

although readers must wonder whether the first settlers would not have been better had they “stayed there.” Alanís Enciso has written a superb account of the history of repatriation, which deserves more readers now that it has been published in English.

Delia González de Reufels  
*Universität Bremen*

ASAKA, Ikuko – *Tropical Freedom: Climate, Settler Colonialism, and Black Exclusion in the Age of Emancipation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017. Pp. 291.

In this important study of black migration, racial displacement, and colonization efforts between 1780 and 1865, Ikuko Asaka details the ways that formerly enslaved peoples’ migration within North America and their transnational displacement was based on settler motivations and determinist justifications that black peoples were “best suited” for labour within tropical climates. “Versions of the doctrine that ‘blacks naturally belong in the tropics,’” Asaka writes, “operated on multiple levels on free black populations, serving not only to justify their dislocation to tropical regions but to legitimate their peripheral economic and social positions in the metropolises and on continental frontiers” (p. 22). Throughout, she closely examines efforts in the mid-nineteenth century—and famously, Abraham Lincoln’s efforts during the American Civil War—to send emancipated and contraband black populations to foreign tropical climates. Supported by an archival study of provincial and abolitionist newspapers; official correspondences between colonial officers in Canada, Britain, and the United States; company papers prepared by the Sierra Leone Company; government records from the Maritimes; and historical writings from prominent abolitionists such as Mary Ann Shadd Cary, Asaka concludes that black people were incentivized to emigrate to foreign tropical regions such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, the West Indies, and Panama, or denied land ownership in the western United States in order to safeguard white settlement, development, and domination over indigenous territories in North America.

Thinking with the work of Canadian critical geographer Katherine McKittrick, Asaka theorizes the history of black peoples in North America as a “geographic story”—that is, one that cannot be fully understood without understanding the complex patterns of black migration in the late eighteenth and early-to-mid-nineteenth centuries, as well as the layered forces of white supremacy impacting such movement. Foregrounding the histories of black migration during the period, as well as mid-nineteenth-century colonization attempts, Asaka discusses the ways that discourses of black freedom figured as a “geographic condition marked by racial difference and climatic character” (p. 3). Here, she shows, black settlement opportunities were eclipsed by white desires to hold viable land in temperate regions and to segregate black people onto lands that were hot, demanding, and exploited

backbreaking labour for white controlled or owned companies. Throughout the book, Asaka takes care to detail the histories of segregation, internal displacement, and economic discrimination in Canada, as well as racialized limitations imposed upon black peoples who emigrated to tropical regions. This analysis highlights the biological determinism that undergirded Canada's historical racism with its insistence that black life was suitable for work and survival elsewhere. Her book, she writes, is ultimately about how "tropicality became a discourse for [black] freedom" (p. 7).

As a theoretical underpinning in her book, Asaka also aims to "acknowledge the intersections between black freedom and settler colonialism" in order to resituate black migrants in Canada and the United States in discussions of settler dynamics throughout North America (p. 17). Here, her timely work joins a significant scholarly body of writings about the relationship between slavery, emancipated black peoples, and settler colonialism in North America. "In thinking about freedom and settler colonialism," Asaka writes, citing a fraught, much discussed 2005 article by Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua, "one should keep in mind that aspirations for landholding by the emancipated were 'premised on earlier and continuing modes of colonization of indigenous peoples'" (p. 18). Here, a close reading of subsequent writings by Rinaldo Walcott (2014), Nandita Sharma and Cynthia Wright (2008), Jared Sexton (2016), Frank Wilderson (2010), and younger scholars such as Sandy Hudson (2017) over the last decade would be both useful and generous in providing a more nuanced analysis of black life and land ties in Canada and the United States. While Asaka refers to Tiffany King, she overlooks the import of King's contributions in articulating the primacy of "settler colonialism's anti-black modalities," where critiques of "black people as settlers" have been raised (King, 2014). As Saidiya Hartman inquired in *Scenes of Subjection* (1997), what rights and obtainments were definitively "had" by black peoples suddenly transformed from "chattel to man," within the "double bind of freedom" after legal emancipation (Hartman, pp. 116-117)? Simply put, critical consideration and temporality is needed when nominalizing black people as "the legal beneficiaries of the official apparatus of native land divestiture" (Asaka, pp. 197-198); otherwise, a tendency to flatten and conflate black subjectivity arises. In the end, neither indigenous peoples themselves nor an analysis of black migrants' subjective investments in settler colonialism are centred in her weighty argument about "the intersections between black freedom and settler colonialism."

Despite Asaka's thoughtful, well-researched undertaking, a few shortcomings of absence appear at the close of the book. Most notably, Harvey A. Whitfield, a preeminent archivist and historian of black slavery and migration within the Maritimes with over a dozen published articles and five books, is scarcely cited throughout. Relevant Maritime historians of the period, such as Kenneth Donovan and Barry Cahill, are absent, as well. Missing also, is any work by Charmaine Nelson, whose 2016 book, *Slavery, Geography and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Marine Landscapes of Montreal and Jamaica*, offers a rich, transnational historical analysis of temperate and tropical slavery and traces slavery's economic and transitory routes between the West Indies, Quebec, and the Maritimes.

While Thavolia Glymph's well-known work, *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household* (2008) is briefly cited, her lesser-known, groundbreaking research on black female contrabands, such as "This Species of Property: Female Contrabands in the Civil War" (1996), is absent. What gender-rich analysis may be provided from a close reading of this area of Glymph's work, similar to Asaka's other important gendered analyses, such as those on pages 147 and 187?

Finally, there are a few historical and historiographical gaps that both raise questions and serve as a reminder of the challenges in undertaking such a courageous and comparative analysis. In chapter 2, Asaka details varying identity formations between black people above and below the border, naming the two groups "self-emancipated people in Canada marked by their British identity and free Black Americans committed to republican principles" (p. 54). This categorization feels rigid, as she fails to more fully consider how parallel histories of ongoing migration, legal rights and citizenship struggles, and reverse migration during and after the Civil War all impacted black peoples' titular identities and thoughts about themselves. Discussing black life on the Detroit River border in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Afua Cooper—whose relevant work, "The Fluid Frontier: Blacks and the Detroit River Region. A Focus on Henry Bibb" (2000), is also overlooked in the book—refers to the borderland as a "metaphor for the shifting and multiple nature of identities . . . constantly negotiated in border zones" by black migrants (Cooper, p. 131). At times, chapter 2 appears to simplify or flatten identity, refusing, as Cooper has written, the "shifting, complex, and multiple identities" of black peoples in the nineteenth century who "constantly reinvented themselves" (Cooper, p. 143). Still, *Tropical Freedom* is an essential book to both read and teach about the history of Black Canada.

Rachel B. Zellars  
Saint Mary's University

CHAPPEL, James – *Catholic Modern: The Challenge of Totalitarianism and the Remaking of the Church*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018. Pp. 342.

*Catholic Modern: The Challenge of Totalitarianism and the Remaking of the Church* by James Chappel invites the reader to reflect upon Catholic attitudes during the twentieth century, roughly from the 1920s until the 1960s. Contrary to what the title suggests, it is not the Catholic Church and clergy, but mainly the Catholic laity and Catholic intellectuals who are at the core of Chappel's analysis, which, indebted to the most fruitful currents in Anglo-Saxon intellectual history, presents an incisive account of how Catholics *became* (and not *were*) modern in the selected time period. Unlike work by such scholars as Roger Griffin, whose take on the relationship between Fascism and modernism in *Modernism and*