

# INTRODUCTION

## Gendered memories and histories

In 2016, after considerable debate and controversy, the US Treasury announced that an image of African-American activist Harriet Tubman (c. 1892–1913) would appear on its twenty-dollar note from the year 2020, the centenary of women's suffrage in the United States. At the time of writing there are no women on the current suite of US banknotes, although some had appeared on the currency in the past.<sup>1</sup> The choice of which historical figures to place on postage stamps, banknotes, and coins is an indicator of what is deemed worthy of commemoration by a particular government. Monarchies will often display the reigning monarch – for Britain and its former colonies, it is Queen Elizabeth II who appears on stamps and currency.<sup>2</sup> Where historical figures are chosen – as in the case of the US – these have overwhelmingly been men. In France, by contrast, we see a woman; not a 'real' woman but rather the allegorical figure of 'Marianne', who symbolises the French nation. Marianne appears on French postage stamps and currency.

As Marina Warner has shown, public representations of women are often as allegorical figures, such as 'Marianne'.<sup>3</sup> In art and in statuary, female figures represent liberty, justice, revolution, charity. Under a system categorised as 'bronze patriarchy', it is less common to see public representations of actual women.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Eric Hobsbawm has labelled the Western world's monumental public statuary 'an open-air museum of national history as seen through great men'.<sup>5</sup> Female monarchs are an exception. A statue of a monarch has a dual function – a depiction of an actual individual and a personification or symbol of the nation.<sup>6</sup> Across the former British empire, statues of Queen Victoria (1819–1901) are ubiquitous, but statues of women who are memorialized for their achievements are less common. In this book, we trace the cultural memories of women who are known for their actions. We are interested in activists – women who tried to transform their society in some way; women who did something more than serve as abstract symbols or allegories. History and memory are gendered. It is these gendered dimensions of history and memory that we explore in this book.

## 2 Introduction

As a way of illustrating the concerns of this book, in this introductory chapter we survey some recent controversies over remembering women's activism, such as the abovementioned controversy over Harriet Tubman. These controversies allow us to see memory in the making, as different actors test competing claims for memorialization and argue about the relative legitimacy of particular male and female figures, white and non-white, colonizers and colonized, capitalist and anti-capitalist, feminist and anti-feminist, or those who do not clearly fit these categories. First, however, we survey some ways of thinking about gendered histories and memories.

### Mutable memories

Our case studies demonstrate that memory is never fixed. Particular figures move in and out of national or collective memory, or the interpretations of their significance may change according to contemporary concerns.<sup>7</sup> As Healy and Tumarkin remind us, with reference to scholarship on contested memories in post-*dictadura* Argentina, 'memories compete fiercely with each other for space, legitimacy and recognition'.<sup>8</sup> Michael Rothberg, however, challenges this 'competitive' view of collective memory, arguing that we should rather consider memory as '*multidirectional*: as subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing, as productive and not privative' (emphasis in original).<sup>9</sup> Astrid Erll prefers the notion of 'cultural memory', defined as 'the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts'.<sup>10</sup> Despite their differences, each of these authors emphasizes the fluidity and mutability of memory.

In talking about history and memory we need to make a distinction between the 'past' (what happened), 'history' (what has been retained in the historical record), and 'memory' (a society's collective acts of remembering). We might distinguish between individual and collective, private and public memory. These categories, however, impinge on each other.

Not strictly separable from either history or representation, memory nonetheless captures simultaneously the individual, embodied, and lived side *and* the collective, social, and constructed side of our relations to the past [emphasis in original].<sup>11</sup>

What we know about the past depends on what has been retained in the historical record. Subaltern historians, indigenous historians, women's historians, feminist historians, and gay, lesbian, and queer historians have questioned the structure and content of the official historical record and have engaged in practices of 'reading against the grain' in an attempt to expose absences and search for new kinds of historical evidence.<sup>12</sup> In this book, while we expose absences in gendered memory, we also show how memories are constantly being reinterpreted, often diverging in significant ways from the initial acts of remembering.<sup>13</sup>

Many have questioned the very notion of collective memory for the implications it carries of homogenous or uncontested remembering.<sup>14</sup> At the very least we can say that memories are contested. Different groups have often engaged in different forms of memory-making about the same events, such as opposing sides in the Partition of India, multiple actors in the Irish struggle for independence, different ‘sides’ in the Asia-Pacific War.<sup>15</sup>

Pierre Nora’s (1931–2001) work on ‘sites of memory’ (*les lieux de mémoire*) has been influential in memory studies.<sup>16</sup> His work has, though, been criticized for largely focusing on the nation-state and its officially sanctioned sites of memory.<sup>17</sup> It has been pointed out that this view of national cultures is based on ‘the assumption of an isomorphy between territory, social formation, mentalities and memories’.<sup>18</sup> Erll explains that

there are too many mnemonic phenomena that do not come into our field of vision with the ‘default’ combination of territorial and national collectivity as the main framework of culture memory – but which may be seen with the transcultural lens. There are the many fuzzy edges of national memory, for example, the sheer plethora of *lieux de mémoire* that have emerged through travel, trade, war, and colonialism. There is the great internal heterogeneity of cultural remembering within the nation-state. Different social classes, generations, ethnicities, religious communities, and subcultures all generate their own, but in many ways intersecting, frameworks of memory.<sup>19</sup>

In attempting to go beyond national frames for understanding memory, Erll proposes the concept of ‘travelling memory’:

I claim that all cultural memory must ‘travel’, be kept in motion, in order to ‘stay alive’, to have an impact both on individual minds and social formations. Such travel consists only partly in movement across and beyond territorial and social boundaries. On a more fundamental level, it is the ongoing exchange of information between individuals and minds and media which first of all generates what Halbwachs termed collective memory. ‘Travel’ is therefore an expression of the principal logic of memory: its genesis and existence through movement.<sup>20</sup>

These insights are particularly pertinent for this volume, where we are often concerned with the memories of activist movements which have operated in a transnational frame. We also look at forms of memory as they change over time, thereby demonstrating the notion of cultural memory in motion.

