



KRI

Kreol Research Institute

**“THE CURTAIN THAT
HIDES INJUSTICE WILL
ONE DAY BETRAY IT”**

**AN UBUNTU PERSPECTIVE
ON
DEDOMAZMAN**

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SUBMITTED TO
LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
FOR DEDOMAZMAN TO THE DESCENDANTS
OF THE ENSLAVED BANTU PEOPLE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS



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PREFACE

This KRI (Kreol Research Institute) publication is a protest and emancipation process to advocate for voices which have been silenced for too long. It has emerged as an imperative and conviction: history does not end when an injustice is formally declared to be over, it will be over only when reparative justice will be proclaimed and implemented. Only then will it be an act of justice.

The abolition of slavery marked a historic end of free servile labour. Abolition did not erase the economic structures, inequalities, losses and consequences created by centuries of enslavement. The wealth generated through the labour and suffering of enslaved Africans did not disappear with abolition. Much of it was transformed, transferred and incorporated into economic and institutional structures whose consequences have extended across generations.

It is from this historical reality that the concept of Dedomazman emerges.

Dedomazman is the kreol word chosen by the kreol Research Institute (KRI) to express a particular understanding of historical responsibility, dignity and socio-economic reparation. It is not presented merely as a demand for compensation for an individual injury. It is a broader reflection on the relationship between those who created wealth under conditions of profound injustice, those who benefited from that wealth, and the descendants who continue to live with the consequences of that history.

This publication therefore seeks to expose to the world the old neo colonial economic greedy structure which was totally and absolutely unjust and inhumane. We are paving the way for a complete new philosophical and socio-economic vision. We invite all to adhere and help build a more just socio-economic society.

Our work brings together five interconnected ideas: Ubuntu, historical responsibility, Dedomazman, socio-economic reparation, and rights. It asks whether justice can be complete when the historical contribution of a people is recognised but the economic and social consequences of their exploitation remain unaddressed.

This publication also explores the question of Right of Abode (ROA) and presents the KRI Socio-Economic Bill of Rights as a proposed framework for further reflection and discussion. These propositions are not presented as established legal conclusions. They are part of an evolving intellectual, historical and legal project that KRI intends to develop through further research and engagement and real-life struggles experiences (case studies).

This work is dedicated, first and foremost, to the ancestors who endured: displacement enslavement, dispossession, forced labour, cultural alienation and denial of human status. They were considered as “meuble”. It is dedicated to those whose names were recorded as property rather than as human beings; to those whose labour created wealth from which they themselves were excluded; and to those whose voices were silenced by the structures of their time.

It is equally dedicated to their descendants – to those who inherited not only their blood and memories, but also the consequences of an economic and social order created to purport ongoing socio-economic injustice. It is dedicated to the generations yet to come, so that they may inherit not merely the memory of suffering, but also to take the place they deserve and that is due to them, thanks to the sacrifices endured by their ancestors.

Finally, this publication is dedicated to truth, justice and human dignity. KRI does not present Dedomazman as an invitation to reopen the wounds of history for the sake of division. Rather, it proposes to unveil history with historical facts, evidence and rationality. We deeply believe that this can construct a bridge towards a more just relationship between communities, institutions and generations.

In the spirit of Ubuntu, we are because we are connected to one another. If the past has connected generations through exploitation and the creation of wealth, then the pursuit of justice must also be capable of connecting generations through recognition, responsibility, repair and sharing of wealth.

This publication is therefore not intended to be the final word. It is a beginning.

Danielle Turner

“Alone, one cannot produce history” *proverb from Malawi*

Remerciements

This work would not have been possible without the constant socio-economic and political dialogue that has accompanied our research and reflection. We extend our sincere gratitude to our members, whose contributions, questions and perspectives have continually enriched this work.

We are equally grateful to members of the Kreol community, civil society organisations and NGOs who participated in consultations and shared their experiences, concerns and aspirations. These exchanges have been essential in grounding our reflections in the lived realities of the community and in keeping the dialogue open, constructive and forward-looking.

We also extend our thanks to members of the community who shared oral histories, family memories, testimonies, lived experiences and inherited knowledge that contributed to this publication. Last but not least, we wish to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of our KRI Researcher, Mr Patrick Mookeenah, whose research, commitment and sustained intellectual engagement mainly with historical and socio-economic sources have significantly contributed to the development of this publication.

This work is therefore not the fruit of one voice alone, but of a continuing collective dialogue – one that seeks to deepen understanding, encourage reflection and advance the quest for Dedomazman, dignity and justice.

While these various contributions have informed the research and reflection presented here, the author retain responsibility for the selection, interpretation and presentation of the material.

Danielle Turner



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AN UBUNTU PERSPECTIVE ON HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY AND HUMAN DIGNITY

The Enslaved Bantu People Cannot Rest in Peace Without Reparatory Justice

Claim for Reparation

Today, 23rd august, we commemorate the “**International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and it’s Abolition**”

Now, the time has come for justice and reparation. On the 25th of March 2026 the United Nations General Assembly, officially declared slavery as “The Gravest Crime Against Humanity”. The resolution passed with 123 votes in favour, 52 abstentions and 3 votes against (United States, Brazil, Argentina).

The case is made, no more debate: “For 300 years, did we have a legal case for reparatory justice? The answer now is yes. The case has been made. There’s nothing more to discuss whether there’s a case or not. The question now is implementation and demand. That’s where we are now at this moment” Professor Sir Hilary Beckles.

The enslaved Bantu People are the ancestors of nearly most of those forming part of the creole community of the Republic of Mauritius. The Bantu enslaved have been systematically abducted from their lawful homelands in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa as well as Madagascar. During enslavement of the displaced Bantu population on the island of Mauritius enslaved Bantu women gave birth to firsts Bantu-Mauritian. A new Bantu Ethnic was born known as creole.

This extraction, deportation and displacement from their mainland was executed via state-sponsored, commercial joint ventures managed by European colonial powers. Those who were prominently responsible for such include: Great-Britain, France and their partners in crime the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England. In modern days these perpetrated crimes are named: terrorism.

In Mauritius, this act of terrorism reached a highly institutionalised scale. Subjected to forced Oceanic transit, already enslaved, those Bantu people were upon arrival on the island placed in a permanent, hereditary status of chattel slavery. By such doings slave traffickers fuel the colonial sugar economy and extended extra-territorial control for political power and economic wealth.

From capture in their homeland to Mauritius, these Bantu people were completely excised from their native territories. Liquidated of their political sovereignty. Their socio-cultural infrastructure completely destroyed by institutionalised white supremacy ideology.

On the 1st February 1835, when Great-Britain enforced the Slavery Abolition Act, it refused to compensate the 66,343 registered enslaved. Instead, the British government paid out a colossal sum of £2,112,632 sterling directly to the white planters, “absentee” slave owners and the clergy. They formally claimed reparations and filled compensation claims for the loss of the enslaved persons they legally owned following the abolition Act of 28th August 1833.

Then came 4 years of manumission where the enslaved were kept in nearly the same situation as during slavery. After the 4 years they did not receive any pecuniary gain, acquired no rights either economic, social or political.

The so-called freed slaves left the plantations with neither the resources nor the rights necessary to enjoy genuine freedom. Unlike the slave owners, who received financial compensation for the loss of what the law had regarded as their property, their ‘meuble’. The emancipated men, women and children received no compensation for generations of forced labour, suffering and dispossession.

They were granted no land, no housing, no capital and no meaningful assistance to establish independent lives. They left slavery without economic security and no civil and political rights. Their sole inheritance was the determination to survive and rebuild their lives in a society that continued to be shaped by the inequalities and structures created by slavery.

This Land Is Africa

The formerly enslaved Bantu people, today largely identified as the creole community in Mauritius, were living on this part of Africa (Mauritius island) where they have been forcibly transported. Victims of human trafficking, mass deportation, displacement and playing a central role in building the colony yet they continued to be treated as an underclass, deprived of citizenship

Not settlers, not immigrants, not colonisers just displaced and still enslaved through a colonial structure rooted in racism and institutional discrimination, economic apartheid and social exclusion they are still waiting for justice. Their descents are still enduring this colonial legacy.

Reparation

Since 2005 the UN General Assembly has adopted through Resolution 60/147 **the Principle of Non-Expiration** (principle iv). This resolution dictates that statutes of limitations shall not apply to gross violations of international human rights law that constitute crimes under international law.

