement that the public was ready to end the trade; indeed, it appears that the years of the mid- to late-1820s were a tipping point against the slave trade. Still, there was little public outcry against slavery itself in
the 1830s, even though it was clear by the end of the decade to anti-slavery and pro-slavery forces alike that the slaves would be emancipated eventually. It was only in the years right before the 1848 revolution that abolitionists were finally starting to develop a popular anti-slavery movement that in any real way matched that of the British. It was a political development – the revolution – that would ultimately end slavery in French possessions.

Of all the normative movements discussed in Chapter 5, the one in the United States most closely resembled that of Britain. American norm entrepreneurs were clearly able to use a popular campaign to spread anti-slavery ideas to a large swath of the population. The foundations of and approaches to civil society and association in Britain and the United States were strikingly similar, and in many ways – number of associations, number of publications, etc. – the American movement surpassed that of Britain. But there were critical differences. American abolitionist norm entrepreneurs could organize and spread their anti-slavery ideas in the North, but after the mid-1830s the South was able to shut down the influx of anti-slavery literature and activists to that part of the country. All anti-slavery thought was repressed in the South, and in this way, the sectional nature of American society and the unique development of America's immense slave system prevented an effective popular anti-slavery mobilization from effecting change throughout the country, and via the channels of representative government. As we know from history, despite a robust normative movement it took a bloody civil war to end slavery in the United States.

In Spain and her possessions, the slave trade and slavery were accepted as normatively appropriate until the later part of the 19th century. Liberalization inside Spain at the turn of the century allowed for the emergence of a Spanish abolitionist movement in the 1860s, after the fall of the American system. For centuries, Spanish elites saw slavery as entirely appropriate and, being a highly hierarchical society, the masses followed. Despite years of British pressure, it took watching the American slave system fall apart before their very eyes at the hands of a terrible civil war before elites in the Spanish empire began to re-consider the future of slavery. Without American support, the slave trade was doomed and thus ended in the late 1860s. The rejection of
slavery by other "civilized" countries was a powerful example. Norm entrepreneurs – some journalists, doctors, engineers, and other professionals – began to take a "European" perspective on the subject of enslaving humans as well. Still, slavery was a powerful institution inside Cuba, and in fact, it is hard to pin down at what point slavery became an unacceptable practice there. For these reasons, Spanish imperial emancipation would take many more years before it was finally enacted in 1886 and would hinge at least as much on political developments as it did on intermittent abolitionist agitation.

The end of Brazil's slave trade was forced upon it by British power, and like Spain, there was little to no popular movement against slavery in Brazil until very late. Nevertheless, this study's review of Brazilian history suggests that country did in fact follow a norm cycle. In the 1860s, elites inside Dom Pedro's government and the Emperor himself were all attuned to the norms of other powers like Britain, France, and the United States. Norm entrepreneurs – again mostly elites – emerged during this period, but their influence was short-lived. It took until the mid-1880s before popular abolitionism hit a tipping point inside Brazil; effective local abolitionist societies developed, and as they did so, some regions were freed from slavery. Eventually, slaves fled en masse and abolitionist societies developed an effective "underground railroad" to spring slaves and bring them to free regions; the norm cascade was on and slavery quickly fell apart. Slavery ended in Brazil in 1888.

The histories of anti-slavery movements presented here suggest a wide range of efficacy, from Britain's archetypal normative campaign to much lesser impact in places like France or Spain's Cuba. What accounts for this variance? Transatlantic slavery's history seems to suggest two great facilitators of a developing norm cycle (and thereby, ultimately, the decline of an institution): the first is "societal inclination;" that is, the evidence suggests a developing idea/norm has a better chance of germinating and taking hold if it is consistent with the identity, structure, values, and self-perceptions of society overall. The second is the nature of the public sphere. It is difficult for ideas to spread and take hold, even if they're internally consistent and/or
appealing to the identity/values of society as a whole, if that society's public sphere is closed off and/or freedom of association is blunted. As Christopher Leslie Brown writes, with regard to slavery, "the decision to act involved more than thinking of slavery as abhorrent, although clearly this was crucial. Somehow this particular moral wrong had to become important and urgent enough to drive individuals and groups to confront entrenched institutions." For a movement to develop and ultimately succeed, the institution had to be sufficiently unacceptable to spark action, and that action needed channels through which to operate. The inclinations of societies and the nature of their public spheres tend to either facilitate or hinder the speed and forcefulness with which they act on issues/with regard to institutions. This is not to say that these facilitators absolutely determine (one way or the other) the paths societies will follow. It is certainly possible for a normative movement to develop in societies that are not perhaps pre-disposed to such movements and/or in societies with closed public spheres. In fact, the case history of anti-slavery in Brazil provides such an example, but at the same time, it should be no surprise that it took until the 1880s for a normative movement to develop in Brazil given its hierarchical society and less than open public sphere.

The British case offers the best example of a society and public sphere disposed to the development of a normative movement, and it is therefore not surprising that the British abolition movement was the first to achieve success. Britons saw themselves as inheritors of a legacy of freedom and righteousness and this identity helped propel norm entrepreneurs within their society to work against slavery practices seen as unjust; at the same time, these norm entrepreneurs could operate in a relatively open public sphere, facilitating and sustaining the spread of antislavery ideas there. In France, given its similarly "enlightened" philosophical heritage one might have expected a convergence of antislavery ideas there, but these were curtailed and poisoned by the

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memory of the revolution and Saint-Domingue, as well as the humiliation of defeat to hated rival, abolitionist Britain. Further, in the restoration period, the nature of the constitutional monarchy was such that limited avenues for popular change existed. The popular notion of slavery's unacceptability undoubtedly developed over time, but it was only at the end that a fully popularized abolition campaign was developing, and it was pre-empted by revolution (discussed more below). In imperial Spain and Brazil, citizens of hierarchical societies did not inherit a long history of liberty or democratic myth-making, and the nature of domestic politics limited the possibilities for popular mobilization. Only when the public sphere loosened in Spain did a popular movement develop. In Brazil's case, the hierarchical nature of society meant that only at the very end did the population decide slavery was unacceptable; people, including slaves, took matters into their own hands and slavery disintegrated, forcing politicians to finally take action. The United States is perhaps the most interesting case. The citizens there held the ideas of liberty and equality at their core and operated in a relatively public sphere, and yet, it took war to end the slavery institution. There, a sustained normative movement that rivaled that of the British developed in one part of the country, yet the efforts of norm entrepreneurs were not sufficient to overcome the sectional nature of American society and politics.

Through these cases one can see that the normative factor – determining that the trade/practice was unacceptable – was fundamentally critical, but not alone always or even usually causally sufficient to bring about the institution's demise. Even if a society's collective identity lends itself to rebuking an institution, the nature of the public sphere and that sphere's interaction with the domestic-political structure may ultimately determine the outcome. In this way, as French historian Daniel Resnick notes, "a moral critique was essential but not sufficient." We turn to other variables to complete the picture.

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Domestic-Political Indicators:

$H_B$ – Slavery declined when domestic interest groups and/or political players and bureaucrats in favor of abolition gained more influence over the national policymaking and legislative processes than anti-abolitionists.

As discussed above, it is one thing to believe slavery wrong, but one must also be availed of avenues through which to take action against the practice in order to effect change. Again quoting Brown, the history of any abolition/emancipation campaign "presents three related but distinct subjects: (1) the development of ideas and values hostile to slavery and the slave trade; (2) the crystallization of programs to reform or transform imperial and colonial policy; and (3) the achievement of abolition and emancipation."\textsuperscript{3416} The first aspect deals with ideas (and thereby, norms), and the second and third aspects deal with the public sphere and how that sphere interacts with the apparatus of government to orchestrate change.\textsuperscript{3417} Thus, the case studies presented here examined three sub-aspects of domestic politics variable: the nature of the public sphere, the domestic political structure, and bureaucratic politics. Taken together, the domestic politics variable examines these pathways of change, focusing on players in the domestic socio-political structure in order to trace how domestic interests ultimately yield societal/governmental decisions and action. Evidence from this study suggests that all three factors played a role in slavery's demise. The first two aspects of domestic politics – the public sphere and its relationship with the form and function of government – were in all cases crucial factors in the demise (or prolonged continuation) of the institution of slavery. Although receiving less focus in the case studies, the third sub-factor, bureaucratic politics, was particularly important in the cases of Britain and


\textsuperscript{3417} Brown, Christopher Leslie. \textit{Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism}. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006: 17. Browns phrases it: "each topic, it should be evident, presents a different set of interpretive problems. The first requires an exploration of changing values, perceptions, and beliefs. It recommends attention primarily to intellectual and cultural history. This I will refer to as the history of antislavery ideology. The second calls for an explanation of how those ideas translated into effective action as well as how and why those strategies took the character and shape they did. This topic, the subject of this book, is the history of abolitionism. The third demands an analysis of the political process. It requires an analysis of the forces and interests that led to political change. This is the history of abolition and emancipation."
France and played smaller roles in the other countries as well. The specific case findings are summarized below.

Britain was far from a perfect, representative democracy during the late 18th and early 19th century, but it had an open and (increasingly) powerful public sphere. Not surprisingly, then, this public sphere was able to influence the government's decision-making process. Britain had freedom of the press and a culture of civic association to a level not experienced by other European polities. The capabilities and power of popular association and pressure tactics (such as petition) grew with every successive issue and were manifested most clearly in the abolition movement. The agitations against the slave trade/slavery were strategic and sustained, and this issue most clearly demonstrates the increasingly effectual impact that a popular campaign could have in shaping the opinion and actions of Parliament. Yet, one must realize that even given the persistence and effectiveness of the abolition campaign, it took politicians and political maneuvers to effect change. Further, and critically, change could not be effected until Parliamentarians and the King realized that continued rejection of public sentiment decreased the government's legitimacy. The recognition of the importance of legitimacy is the stuff of increasingly representative government, not that of absolute monarchy.

The importance of domestic politics in ending slavery is undeniable in the case of the United States. Like Britain, the civic culture in the United States was one of active association and free press. Electorally, the United States was more representative than Britain in the period of interest. Yet, the United States did not follow the same peaceful abolitionist path that Britain did despite its similar public sphere, in large part because of the nature of the union that it formed at the time of its founding. America's unique federal system served as a roadblock to peaceful resolution of the slavery issue. As discussed, the Constitution was not in-and-of-itself a pro- or anti-slavery document, but it was a living document, open to interpretation and the vagaries of

implementation. The federal system gave states considerable rights and allowed for distinct sectional differences. From the earliest stages, the Southern states used the threat of disunion to ensure states rights and protect the institution of slavery. As the country expanded, the issue of slavery in the new territories continued to plague policymakers and the successive compromises only delayed the final struggle. When Northern abolitionists attempted to influence popular opinion through petitions and other media, Southern politicians blocked these efforts, enacting gag rules in Congress and blockades of the U.S. postal system. Even as the population of the North increased in the 1830s-1850s, the form of the House of Representatives and particularly the Senate (two Senators for every state regardless of size) stalemated progress on the issue. It was only a unique confluence of political events supported but not driven by abolitionist agitation and related to, but certainly not exclusively focused on, the institution of slavery that produced the improbable election of Republican Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency in 1860. Even then, slavery's political doom was not pre-ordained, as Lincoln was content to resolve the issue of slavery in the territories through negotiation without threatening the institution of slavery itself. Only the secession of the Southern states and the large-scale and prolonged bloodshed that followed compelled the federal government to end slavery once and for all. The United States, then, is an ironclad example of the importance of domestic politics – the interaction of public sphere and government form – in the decline of transatlantic slavery. The process and development of domestic structure and politics proceeded in such a way that ultimately, it took civil war to end the institution of slavery there.

In the other three polities – France, Imperial Spain, and Brazil – maintaining a constitutional monarchy in name did not automatically signify an open, representative political system and public sphere in practice. Despite the fact that France modeled its government structure on Britain's constitutional monarchy, her path to abolition/emancipation followed a definitively different course. The critical difference between the two rivals appears to be in the nature of the public sphere in France and its capacity to mold popular opinion and then force
political action in the Assembly. France had a more hierarchical society than Britain and French elites, with the French Revolution fresh in their historical minds, were afraid of the masses. Abolitionists and politicians alike were committed to working for change via government structures, not through a public campaign like that of her rival. Even when they did attempt to move for a more popular movement, the government was prone to limit the press and public expression/association in fear of revolution. Further, key ministries – the colonial and navy for example – were against abolition/emancipation and they were able to further their parochial interests through stall tactics and ineffective implementation. Even with abolitionists in the leading government positions of the Orleanist regime, change was not quick in coming; this was a seemingly classic example of the "iron law of oligarchy" – that power is inherently conservative. French elites were concerned with achieving the air of some modicum of legitimacy, without giving their citizens a truly free public sphere in which to interact with government. It would ultimately take a revolution and quick, efficient political maneuvers by an abolitionist-turned temporary insider (Schoelcher) to overcome the suppression of the public sphere and finally secure abolition/emancipation.

Spain and its empire struggled to develop a functional public sphere and legitimate institutions in its highly hierarchical society. The recurring theme of Spain's domestic politics in the period covered can be described as short periods of popular enthusiasm for change followed by defeat of the forces of change by an army committed to conservative forms of government that never developed legitimate institutions. Government/imperial instability, then, undoubtedly prolonged the history of slavery in Spain and her possessions. Indeed, Spain's was a government that lived somewhere between absolute monarchy, constitutional monarchy, and near-dictatorial oligarchy. It was only in the 1850s and 1860s (under the Liberal Union) that a public sphere with some level of freedom of expression and association could develop, and in this period the seeds

of abolitionism were born. The reform impulse started first in Puerto Rico, where slavery was relatively less important, and eventually the ideas formed there and in the Creole movement in Cuba would help finally build an abolitionist society inside Spain. When a Liberal government finally allowed the colonies representation, it was the Puerto Rican delegates' political maneuvers, followed quickly by the revolution in Spain (The Glorious Revolution) and insurrection in Cuba, which compelled Spain's reluctant, conservative government to first enact the Moret Law and then eventually end slavery via patronato.

