Introduction

When African American orator Frederick Douglass took the stage at the inaugural conference of the International Council of Women in 1888, he reflected on the origins of the movement for women's rights. With his characteristic combination of insight and flair, he signalled an unusual problem the women's movement had had to face: the lack of an enunciated history of injustices to which women had been subjected. He suggested:

> It was a much greater thing [than the temperance, peace, antislavery movements], in view of all the circumstances, for woman to organise herself in opposition to her exclusion from participation in government. The reason is obvious. War, intemperance, and slavery are open, undisguised, palpable evils. The best feelings of human nature revolt at them. […] but no such advantage was found in the beginning of the cause of suffrage for women. On the contrary, everything in her condition was supposed to be lovely, just as it should be. She had no rights denied her nor wrongs to redress. She herself had no suspicion but that all was going well with her. She floated along on the tide of life, as her mother and grandmother had done before her. Her wrongs, if she had any, were too occult to be seen, and too light to be felt. (Report of the International Council of Women 1888, 328–329)

Douglass' designation of the evils he had spent his career combating as an 'advantage' to antislavery had an ironic ring to it. On previous occasions, he had been vigilant about the overextension of the term 'slavery' to other social issues and in 1868 he had clashed with leading suffragists, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton, over whether black suffrage ought to be prioritised over votes for women during Reconstruction (Douglass 1846, 6–7; Davis 2011, ch. 4; Davis 2014, 304–315). To those in the know at this gathering in 1888 – including Stanton, with whom Douglass

shared the stage – his gallant designation of the women's movement as 'much greater' may well have carried a sting.

Still, the point stands. In the absence of this established shared history, a major way in which women considered the 'unloveliness' and urgency of their situation was precisely by constructing analogies and continuities with these other social causes. This book describes how, from a Parisian jail to a Peruvian plantation, from a crammed hall at the Dutch National Exhibition of Women's Labour in the Hague to the Zürich study of a new convert to German ideas of *Lebensraum*, women's rights advocates worked to make the movement to end slavery, in various guises, part of their usable past. The network of advocates for women's rights which Bonnie Anderson (2000) identified as the 'first international women's movement' incorporated the history of slavery and abolition into the unfolding story of the movement for women's rights in the 1830s and this history continued to be a key reference point for decades, into the early twentieth-century era of the international campaign for women's suffrage. In charting this history, this book seeks to contribute to our historical understanding of the culture of feminist internationalism in the nineteenth century. By studying the afterlives of antislavery in this domain, it also offers an important piece of the puzzle that is the legacy of abolitionism in modern social movements.

Despite the absence of antislavery efforts on the scale and intensity of the Atlantic World, recalling the history of slavery and abolition was a lively practice in Europe and it interacted with previous critiques of women's 'enslavement' in meaningful ways. French, German, and Dutch women's rights advocates did not only recall and reuse memories of antislavery, but at times affiliated their own movement with that of the struggle for abolition. Close study of the processes by which women's rights advocates of different ideological feather integrated the language, stories, and iconography of the antislavery movement into their argumentation opens a window on the animated transnational discussions in which women on both sides of the Atlantic engaged. Through memory work, different constellations of female reformers attempted to traverse the limitations imposed on their efforts by linguistic and cultural boundaries. At the same time, this account shows how many of these women erected alternative barriers, which kept other women, especially those who had been directly affected by colonial slavery, out of the conversation.

This is not a study of early feminism as a political campaign, but a cultural study which aims to contribute to the long-range intellectual history of the movement. Though the book does reflect on the political efficacy,

or lack thereof, of this framing for women's rights claims, it takes this criterion to be just one among many and (demonstrably) often not the primary aim of the individuals discussed. Finding themselves in dire straits far more often than in fair winds, for nineteenth-century women's rights advocates the need to maintain a shared horizon among dispersed and isolated individuals was often more pressing. That is not to say that invocations of antislavery history were not tactical. This book argues that they very much were, as women sought to phrase their grievances in ways that would make 'the best feelings of human nature revolt' in their contemporaries and in ways that would enable collective action down the line.

The intensive early interactions between anglophone women and women in France, Germany, and the Netherlands make these three Continental contexts a natural starting point for this study. It should be noted, however, that one quickly finds examples to suggest the salience of the legacy of antislavery in other European contexts. Estonian nationalist poet Lydia Koidula's *Juudit, or the Last Maroons of Jamaica* (1870), for instance, used the setting of the Second Maroon War in Jamaica (1795) to treat both nationalist and feminist themes (Peiker 2015, 113–114); and Swedish suffragist Ellen Hagen circulated a postcard which celebrated her father's involvement in abolitionism ('Ellen Hagens' 1907).

Key figures of the American women's rights movement had first-hand experience in the antislavery movement, such as Lucy Stone, Sojourner Truth, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. This personal link has been emphasised as an explanation why, in the cultural production of the women's movement there, the connection to antislavery was perceived as so meaningful and why women began to insist on similarities between white women and the enslaved. In Continental Europe, the situation was very different. In contrast to the UK and the Northern US, organised antislavery was neither broadly supported nor politically impactful and women who did in fact embody a connection between the two emancipation movements, like French playwright and political activist Olympe de Gouges (1748–1793), were few and far between.

Certain memories of antislavery circulated extensively on both sides of the Atlantic, however, and women played a purposive role in shaping and sharing them. The ways in which these women immersed themselves in these stories, treated them as their own, and incorporated them into their horizon, is one reason why this study refers to such stories as 'memories'. The other is that this book seeks to apply insights from memory studies (discussed in more detail later in this chapter) to the case at hand,

in order to bring to light dynamics both within and outside of the sources which rhetorical approaches tend not to spot. This study pays close attention to the constructed, mediated nature of cultural memory and the selectivity and strategy with which the key players of this book engaged with it (Erll and Rigney 2009, 2–5). As it surveys the development of the international women's movement over the course of the nineteenth century, it considers a range of materials in which women's rights advocates developed their arguments, from novels and life writing to periodical articles and histories, to capture how antislavery narratives, motifs, and themes were introduced, travelled between communities, and changed purpose and meaning. As will become evident, the memories different generations of women's rights advocates circulated varied substantially. These women assembled changing visions of the antislavery movement with different historical significance for, and meaningful relations to, the women's rights movement. Seeing how memories of slavery operated in the transnational sphere, and not just in the anglophone world, changes the picture of how these two movements connected and casts the significance of their appearance in anglophone women's rights discourse in a new light. The memory of antislavery did not just concern women in the UK and the US; the stories which constituted it were a staple of the memory work by which changing constellations of women's rights agents sought to affiliate into transnational movements.

SCOPE AND SOURCES

This study describes four episodes in which women's rights advocates called on memories of antislavery to foster a shared usable past among collectives of their cosmopolitan peers. The scale and historical and medial landscape of each episode varied. The first case concerns women novelists in the 1830s and 1840s; the second focuses on the collaborations between two women in Paris, in the aftermath of 1848; the third surveys the periodical landscape in which the Woman Question was being discussed in the second half of the nineteenth century; and the fourth considers the production of historiography in the international suffrage movement, a prominent wing of women's rights agitation at the turn of the century. Despite their variety and sometimes contradictory purposes, these four episodes all contributed to the cultivation of the memory of antislavery within the international women's rights movement.

The study is not organised around specific demands, which often clustered in idiosyncratic ways for the women's rights advocates it surveys.