This resolution targets “gross violations”, which encompass systemic mass deportation, human trafficking, arm conflict, arbitrary dispossession, and hereditary subjugation, which clearly describe the operational realities of the slave trade of which our Bantu ancestors have been victims- and their descendants are still suffering ongoing damages

Resolution 60/147 stipulates under (principle: 19, 20,21,22,23) the needs for: **Restitution, Compensation, Rehabilitation, Satisfaction, Non -Repetition Colonisers and Slave Traffickers Cannot Claim Ignorance**

The colonial authorities and institutions cannot plead ignorance of the legal principles and moral standards that were applicable at that time. They consciously chose to disregard those principles in pursuit of economic gain, political domination, and, above all, the systematic and systemic dehumanisation of enslaved people. Their actions were not the product of ignorance, but deliberate choices.

The French and British colonisers violated principles of international law that were already recognised during the era of the slave trade. So, the principle of non-retroactivity cannot properly be invoked in the case of Great-Britain, France and their partners. It is both inappropriate and inapplicable to the legal and historical issues of the slave trade and its ongoing damages.

Early legal jurisprudence established that sovereign political communities possessed inherent territorial rights. British and French state-backed corporations violated early jus gentium by executing armed incursions, instigating proxy wars, and systematically kidnapping populations from sovereign African polities without a lawful declaration of war. Which in short is a clear violation of the Customary Law of Nations.

Another crime which was under early customary law, is the unauthorised seizure of persons on the high seas, this was already classified as piracy- a crime considered hostis humani generis (an enemy of all kind). While both empires granted domestic monopolies to slave traders, their maritime operations were universally banned under general customary maritime law.

Another foundational maxim of Roman law which encompassed European customary law is the doctrine of unjust enrichment (Abus de Droit). This doctrine states that no party should be unjustly enriched at the expense of another through an unlawful or abusive act. By this tort of systematically extracting wealth through uncompensated labour and ancestral dispossession, both empires built their domestic economies upon an ongoing, legally recognized tort of unjust enrichment.

These actions constituted a *Per Se Violation of the jus Cogens Prohibition: Against Crimes Against Humanity*. Thus, the principle of non-retroactivity is inapplicable. While statutory treaties generally do not apply retroactively, *jus cogens* reflect universal customary laws that have bound humanity since antiquity and this despite domestic colonial laws at that time.

The violation of jus cogens creates obligations *erga omnes*. Obligations owed to the international community as a whole. Which means that any international body or victim coalition has the legal standing to demand redress, and no state can recognize the legal validity of a situation created by a *jus cogens* breach.

These tortious crimes have remained unremedied and are still causing active, compounding damages to the descendants, the today creole community. This ongoing harm prevents the tolling of any statute of limitations.

An Ubuntu Obligation

It is therefore legitimate to seek reparatory justice for the descendants of the enslaved Bantu people of Mauritius. Beyond its legal and historical foundations, this claim embodies a moral duty and a need for restorative justice – an Ubuntu obligation- to recognise the past, foster truth, restore dignity, and to build a more just future.

DEDOMAZMAN

A Kreol Concept of Economic Redress and Reparatory Justice for the Bantu Descendants of Mauritius

KRI Position on the Use of the Term DEDOMAZMAN

The use of Dedomazman is intentional. It allows KRI to move beyond the limitations of terminology inherited from colonial, legal or administrative frameworks and to articulate reparatory justice in a language that belongs to the community itself. In this way, what may appear abstract or distant when expressed as 'Reparatory Justice' becomes immediately meaningful and accessible, resonating with people's own linguistic and cultural ecosystem.

For **KRI – Kreol Research Institute**, the word **Dedomazman** is deliberately used as a broad and encompassing Kreol concept of redress. It does not refer exclusively to financial compensation. It embodies economic redress and wider principles and forms of redress that may be required to address historical injustice – including **compensation, reparation, restitution, recognition, restoration, rehabilitation and reparatory justice**.

Dedomazman therefore gives a distinctly kreol expression to the demand for justice arising from historical wrongs.

For KRI, **Dedomazman is consequently not merely a translation of “compensation” or “reparation.” It is an encompassing kreol notion of redress**, rooted in the lived experience, memory and dignity of the Creole people.

Dedomazman is therefore both a word and a principle. While the English word *redress* and the French word *réparation* are valuable legal concepts, they do not fully convey the historical, cultural and emotional depth experienced by kreolophone communities whose ancestors' endured slavery, dispossession and systematic dehumanisation.

In Mauritian kreol, **Dedomazman** carries a broader and more profound meaning. It signifies the act of making good a historical wrong by restoring what has been unjustly taken away. It is a comprehensive process through which historical injustice is acknowledged, collective memory is restored, dignity is reaffirmed, and the foundations of a more just and reconciled society are built.

The adoption of the term **Dedomazman** also affirms the legitimacy of the kreol language as a language capable of expressing sophisticated legal, historical and philosophical concepts. By using a word born from the lived experience of a kreolophone people, KRI asserts that the language of those who suffered is itself an essential vehicle for truth, justice and historical responsibility

From this day forward, KRI shall use **DEDOMAZMAN** as the umbrella concept embracing **Compensation, Truth, Justice, Reparation, Restitution, Rehabilitation, Recognition, Guarantees of Non-Repetition, and the Restoration of Human Dignity**. It expresses a vision of reparatory justice that is faithful both to international human rights principles and to the historical experience of the descendants of the Bantu enslaved people of Mauritius.

Dedomazman as Economic Redress

For KRI, **Dedomazman** begins with **economic redress**.

Economic redress is not an act of charity. Nor is it based upon inherited personal guilt.

It is a reasoned response to an economic injustice whose consequences extend across generations.

The perpetrators and beneficiaries of slavery were compensated for the abolition of slavery, while the very people whose stolen labour had generated the wealth received no compensation, reparation or restitution.

Remembrance of the very fact that the enslaved Bantu People were uprooted from their main land. An African land rich with minerals, such as: gold, diamonds and other precious stones that were exploited unashamedly to create the economic power of the imperialist's domination.

The African land born and natural proprietors were enslaved and deported to Mauritius, another African territory. There they were deprived of their human status. Their Right to land possession was banned. Not even to a plot of land for a hut.

This denial and deprivation of land possession right imposed on our ancestors did not end with the abolition of slavery. Its consequences have been transmitted across generations and continue to affect their descendants today.

This historical imbalance remains one of the central questions of reparatory justice. Abolition ended the legal institution of slavery, but it did not dismantle the landholding structure created under slavery. No corresponding system of land restitution or redistribution was established for the formerly enslaved. Thus, emancipation freed people from the legal status of slavery without providing them with an economic and territorial foundation equivalent to that retained by the former slave-owning class.

Recognising the economic dimension of slavery does not diminish its moral horror. Rather, it recognises that justice should address the very mechanisms through which the injustice was created.

DEDOMAZMAN is the process of remedying the enduring economic and human consequences of slavery through evidence-based measures of economic redress, historical recognition, institutional reform and the restoration of human dignity.

It recognises that because slavery functioned as an economic institution, economic redress is an indispensable pillar of reparatory justice.

Dedomazman is the pursuit of justice where history has left an unpaid debt.

KRI therefore maintains that there should be no hesitation, embarrassment or apology in acknowledging the **economic dimension of reparatory justice**. If the injustice of slavery was sustained through economic exploitation, and if its abolition gave rise to economic compensation for slave owners, then it is both legitimate and necessary to consider **economic redress** for the descendants of those who endured enslavement.

Dedomazman is not a request for charity. It is a claim grounded in history, law and economics. It seeks to address an economic injustice that was created by slavery and acknowledged by the compensation awarded to slave owners.

Economic redress must be accompanied by shared historical responsibility for beneficiaries

KRI does not direct its claim for the Bantu descendants of Mauritius from the premise of inherited personal blame.

We believe in **shared historical responsibility**. Where historical evidence demonstrates that governments, institutions or organisations materially benefited from slavery or from compensation for slavery. These will have the responsibility to contribute to Dedomazman. This act of justice will be focus towards restoring justice rather than assigning perpetual guilt.