Brazil's was a constitutional monarchy dominated by a landholding class committed to slavery. In Brazil's hierarchical society, slavery was so ingrained in the landowning interest, and therefore the general public living under them, that any moves against it were slow to develop. These power-holders dominated the thinking of the country and hence no abolitionist movement developed in the limited public sphere until extremely late. Pedro II was open to European influence and ideas, but realized that he was a moderating power and that if he tried to force change that went against the interests of the slaveholding class, he would pay a political price. The slaveholding interest – whether labeled Liberal or Conservative mattered little – was a solitary bloc for most of Brazil's history from independence to emancipation. Sectional divides developed only after Brazil was forced to end the slave trade through British military force. The slavery interest attempted to prolong slavery as long as possible through the passing (and poor implementation) of gradual amelioration measures (particularly the Rio Branco "free womb" Law). Eventually facing slave defections and province-wide emancipations in the northeast, the oligarchy again reluctantly passed measures to forestall slavery's demise (Saraiva-Cotegipe).

With the abolitionist explosion and massive slave defections that gripped the country going on all around them in 1887 and 1888, the Parliament finally put an end to slavery in Brazil, the last major power in the transatlantic slave system.

The domestic-political variable clearly played a vital role in the causal mechanism of transatlantic slavery's decline. In keeping with Browns' formulation, the development of a
normative movement that effects change (in other words, one that produces a new norm) entails not just the idea that some behavior needs addressing, but also how those ideas are translated into action that is, or is not, capable of affecting policies. The development of a norm is more likely to succeed where there is an open, robust public sphere and a government structure that interacts with, and is responsive to, that public sphere. The British antislavery movement demonstrated just such an example; one in which dedicated persons/interests mobilized within a relatively open public sphere and enacted mechanisms that exerted pressure and influence on an imperfect, but increasingly responsive (and thereby legitimate), government apparatus. In the other countries examined, either a stymied public sphere or illegitimate government structures, or both, served as roadblocks to change. In those countries, the spread of new ideas and ultimate change were either extremely slow (Spain and Brazil), or brought about by more dramatic forms of political action such as revolution (France) or bloody civil war (the United States).

**Geostrategic Indicators:**

H₅ – Slavery declined when it was perceived to reduce the state's strategic power relative to other states in the international system.

In international relations theory, the dominant realist framework posits that an institution such as slavery would only become obsolete if it was determined that its continuation would reduce a state's strategic power relative to other states in the international system, or alternatively, if ending the institution was expected to increase a state's power in that system. The critical factors of power center around economic, diplomatic, and military/security capabilities. Were geostrategic calculations a causal variable in the decline of transatlantic slavery? The answer is yes and no; geostrategic considerations were certainly important causal components in transatlantic slavery's decline but these considerations played both a helpful and a hindering role. The evidence presented in Chapter 3 suggested that clearly economic factors (which play a part in geostrategic calculations) did not cause slavery's decline. Slavery was still a profitable and viable institution. Putting that chapter aside, Chapter 8 suggested several conclusions relating to the
other aspects of the variable, particularly diplomatic and military/security capabilities. First, the balance of power mattered, as the most powerful state in the system was the most powerful international force for ending the slave trade and eventually slavery. In that sense, relative power calculations mattered definitively. Second, geostrategic calculations came to the forefront, and at times superseded normative calculations, in times of perceived threat. Third, the concept of nationalism played an important, if mixed, role in slavery's decline and although typically considered a constructivist variable, nationalism is best considered in geostrategic calculations. Finally, the history recounted here suggests the great difficulty in developing, implementing, and enforcing a morality-based norm, particularly when it is in the geostrategic interest (in slavery's case it was in several states' economic interest to continue the practice) of other countries in the system to continue it. These conclusions are discussed in more detail below.

The most important finding from the geostrategic chapter was that balance of power definitively mattered, as the most critical player in the demise of transatlantic slavery was the most powerful state in the system – Great Britain. This effort was facilitated by Britain's hegemony after France's defeat; and in fact, it's doubtful the suppression effort could not have been carried out as it was if not for Britain's dominance. Britain had not always been the clearly dominant power in the system during the period of fledgling abolitionism; in fact, in the 1760s and 1770s there was true parity between Britain and her great rival, France. That said Britain was assuredly the dominant power in the system as it emerged victorious from the Napoleonic Wars. Having enacted its own abolition domestically (and having demonstrated in the 1814 and 1815 that there was no going back, even though re-opening the slave trade could have been most profitable), it was in Britain's interest, at least in the short run, to force similar measures on the other powers in the system. Further, Britain was the one power that possessed the necessary geostrategic capability – a large, power projection-capable navy – that could establish and at least tacitly enforce a ban on slave trading. London set out to suppress the trade for most of the next
century and in this way, Great Britain was the greatest "norm entrepreneur" of all for the abolition/emancipation of transatlantic slavery.\footnote{This study focuses on transatlantic slavery, but indeed Britain worked against slavery in the rest of the world through the end of the 19th century and into the 20th. For examination of these efforts see Miers, Suzanne. \textit{Britain and the Ending of the Slave Trade}. New York, NY: Africana Publishing Company, 1974; Hamilton, Keith and Patrick Salmon, eds. \textit{Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire: Britain and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975}. Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2009; and Drescher, Seymour. \textit{Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery}. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009: 267-411.}

After Napoleon's defeat, Britain attempted to develop and institutionalize a multilateral regime (in essence, they attempted to make engaging in the slave trade a matter of international law) against the slave trade. France resisted Britain's early efforts to suppress the slave trade. Geopolitically, they had no desire to easily succumb to the diplomatic pressure of their longtime rival, especially when their elites long-believed that Britain's abolition must somehow be interest-driven. Largely failing multilaterally, Britain engaged in bilateral negotiations and treaties in order to bring about first the slave trade's demise, and then the overall institution's demise. There were clearly power calculations in their efforts. Both France and the United States resisted British infringements on their freedom of the seas. Most British diplomats would not go so far as to risk renewed war with France in order to achieve abolition there. Further, having accepted as a \textit{fait accompli} America's key role in the Caribbean following the War of 1812, Britain could exert only so much pressure on the United States and states of American interest such as Spain/Cuba.

A confluence of other factors in France and the United States ended the slave trade and practice in those two countries, and thereby, ultimately put the three powers on the side of ending the institution everywhere. Lesser powers had little geopolitical options once Britain's strategic rival, France, and the rising regional power (the United States), were both in the anti-slave trade camp. Under British military pressure in 1850, Brazil requested French help to no avail, and quickly succumbed. In short, the end of Brazil's slave trade is the most clear and explicit example of geopolitical calculations determining a slave institution's demise. Britain used power in the
form of military force to compel the Brazilian government to end the slave trade. As Brazilian Foreign Minister Paulino Soares de Sousa asked, "With the whole of the civilised world now opposed to the slave trade, and with a powerful nation like Britain intent on ending it once and for all, 'Can we resist the torrent?'... "I think not."3421 Additionally, one can make the case that it was Britain's shutting down of the Brazilian trade that led to the development of sectionalism within that country (certain sectors moving toward free labor) and that this sectionalism was critical in the development of the abolition movement and then slavery's collapse there. In a similar, but less violent way, once the United States ended slavery domestically Britain could bring more complete pressure on Madrid/Havana, and could do so largely with the support of other powers (including the United States). As naval historian Andrew Lambert summarizes, "the American position proved to be the final obstacle to the closure of the Atlantic trade because the United States was simply too powerful to be coerced, and too divided to be persuaded."3422 Not surprisingly, Cuba relented in its efforts to maintain its slave trade soon after the United States ended slavery in the mid-1860s.

The point is that power speaks, and when the most powerful state in a system is for/against an institution, as Britain was slavery, that state's power carries weight. The focal point of international anti-slavery was Britain. In fact, in David Eltis's words, "Britain was more than the center of the network. No country in the world in this era signed a treaty containing antislave provisions to which Britain was not also a party."3423 The British state was not just a focal point, it

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was a driver of anti-slavery activity and "when all is said and done," as historian Suzanne Miers points out, "she [Britain] did more [to end the trade/practice] than any other power."3424

A second conclusion from the geostrategic chapter – that international threat matters – requires elaboration. Even though Britain ended the slave trade at a time when continuing it would have likely increased their strategic power, seemingly flouting power politics, such is not the full story. The British example, and others examined in this study, suggests that the force of international threats do matter, even in domestic politics. British abolitionism was hitting its stride, its tipping point, in the 1790s and yet it took until 1806-1807 to enact the slave trade's abolition. Why? Because the perceived existential threat from revolutionary and then Napoleonic France stymied domestic abolition efforts, which became associated with that external and perceived existential threat. Once the threat of invasion and total defeat to the French receded, the abolition movement moved forward again, and as mentioned above, abolitionist-parliamentarians used the threat/international context to secure an end to the foreign trade first, which served as a method to combat that threat. This measure was then a stepping stone to total abolition, which was not in Britain's strategic interest from a power-maximization standpoint, but which could come to fruition with the existential threat from France diminished.

In the same way, France was reeling after the defeat of Napoleon and was loathe to end the slave trade to its remaining colonies, which it saw as a lifeblood of its economic revival and thereby, political survival. It took years before French citizens and politicians alike could feel secure enough to enforce an end to the trade, and decades more (and a revolution) before slavery itself was ended. Certainly the same can be said for the American South, Cuba, and Brazil; while it was increasingly clear in the decades of the 19th century (whereas, it had once been fully accepted and little questioned) that slavery was an unsavory institution, it survived because of the proffered notion that ending the institution would threaten the economic viability and thereby the

very fabric, and perhaps existence of, those societies. In the American South, slavery was perceived to be the source of the South's existence and unique way of life; in some ways, the North was seen as an external threat to that existence and thereby, it would take nothing short of war to end the institution of slavery there. A similar conclusion can be drawn for the societies in Brazil and Cuba. Elites (and in a hierarchical society, thereby, the masses for most of the period examined here) believed that slavery was at the very core of Cuba and Brazil's existence, and it would take until very late for sufficient numbers of citizens to realize that such a proposition was not the case. As mentioned, in Brazil's case, it took the threat of military destruction at the hands of the British to compel an end to the slave trade (which contributed to the events that eventually produced the collapse of slavery). In Cuba, the metropole was moving toward slavery's end there and locals faced an existential threat from the local-led, slave-supported insurrection. The future was clear: once the insurrection was quelled the Spanish imperial realm would move toward free labor.

The point is that survival is a foundational issue for all states, and all state citizens. States/state populations are reluctant to take steps domestically that will threaten their security internationally. Domestic politics can sometimes result in decisionmakers adopting measures that fail to maximize state power, for example, British domestic pressure led British parliamentarians to end the slave trade even though continuing it would have maximized British power, but decisionmakers rarely if ever adopt measures that reduce the state's relative power or are perceived to threaten the state's existential security. This, too, was most clearly shown via the British example. Under domestic pressure, British parliamentarians need not be shown that ending the slave trade would increase or maximize the state's economic/international power, but rather, only that doing so would not reduce their relative economic/international power in a way that threatened Britain's security. Security/survival matters; the history of slavery suggests in the interaction between domestic and international politics, decisionmakers may not always take steps that maximize power internationally, but they will not, nor will their populations push them
to, take steps that reduce international power to a level that presents a recognized existential threat to their security. In this way, if these two lessons from the geostrategic chapter appear to support a realist framework, they support a defensive realism over an offensive realism perspective. An offensive realist would not have predicted Britain's ending of the slave trade at the moment when it could have extended its power by continuing it. Similarly, an offensive realist would predict different British policy decisions regarding the United States, a rising regional power. In short, this case study has revealed several examples that support tenets of the realist framework, but it is distinctively a defensive rendering of that framework, not an offensive one.

A third point related to geostrategic calculations is that nationalism is a strategic power variable, and one that at times both helped and hindered the movement for abolition of the slave trade and slavery. The concepts of nationalism/patriotism, which have to do with the idea of one's own identity/affiliation, are rarely treated as variables in the measure of international power. Yet, the concept of nationalism and identity were evident throughout the various chapters of this study. With regard to the British, Britons took great pride in their history and saw "their freedom as part of a distinctive national inheritance." In this way, linking back with to earlier discussions of "societal inclinations," this sense of unique national character served as both a help and a hindrance to the abolition movement, depending in large part on external events. In

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3425 The history presented here, particularly that of Britain, appears to support a framework of defensive realism a la Kenneth Waltz, as opposed to offensive realism as espoused by John Mearsheimer. In Mearsheimer's The Tragedy of Great Power Politics (2001), the author suggests that great powers fear each other in a self-help world and so they look for ways to maximize their power; doing so is their only security (see page 3-5, 33-49). By this formulation, when Britain would have continued and/or reinstated slavery during the period when doing so would have increased profits and further ensured its role as the world's hegemon (which according to Mearsheimer is a status all great powers seek). Yet, Britain did not do this, and the evidence presented here suggests both strategic calculations (parliamentarians accepted the end of the slave trade if they were convinced doing so would not cripple the economy, even though they knew doing so would not maximize their power – this appears in keeping with Waltz) and normative considerations played a role. I would not suggest that one historical example is enough to invalidate the tenets of a framework, but nonetheless, the comparison between offensive and defensive realism is appropriate here.

3426 This is of interest because nationalism is typically associated with liberal/constructivist frameworks.

domestic circles, the population's identification with their perceived commitment to freedom inclined them to question the duality of a nation beholden to liberty, but still engaging in bondage overseas. Further, a rising sense of nationalism showed itself at several instances when external threats and adversaries developed in the periods discussed. In the 1790s, just as abolitionism was taking off, events in Saint Domingue and France threatened Britain's security. Britain's own sense of self, and security, led them to recoil from the abolitionist sentiments of their adversaries. Then, in the early 1800s, Napoleonic France reversed course, reinstituted slavery, and suddenly British abolitionism and British nationalism were synergistic forces once again.

In the same way, France's ideological foundations for abolitionism were as strong or stronger than those in Britain, but once defeated at the hands of her rival, severed national pride (and economics) prevented Paris from accepting immediate British-mandated abolition. It was only after a matter of years, once the rivalry had cooled and the memories Napoleonic defeat faded, that the French public could come around to the idea of abolition that it so closely associated with its British rival. Later, controversies with Britain over the right of search sparked nationalistic fervor once again, and for a period, stopped abolitionism in its tracks. In fact, in those instances, nationalism prevented France from adopting measures that would have otherwise been in its interest; French elites had accepted joint efforts as the prudent course of action.

