


negra d'America Remond and Her Journeys

Sirpa A. Salenius
Firenze

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Abstract: In her article "*negra d'America Remond and Her Journeys*" Sirpa A. Salenius analyzes Sarah P. Remond's travels to Europe. Remond, an African American born free in Salem, Massachusetts in 1826 into an abolitionist family, was a successful lecturer on abolitionism in the United States before traveling to England in 1859. During her anti-slavery lecture tour there, she also became involved in promoting women's rights thus enlarging the scope of her social and political agenda to embrace both racial and gender oppression. Subsequently, she studied in London, graduating as a nurse from London University College before moving to Italy where she graduated as a physician and practiced medicine. Remond's life and activities are exceptional because she crossed the boundaries of her time — physical, geographical, social, and political — in both the U.S. and Europe.

Sirpa A. SALENIUS

Negra d'America Remond and Her Journeys

"Sarah Parker Remond, *negra d'America*" is among students whose name appears in the register of Santa Maria Nuova hospital Firenze admitted at the Department of Obstetrics for the academic year 1866-67. Before moving to Italy, Remond (1826-1894), an African American born free in Salem, Massachusetts into an abolitionist family, had studied medicine in the departments of midwifery and surgery at London University College, graduating as a nurse. She arrived in England in 1859 determined to disseminate her antislavery views during an extensive lecture tour across England, Scotland, and Ireland. Before starting her lecture tour in Great Britain, she established herself as a successful lecturer on abolitionism in the United States, where she represented the American Anti-Slavery Society. She was actively involved in promoting women's rights, thus enlarging the scope of her social and political agenda to embrace both racial and gender oppression. In 1866 she moved to Firenze where she pursued her medical career by enrolling in the Santa Maria Nuova hospital medical school. As an empowered — and empowering — woman of her time she trespassed racial, gender, and social boundaries which insisted on her inferiority as an African American and as a woman. She excelled in her studies, sat next to artists and aristocrats at the lending library of Firenze, and reconciled her demanding career with her interracial marriage to an Italian. Hence, Europe and her travel there offered Remond education, socio-cultural growth, and an opportunity to realize her full potential.

Remond's father, John Remond, who was a well-known and prosperous hairdresser and caterer, provided for Sarah's early education in a private school of Salem that admitted African American students. Both Sarah's parents were free African Americans dedicated to the antislavery cause. They were members of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society where Sarah's brother, Charles Lenox Remond, became an influential lecturer, the first Black orator of the Society. Remond herself, a woman of talent and intellect, followed her brother's footsteps: she began her public career joining him as one of the speakers in an anti-slavery campaign in the state of New York in 1856 (see Bogin, 129; Porter 287). She continued to lecture in New England and New York State in the following years, also attending the annual women's rights convention in New York (see Peterson 136). She was generally considered "a pleasing speaker" and it has been argued that her gender and race made her especially attractive as a lecturer (Bogin 131). Few women were public speakers in the U.S. when Remond embarked on her antislavery speaking tours, but it was not entirely uncommon to find some, even African American women, take the lecture pulpit. Sojourner Truth, for example, had been touring New England, the Mid-Atlantic, and the Midwest to speak about abolition, temperance and women's rights in the 1850s (Washington 59). Lucretia Mott, an active leader in the antislavery cause, was one who encouraged women to transcend traditional gender roles (see Harrold 43). Remond, too, was among those women who resisted racist and sexist assumptions to raise her voice in national and international debates on emancipation. Her popularity was exceptional: in 1858 she had eight speaking engagements at an antislavery convention in Cape Cod, all of them successful, and the audience, as Remond herself observed, was "closely packed" (Remond qtd. in Porter 289).