In the age of globalization,

[m]oney moves, products move, people move. Signs, symbols and representations also move. With new communications technologies, images can

## 4 Introduction

be flashed around the globe instantaneously, but with diverse forms of local reception.<sup>21</sup>

As we discuss in detail in a case study of the Rana Plaza factory disaster, we can trace the rapid processes of memory-making facilitated by the internet. We follow Huyssen who argues that ‘globalization and the strong reassessment of the respective national, regional, or local past will have to be thought together’.<sup>22</sup>

Our explorations are also informed by the field of gender and history. Joan Wallach Scott, in her classic article on gender as a useful category of historical analysis, defined gender as ‘a constitutive element of relationships based on the perceived differences between the sexes, and . . . a primary way of signifying relationships of power’.<sup>23</sup> Our book focuses on how women activists have been remembered. We have chosen to focus on women activists on the grounds that they have been less well remembered than their male counterparts in the historical record and in collective memory. This discussion is situated in a consciousness of the gendered nature of the historical record, the structured relationships and power differentials between men and women in society, and the cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity which inform and shape our understandings of history and memory.

Gender interacts with other dimensions of difference and their associated power differentials: ethnicity, racialized positioning, descent from colonizers or colonized, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, linguistic background, ability and disability, indigeneity, age. The interactions between these dimensions of difference necessitate a theory of intersectionality.<sup>24</sup> An individual is never just a ‘woman’ or a ‘man’, or other gendered identities. Rather, identities are positioned in the intersections of these different categories, and these intersectional dynamics may change according to situation and across time. As noted above, different but intersecting frameworks of memory arise out of memories generated by ‘[d]ifferent social classes, generations, ethnicities, religious communities, and subcultures’.<sup>25</sup>

### Activism and history

History is important to political movements for several reasons. In some cases, activists look to the past for models of successful political campaigns which can inspire future activism: the abolition of slavery, the granting of suffrage, successful strike activity, independence from colonial domination. In other cases, the past is seen as the very thing that needs to be transcended, such as when past customs are dismissed as ‘feudal’.<sup>26</sup>

History can also demonstrate that the status quo need not be taken for granted. In the case of feminist movements, historical research has been important in demonstrating that the gendered relationships in society at any one time are particular to that time and place. If men and women had different kinds of relationships in the past, then it is possible to imagine alternative forms of relationships in the future.<sup>27</sup>

Writing the history of activism involves ‘a multi-layered narrative which draws on the documents of the past, a dialogue with other historians, and an engagement with the ways in which . . . activists and historians have attempted to understand their own past, and the ways in which they have deployed their understandings of the past in addressing the issues of their own time’.<sup>28</sup>

As we shall see, activists are also engaged in making their own histories. In Britain, the suffragists were actively involved in documenting their own movement. As early as 1928, Ray Strachey (1887–1940) wrote *The Cause*, the history of the women’s suffrage movement.<sup>29</sup> In 1920s Japan, Hosoi Wakizō’s (1897–1925) book *Jokō Aishi* (The Pitiful History of the Female Factory Workers) dramatized the exploitative conditions of female textile workers at that time. His book soon became a classic text in labour history. Within patriarchal societies where their contributions and challenges were undervalued, feminists were often compelled to document their own movements in the attempt to preserve their own histories, with varying degrees of success.

Because we are writing about activists – those who challenged the status quo of their society and their times – their activities have not necessarily become matters of public or collective memory. Or, there might be contestation about how they are to be remembered. Héléne Bowen Raddeker has written about Japanese anarchist Kanno Suga (1881–1911) and how her image has been refracted through the concerns of male activists in the anarchist and other leftist movements. Kanno was the first woman in Japan to be executed for the crime of *lèse majesté*, along with eleven of her male anarchist comrades. Until relatively recently, much of what we knew about Kanno was refracted through the lens of her disgruntled former lover, Arahata Kanson (1887–1981) and his allegations of her supposed sexual improprieties. Raddeker argues that there is a tendency to ‘attribute a greater significance to sexual relationships in the life, career and subjectivity of female historical subjects than of male subjects’.<sup>30</sup>

Women and men have different relationships with the nation-state. This has repercussions for how women activists are remembered, and whether or not they are integrated into public or collective memory. As numerous scholars of gender and nationalism have attested, the nationalist project overwhelmingly cast women in a reductive symbolic role; the nation as allegorical woman who relied on a masculine protector.<sup>31</sup> Nationalist histories, then, tended to obscure, or even omit, acknowledgment of the participation of women in nationalist movements and nation-building projects.

Women active in violent anti-colonial movements have been further omitted from narratives of national liberation. Throughout the twentieth century, militant women involved in Ireland’s campaign for autonomy were written out of the national narrative. Recollections of the emasculated, colonized man’s past need for a female warrior’s assistance form an uncomfortable and embarrassing aspect of the new postcolonial nation’s memory; if it forms part of that collective memory at all.<sup>32</sup> The process of recovering the histories of women who participated in Ireland’s anti-colonial campaigns only gathered speed when feminist pressure was

## 6 Introduction

exerted as the postcolonial Irish nation prepared for centenary commemorations of the revolutionary years (1912–1922).