In short, in the interaction of domestic and international politics, the evidence in this study suggests that people will resist measures that are seen as contrary to one's national character or supported by one's (threatening) rivals. Conversely, people will likely rally to a cause that is seen as in keeping with their own perceived national character and/or contrary to that of rivals, even at times when doing so may be a less than beneficial policy option. Nationalism is a powerful force, and one that plays a significant role in domestic and international politics. It is not a hard-and-fast, easily measurable power variable, but it is a power variable nonetheless. This is in keeping with tenets of classical realism. Hans Morgenthau, in particular, noted the power of
nationalist sentiment and that power was certainly demonstrated here. In many cases, in fact, nationalism (and sense of threat – as already discussed) trumped the normative unacceptability of the slave trade/slavery.

A fourth lesson is the great difficulty in developing, implementing, enforcing compliance with conventions, particularly when those conventions are grounded in a view of morality. This is particularly true if the practice remains firmly in the national interests in other countries engaging in it. For example, in the case of slavery, keeping the trade and/or practice was clearly in the economic interests of the larger slave societies mentioned here and this greatly complicated Britain's effort to suppression the institution(s). Further, when a state attempts to promote the decline of an institution still in other states' interests, particularly if the critique is based on moral logic, one should expect that that state's methods will be questioned from all directions.

After the defeat of Napoleon, Britain followed a liberal-institutionalist strategy for ending the slave trade (and eventually slavery). It received tacit agreement to end the trade in a myriad of documents, but compliance remained lackluster. Most countries didn't believe that Britain was actually committed to morality, but rather, to its own interests. Further, the quandary of when and how to justify interfering in the sovereign affairs of another country in order to further a normative agenda proved a most difficult one for policymakers. It is paradoxical for a country trying to enforce a humanitarian norm to do so through the threat of force. British statesmen grappled with this dilemma for most of the sixty years they endeavored to suppress the trade. In at

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3428 Classical realists, particularly Hans Morgenthau, suggest that nationalism is a geo-strategic/power variable. Structural realists like Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer would likely stress more measurable variables like economic and military powers. See Morgenthau, Hans. Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, 6th Edition. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985. He states, "In the last analysis, then, the power of a nation, in view of its national morale, resides in the quality of its government. A government that is truly representative, not only in the sense of parliamentary majorities, but above all in the sense of being able to translate the inarticulate convictions and aspirations of the people into international objectives and policies, has the best chance to marshal the national energies in support of those objectives and policies" (page 158).


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least one case – Brazil – the use of force quickly and successfully ended the trade. Yet, such a use of force alienated many abolitionists at the time, particularly the pacifist Quakers.

In truth, Britain's efforts to end the slave trade/slavery still receive critique to the present day. As an example, Marika Sherwood's impassioned work *After Abolition: Britain and the Slave Trade Since 1807* (2007) excoriates Britain for its hypocritical lack of effectiveness in combating slavery, particularly noting that British citizens gained from the trade for decades after abolition. While one must admit that Britain's efforts were at times hypocritical and that officials sometimes "looked the other way" as they balanced strategic interests with their suppression efforts, David Eltis's work goes a long way toward disavowing any treatise that suggests that somehow Britain surreptitiously gained more than it lost economically by engaging in the trade's suppression. British companies certainly skirted around British anti-slavery efforts and laws for decades, but that said, "if the process of squeezing British capital out of the trade was protracted and largely unsuccessful, British slave ships at least, even under foreign flags, had mostly disappeared within a few years of the 1807 act." By the 1820s there were no British slave traders left really, although certainly some British capital still funded the trade. Internationally, Britain's suppression efforts certainly gave Britons a feeling of moral superiority, while there was limited ability for foreign powers to reciprocate the rights of search given Britain's naval dominance. But looking at the whole sweep of history, to say that because some British capital took advantage of the trade or because Britain strategic interests intermeshed with abolitionist interests

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3430 Eltis, David. *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 59, 83-85. As David Eltis points out, from 1806 to 1824 Parliament passed fifteen acts attempting to curtail the domestic slave trade, but it is true, "down to 1824 there was nothing to stop a British subject selling goods or equipment to a slave trader outside British territory; after 1824 such activities were illegal only if the seller had prior knowledge of the purposes for which the goods were intended. Furthermore, until 1843 British companies and individuals were free to hold slaves outside British territory and, of course, at no time were British loans on the security of nonslave property restricted."


3432 Eltis, David. *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989: 85. As Eltis notes, "everyone knew that the treaties were in practice a license for the British Navy to capture and the joint courts to condemn the ships of other nations."
this somehow discredits Britain's decades of anti-slave trade/practice efforts is to nitpick at best, and to misread and/or distort history at worst. The historical record is absolutely clear that Britain lost in lives (over 5,000) and wealth (it bore almost all costs of suppression for sixty years and its costs likely outpaced any gains it accrued from its active years in the trade) far more than it gained.  

As Chaim D. Kaufman and Robert A. Pape summarize, in pure numbers the "anti-slave trade efforts did not yield Britain any noticeable material benefits in wealth or power.  

Seymour Drescher perfectly summarizes the difficulty a powerful country encounters when engaging in a normative agenda, stating: "When one claims the moral high road, no good deed goes unquestioned. The odor of sanctity always raises suspicions of the scent of hypocrisy." Noting, appropriately, the scant scents of scattered pockets of hypocrisy is one thing; concluding total hypocrisy in the face of all facts to the contrary is quite another.

A Summary of Transatlantic Slavery's Decline

The preceding discussion of the findings of this study suggests a tentative summary of the primary causal variables in transatlantic slavery's decline. First, transatlantic slavery did not die a "market death;" that is, it did not die because it was economically moribund or unprofitable. Rather, a combination of normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic factors were the primary, interactive causal variables leading to transatlantic slavery's demise in the countries examined. Table 9.2 summarizes the most important causal variables that drove (and/or at other times hindered) the decline of the slave trade and slavery in the respective countries examined in this study. The relative weight – primary, or secondary – of the importance of these variables can


be debated. In truth, volumes have been written on transatlantic slavery's demise and one can only expect the debate to continue. What this present author concludes, however, is that an interactive mix of causality between normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic factors ultimately produced transatlantic slavery's obsolescence.

**Table 9.2. A Comparison of Causal Variables for Transatlantic Slavery's Decline Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Slave Trade</th>
<th>Slavery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Britain</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary:</td>
<td>Normative,</td>
<td>Normative, Domestic Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geos.**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>France</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary:</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Domestic Politics (Revolution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geos.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The United States</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary:</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Domestic Politics (Civil War)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brazil</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary:</td>
<td>Geostrategic</td>
<td>Normative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spanish Empire</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary:</td>
<td>Geostrategic</td>
<td>Domestic/Imperial Politics (including rebellion in Cuba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geos.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* In the case of Britain, there were geostrategic calculations mixed in with domestic politics in Britain's move to end the slave trade to foreign territories and then end its own trade. There were then geostrategic calculations in endeavoring to end the trade to other rivals. That said, it clearly was NOT in Britain's geostrategic interest to end the slave trade when it did, and in that way, the normative and domestic-political calculations far outweigh the geostrategic ones in favor of abolishing the trade.

* As discussed, one could say that the United States chose to abolish the slave trade in 1807 because it had a natural reproduction rate – an economic factor. This in no way insinuates that the institution was moribund; quite the contrary, the United States carried on slavery for another nearly sixty years.

In many if not most of the histories of transatlantic slavery, the normative variable tends to either be the primary focus of causality or is neglected in deference to more material/geostrategic factors. What I would hope that this review has shown is that the normative variable – the development of the idea, the norm, that the slave trade and slavery were morally/normatively unacceptable – was necessary, foundational and fundamental, but not always
or even predominantly sufficient to bring about change in the countries studied. As Hendrik Spruyt notes, one cannot attribute absolute primacy of either material or moral interests. "Beliefs will often determine which interests actors pursue, and even how actors perceive their interests. But material factors and structural necessities (such as state survival) will equally determine whether such beliefs get a foothold on elite and public imagination."3435 With regard to slavery, Spruyt suggests that material/instrumental factors played a role in the antislavery norm's emergence and diffusion, but that over a much longer period of time the norm against slavery became a fait accompli and "part of a system of logics of appropriateness."3436 In this way, other theorists such as Spruyt have clarified that Professor Mueller's thesis rests on a social theory of learning.3437 Humans make social institutions to serve their interests and values, and when these change, the institutions sometimes change as well.3438 Here again, the question is how does this change occur?

Looking back, it's easy to suggest that people simply tired of slavery's ugliness, and thereafter, as Mueller suggests, the institution "abruptly" declined because its time had passed. A close review of the history suggests there is much more to the story. Transatlantic slavery became obsolete primarily because despite remaining profitable, it was deemed morally unacceptable. Fundamentally, for an institution to decline it stands to reason that at least some number of people associated with that institution would have to determine that it was no longer attractive, appropriate, legitimate, and/or effective. For a normative variable to be primarily causal one would expect that at least majority of the population and/or a majority of the policymakers in a given country would recognize the institution's unacceptability and thereby attempt to enact

change. There is one shining example examined in this study that demonstrates a predominantly normative cause of slavery's decline: Britain. This is the great archetype of an efficacious normative movement; a majority of the British population decided the practice of the slave trade and then slavery was inappropriate and/or repugnant and then successfully endeavored in a sustained, strategic campaign to end that institution domestically and, ultimately, internationally. This story offers one critical, if imperfect, example of a morality-based norm developing despite the fact that at times other more material factors worked against it.

Yet, even this story showed the importance of the domestic-political variable. The power of this norm was enhanced in societies with open public spheres and government structures that were responsive to the people. British abolitionists could not have built a normative movement against the slave trade had they not operated in a country with an open public sphere. In the same way, however imperfect and unrepresentative Britain's constitutional monarchy was, it was committed to maintaining at least some modicum of legitimacy enough that it ultimately bowed to domestic pressure to end slavery. Even then it took abolitionist insiders working within the domestic political structure to bring about final change. In this way, even the archetype British example shows the importance of the nexus between norm development and domestic politics. The nature of the public sphere and the form/function of government impacts the development of norms significantly. It is more difficult to develop and sustain a normative movement in states with closed, repressed public spheres and non-representative and/or non-responsive government structures. It is difficult to develop and spread an idea in a society that is closed and/or in which freedom of thought is stunted. At the same time, even if a society has some semblance of an open public sphere, the task of forcing/enacting policy change is complicated by a government form that is deliberately or structurally unresponsive to the sentiments of the people. In this way, the domestic politics variable is critically important. The histories presented here reinforce this critical importance. Thinking back, domestic politics played a primary or secondary role in slavery's decline in almost every case examined. In short, domestic politics matter.
So far, we've summarized state-centered anti-slavery; what of the international movement against slavery? One interesting conclusion from this study is that two key means through which the constructivist framework suggests new ideas are spread – transnational ties and universal themes – did not play a particularly powerful role. This finding is in keeping with work done by Kaufman and Pape (1999), which found that British abolition efforts were less about universal "cosmopolitan ethical beliefs" driving norm development "through transnational interaction" than about favorable domestic-political environments allowing abolitionists driven by "parochial religious imperatives" to make changes that added to the government's legitimacy and to Britain's own national identity. This study asserts similar conclusions. Transnational ties produced mixed results. Anglo-American cooperation was certainly intermittently important, but not decisive. Further, Anglo-French abolitionist cooperation hindered as much as helped the movement there. In addition, while Britons certainly felt a cosmopolitan (if racist-tinged) empathy with the slaves and this fact cannot and should not be denied; it was a self-fulfilling empathy that reinforced Britain's moral and national superiority. In short, the normative movement against slavery did not proceed as constructivism would tend to predict.

It is appropriate therefore to return Ethan Nadelmann's (1990) formulation of the development of globalized normative change. According to Nadelmann, most globalized regimes share an evolutionary pattern of four to five stages. In the first, "most societies regard the targeted activity as entirely legitimate under certain conditions and with respect to certain groups of people." In the second, the activity is redefined as a problem by idea/norm/moral entrepreneurs, who then, push in the third stage for suppression of activities and formation of

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international regimes. For Nadelmann, these entrepreneurs "include governments, typically those able to exert 'hegemonic' influence in a particular issue area," as well as transnational groups and individual actors.\textsuperscript{3442} He adds, "their agitation takes many forms, ranging from diplomatic pressures, economic inducements, military interventions, and propaganda campaigns of governments to the domestic and transnational lobbying, educational, organizational, and proselytizing efforts of individuals and nongovernmental organizations."\textsuperscript{3443} If these actions are successful, then the fourth and fifth stages develop. In the fourth, proscribed activity becomes the focus of prohibitions and laws throughout much of the world. In some stages, these activities actually significantly decline and/or become obsolete.\textsuperscript{3444}

The systematic outline provided by Nadelmann closely matches the story revealed in this dissertation (this should be no surprise since Nadelmann built his model in part on transatlantic slavery's example). Critically, what needs to be re-emphasized is that as Nadelmann notes but many transatlantic slavery historians and constructivists (and Professor Mueller) tend to underplay, a state can be a powerful norm entrepreneur. In fact, in transatlantic slavery's case, the most powerful "norm entrepreneur" was the most powerful state in the system. Once it enacted antislavery domestically, exerting power to end the institution internationally was both strategically and normatively consistent with Britain's interests, which helped to sustain its efforts. No state contributed more to slavery's decline – both normatively and in sheer power

calculations – than Britain.\textsuperscript{3445} Britain's power knew limits, as the case studies showed. But Britain's pressure – diplomatic, military, and force of example – exerted near constant influence on the transatlantic region. While the histories of transatlantic slavery's demise tend to emphasize domestic norm entrepreneurs and/or their cooperation internationally, it should be stressed that the powerful British state did more than any other to bring about system-wide abolition/emancipation. Nonetheless, in most cases it took a domestically-driven impetus – normative and political – to end the slave trade/slavery. Brazil developed a robust anti-slavery movement at the very end, for example. In the United States, internal and external normative pressure was not enough to bring about change peacefully, and civil war ensued. In the end, transatlantic slavery declined when and as it did because norm entrepreneurs enacted domestic policy change in the most powerful state in the system, and then that powerful state provided near-constant diplomatic and military pressure on the other powers in the system to end the institution as well. Over time, normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic factors combined in a way that resulted in state-sponsored slavery in the transatlantic system becoming first unacceptable, then repugnant to the point of obsolescence.