Moreover, as the protagonists of this story were in survival mode more often than not, these demands often took a back seat to other pressing needs. Broadly, however, the women in Chapters 2 and 3 were preoccupied with marriage reform and the recognition of women's social role; the debates in Chapter 4 illustrate a broad spectrum of issues captured in the 'Woman Question', including women's education, the abolition of prostitution, labour laws, and the vote; and Chapter 5 examines the international movement for women's suffrage.

Following in the footsteps of Bonnie Anderson and Margaret McFadden's research, discussed in further detail later in this introduction, this study considers the internationalism of early European and Anglo-American women's rights advocates, originating in radical reform movements of the 1830s and ultimately feeding into the organised feminist internationalism of the turn of the century. I approach this as a slack, but internally coherent intellectual movement, powered by interpersonal contacts as well as factional disagreement. Though this strand of women's rights advocacy lived on after the achievement of suffrage in its various national contexts, particularly through powerful feats of self-mythologisation, this study ends with the stifling effect on transnational relations presented by World War I.

My research relies on a variety of published and unpublished sources. Chapters 2 and 5 engage particularly with books, some of which are still easily accessible, while only a few copies survive of others (like Luise Mühlbach's *Aphra Behn*). Chapter 3 relies primarily on journals held by the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) as well as correspondence and other materials held at the Friends House in London and the Bibliothèque Marguerite Durand in Paris. Some of the periodicals discussed in Chapter 4 are available in the digitised Gerritsen collection or on Gallica, the digital portal of the BnF, and others are held at the Atria Institute in Amsterdam and the Archiv der deutschen Frauenbewegung in Kassel. This research has been greatly aided by digitisation efforts, which are unlocking new materials every day – though to the lone researcher, the driving factors behind what is prioritised are sometimes arcane.

CONCEPTUALISATION AND TERMINOLOGY

The operative word of this book is cultivation: the sustained effort to develop a sense of the relationship between the causes of antislavery and women's rights, through varying activities that are here captured under the umbrella term memory work. The cultivation of this relationship

took place along two axes. On the one hand, in all cases under discussion, memory agents wove vocabulary and narratives from the antislavery movement into women's rights rhetoric. On the other hand, they encouraged and regulated women's rights advocates' imaginative affiliation with the antislavery movement by promoting particular memories of it in fiction, histories, articles, and images.[1] This sense of affiliation could extend to the enslaved as well as white movement leaders. As Chapters 4 and 5 showcase, however, by the end of the nineteenth century this affiliation came to be mostly focused on white women globally, while identification with the enslaved was discouraged.

The two axes by which memories of antislavery travelled into the women's movement inflected each other. Creating a shared lexicon between advocacy for the emancipation of slaves and of women reinforced a sense of affiliation between the causes, while cultural memories of abolition, and the circulation, across different media, of abolitionist representations of slavery supplied the woman–slave analogy with practical examples and associative meanings. Both dimensions are captured in the heuristic term 'memories of antislavery', which has directed this analysis. In its broad sense, this term refers to the *representations of colonial slavery* produced by the antislavery movement and which women's rights advocates remediated in service to their own cause. As has been well documented, generally these representations were highly selective and distortive of the culture and daily lives of enslaved persons and contributed to the promulgation of racist stereotypes (Nederveen Pieterse 1990; Hartman 1997; Wood 2010). Nevertheless, many European reformers treated them as authentic and women's rights agents also promoted them as such. In its narrow sense, 'memories of antislavery' refers to the representations of *the antislavery movement itself*. As has become customary in this field of study, reference to antislavery rather than abolitionism indicates that my analysis looks at a broader set of attitudes and expressions that are hostile to slavery, rather than only those that make the specific political demand for the immediate or gradual abolition of the institution of slavery (Carey 2012, 15–16; see also Chapter 1).

It is the core business of each of these chapters to unpack the complex interactions between the memories of antislavery that actors circulated at

[1] I use the term affiliation here in Edward Said's sense, to describe the 'network of relationships which human beings *make* consciously and deliberately for themselves, often to replace or compensate for the loss of filiative relations in modern societies' (McCarthy 2012, 100; Said 1983).

particular places and points in time. This study considers the interactions between the broad and narrow dimensions of memories of antislavery and how these memories worked together, collectively producing shifting constellations of memory which changed radically depending on the circumstances of the time. By referring to different conceptions of the nature of the antislavery movement and of its tactics, women's rights advocates shaped and reshaped the usable past on which they drew.

This study is informed by recent research on the importance of cultural memory to social movements (Doerr 2014; Kubal and Becerra 2014; Eyerman 2015; Rigney 2018; Zamponi 2018; Zamponi and Daphi 2019; Merrill and Rigney 2024). As Sidney Tarrow notes,

> Particular groups have a particular history – and memory – of contention. Workers know how to strike because generations of workers struck before them; Parisians build barricades because barricades are inscribed in the history of Parisian contention; peasants seize the land carrying the symbols their fathers and grandfathers used in the past. (2011, 29–30)

Studying the usable past of a movement at a particular moment in time, then, is key to interpreting the actions of the movement's actors, while the study of the genesis of that past has the potential to bring to light long-buried and even purposefully erased historical junctions. Cultural memory guides activist tactics and discourse, providing a portfolio of actions that have worked in the past, with cues about which are 'appropriate' to a particular group and which have come to correspond to a particular demand. As this study shows, diverse memories of antislavery helped women's rights advocates from different ideological backgrounds and operating in different historical circumstances to formulate their claims, to defend their strategies, and to imagine next steps. They aimed to do so in a way that could speak to like-minded readers across borders and cultural divides by relying on a legacy they considered they had in common.

This study joins gender historians like Karen Offen and Joan Scott in the conviction that feminism is usefully studied as a long-term movement of cultural contestation (Scott 1996, 1–3; Offen 2000, 20–21), which informs its interest in a wide range of media. The study is interested especially in the development of arguments to recognise women's de facto participation in political processes, as well as aspirations for its eventual de jure recognition. It should be noted that this political ambition was only one aspect of the broader history of women's emancipation and of the range of changes for which women's advocates agitated. The frequent

identification of the political goal of suffrage for the whole is a common source of myopia regarding the full historical range of feminist contestation and the diversity of feminist actors, both past and present (Offen 2018, 46–47; DuBois et al. 2019; Delap 2020, 4–5).

In line with this study's emphasis on the agitation for the recognition of women as social and political actors, the book generally uses the politically tinged terms *women's rights movement* and *women's rights advocacy*, rather than the more diffuse and contested terms *feminism* or *women's emancipation movement* (pace Offen 2000 and Paletschek and Pietrow-Ennker 2004). The term *women's rights movement* is used not just for specific organisations, but also for the networked collective of actors who spread opinions and beliefs intended to contribute to progressive change in societal and legal attitudes to women. In this inclusive definition, this study's approach adapts McCarthy and Zald's classic distinction between social movements and social movement organisations (1977, 1217–1218) and builds on the nineteenth-century use of the term 'movement' for the progressive impulse in society.[2] It is also in this vein that this book adopts Bonnie Anderson's understanding of an 'international women's movement' beginning in the 1830s, well before the founding of official bodies in the 1880s. Recognising the existence of a movement for women's rights before its formal organisation in the late nineteenth century is key to interpreting the work of individual nineteenth-century advocates. This movement often constituted the community, real or imagined, to which advocates addressed themselves, on whom they drew for courage and inspiration, or whom they sought to influence. It is important to emphasise, however, that this approach does not take women's internationalism to be monolithic. As discussed in further detail later in this chapter, different forms of feminist internationalism developed in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century which had distinct cultures and founding ideas and which were as likely to be at odds with each other as they were to be in solidarity. To what extent the initiatives discussed in the following chapters were part of the 'hegemonic feminism' of their era, to use Chela Sandoval's useful term, or indeed of 'imperial feminism', is an important question on which this book will reflect (2009, 341; Amos and Parmar 1984).