Moreover, a past nationalist female activist may occupy a different position in community-derived or official memory if that nation is unstable or the nation-building process still ongoing. Memories of female nationalists occupy a different place in the collective consciousness north of the Irish border. In Northern Ireland, where violence threatens to erupt despite successful peace negotiations, public murals depicting the exploits of past female activists spur ongoing politicization.

There can also be gaps between individual and collective memory. While thousands upon thousands of women in the Asia-Pacific region harboured private memories of wartime sexual abuse, their stories took decades to become part of collective memory, and even today this memory is contested. Women's private memories of encounters in the military facilities would also be different from the private memories of the military personnel involved.<sup>33</sup> An important part of the movement for redress, as we shall see below, has been bringing these privatized memories into public discourse, thereby transforming the survivors into activists.

### Mnemonic practices

Erlil has argued that, in tracing memory, we should consider the 'carriers, media, contents, practices and forms' involved. For us, the concepts of mnemonic practices, sites, and media are particularly useful.<sup>34</sup>

Mnemonic practices, including rituals, commemorations, demonstrations, and place naming, are intended to nurture a cohesive collective memory. The very diversity of societies means, though, that however didactic these practices are, they will always be polysemic. Some of their associated meanings, as Brian Osborne reminds us, will be other than those intended.<sup>35</sup> Rothberg sees the public sphere as

a malleable discursive space in which groups do not simply articulate established positions but actually come into being through their dialogical interactions with others. The subjects and spaces of the public are open to continual reconstruction.<sup>36</sup>

The past does not simply evolve into the present; it is socially constructed through archives, museums, monuments, and commemorative practices. It is always being reconstructed through the lens of the present, and can never be dissociated from the power dynamics of that present.<sup>37</sup>

Commemorative rituals, such as demonstrations of celebration or of protest, form palpable but transient ways of inscribing memory. Being encouraged to share the celebration of a past event, person, or movement is understood to encourage group cohesion; to foster or inculcate a shared sense of perpetuating a collective memory. Sometimes, these events are unplanned, spontaneous commemorations. Within hours of the World Trade Center tragedy in New York on 11 September

2001, commemorative murals, flowers, placards, flag-raising, and public gatherings constituted informal attempts to mark out time and space as focal points for remembering, grieving, and mourning. While some objects of commemoration invite division or contestation, death and mourning rarely do, being widely understood concepts and practices.<sup>38</sup> As we shall see, this has implications for understandings of the memory of tragedies like the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911 in New York and of the labour activism prompted by that event.

These commemorations are often strategically planned to not only remember a historic event or process but to channel that shared memory into activism in the present and future. Such mnemonic practices often revolve around anniversaries.

International Women's Day was established in the early twentieth century and revived in the mid-twentieth century.<sup>39</sup> This day, 8 March, often provides a convenient frame for announcements related to gender equity.<sup>40</sup> The anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December) also provides a useful temporal marker. Women's suffrage was gained in some colonies (which would later become states) of Australia and some states of the USA in the 1890s, in New Zealand in 1893, and in the nation-state of Australia in 1901. The centenaries of these dates provided opportunities for commemoration. We also approach centenaries of women's suffrage in the United Kingdom (now in 2018 and later in 2028) and the USA (2020). Similarly, anniversaries of the births and deaths of significant historical figures provide opportunities for commemoration and memory-making.

Street marching forms one type of mnemonic practice that female activists laid claim to through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Previously, these public expressions of solidarity had been employed by men to 'proclaim their collective agency'.<sup>41</sup> When feminists took to the streets in the campaign for the vote in the early decades of the twentieth century they appropriated a hitherto masculine memory of protest.<sup>42</sup> The pageantry of these suffrage parades continues to capture the public imagination today. When an estimated five million people across 81 countries participated in 673 'Women's Marches' in January 2017 – marches initiated to oppose the victory of Donald J. Trump in the US Presidential election, but which soon broadened to champion women's rights more generally – they drew on memories of earlier feminists' public demonstrations.<sup>43</sup> Contemporary women's marches echo both the practices and the demands of the earlier feminist campaigns. Yet they also create their own traditions and frame their own demands. They form new links between the women's protest movements of the past and those of the present.

## Mnemonic sites

We are also interested in the physical sites of memory, *les lieux de mémoire*.<sup>44</sup> Official memories are made in museums, memorials, plaques, and acts of naming – the names of streets, buildings, or public squares. In our research for this book, we visited museums and memorials, but also walked the streets of Seoul, Taipei,

Tokyo, Shanghai, Nanjing, Hangzhou, Belfast, Dublin, Sligo, Manchester, London, Adelaide, Canberra, Melbourne, Glendale, Seneca Falls, and New York, looking at statues and memorial plaques.

Monuments, streets, buildings, and parks are material sites which evoke specific kinds of meaning. Monuments focus attention on particular places, events, and people. Osborne explains that the desire for commemorative statues reached its peak throughout Europe and North America in the period from 1870 to 1914. In a rapidly changing world, monuments were used to anchor 'collective remembering' in material sites which were then used to celebrate a common memory and identity.<sup>45</sup> This high point in statuary during the peak years of modern European and American imperialism explains the dominance of monuments to 'great men'. After the ubiquitous memorials to the First World War, such public homages to past glory went out of fashion, gaudy remnants only to be retained by dictatorships.