In 1832 women in the United States had formed the first US-American women's anti-slavery society in Salem. It consisted of both White and Black members, who often were young, unmarried women. The women activists included Maria Weston Chapman, Lydia Maria Child, Jane Grey Swisshelm, Myrtila Miner (who was the founder of a school for African American girls in Washington, D.C.), Sojourner Truth (a former slave), Frances Ellen Watkins (from the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society and the Maine Anti-Slavery Society), and Remond. Two other women speakers were Angelina Grimké and Sarah Grimké, who in the 1820s left their South Carolina slaveholding family and became instrumental in challenging the generally accepted view that respectable women should not speak in public. In addition to lecturing about the situation of enslaved women as victims of sexual abuse, they wrote pamphlets which objected to gender inequality (see Harrold 43-48). Thus Remond found herself among progressive women, both White and African American, who supported her and transformed her into influential individual. Indeed, scholars have seen Remond — who according to her friend Charlotte

Forten Grimké was entertaining, successful, and kind — as a "strong female role model of professionalism, independence, and education" for other African American women, including the artist Edmonia Lewis (Nelson 167). Grimké's *The Journals of Charlotte Forten Grimké* provide a vivid picture of Remond at this time of her life.

In the United States, however, "the spirit of prejudice" and discrimination prevailed (Remond qtd. in Porter 290). For example, Remond's personal experience with racial prejudice included her expulsion from the Howard Atheneum of New York in 1853. Although she had bought a ticket and already had been admitted to the Atheneum theater with two of her friends, an officer forced her to leave the premise accidentally pushing her down the stairs: Remond took the case to court and won. Five years later, little had changed: in 1858 she was refused accommodation on several occasions during her speaking tour in the State of New York (see Bogin 130; Porter 288).

By the mid-nineteenth century, freedom and self-definition for both African American men and women became intertwined with mobility and could be found much more easily in Europe than in the U.S. During the decades between 1830 and 1860, many African Americans left the United States for England, especially after the Fugitive Slave Law came into effect in 1850 and they helped to build the international, transatlantic, antislavery network that grew in those years. They crossed the Atlantic for their personal safety and to promote the cause of abolitionism. Remond's plans to leave the United States were ready by midsummer 1858 and when she sailed for England in December, her goals were to enjoy freedom, improve her education, and serve the anti-slavery cause: she had "an intense desire to visit England ... that I might for a time enjoy freedom ... depend upon myself" (Remond qtd. in Peterson 136; see also Brownlee 121; Schriber xx). Remond arrived in Liverpool in January 1859 where the *Liverpool Mercury* and the *Liverpool Daily Post* both reported that her first lecture attracted a large audience. The appearance of a colored female speaker intrigued many who came to hear the "eloquent and thrilling" orator (Bogin 131). Her success was immediate: she lectured to crowded audiences in Liverpool, Warrington, Manchester, Leeds, and London and also lectured in Scotland and Ireland during 1859 and 1860. She spoke to anti-slavery audiences and ladies' groups alike and met with members of parliament and prominent members of society (see Peterson; Porter; Sillen; Zackodnik).

According to Audrey A. Fisch, the appearance of Remond on the lecture circuit drew more attention to her light-skinned, educated persona and her feminine traits, lady-like manner, cultivation, and refinement — qualities Victorian society admired — than to the subject matter of her talks. The British press and audiences appropriated Remond to confirm pre-existing ideological ideals, affirm gender roles, and celebrate English womanhood. And yet, Remond's choice to talk about Margaret Garner, a sexually abused escaped slave woman who chose to kill her children rather than have them return to slavery, was, according to Fisch, a challenge to "her audience's forceful attempts to assimilate her into their world" (87): it implied her refusal to relinquish her racial identity and she refused the White audience's attempts to present her as of a different race and class than her Black sisters in slavery (see Fisch 5, 8, 82-87, 90). Indeed, her response to the *Warrington Standard's* account of one of her talks testifies to her feelings of belonging to the White sisterhood, but as a member of her own race. The *Warrington Standard* quoted her saying that "for the first time in her life had she been removed from the pressure there always was upon people of colour in America; and every hour she had spent in England had been happiness to her, for she had felt none of that objection to her which existed in the United States because of her race" (Remond qtd. in Fisch 123). It seems, then, that she had taken distance from the prejudices of her native country. The color of her complexion had hardly any significance to the British who admired her as a powerful orator able to attract overflowing audiences.