A Framework for Implementation

Dedomazman should be implemented through transparent and accountable mechanisms that benefit affected communities as direct beneficiaries.

A viable economic, social and political redress (ECOSOC) must include:

- Constitutional and Electoral reform
- A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for business investment programme
- New models of entrepreneurship
- Restitution of land
- Development of a cultural Industry
- Educational endowments and scholarships;
- and other forms of economic restoration
- institutional and political reform.

DEDOMAZMAN is the process of remedying the enduring economic and human consequences of slavery through evidence-based measures of economic redress, historical recognition, institutional reform and the restoration of human dignity. It recognises that because slavery functioned as an economic institution, economic redress is an indispensable pillar of reparatory justice.

The Principle of Dedomazman

Dedomazman is the pursuit of justice where the economic debt created by slavery has never been adequately discharged. This imbalance did not disappear with history. It became part of history.

Dedomazman rejects the notion that history alone extinguishes justice. Where an economic injustice has produced enduring benefits for some and enduring disadvantages for others, society has a continuing responsibility to examine appropriate measures of economic redress.

Its objective is not to punish the present for the past, but to remedy, as far as possible, the enduring consequences of an economic system whose benefits and burdens were distributed unequally.

For KRI, **justice delayed by history should not become justice denied by history.**

Beyond Symbolism

KRI welcomes symbolic measures such as apologies, memorials, commemorations and historical recognition. These are important.

But KRI maintains that **Dedomazman cannot be reduced to symbolic gestures.** Justice requires that the economic dimension of slavery be addressed with the same seriousness with which the economic losses of slave owners were once acknowledged.

The descendants of the enslaved Bantu people should never feel ashamed to speak about economic redress. Seeking an economic remedy for an economic injustice is neither greed nor opportunism. It is a legitimate pursuit of justice grounded in history, law and economic reality.

KRI also invites a re-examination of traditions of thought that have sometimes treated financial claims arising from historical injustice with suspicion or discomfort. There should be no contradiction in recognising both the moral and the economic dimensions of slavery. To acknowledge one while ignoring the other is to leave justice incomplete.

Dedomazman therefore affirms that **economic redress is not opposed to dignity – it is one of the means through which dignity may be restored.** Truth without justice is incomplete. Recognition without remedy is insufficient. Memory without meaningful action risks becoming commemoration without transformation.

The pursuit of Dedomazman is the pursuit of justice through remedies that correspond to the nature of the injustice itself.

A Case study for Compensation and socio-economic reparation under the precept of the International Law of States Responsibilities and Private Entities.

Stolen, shackled, shipped

For more than 400 years, millions of people were stolen from Africa, put in shackles and shipped to the New World to toil in cotton fields, sugar and coffee plantations under scorching heat and the crack of the whip. They were denied basic humanity and even their own names, **forced to endure generations of exploitation with repercussions that reverberate today**, including persistent anti-Black racism and discrimination.

UN passed resolution emphasising: “the trafficking of enslaved Africans and racialised chattel enslavement of Africans as **the gravest crime against humanity** by reason of the definitive break in world history, scale, duration, systemic nature, brutality and enduring consequences that continue to structure the lives of all people through racialized regimes of labour, property and capital.” <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/03/1167199>

The following international law instruments are more than explicit concerning the atrocity of slavery:

International Law Commission, Peremptory norms of general international law (jus cogens), Texts of the draft conclusions and Annex adopted by the Drafting Committee on second reading, Identification and legal consequences of peremptory norms of general international law (jus cogens), 11 May 2022, A/CN.4/L.967, at 6 International Law Commission, supra note 3, at 85–89 (draft conclusion 23 and annex): prohibition of aggression, prohibition of genocide, prohibition of crimes against humanity, the basic rules of international humanitarian law, prohibition of racial discrimination and apartheid, prohibition of slavery, and prohibition of torture. <https://esil-sedi.eu/esil-reflection-change-of-peremptory-norms-of-general-international-law-jus-cogens/>

Where in history have reparations been paid?

After World War One: Germany and the other countries were to be made to pay for the damage suffered by Britain and France during the war. In 1922 the amount to be paid was set at £6.6 billion.

After World War Two: West Germany agreed to pay \$7 billion to the newly created state of Israel where many persecuted Jews were going to live, around \$89 billion was paid to individual survivors of the Holocaust.

2003: South Africa’s post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommended reparations for human rights abuses by the apartheid government, although only small amounts were paid.

2013: The UK government agreed to pay out £19.9 million in costs and compensation to more than 5,000 elderly Kenyans tortured by British colonial forces following the Mau Mau uprising in the 1950s. This was a very large sum, around 40% of the government’s budget at that time. It had to take out huge loans to be able to raise the funds, which it only finished paying off in 2015.

What about slavery

for many, their biggest concern was about money and the loss in profits to their businesses after slavery came to an end. **Nowadays it might seem very strange that people were given money to compensate SLAVEOWNERS for not being allowed to own slaves - something now universally agreed to be wrong and an abuse of human rights.**

There have been campaigns calling for reparations to be paid to those who suffered as result of slavery. But as the former slaves are no longer, there is debate as to who the money would go to - their descendants, their communities or countries that slaves were originally taken from?

There are different views and much disagreement about how monetary compensation would work, who should pay reparations, and who should receive money.

When we talk about compensation and reparations, people think that it’s about just money. But it’s about making “dedomazman” whether economic or social, there’s a need to readdress people of African descendants deposed and displaced illegally by violence under the process of slave trade, which created the wealth of white oligarchs in Mauritius and benefited directly to the colonial empire.

Beyond the immediate question of merging torts of human trafficking, unjust enrichment on human crime, and reparations for the corrective justice there is a litigation-based approach for reparations which need to be pursued through the local, national, regional and international political process, in order to access compensation claims.

For those who favour the corrective justice framework the argument for reparations is based in restitution: there is an irreducible quantum of value that results from enslaved labour that the law of restitution can properly identify and restore to its rightful owner.

The argument that the absence of direct survivors disqualifies communities from compensation is a central point of tension in international legal, political, and historical debates regarding reparations. This reasoning is frequently used by European governments when addressing historic claims stemming from colonialism, the transatlantic slave trade, and early 20th-century atrocities. <https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.eureporter.co/world/united-nations/2025/10/02/europes-colonial-reckoning-why-reparations-demands-meet-resistance-in-brussels>

By framing compensation strictly around direct victims, states often argue that the legal chain of liability is broken by the passage of time. <https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.reuters.com/world/where-europe-us-stand-slavery-reparations->

The facts

It is estimated that between 25 million and 30 million people were violently uprooted from Africa for enslavement throughout history. From the beginning of the sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, approximately 12.5 million Africans were enslaved by Europeans and shipped to colonies in the Americas in what has come to be known as the “transatlantic slave trade.” Of those 12.5 million enslaved Africans, it is estimated that close to 2 million lost their lives during the Middle Passage across the Atlantic Ocean.

The trade in enslaved people did not only affect the African and American continents. For example, between 1500 and 1850, Europeans were also involved, directly or indirectly, in trading between 953,900 to 1,275,900 enslaved persons “within an oceanic world that stretched from Eastern Africa, Mauritius and Madagascar to the Persian Gulf, South Asia, the Indonesian and Philippine archipelagos.

The colonial empires built by European states between the 15th and 20th centuries extended across nearly 80% of the entire globe. This means that two-thirds of the membership of the United Nations, approximately 127 out of 193 Member States, were subject to European colonial rule at some point in history. In many cases, this rule lasted for over 250 years.

Among the many harms of colonialism was the denial of self-determination and dispossession of land from Indigenous populations, the imposition of colonial borders, plunder of natural resources, the exploitation of labour of enslaved, and the destruction of local cultures, languages and knowledge systems.

European governments have since now relied on specific legal and logistical frameworks to reject or reshape historical compensation demands:

- **Statutes of Limitations and Legal Standing:** Under traditional domestic and international legal systems, claims for personal injury or financial loss must generally be brought forward by the immediate victims or their direct heirs within a set time frame. Governments argue that after generations have passed, finding legally verifiable links to specific damages becomes impossible.
- **Preventing Financial Precedents:** Nations fear that compensating subsequent generations would open a “Pandora’s box” of infinite liabilities. For instance, the United Kingdom has repeatedly refused to pay financial reparations for the transatlantic slave trade or colonial rule.
- **The “At the Time” Legality Argument:** Beyond the survivor issue, states often argue that acts committed centuries ago were not violations of international law at the time they occurred, thus invalidating retroactively applied legal claims.