When it comes to nomenclature for the actors involved, for the sake of brevity and variety I will at times use the shorthand 'feminist', referring for instance to 'feminist advocates' or 'feminist authors'. In this case,

[2] Used as such by, for instance, J. S. Mill ('movement', OED 2020).

'feminist' is used in the narrow sense outlined earlier in this introduction. Adapting the term Leila Rupp suggested in her study of several women's international organisations at the turn of the century, the analysis often refers to its protagonists, who worked to make possible their shared conviction 'that women could – and ought to – come together across national borders and work to make the world a better place' (Rupp, 1997, 126), as 'feminist internationalists'. This term is used as an invitation to think about the women's active engagement in promoting internationalism, which Bonnie Anderson's preference for 'international feminists' does not do. Regarding racial distinctions, the study generally uses the terms 'white' and 'black' as descriptors in the sources under consideration, without capitalisation. It also reproduces original terms, especially in the footnotes, since nineteenth-century racial denominators contain important clues about speakers' positionings and affiliations. In the same vein, both the words 'enslaved' and 'slave' are used at times in the argument, with the understanding that the latter refers to the constructed figure in the European imagination, rather than historical persons.

Another decision that warrants explanation is my use of the term 'international' in addition to the more technically descriptive *transnational* (which also features in the narrative). That this book is pleased to follow Bonnie Anderson's word choice is less out of concern with anachrony, than it is with the affective connotations of this word for nineteenth-century reform (2000; Sandell 2015; Oesch 2016). Discussing the early twentieth century, Myriam Boussahba-Bravard has recently described how, for women's advocates, '[i]nternationalism represented a free space, an alternative frontier where, according to circumstances, a collective identity could be deployed, its components and nature being variable, but never inconsistent' (2021, 159). This sense of internationalism is important to my interpretation, too, and can be extended further back. The protagonists of this study led cosmopolitan lives, and this word also sometimes finds its way into the book. In a way, memories of antislavery were employed to contribute to a *supranational* feminism, if anything: but arguing this proved an undue distraction from the story at hand. One of this book's aims is to shed light on the meanings of feminist internationalists' appeals to *sisterhood*, an often problematised term which has yet proven so central to cultures of feminist internationalism. As Marie Sandell showed, careful historicisation of women's interpellations of other 'sisters' is a useful place to start exploring their changing internationalisms over time (2015) and this book attempts to do so within the vital context of the history of slavery and abolition.

'FEMINIST ABOLITIONISTS' AND WOMEN'S SLAVERY

This study joins a corpus of research into the relationship between women's involvement in antislavery and the rise of women's rights advocacy. Historical consideration of this relationship started back in the late nineteenth century, since prominent women's rights advocates emphasised its importance themselves, as Chapter 5 discusses in depth. With some exceptions, most notably several essays collected in Kathryn Kish Sklar and James Stewart's (2007) volume *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Antislavery in the Era of Emancipation* (Anderson 2007; Drescher 2007; Offen 2007) and the work of Doris Kadish and Françoise Massardier-Kenney (Kadish 1995, 2012; Kadish and Massardier-Kenney 2008; 2010), the investigation of these questions has focused on Great Britain and America.[3]

Classic accounts of the connections between feminism and abolitionism focus on two interrelated factors. The first is the fact that many early feminists, particularly in the US, were schooled in societal critique and activist tactics by their involvement in the antislavery campaign.[4] The experience of collaborating with men for a single political purpose and the sporadic coalescence of the separate spheres of men and women, it is argued, empowered some antislavery women to begin to address women's rights. Moreover, women's involvement in antislavery was an important channel for the tactics and techniques from the antislavery campaign to make their way into women's advocacy. In her perceptive essay on this relationship, Ellen Carol DuBois suggests that 'feminism developed within the context of [Garrisonian] abolitionism less because abolitionists taught women that they were oppressed than because abolitionists taught women what to do with that perception, how to develop it into a social movement' (1998 [1979], 57). Maartje Janse explores this model and its limits for the Netherlands (2007, 103ff.; 2020), and Sarah Lentz for the German context (2020, 204ff., 241ff.).

[3] For Britain, see Midgley 2004; Halbersleben 1993; Taylor 1994; Clapp and Jeffrey 2011; for America, Sillen 1955; Hersch 1978; Yellin 1989; Yellin and Van Horne 1994; Salerno 2005; Kish Sklar and Stewart 2007; Kellow 2013.

[4] Sillen 1955; Lutz 1968; Hersch 1978; Midgley 1992; Halbersleben 1993; Taylor 1994; Flexner and Fitzpatrick 1996 [1959]; Zaeske 2003; Davis 2011 [1981], ch. 2. Julie Roy Jeffrey 1998 has pointed out that the majority of antislavery women in the US were not interested in feminist questions.

The second line of investigation is powered by the idea that some (free) women's identification with enslaved women, and their engagement with abolitionist argumentation, spurred them to reflect on their own position and to develop, within small circles of like-minded women, a 'feminist consciousness' or 'feminist ideology' (Hersch 1978; Halbersleben 1993; Pierson 2003; Kish Sklar 2007; Davis 2011 [1981], ch. 2). Blanche Glassman Hersh coined the term 'feminist-abolitionists' to refer to a group of fifty-one women who agitated both for antislavery and women's rights and identified this group as an ideologically coherent feminist grouping before the Civil War (1978). Similar interests motivated the investigations of the political culture of the 'abolitionist sisterhood' in Jean Fagan Yellin and John C. van Horne's collection, which is discussed further in Chapter 2 (1994, 19; see also Fagan Yellin 1989). Amy Dru Stanley and Elizabeth Clark studied how early women's rights advocates applied abolitionist argumentation to women's emancipation when they, for instance, emphasised the 'legal symmetry' between marriage and slavery (Dru Stanley 1998, 176; Clark 1990). Historians have observed this rise of feminist consciousness particularly in moments where female abolitionists felt they were treated unjustly by male abolitionists, as in the aftermath of the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London, when British organisers did not allow female delegates to speak, causing a stir among both the American female delegates and the British antislavery women present (Halbersleben 1993; Kish Sklar 1994; discussed in depth in Chapter 5).

Building on their perceptions of shared rhetoric between women's rights and antislavery, other scholars have tried to describe the cultural factor of abolitionism in the development of women's agitation. Abolitionism informed, for instance, Harriet Martineau's reflections on women's position in *Society in America* (1837) and Lydia Maria Child's writing on women, which appeared in the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, which she edited in the early 1840s (1843). Karen Sánchez-Eppler, Doris Kadish, Jean Fagan Yellin, and Moira Ferguson's sensitive close readings of antislavery and early feminist texts have suggested ways in which issues of gender and race became co-articulated (Yellin 1989; Ferguson 1992; 1994; Sánchez-Eppler 1993; Kadish and Massardier-Kenney 2008; 2010). Other scholars have investigated the extent to which the 'feminist slavery rhetoric' (Bock 2014, 133), 'woman–slave analogy' (Midgley 2007; Stevenson 2020), 'slavery analogy' (Offen 2007), the 'slavery of sex' (Hersch 1978), or the 'slavery metaphor' (Quanquin 2012, 2022) in nineteenth-century advocacy drew meaning and weight

from historical developments like the rise of organised antislavery and the Haitian Revolution (Yeo 1998).