Remond's style of lecture was calm and rational and, as Carla Peterson observes, her rationality characterized the majority of her lectures. However, she was also successful in eliciting an emotional response from her audience when narrating the tragic stories of slave women in highly sentimental language (Peterson 139-40). Often her speeches were shaped by the audience and their socioeconomic circumstances. For a female audience she would talk about women who were sold at open markets: "The more Anglo-Saxon blood that mingles with the blood of the slave, the more gold is poured out when the auctioneer has a woman for sale, because they are sold to be concubines for

white Americans" (Remond qtd. in Brownlee 129). Central to her message in these speeches aimed at female listeners was the abuse inflicted on slave women. The *New York Times* reported on 2 July 1859 that "Miss Sarah P. Remond, a colored woman, from the United States, has been lecturing in London on American Slavery. ... The lecturer, in pleading on behalf of her own sex, said that words were inadequate to express the depth of the infamy into which they were plunged by the cruelty and licentiousness of their brutal masters" ("Personal" n.p.). In contrast, she delivered a speech in Manchester on "Why Slavery is Still Rampant" with skillfully used statistical and factual information to demonstrate the evils of slavery. Remond was unafraid to name "a slaveholding President" or the husband of England's own Fanny Kemble (a prominent actress), whose 343 slaves were sold at a Savannah auction. She accused Christians "guilty of sustaining or defending slavery" and she incorporated familiar references to fictional characters such as "Mrs. Stowe's 'Topsey' in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*" (Remond, "Why" 44-45). In this way, she carefully prepared her talks to suit her audience and thus succeeded in drawing rational and emotional responses from them as she furthered the cause for racial acceptance.

In Europe Remond was free of color discrimination until she came in contact with US-American officials. At the end of her lecture tour in England in 1859, Remond wished to visit the Continent with her sister, Caroline Remond Putnam, but the U.S. Minister in London refused to give her a visa for the simple reason that she was a person of color. Before her departure for England, Lewis Cass, a representative of the Department of State, had issued Remond a passport (dated 10 December 1858) that declared her to be allowed to travel freely as "a citizen of the United States." And yet, the U.S. Legation in London argued that it was manifestly a legal impossibility for her to have US-American citizenship. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary George M. Dallas and his assistant Benjamin Moran at the Legation, who refused to issue the visa for France, were annoyed with Remond, who had replied that she "did not expect such an answer from one whose salary she contributes to pay" (Remond qtd. in Brownlee 137). The men, both known for their racism, found Remond "insolent." The *New York Times* articles published on 24 and 25 January 1860 which described the incident brought attention to the ambiguous condition of free colored US-Americans and demanded a change in U.S. passport regulations, which would have meant a step forward in recognizing colored people as US-Americans and a move towards granting them full citizenship.

The confusion about Remond's status was a result of laws that positioned free Blacks somewhere between aliens and citizens. As Leon F. Litwack explains, "the federal government and the individual states separately defined the legal status of ante-bellum free Negroes. Prior to the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments, each state determined their political and educational rights" (261). This meant that states could grant citizenship to free Blacks, but that status was not recognized on the federal level. There were five states — New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, and North Carolina — in which free African Americans were considered citizens and could, on equal terms with Whites, exercise their right of suffrage. In the 1840s and 1850s the U.S. State Department rejected many passport applications from Blacks planning to travel to England to lecture and raise money for their antislavery cause, but some of them, for example William Wells Brown in 1849 and John Remond in 1854, were successful in obtaining a passport or its substitute, a certificate attesting that they were born in the United States, were free, and under the protection of the government. It was not until Reconstruction following the Civil War that Congress granted some, although still limited, rights to all Black Americans, most importantly in the Civil Rights Act of 1866. Two years later, in 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution sought to clarify the issue once and for all: it declared that all people born in the United States were entitled to the full rights of citizenship without regard to race (see Litwack). Before then, as Remond's case demonstrates, the rights and national identity of African Americans were complex and ill-defined issues.