Through the twentieth century, the grandiose and towering statue tended to be replaced by the much less ostentatious commemorative plaque. Such plaques commemorating individual events, places, and people and affixed to specific material sites act as markers of historical significance. Being state-approved if not state-directed, such memorialization reflects ideological priorities at the time of decision-making. Not surprisingly, gender biases continue but arguably more women are commemorated in these less showy historical markers than in bronze and marble statuary.<sup>46</sup> Today, however, we are witnessing a revived interest in statuary, if only as part of intersecting moves to correct the gendered and racialized biases of past acts of remembering. In this book, we look at various forms of public memory.<sup>47</sup>

As we travelled, we also looked at sites which had not yet been officially memorialized, such as a building in Shanghai said to have housed a wartime military 'brothel' and therefore of much significance in the memory of militarized sexual abuse and the subsequent activism on this issue.<sup>48</sup> We looked at unofficial, or community-derived, memorials, too – memorials that are transient in character, such as the political murals painted on the walls of private homes in West Belfast. According to social anthropologist, Neil Jarman, during times of conflict these forms of community expression are recognized as significant features of 'the local culture of war'. They turn public spaces into politicized places, serving as potent vehicles for ideals, ideologies, symbolism, and propaganda. If they survive, they become remnants of that wartime culture, absorbed into the memory of the conflict.<sup>49</sup> Whether during or after the conflict, they tend to become objects of curiosity, at least for international tourists keen to read history through the walls of the war-torn cities they visit.

We explore museums as sites of memory. These include virtual museums and memorials on the internet, as well as physical museums. As more material culture relevant to feminist histories makes it into the collections of established museums, questions abound as to what readings of women's history are made possible by these selections of artefacts. Can objects exemplifying everyday female lives – overalls, yoghurt-makers, and spanners, for example – comprise a feminist material



culture? Can they offer alternative versions of, and ways of engaging with, women's pasts?<sup>50</sup> Alison Bartlett and Margaret Henderson remind us that objects, as a 'mnemonic bridge', help us maintain established collective identities or 'mnemonic communities' and bring them into the present and future. To neglect feminist culture, then, is to potentially limit understandings of feminism and render mute the history of feminist activism.<sup>51</sup>

There are differences in approaches to remembering women's history and women's activism via museum displays across national sites. In 2014, Senior Historian at the Museum of Australian Democracy, Libby Stewart, argued that remembering Australian women's history through museums has been subject to certain limitations. It has not been standard cultural practice in Australia 'to build museums or develop permanent displays devoted to women's lives, as is the practice in many other parts of the world'.<sup>52</sup> In some ways this reflects the culture of early Australian feminist activism. Australian suffragists did not embrace public spectacle in the way that their counterparts in Britain did.<sup>53</sup> Museum displays of the Australian section of what was a transnational feminist movement reflect the relative paucity of suffrage memorabilia.<sup>54</sup> The abundance of suffrage ephemera in the UK means that permanent museum exhibits and heritage sites there are not so hampered.<sup>55</sup> Regional and cultural factors influence the range and diversity and permanence of displays of women's lives and their activism.

## Mnemonic media

Mnemonic practices can be performed in diverse media. These can include official histories, print media, popular culture, and increasingly, the internet. In this book, we take an inclusive view of the texts (in the broadest sense) which are involved in making memory. We also consider tourist memorabilia, banknotes (as noted above), and material culture. Activist movements generate their own texts in the form of posters, fliers, and handbills. Whether or not these ephemera are preserved affects what becomes part of the historical record and what becomes part of collective memory.

Popular culture is also important in producing collective memory. As we were writing this book, the film *Suffragette* prompted debate about how the movement for women's suffrage in Britain should be remembered.<sup>56</sup> The film's approach to the memory of the British women's suffrage campaign raised questions among academics and movie-goers alike about the ethics of selecting aspects of historical activism to portray in popular modes of cultural production. Critics raised concerns about giving equal weight to intersecting issues such as class, gender, and racialized positioning. Relatively few movies remembering feminist campaigns are made and fewer make it onto global cinema screens. The debate around *Suffragette* reminds us of the pressures placed on those producing popular histories of feminist activism to perform the impossible task of representing all the multi-layered components of what were intricate, varied, and contested forms of protest and activism. We discuss this in more detail in our first chapter on 'Suffragists and Suffragettes'.

## Feminist activism on social media

Social media campaigns have become a popular means of attempting to resurrect the memory of forgotten historical women. The process of voting online has been viewed as a democratizing process; a way of bypassing the restrictions and biases of state-orchestrated acts of remembering. Before the abovementioned 2015 campaign to place a woman on the US twenty-dollar bill, there was a movement in the UK to put a woman on a banknote. In 2013, feminist outrage was sparked when the governor of the Bank of England announced that he was replacing philanthropist Elizabeth Fry (1780–1845) with Winston Churchill (1874–1965) on the five-pound note. As it was, Fry was the only woman on English banknotes at the time apart from Queen Elizabeth II – a female figure who did not count, numerous feminist commentators asserted, because she had inherited her position rather than having achieved it meritoriously.<sup>57</sup> Feminist activist and journalist Caroline Criado-Perez obtained more than 36,000 online signatures in her endeavour to have a woman placed on British currency.<sup>58</sup> By May of that year, incoming Bank of England governor had confirmed that British writer, Jane Austen (1775–1817), would appear on the new ten-pound note.