Sceptical commentators have warned against overestimating the significance of abolition history to the development of women's rights rhetoric by pointing to the general presence of what could be called the 'lexicon of slavery' in radical discourse.[5] Sympathetic analysts are at risk of over-reading individual women's mentions of slavery for a critical race consciousness or solidarity for which there is no evidence, as the vocabulary of slavery was a prominent feature of radical women's rights rhetoric. Kathryn Gleadle estimates that in the case of early English women's rights radicals, the woman–slave analogy was 'by far the most frequently employed' rhetorical move at their disposal (2002, 2). As Karen Offen and Bonnie Anderson's investigations of German and French women's rights rhetoric show, it was also a prominent part of the repertoire of early Continental women's rights advocates (collected in Kish Sklar and Stewart 2007). By the late nineteenth century, the lexicon of slavery had also become a widely applied feature of other radical reform movements, such as socialism and anarchism (Streeby 2007). Use of this vocabulary could draw both on the thought of exalted figures, like the master–slave dialectic as developed by Hegel and Marx, and on the hyperbolic expression of working-class frustrations. Since these movements frequently profiled themselves as international, these words became a cosmopolitan expression of oppression, which translated easily between different languages and contexts. Gleadle reminds her reader that they 'triggered a plethora of meanings', from the Eastern slave in the harems of the Orientalist imagination, to the black African labourer, and from the Roman household slave to the complex allegory of biblical Egyptian bondage (2002, 21). In her estimation, this versatility was exactly the strength of this rhetorical strategy, as it allowed women's rights advocates to tap into a range of 'ideological registers' (Gleadle 2002, 22; compare Clare Midgley's account of the 'triple discourse of anti-slavery', 1998, 173; 2007). The domain of orientalism within women's rights rhetoric, and how this intersected with nineteenth-century 'imperial feminism', has produced an especially rich body of scholarship (Zonana 1993; Burton 1994; Midgley 1994; 2007, 16ff.).

[5] Gleadle 1995, 62ff.; Davis 2007, 14. For insight into the lexicon of slavery in British radical women's writing, see Mike Sanders' and Kathryn Gleadle's collected volumes (2001; 2002). See Dorsey 2009 and Furstenberg 2003 for its use in Revolutionary America. The lexicon was also prominently employed in nationalist rhetoric.

These interpretive difficulties have not discouraged study of the cultural influence of abolitionism on women's rights rhetoric (Plasa and Ring 1994; Nym Mayhall 2001; Wiegmink 2017; Stevenson 2020). Using a wider discursive approach, Ana Stevenson offers an expansive reading of the intersections between radical discourses. In *The Woman as Slave in Nineteenth-Century American Social Movements* (Stevenson 2020, 19), she shows the centrality of what she terms the 'woman–slave analogy' and the 'woman-as-slave worldview' across a variety of reform movements in America, including 'antislavery, women's rights, dress reform, labour reform, suffrage, free love, racial uplift, and anti-vice movements'. She shows that the comparison was quite ubiquitous and not just associated with women's rights. It was not only taken up by white middle-class women, but by men and women of different ethnic backgrounds and different allegiances across the political spectrum. Analysing 'discourses of slavery' as primarily a rhetorical tool, Stevenson (2020, 304) suggests that it could express a variety of ideological backgrounds, one of which was a nascent intersectional theoretical framework. Stevenson's recognition that the slavery lexicon was a site of structural overlap and cross-fertilisation between progressive rhetorics is an important corrective to the overemphasis of some earlier studies on a direct genealogy from antislavery to women's rights rhetoric.

This study seeks to further understanding of the relationship between antislavery and women's rights from a different vantage point, by looking at the memory work women performed to connect them. The case studies presented in this study engage the trap of referential haziness that Gleadle identifies head on, as they each revolve around specific occasions of recall of antislavery and examine the woman–slave analogies that agitators made in this context. It takes these instances as a starting point, rather than a mapping of the wider pattern of woman–slave analogies circulating in the public sphere at a given point in time. The chapters set themselves the task of analysing occasions where memories of antislavery inflected the formulations of European women's right advocates in their rich historical and discursive contexts. By reconstructing these contexts, they bring new affective, tactical, and conceptual dimensions to the fore. Rather than uncovering relationships, the study uncovers why, and how, women *related* their movement to what came before.

As a whole, the book attests to the imaginative potential of antislavery for women's advocacy transnationally and shifts the frame beyond geopolitical borders to the 'transnational space' in which canonical feminist-abolitionists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton operated (Wüstenberg

2020, 7). This form of feminist internationalism frequently excluded black women and men, whose agency was ignored or denied in dominant abolitionist understandings of social change. The study shows that anti-slavery was a cultural touchstone for many women's rights reformers, which generations of feminist internationalists sought to incorporate into the usable past of their collective in different ways. Ultimately, it makes a case for taking seriously the memory work that women's rights advocates performed across different media.

NATIONAL COMPARISONS AND CONTINUITIES

Generally, in Western European contexts the beginnings of women's rights agitation is dated back to key Enlightenment tracts, such as Olympe de Gouges' *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen* (1791) and Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel's *On Improving the Status of Women* (1792). In the first half of the nineteenth century, romantic socialism, particularly the schools of Charles Fourier and Henri de Saint-Simon, was an important influence which collected small circles of like-minded working-class women around the question (see also Chapters 2 and 3 for some key figures in this period), while 'religious fervours [...] and moral reform' initiatives drew some middle- and upper-class women to the subject (Rochefort 2018, 26; see Chapter 1). As discussed in more depth in Chapter 4, from the 1860s the Woman Question came to be established as a subject of public debate (if not sympathy) – at which point a recognisable strand of liberal feminism became increasingly well established, to the growing vocal dismay of socialist organisations and other more radical factions. The turn of the century, the period discussed in Chapter 5, was characterised by its feats of organisation, as lasting (inter)national associations were set up and as feminist congresses could cater to hundreds or, when coupled with exhibitions, even thousands of visitors. Though their emphasis is on general discourse, rather than on individual feats, Chapters 4 and 5 touch on some leading European figures of the women's movement, such as the socialists Clara Zetkin and Nellie van Kol, the radicals Wilhelmina Drucker and Hubertine Auclert, and the liberals Maria Deraismes and John Stuart Mill.

Offen provided the suggestive conceptualisation of the relationship between feminist discontent and feminist political episodes as being like magma to volcanic eruptions (2000, 25). With exceptions, such as the brief general optimism of 1848 and the spectacular campaigns for suffrage at the turn of the century, the lava flows took a different course in the

different local and national contexts discussed in this book. What was constant, however, was the conservative backlash, suppression, and ridicule women's rights advocates experienced. This was an important factor in the search for like minds abroad which drove many protagonists of this book.