How does the decline of slavery in the case studies examined here compare with Mueller's model of slavery's (and thereby warfare's) decline? Mueller presented a model in which idea/norm entrepreneurs acting domestically and transnationally were the key to transatlantic slavery's "abrupt" demise. His key causal variable is the normative/constructivist one – the idea of slavery becoming unacceptable and ultimately repugnant. The slavery case study actually suggests that the norm's emergence was not particularly abrupt and was rather more complex.

\textsuperscript{3445} In at least one case – Brazil's – the slave trade was ended, counter-intuitively, without a fundamental normative rejection of the institution having developed domestically. It would be difficult to show that either Brazilian elites, or the larger general public, were sufficiently opposed to the slave trade to end that institution in 1850; the fundamental ingredient of unacceptability was provided by (forced upon) Brazil by an outsider – powerful Britain. Interestingly, Brazil did finally develop its own widespread rejection of the acceptability of slavery at the very end of that institution's life and a case can be made the normative variable – the mass movement of slaves and locals to destroy – forced an end (through domestic politics) to slavery there. But interestingly, the initial impetus to end the trade was produced externally.
Norm entrepreneurs did play a critical role domestically, but their transnational role was limited and mixed in effect. States with certain societal inclinations tended to be more pre-disposed to the spread of a norm against human bondage-enforced labor. In this way, norm entrepreneurs inside Britain were the first to meet success, while norm emergence was slower to develop inside less-inclined countries such as Spain and Brazil. Once adopted domestically, Britain became the most powerful norm entrepreneur in the international arena, its effectiveness greatly facilitated by its being the most powerful state in the system and having capabilities (a strong navy for example) that allowed it to carry out a global slave trade/practice suppression campaign. In the end, then, transatlantic slavery's demise was brought about by a combination of normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic factors and via a process that is more complex than Mueller's slavery-warfare analogy has suggested.

Table 9.3. Comparing Models of Slavery's Decline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mueller's Slavery Model</th>
<th>Case Study Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome</strong></td>
<td>Institution becomes unacceptable to the point of obsolescence</td>
<td>Institution becomes unacceptable to the point of obsolescence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Causal Variable</strong></td>
<td>Normative/Constructivist</td>
<td>Normative/Constructivist Domestically-Political Geostrategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Actor</strong></td>
<td>- Domestic and/or Transnational Idea/Norm Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>- Domestic Norm Entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- State-based Norm Entrepreneur = Most Powerful State in the System (Britain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>- Idea entrepreneurs help reveal institution as rationally unthinkable (normatively unacceptable, irrational from a cost-benefit analysis*)</td>
<td>- Normative movement consistent with societal inclinations develops in open society with responsive government structure (which is at same time the most powerful state in system)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Institution then becomes subrationally unthinkable (it no longer registers as a viable policy option)</td>
<td>-- Norm is slow to emerge in other states with different societal inclinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Most powerful state helps establish/maintain norms/international order consistent with national interests, identity and domestic politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- State becomes most powerful norm entrepreneur and enforcement mechanism in international system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mueller actually concedes that slavery was still viable/profitable, and so the impetus falls to the normative variable.
Part II – What Lessons Might Slavery Hold For Major Power Warfare?

So what does slavery's case suggest about warfare? As Robert O'Connell points out, to suggest as Mueller does that war is declining after thousands of years as a prevalent institution just because people are tired of it is to have "trivialized the subject."\textsuperscript{3446} Such an explanation is "the equivalent of 'just saying no' to the drug problem."\textsuperscript{3447} In agreement with O'Connell, the chapters already presented here have demonstrated, if nothing else, that the decline of slavery was a long, drawn-out, convoluted process and the important question regarding warfare's decline, and thereby for this study, slavery's decline, is the more finely-grained question of "how" the process proceeded; what were the causal mechanisms that produced this result?

Economics and War

The evidence presented in this study suggests economic calculations were not a causal variable in transatlantic slavery's decline. In each state studied, slavery remained viable/profitable right up to abolition and/or emancipation and in many cases states moved to eradicate the institution at the very time when its potential for economic gain was at its greatest. Further, the evidence presented here suggests slave systems were not technologically moribund, but rather, most remained on the cutting edge of modern techniques. Theoretically this sheds light on two prominent theories of warfare's decline: the technological argument and the war profitability/cost argument. In warfare studies, technology is typically considered a geostrategic variable. The most prominent technological argument for warfare's decline posits that the development of nuclear weapons has reduced the likelihood of war. This argument is prominent in realist literature. See, for example, Martin Van Creveld, who states "by far the most important factor behind the waning

of major interstate war has been the introduction of nuclear weapons. Political scientist Kenneth N. Waltz asserts that the spread of nuclear weapons improve the prospects for peace because the threatened use of nuclear weapons means that a state faces destruction if they are used; facing an existential threat is a high stakes/high cost game and states act with more care when costs are high. Therefore, certainty about the relative strength of potential adversaries – meaning certainty that they can inflict total destruction upon a given adversary – makes war less likely. A related argument, that "war has become too costly," is prominent in international relations literature as well. It is intuitively rational to think that as a practice/institution loses is utility or profitability, it will cease to be an enticing policy option; theorists like Michael Howard and Carl Kaysen have suggested as much.

The inspiration for this study, Professor Mueller, has admitted that slavery remained economically viable, but still contends that war became rationally unthinkable – it became both futile from a cost-benefit analysis perspective and normatively unacceptable. In this way, from the beginning, Mueller makes a distinction between the slavery case (economically viable, but normatively unacceptable/repugnant) and the warfare case (both rationally ineffective and normatively unacceptable). Yet, Mueller asserts that none of these traditional arguments – the costliness or advancing technology arguments – about warfare's utility/futility is particularly valid. For Mueller, nuclear weapons need not be present in order for states to grasp war's high cost and lack of utility; the examples of the two world wars of the twentieth-century should be


sufficient.\textsuperscript{3451} Further, war is not appreciably more costly than it has ever been.\textsuperscript{3452} Therefore, Mueller never fully answers what cost-benefit calculation accounts for warfare's decline.

Regrettably, the present author does not believe that the slavery case study sheds much light on the cost-benefit/rational choice explanation for the decline of war. The dynamics associated with the economic variable as it relates to slavery does not lend suggestive trends for economics/technology as it relates to war. In slavery's case, continually modernizing technologically simply produced continued efficiency and likely profitability, a positive reward which contributed to national wealth and thereby added to national power. In warfare's case, advancing technology has brought more advanced weapons, including nuclear – the ultimate – weapons and have therefore brought to fruition the threat of total destruction, a negative outcome of the highest possible impact. With regard to technology, the fact that slave processes remained relatively modern technologically – and thereby remained profitable – sheds little light on whether warfare's ultimate technological innovation, nuclear weapons – which threatens total annihilation – can limit warfare in general. The comparison of both process and outcome/magnitude seem inappropriate. In the end, if the case study found that slavery lost its economic utility, then it might in some small way add credence to an argument that war might be declining because it is losing its utility as well. But it did not. On the other hand, it remains a distinct possibility that rational choice factors – increasing costliness of war, the threat of total annihilation via nuclear weapons, etc. – are contributing to warfare's decline. In fact, Mueller asserts that rational cost-benefit analyses are contributing to war's decline; it just remains to be determined what those exact factors are.\textsuperscript{3453} Sadly, the slavery case doesn't provide much insight.

\textsuperscript{3451} Mueller, John. \textit{The Remnants of War}. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004: 164-165. Mueller suggests the evidence from the First and Second World Wars enough to prove war's rational futility as a policy option. As a summarizing example, Mueller states, "a jump from a fiftieth-floor window is probably quite a bit more horrible to think about than a jump from a fifth-floor one, but anyone who finds life even minimally satisfying is extremely unlikely to do either."
Therefore, this rational choice/decreasing utility of warfare remains a viable and necessary research vector for the future.

**The Normative Variable – What Norm?**

Norm emergence was a critical causal variable in slavery's demise, and thus it seems likely that norms will play and/or are playing a role in the decline of major power warfare. Naturally, it's important to be clear about exactly what norm is emerging with regard to warfare. In the case of transatlantic slavery, a norm cycle produced first a norm against the slave trade, and then a norm against the institution of slavery itself. In the case of warfare, Mueller's formulation suggests all warfare between civilized states is in decline. In reality, the norm cycle that is occurring related to warfare is the norm against aggressive, or offensive, warfare. Noted "Just War" theorist Michael Walzer asserts that a commenced "war is always judged twice, first with reference to the reasons states have for fighting, secondly with reference to the means they adopt."\(^{3454}\) The first judgment is known as *jus ad bellum*: justice of war; the second, *jus in bello*: justice in war.\(^{3455}\) A judgment of "*Jus ad bellum* requires us to make judgments about aggression and self-defense."\(^{3456}\) The latter norm regarding how war is waged is important, but not for the present study on the incidence of war; for that, one must look to the former – *jus ad bellum*.

Starting a war – aggression – is considered normatively wrong in the modern world; self-defense

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is not.\textsuperscript{3457} Noted historian John Keegan states plainly, "war, historically, is a predatory affair."\textsuperscript{3458} For Walzer, war has human agents and those agents "are properly called criminals... in contemporary international law, their crime is called aggression."\textsuperscript{n3459} "There is," according to James Lee Ray, "an almost universal sense that the deliberate launching of a war could now no longer be justified."\textsuperscript{m3460}

This formulation says nothing about self-defense. Martin Van Creveld asserts the right to wage war has been called into question "except in cases involving self-defense."\textsuperscript{n3461} Inherently, if one suggests as Mueller does that war is declining and/or becoming obsolete because it is becoming unacceptable/repugnant, one is asserting that all war is unacceptable and clearly that is not the case. A norm is developing against offensive war, but defensive war remains within the bounds of international acceptance. The world is not suddenly dominated by pacifists and historically even during periods of peak pacifism, as Robert O'Connell states, "pacifists remained very much a minority, and not a particularly insightful one" as far as explaining the incidence of war, or lack thereof.\textsuperscript{3462} People find offensive war unacceptable, but self-defense is another matter completely. One need only make a quick scan through cable television channels to find that war.

\textsuperscript{3457} Balibar, Etienne. "What's in a War? (Politics as War, War as Politics)." \textit{Ratio Juris}, Vol. 21, No. 3. (September) 2008: 369. Balibar asserts offensive war has been declared illegal since Kellogg-Brian Pact in 1928; and the only exception, even for this anti-war philosopher, is "the legitimate defense against an aggression carrying a threat that is at the same time immediate and vital."


\textsuperscript{3459} Walzer, Michael. \textit{Just and Unjust Wars}, 4\textsuperscript{th} Edition. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2006: 31. Walzer further states, "When soldiers believe themselves to be fighting against aggression, war is no longer a condition to be endured. It is a crime they can resist – though they must suffer its effects in order to resist it – and they can hope for a victory that is something more than an escape from the immediate brutality of battle." See also Black, Jeremy. \textit{Why Wars Happen}. New York, NY: New York University Press, 1998: 16-17, which lists the tenets of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Decalogue of 1975, including the norms of: 1) sovereign equality, 2) refraining from the threat or use of force, 3) inviolability of frontiers, 4) territorial integrity of states, 5) peaceful settlement of disputes, 6) non-intervention in internal affairs, 7) human rights, 8) equal rights and self-determination of people, 9) cooperation among states, and 10) fulfillment of obligations under international law. The concept of aggression as normatively unacceptable is clearly present. Self-defense is not outlawed.


\textsuperscript{3462} O'Connell, Robert L. \textit{Ride of the Second Horsemen: The Birth and Death of War}. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995: 235. The author mentions specifically the decades around the turn of the 19\textsuperscript{th} to the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.
is still very much accepted, and sometimes even glorified, but predominantly the self-defense variant. For there to be an emerging norm against war would mean that the world's population is trending toward pacifism, and this is not the case.

The above discussion suggests that if any norm is developing related to warfare, it is one against offensive warfare. There is as yet no such norm emerging against one's right to defend one's self if attacked, and indeed, there is little indication the world is becoming predominantly pacifist; that is, against fighting in all circumstances. Mueller's formulation does not fully answer the "why major power warfare" question. He suggests that "civilized" states are turning away from war, and as a subset of "civilized" states, major power warfare is therefore decreasing. In the same way, the lessons learned from the slavery case study do not fully answer the "why major power war" question either. It appears that a norm against aggressive warfare is developing, and thereby, major power warfare is reduced. Therefore, there is a continued need for further research. What the slavery case does help understand is the "how" of the anti-offensive war norm. A review of the development of the norm against slavery has shown that key individuals and groups served as norm entrepreneurs inside the various countries examined. Of particular significance were those inside Britain, who having achieved abolition/emancipation domestically, then helped propel Britain's leading role in spreading the anti-slavery norm to the rest of the world. Still, just as in slavery's case, the full story of warfare's decline is not told without examination of domestic politics, geostrategic calculations and the international system.

The "How" of Norm Emergence – Norms and Domestic Politics

Professor Mueller's argument for the idea of war becoming repugnant hinged in large part on the efforts of transnational idea entrepreneurs, particularly those operating in the years before and during World War I, who suggested that war was no longer necessary, desirable, or inevitable. For him, World War I "was not the first horrible war in history, but because of the efforts of the prewar antiwar movement it was the first in which people were widely capable of
recognizing and being thoroughly repulsed by those horrors and in which they were substantially aware that viable alternatives existed.\textsuperscript{3463} The experience of war as a horrific institution and one without utility was only reinforced by World War II. Interestingly enough, Mueller asserts that it was idea entrepreneurs in Britain and the United States that were critical.\textsuperscript{3464} In Britain's case, the aim coming out of World War I was to produce a perpetual peace. For the United States, that goal of perpetual peace was a useful tool in bringing America into the war.\textsuperscript{3465} Also of interest, Mueller suggests "Britain's entrance into the war was triggered when Germany brutally invaded neutral Belgium and Luxembourg. It was this circumstance, more than any other that impelled the remarkable public outcry in Britain against Germany as the war broke in August 1914."\textsuperscript{3466} He adds, "thus, Britain was fighting in part for a somewhat pacifistic principle [my emphasis added]: small countries that wish to avoid being engulfed by conflicts between larger countries, and that in fact wish to drop out of the war syndrome entirely... should be allowed to do so."\textsuperscript{3467} This formulation is of interest, first, because he re-affirms that the norm that was developing was one against aggressive warfare. Germany's invasion of the neutral low countries was the event that sparked outrage. That said, secondly, one has to bend definitional rigor to a significant degree to say that going to war to stop aggression, and attempting to coax the United States to join you in that war, represents a paragon of pacifism.