These online actions to remember historical women have fuelled other forms of related activism. In November 2015, for example, while the US twenty-dollar bill was being discussed, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) launched its #TheReal10 and FightForFairPay campaigns to highlight continuing discrepancies not only between men's and women's rates of pay but also between women of different ethnicities.<sup>59</sup>

As a mnemonic practice, online or social media campaigning also has its downsides. While which woman would grace the new US bank note was still being debated, some feminists expressed distress that historical activists such as Tubman were being appropriated for state purposes. Tubman was an ex-slave who bravely and actively championed the emancipation of fellow slaves while also advocating the rights of fellow women. This led some to declare it an affront to her memory to think of putting a black woman on a US banknote. Such an action seemed to signal that America had achieved a 'post-racial' society which most commentators emphatically denied. Putting her likeness on a ten- or twenty-dollar bill would cheapen the memory of her activism. It would not 'fix the problematic political underrepresentation of black women'. Instead, it would mask it.<sup>60</sup> The apparently democratic process of online campaigning to remember women activists had served to expose some of the more problematic issues of gendered and racialized memory. The fragility of consensus around this issue was revealed once more when Steven Mnuchin, Treasury Secretary in the Trump administration, 'declined to endorse the plan' in August 2017.<sup>61</sup>

This form of mnemonic practice also revealed a darker side to conducting feminist campaigns via social media. Rather than moving society towards gender equality – which arguably it did to a degree – paradoxically it worked to expose ongoing gender inequalities and power differentials. Writing for the *Guardian* in

2013, journalist Zoe Williams declared that campaigns such as those for women on banknotes had demonstrated that contemporary feminist campaigns were robust forms of protest. The situation was ‘better than it was in the 90s or the noughties; it is more determined, its weapons are more lethal; it is Buffy to yesteryear’s Mary Poppins’.<sup>62</sup>

She also contended:

Two things are unarguable about this century; the first is that it is more sexist than the end of the last, raunch and postmodernism having converged to normalise the presentation of women as meat; the second is that the internet has had profound consequences for privacy and, inevitably, personal freedom.<sup>63</sup>

The internet facilitated campaigns to put historic women on national banknotes, but it also led to a violation of the privacy of countless feminist activists. Over 36,000 people might have responded to Criado-Perez’s feminist social media campaign, but she was also subjected to a violent sexist backlash, being inundated with abusive and ‘menacing’ messages, some of a violent sexual nature that has so far led to the arrest and trial of multiple people.<sup>64</sup> Once again this demonstrates the contested nature of historical memory and mnemonic practices.

## The structure of this book

The book is organised around case studies in four main chapters. Our selected case studies come from the Asia-Pacific region (South, Southeast and East Asia, and Australia) and the Anglophone world (the USA, Ireland, Britain, and its former colonies). We trace both nation-based case studies and transnational studies. Activist movements often address the government of a particular nation-state, as in demands for votes for women. The movement for women’s suffrage, however, was from the beginning a transnational movement based on links between women across the world.<sup>65</sup>

The campaign for women’s suffrage was one of the longest-running and most spectacular feminist campaigns of the modern era. The movement’s flair and controversy captivated audiences at the time – proponents and opponents – and continues to capture the public imagination today. As expected, given the revolutionary nature of its demands, it was also a highly divisive movement. The militant actions of some members also render their memory threatening in an age when there is still a considerable degree of ambivalence about the militant woman. In the first of our four case study chapters, ‘Suffragists and Suffragettes’, we look at how suffragists across Britain, the USA, and Australia worked to document their own histories and attempted to preserve their own memory. We reach across national and regional sites to trace how their memory has been subsumed into national and regional narratives, such as those celebrating histories of radical protest or triumphant democracy. In doing so, we examine how female

activists who once disrupted or even terrorized their societies are remembered. We look at the processes through which radical women have been disarmed and domesticated according to the priorities of contemporary society.

In Chapter Two, ‘Revolutionary Nationalists’, we focus on the lives of two early twentieth-century feminist nationalists in two very different sites: Constance Markievicz (1868–1927) in Ireland and Qiu Jin (1875–1907) in China. Not only were both women writers and speakers of note, they were also armed warriors who fought alongside male revolutionaries to free their countries from oppressive regimes; one the British Empire and the other the Qing dynasty. While both were sentenced to death for their roles in failed nationalist uprisings, only Qiu Jin’s penalty was enacted. Markievicz had her death sentence commuted to life imprisonment. We examine how such contentious female figures have been remembered. As mentioned above, female revolutionaries tend to be omitted from nationalist narratives. This is particularly so in the case of those countries which won their independence via anti-colonial uprisings. Has this been the case for Qiu and Markievicz? Or has their memory been preserved only to be disarmed and domesticated? We further ask how Markievicz has been remembered in Northern Ireland, a site of ongoing instability, conflict, and unrest. Is there still a need for the potency of her memory as a female armed insurrectionist in a place where its legitimacy as a state is constantly under threat? These first two chapters focus on women’s activism in the past, and how the memories of such activism are mobilized in the present.

Women workers in textiles and the garment industry were often at the forefront of industrialization, and therefore the first to recognise the power of labour united against capital. In Chapter Three, ‘Workers’, we consider how the struggles of women workers have been remembered – at times as figures of pathos, at times as heroic figures. We commence with the Shirtwaist Triangle Factory Fire in New York in 1911, tracing how memories were being made in the print media of the time. We then move to the textile industry in Japan’s early industrialisation. We trace different modes of memory-making from the early-twentieth-century labour movement to the inscription of the Tomioka Silk Mill complex on UNESCO’s World Heritage List in 2014. We bring this discussion up to the present, as we consider the rapid making of memory on the internet in the context of the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh. Reporting on Rana Plaza prompted memories of other industrial catastrophes, taking us back to the memories of the Shirtwaist Triangle Factory Fire of 1911. In this chapter, we trace a genealogy of women workers’ struggles, from the early twentieth century to the present.