The regions on which this study primarily focuses, France, the Netherlands, and the German states, each experienced their moments of advocacy and of organisation, with a series of rights claims, ranging from divorce to education, and from labour laws to suffrage, at stake.[6] Despite seeing early radical feminist agitation in the late eighteenth century, and several flurries of progressive legislation, France underwent its share of reactionary convulsions and saw women gain the vote only in 1944. In the Netherlands, women's rights advocacy took on a more moderate tone initially, focusing on education reform in its early days in the second half of the nineteenth century, but the country ultimately became a hub of feminist internationalism and suffrage was achieved by 1919. The German states and the later German Empire saw small-scale initiatives across the regions that varied in intensity and degree of radicalism, though their intensity nevertheless never came close to that of the French. Ultimately suffrage was granted to women with the founding of the Weimar Republic in 1918. Some early nineteenth-century examples of women's rights initiatives both in Europe and the anglophone context, as they connect to antislavery, are discussed in Chapter 1.

The strategic decisions advocates made were influenced by events and developments both at home and abroad, ranging, beside abolition, from the French Revolution to the abolition of serfdom and the outbreak of World War I. They were also dictated by local social and political circumstances, which sedimented in the women's rights discourse that sometimes travelled far and wide. In the European context, one thinks of the relationship between prominent Frenchwomen's part in eighteenth-century revolutionary politics and their later insistence, in that same register, on the rights of 'female citizens' (*citoyennes*) (Scott 1996). Or perhaps, of socialist feminists' recruitment of class warfare vocabulary to denounce the dangers of 'bourgeois [liberal] feminism', put forward especially effectively in the German context by Clara Zetkin (Boxer 2007). Some explicitly international registers of social transformation which women's rights advocates adopted were the '[r]adical Christianity' of romantic socialisms (Anderson 2000, 83; Delvallez and Primi 2004), the civilisational discourse of high imperialism (Burton 1994, 2), talk of civic motherhood

[6] Chapter 4 also addresses one Flemish/Dutch case, the socialist periodical *De Vrouw*.

(Offen 2000, 236), and the revolutionary language of citizenship (Rendall 1985, 3; Bock 2002, 90). The present study continues this vein of investigation into the transfers between the different nineteenth-century radical reform discourses. The transnational, actively constructed dimension of this story, and its discovery of the webs of memory which its sources navigated, particularly highlight the agency and creativity involved in them. On several occasions in this book, I reflect on how multiple discourses came together, as in the Saint-Simonian inspirations of Jeanne Deroin in Chapter 3 or the 'white slavery' narratives of anti-prostitution efforts in Chapter 5.

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT: CONTEXT AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

Since the early 2000s, work on the connections between women's rights activists in different countries has significantly altered the picture of these national movements. Before their formal organisation into international bodies in the latter part of the nineteenth century, women's rights advocates were connected in overlapping networks of communication and readership, networks which produced crucial encouragement and intellectual reinvigoration. Feminist internationalist 'mothers of the matrix' fostered these connections (McFadden 1999, 11). The body of foundational and recent scholarship conjures a picture of the transnational communities which were at stake in the memory work of feminist internationalists.

Offen's *European Feminisms, 1700–1950* (2000) and Sylvia Paletschek and Bianca Pietrow-Ennker's collected volume *Women's Emancipation Movements in the Nineteenth Century* (2004) show how shared pressures and cultural influences allowed feminist demands to develop across Europe, 'radiat[ing] in concentric circles from western and central Europe to include northern, eastern and southern Europe' (Paletschek and Pietrow-Ennker 2004, 9). French and anglophone ideas had an important catalysing function on this development (Moynagh and Forestell 2012), in part because their revolutionary histories allowed for early and elaborate women's rights critiques and no doubt in part because they were written in widely read languages.

Anderson documents a 'first transnational women's movement' in the period 1830–1860, decades before the foundation of official international women's rights organisations (2000; see also Hewitt 2001; 2007). Anderson traced the communications and collaboration between a group of about twenty core women's rights advocates in France, England,

Germany, and the US, who, through their travels and correspondence, maintained a transnational network. Anderson's recontextualisation of women like Jeanne Deroin and Anne Knight offers a major counterpoint to their general dismissal as 'crackpots and utopians', an invective that they faced both in their own day as well as in some later historiography (Anderson 2000, 3). Anderson shows how these women were at the heart of the development of a shared language and repertoire of ideas, as well as a transnational support network.

According to McFadden, throughout the nineteenth century women maintained a 'tradition of transatlantic female communication' (1999, 3). She identifies several avenues of women's interconnection, including the networks built by travelling women as a result of the rise of new communication and travel technologies; the cooperative networks of religious philanthropists in abolitionism, temperance, and anti-prostitution; the mutual support networks of political revolutionaries and refugees; and the emergence of shared readerships around female literary celebrities like Harriet Beecher Stowe and George Sand, 'whose works and personal example served to call into existence "virtual communities", international in scope and significance' (McFadden 1999, 4). McFadden discusses a handful of 'mothers of the matrix', including Irish socialist Anna Doyle Wheeler and American women's rights organiser Stanton, whose activities greatly strengthened the networks already in place. She ultimately concludes that these early interconnections nurtured the emergence of a feminist 'international women's consciousness' that paved the way for women's formal organisation into international networks in the late 1880s (McFadden 1999, 172). This consciousness consisted both of a practical awareness of the importance of transnational alliances and, often, of an ideological rejection of nationalism.

Though they do not thematise it in particular, McFadden and Anderson's studies showcase the close relationship between women's internationalism and working-class radicalism (see also Taylor 1993; Rowbotham 2014 [1974]; Tamboukou 2016). After the First International Women's Rights Congress united over two hundred delegates from twelve countries in Paris in 1878, feminist internationalism became institutionalised among bourgeois feminists, with the founding of the International Council of Women (1888), the International Woman Suffrage Alliance (1904), and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (1915). A striking countermovement in a period of intense nationalist sentiments, it is little wonder that it is in the context of these formal initiatives that women's rights advocates' internationalism

has most often been interrogated (Bosch and Kloosterman 1990; Gerhard 1994; Rupp 1997; Berkovitz 1999; Johnson, Neunsinger, and Sangster 2007; Janz and Schönpflug 2014). Mineke Bosch's and Leila Rupp's analyses of these organisations stress the development of a 'feminist internationalist' identity through personal friendships and loyalties, as well as through language and symbolic display (Rupp 1997, 44; Bosch and Kloosterman 1990; Rupp and Taylor 1999). Both the international collaborations and the conflicts women engaged in 'meant that women were talking to each other across the lines of both organisation and country' (Rupp 1997, 44), fostering a vaguely defined internationalist identity which International Women Suffrage Alliance (IWSA) President Carrie Chapman Catt described as a 'sentiment like love, or religion, or patriotism, which is to be experienced rather than defined in words' (quoted in Rupp 1997, 108; see also Offen 2014, 38, on feminist 'internationalism/transnationalism').

The wave of suffrage centennials celebrated in the US and many European countries (2017–2021) has given a new impulse to research into first-wave feminism, with recent titles revisiting established stories and reconsidering its 'single issue' agenda and cast of characters.[7] There has also been a serious turn towards decentring the frames of the national, and of electoral politics, and thoughtful critique of what this frame structurally forgets.[8] Rather than repairing the hegemonic narrative of the women's movement as seen through the prism of the international suffrage campaign (discussed in more detail in Chapter 5) by adding formerly 'peripheral' characters to the national story, or by further illuminating the penumbra its imperialist assumptions cast, scholars have showcased the diverse intellectual legacies and different

[7] New sweeping accounts include DuBois 2020 and Bosch 2019. Many new national accounts show increased scrutiny for ethnic diversity within the movement, and for its intersection with other issues, including antislavery. For instance, Pavard, Rocherfort, and Zancarini-Fournel, 2020. For discussion of trends in this historiography see also DuBois et al. 2019; Delahaye and Ramdani 2022; Lange 2022.

