NINETEENTH-CENTURY GENDER STUDIES

Issue 18.1 (Spring 2022)

Krueger, Misty, ed. *Transatlantic Women Travelers: 1688-1843*. Bucknell University Press, 2021. 246 pp.

Reviewed by Michelle Medeiros, Marquette University

<1>In *Transatlantic Women Travelers: 1688-1843*, Misty Krueger organizes a volume that brings a fresh perspective to the field of travel writing by showcasing articles that analyze the accounts of fictional and historical women on their transatlantic journeys across the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Krueger puts together a collection that explores the adventures of women as historical figures, writers, and fictional characters to reveal their transformation through the experience of traveling. The interdisciplinary scope of the articles encompasses issues related to gender, race, colonialism, as well as transatlantic and post-colonial studies.

<2>The scholarship that has recently emerged from transatlantic studies has introduced new theoretical frameworks and perspectives to analyze literary and non-literary texts. *Transatlantic Women Travelers: 1688-1843* further explores these possibilities by offering insight into the transformations and experiences produced by travel. Krueger's organizational choice highlights the resonances among fictional and historical women as they ventured into the transatlantic world and shared their experiences through writing. In the introduction, "Tracing the Lives of Transatlantic Women Travelers," Krueger explains the reasons behind the organization of the volume and also clarifies its purpose, which is "[to] learn from accounts about real women's lived experiences and imagined portrayals of seafaring women in this time period" (Krueger 2). Krueger highlights the importance of recognizing who depicted women's travels and what these accounts reveal about gender and genre. She explains the strategies women travelers employed to navigate their situation as lonely travelers, such as presenting themselves as feminine, masculine, or even in disguise, and how these identities affected their writing and their experience (Krueger 3). She elucidates that the division of the essays into two parts, historical and fictional, rather than demonstrate a clear difference, reveals fluid boundaries between fact and fiction.

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<3>"Part One: (Pseudo) Historical Women's Travels" opens with Diana Epelbaum's essay on Maria Sibylla Meriam's *The Metamorphosis of the Insects of Surinam*, published in 1705 after Meriam had spent two years on a natural history expedition to Surinam at her own expense. Epelmaum's precise analysis shows how Meriam's observations reveal not only her unique views as a woman scientist but also her perceptions of colonialism and slavery. Meriam's writing, however, also reveals the complexity of gender relations "in an age where nature study and conquest could not be disentangled" (44). The second essay by Shelby Johnson analyses Anna Maria Falconbridge's *Two Voyages to Sierra Leone* (1794). Falconbridge was the first British woman traveler to give a narrative account of travel experiences in Africa. Johnson's essay shows how Falconbridge writes an epistolary travel narrative in which she exchanges letters with other women to evaluate the reasons and motivations of colonization. As Johnson argues, by demonstrating her empathy toward other women and calling for restorative justice, Falconbridge positions herself in the debates on black resettlement and gender of her time. Grace A. Gomashie's essay focuses on two women who traveled to Latin America in the nineteen-century to Peru and Mexico, respectively: Flora Tristán and Frances Calderón de la Barca. Gomashie shows how their status as "social explorers," who were interested in the social aspects of the communities they visited, allowed them to make insightful comments on the societal norms they observed. Their narratives focused on the social encounters they experienced through travel and reveal their perceptions of other women they met along the way. The fourth essay, by Pam Perkin, analyses the journal of Sir Thomas Cochrane, who, in 1825, became the governor of Newfoundland, a British colony established in 1610 on the homonymous island off the Atlantic coast of Canada. In his journal, he details his interactions with the "fair daughters of Terra Nova" as he called the women of St. John's, the capital city of the colony. Through Cochrane's lenses, we learn more about the roles of transient women in settler cultures and communities away from home. Perkin demonstrates that these women are represented within his narrative as a displaced version of British femininity and culture and as the domestic angel supporting St. John's newly founded society. The last article of Part One, "Busty Buccaneers and Sapphic Swashbucklers on the High Sea" by Ula Lukszo Klein, analyses two eighteenth-century female pirates, also through the lens of a male writer, in this case Captain Charles Johnson. Anne Bonny and Mary Read traveled to the Caribbean masquerading as men to "fight and love." Lukszo Klein cleverly shows that, although they were portrayed as adventurous and transgressive, they still reproduced many tropes related to gender and eighteen-century British women, especially regarding class and race.