The final case study chapter, ‘Grandmothers’, considers the movement for redress for those who have suffered militarized sexual abuse. We make links between mid-twentieth-century movements to commemorate women who had been raped in war, and the late-twentieth-/early-twenty-first-century movement in support of survivors of militarized sexual abuse by the Japanese military in the Asia-Pacific War. The elderly survivors are known as the ‘Grandmothers’, as a term of respect. Their movement does not just commemorate wartime suffering,

but also the decades of activism around the issue, a campaign which is ongoing. A particular feature of this movement is the commemorative museums which have been created in recent years in several sites in East Asia. Commemorative statues have been replicated in East Asia, the US, Europe, and Australia, making this a truly transnational movement and highlighting the theme of ‘traveling memory’.<sup>66</sup>

These case studies demonstrate that memory is something which is constantly being remade. In the case of workers’ movements and the Grandmothers’ movements, we can often see a transformation from pathos to militancy. In the case of histories where national boundaries are redrawn, this affects what is remembered and what is forgotten. Where we are talking about transnational movements, the manifestation of memory will be subtly different in each local site. In our final chapter ‘Marching On’, we provide further reflections on the mobilization of memories of activism in the present. We make particular reference to the recent women’s marches which reference the activism of the past. Whatever the context, gender profoundly shapes memory.

## Notes

- 1 The US Mint reports that there were three real women on American coins that were in ordinary circulation (excluding a small number of women who appeared on commemorative notes), including: Helen Keller on the reverse of the Alabama quarter (2003); Sacagawea on the dollar coin (1999–Present); and Susan B. Anthony on the dollar coin (1979–1981). See ‘Women on the Nation’s Coins’, *United States Mint*, [www.usmint.gov/about\\_the\\_mint/fun\\_facts/?action=fun\\_facts8](http://www.usmint.gov/about_the_mint/fun_facts/?action=fun_facts8) (Date last accessed 11 August 2015).
- 2 By contrast, Japanese banknotes do not show the reigning monarch, but rather a series of historical figures. Women who appear on current Japanese banknotes are writer Murasaki Shikibu (c. 973–c. 1031) on the ¥2000 note from the year 2000 and writer Higuchi Ichiyō (1872–1896) on the ¥5000 note from 2004. The mythological Empress Jingū appeared on banknotes in the late nineteenth century.
- 3 Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (New York: Atheneum, 1985).
- 4 This term has emerged recently in a campaign to have the statue of a real woman erected in New York’s Central Park. All 22 statues of historical figures in the park are of men. Females are represented by a bronze Mother Goose, Alice in Wonderland, and Juliet. At the time of writing, campaigners were seeking funds for an Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony statue to be unveiled in time for the women’s suffrage centenary, 2020. See Erin Blakemore, ‘Central Park Has 22 Statues of Historical Figures. Every Single One is a Man’, *Smithsonian.com*, 22 July 2015, [www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/central-park-has-no-statues-real-women-180955973/](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/central-park-has-no-statues-real-women-180955973/) (Date last accessed 2 April 2017). In late 2017 it was announced that Central Park would have statues of suffragists Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. WITW Staff, ‘New York City to Build its First Statues to Women in Central Park’, *Women in the World*: <http://nytlive.nytimes.com/womenintheworld/2017/11/10/new-york-city-to-build-its-1st-statues-of-women-in-central-park/> (Date last accessed 21 December 2017). Other cities have launched similar campaigns. Manchester in England, for example, has launched the WoManchester campaign (for WomanManchester). The campaign website explains that at present there are 17 statues in the city. Only one is a woman and that is Queen Victoria. See WoManchester Statue Project, [www.womanchesterstatue.org/](http://www.womanchesterstatue.org/) (Date last accessed 2 April 2017). At the time of writing, plans for a statue of Emmeline Pankhurst have

been approved with the expectation that it will be unveiled in St Peter's Square, Manchester, by the end of 2018. See Sam Yarwood, 'Emmeline is Coming Home – Plans for Statue of Suffragette in St Peter's Square Approved', *Manchester Evening News*, 9 February 2018, <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/emmeline-pankhurst-suffragette-statue-manchester-14265979> (Date last accessed 27 May 2018).

- 5 Eric Hobsbawm, 'Foreword', in *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators. 1930–45*, eds David Elliott, Dawn Ades, Tim Benton and Iain Boyd White (London: Thames and Hudson 1995), p. 13; quoted in Brian S. Osborne, 'Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration: Putting Identity in its Place', *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (2001), pp. 39–77.
- 6 The figure of the monarch as allegorical figure often appears in political cartoons. Anne Helmreich, 'Domesticating Britannia: Representations of the Nation in Punch, 1870–1880', in *Art, Nation and Gender: Ethnic Landscapes, Myths and Mother-Figures*, eds Tricia Sighle Cusack and Breathnach-Lynch (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003) pp. 15–28.
- 7 The notion of 'collective memory' can be traced back to the writings of Maurice Halbwachs. Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, translated by Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992 [1925]).
- 8 Chris Healy and Maria Tumarkin, 'Social Memory and Historical Injustice: Introduction', *Memory Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (2011), p. 10.
- 9 Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 3.
- 10 Astrid Erll, 'Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction' in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, eds Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning in collaboration with Sara B. Young (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), p. 2.
- 11 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 4.
- 12 On 'reading against the grain', see Annette Kuhn, *Women's Pictures: Feminism and Cinema* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), p. 15; Nupur Chaudhuri, Sherry J. Katz and Mary Elizabeth Perry, 'Introduction', in *Contesting Archives: Finding Women in the Sources*, eds Nupur Chaudhuri, Sherry J. Katz and Mary Elizabeth Perry (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), p. xv.
- 13 Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*, Second Edition (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 7–8.
- 14 Andreas Huyssen, 'Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia', *Public Culture*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2000), p. 28; Henry L. Roediger and James V. Wertsch, 'Creating a New Discipline of Memory Studies', *Memory Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2008), p. 18.
- 15 On the partition of India, see Ritu Menon, *Borders and Boundaries: How Women Experienced the Partition of India* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998). Contested memories in Ireland and in East Asia will be discussed in several of our case study chapters below.
- 16 Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*', *Representations*, No. 16 (Spring 1989), pp. 7–25.
- 17 Astrid Erll, 'Travelling Memory', *Parallax*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (2011), pp. 6–7.
- 18 Erll, 'Travelling Memory', p. 7; Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, translated by Assenka Oksiloff (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006 [2001]).
- 19 Erll, 'Travelling Memory', p. 8.
- 20 Erll, 'Travelling Memory', p. 12.
- 21 Vera Mackie and Mark Pendleton, 'On the Move: Globalisation and Culture in the Asia-Pacific Region', *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, No. 23 (January 2010) [http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue23/mackie\\_pendleton.htm](http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue23/mackie_pendleton.htm) (Date last accessed 14 April 2017).
- 22 Huyssen, 'Present Pasts', p. 27.
- 23 Joan Wallach Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', in *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), p. 42. This was originally published in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 5 (1986).