Whether an example of pacifism or not, Mueller's argument stresses the importance of idea/norm entrepreneurs in developing a norm against [offensive] war. Indeed, the slavery case study presented here also asserted the critical role of domestic norm entrepreneurs, but suggested that there is more to the story. There appear to be facilitators – societal factors and the nature of the public sphere – that help determine when and where normative movements have a likelihood of developing and achieving success. In slavery's case, the spirit of free civic association and an

identification with freedom facilitated first the questioning of the slavery practice, and then the
taking and sustainment of action against that institution. In contrast, the more hierarchical
societies and those with suppressed public spheres had much greater difficulty even questioning
state-sponsored slavery, let alone taking action against it. The nature of the public sphere provides
the conduit between the normative and the domestic-political variables, and thereby ultimately
helps determine state action against a state-sponsored institution. One (important) aspect is if
societal factors and the efforts of norm entrepreneurs lead some citizens to question and/or take
action against an institution, but it still takes government action to end a state-sponsored practice.
Therefore, the evidence from this study suggests that both the nature and openness of the public
sphere and the government structure/operation matter with regard to the development of norms
and the decline of institutions.

For example, Britain had a relatively open society with an increasingly representative and
responsive form of parliamentary government. Neither aspect was perfect, but the history
presented here suggests that they played a facilitating role in Britain becoming the first and most
important player in the movement against slavery. In contrast, in France, Brazil, and Spain, the
less open public spheres and less legitimate and responsive government structures stymied norm
emergence for decades. Additionally, the United States offers an example in which the public
sphere was open, but the unique structure and operation of government contributed to
sectionalism in such a way that in the end, only a violent form of political action – civil war –
could end slavery there.

Given the importance of domestic politics in transatlantic slavery's decline, it stands to
reason that the same variable may play a role in warfare's decline. Not only that, despite the fact
that he put no emphasis on domestic politics in his own model of decline, Professor Mueller has
specifically pointed out that two liberal countries – Britain and the United States – were at the
forefront of the development of anti-war norm. Therefore, it is no stretch to suggest that domestic
politics may again prove relevant in the norm against offensive warfare.
In international relations literature, the most noted theory related to the nature of
domestic politics is the democratic peace theory (DPT),\textsuperscript{3468} in its most colloquial form this theory
states that "democracies don't fight other democracies."\textsuperscript{3469} Professor John M. Owen suggests that
a more appropriate label is liberal peace theory (LPT), because the "democratic peace theory"
moniker connotes a focus on electoral processes, while liberal peace is much broader, based in
liberalism as a worldview. Theorists have traced DPT/LPT back to philosopher Immanuel Kant,
who suggested that democratic (republican) form of government, pacific unions, and
cosmopolitan law between states would guarantee success.\textsuperscript{3470} In more modern terms, these three
tenets are reformulated as democracy, interdependence, and institutions (rule of law).\textsuperscript{3471}

With this background, LPT/DPT theorists have stipulated both normative and structural
causes for a proposed democratic peace.\textsuperscript{3472} On the normative side, theorists have suggested that
liberal democratic leaders learn to resolve transitions in power and conflict peacefully.\textsuperscript{3473} In this
way, they develop an expectation that leaders in other like-governed states will resolve conflicts

\textsuperscript{3468} Professor John M. Owen has asserted that a more appropriate moniker is "liberal peace," and the
present author concurs. As Owen notes, "the core of liberal peace, however, is liberalism itself;" and he
suggests to understand the causal mechanisms of liberal peace, one has to focus on liberalism as a
worldview rather than just the narrow electoral process connoted by "democracy." See Owen, John M.
\textit{Liberal Peace, Liberal War}. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997. This study will adopt LPT.

\textsuperscript{3469} Barnett, Michael, Emmanuel Adler, and Bruce Russett. "A Neo-Kantian Perspective: Democracy,
Interdependence and International Organizations in Building Security Communities." \textit{BT - Security
Communities}. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1998: 372. The author's actual formulation is
"democracies rarely fight each other."

\textsuperscript{3470} Doyle, Michael. "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs." In \textit{Debating the Democratic Peace}. eds.

\textsuperscript{3471} Barnett, Michael, Emmanuel Adler, and Bruce Russett. "A Neo-Kantian Perspective: Democracy,
Interdependence and International Organizations in Building Security Communities." \textit{BT - Security

\textsuperscript{3472} See most notably Maoz, Zeev and Bruce Russett. "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace,

\textsuperscript{3473} Russett, Bruce. "Why Democratic Peace." In \textit{Debating the Democratic Peace}. eds. Michael E. Brown,
Fact of Democratic Peace." In \textit{Debating the Democratic Peace}. eds. Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-
Jones, and Steven E. Miller. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001: 59; and Owen, John M. \textit{Liberal Peace,

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in similar fashion. Additionally, they tend to be much more interested in building prosperity through the furtherance of trade than they are through territorial conquest. In this way, liberal polities tend to adopt a worldview that stresses setting up structures that support freedom, representative institutions, rationality, rule of law, etc, and reinforces the suggestion that liberal states shouldn't go to war with other liberal states.

On the structural side, DPT/LPT theorists have suggested that because democratic governments tend to have checks and balances and because they have to respond to public debate and wishes regarding the launching and execution of war, they will be less impulsive and more circumspect before engaging in warfare. Further, the public bears the cost of war in democracies, and this will lead naturally to reduced haste in fighting. Further, because the public has a say in the political life of its leaders' futures, elites will be very careful about the kind

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3474 Russett, Bruce. "Why Democratic Peace." In Debating the Democratic Peace. eds. Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001: 96-97; and Owen, John M. Liberal Peace, Liberal War. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997: 12, 22; Thompson, Peter. "The Case of the Missing Hegemon: British Nonintervention in the American Civil War." Security Studies, Vol. 16, No. 1 (January–March) 2007: 105. A key distinction needs to be made on the ideological side, however. As John M. Owen states, people "tend to favor a foreign state if it has their preferred system of government" (page 22). The slavery case shows that in the 19th century British elites did not, for example, have any particularly affinity for the United States because it was a republic. Quite the contrary; the slavery case shows British distrust of America because it was ruled by the masses. Thompson (page 105) quotes a letter from Lord Palmerston to Richard Cobden in January 1862 in which he suggested that republics, "where masses govern, are far more quarrelsome and more addicted to fighting, than monarchies, which are governed by comparatively fewer people." British elites had a much greater confidence in dealing with Constitutional monarchies built upon their model; this is in part why they gratified that the post-Napoleonic restoration followed this model and were concerned to keep a liberal constitutional monarchy in Spain.


of military actions upon which they embark. Still, one would be hard-pressed to show that
democracies are truly pacifistic. Democracies fight fiercely once provoked.3479

The history of slavery's decline suggests the importance of domestic politics both
normatively/ideologically and structurally. On the ideological side, the internal consistency of the
norm was of great importance. Britain was the first country to effectively and sustainably
question the right of one man to control another, and Britons' own feeling of their unique
commitment to freedom played a definitive role in their leadership. Thus, a movement against
slavery was internally consistent with a society that believed in freedom and was increasingly
participatory in its public sphere and government form. In the same way, the conquest of others
would appear to be inconsistent with the foundations of democracy given that such government is
based on a belief in the right to self-determination. Further, democracies do tend to resolve
internal/domestic issues peacefully, with regard to the transition of power if nothing else, and
tend to relish stability in order to further liberal, capitalist economics. Hendrik Spruyt formulates
these ideological underpinnings as commitment to sovereignty and economic liberalism, and
suggests with these norms "relatively robust, future conflicts will not be sparked by the pursuit of
naked territorial aggression and zero-sum economic calculations."3480

Turning to structural constraints, the presence of an open society and a government form
at least in some degree answerable to the people was important to the decline of slavery, and
appears relevant to the decline of warfare as well. Britain, while not a republican democracy,
possessed open public sphere that allowed an environment in which new ideas could spread and
in which new popular interest groups could form. One critical factor in the decline of slavery was
the abolitionists' ability to bring new evidence and eyewitness accounts of slavery's cruelty to the

3479 Forsyth, James Wood, Jr., and Col. Thomas E. Griffith Jr. "Through the Glass Darkly: The Unlikely
Demise of Great-Power War." Strategic Studies Quarterly, (Fall) 2007: 108; and Mueller, John. The
3480 Spruyt, Hendrik. "Normative Transformations in International Relations and the Waning of Major
public. Without these factors, slavery would have remained an institution that was "over there," little understood and little cared about by the average British citizen. It was the fact-finding tours, and the witnesses gathered by Thomas Clarkson, that laid the foundation for change with the British people and Parliament alike. This spread of ideas was facilitated by an open society and popular groups armed with facts could then lay these facts before government and pressure for policy changes.

Liberal polities tend to be committed to openness and a free press and it is no stretch to suggest that this has some bearing on the decline of warfare and adds some validity to liberal-democratic peace theorists. In today's world, war is no longer a distant phenomenon grasped only by reading impersonal accounts in the newspaper. The modern media brings images of war to the public via television and internet on a minute-by-minute basis. The types of stories and facts that took months for Thomas Clarkson to gather and write down can now be grasped by the public near-instantaneously via the media. This, then, is one area where technology almost certainly plays a role in the decline of war. Any norm against war, and particularly offensive war in our formulation, is greatly facilitated by the openness of society and the media, and thereby, the ability of the public to grasp the impacts of war, even when it is being conducted in far-off places. Once again, an open society and free press is internally consistent with the structural tenets of democracy.

The structure of representative government played a role in slavery's decline – the more responsive the government the more the people could question the state-sponsored institution of slavery – and it seems likely that this is all the more important with regard to warfare. In liberal states/democracies, the people tend to do the fighting and therefore they will have more to say

3481 Recall that in other societies the converse was true – the lack of openness hindered the spread of ideas. In France, the suppression of the press retarded abolitionist efforts. Still, it was the eyewitness accounts from persons with first-hand experience of slavery's cruelty that most swayed public opinion in France and elsewhere. In the same way, tales from the American South helped build the abolitionist cause in the North, but once the South shut down the spread of abolitionist ideas from the North, any normative movement there withered.
about government policies regarding defense. One could foresee how it would be much more
difficult to justify aggression against other like-governed polities, against states with similar
worldviews as Owen calls them. Why would citizens bear the burden of aggression against other
liberal democracies, particularly when liberal capitalism tends to be a sister tenet of liberal
democratic thought. When citizens are used to free trade, how difficult is it to mobilize them to
bear the cost of aggression against other free-trading states? Further, given that elites are
answerable to the people in democracies, the survival of one's own political career hinges on the
will of the people, and therefore leaders are less likely to participate in wars frivolously and/or
when the population is against it.\textsuperscript{3482} As James Forsyth and Col. Thomas E. Griffith note,
"democratic leaders, if for no other reason than self-preservation, tend to hedge against risky wars
because their own fortunes are tied either to maintaining the status quo or assuring a victory, or
both."\textsuperscript{3483} Self-preservation is a powerful motivator, in life, as well as in politics.

In all of these ways, the underpinnings of liberalism/liberal democracy are internally
consistent with a norm against offensive warfare and this reinforces the notion that the spread of
democracy plays some role in the recent decline of major power warfare. This conclusion
counters that of Mueller, who suggests that the presence of democracy is coincident to the decline
of warfare.\textsuperscript{3484} This despite the fact that the two states he suggested were critical to furthering the
norm against war in the World War I period – Britain and the United States – were both
liberal/democracies. Further, Mueller tends to put the focus on domestic and then transnational
norm entrepreneurs, but the slavery case suggested transnational cooperation had little overall
impact on slavery's demise. Near-constant hegemonic pressure from Britain was rather more

\textsuperscript{3482} Henderson, David R. "The Economics of War and Foreign Policy: What's Missing?" \textit{Defense &
Security Analysis}, Vol. 23, No. 1. (March) 2007: 87-100. Henderson notes, in understanding public choice,
one needs to understand the incentives that political decision-makers have and how these incentives shape
their decisions... this doesn't often happen in security analysis.

\textsuperscript{3483} Forsyth, James Wood, Jr., and Col. Thomas E. Griffith Jr. "Through the Glass Darkly: The Unlikely
Demise of Great-Power War." \textit{Strategic Studies Quarterly}, (Fall) 2007: 108. Of note, these authors are not
proponents of Democratic Peace Theory.

significant. The point here is not that a liberal/democratic form of government alone either causes perpetual peace, or that it forever and with complete certainty guarantees peace between states whose interests are at odds. The point is that the slavery example shows that the presence of an open society, and a government form that is legitimate and responsive to its citizens, is conducive – both ideologically and structurally – to the development, spread, and solidification of norms that are internally consistent with such a form of government. A norm against territorial aggression would appear to be consistent with a socio-governmental form like liberal democracy, which stresses peaceful transition of power/resolution of conflicts and tends to count on obtaining goods through assured free and open trade rather than through conquest. In the case of slavery, domestic politics played a supporting role in the institution's decline and it would appear similar tenets are present in the case of the decline of offensive warfare. Given all this, to suggest that liberal domestic politics have little relation to warfare's decline, when in fact, it was important in slavery's decline and two liberal democracies have been at the forefront of the anti-offensive warfare norm, seems suspect at best.

As this study moves toward a discussion of slavery's geostrategic lessons regarding warfare, it is worth reminding ourselves that while slavery is an intra-state game (although the case studies showed that strategic calculations mattered), war is a two- or multi-state game. The establishment of a norm against aggression doesn't necessarily ensure that states will follow that norm, and in that way, other states remain at risk. The "security dilemma" lives.³⁴⁸⁵ Again referencing O'Connell, "the victims of such aggression... must still face the ancient martial quandary: submit or fight back."³⁴⁸⁶ Therefore, war, and particularly major power war, may be in

decline but it remains a distinct possibility.\textsuperscript{3487} The pertinent question, then, is given the norm against aggression, what does its presence mean for the future of warfare in the international system? Some might suggest that the historical example, and particularly the importance it places on the domestic-political variable, holds little lesson for the multi-state game of warfare; the present author would contend that this is certainly not the case. It is true that if a norm is developing against offensive warfare that this norm only ensures that like-minded states will not attack others. It will not protect these states from attack, and therefore, "norms offer no guarantees.\textsuperscript{3488} In this way, states will likely continue to arm themselves to at least some degree for the foreseeable future. As Griffith and Forsyth note, "it is difficult to imagine a world of states – be they democratic or otherwise – where the possibility of war does not exist and the need for military forces is moot.\textsuperscript{3489} War, particularly offensive war, is not yet obsolete.