[8] For an earlier critique of the limited frame, Hannam 2005; for discussion of the interrelation of alternative genealogies, minority rights, transnational allegiances, and the threat of forgetting, Cathleen Cahill's epilogue to *Recasting the Vote*, 2020. For the (renewed) turn towards the global frame, Delap, 2020; for types of feminism, Smith and Robinson 2022. Several recent edited collections address different women's internationalisms and transnational initiatives. For instance, DuBois and Oliveiro 2009; Allen, Cova, and Purvis 2010; Jansz and Schönpflug 2014; Ludi, Matter, and Delaloye 2016; Midgley, Twells, and Carlier 2016; Boris, Trudgen Dawson, and Molony 2021; Owens and Rietzler 2021; Delahaye and Ramdani 2022; Marino and Ware 2022; Hutchins and Owens 2023; Taylor Allen and Cova 2023.

internationalisms that flourished side by side. Brittney Cooper's work on the genealogy of the 'intellectual thought of race women' is part of this project (2017, 1), as are Keisha Blain and Tiffany Gill's edited volume on black women's internationalism (2019), and Katherine Marino's account of *feminismo americano* (2019; see also Joseph-Gabriel 2020; Florvil 2020). Similar concerns have reinvigorated the study of abolitionism, discussed in Chapter 1.

This book also hopes to contribute to the project of dismantling persistent hegemonic accounts of women's internationalism, but from the inside. In this respect, it bears some resemblances to Carolyn Eichner's recent study of the different 'empires' of key French feminists (2022) – it puts into frame the historical contingencies, constructions, and contradictions involved in feminist affiliation with the history of antislavery. Various actors used memories of antislavery as fundamental conceptual and argumentative building blocks within a pluriform feminist internationalism. Their efforts guided the elaboration of analogies between women and the enslaved and created the influential origin myth that organised women's rights agitation flowed from (white) women's antislavery efforts. The chapters follow these building blocks as they are taken up and placed by feminist internationalists in different historical and medial contexts over the course of the nineteenth century, as these internationalists strove to call into being and to maintain a sense of community and a shared usable past.

TRANSNATIONAL MEMORY

In its recognition of the potential of memory to support transnational and transcultural collective affiliations, this study draws from recent work in the field of memory studies, which I will briefly introduce in this section. The subject of the present study is not self-memorialisation within a movement itself, though key figures in this study would fain have presented it so. Instead, it lays bare the circulation of memories of another movement in a new context. In studying this field of activity, it showcases complex transnational interactions between different memory discourses and the potential of these interactions to make enunciable new histories and to bring new collectives into being – as well as to tear new fissures.

In finding their place in the contemporary world as well as in the nineteenth-century historical grand narrative of emancipation, feminist internationalists consistently framed women's rights advocacy as an international movement with a shared history. Remembrance of antislavery

was at the heart of their memory work, at times performed at significant personal cost, to maintain a shared usable past, which grounded an emergent transnational community. These productive borrowings are a liminal site where one can observe how the emergent transnational movement for women's rights oriented itself in space and time and developed a sense of belonging. Recent work on the relations between cultural memory and transnational community formation has articulated several different ways of approaching this connection.

Chiara de Cesari and Ann Rigney have pointed out the implicit privileging in many studies of the national framework of memory, countering that 'there is no necessary or linear "progress" from the familial, to local, to national, to global memories' (2014, 6; see also Bond and Rapson 2014; Wüstenberg 2020). Studying transnational memory involves moving away from the assumed primacy of the national and attuning the analysis to the different scales at which memory work takes place (De Cesari and Rigney 2014, 18) and the unexpected trajectories along which memory 'travels' (Erll 2011, 11). In the same vein, Aline Sierp and Jenny Wüstenberg warn that 'what we know about the *national* level should not structure our interpretation of *transnational* memory politics' (2015, 322) and call for more 'empirical analysis of transnational mnemonic practices' (321). They propose that actors engaging in transnational practices of remembering call into being a new 'space' (Wüstenberg 2020, 7), in which local and national patterns of remembrance can be challenged, transformed, or reproduced (8).

Michael Rothberg formulated the concept of 'multidirectional memory' to study dynamic transfers between diverse memory discourses. In *Multidirectional Memory* (2009), Rothberg used this framework to study interventions in public memory where agents articulated the traumatic legacies of colonialism and the Holocaust together (4), through 'metaphorical and analogical appropriations' (11). He sees multidirectional memory both as a way for cosmopolitan memory actors to build 'new forms of solidarity and new visions of justice' (Rothberg 2009, 5; see also Rothberg 2012) and as a structural feature of cultural memory, which is 'always marked by transcultural borrowing, exchange, and adaptation' (2012, 524); productive activities which make possible the enunciation of new histories and experiences. Rothberg's work reveals the complex, interlaced quality of memory discourses and shows how they help each other come into being, even if, as memories become transnationally shared, they are at risk of becoming universalised and decontextualised (Levy and Sznaider 2006).

Rothberg's focus on the interaction of memories in public discourse did not offer occasion for an in-depth look at the material practices underlying their construction. This study shifts the focus to these practices. It complements the analysis of creative discursive work with considerations of the preparatory work of gaining historical awareness and collecting materials, which can move with or against the broader popular culture, as Chapters 2 and 3 showcase, and with considerations of the emergent collective remembrance which writers either amplify or disrupt, as explored in Chapter 4 and 5. The emphasis of the memory work approach taken here is on the collaboration and the collective dynamics of remembrance and forgetting involved in the changing collective memory of antislavery in the women's rights movement.

Recognising the changeability of particular multidirectional memories within the usable past of a collective is crucial to understanding how, and to what extent, such memories enable new solidarities. By following its subject over decades, this study brings to light not just the potential of the dynamics of multidirectional memory to cultivate solidarity, but also memory's potential to serve the invention of new modes of exclusion, hierarchisation, and hostility. Rothberg's primary interest has been those cases that demonstrate multidirectional memory's tendency towards reciprocity and solidarity, rather than its tendency towards competition (see also Rothberg 2012, 525, for the elaboration of this 'axis of political affect'). The case of multidirectional memory in the nineteenth-century transnational women's movement showcases the many shades, the evident affective power, and the creative potential of asymmetrical appropriation, of patterns of disassociation, and of the dissolutions of former common causes. Particularly towards the end of the century, despite earlier work towards making common cause, some white, middle-class reformers prominent in the international suffrage movement began to cultivate solidarity through their systematic disavowal of affiliation with the cause of the enslaved, and to great effect.