Most often, the word reparation and compensation are used in relation to money. It is given as an acknowledgement of wrongful/unlawful conduct and to repair the harm caused by or as a result of this conduct.

Under international law, victims of crimes under international law and human rights violations have a right to reparations. The word reparations refer to measures to redress violations of human rights by providing a range of material and symbolic remedies to victims or their families as well as affected communities. It goes even further saying: reparations must be adequate, effective, prompt, and should be proportional to the gravity of the violations and the harm suffered.

European colonialism and slavery built the world that we inhabit today. It is palpable all around us, from the borders that divide us to the languages we speak, the religion we were forced to practice and the general white supremacist cultural influence imposed and the educational systems inherited.

The incredible wealth that was made by European states through slavery and colonialism has led to gross inequality that continues to mark the world order.

We often think about slavery and colonialism as something that's finished, but we are still living in its long embrace that keeps impoverish the victim's century after century. We live in a world shaped and orchestrated by colonial logic.

For example, after abolition of slavery while the transatlantic slave trade was over, the ideas governing the organisation and geopolitics of the globe remained in the hands of the white supremacists. The decisions of where people migrate from and to which country remained under colonial power. In this phase of the world history low-income countries were former colonies where the majority of the population was non-white citizens.

What About Now?

Communities are organising across the world to obtain reparations but it's a slow process, with many European states continuing to oppose claims for reparations. In a historic move in December 2024, Belgium was found responsible for crimes against humanity for acts committed during colonization. A signal, a turning point for European states. The decision represents a long-awaited recognition and it supports additional claims for reparations for Métis people, victims and survivors of Belgian colonization.

In Canada, Indigenous Peoples have long been fighting for reparatory justice for historic and ongoing violations, including violations of their right to self-determination and loss of ancestral lands. As part of the British Empire, Canada participated in the transatlantic slave trade, with institutions like the Hudson's Bay Company profiting immensely from enslaved and indentured labour.

In 2012, hundreds of Indigenous Peoples brought a class action lawsuit against Canadian authorities, seeking reparations for the forcible removal of Indigenous children from their families and placement in residential schools.

The residential school system formed part of a colonial policy to eradicate Indigenous cultures, languages, and communities in Canada, resulting in the separation of approximately 150,000 Indigenous children from their families, identity, and cultures. Residential schools were also rife with neglect and abuse of Indigenous children causing thousands of deaths.

Survivor stories detail horrific physical and emotional abuse suffered that resulting in lasting trauma. In January 2023, the Canadian government agreed to pay a 2 billion US dollars to settle a lawsuit, with the settlement to be used to "revitalize Indigenous education, culture, and language to support survivors in healing and reconnecting with their heritage.

As a result of an earlier class action lawsuit filed by thousands of Indigenous survivors, the Canadian government formally apologized for the harms of the residential school system and held a Truth and Reconciliation Commission from 2007 to 2015 to investigate and record crimes and human rights violations committed against Indigenous children in Canadian residential schools.

Regional bodies are also addressing the issue of reparations for historical injustices. In 2014, Caricom – the Caribbean intergovernmental body – developed a 10-points agenda for reparatory justice including full formal apology, illiteracy eradication and debt cancellation.

The African Union designated reparations for Africans and People of African Descent as theme of the year for 2025, which has now turned into a decade for reparations going from 2026 to 2036.

Reparation involves not only justice for the historic wrongs of slavery, the slave trade and colonialism. It requires also dismantling or transforming contemporary systems and structures of racial discrimination, subordination and inequality that were built under slavery and colonialism, like white supremacy. Reparations therefore concern our future and our present as much as they do our past.

Over the past year, Amnesty International's Racial Justice Team has:

1. Developed legal arguments under international law for reparations.
2. Advocated alongside the UN, producing oral statements, submissions and inputs into U.N resolutions, advocacy meetings and co-organising side-events with partners.
3. Worked with partners to amplify reparations demands, through the Dekoloniale Berlin Conference, as well as for the cases of Namibia and Haiti.
4. Continued to document the effects of colonialism and slavery on human rights today.

The team also works with partner organizations and communities struggling to achieve justice. They bring together groups and communities so they can learn about different ongoing reparation processes, discuss successes and challenges, and strategize how international law and advocacy may be used for achieving reparatory justice.

Going forward, the team will be attending the Wakati Wetu Festival in Nairobi Kenya from 22-23 October, where they will be working with partners African Futures Labs to ignite global conversations on reparative justice through art, activism, and community. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2025/10/why-do-reparations-for-colonialism-and-slavery-matter/>

The Counter-Perspective and Contemporary Reforms

Conversely, some economists and policy analysts argue that modern poverty in these regions is less about a *deliberate modern design* to exclude, and more about the challenges of globalization and rapid macroeconomic shifts. For example, the decline of global sugar and textile preferences severely impacted low-income working classes across the board, regardless of ethnicity.

Furthermore, many governments have actively attempted to break these historical cycles. In recent years, states have ratified international human rights conventions, implemented strict national minimum-wage policies to protect low-income earners, and formally integrated Creole languages into primary school curricula to boost institutional access and educational equity.

The argument that poverty within Creole communities stems from a continuous lack of economic access dating back to the era of slavery is a central pillar of structural economic history. Across many post-plantation societies such as Mauritius (where this discourse is often termed the *malaise créole*), Louisiana, and parts of the Caribbean – sociologists and historians argue that the transition from slavery to a free-market economy was structurally designed to limit asset accumulation for descendants of enslaved peoples.

The Historical Mechanics of Exclusion

When slavery was abolished, the institutional framework changed, but the distribution of capital did not. Historians point to several critical transition points where economic policies systematically bypassed Creole communities:

- **Compensation Reversion:** At the time of emancipation, colonial governments compensated the *enslavers* for their loss of “property,” rather than providing reparations or land to the freed population. This left the newly freed Creole population completely assetless.
- **Land Tenure Policies:** In many sugar-plantation economies, arable land remained concentrated in the hands of the colonial oligarchy. In places like Mauritius, when land was finally broken up or leased, it was heavily tied to indentured labour structures or specific corporate interests, effectively leaving Creole populations landless and pushing them into marginalized coastal villages or urban slums.

- The Shift to Informal Economies: Cut off from formal banking, land ownership, and state-backed agricultural credit, Creole communities historically relied on what scholars call “Creole Economics”—highly adaptive, resilient, but informal survival strategies (such as the *débrouillard* system in the French Caribbean). While culturally rich, informal economies lack the structural mechanisms to scale wealth across generations. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283123533_Post-Colonialism_The_So-Called_Malaise_Creole_in_Mauritius

After abolition of slavery church urges the slaves’ victims not to claim compensation but rather to forgive their masters. Religious institutions heavily used theological arguments to encourage newly emancipated people to choose spiritual forgiveness over financial compensation.

While European governments spent millions compensating *slave owners* for the “loss of property”, emancipated slaves were left with nothing. The church pacified social unrest by teaching that seeking earthly wealth or retribution was un-Christian.

Historically, this manifested across colonies through specific strategies:

The Weaponization of “Christian Forgiveness”

Missionaries and colonial church leaders heavily preached Biblical narratives centered on long-suffering, meekness, and the virtue of forgiveness. Enslaved individuals were taught that enduring injustice with grace would guarantee their reward in heaven. This effectively framed demands for wages, land, or financial redress as greed or an un-Christian lack of charity.

Pacification for Colonial Stability

Following the **Slavery Abolition Act of 1833** in the British Empire, colonial authorities deeply feared uprisings and immediate economic collapse. The church acted as an arm of the state to manage the transition from chattel slavery to cheap labour. By urging formerly enslaved people to “forgive and move forward,” religious institutions successfully maintained social order and kept the plantation system functioning under new names (like apprenticeship or sharecropping).

The Unfairness of Historic Payouts

The ultimate irony of this theological push for forgiveness lies in who actually received compensation:

- **The Enslavers:** The British government paid **£20 million** (worth billions today) in compensation. This massive sum was paid exclusively to slave owners to offset their financial losses.
- **The Enslaved:** The actual victims of slavery received **zero financial compensation**. Instead, they were given mandates to return to work, alongside sermons emphasizing spiritual reconciliation over material justice.