But does this mean that domestic-political factors have no role in explaining warfare's decline? Hardly. As liberal-democratic peace theorists note, the nature of domestic politics plays both an instrumental and ideological role in reducing warfare. Instrumentally, governments and elites that are responsive to the interests of their people will tend to be slower and more circumspect in the decision to go to war and will likely pay the political consequences for unpopular excursions into aggression. The leaders of authoritarian regimes are much less concerned about public opinion. Ideologically, in today's world, the presence of democratic institutions\textsuperscript{3490} is identifiable and recognized "shorthand" for a commitment to a liberal worldview. Normatively, societies committed to freedom and peaceful resolution of issues will tend to promote those values in their dealings with others, and if their leaders do not, then those


\textsuperscript{3488} Forsyth, James Wood, Jr., and Col. Thomas E. Griffith Jr. "Through the Glass Darkly: The Unlikely Demise of Great-Power War." \textit{Strategic Studies Quarterly,} (Fall) 2007: 110. This lack of guaranteed security is of course most forcefully stressed by realist theorists like John Mearsheimer and Kenneth Waltz.


\textsuperscript{3490} Of course there's a discussion to be had here regarding what constitutes a democratic institution, what is a consolidated democracy, etc. Such discussion is for another time and venue, as this discussion will remain at a higher, less specified level.
leaders will likely be held accountable.\textsuperscript{3491} There are various democratic forms\textsuperscript{3492} – republic, constitutional monarchy, etc. – and however imperfect all of these systems are, they provide shorthand for predictable interactions based on a similar worldview. In the 19th century (when the movement against slavery was developing), the identifiable "shorthand" for a liberal worldview was slightly different. During that period governments were becoming more representative and responsive to their citizens, but most were far from truly "democratic." Then, for policymakers, particularly in Britain, the "like-government" form that gave predictability and stability to multi-state interactions was constitutional monarchy.\textsuperscript{3493} The forms have changed, but the mechanism remains the same.

Realists would likely say that such instrumental and ideological factors hold no guarantees in a multi-state game, and again, this is admittedly true. Offensive realists like John Mearsheimer would go so far to say that given uncertainty about one's own security (and hence survival) in an anarchic system, states have no choice but to behave aggressively.\textsuperscript{3494} By this logic, states are forced to adopt an absolute worst case-scenario as the basis of their geostrategic calculations because not doing so would threaten their survival. I know few people that live their lives expecting worst-case scenarios from all their interactions, especially when they've been socialized through recent example that the worst-case scenarios is unlikely; why would the rational state actor behave any differently? There is no guarantee that liberal-democratic states will not engage in offensive warfare, but practical experience suggests that there is reason to believe that instrumental and normative logics will have some impact in reducing the likelihood of democratic states nakedly engaging in territorial conquest, and this, further, provides some level of predictability to multi-state interactions. States that break this norm may indeed shatter it

\textsuperscript{3491} And as this study has suggested, state survival is a strong motivating force, and political survival – although not of the same magnitude – is a powerful motivator as well.
\textsuperscript{3492} Of course there's a discussion to be had here regarding what constitutes a democratic institution, what is a consolidated democracy, etc. Such discussion is for another time and venue, as this discussion will remain at a higher, less specified level.
\textsuperscript{3493} As already mentioned, dealing with mass-driven republics like the United States was less predictable.
and thereby reduce the likelihood of more predictable (but again, not guaranteed) international interactions in the future, but in an anarchic world, predictability is a valued commodity. It is why Britain pushed for a constitutional monarchy in France after Napoleon and why she was reluctant to take any action that would destabilize liberalizing Spain after mid-century. As Mesquita and Lalman (1992) argue, "if liberal states are known to be dovish and illiberal states may not be, a prudent liberal state will distinguish liberal from illiberal neighbors." Stability and predictability are prized commodities and a recognized liberal worldview provides policymakers with more predictable two-state interactions.

To summarize to this point, the case study showed that the normative movement against slavery developed in ways consistent with the norms literature, and that there was a nexus between the success of norm entrepreneurs and the nature of domestic politics in the respective countries studied. In short, domestic politics mattered. In security literature, the framework that most stresses domestic politics is democratic peace theory and so there seems to be some support coming from the slavery case for liberal/democratic peace theory. What did the slavery case say regarding geostrategic calculations?

Before discussing slavery's geostrategic lessons for warfare's decline, it is worth reminding ourselves that while slavery is an intra-state game (although the case studies showed that strategic calculations mattered), war is a two- or multi-state game. The establishment of a norm against aggression doesn't necessarily ensure that states will follow that norm, and in that way, other states remain at risk. The "security dilemma" lives. Again referencing O'Connell, "the victims of such aggression... must still face the ancient martial quandary: submit or fight

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back. Therefore, war, and particularly major power war, may be in decline but it remains a
distinct possibility. The pertinent question, then, is given the norm against aggression, what
does its presence mean for the future of warfare in the international system? Some might suggest
that the historical example, and particularly the importance it places on the domestic-political
variable, holds little lesson for the multi-state game of warfare; the present author would contend
that this is certainly not the case. It is true that if a norm is developing against offensive warfare
that this norm only ensures that like-minded states will not attack others. It will not protect these
states from attack, and therefore, "norms offer no guarantees." In this way, states will likely
continue to arm themselves to at least some degree for the foreseeable future. As Griffith and
Forsyth note, "it is difficult to imagine a world of states – be they democratic or otherwise –
where the possibility of war does not exist and the need for military forces is moot." War,
particularly offensive war, is not yet obsolete.

But does this mean that domestic-political factors have no role in explaining warfare's
decline? Hardly. As liberal-democratic peace theorists note, the nature of domestic politics plays
both an instrumental and ideological role in reducing warfare. Instrumentally, governments and
elites that are responsive to the interests of their people will tend to be slower and more
circumspect in the decision to go to war and will likely pay the political consequences for
unpopular excursions into aggression. The leaders of authoritarian regimes are much less
concerned about public opinion. Ideologically, in today's world, the presence of democratic

institutions is identifiable and recognized "shorthand" for a commitment to a liberal worldview. Normatively, societies committed to freedom and peaceful resolution of issues will tend to promote those values in their dealings with others, and if their leaders do not, then those leaders will likely be held accountable. There are various democratic forms – republic, constitutional monarchy, etc. – and however imperfect all of these systems are, they provide shorthand for predictable interactions based on a similar worldview. In the 19th century (when the movement against slavery was developing), the identifiable "shorthand" for a liberal worldview was slightly different. During that period governments were becoming more representative and responsive to their citizens, but most were far from truly "democratic." Then, for policymakers, particularly in Britain, the "like-government" form that gave predictability and stability to multi-state interactions was constitutional monarchy. The forms have changed, but the mechanism remains the same.

Realists would likely say that such instrumental and ideological factors hold no guarantees in a multi-state game, and again, this is admittedly true. Offensive realists like John Mearsheimer would go so far to say that given uncertainty about one's own security (and hence survival) in an anarchic system, states have no choice but to behave aggressively. By this logic, states are forced to adopt an absolute worst case-scenario as the basis of their geostrategic calculations because not doing so would threaten their survival. I know few people that live their lives expecting worst-case scenarios from all their interactions, especially when they've been socialized through recent example that the worst-case scenarios is unlikely; why would the rational state actor behave any differently? There is no guarantee that liberal-democratic states

3501 Of course there's a discussion to be had here regarding what constitutes a democratic institution, what is a consolidated democracy, etc. Such discussion is for another time and venue, as this discussion will remain at a higher, less specified level.
3502 And as this study has suggested, state survival is a strong motivating force, and political survival – although not of the same magnitude – is a powerful motivator as well.
3503 Of course there's a discussion to be had here regarding what constitutes a democratic institution, what is a consolidated democracy, etc. Such discussion is for another time and venue, as this discussion will remain at a higher, less specified level.
3504 As already mentioned, dealing with mass-driven republics like the United States was less predictable.
will not engage in offensive warfare, but practical experience suggests that there is reason to believe that instrumental and normative logics will have some impact in reducing the likelihood of democratic states nakedly engaging in territorial conquest, and this, further, provides some level of predictability to multi-state interactions. States that break this norm may indeed shatter it and thereby reduce the likelihood of more predictable (but again, not guaranteed) international interactions in the future, but in an anarchic world, predictability is a valued commodity. It is why Britain pushed for a constitutional monarchy in France after Napoleon and why she was reluctant to take any action that would destabilize liberalizing Spain after mid-century. As Mesquita and Lalman (1992) argue, "if liberal states are known to be dovish and illiberal states may not be, a prudent liberal state will distinguish liberal from illiberal neighbors."\(^{3506}\) Stability and predictability are prized commodities and a recognized liberal worldview provides policymakers with more predictable two-state interactions.

**The "How" of Norm Emergence – Geostrategic Lessons**

There were two, what I deem to be, key geostrategic findings from the slavery case studies (the two supplemental findings will be discussed briefly below as well). First, the balance of power matters, and in fact, the most critical player in the demise of transatlantic slavery was the most powerful state in the system – Great Britain. Second, the perception of external threat matters, and could overcome the drive for norm development if perceived as sufficiently threatening to security. In short, security/survival matters.

As was mentioned several times in the analytical chapters, the slavery case and Britain's behavior in particular seems to lean toward a defensive realist explanation. The balance of power mattered with regard to slavery's decline. Britain was reluctant to take actions that threatened its survival and/or its place in the international system. Domestic norm entrepreneurs developed a

successful movement against the slave trade/slavery, but in times of high threat, the power of that movement receded. When Saint-Domingue was in flames and radicalism seemed to threaten France, Europe, and Britain, anti-slavery slowed. Once the threat of radicalism and/or Napoleonic invasion passed, anti-slavery prospered once again. In fact, abolitionists moved first against the foreign trade, and then outlawed Britain's own trade, a domestic political move with geostrategic acumen. Parliament passed anti-slave trade measures not because it thought such measures would bring it increased wealth, but rather, accepting that such a move, supported by the people, would not be crippling. This is not the stuff of offensive realism; the last thing an offensive realist would assert is that Britain would dismantle a trade making money for the empire, as slavery was, at exactly the time when its continuation could expand Britain's power. There are other similar instances demonstrating Britain's restraint. Britain accepted the United States influence in the Caribbean and stayed clear of the American Civil War, in contrast to the dictates of offensive realism, which would mandate stymieing the rise of a potential regional rival. Of offensive realism and defensive realism, Britain's behavior seems to more closely match the expectations of the defensive variant; but does that tell the full story?

In the period of interest regarding slavery, the world order went from being multipolar to being one in which Britain was the dominant power. Given that Britain remained the dominant power for nearly a century after, two prominent International Relations theories would appear to explain the order that ensued. A leading power has three choices as it emerges victorious from war (as Britain did in 1814-1815); it can either, dominate the lesser powers, abandon them and return to its own domestic affairs, or "gain acquiescence and participation in a mutually acceptable post-war order."3507 The first form – a hegemonic order – is that described by Robert

Gilpin (1981). In a hegemonic order, stability is maintained by the most powerful state.\textsuperscript{3508} The other option, besides abandonment (and thereby no order), is the "constitutional," or "institutional" order" as G. John Ikenberry (2001) calls it.\textsuperscript{3509} This is an order based in liberal-institutionalist literature. If a leading power chooses to develop a constitutional/institutional order, the organizing principle is the rule of law embodied in binding institutions. States agree to the "rules of the game," and the most powerful state agrees to limit their power exertion within the rules of the game.\textsuperscript{3510} As Ikenberry notes, the "institutional bargain" is one in which the "leading state – driven by a basic incentive to conserve its power – wants a legitimate order that will reduce its requirements to coerce."\textsuperscript{3511} "The leading state agrees to restrain its own potential for domination and abandonment in exchange for greater compliance by subordinate states."\textsuperscript{3512} Compliance will hinge on the leading state's ability to show reliability and willingness to "forego the arbitrary exercise of power."\textsuperscript{3513} Ikenberry asserts that democracies tend to be more reliable members of an established order for some of the same reasons that a normative movement against slavery developed in Britain – they tend to have a more open public sphere, institutions are more transparent and the government is more responsive to the population, etc. Added to this, Ikenberry asserts that democracies are more credible and more capable of restraint.\textsuperscript{3514}

Britain was Europe's, and the world's, leading power as it emerged victorious over Napoleonic France in 1814-1815. Britain attempted, multilaterally and unilaterally, to build a


regime against the slave trade based in international law. This attempt was only one part of the much larger order that it attempted to build. The Congress system was designed to provide avenues for power consultation, and thereby, to prevent future conflict. Britain was indeed in a powerful position in 1815, and yet, the order it attempted to establish -- including the anti-slavery measures -- was participatory and transparent. It limited Britain's ability to act unilaterally but London also hoped that in return, it could limit the resources and effort exerted to maintain that order. In slavery's case, however, Britain's multilateral efforts failed, bilateral treaties were broken by the lesser powers, and ultimately, Britain ended up exerting hegemonic influence in this realm.\textsuperscript{3515}

To summarize, while the purpose of this study was not to either espouse or refute major International Relations literatures, it seems safe to conclude that Britain did not behave in ways consistent with offensive realism. The record suggest that hegemonic Britain behaved in a manner consistent with institutionalist literature, in that it attempted to build an order built on mutual obligations, an order that restrained its own power in the hope of lesser powers playing by the same "rules of the game." With regard to slavery, Britain attempted to build first multilateral, and then bilateral institutions and in some cases fell back on its own power to enforce compliance. Britain was the most powerful state in the system during slavery's decline and not coincidentally, it was the state that did the most to promote the norm against that institution.

