Ana Lucia Araujo, *Reparations for Slavery and the Slave Trade: A Transnational and Comparative History*. London: Bloomsbury, 2017. x + 276 pp. (Cloth US\$88.00)

Claims for reparations for the brutality, inhumanity, and stolen labor of slavery have been made since the eighteenth century and yet those claims are almost uniformly rejected in the legal and political worlds. Ana Araujo's *Reparations for Slavery and the Slave Trade* provides a narrative history of the repeated claims for reparations, even as they were rejected. It tells the story of the origins of slavery in the Americas from the 1500s to the end of slavery in the 1880s, detailing the claims that were constantly made by the enslaved, the newly freed, and later the descendants of the enslaved. What is so clear in this important and timely book is that many people keep making moral claims even as they are repeatedly, rudely, and firmly rejected by those in power.

Araujo discusses the limited emancipation in Anglophone North America in the eighteenth century; the epic battle for freedom in Haiti beginning at the end of the eighteenth century and the reparations paid by Haiti to France over a half century (1826–83), as other nations did what they could to limit Haiti's development and the example of freedom it set for enslaved people; emancipation in the British West Indies where the slave owners received compensation for their lost human property; emancipation in the United States and the final emancipation in Brazil; and the movements after slavery ended to provide compensation, as well as symbolic reparations, for slavery.

The narrative of slavery is presented alongside the claims that have been made for reparations. There were claims as early as Belinda Sutton's petition for compensation in late eighteenth-century Massachusetts (p. 49). But what is surprising in this story is that in the nineteenth century the claims were most often made by those who had lost or would lose their enslaved property. Thus, reparations for slavery were granted, but not in the way we typically think of reparations today. David Walker, an early nineteenth-century black abolitionist, made an appeal for payment, and in the wake of the Civil War even more claims were made, especially by the ex-slave pension movement in which both Civil War veterans and former slaves were active. That movement failed. For, as happens so frequently in history, power and wealth do not give up easily. And while the enslaved wrested freedom from their captors, it proved difficult to get (some of) the wealth they and their ancestors had created.

This is a narrative history of the reparations movement, but it also is a story of slavery and its legacy more generally. The innovative contribution of the book is its comprehensive historical analysis of reparation claims in the Americas. Where others have focused, for instance, on the United States or

NEW WEST INDIAN GUIDE

© ALFRED L. BROPHY, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/22134360-09301013

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the Caribbean, Araujo boldly crosses borders, covering territory from Boston to Haiti and Brazil. In the process she shows a broad range of actors, such as the Republic of New Africa, the Nation of Islam, and N'COBRA, as well as individuals such as James Forman. She also links historical reparation claims to broader movements for local determination by African descendants in Brazil, and to the recent CARICOM claims for reparations. While the focus of the book is on reparation claims, Araujo puts those claims in the context of the broader movement for economic and social empowerment of people of African descent. It is this comprehensive and broad story that makes *Reparations* the best book yet on reparations for slavery.

It carries the story right up to the present, to Black Lives Matter and the CARICOM demands for reparations, producing an important work of contemporary advocacy. Yet Araujo says that as a historian she is not going to talk about who should pay, or who should receive reparations, or what form they should take. Instead, she focuses on who has asked for them in the past and why. Nevertheless, on finishing the book I feel that it will contribute to a compelling case for reparative action. As others take up the difficult moral questions it raises, such as who should pay and why, this book will be at the center of discussions of ways in which the past burdens the present. It makes me think that the movement to redistribute wealth and cultural capital back to those whose ancestors labored in slavery is reaching takeoff speed.

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