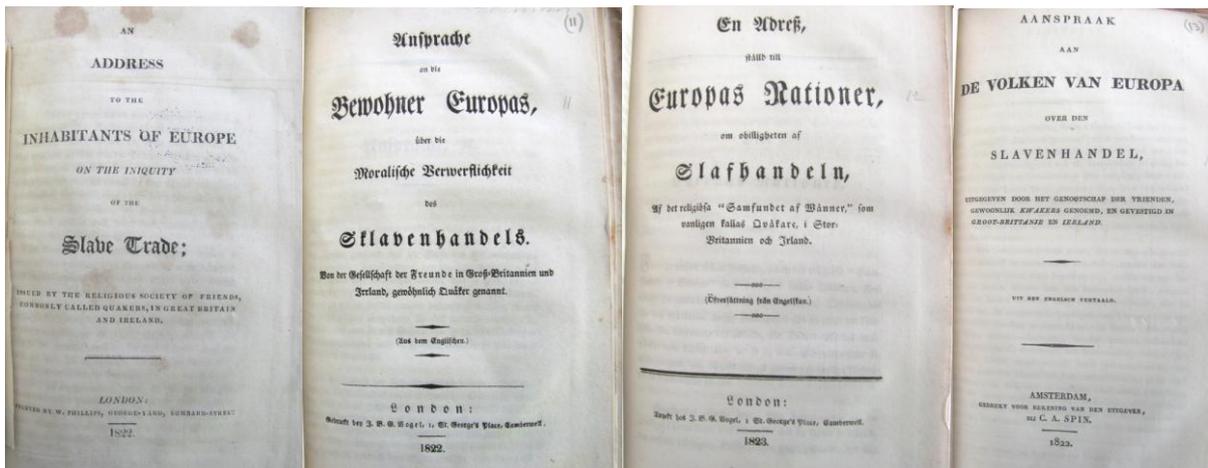


An Address to the Inhabitants of Europe on the Iniquity of the Slave Trade (1822)



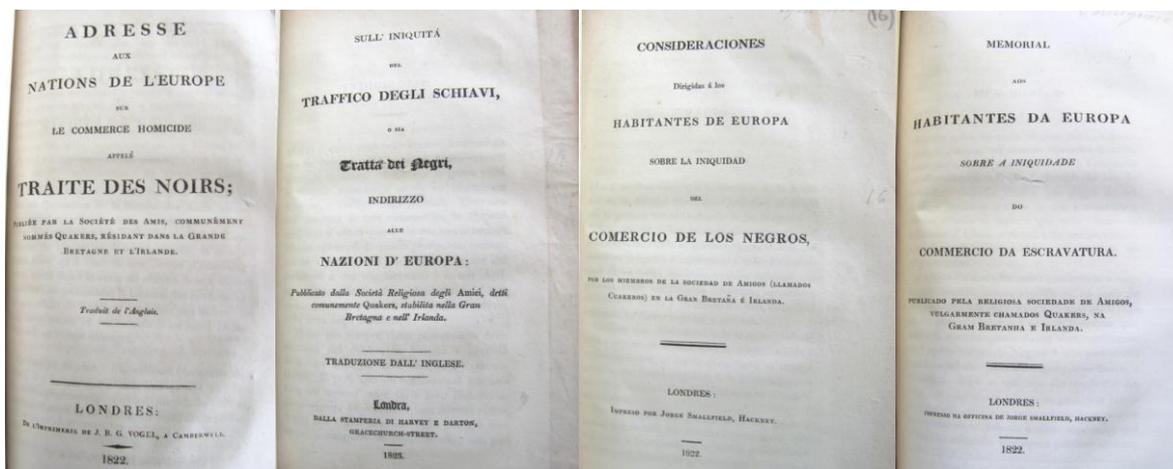
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English: *An Address to the Inhabitants of Europe on the Iniquity of the Slave Trade; Issued by the Religious Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: W. Phillips, 1822).

German: *Ansprache an die Bewohner Europas über die Moralische Verwerflichkeit des Sklavenhandels* (London: J.B.G. Vogel, 1822).

Swedish: *En adress ställd till Europas nationer, om obilligheten af slafhandeln* (London: J.B.G. Vogel, 1823).

Dutch: *Aanspraak aan de volken van Europa over den slavenhandel* (Amsterdam: C.A. Spin, 1822).



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French: *Adresse aux nations de l'Europe sur le commerce homicide appelé traite des noirs* (London: J.B.G. Vogel, 1822).

Italian: *Sull'iniquità del traffico degli schiavi, o sia tratta dei negri indirizzo alle nazioni d'Europa* (London: Harvey & Darton, 1823).

Spanish: *Consideraciones dirigidas a los habitantes de Europa sobre la iniquidad del comercio de los negros* (London: Jorge Smallfield, 1822).

Portuguese: *Memorial aos habitantes da Europa sobre a iniquidade do commercio de escravatura* (London: Jorge Smallfield, 1822).

Translation was one of the major strategies used by British campaigners to encourage the “circulation of ideas” in continental Europe in the nineteenth century.¹ From the international articles and pamphlets published during the Congress of Vienna in 1814-15, to leaflets in Spanish handed out at the International Exhibition in London in 1862, translations were an important part of the ongoing campaign against the slave trade. This strategy was particularly favoured by Quaker abolitionist committees, who utilised their religious networks abroad to distribute the translations. Multilingual pamphlets on the slave trade were published by the British Society of Friends in 1822, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1839, 1844 and 1849. All of these were published in French (including one in 1824, addressed specifically to the people of Nantes). Other popular languages for translation of Quaker pamphlets included Spanish and Dutch.

By far the most widely translated Quaker abolitionist pamphlet, however, was *An Address to the Inhabitants of Europe on the Iniquity of the Slave Trade*, published in 1822-23. As the title pages above demonstrate, this pamphlet appeared in eight languages: English, German, Swedish, Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. This range of languages was designed to publicise the abolitionist cause as widely as possible, even in parts of Western Europe which had no American colonies and no history of trading in slaves across the Atlantic. The aim was therefore to create a widespread European cultural consensus condemning the slave trade as “at once barbarous and iniquitous” (4).

An Address to the Inhabitants of Europe makes reference to a common global humanity, while placing particular emphasis on the religious culture uniting the countries of Europe: “Although the kindreds of the earth are divided into distinct communities and nations, we are all bound one unto another by the ties of love, of brotherly kindness, and compassion. But the nations of Europe are united by an additional bond. To them has been granted a blessing, which has not hitherto been enjoyed by the greater part of the natives of Africa: this blessing, this invaluable treasure is the Bible.” (5-6). The Society of Friends were thus able to promote a heightened awareness of the slave trade through shared cultural knowledge and shared European identity. This Address calls for joint action from European countries as the way forward to ending the trade, and uses multiple publications in European languages as the way to achieve this objective.

¹ On the “circulation of ideas” via translation in early nineteenth-century Europe, see the essay by Madame de Staël, ‘De l’esprit des traductions’ in *Œuvres complètes de Madame la baronne de Staël, publiées par son fils*, Tome XVII (Paris, 1820-21), 387-99.