MEMORY WORK: APPROACH

In an account of her own involvement in the Dutch centennial, Mineke Bosch reflects on how, once suffrage was achieved, 'everybody seemed to assume overnight that the long fight for women's suffrage and the final accomplishment were historically completely insignificant' (Bosch 2021, 55). Many scholars have recognised the difficulties dynamics of remembrance and forgetting have caused both within the nineteenth-century

women's movement and afterwards. Maria Grever, for instance, developed an analytical framework to describe the role of collective memory in the formation of feminist collective identity (1997). Building on Bonnie Smith's work on women-authored histories in the nineteenth century (1998), scholars like Grever (1994), Isabelle Ernot (2007), and Mary Spongberg (2003) have studied the production of women's history in the nineteenth century, as Chapter 5 discusses further. Sharon Crozier-De Rosa and Vera Mackie's *Remembering Women's Activism* (2019), Red Chidgey's *Feminist Afterlives* (2018), Katrine Smiet's *Sojourner Truth and Intersectionality* (2021), and Clara Vlessing's recent dissertation *Remembering Revolutionary Women: The Cultural Afterlives of Louise Michel, Emma Goldman and Sylvia Pankhurst* (2023) offer insight into the long-term remembrance of key figures.[9] Particularly in the American context, the construction of the history of abolition in national historiography has attracted similar interest (e.g., Jeffrey 2012; Santana 2016).

By adopting a multimodal approach, oriented towards individual agency, this study hopes to make a useful contribution to our understanding of memory dynamics in the nineteenth-century women's movement. It shows how actors constructed a 'usable past' for the movement which served powerful affective, ideological, and tactical needs (Wyck Brooks 1918; Olick 2007). The operative question is not which past events, or 'sites of memory' (Nora 1996), are 'selected' for commemoration, but rather how these are made meaningful, able to 'steer emotions [and] motivate people to act' (Confino 1997, 1390; see also Irwin-Zarecka 1994, 7; Zerubavel 2003; Feindt et al. 2014; Bond et al. 2016). To answer this question, my analysis looks at the memory work agents performed to reconstruct the past in the present, as well as to preserve the present for future recall. In this focus on the dynamics of memory and on the agentic process of memory construction, this study's approach draws on recent developments in memory studies and particularly on its new orientation towards what Rigney terms the 'memory–activism nexus' (2018, 372; Daphi and Zamponi 2019; Gutman and Wüstenberg 2023). As memory scholars increasingly recognise, protest and social movements are important drivers of cultural memory transnationally (Hamilton 2010; Hajek 2013; Reading and Katriel 2015; Katriel 2016; Gutman 2017; Wüstenberg 2017; Rigney

[9] There is also considerable interest in contemporary ramifications of feminist memory: see, for instance, Marianne Hirsch and Valerie Smith's special issue of *Signs* (2002); Altınay et al. 2019.

2018; Merrill et al. 2020; Gutman and Wüstenberg 2023; Rigney and Smits 2023, Merrill and Rigney 2024). Social movements are sprawling sites of voluntary affiliation which often develop in active opposition to the national frame. Moreover, in their active construction of shared identity, they draw attention to the agency involved in curating the past (Hamilton 2010; Rigney 2018).

The main advantage of this study's focus on memory work is that it renders visible the agency involved in the construction and circulation of cultural memory (Irwin-Zarecka 1994; Van Dijk 2007; Till 2012; Wüstenberg 2017; Altınay et al. 2019; Wüstenberg 2020; Merrill et al. 2020). As the contributions in Samuel Merrill et al. (2020) attest, the concept has sprawled in various directions as it has been used to analyse dissimilar cases (see esp. the editors' introduction to the term, Merrill et al. 2020, 14–17; Smit 2020, 87–89). It is exactly this sprawl which makes memory work such a potent lens with which to consider agency in its various trajectories. The women discussed in this study exerted their agency at various levels and in different media; through creation, but also through citation; through their efforts to elicit vivid vicarious remembrance of scenes from the history of antislavery, but also in their decisions to remain silent.

Memory work, here, is not a specific domain of activity, but rather a continuous dimension of the work of a social movement, which can be observed clearly in cultural production. It is the work through which activists maintain and regulate their collective by reaffirming or reconfiguring the boundaries of their collective. The work of the women in this study included building archives of abolitionist materials, invoking historic events and iconic scenes of the history of antislavery with vivid emotional charge, and borrowing concepts and argumentation from antislavery rhetoric; all these activities were geared towards establishing an affiliation with antislavery and shaping the memory of the earlier movement for new purposes. As conceptualised here, memory work is not primarily a recuperative effort, but begins in the present. Memory work can be observed in journalists' reports or the representations of eyewitnesses and involved actors themselves. It can even be seen in prefigurative work of an event, such as the language use, active circulation and design of the announcement of an event, linking it to and distinguishing it from previous events, and cueing in certain collectives and not others. These early mediations are an important site of remembrance and forgetting; artistic and representational choices are in large part driven by memory, as they are guided by interpretive schemes and representational conventions put

in place by representations of earlier events (Erll 2009; Zelizer 2010; Rigney 2016).

Memory work, then, is not performed on the past, but on the material traces and mediations circulating in the present and a productive way to analyse it is to observe how agents intervene in the assemblages on which shared memories rely (Tamboukou 2016; Chidgey 2018; 2020). References to and representations of the past do not produce memory in isolation, but in networks of mediations. Circulating representations work together in assemblages to produce a sense of an authentic past, a 'highly subjective, highly selective reconstruction' with meaning and affective significance for the present (Erll 2011, 8). Astrid Erll and Stephanie Wodianka emphasise that such 'plurimedial constellations' have an important social dimension, as they exercise their power through 'the way they are produced, received, discussed and handed on' (2008, 37; see also Basu 2009; 2011; Erll 2014). Analysing how particular assemblages of works and references produce memory means looking at the relationships between their different elements, as each contribution to the conversation on a certain memory represents a potential intervention in the whole. Chidgey has emphasised the scalable nature of assemblages, seeing even 'protest and social movements as assemblages themselves, which extend into the past and reach into the future', as they 'leave a multitude of artefacts, traces, expressions and potentials that can be reorganised and revisited as political resources in future times, when the conditions are viable' (2018, 49).

Throughout, this study maps the collective assemblages of memories of antislavery on which women's rights advocates acted. By considering memory work as acting on particular assemblages, one sees more easily which memories were amplified, which twisted beyond recognition, and which collectively forgotten. Moreover, placing the individual efforts of memory agents against the background of the wider assemblage of memories of antislavery current in particular historical contexts renders visible the creative impulse of agents. For instance, in Chapter 3, seeing how the memory work of a circle of feminist internationalists in Paris contrasted with the 'public memory' of abolition promoted by Republican officials, helped to direct the analysis of the former's efforts towards the alternative archives on which they relied. By contrast, the analysis of the memories shaped collectively within women's rights periodicals helped to pinpoint and dissect processes of collective forgetting across sectional lines in Chapter 4.

ROADMAP

The rapid opening up of new channels of public communication for women agitators over the course of the nineteenth century takes this analysis from fiction and travel writing in the first half of the nineteenth century, through the ephemeral press and correspondence networks leading up to and following 1848, to stable periodical platforms from the late 1860s onwards, and finally to academic and popular histories after the 1880s. As the intricacies of agitation are better understood in terms of the specific discursive arenas in which agents operate than in a blanket notion of a single public discourse, these chapters study how their writings in different media interact with the memories that are prominent in the different periods, as well as their broader intellectual context and specific opportunities. The chapters seek both to show the continuities in the recall of antislavery across decades and media and how advocates in different periods relied on very different conceptions of slavery and meanings of abolition. Chapters 2 and 3 are oriented towards individual efforts in memory work, while Chapters 4 and 5 deal with memory work as a collective process.