In the end, the officials issued Remond's visa and she was free to travel in Europe. From France she returned to England where she continued to promote her political agenda through lectures, essays, and pamphlets, while her concerns expanded from antislavery to educational rights to women's emancipation. In an address in London in 1862 before the International Congress of Charities, Correction and Philanthropy, Remond asked for the support of the people of Great Britain to maintain "their position as the friend of the oppressed negro" ("Negroes" 218). Her goal in England

was to engage the sympathy of the entire British nation for the abolition of slavery in the United States: "The real capacities of the negro race have never been thoroughly tested; and until they are placed in a position to be influenced by the civilizing influences which surround freemen, it is really unjust to apply to them the same test, or to expect them to attain the same standard of excellence, as if a fair opportunity had been given to develop their faculties. With all the demoralizing influences by which they are surrounded, they still retain far more of that which is humanizing than their masters" (Remond, "Negroes" 218; see also Porter 291). Thus, Remond presented her "race" as morally superior when compared to slave masters and she emphasized the injustice of existing laws that hindered African Americans from obtaining education and achieving their potential. She underscored her view that equality of races could be accomplished if both White and Black were given the same rights and opportunities for study. Frederick Douglass had expressed similar concerns in his autobiography, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), in which he advanced the cause of emancipation by challenging the racist claim that Black people were "so low in the scale of humanity, and so utterly stupid, that they are unconscious of their wrongs, and do not apprehend their rights" (Douglass vii; see also Yellin 164). Antislavery novels, slave narratives, and contemporary newspaper articles also raised the issue of education.

Remond had several opportunities to connect with other women who shared her goals. During a visit to Bristol, she stayed for a few days with the influential Victorian suffragist, essayist, journalist, and social reformer Frances Power Cobbe. She met Cobbe again in Dublin in August 1861 at a meeting of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science where Remond delivered a paper entitled "American Slavery and Its Influence on Great Britain." Many discussions at the conference revolved around women's education and medical reform, topics which would become increasingly important to Remond. It can be presumed that the powerful, progressive, and determined women whose company Remond shared influenced the direction of her life. As one of them, Elizabeth Crawford observed Remond was the first woman to address large mixed audiences with her speeches that tackled both antislavery and women's rights (see Brownlee 150; Mitchell 105). Further, she became associated with Clementia Taylor and Mary Estlin, important British national activists in the women's suffrage movement.

At the time Remond was studying at London's Bedford College for Ladies and was staying at the Taylor's Aubrey House from December 1861 to October 1864 (see Mitchell 117, 132). She became a committee member and pamphleteer for the Ladies' London Emancipation Society, which was formally organized at the Taylors' home in March 1863. Her involvement in many organizations demonstrates her growing sense of belonging. The newly formed society, dedicated to exposing the evils of slavery, published a series of pamphlets and "The Negroes & Anglo-Africans as Freedmen and Soldiers" appeared in January 1864 with her introduction and concluding words. The pamphlet is a historical document that provides various testimonies of Black freedmen and soldiers who the reports praised as fearless, brave, resourceful, devotional, and reliable. The testimonies show that they valued education and had established schools in Alexandria (Virginia) at their own expense immediately after they had become free. The pamphlet included a report from a Commission established to evaluate Black men's suitability to serve as soldiers. The Commission's conclusion was that "As a general rule these people are more devotional than the whites" (10). They should only be treated, the report warned, not as children or objects of charity but as self-reliant men. Remond concluded her pamphlet by observing that "the negro desires liberty, not revenge" (30). The last page of the publication lists the Executive Committee members of the London Ladies' Emancipation Society: "Miss Remond" is among such others as Miss Cobbe, Miss Estlin, Mrs. Manning, Mrs. H. Martineau, and Mrs. Taylor. Also, via an introduction by Clementia Taylor, Remond met Giuseppe Mazzini, the leading Italian nationalist, who became the only active male member of the London Ladies' Emancipation Society. Remond met Mazzini in 1861 and became involved through him in the Italian unification movement, participating in fund-raising and impressing Mazzini with her rhetorical skills.