<4>"Part Two: Fictional Women's Travels" is comprised of essays that deal with fictional characters travelers and writers who "mirror and expand upon images of actual transatlantic travelers" (10). In the opening essay, Jennifer Golightly takes us back to 1780 to discuss the novel *Emma Corbett* by Jackson Pratt, underscoring the importance of trans-dressing for women travelers in the eighteen-century. The essay focuses on the performative role of the character as she navigates and performs her roles as a woman and a man. The next essay, by Alexis McQuigge, further explores performance and negotiation of roles and cultural differences in Unca Eliza Winkfield's *The Female American*, published in 1767. McQuigge argues that the problem of authorship surrounding the text, probably written by a non-indigenous person writing fiction and often read as a "feminist colonial utopia," indicates another difficulty presented by this text: its ideological complications never make it clear whether it promotes British colonial drive or undermines it. McQuigge concludes that the narrative ultimately reveals, through its contradictions and confusion, the importance of female power and maternal heritage as tools that allow female intervention in colonial environments. Octavia Cox's essay on the anonymous epistolary account *The Woman of Colour*, published in 1808, takes us to the nineteenth century to learn more about a biracial heroine, Olivia Fairfield, and her experiences as she travels. Cox proposes to analyze the text as a "reverse-Robinsonade" tale that shifts the trope of the white European discovering and civilizing other cultures. Olivia Fairfield is a Jamaican-born, "uncultured native," who travels to a "civilized" culture and exposes the not-so-civilized manners of its inhabitants. Cox argues that the function of the "reverse-Robinsonade," however, is to focus on the home culture, as it becomes clear in the end of the novel, which concentrates not on Olivia's return to her homeland, but on the English values she brings back with her. The next essay, a well-argued study by Victoria Barnett-Woods, seems to tie together the entire collection on her analysis of the novel *Zelica, the Creole*, published in 1820 and attributed to American author Leonora Sansay. "Creole Nationalism, Mobility, and Gendered Politics in *Zelica, The Creole*" argues that the historicity of the novel and its genre are directly affected by the uncertainty about its authorship, which makes it possible to read it both as history and/or fiction. Barnett-Woods argues that Zelica re-signifies the concepts of American and Creole offering an alternate narrative possibility for the "globally minded nation-state" (180). Besides, the essay provides further insights on issues of race, class, colonialism, and mixed-race women. The last essay of the collection, by Kathleen Morrissey, takes us back to previous centuries and offers a comparative study between *Oroonoko*, published in 1688 by Aphra Behn and *Hartly House, Calcutta*, by Phebe Gibbes published in 1789. By comparing British fictional characters who traveled almost 100 years apart and settled on English colonies on opposite sides of the Atlantic, Morrissey shows that both texts seem to be in conversation, revealing

a sort of literary colonization “that allows the woman British subject to make sense of seemingly exotic cultures though experimentation” (184).

<5>In the Afterword, Eve Tavor Bannet commends the methodological approach of the collection, considering that “the exhibition of the highly mediated character of the source texts and demonstration of the importance of men even to our reconstruction of women’s agency in the Atlantic world are the most striking… methodological features of the essays in this collection” (197). Bannet points out that these two features directly affect fictional and non-fictional female travelers, which places them along what she calls a “spectrum between history and fiction in which there are no pure exemplars of either extreme” (197). Bannet concludes by saying that history versus fiction is not the only way to read a primary text and that the essays in this collection illustrate very well these other possibilities.

<6>This well-thought-out collection of articles demonstrates that the emergent field that comprises the study of women’s transatlantic travels and travel writing can provide new perspectives on how the transatlantic world, as a space of convergence and interchange, has also been a space for women to extrapolate and interrogate their roles in society. Both fictionally and historically, by traveling, women found ways to express themselves and to undergo transformations and experiences that transcend societal expectations in the eighteen century and beyond, and this well-organized collection of essays sheds new light on that.

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