

denominator, if we can indeed learn to read more closely and “pay attention,” it will be no mean accomplishment.

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Aaron Spencer Fogleman. *Two Troubled Souls: An Eighteenth-Century Couple's Spiritual Journey in the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013). Pp. 321. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth,

With *Two Troubled Souls*, Aaron Spencer Fogleman gives us a deeply engaging account of the lives of an eighteenth-century Moravian missionary couple, both telling the story of their marriage and illuminating the multifaceted and multicultural experiences of the Atlantic World they inhabited. The lives of Jean-Francois Reynier and Maria Barbara Knoll spanned continents and decades, intersecting with two Atlantic World empires (Dutch, English) and bearing witness to four colonial wars. Fogleman effectively explores both their relationship and the cultural, imperial, and religious contexts they encountered as they traveled their new world searching for their own place and purpose and trying to serve their God.

Fogleman begins his story with Jean-Francois' solo travels in North America. Descendant of a family of Huguenot refugees in Switzerland, he gravitated to the radical wing of the pietist movement, compelled by its vision of “isolation from corrupting worldly influences to find individual perfection” (27). He emigrated to North America at sixteen, where in Philadelphia he followed a rocky path from indentured servitude to an impoverished freedom, eventually finding his way to Ephrata, one of the many religious communities in Pennsylvania. There he experienced a “bout with madness” brought on by his spiritual seeking, an event that, Fogleman argues, deeply affected his life course. Fogleman returns often to this moment at Ephrata as one that demonstrated Jean-Francois' difficulty relating to others and highlighted the tension between individualist and communal approaches to pietism that influenced his lifelong spiritual quest and his relationship with his wife. From Pennsylvania, Jean-Francois journeyed to a Moravian community near Savannah, where missionaries attempted to convert Creeks and South Carolinian slaves (Georgia was not yet a slave colony). Here, he honed the medical skills that he plied during his trajectory through

the Atlantic World. When after a total of eleven years in North America he returned to Europe, Fogleman notes he “had tried and failed to change people in America; instead the Atlantic system he entered had changed him” (70). Fogleman pursues this theme, showing how the Atlantic system made by its inhabitants both shaped them and was shaped by them.

After Jean-Francois returned to Europe, the next phase of his life began when Moravian leaders set him up with Maria Barbara at the Moravian community in Wetteravia. Their union sanctioned by their faith’s practice of “the Lot,” they left on the journey the church leaders ordained: to be missionaries in the Americas. Over the course of their lives, this charge took them from Dutch Suriname to St. Thomas to Pennsylvania and finally to Georgia.

In the course of documenting the couple’s tumultuous and adventurous marriage, Fogleman explores several important histories and their intersections: marriage and gender identity, slavery in its varied Atlantic World forms, the Great Awakening and the Moravian experience in the Americas, and the history of science and medicine in this era. Thus, as the author intended, this book is both the story of a marriage and a narrative of the couple’s times, equally valuable for its close attention to these contexts and for its gripping personal story. By mining primary and secondary sources to contextualize the Reyniers’ experiences, Fogleman suggests parts of their lives for which he lacks direct evidence.

One of the book’s many strengths is its clear depiction of the diverse religious sects of this time period, particularly in accommodating Pennsylvania, charting the interconnections and conflict between them, and their approach to missionizing among Native Americans and enslaved peoples. Fogleman, who has also authored a monograph on the Moravians, clearly explains the history, beliefs, and missionary goals of this controversial sect, and shows how their ideas—about gender roles and sex, for example—both provided opportunity (for Maria Barbara) and generated internal strife.

Another of the book’s strengths is its closely told story of a marriage. Fogleman has done creative and nuanced work reading his sources; Reynier’s autobiography provides invaluable material, but given its writer’s own desire for revenge and possible mental instability, its discoveries require careful use, which Fogleman supplies. Fogleman pays equal attention to Maria Barbara’s story, reading her contemporary sources to parse out her perspective (though she left no written record, she talked to others who recorded her views). He makes gender central in his discussion, analyzing the power dynamics at play in their relationship and the ways their peripatetic life and the different

cultural practices of each missionary home allowed Maria Barbara more or less opportunity to pursue her own needs and desires. Fogleman describes the different concerns that motivated husband and wife; Maria Barbara, like many Moravian women, he suggests, was drawn to the faith more because of the leadership opportunities it offered women than for the missionizing work that galvanized her husband. In wry sentences like these, Fogleman conveys the vast gap between them: “Now she was traveling to a deadly tropical colony on the other side of the ocean with a man she hardly knew who had just publicly declared that she was less important to him than his work” (102).

Indeed, the fluid space of the mid-eighteenth century Atlantic World offered much to fear; Fogleman vividly details the threats from disease, human violence, and deadly wildlife. But at the same time, it offered much possibility. For Maria Barbara, it offered some chance at freedoms many European women could never experience; for Jean-Francois, it meant the possibility of fulfilling a personal spiritual mission.

The mix of challenge and possibility, of hope and hope denied, makes this story a riveting read. As Fogleman puts it, “these two Atlantic lives reveal a tension or struggle between opportunity in the Americas and the inability or difficulty of individuals to affect real change in that new world of opportunity.” From these missionaries to the enslaved people and Native Americans whose status Fogleman also describes, this opportunity existed—or failed to exist—on very different scales.

During their colonial experience, Jean-Francois and Maria Barbara underwent another profound change: from skeptics on slavery to slaveholders. Fogleman notes how their immersion in slave systems gradually accustomed them to the norms, beliefs, and prevailing rationale for holding slaves. Essentially, they became acculturated to slavery. This transition is one example of how Fogleman uses this couple’s story to suggest broader models for understanding the behaviors and beliefs of this time period.

Fogleman has woven multiple complex histories together to tell the story of Jean-Francois and Maria Barbara, “two troubled souls” whose lives both reflected and shaped the tumultuous times and spaces they inhabited. Supplying both a narrow and wide view of its subjects, this vividly written book offers an important contribution to Atlantic World history and to the history of the various people and places it describes.

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