Remond succeeded, then, in having her voice heard literally, politically, and socially. This was unlike the experience of the fugitive slave Ellen Craft, who also was active in the abolitionist movement but had hardly any public voice. Instead, Craft was exhibited on stage to Victorian audiences in a silent performance — only her husband or William Wells Brown, who often toured with

the Crafts, had speaking parts. The discrimination became manifest in the act of silencing her, in her disempowerment, denying her the right for verbal expression, thus ridding her of the power of language (on Craft see, e.g., Fisch; Zackodnik). Remond, instead, refuted the arbitrary constructions of gender and racial stereotypes, challenged the norms of society, subverted nineteenth-century racial ideologies, and challenged race-gender hierarchies.

Remond continued her education in England where she enrolled in the aforementioned Bedford College for two academic years between 1859 and 1861. She studied subjects which interested her rather than those for a particular degree. Indeed, the College records indicate that the first year she studied ancient history, mathematics, geography, French, Latin, elocution, and vocal music. In the academic year 1860-61 she took courses on modern history, English and French literature. Her subject choices were not unusual as students at the College were allowed to choose courses they preferred or, instead, study towards examination. Elisabeth Jesser Reid, an English feminist and a wealthy philanthropist, ardent supporter of the antislavery cause, and a friend of Harriet Martineau and Cobbe, was the founder of the Ladies College. The students at the college, which was the first higher education institution for women in the United Kingdom, founded in 1849, were the first to obtain degrees when the University of London rendered its degree examinations open to women, starting in 1878. Already in 1862 Cobbe had proposed that women should be allowed to take University of London examinations. It would have been a logical action to take because many of the professors who taught at Bedford College also held positions at the University College London, which, like Bedford, was non-sectarian. Many of the early students campaigned for women's suffrage, educational rights, and women's property rights. After Mrs. Reid's death in 1866, Bedford College became a College of the University of London. In 1852, Reid had opened her home on 6 Grenville Street as a boarding house for the students who attended the school, and in 1860 new enrollee Remond lived there while studying at the college.

It can be argued that Remond's campaign for women's rights to obtain education and embark on professional careers reached its climax in the example of her own life and this was facilitated in particular by her travel to England. From abolitionism and the study of languages, her interest soon shifted to medicine. It may be no coincidence that at the time Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell was lecturing in England promoting the women's medical movement (James 136). Remond, whose "strongest desire through life has been to be educated" (Remond qtd. in Reyes 156), enrolled at the All Saints University College Hospital to study nursing with nuns who were in charge of the nursing department. The Society of All Saints' Sisters, an Anglican Sisterhood and nursing order, was founded in 1851. Initially the All Saints nursing activities were conducted at its private home for incurable women and children until the Sisterhood became linked with University College Hospital, where the sisters took over first a few nursing wards in October 1860 and assumed control of the entire nursing department in 1862. The hospital was used as a training ground for the All Saints nurses, who had superior education, special knowledge, and experience in nursing, and represented a higher social class than their predecessors. In England, nursing changed its character between 1862 and 1899 as it developed from a trade to a profession (see Holloway 146-48, 152-53). Remond received her education and training at the hospital in the department of surgery. In one of his letters, Mazzini writes that Remond had completed her nursing studies by early 1865: "Miss Remond is in Bristol, had she not better being now in the midst of the emancipated negroes, nursing the wounded or educating the others? The problem now lies with themselves; and the agitation ought to turn to a different channel" (Mazzini qtd. in Brownlee 152). She was dedicated to her work, was competent, energetic, and showed unwavering attention and kindness to the ailing under her care, as testified by the recommendation letters her supervisors wrote on her behalf in June 1866 when she applied to the Santa Maria Nuova hospital school in Firenze.