In Mauritius, the historical alliance between the Roman Catholic Church and the white Franco-Mauritian plantocracy (the sugar oligarchy) created a deeply stratified, segregated, and unequal socio-cultural environment. https://www.ias.asia/sites/ias/files/nwl_article/2019-05/IIAS_NL45_19.pdf

While the British took political control of the island in 1810, the Treaty of Paris (1814) allowed the white French elite to retain their laws, language, and the Catholic religion. This cemented a powerful system where the church and the sugar oligarchs operated hand-in-hand to maintain racial hierarchies long after the abolition of slavery. The segregation of Mauritian society was built and sustained through several institutional mechanisms:

Segregation Within the House of God

Even within sacred spaces, the Catholic Church strictly enforced the racial hierarchy of the white oligarchy. Separation at Mass: In churches, white parishioners and Afro-Creole/Black parishioners were separated by physical barriers like balustrades. Up into the mid-20th century, the front pews were strictly reserved for white families, while black Creoles were relegated to the back. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/713675629>

- **Segregated Rituals:** When a white person died, the clergy would bring the casket inside the church for a full service. When a Black or Coloured person died, the corpse was frequently left outside on a flat stone for hours before a brief, minimal service was performed.

- **Graveyard Divisions:** Even in death, segregation was maintained with separate cemetery sections for whites and non-whites.

Elitist Education as a Tool for Class Preservation

The white oligarchy and the Church controlled the finest educational institutions on the island

(such as the Loreto Convents and elite Catholic colleges). Initially, these institutions were designed to educate the children of the white elite and maintain French cultural dominance.

- For generations, these schools acted as a filter. They restricted upward social mobility for the descendants of enslaved people by keeping the Creole working class under-educated, while preparing white elites to retain control of the island's economic, banking, and sugar sectors.

Suppression of Afro-Creole Identity and Culture

The cultural environment was explicitly engineered to erase African heritage in favour of an Eurocentric, Catholic identity.

- Under the historical legacy of the Code Noir, enslaved people were forced to baptize into Catholicism and strip away their ancestral African names, religions, and languages.
- The Church demonized traditional Creole cultural expressions, such as early forms of *Sega* music and traditional spiritual practices, viewing them as pagan or un-Christian. This created an identity crisis and a structural dependency on the very white-dominated institution that oppressed them.

The Paternalistic “Peace”

When prominent missionaries like Père Jacques-Désiré Laval arrived in 1841 to minister to the newly emancipated slaves, his work provided vital spiritual comfort and basic literacy to the marginalized population. However, the institutional Church leveraged this to keep the peace. By channelling the grievances of the emancipated slaves into spiritual endurance rather than political or economic revolt, the Church protected the vast sugar estates owned by the white oligarchy from labour uprisings. <https://www.mauritiustimes.com/mt/from-the-pages-of-history-mt-60-years-ago-3/>

The Modern Reckoning

The institutional landscape began to shift through a series of key historical events:

- **The Truth and Justice Commission (2011):** Mauritius established a landmark commission to investigate the legacy of slavery. The final report explicitly pointed out the Catholic Church's role in suppressing the cultural and religious heritage of enslaved peoples. <https://atjhub.csvr.org.za/mauritius/>
- **The Official Apology:** Following the commission's findings, the Catholic Church in Mauritius became one of the first major institutions on the island to issue a formal apology for its historical complicity with the slave trade and the plantocracy.
- **Internal Reform:** Modern Mauritian Catholic leaders, such as Cardinal Maurice Piat, actively worked to reverse this legacy by advocating for the poor, transforming parish schools into inclusive institutions, and addressing the systemic marginalization of the Creole community. <file:///C:/Users/Administrator/Downloads/admin,+25+Mauritius+-+the+Paradise+Island.pdf>

PLEA FOR A RIGHT OF ABODE

The profound principle of Dedomazman

Dedomazman seeks to restore what slavery took away: not only wealth, but agency; not only recognition, but opportunity; not only memory, but choice.

KRI proposal for a **Right of Abode (ROA)** is a legitimate demand

Slavery took away: FREEDOM, HUMANITY, THE RIGHT OF A LAND, THE RIGHT OF CHOICE. THE RIGHT TO HAVE RIGHTS

Colonialism extracted the economic value of THE Bantu enslaved labour.

Abolition ended the legal institution without fully reversing its economic consequences.

Independence changed political sovereignty without automatically settling the historical economic debt.

The Government of Mauritius subsequently recognised the continuing consequences of slavery by establishing the Truth and Justice Commission and expressly giving it the task of determining appropriate measures for descendants of slaves and examining historical land dispossession;

Whereas international reparatory principles recognise restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition as components of remedy;

African law recognises that, in cases of spoliation, dispossessed peoples have a right to lawful recovery of property and adequate compensation;

KRI Proposal for the right of abode, citizenship and reparatory immigration route. It's a new policy and legal proposal requiring legislation or international agreement

We are not claiming that international law already gives us every right we propose. We are using existing principles of restitution, economic redress and historical responsibility to propose the development of a new reparatory framework. And there is an especially powerful historical precedent in the French 1848 decree: the law simultaneously recognised **an indemnity for colonists**, the liberating effect of **French soil**, and consequences concerning **French citizenship**.

That gives us an excellent historical bridge for **Dedomazman Right of Abode and Citizenship** – KRI is proposing a new twenty-first-century application rather than claiming that the old law itself creates today's right.

A KRI Position on Restitution, Economic Justice and Historical Responsibility

There is a question that must now be asked openly:

If slavery forcibly removed our ancestors from Africa, transferred their labour and economic value into colonial societies, and generated wealth that continued to benefit those societies long after abolition, why should restitution be confined to Africa – or to symbolic recognition in the countries where their descendants were left behind?

This is the question at the heart of **Dedomazman**. It is not a question of revenge. It is not a question of inherited personal guilt. It is not a rejection of Africa. And it is certainly not a demand that the descendants of the enslaved abandon the countries in which their communities were historically formed. It is a demand for **justice, choice and restitution**. **Where the original injustice was profoundly economic, economic redress is profoundly a matter of justice.**

The abolition of slavery was a historic achievement. But abolition and restitution are not synonymous. This distinction is particularly clear in Mauritius. The historical record forces us to confront an extraordinary asymmetry: **The system that had treated the enslaved as property ended with an economic settlement for those who had possessed that property, while emancipation did not itself provide an equivalent restoration of the wealth and economic opportunity extracted from enslaved.** Dedomazman asks that this imbalance be examined honestly.

The clock of justice did not begin again at independence

Mauritius became independent in 1968. But it did not reverse patterns of land ownership, capital accumulation, social hierarchy and economic opportunity created during the preceding centuries.

Indeed, Mauritius itself recognised the continuing nature of the historical question when it established the Truth and Justice Commission and gave it a mandate to investigate the consequences of slavery and to determine appropriate measures for descendants of slaves, including questions concerning historical land dispossession.

Independence changed political sovereignty. It did not settle the economic consequences of slavery. History does not operate through administrative dates. Economic advantages and disadvantages can survive political transitions.

We cannot tell descendants: **“Your ancestors were enslaved, but that history ended in 1835.”** Nor can we tell them: **“Whatever happened afterwards is irrelevant because Mauritius became independent in 1968.”**

Why Europe?

Someone will inevitably ask: **“If your ancestors were taken from Africa, why are you asking for the right to live in Europe?”**. Our answer is simple. **Because the claim follows the history of the dispossession.**

Our ancestors were taken from Africa. Their labour was exploited in colonial territories. The economic value generated by that labour became part of colonial economies. Much of the wealth generated through slavery ultimately became incorporated into European commercial, financial and institutional systems.

The descendants were left with the consequences. Therefore, restitution cannot be reduced to a simplistic instruction: **“Go back to Africa.”** that would misunderstand both slavery and its aftermath.

The Dedomazman Right of Abode

KRI proposes that States historically responsible for slavery and colonial exploitation establish a special reparatory pathway through which descendants of enslaved people may obtain a right to reside in those States. This would be fundamentally different from ordinary immigration. It would not depend principally upon:

- Employment, wealth, educational qualifications, investment, family sponsorship, or economic usefulness to the receiving State.

