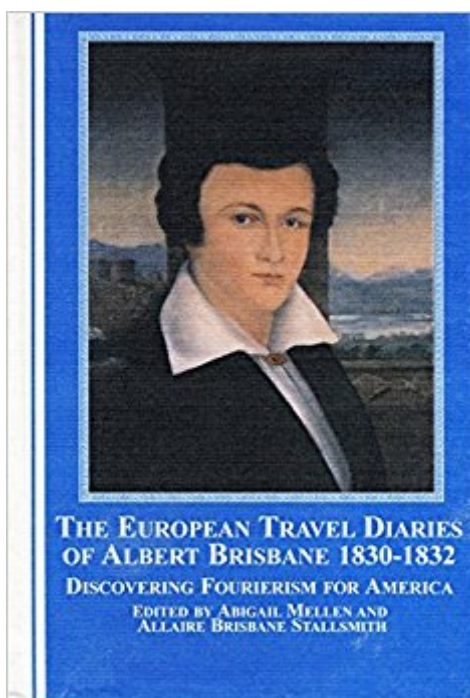


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The European Travel Diaries Of Albert Brisbane, 1830-1832: Discovering Fourierism For America



Synopsis

In the past half-century, scholars of many different disciplines have produced an expansive body of literature on utopianism in America, Albert Brisbane, as the original propagandist of Fourierism in nineteenth century America, owns a significant place in this literature. Brisbane's 1830-1832 travel diaries offer a useful contribution at several levels. First, the diaries furnish us with a picture of the society in which Saint-Simonianism and Fourierism took shape. Second, the diaries further our understanding of the impact and dissemination of these ideas - where they were discussed and how they were discussed. Finally, and perhaps most intriguingly, the diaries offer us an opportunity to "listen in" on the thinking of an impressionable young man as he came to be attracted to utopian theories while moving in elite European intellectual society. Brisbane made strong personal friendships within this intellectual community, and continued to correspond with several significant individuals while in Europe and following his return to America. Brisbane was an earnest and precocious young man - and very human. Beside his intellectual wonderings, the diaries give us a sense of his adolescent sensibility and openness to new experiences and ideas. In the end, we have a much better picture of who this person was who brought the complex social model of the Phalanx to America.

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