The antislavery campaign was in many ways the cradle of the constellation of reform movements and ideologies that are usefully understood as part of a nineteenth-century global 'reform culture' (Barton Scott 2016, 2). Chapter 1 surveys the cultural legacy of antislavery among reformers, as it offers a typology of the main motifs and dominant memories. To set the stage for the following chapters, it discusses how abolitionism served both as an organised and as a cultural movement in the US, the UK, France, the Low Countries and the German states. It argues that though organisational efforts were insignificant compared to the unprecedented scale of popular mobilisation achieved in the Atlantic World, the cultural impact in Continental Europe – divided into a pre- and post-*Uncle Tom's Cabin* phase – was lasting and diverse. This impact was twofold: it lay both in the depictions of the institution of slavery that the movement promoted (in a coordinated fashion) and in the way abolitionism itself came to serve as a venerated model.

Chapter 2 uses three works of (autobiographical) fiction, George Sand's *Indiana* (1832), Luise Mühlbach's *Aphra Behn* (1849), and Flora Tristan's *Pérégrinations d'une paria* (1838 [2004]), to explore how, in the 1830s and 1840s, Continental women's rights advocates were working out a potent contradiction between the sentimental theme of women's supposed moral influence and their practical powerlessness – the

contradiction between their 'sisterhood' with either bourgeois reformers or with the enslaved. This theme has been described as a productive paradox in American and British women's rights argumentations of the period and this chapter shows that, building on the cultural influence of antislavery, women's rights advocates in German and French communities were engrossed by it as well. The prominence of this theme in the work of three prominent figures in the literary and social reformist circles of their day is evidence of a broader cultural preoccupation, which the cases discussed in the later chapters built on. The chapter identifies different motifs and memories of antislavery, including the late eighteenth-century sugar boycott by British women.

Chapter 3 offers a materially focused consideration of the practical minutiae of memory work. It considers the collaboration between English Quaker Anne Knight (1786–1862) and Parisian socialist Jeanne Deroin (1805–1894), which began in the aftermath of the events in Paris in 1848. The chapter argues that following the French Revolution and abolition of 1848, Knight and Deroin, both ardent women's rights advocates, promoted memories of antislavery to inform the usable past of a transnational women's rights community. Through their transatlantic networking, their circle compiled and made available an archive of memories and materials of Garrisonian abolitionism, reprinting, for instance, William Lloyd Garrison's declaration of principles for the National Anti-Slavery Convention from 1833. By circulating these materials, they promoted a cosmopolitan outlook on abolition and women's emancipation which contrasted with the national orientation of Parisian women's rights colleagues and that of prominent Republicans, who sought to commemorate abolition as a victory of French Republicanism.

Showcasing the developments of memory work over decades, the chapter follows the collection and circulation of materials from Knight's correspondence with other abolitionists in the late 1830s onwards, which she brought into Parisian circles, through Knight and Deroin's women's rights advocacy in Paris after the revolution of 1848, when they advocated for the abolition of privileges of 'sex and race'. It looks, finally, to the circulation of abolitionist materials and references to antislavery in Deroin's yearly *Almanach des femmes*, which she produced from her political exile in London in the early 1850s. The chapter pays special attention to these almanacs, essentially collections of reprinted texts, which it sees as the primary expression of an alternative archive for social movements, modelled on radical antislavery. The chapter gives an

account of collaborative memory work that crossed national and generational divides. In its suggestion that memory work played a key role in the different imaginings of women's local and international communities, the chapter casts new light on the transnational dimensions of the eruption of feminist activity around 1848, as well as on the motivations of key historical actors.

Chapter 4 shifts focus from individual efforts to collective processes. It studies memories of antislavery in the periodical press devoted to the advocacy of women's rights, which developed into a stable feature of women's rights agitation in the 1860s. From the 1860s onwards, debates on the meaning and desirability of women's rights, under the collective nomer of the 'Woman Question', slowly became a regular feature of public debate and advocates organised into official collectives, which created platforms for the discussion of women's rights. By this point, public engagement with memories of antislavery had also widened, as the popularity of Harriet Beecher Stowe's antislavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) and subsequent news coverage of the American Civil War gave American slavery prominence in the European collective imagination.

The chapter studies an indicative sample of French, Dutch, and German periodicals which engaged closely with the question of women's rights from a range of ideological perspectives. Under the influence of key texts like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women*, memories of antislavery became a diverse resource from which women's rights advocates reprinted and retold selectively, tracing and reinforcing particular trends in remembrance which were salient to different ideological outlooks on the Woman Question. The chapter seeks to capture the complexity of the transnational conversation and the memory work performed by clustering individual references across periodicals. It identifies five commonplaces in the recall of antislavery. These clusters of intensified remembrance and debate appear across national contexts and the chapter explores how the memory work performed in these periodicals presented a usable past for the transnational movement for women's rights. The chapter finally reflects on what parts of the history of antislavery these commonplaces left out, which is as important as tracing the narratives that were promoted.

Finally, Chapter 5 studies memory work in the international movement for women's suffrage at the turn of the century. The 1880s saw the rise of official international women's rights advocacy organisations, which became increasingly focused on the campaign for women's

suffrage. The chapter explores how, in the quest to legitimate their movement, feminist internationalists produced a body of comparative histories which narrated the rise of the feminist movement as a transnational phenomenon. As historians like Leila Rupp and Mineke Bosch have shown, movement leaders formulated a powerful concept of international 'sisterhood' which implicitly relied on a narrow conception of the nature of the struggle for women's rights and its advocates. Focusing on retellings of the 'antislavery origin myth' of organised feminism, this chapter shows how the memory work performed in these 'movement histories' contributed to this process and gives a sense of the life of these histories, tracing their reception in different popular media of the time, including national exhibitions.

The chapter follows the travels of the 'antislavery origin myth' across borders and media. This increasingly popular origin story took women's exclusion from the 1840 World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840 as the starting point of the organised women's movement. This interpretation was promulgated by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony's influential *History of Woman Suffrage* (first volume published in 1881), a magisterial undertaking of memory work, which they actively circulated among European colleagues. However, a close examination of individual retellings shows that the European adoption of this foundational myth was not only the result of the push factor of Stanton and Anthony's prominence in Europe, but also local pull factors. European writers used the story to establish a usable past for liberal middle-class feminist internationalists. In doing so, and to their own ends, European writers built upon and reinvested in the racial antagonisms of the American account.

Taken together, these chapters demonstrate that the cultural memory of antislavery was potent in European reform circles and that women's rights advocates worked to make the history of slavery and abolition part of the history of women's emancipation. They show that this memory work was part of a culture of internationalism within the women's movement. Memories of antislavery were used to establish a usable past for a transnational movement, encouraging women to develop affiliation with other women across national borders and develop shared conceptualisations both of women's subjection and of the nature and means of their emancipation. This affiliation could be based both on a shared conception of common cause with the enslaved, or on a shared assertion of difference, or even on competition and hostility. On the whole, the study sketches a pattern of convergence (Chapters 2 and 3) and divergence

(Chapters 4 and 5) in the attitude of the international women's movement towards the cause of the enslaved and of African Americans. The chapters document the discursive complexities, affective charges, and tactical advantages of convergence as well as divergence, showing how both solidarity and antagonism were creative driving factors in the development of a transnational usable past.