It would arise from **historical relationship and reparatory responsibility**.

A descendant could remain in Mauritius. A descendant could reconnect with Africa. A descendant could choose Europe.

The essential principle is: **From Abode to Citizenship**

KRI's proposal should not stop at residence. A state bearing historical responsibility should consider a **Dedomazman pathway to citizenship**.

Why?

Because citizenship represents more than physical residence. It represents: **legal belonging, political participation, security, mobility and recognition**.

The history of slavery itself demonstrates that States have historically connected slavery with questions of citizenship, territorial freedom and legal status.

The French abolition decree of 1848, for example, linked abolition with the principle that French territory liberated an enslaved person who reached it, while simultaneously addressing the legal and economic consequences of abolition. That historical connection does not create a citizenship right for descendants today – but it demonstrates that **territory, freedom and legal belonging have long been connected in the law of slavery and abolition**.

KRI proposes that the principle now be developed in a reparatory direction.

Why should the right extend to all colonial powers?

The claim should not be reduced to one European country.

The Dedomazman principle must be capable of addressing the historical responsibility of **all colonial powers whose laws, institutions and economies participated in systems of African enslavement and colonial exploitation**, according to the evidence applicable to each State.

This includes, where historical responsibility is established: **France, Great Britain, Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands, Denmark. And other historically implicated colonial powers.** The precise remedy may differ from one country to another, but **the principle should be universal: Where there is demonstrable historical responsibility, there must be room to discuss reparatory responsibility.**

The European Right of Abode is therefore **an additional reparatory instrument**, not the entire remedy.

We must also reject the false choice between Africa and Europe

There is no contradiction between demanding: **reconnection with Africa and a reparatory right of abode in the former colonial countries and their territories.** The two address different dimensions of the same human historical crime. Africa represents the ancestral origin from which millions were forcibly removed. Europe represents, among other places, the metropolitan centres of colonial powers whose laws, institutions and economies participated in and benefited from the system.

The descendants should not be forced to choose only one side of the same history.

Dedomazman restores the dual reality: while European bleeds Africa dry it operated an economic transfusion to Europe. This operation stands on one denominator: African blood. It created the wealth and consequently the one who created wealth at the expense of his life and that of his descendants has a legitimate right of abode for his descendants.

This is not a demand for inherited guilt.

KRI makes it clear. We do not ask today's French people to apologise personally for slavery.

We do not ask today's British people to carry the guilt of their ancestors. We do not accuse today's churchgoers because the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant church institutions participated in slavery.

Personal guilt is not the foundation of Dedomazman. Institutional and historical responsibility is. A State can have historical responsibilities without every citizen being personally guilty. An institution can have a historical debt without every person presently belonging to that institution being personally responsible for creating it.

That distinction allows reconciliation to coexist with justice.

We will not be satisfied with faux semblant

Dedomazman cannot become another vocabulary for symbolic gestures alone. We welcome: apologies; memorials; commemorations; museums; historical research; educational programmes.

But these cannot be the end of the conversation.

A monument cannot restore land. An apology cannot restore generations of unpaid labour. A ceremony cannot create economic capital. Symbolism cannot substitute for restitution.

There must be substance. There must be a discussion about **who should pay, how Dedomazman should be financed**, the different mechanism that should be used for implementation.

Dedomazman is not about keeping the past alive. There will be those who ask: **"Why continue talking about slavery?"**. Our answer is: Because we are not keeping the past alive.

We are refusing to allow an unresolved debt to become invisible merely because time has passed. If the economic benefits of slavery could be transmitted across generations, then it is reasonable to examine whether its economic disadvantages could also have been transmitted.

If wealth could have continuity, why should responsibility automatically have none?

This is not bitterness. It is an insistence that **history must be allowed to produce justice rather than merely memory.**

Our Demand

KRI calls upon former colonial powers to enter a serious dialogue with the descendants of enslaved peoples concerning a comprehensive framework of Dedomazman. As well as recognition and appropriate contribution by institutions demonstrably involved in slavery.

Dedomazman does not seek to reverse history. It seeks to prevent history from perpetrating its merry-go-round circle of injustice and unaccountability.

THE KRI DEDOMAZMAN BILL OF RIGHTS

A Proposed Charter for Economic Redress, Restitution, Dignity and Freedom of Choice for Right of Abode.

Preamble

Whereas slavery was an organised system of human exploitation and economic extraction;

Whereas the enslaved were deprived of liberty, property, wages, family autonomy, mobility and the opportunity to accumulate wealth;

Whereas abolition terminated the legal institution of slavery but did not, in itself, restore the wealth, land, opportunities and economic position lost through generations of enslavement;

Whereas in Mauritius the colonial transition from French to British rule did not erase the economic structures created under slavery, and abolition was accompanied by compensation to slave owners;

Whereas the Government of Mauritius subsequently recognised the continuing consequences of slavery by establishing the Truth and Justice Commission and expressly giving it the task of determining appropriate measures for descendants of slaves and examining historical land dispossession;

Whereas international reparatory principles recognise restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition as components of remedy;

Whereas African law recognises that, in cases of spoliation, dispossessed peoples have a right to lawful recovery of property and adequate compensation;

KRI therefore proposes the following Dedomazman Bill of Rights.

ARTICLE 1 – The Right to Dedomazman

Every descendant of persons subjected to slavery shall have the right to seek appropriate forms of **Dedomazman** for the enduring economic, social, cultural and institutional consequences of slavery.

Dedomazman shall be understood primarily as economic redress, while encompassing other appropriate forms of restitution and restoration.

This is the foundational right.

ARTICLE 2 – The Right to Economic Redress

The descendants of the enslaved shall have the right to seek economic remedies corresponding to the nature and consequences of the historical injustice.

Such remedies must include:

- financial redress such as SPV vehicles for:
- Business investment programme
- Development of cultural Industry
- Entrepreneurship and business financing
- Educational endowments and scholarship
- community development funds;
- Access to capital;
- Land redistribution
- Economic empowerment;
- and other measures capable of restoring economic opportunity.

Dedomazman shall not be reduced to charity. All proposed measures shall be fully tax exempted

Economic redress is not an embarrassment and should never be presented as greed.

Where the original injustice was profoundly economic, **an economic remedy is a legitimate component of justice.**

ARTICLE 3 – The Right for a proper redistribution of wealth.

Redistribution of wealth shall seek, to restore rights and opportunities lost through slavery and its continuing consequences.

KRI proposes that this principle be developed specifically in relation to the historical consequences of slavery.

ARTICLE 4 – The Right to Land and Economic opportunity

Historical evidence establishes that slavery and post-emancipation arrangements contributed to exclusion from land and economic rights, descendants should have access to appropriate restorative measures.

This shall include:

- land Redistribution
- community land schemes;
- housing;
- preferential access to development programmes;
- economic investment;

ARTICLE 5 – The Right to Historical Truth

Descendants have the right to know the history of the enslavement of their ancestors.

This includes access to:

- colonial records;
- plantation records;
- slave registers;
- compensation records;
- church archives;
- shipping records;
- financial records;
- Bank records
- land records;
- and other relevant historical documentation.

Historical amnesia cannot extinguish a historical claim.

ARTICLE 6 – The Right to Institutional Acknowledgement

Institutions demonstrated by historical evidence to have participated in, benefited from, facilitated or materially supported slavery should have a responsibility to examine and acknowledge that history and be made accountable for Dedomazman.

This applies according to evidence to:

- States;
- colonial administrations;
- Religious institutions;
- companies;

- banks;
- insurance institutions;
- universities;
- charitable institutions;
- and other bodies.

This is **institutional responsibility**; institutions cannot erase their own historical responsibility by merely pleading generations have changed. Because actual generations are still beneficiaries of the historical scandalous acquired wealth. And while the workforce remained mainly the enslaved descendants.

ARTICLE 7 – The Right to Institutional Dedomazman

Responsibility should extend beyond States where the historical evidence demonstrates institutional participation.

Religious institutions, financial institutions, commercial companies, insurers and other institutions should be invited to establish their own Dedomazman programmes where their historical involvement is demonstrated.

This does not mean accusing today's believers, employees or shareholders personally but this involves the institutions Responsibility..

It means requiring institutions with historical continuity to confront their institutional inheritance and donations.