In 1866 Remond — supposedly — returned to the United States to speak on behalf of the Equal Rights Association, after which she traveled to Firenze, then the capital of unified Italy (Schriber xx), although there seems to be no evidence of her participation at the event. In any case, she arrived in Italy in the summer of 1866. Around the same time (winter of 1865-66), the African American sculptor Edmonia Lewis had established herself in Roma where actor Charlotte Cushman, and other US-American artists such as Emma Stebbins and Harriet Hosmer, all committed abolitionists, also

were residing. George Perkins Marsh, who was the U.S. diplomatic representative in Italy and lived in Firenze and Roma, reported that in 1865 Firenze had become a "mighty poor residence": housing was expensive, food prices had increased, and the overall financial situation was desperate (Lowenthal 315). A decade later the situation had improved and the number of US-American visitors in Italy had increased, now including general tourists. Notable Americans visited Firenze in the few years around Remond's arrival, including artist Hiram Powers, poet William Cullen Bryant (1866), travel writer Bayard Taylor (1867 and 1868), and writer Charles Eliot Norton (1869). They all attended the receptions and dinners given by Marsh, who entertained foreign residents and visitors at his Villa Forini by the Arno river (see Lowenthal 315, 319, 32, 332; Mitchell 268; Nelson 32).

On 14 August 1866, Remond was in Luzern (Switzerland) according to Mazzini's letter. A letter to the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, written in 1866, states that from Switzerland Remond travelled to Italy: "I arrive at 'Firenze La Bella'. With some interest, I look around to all that I can ... I am soon on my way to a hotel which had been highly recommended to me, and very soon I am in a most comfortable room." She further explained that "I am not here [in Firenze] for pleasure, but for study" (Remond qtd. in Reyes 159). In August 1866, she was, indeed, established in Firenze, where, on 29 August, she signed up for a one-month membership at the Vieusseux newsroom and circulating library at Piazza Santa Trinita. The Murray guide from 1867, one of the most influential travel guides of the period, claims it was excellent "both for its reading-room and lending-library" and added that the "collection of journals and newspapers of every country is extensive and well chosen;" the subscription to the newsroom was only 3 francs a week (Murray 85-86). At the time of Remond's subscription, US-Americans such as Hiram Powers (who renewed his annual membership in May), one Mr. Alexander, who was living in Villa Brichieri on Bellosguardo, and the composer Frances Boott, also resident on Bellosguardo hill, had all paid their membership fees. In the library's register Remond wrote that she was staying at Casa Iandelli, one of the boarding houses that Murray's guide recommended. It was centrally located in 1 Piazza dei Soderini (now Piazza Nazario Sauro) and the guide advised that many boarding houses, in general "respectably conducted," were especially convenient for "ladies and families." Among those he highly recommended was the pension of "Mrs. Jandelli's (an Englishwoman), in the Piazza dei Soderini, near the Ponte alla Carraja ... arrangements en pension by the day, week, or month, to include everything, can be made in most of these houses" (81).

Remond's training and experience as a nurse in London formed the basis for her continued education in Firenze. She was planning to spend the winter attending classes at the medical school. Her request for admission, dated 30 October 1866, was written, in Italian, at Casa Iandelli; it is likely, however, that she copied the Italian from a translation because of the errors in the text: twice she wrote *lezione* (lesson, class) instead of *sezione* (section), for example, when addressing the letter to the President of the Medical and Surgical Section of the hospital. This would indicate that she confused the initial "s" with an "l" — two letters that even in her own handwriting were similar — without realizing the difference in meaning. In her letter of application she explained that she lived in London, but planned to spend the winter in Firenze and requested to be admitted to the school's clinic of obstetrics. As a reply to her application, "Remond, Sarah, negra d'America" was admitted to audit classes during the academic year 1866-67 (see "Remond"). Further, the two reference letters which accompany her request both came from London. One of them was from Sister Rosmonda from the All Saints University College, the other was signed by M. Berkeley Hill, one of the Head Surgeons of the University College. Both letters testify to Remond's seriousness with taking care of her duties at the University College in London ("Remond" filza 74, affare 11 [1866-67]). Moreover, Dr. Hill's letter testifies to the high quality of the education Remond had obtained in London under the supervision of the nuns. Thus Remond had an opportunity to continue her studies at one of Europe's leading and most prestigious medical schools. Students at the school attended Professor Balocchi's classes at the Obstetrics Clinic every weekday from 7am to 8pm and had Professor Cavalier Pietro Vannoni's classes on Obstetrics surgery on Mondays and Fridays. Occasionally lessons were cancelled due to, for example, the visit of the King of Italy to the city or the celebration of Prince Umberto's marriage (April 1868), or anatomy classes were frequently cancelled because of lack of cadavers. The school closed for Christmas vacation (24 December 1866), but mid-January 1867 the students were all back in class ("Remond" filza 74, 75 [1866-67]).