Coming full circle, then, when it comes to norm development, the systemic environment and the states within that system matter. Professor Mueller's work has rightly emphasized the role that norm entrepreneurs, particularly individuals and small groups, have played in spreading a

norm cycle of norm emergence, cascade, and internalization, particularly domestically.\textsuperscript{3516} The summation of the case studies has further shown ways in which the nexus between domestic norm entrepreneurs and domestic politics are important, and this last section has hinted at ways in which domestic politics bleeds over into geostrategic calculations. In fact, whereas Mueller stresses norm entrepreneurs acting transnationally, the slavery case suggested transnational organizations were of limited impact and that more focus should be placed on the powerful norm entrepreneurship of the British state. This is much more in keeping Ethan Nadelmann's (1990) formulation, which stressed that states can be norm entrepreneurs (as can transnational individuals and groups), and even more, that the states capable of "hegemonic influence" tend to be the most powerful norm entrepreneurs.\textsuperscript{3517}

Nadelmann's model is a useful addition, but we are still left with the more fine-grained questions of "how" with regard to international norm development. Hendrik Spruyt (2006) has proposed several other principles that support the spread of norms internationally. He, too, asserts that norms need champions and further suggests that norms should be internally consistent – part of a larger group of consistent normative precepts. Additionally, the success or failure of a norm's diffusion depends on its interaction with the larger systemic environment. In other words, one needs to examine whether the system and its most powerful players tend to weaken or reinforce the norm that is emerging.\textsuperscript{3518} These additions reinforce and supplement the picture that is developing regarding norm development. The norm against slavery was consistent at every level in its relationship to its most prominent norm entrepreneur. In Britain, the norm against slavery was consistent with a British self-image that stressed freedom and rule of law. This freedom was

\textsuperscript{3516} Mueller, John. \textit{The Remnants of War}. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004. Professor Mueller's work tends to stress the work that individual norm entrepreneurs have played in the decline of war, and appropriately so. He particularly emphasizes the norm entrepreneurs that changed the impression of war in the decades before World War I.


exhibited through Britain's open public sphere, and the fact that the British government, while not perfectly representative, realized the importance of legitimacy and became more and more responsive to the will of its public domestically. Upon its defeat of rival France, Britain attempted to build an institutional order that was in keeping with this line of reasoning – freedom, rule of law, and mutual obligations. The anti-slavery norm was but one part of a largely consistent systemic order that Britain attempted to build. The lesson at the international level appears to be this: if a norm against offensive warfare is emerging and holding in today's world, then slavery's history suggests the most powerful state is likely the most powerful force for the diffusion of that norm.

Professor Mueller has almost completely neglected the fact that in the spreading of a norm internationally, it is not just transnational actors, but states too, that can serve as norm entrepreneurs and in this process it is often if not usually the case that the most powerful states are the most influential norm entrepreneurs. Certainly this was the case regarding Britain and the decline of slavery, and one would expect that such would be the case with regard to the emerging norm against territorial aggression. Clearly, if a norm against offensive warfare has developed it likely did so under the leadership/sponsorship of the most powerful state(s) in the international system. If this is true in regard to an institution that is a "one-state game" such as slavery, where domestic norm entrepreneurs can have a complete impact on a domestic institution, it is all the more important in "multi-state game" like warfare. It stands to reason that in an anarchic world, for a norm as powerful as the one against offensive warfare to develop, the most powerful state in the system likely supports/reinforces that norm.

Professor Mueller suggests the norm against war has developed over the last century; therefore, it makes sense to look for leadership on this norm's development from the world's leading powers during this period. The most powerful states in the system during this period were/are, first, declining Britain; and presently, critically, the United States. Real world experience supports this line of reasoning; the most powerful state in the system – the United
States – has been the most powerful norm entrepreneur acting against territorial conquest through offensive warfare. From World War II, to the intervention in Korea in 1950, to the first Gulf War in 1990, the United States has played a primary role in developing, and importantly, enforcing the norm against territorial aggression. It has done so for both normative and strategic reasons. As theorists like Christopher Layne have noted, America's grand strategy has been to promote an "open door" policy in order to spread the idea of free trade and to utilize free trade to further its own power. In keeping with Spruyt's formulation, the United States, like Britain before, has espoused a wide range of norms – free trade, respect for sovereignty, etc. – that are both internally consistent with the values of the country domestically and externally consistent with the Post-World War II international environment the United States helped to create. G. John Ikenberry states,

The character of the American domestic system – which provided transparency and 'voice opportunities' – and the extensive use of binding institutions served to limit the returns to power and provide assurances to states within the order that they would not be dominated or abandoned. The order that has emerged is distinctive – multilateral, reciprocal, legitimate, and highly institutionalized.

The United States, as the most powerful state in the international system, is helping to solidify and diffuse the norm against territorial aggression. In this way, it is aiding in the process of social learning, the same way that Britain contributed to social learning regarding slavery.

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3522 Incidentally, the direction of the flow of this process of "social learning" seems historically consistent. For example, the evidence contained here suggests that Britain worked first in the mercantilist system, and then moved toward and was an archetype and entrepreneur of free trade. The remnants of mercantilism – including institutions such as colonialism – lingered in the British system and in the early years of America's rise but eventually America ridded itself (and put pressure on other states – albeit inconsistently – to rid themselves) of colonialism in keeping with its commitment to free trade. This suggests evidence of social learning, perhaps passed from one (Britain) hegemon to (the United States) another. This suggestion is beyond the scope of this study, but having examined the history of slavery, it is worth at least mentioning what appears to be some similar processes in the works. Perhaps the history of colonialism is another declining institution worthy of study in order to understand the decline of warfare.
Britain, as the world's most powerful economy, showed that ending slavery was normatively appropriate, without being economically crippling. The example of the United States shows that not engaging in territorial conquest is both normatively and materially beneficial, and in this way, it is helping to shape the international environment. Realist theorists tend to downplay this assertion, stating that the international order remains fundamentally anarchic, and little else matters. But, if what we're talking about is the shaping of a system via the power of the most powerful players in it, then we are perfectly in keeping with both liberal-institutionalist frameworks and those embedded in defensive realism.\footnote{Waltz, Kenneth N. \textit{Theory of International Politics}. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Publishing, 1979: 76. Kenneth Waltz, himself the father of structural/defensive realism, describes this process of social learning, but he calls it socialization. Waltz notes that \"the first way in which structures work their effects is through a process of socialization that limits and molds behavior;\" the second is competition.\footnote{\textsuperscript{3524} This idea – that a point of controversy shows where a norm resides – is not a new one. Theorists such as Finnemore and Sikkink (1998), Walzer (2006) and Heinze (2006), among others, hint at this formulation. See Finnemore, Martha and Kathryn Sikkink. \"International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,\" \textit{International Organization} 52, 4, (Autumn) 1998: 891-893 regarding how to spot a norm; and Walzer, Michael. \textit{Just and Unjust Wars}, 4\textsuperscript{th} Edition. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2006: xi-xviii, and Heinze, Eric A. \"Humanitarian Intervention and the War in Iraq: Norms, Discourse, and State Practice,\" \textit{Parameters} (Spring) 2006: 20-34, regarding the Iraq war more specifically.} He adds, \"socialization brings members of a group into conformity with its norms; further, \"in various ways, societies establish norms and encourage conformity. Socialization reduces variety.\"} Before concluding, it is important to discuss the fact that I am certain given the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that some readers will scoff at the assertion that as the world's leading power the United States has been the greatest entrepreneur of the norm against territorial aggression. For some, these wars serve as searing examples of the United States deliberately flouting the norm against aggression. My conclusion is rather different. In reality, these wars show two points that are very much in keeping with the story that's been told here. First, the war in Iraq shows exactly where the norm related to warfare resides: the norm is against offensive warfare.\footnote{Waltz, Kenneth N. \textit{Theory of International Politics}. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Publishing, 1979: 76. Kenneth Waltz, himself the father of structural/defensive realism, describes this process of social learning, but he calls it socialization. Waltz notes that \"the first way in which structures work their effects is through a process of socialization that limits and molds behavior;\" the second is competition.\footnote{\textsuperscript{3524} This idea – that a point of controversy shows where a norm resides – is not a new one. Theorists such as Finnemore and Sikkink (1998), Walzer (2006) and Heinze (2006), among others, hint at this formulation. See Finnemore, Martha and Kathryn Sikkink. \"International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,\" \textit{International Organization} 52, 4, (Autumn) 1998: 891-893 regarding how to spot a norm; and Walzer, Michael. \textit{Just and Unjust Wars}, 4\textsuperscript{th} Edition. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2006: xi-xviii, and Heinze, Eric A. \"Humanitarian Intervention and the War in Iraq: Norms, Discourse, and State Practice,\" \textit{Parameters} (Spring) 2006: 20-34, regarding the Iraq war more specifically.} The United States was attacked by terrorists operating inside Afghanistan on September 11\textsuperscript{th} and in response, engaged in military action there. There was comparatively little outrage at the United States defending itself against attack. In stark contrast, there was worldwide outrage to the United States attack on Iraq, which had no part in the 9/11 strikes. This was a
preventive attack – an attack on another country to prevent an expected future threat, one not yet imminent – and the United States had little success selling it as self-defense. Preventive warfare resides right where the line between offensive and defensive warfare blurs. Additionally, American actions demonstrate another principle discussed here: that survival/security will sometimes drive actions that produce friction with norms – even norms that the leading state helped develop – and may sometimes be broken in order to ensure one's own security. The key is, the American handling of Iraq war sparked international friction, and that friction showed exactly where the war norm resides – against offensive warfare. The United States, like Britain before it, had helped establish an international order based on the restraint of its own power. Many perceived that American actions in the "War on Terror," particularly with regard to Iraq, showed a lack of restraint. Over the long haul, continued abuses could reduce the credibility of the United States and the order its power has helped produce, but in the mean time, the Iraq war reveals very clearly the existence of the norm against offensive warfare that the United States helped emerge.

The Lessons for War – A Summary

Slavery's decline history presents lessons for warfare. To be precise, the norm that is emerging is one against offensive, aggressive warfare. The emergence of such a norm tends to follow a "norm cycle" as described by Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) and Nadelmann (1990), but the question of which country adopts a norm seems to be facilitated by state/societal factors – such as an identification with freedom, active civil society, an open public sphere – that incline them toward the questioning of institutions and the formation of movements against such institutions. One can point to such societal factors in slavery's case, but more research is required regarding warfare and other developing norms. Moving beyond societal factors, the slavery case suggests that domestic politics plays an important role in the development of norms. States with an open public sphere and a representative and responsive political structure seem to be more inclined toward the development of norms such as anti-slavery or anti-offensive war. One can't be
certain that the absence of such societal and domestic-political indicators precludes the
development of norms within a polity, but these certainly assisted the anti-slavery movement and
one would expect the same is true of anti-offensive war norms. Theorists tend to stress the
transnational character of norm development but the slavery case suggests that certain countries
may be at the forefront of such movements; and in fact, the balance of power tends to matter. It
was not coincidental that the state that possessed multiple conducive societal factors – Britain –
was also the first to take on slavery and it was fortunate for the anti-slavery cause that Britain also
happened to be the most powerful state in the system. Without Britain's decision to first enact
abolition/emancipation itself, and then to exert lives and treasure to force other states to follow its
lead, it is hard to foresee the end of transatlantic as early as it did. This does not automatically
mean that all norms must be adopted and spread by the most powerful state in the system, but it
does suggest that the balance of power matters and having the most powerful state as a lead norm
entrepreneur certainly helps. This is an aspect that most constructivist theorists, including
Mueller, tend to neglect.

Overall, it took a combination of normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic
variables to ultimately bring about the demise of transatlantic slavery, and further, there seems to
be a connection between these variables across the different levels of analysis. At the
individual/societal level, there appear to be factors that provide certain societies with inclinations
toward the emerging norms. In the case of slavery it was societies with cultures of civic
association and norms of liberty and democracy. In the case of war, it is likely that similar factors
– such as an inclination of peaceful resolution of conflict, or peaceful/free trade – play a role in
warfare's decline. These societal factors require more research, but the concept of a liberal
worldview put forward by liberal peace theorists like John M. Owen seem to be forwarding this
line of logic. Therein lays the connection between individual/societal factors and domestic
politics. The nature of the public sphere – the ability of people to associate freely and
form/express their own opinions on matters – is critical not just to the success of norm
entrepreneurs, but in interacting with the government and keeping politicians responsive to the will of the people. The more responsive the government is to the will of the people, the more possible it is for a norm to take hold and to become part of the official bureaucratic mind (and thereby affect international policy). With regard to inter-state interactions, states (and their people) are reluctant to take actions that threaten their security and/or standing in the international system. Further, while it is not necessarily an absolute necessity to have the most powerful states in the system pushing for a norm's emergence, it certainly doesn't hurt. Constructivist theorists tend to downplay the importance of the distribution of power, but the slavery case showed that there was no stronger norm entrepreneur than the powerful state of Britain. With regard to war, then, it bodes well for the anti-offensive warfare norm that the most powerful state in the system – the United States – is also the most powerful force for that norm's spread and enforcement. Finally, almost coming full circle, it is interesting that nationalism can play a role (good or bad) in a norm's emergence, and nationalism can thus be geostrategic factor and can be considered a factor in a society's inclination toward a norm. If citizens see an emerging norm as consistent with their national identity and interests, they will be more inclined to push for that norm. On the other hand, nationalism can cut both ways, and an emerging norm that appears counter to interests or identity can be spurned for just that reason, just as the French resisted abolitionism for a time because they saw it as being forced on them by their hated British rival. This, too, is an area that requires further research – that nationalism can play both an individual-/identity-level role and a geostrategic/international-level one. Figure 9.1 offers a rough rendition of the lessons learned and their impact across the variables and levels of analysis. Having delineated the case studies' lessons for warfare, we can then return to Mueller's model of slavery's/warfare's decline and see how it compares with the findings of this study.
**Figure 9.1. Levels of Analysis: Lessons Learned/Facilitators from the Slavery Case**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lessons Learned</th>
<th>Geostrategic Calculations (International System)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domestic Politics (State)</strong></td>
<td>- Balance of power matters/norm emergence assisted if powerful states adopt/spread/enforce norm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Open public sphere allows connection between people's will and government</td>
<td>- Spread of morality-based norm complicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Representative/responsive government structure can facilitate norm emergence</td>
<td>- State unlikely to adopt norms that pose/persuaded to pose threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Norm emergence facilitated by norm becoming part of official bureaucratic mindset/policy</td>
<td>- Nationalism can help or hinder norm emergence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nexus Between Levels**

- "Norm Cycle"
- "Societal Inclination"  
  - Open Public Sphere  
    - Domestic Political Structure  
      - (How Representative/Responsive, Interest Influence?)  
      - Bureaucratic Politics  
        - Balance-of-Power  
          - Threat?  
          - Nationalism