ARTICLE 8 – The Dedomazman Right of Abode

Slavery involved the **forcible removal and control of human mobility**.

Therefore, KRI proposes that reparatory justice should be capable of addressing mobility as well as money. The descendants should have the opportunity to seek a **Dedomazman Right of Abode** in a State bearing historical responsibility for the system under which their ancestors were enslaved.

A historically responsible State should be able to establish a special legal pathway through which enslaved descendants may obtain:

- (a) a long-term right of residence;
- (b) permanent settlement; and
- (c) where the descendant chooses, access to full citizenship.

The right should be **voluntary**. No descendant would be required to leave Mauritius, Africa or any other country.

This is crucial: **Dedomazman does not demand that descendants return to Africa or migrate to Europe. It demands that history cease to determine the limits of their choices.**

ARTICLE 9 – The Dedomazman Right to full Citizenship

Where a State bears historical responsibility for slavery or colonial exploitation, KRI proposes that it establish a **Dedomazman Citizenship Route** for enslaved descendants.

Citizenship should be regarded not merely as an immigration privilege but as a possible form of **restoration of legal belonging and agency**.

The French abolition decree of 27 April 1848 is historically instructive here: it linked abolition with territorial liberty and imposed loss of French citizenship upon French persons continuing to participate in slavery. Articles 5, 7 and 8 therefore demonstrate that the French legal order itself historically connected **slavery, economic indemnification, territory, liberty and citizenship**.

KRI is **not claiming that these nineteenth-century provisions create a citizenship right today**.

Rather, they demonstrate that citizenship was historically capable of being treated as part of the legal response to slavery.

ARTICLE 10 – The Right to Reparatory Citizenship and Residence Across Former Colonial Powers

KRI proposes that the principle not be restricted to France or Britain.

It should be capable of application, according to historical evidence and the circumstances of each case, to **all former colonial powers whose institutions and legal systems participated in systems of enslavement and colonial exploitation**.

This may include, historically and according to the specific evidence:

- France;
- Great Britain;
- Portugal;
- Spain;
- the Netherlands;
- Denmark;
- and other States.

The legal mechanism need not be identical in every country.

The principle should be universal:

Historical responsibility should be capable of producing reparatory responsibility.

ARTICLE 11 – The Principle of Choice Rather Than Return

Dedomazman does not ask: “Where should the descendants go?”

It asks: “Who has the right to decide where they may go?”

Slavery removed that right from their ancestors.

Dedomazman seeks its restoration.

Therefore: **The descendant should not be required to return to Africa as a condition of restitution. Nor should the descendant be excluded from Europe merely because the original injustice occurred centuries ago.** The choice must ultimately belong to the descendant.

ARTICLE 12 – The Right to Choose

The enslaved were denied the right to choose where they would live, work, travel and establish their families. Dedomazman seeks to restore choice.

A descendant should be free to choose:

- To remain in Mauritius;
- to reconnect with Africa;
- to seek residence in a former colonial power;
- to seek citizenship where a reparatory pathway exists;
- or to pursue several of these relationships simultaneously.

Restitution should restore agency, not prescribe destiny.

ARTICLE 13 – The Right to Cultural and Historical Restoration

Dedomazman shall include measures to restore and strengthen:

- African and Creole heritage;
- languages;

- oral history;
- genealogy;
- traditional knowledge;
- cultural institutions;
- historical sites;
- and community memory.

Cultural restoration does not replace economic Dedomazman, it complements it.

ARTICLE 14 – The Right to Education and Intergenerational Advancement

The descendants of the enslaved should have access to measures designed to overcome the educational and economic disadvantages transmitted through generations.

These may include:

- scholarships;
- research grants;
- professional training;
- entrepreneurship programmes;
- university access;
- historical research institutions;
- and community educational endowments.

The objective is not preferential treatment for its own sake.

It is **restoration of opportunity where historical deprivation affected the transmission of opportunity across generations.**

ARTICLE 15 – The Right to Family, Identity and Ancestral Recognition

Slavery disrupted names, families, identities and genealogical continuity. Dedomazman should therefore recognise the right of descendants to:

- reconstruct their genealogy;
- recover ancestral names where possible;
- access records;
- identify places of origin;
- establish historical family connections;
- and reconnect with African communities of origin.
- But this right should **not require descendants to abandon the identities they developed in Mauritius or elsewhere.**

A Mauritian kreol identity is itself part of the history created by slavery.

“Birds sing not because they have answers but because they have songs” *African proverb*

CONCLUSION

We cannot come to a conclusion at this stage of our work. We are in a process whose final goal will be Dedomazman.. What has been presented is part of an ongoing process of understanding, questioning, reclaiming and, ultimately, seeking justice.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore not to provide a final answer, but to establish **pathways for reflection, revendication and unity**. It invites us to look again at a history that has too often been interpreted through ideas imposed upon the descendants of the enslaved—ideas of guilt, laziness, inferiority, dependency or lack of ambition. Such assumptions must be set aside. They do not explain the historical and economic realities that shaped generations of people, nor do they adequately account for the wealth created through their labour, suffering and dispossession.

To move forward, we must therefore be prepared to question inherited narratives and to examine history from the perspective of those whose contribution has too often been marginalised. This is not a call for resentment, nor an attempt to transfer guilt from one generation to another. It is a call to **recognise responsibility, understand consequences and pursue justice**.

Dedomazman begins from this premise: where historical processes created wealth through the exploitation and dispossession of a people, the consequences of that history cannot simply disappear with the passing of time. Their effects are still there, they continued through generations, institutions, economic structures, land ownership, access to opportunity and the distribution of wealth. Recognition alone is therefore insufficient if it does not lead to meaningful consideration of redress.

This chapter consequently calls upon descendants to move from silence to reflection, from reflection to awareness, from awareness to unity, and from unity to a legitimate and organised **revendication of justice**. Dedomazman is the pathway through which that revendication is articulated.

The process is not about remaining prisoners of the past. On the contrary, it is about understanding the past sufficiently well to refuse its continued consequences. It is about restoring dignity, challenging inherited assumptions and creating the conditions for a more just future.

There is therefore no final conclusion here. **The process continues**. The questions remain open, the pathways remain to be explored, and the revendication remains to be articulated. What matters is that we have begun to change the terms of the conversation: from guilt to responsibility, from prejudice to historical understanding, from resignation to agency, from division to unity, and from recognition to justice.

Dedomazman is not the end of the journey. It is the claim that gives the journey its direction.

ANNEX I

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND LEGAL SOURCES FOR DÉDOMAZMAN

Purpose of this Annex

This bibliography accompanies the Dédomazman publication as an indication of the historical, economic, philosophical and legal foundations upon which the reflection is developed.

It is not intended to suggest that the authors cited below have advanced or endorsed the concept of **Dedomazman** as formulated by KRI. Rather, their works provide important bodies of evidence, analysis and legal principles concerning slavery, colonialism, wealth creation, economic exploitation, historical responsibility, reparations, human rights and the continuing consequences of historical injustice.

Dédomazman seeks to bring these different fields of knowledge into dialogue and to open a pathway for further research, reflection, revendication, unity and the pursuit of justice.

I. AFRICAN HISTORY AND AFRICAN SCHOLARSHIP

Amin, Samir. *Le développement inégal*. Paris : Les Éditions de Minuit, 1973.

Falola, Toyin. *A History of West Africa*. Routledge.

Falola, Toyin, and Christian Jennings, eds. *Sources and Methods in African History: Spoken, Written, Unearthed*. University of Rochester Press, 2003.

Inikori, Joseph E. *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Manning, Patrick. *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades*. Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1972.

UNESCO. *General History of Africa*. UNESCO General History of Africa series.

These works are important for placing African history, African agency, economic exploitation and the consequences of slavery within a framework that does not depend exclusively upon European historical interpretations.

II. SLAVERY, CAPITALISM AND THE CREATION OF WEALTH

Baptist, Edward E. *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*. Basic Books, 2014.

Beckert, Sven. *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2014.

Blackburn, Robin. *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492–1800*. Verso, 1997.

Inikori, Joseph E. *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Williams, Eric. *Capitalism and Slavery*. University of North Carolina Press, 1944.