In 1867 Remond returned to England for another lecture tour. One of the speaking events had as many as three hundred men and women attending. In the audience were William Craft and Ellen Craft, who at the time were living in London. In May 1867 she visited the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison in France. She lectured in England and participated in London at a public breakfast organized in honor of Garrison (see Porter 292, 293; Brownlee 153). From England, Remond returned to Firenze to continue her studies and in October 1867 her sister together with her son Edmund L. Putnam were visiting her and the Vieusseux lending library (18 October 1867). Edmund Putnam's name appears again in the library's register on 9 October 1871 when he paid for six months' membership indicating his address as Villa Sanna outside the Porta Romana city gate.

The year following her attendance auditing classes at Santa Maria Nuova, Remond took the entrance exam to officially enter the medical school as a student. Her knowledge of Latin was certainly useful for mastering Italian. In addition to theory the admission test included a practical exam. She passed the test with top marks *benissimo* and that allowed her to continue her studies. Out of the nineteen candidates taking the exam, six obtained the highest grade while some failed it. Remond, who signed the register "Sara Parker Remond, asking to study at the obstetric clinic" ("Sara Parker Remond domanda di venire a studio nella clinica ostetrica") joined the other women, all Italian, in attending the courses which started at the end of November and continued through June ("Remond" filza 77 [1867-68]). Her letter of application to be admitted to continue her studies was dated 13 November 1867 and contains some errors in Italian, as well as the earlier mistake of *lezione* instead of *sezione*. She gave her address as no. 8 Via Santo Spirito, which was around the corner from Casa Iandelli's. In the letter, she explained that she had already taken classes at the school for a year and was desirous to have a career in Obstetrics ("Remond" filza 79, affare 115 [1867-68]). The school register shows that Remond, whose first name now was Italianized to Sara, participated in practical training/clinical service with the others. The women, in groups of four, took turns in 24-hour shifts to assist pregnant women, those expected to give birth, and those who had just delivered babies. The students had to write reports of the patients recovered at the department where they practiced under the supervision of one of the medical assistants.

In a letter dated 2 July 1868, "Remond Sara di America (Stati Uniti)" who had completed her studies and practical work, requested to be admitted to the final exams in July 1868 (despite her absence of two months the previous year) ("Remond" filza 79, affare 119 [1867-68]). In a reply dated 29 July 1868, the school authorities gave her a permission to take the final exam in Obstetrics and thus in summer 1868, "Remond, Sarah Parker, daughter of John, native of Salem, United States" ("Remond Sarah Parker figlia di John nativa di Salem Stati Uniti"), took the exams, which were evaluated together with her studies ("Remond" filza 79, affare 100, 115; 93-, no 119). A newspaper article published in 1868 confirmed that Remond had studied at Santa Maria Nuova for the past two years and "After a regular course of study and also of hospital practice, she has recently passed the necessary examinations, and received a diploma for professional medical practice" (Reyes 155). Anne Whitney, a US-American sculptor living in Roma, also mentioned in a letter written in 1868 that Remond, who was present at a gathering at Whitney's home on Easter Sunday, was "now a physician in Florence" (Whitney qtd. in Brownlee 154; Reyes 160). After her graduation, Remond remained in Firenze where, it seems, she started her medical career. In 1871, Lucy Chase visited her at her home she shared with her sister, Caroline Putnam, and mentions writers and German opera stars who visited the Remonds (Brownlee 154, 156).