- 24 Kimberlé Crenshaw, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics', *The University of Chicago Legal Forum*, Vol. 140 (January 1989), pp. 139–167; Kimberlé Crenshaw, 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence Against Women of Colour', *Stanford Law Review*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (1991), pp. 1241–1299.
- 25 Erll, 'Travelling Memory', p. 8.
- 26 See, for example, the discussion of 'feudal' attitudes in socialist debates on the 'woman question' in early twentieth century Japan. Vera Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 73–98.
- 27 See the debates on the existence of matrilineal or matriarchal societies in the past in Annette Kuhn and AnnMarie Wolpe eds, *Feminism and Materialism: Women and Modes of Production* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978). See also the work of Japanese anarchist feminist historian, Takamure Itsue (1894–1964) who looked to the past for models of societies which valued women. Takamure's work has been surveyed in E. P. Tsurumi, 'Feminism and Anarchism in Japan: Takamure Itsue 1894–1964', *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1985), pp. 2–19.
- 28 Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan*, p. 12.
- 29 Ray Strachey, *The Cause: A Short History of the Women's Movement in Great Britain* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1928).
- 30 Hélène Bowen Raddeker, 'A Woman of Ill Fame: Reconfiguring the Historical Reputation and Legacy of Kanno Suga', in *Japan and the High Treason Incident*, eds Masako Gavin and Ben Middleton (Oxford: Routledge, 2013), p. 92. See also Hélène Bowen Raddeker, *Patriarchal Fictions, Patricidal Fantasies: Treacherous Women of Imperial Japan* (London: Routledge, 1997).
- 31 See Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias eds, *Woman, Nation, State* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1989); Sylvia Walby, 'Woman and Nation', *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, Vol. 32, Nos. 1–2 (1992), pp. 81–100; Nira Yuval-Davis, 'Gender and Nation', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (1993), pp. 621–632; Anne McClintock, 'Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family', *Feminist Review*, No. 44 (1993), pp. 61–80.
- 32 For an example of the study of historical amnesia as applied to women formerly active in anti-colonial nationalist movements, see Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: Zed Books, 1986).
- 33 Vera Mackie, 'Sexual Violence, Silence, and Human Rights Discourse: The Emergence of the Military Prostitution Issue', in *Human Rights and Gender Politics: Asia-Pacific Perspectives*, eds Anne-Marie Hilsdon, Martha Macintyre, Vera Mackie and Maila Stivens (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 37–59.
- 34 David Lowe and Tony Joel use the term 'mnemonic techniques'. David Lowe and Tony Joel, *Remembering the Cold War* (Oxford: Routledge, 2013), p. 8.
- 35 Osborne, 'Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration'.
- 36 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 5.
- 37 Osborne, 'Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration'.
- 38 Osborne, 'Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration'.
- 39 Temma Kaplan, 'On the Socialist Origins of International Women's Day', *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1985), pp. 163–171; The University of Chicago, 'About IWD', *International Women's Day*, 2017 <https://iwd.uchicago.edu/gallery/about-iwd> (Date last accessed 14 April 2017).
- 40 The European Commission chose International Women's Day 2017 to announce that only one in three managers was female and that women's wages were around 75 per cent of men's. European Commission, 'International Women's Day – Only 1 Manager out of 3 in the EU is a Woman . . . Earning on Average almost a Quarter Less than a Man', *European Commission Press Release Database*, 8 March 2017, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_STAT-17-461\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STAT-17-461_en.htm) (Date last accessed 8 April 2017). We also

noticed that businesses are increasingly using anniversaries such as International Women's Day in their sales pitches. Fairtrade ANZ highlighted stories of women from around the world. Fairtrade ANZ, '#BeBoldforChange this International Women's Day', <http://us2.campaignarchive2.com/?u=c58b63ac1d582e0c3c22826c2&id=ad218af51e&e=f7b2c3466c> (Date last accessed 8 April 2017). Oxfam featured 'products that empower female artisans'. Oxfam Shop, 'Discover Products that Empower Female Artisans' *Drumbeat Newsletter* (8 March 2017). We observed a similar pattern around International Women's Day in 2018.