These studies are relevant to the question at the heart of the Dedomazman reflection:

How was wealth created through the exploitation of enslaved Africans, and through which commercial, financial, industrial and institutional systems was that wealth accumulated and transmitted?

III. MAURITIUS: SLAVERY, EMANCIPATION AND THE PLANTATION ECONOMY

Allen, Richard B. *Slaves, Freedmen, and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Allen, Richard B. Studies on slavery, the illegal slave trade, emancipation, indentured labour and the development of the Mauritian plantation economy.

Teelock, Vijaya. Works on slavery, emancipation, labour and the social and economic history of Mauritius.

The Mauritian historical record should also be examined through primary sources, including:

- colonial ordinances;
- slave registration records;
- emancipation records;
- compensation records;
- land records;
- plantation records;
- notarial records;
- census records;
- colonial correspondence;
- shipping records;
- insurance records;
- banking records;
- parliamentary papers;
- court records.

These sources are particularly important because they allow historical claims to be tested against documentary evidence.

IV. THE MAURITIUS TRUTH AND JUSTICE COMMISSION

Truth and Justice Commission, Republic of Mauritius. *Report of the Truth and Justice Commission*. 6 volumes. Mauritius, 2011.

The Truth and Justice Commission constitutes one of the most important official sources for the study of the historical consequences of slavery and indentured labour in Mauritius.

The Commission examined the historical development and continuing consequences of slavery and indentured labour and made recommendations concerning social, economic and other forms of redress.

Of particular relevance to Dedomazman are the Commission's recommendations concerning reparations and the historical responsibility of former slave-trading and colonial powers.

The Report therefore constitutes an important starting point for any contemporary Mauritian discussion concerning historical responsibility, reparative justice and the descendants of enslaved people.

Dedomazman does not claim that the Truth and Justice Commission established Dedomazman. Rather, it recognises that an official Mauritian process had already identified historical injustice and reparative questions as matters requiring further consideration.

V. REPARATIONS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Beckles, Hilary McD. *Britain's Black Debt: Reparations for Caribbean Slavery and Native Genocide*. University of the West Indies Press, 2013.

Banner, Michael. *Britain's Slavery Debt: Reparations Now!*. Oxford University Press, 2024.

Howard-Hassmann, Rhoda E., and Anthony P. Lombardo. *Reparations to Africa*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

Shepherd, Verene A. Works on slavery, reparations, rehabilitation and reconciliation.

Kunnie, Julian. Studies concerning historical reparations movements among Africans and African Americans.

These works demonstrate the breadth of the contemporary debate concerning historical responsibility and reparative justice.

VI. INTERNATIONAL LAW

International Law Commission. *Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts*, 2001.

Particularly relevant are the principles concerning the obligation to make **full reparation** for injury caused by an internationally wrongful act and the forms of reparation recognised in international law.

These include, according to the circumstances:

- restitution;
- compensation;
- satisfaction;
- guarantees of non-repetition.

United Nations. *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law*. 2005.

This instrument recognises different forms of reparation, including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition.

United Nations. *Durban Declaration and Programme of Action*. World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, 2001.

United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). General recommendations and relevant materials concerning discrimination against people of African descent and reparations for historical and continuing harms.

These international instruments provide an important framework for examining the relationship between historical injustice, continuing consequences, responsibility and remedies.

VII. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL COURTS

Permanent Court of International Justice

Factory at Chorzów (Germany v. Poland), Merits, 1928.

This case is a foundational authority concerning the principle of reparation in international law.

International Court of Justice

Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Bosnia and Herzegovina v. Serbia and Montenegro), Judgment, 2007.

Relevant to the principles governing responsibility and reparation for internationally wrongful acts.

International Court of Justice — Mauritius

Legal Consequences of the Separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965, Advisory Opinion, 25 February 2019.

This case is particularly relevant to the Mauritian context. It demonstrates the continuing relevance of international law to questions arising from the colonial history of Mauritius.

The Chagos case demonstrates the right to *Dedomazman*. Its relevance lies in demonstrating that questions concerning the legal consequences of colonial acts can be disputed in international court.

African Human Rights System

African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Relevant jurisprudence of the **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights** and the **African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights** concerning rights, remedies, discrimination, peoples' rights and reparations.

Inter-American Human Rights System

Relevant jurisprudence of the **Inter-American Court of Human Rights** concerning reparations, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition.

European Human Rights System

Relevant jurisprudence of the **European Court of Human Rights**, particularly concerning slavery, servitude, forced labour, discrimination and effective remedies.

These bodies of jurisprudence are used for their principles concerning responsibility, remedies and reparation.

VIII. COLONIALISM, SELF-DETERMINATION AND MAURITIUS

The legal and historical study of *Dedomazman* should also take account of:

- the Treaty of Capitulation of 1810;
- the Treaty of Paris of 1814;
- the Congress of Vienna;
- British colonial legislation applicable to Mauritius;
- French colonial legislation applicable before British rule;
- ordinances concerning slavery and emancipation;

- legislation concerning land and labour after emancipation;
- records concerning compensation following abolition;
- colonial administrative correspondence;
- constitutional and decolonisation documents.

These sources permit the transition from the history of slavery to the study of its institutional and economic consequences.

IX PRIMARY SOURCES: THE EVIDENCE OF WEALTH AND COMPENSATION

A central methodological principle of Dedomazman is that historical assertions should, wherever possible, be tested against primary evidence.

Particular attention should therefore be given to:

Slave Compensation Records

Records identifying claimants, enslaved persons, compensation amounts and the distribution of compensation following abolition.

Banking Records

Records concerning the institutions through which compensation, investment and commercial wealth circulated.

Insurance Records

Records relating to the insurance of slave voyages, ships, plantations and enslaved persons.

Shipping Records

Records demonstrating the movement of people, commodities and capital within the slave-trading and plantation economy.

Plantation Records

Accounts, registers and correspondence documenting production, labour and profitability.

Land Records

Records concerning ownership, transfer and concentration of land before and after emancipation.

Parliamentary and Colonial Records

Official debates, correspondence, legislation and administrative records.

Such evidence can assist in answering questions that are central to the Dedomazman investigation:

Who created the wealth?

Who received it?

Through which institutions did it circulate?

What assets were acquired with it?

Who retained those assets?

What happened to those who created the wealth and to their descendants?

X TOWARDS DEDOMAZMAN

The sources assembled in this Annex do not constitute a single legal or historical proof of Dedomazman. They represent different bodies of scholarship and law that illuminate different dimensions of the question.

Taken together, however, they permit a broader inquiry:

African labour and resources → enslavement and dispossession → wealth creation → commercial and financial accumulation → colonial economic structures → inheritance of wealth and disadvantage → continuing consequences → responsibility → justice and redress.

Dedomazman emerges from the decision to examine these connections rather than treating slavery as an isolated event belonging exclusively to the past.

It therefore calls for further research, documentary investigation, legal reflection and collective dialogue.

Above all, Dedomazman seeks to move the discussion beyond inherited assumptions of guilt, laziness, inferiority or dependency and towards a historically informed understanding of **contribution, responsibility, dignity, justice and legitimate revendication**.

Note to the Reader

This Annex is a **selected bibliography**, not an exhaustive catalogue. It is intended to provide a foundation for continued research and to encourage readers, researchers and institutions to examine the primary evidence for themselves.

Dedomazman remains a process of inquiry and revendication. The research continues...

Lernaean Hydra of Slavery: A Legacy That Keeps Regenerating



Slavery was legally
abolished,
but the system
survived in many
forms.

BUT INSTEAD
OF ENDING...



1 COMPENSATION FOR SLAVE OWNERS

Millions were paid to former slave owners
for their "loss of property".
Nothing was given to the enslaved.



2 INDENTURED LABOUR

New forms of unfree labour were
introduced to replace enslaved
people and keep the system
running.



3 ECONOMIC CONTINUITY

The wealth, businesses and land
stayed in the same hands.
The economy was built on
exploitation then, and it
benefited the few.



4 SOCIAL HIERARCHY

Racial discrimination and social
inequality were preserved through
laws, institutions and daily practices.



5 HISTORICAL AMNESIA

The past was silenced, distorted
or forgotten so that injustice
would not be questioned and
power would remain unchallenged.



BREAK THE SYSTEM.

True freedom requires more than laws.
It demands truth, justice, reparation,
and the restoration of human dignity.



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