Although there had been arguments between Remond and her sister Caroline, the sisters were both in Firenze when Mrs. Elizabeth Buffum Chace, a supporter of abolition, visited them in 1873. Chace, who had been instrumental in helping slaves escape to Canada via the so-called underground railroad, had been touring Italy from north to south, all the way to Naples. While in Roma, she had visited Edmonia Lewis, whose marble copy of the *Young Augustus* she purchased (see Wyman 37-38, 263-65). In the spring of 1873, Lewis took a drive "in the suburbs" of Firenze to visit the English cemetery where Theodore Parker was buried on what to her seemed "consecrated ground." On one of the following days, as she wrote, she went to "take tea with Mrs. Putnam, Sarah Remond and Miss Sargent. We had a fine visit. Sarah Remond is a remarkable woman and by indomitable energy and perseverance is winning a fine position in Florence as a physician, and also socially; although she says

Americans have used their influence to prevent her, by bringing their hateful prejudices over here. If one tenth of the American women who travel in Europe were as noble and elegant as she is, we shouldn't have to blush for our countrywomen as often as we do" (Wyman 42-43). The unidentified Miss Sargeant may be one of the US-American artist John Singer Sargeant's sisters who lived in London but occasionally visited Firenze. As the passage testifies, Chace thought highly of Remond.

In the 1870s Remond moved to a more fashionable neighborhood, close to the Arno river. On 2 February 1874, her sister Caroline stated her address for a three-month membership at the Vieusseux library as 5 Via Garibaldi, the same that subsequently became the home of the author Vernon Lee (Violet Paget). Also Edmund Putnam had paid his three-month membership a few days before Caroline, giving his address as 5 Via Garibaldi P.P. It is possible that they were Remond's guests during their stay in Firenze because in May 1877 Remond, now married, paid the library membership for a month and signed the register as Madame Remond Pintor, also indicating her address as Via Garibaldi 5 (but 2 piano). Further, in 1885 Remond's sisters Caroline and Martiche moved to Roma, where Frederick Douglass stayed with Caroline, her son Edmund, and his wife at their home Palazzo Maroni in 1886. Douglass wrote about the interracial gatherings at their home, which "included the sculptor, Edmonia Lewis" and one Miss Gates, "an artist and philanthropist" (Douglass qtd. in Brownlee 156; see also Lowenthal 402; Richardson 108). Thus it seems that Remond resided in Roma in the 1880s. On 25 April 1877 Remond married Lazzaro Pintor, originally from Cagliari (Sardinia). Both of Remond's parents and Pintor's mother had already passed away when they married. Her marriage certificate indicates that both Remond and Pintor, who was an office worker, were permanent residents in Firenze at the time of their marriage. "Sara P. Remond," according to the certificate, was 50 years old, her spouse 44. Once again, conventional thinking was not a limitation for Remond whose husband was younger.

Remond, who contributed to the construction of US-American selfhood through her expressions of identity and self-definition, was successful in disproving assumptions of racial and gender inferiority. Through her exemplary journey to self-realization she became a catalyst of the social change she envisioned. She refuted dominant ideas about gender and racial inferiority when she demonstrated her capabilities first as a successful public lecturer, then by becoming a physician in a foreign country, something that would not have been possible in the U.S. She inspired a transformation in gender, class, and race consciousness; she rejected the pejorative images created for Black subjection. It was in Europe where Remond was able to demonstrate how vast, indeed, was the disparity between reality and US-American national ideals of freedom, equality, and the right to pursue happiness. She set a model for intellectual and personal progress others could emulate for gender and racial equality.

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Author's profile: Sirpa A. Salenius is an independent scholar in Firenze. Her interests in research include US-American anti-slavery writing and gender studies. Salenius's book publications include *Florence, Italy: Images of the City in Nineteenth-Century American Writing* (2007) and her recent articles include "The 'Emancipated Ladies' of America in the Travel Writing of Fredrika Bremer and Alexandra Gripenberg," *Journal of International Women's Studies* (2013) and "US-American New Women in Italy 1853-1870," *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* (2012). Currently, Salenius is working on a book about nineteenth-century US-American images of Finland. E-mail: <sirpa.salenius@gmail.com>