- 41 Jennifer L. Borda, 'The Woman Suffrage Parades of 1910–1913: Possibilities and Limitations of an Early Feminist Rhetorical Strategy', *Western Journal of Communication*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (2002), pp. 25–52, p. 25.
- 42 Some scholars have queried the effectiveness of suffrage parades in challenging understandings of gender and the respective roles of the sexes in society. Lisa Tickner and Linda Lumsden have each argued that suffragists challenged preconceptions about women's place in the public sphere while also reinforcing definitions of femininity through their insistence on emphasising their own femininity on parade. This left them open to patronizing commentary from the press and often insults, even physical assault, from male onlookers. See Lisa Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women: Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign 1907–1914* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988); Linda J. Lumsden, *Rampant Women: Suffragists and the Right of Assembly* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997). Although all-women's marches might have been new, women had participated alongside men in the Chartists' processions in the mid-nineteenth century. British Library, 'Female Chartists', *Learning: Dreamers and Dissenters*: <http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/21cc/struggle/chartists1/historicalsources/source7/femalechartists.html> (Date last accessed 21 December 2017).
- 43 We discuss the 'Women's Marches' in greater detail in the final chapter.
- 44 Pierre Nora ed., *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, I–III (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–1992).
- 45 Osborne, 'Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration'.
- 46 Of the 'blue plaques' which commemorate famous Londoners, 13 per cent are women. Only 4 per cent of London's blue plaques commemorate black or Asian individuals. Katie Engelhart, '150 Years of Blue Plaques Honour London's Noted and Notorious', *Financial Review*, 5 December 2016, <http://www.afr.com/lifestyle/travel/150-years-of-blue-plaques-honour-londons-noted-and-notorious-20161204-gt3ykl> (Date last accessed 10 April 2017).
- 47 Osborne, 'Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration'.
- 48 Lucy Hornby, 'China's "Comfort Women"', *Financial Times*, 20 March 2015, [www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/b44ae604-cdc1-11e4-8760-00144feab7de.html#axzz3rR25UkHS](http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/b44ae604-cdc1-11e4-8760-00144feab7de.html#axzz3rR25UkHS) (Date last accessed 14 November 2015).
- 49 Neil Jarman, 'Painting Landscapes: the place of murals in the symbolic construction of urban space', in *Symbols in Northern Ireland*, ed. Anthony Buckley (Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University of Belfast: Belfast, 1998), pp. 81–98.
- 50 Alison Bartlett and Margaret Henderson, 'The Australian Women's Movement Goes to the Museum: The "Cultures of Australian Feminist Activism, 1970–1990" project', *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 37 (2013), p. 85.
- 51 Bartlett and Henderson, 'The Australian Women's Movement Goes to the Museum', p. 86.
- 52 Libby Stewart, 'Beyond the Glass Ceiling: The Material Culture of Women's Political Leadership', in *Diversity in Leadership. Australian Women, Past and Present*, eds Joy Damousi, Kim Rubenstein, and Mary Tomsic (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2014), pp. 241–242. Hilda Kean assents, stating that many individual Australian women have been remembered but that collective memory of the suffrage movements themselves are not in existence. See Hilda Kean, 'Public Histories of Australian and British Suffrage: Some Comparative Issues', *Public History Review*, Vol. 14 (2007), p. 7.



- 53 The same cannot be said of the women's liberation movement of the 1970s, of which there is an abundance of ephemera.
- 54 Kean, 'Public Histories of Australian and British Suffrage', p. 4.
- 55 The Museum of London maintains a permanent women's movement display at its city location and there is a Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, upstate New York, which preserves and displays the homes of former feminist activists. See Chapter One, 'Suffragists and Suffragettes'.
- 56 Sarah Gavron, dir., *Suffragette* (2015, Focus, London).
- 57 Katie Allen, 'New £5 Note Replaces Elizabeth Fry with Sir Winston Churchill', *The Guardian*, 26 April 2013, [www.theguardian.com/business/2013/apr/26/winston-churchill-new-five-pound-note](http://www.theguardian.com/business/2013/apr/26/winston-churchill-new-five-pound-note) (Date last accessed 7 November 2015). For reference to the Queen's lack of merit as a 'woman of note', see Zoe Williams, 'The Jane Austen Banknote Victory Shows Young Women are Packing a Punch', *The Guardian*, 25 July 2013, [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jul/24/jane-austen-banknote-victory-young-women](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jul/24/jane-austen-banknote-victory-young-women) (Date last accessed 10 Aug 2015).
- 58 Bauke Schram, 'Bank of England Asks Public to Vote for Face of New £20 Note', *International Business Times*, 19 May 2015, [www.ibtimes.co.uk/bank-england-asks-public-vote-face-new-20-note-1502002](http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/bank-england-asks-public-vote-face-new-20-note-1502002) (Date last accessed 10 Aug 2015).
- 59 The AAUW defines itself as 'the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls'. See <http://thereal10.org/> and [www.aauw.org/fairpay/](http://www.aauw.org/fairpay/) (Last accessed 7 November 2015). For a discussion of the campaign, see T. L. Stanley, 'A Woman on the \$10 Bill Would Mean More If Women Didn't Earn \$7.80 to Men's \$10. New ad campaign wants more than symbolic change', *Adweek*, 3 November 2015, [www.adweek.com/adfreak/woman-10-bill-would-mean-more-if-women-didnt-earn-780-mens-10-167920](http://www.adweek.com/adfreak/woman-10-bill-would-mean-more-if-women-didnt-earn-780-mens-10-167920) (Date last accessed 6 November 2015).
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- 62 Williams, 'The Jane Austen Banknote Victory'
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- 64 'Two guilty over abusive tweets to Caroline Criado-Perez', *BBC News*, 7 January 2015, [www.bbc.com/news/uk-25641941](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-25641941) (Date last accessed 8 November 2015).
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- 66 Erll, 'Travelling Memory'.



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