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Autore	Swaminathan Srividhya
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**Sommario/riassunto**

Srividhya Swaminathan examines contemporary books, pamphlets, and literary works to trace the changes in rhetorical strategies utilized by both sides of the abolitionist debate. Suggesting that the debate to abolish the slave trade helped to construct a British national identity and character, she reads the arguments of pro- and anti-abolitionists as a series of dialogues among diverse groups at the center and peripheries of the empire.

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