**Comparing the Models: Mueller Verified?**

The goal of this study was to determine if examining transatlantic slavery's demise offers any understanding of the process of decline of major power warfare. Professor John Mueller asserts that it does. For him, warfare is declining, like slavery, because the efforts of idea entrepreneurs reveal the institution(s) to be rationally unthinkable (normatively unacceptable and of little utility). Over time, slavery became subrationally unthinkable – obsolete, and so we can expect major power warfare to follow a similar course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mueller's Model of Warfare/Slavery</th>
<th>Slavery Case Study's Conclusions</th>
<th>Likely Model for Offensive Warfare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome</strong></td>
<td>Institution becomes unacceptable to point of obsolescence</td>
<td>Institution is Obsolete</td>
<td>Institution is in decline, but not Obsolete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Causal Variable</strong></td>
<td>Normative/Constructivist</td>
<td>Normative Domestic-Political Geostrategic</td>
<td>Normative Domestic-Political Geostrategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Actor</strong></td>
<td>- Transnational Idea/Norm Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>- Domestic Norm Entrepreneurs - State-based Norm Entrepreneur: Most powerful state in the system (Britain)</td>
<td>- Domestic Norm Entrepreneurs? - State-based Norm Entrepreneur: Most powerful state in the system (the United States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process (How it happened)</strong></td>
<td>- Transnational idea entrepreneurs help reveal institution as rationally unthinkable (normatively unacceptable and irrational from cost-benefit analysis) - Institution then becomes subrationally unthinkable (it no longer registers as viable policy option)</td>
<td>- Normative movement consistent with societal inclinations develops in open society with responsive government structure (which is at same time the most powerful state in system) -- Norm is slow to emerge in other states with different societal inclinations - Most powerful state helps establish/maintain norms/international order consistent with national interests, identity and domestic politics - State becomes most powerful norm entrepreneur and enforcement mechanism in international system</td>
<td>- Most powerful state helps establish/maintain norms/international order consistent with national interests, identity, and domestic politics - State serves as powerful norm entrepreneur and enforcement mechanism in international system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study conducted here has shown the process of slavery's decline was rather more complex, and thereby the model of war's decline is likely more complex as well (see Table 9.4). It included causal factors beyond just the "idea" of institutional ugliness and irrationality. In fact, it took a mix of normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic factors to bring about transatlantic slavery's demise and obsolescence. Yes, at core, the idea of slavery did become unacceptable. But
unlike Mueller's model, the norm entrepreneur that played the most critical role in spreading that idea, and thereby ensuring transatlantic slavery's demise, was not an individual or transnational organization, but a state – the most powerful state in the system. Further, in contrast to Mueller's model of slavery's/warfare's decline, domestic politics mattered. A normative movement developed within a state with an open public sphere and a government form that was responsive to, if not perfectly representative of, its people. This country, Britain, upon arising as the world's most powerful state, set out to establish an international order that was consistent with its national interests, domestic political structure, and national identity. Under pressure from its people, British leaders made anti-slavery part of that order. At the international level, the balance of power mattered. In some cases British power could greatly influence the demise of slavery (the Brazilian slave trade's end for example); in some others, like the United States, internal and external normative pressure was not enough to bring about change peacefully, and civil war resolved the issue. Ultimately, in almost every case it took a domestic decision – whether driven by the masses or by the political elites – to completely eradicate slavery. As Hendrik Spruyt suggests, over a long period of time the norm against slavery became a *fait accompli* and "part of a system of logics of appropriateness."

State-sponsored slavery in the transatlantic system became first unacceptable, then repugnant to the point of obsolescence. Responsibility for this outcome, for the development of this "system of logics of appropriateness," this order, falls more assuredly on Britain's shoulders than any other player in the international system.

Major power warfare is in decline, and the lessons of transatlantic slavery's offer possible lessons for the "how" of that process. It should be made clear, first, that the norm that is developing is one against offensive warfare. No such norm exists against legitimate defense when one is attacked. While warfare is an ugly institution, there is no indication that the world has suddenly become pacifist; if one state is attacked by another, there is no injunction against the

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defending state defending itself. At the root of this norm undoubtedly lies recognition of the unacceptability of naked aggression, just as at the core of slavery's decline lay in a growing recognition of the brutality of that institution. The recent history of two world wars and the general carnage of the 20th century certainly made plain the dangers and costliness of wars, and World War II in particular showed the waste and near-absolute destruction that can result from aggression like that perpetrated by the Nazis and the Japanese Empire.

The history of slavery suggests norm entrepreneurs play a critical role in publicizing the costs of any institution and thereby furthering a norm against it, and certainly anti-war activists have and are fulfilling a similar role. 3526 But if the slavery case tells us anything, it is that the most important norm entrepreneur is the most powerful state in the system. In the period in which the norm against aggression has developed, that state has been the United States.

Further, the history of slavery suggested politics play a significant part in where and how norms develop. Those states with open societies and responsive government structures were the leaders in enacting a norm against slavery. The most glaring example of this was Great Britain. There, the open public sphere allowed space for the spread of anti-slavery ideas, and the mobilized public exerted effective pressure on parliament to change its slavery policies. Slavery's history suggests domestic political factors – both instrumental and ideological – matter in institution formation and acceptance, and the same is likely true in the developing norm against offensive warfare. Liberal/Democratic Peace theorists have asserted as much.

One critical difference between slavery and warfare, as realists would point out, is that warfare is a multi-person game. Even Professor Mueller admits, "a country that would like to abolish war, however, must continue to be concerned about those that have kept it in their

3526 There is a striking and intriguing similarity between anti-war activists that protest against using military force to stop aggression, and those abolitionists that resisted Britain's use of force in efforts to shut down the slave trade. Enforcement is critical to norm emergence. See for example, Fearon, James. D. "Bargaining, Enforcement, and International Cooperation." International Organization, Vol. 52, No. 2 (Spring) 1998: 269-305.
Therefore, even if a norm against offensive war develops inside a country, democratic or otherwise, there is no guarantee that other states will develop that same norm. The security dilemma lives, and if attacked, the people of the defending state will undoubtedly defend themselves. In fact, there's no norm suggesting they shouldn't. Thus, as Forsyth and Griffith state, "peace among the world's democracies may not, by default, last forever."  

The Decline of Warfare – A Conclusion

One ends this study with the conclusion that history suggests slavery became first unacceptable, and then so repugnant that it was unthinkable – obsolete; this gives theorists reason to believe that warfare is and/or may follow a similar path. The portrait of institutional decline/norm emergence offered by the slavery case is rather more complex than Professor Mueller asserts. It entails not just the transnational spread of ideas, but a mix of normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic variables. While ideas do matter, how those ideas develop, spread, and change institutions has more to do with both domestic and international political factors than he has suggested. 

States do indeed seem to be determining that offensive warfare is unacceptable and irrational and over time it may become near unthinkable. Sadly, it will be very difficult in a multi-state game like war to tell when decline – which we can be measured with numbers – will hit obsolescence, which inherently entails having perfect knowledge of intentions. Further, the study of slavery suggested that survival tends to trump other factors, and so one could foresee in the future any number of circumstances – economic disaster, shortage of national resources, etc. – in which offensive warfare may again be sold to even democratic polities as an appropriate policy.

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3529 Additionally, the study of slavery has shown that nationalism is a powerful force that can be either supportive of, or work against, norms such as anti-slavery and anti-offensive warfare.
option that ensures security/survival. The current era is shaped by a powerful hegemon – the United States – that usually, if however imperfectly, is at the forefront of supporting the norm against offensive warfare. This has helped socialize the international system and produced a long period of freedom from major power warfare. Sadly, there is no guarantee that such norms or socialized system will exist under the most powerful states of the future.

In the end, that factors such as "economics, democracy, and norms play a role in preventing great-power war is," as Forsyth and Griffith note, "not the issue. The issue is whether they make it unthinkable." As of right now, they do not. Robert O'Connell states, "we learned to wage war because it made sense in terms of the kinds of societies we lived in. That is far less true today;" but "a recourse to war will remain a possibility." Theorists like Professor Mueller who propose that warfare, like slavery, is declining because it is no longer a normatively acceptable policy option are, strictly-speaking, correct. Yet, decline does not ensure obsolescence. In addition, such a formulation offers a simplistic "why" explanation of decline, and largely skips over the more substantive examination of "how." It is the present author's hope that the foregoing discussion of the history of slavery's decline has made at least some contribution to the examination of the latter. In O'Connell's words, with regard to war, "we can only hope that the path of history will continue to lead us away from its carnage and despair."

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3533 Again, a prolonged period of time without offensive major power warfare may help move the institution from being rationally unacceptable, to being subrationally unthinkable. Telling when that crossover happens will be very difficult, and hence, the security dilemma remains.
Epilogue:
Where to From Here?

This study concluded that slavery and war are sufficiently analogous to warrant comparison and that like slavery, a norm is emerging against offensive warfare through an interaction of normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic factors. This leaves any number of follow-on questions.

First, the development of a norm against offensive warfare doesn't in and of itself explain why major power warfare is declining. One can surmise that major powers are those most likely to engage in offensive warfare, and therefore that one could extrapolate from that norm's emergence a requisite decline in major power warfare. But this doesn't seem sufficient. Professor Mueller suggested warfare between "civilized states" is declining, and while this study helped refine his model of norm emergence, it did not fully answer "why civilized countries" or "why major power warfare."

Further, the slavery case shed little light on the rational/cost-benefit analysis-based causes of warfare's decline. Mueller suggests that states are finding warfare rationally ineffective and thereby futile as a policy option, but again, does not fully explain how and why. He suggests they are focusing on their own prosperity and deciding that war is not the most effective way toward prosperity, but he leaves it at that. Further, he suggests that some of the noted theoretical explanations for turning away from warfare – nuclear weapons and/or increasingly costliness – do not explain the trend. The question is – "what does." It appears that Mueller believes war was never a rational policy option, and norm entrepreneurs have simply revealed it as such. Does this explanation suffice? The present author does not believe it does, and feels strongly that continued research on the "why war/major power war is now irrational (and/or when it became so)" questions is warranted. The slavery case didn't add much to this research area, but research should continue nonetheless.
In addition, slavery is but one case, and more case studies are warranted. One particular case that would further the study of institutional decline is that of colonialism. Having reviewed slavery, I would expect that this institution's decline has been caused by a mix of normative, domestic-political, and geostrategic factors; it likely had something to do with the idea that the institution was unacceptable, and one would further expect that the most powerful state(s) in the system turned against the practice. Was this the case? Colonialism's decline seems an appropriate case for future study.

The slavery case seemed to suggest that certain societal inclinations facilitated the emergence and spread of a norm against slavery. This idea of "societal inclinations" is another area ripe for research. What societal factors serve as facilitators? How does one identify these factors? When do they matter? How do they matter? Since they can have a mixed impact, how are positive societal factors nurtured and negative societal factors overcome?

The process suggested here put rather more emphasis on domestic and geostrategic politics than Professor Mueller and other constructivists would assert. On the domestic side, this leads one to conclude that still more work is needed regarding liberal peace theories. John M. Owen's work, moving beyond democratic peace – an oversimplified explanation – to liberal peace seems to be a good start. The slavery case suggests a consistent line of reasoning running all the way from the ideas – the public sphere – of individuals and groups inside society, through the domestic political structure, all the way up to the types of international orders that exist. There was an internal consistency between Britain's own sense of national identity regarding freedom, the increasing legitimacy that its institutions developed, and then the order that it tried to develop as hegemon. In this way, while International Relations theorists are right to keep separate their units of analysis, they may gain a better understanding by looking across those levels of analysis.

Overall, this study suggests a renewed call for more theorizing on the international learning process, on socialization. Professor Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* explicitly mentioned the socialization and competition processes, and yet, the competition process if the one
that most forcefully stuck, at least in Realist circles. Power clearly matters; the slavery case showed as much. And there seems to have been a striking consistency between the order the most powerful hegemonic power in the 19th century (Britain) oversaw, and that which today's hegemon – the United States – currently leads. The work of Professor Ikenberry regarding constitutional orders seems particular prescient and further study down this line of reasoning is warranted. Why did hegemony pass from one to the other peacefully, and why does the current take so much from the old? Is this socialization? Can one expect the next hegemonic power – today it seems to be China – to further a similar order and if so, why? A more refined understanding of social learning in international politics, beyond just anarchy and self-help, is warranted. It seems that a better understanding of international learning might blur the dividing line between structural realists and liberal-institutionalists like Ikenberry.

Similarly, this study suggested that the development of a norm against offensive warfare was not just a transnational process. In this way, the dividing line between liberal and realist theorists is blurred and needs to be further reduced. Normative theorists tend to focus on ideas and transnational actors, leaving out power and domestic/international politics. In the same way, realists tend focus on economic and military variables, and neglect the power of ideas. Again, the wall needs to come down. One of the geostrategic lessons was that when a powerful state attempts to spread or enforce a morality-based norm, that state opens itself up for condemnation of both its motives and its actions. Just as some abolitionists condemned Britain for threats and use of force to stop the slave trade, so one can expect moral entrepreneurs to judge states that act to enforce the norm against aggression. This scenario has already played out several times – reversing Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, stopping ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, etc. Inherently, a state/states may well have to resort to the use of force to enforce the norm against offensive warfare and the paradox of using force to stop force inevitably complicates the matter. A more blended study of realist and liberal/constructivist variables would better both camps' understandings of the dynamics at play.
We have only scratched the surface of the relevant research vectors that remain. If offensive warfare is declining, what if anything can be done to move it toward to obsolescence? Is it possible for a multi-state institution like warfare to become obsolete, and how would one know that obsolescence had arrived? Is the decline reversible? If so, what developments can slow or reverse this decline? One of the lessons from the slavery case was that nationalism is a powerful force, one that could possibly overpower the norm against offensive warfare as it at times did the movement to end slavery. One can foresee any number of scenarios in which nationalism could become such a powerful force that it overcomes any taboo related to offensive warfare. One need look no further than India-Pakistan conflict for an example in which nationalism adds increasing friction to the strategic situation. Nationalism seems a profitable research vector. Here again, the barrier between nationalism as a domestic variable and nationalism as a geostrategic/power variable needs to further examined.

In the end, these are but a smattering of the research vectors that one could undertake, and thereby, this dissertation serves as a foundational piece in much larger and more far-reaching research agenda with important ramifications for the field.
Bibliography


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