

TRANSLATING REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS
IN THE ATLANTIC WORLD, 1776-1853

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation studies the role of translation in the emergence of political concepts as they traveled through the Atlantic world in various discourses, documents, and genres of writing. A practice vital to new revolutionary governments, exiled or internal dissidents, and international abolitionists alike, the translation of political writing supported movements and expanded their scope by, I argue, not merely circulating, but actively transforming the meaning of such concepts as “liberty,” “equality,” “emancipation,” “public feeling,” “the people,” and “abolition.” Our study of this phenomenon has been limited—even stifled altogether—by the still prevailing tendency, academically and colloquially, to misconstrue translation as transparent communication, as the transfer of meaning unchanged from one language to another. Against this tendency, my study proceeds from the understanding that translation is an interpretive act that necessarily varies the meaning, form, and effects of whatever materials are translated. I examine cases of translation that generatively intervened in two decisive moments for the transnational production of the ideas that would become foundational for so-called Western modernity: the Age of Revolutions and the abolitionist period. I offer close readings of the translation of state papers, political theory, and literature by African American educator Prince Saunders, Venezuelan diplomat Manuel García de Sena, Irish abolitionist R.R. Madden, and French writer Louise Swanton Belloc. They demonstrate how key insurgent ideas were forged through cultural exchange in more textured, dynamic historical complexity than we have yet grasped. As the project traces the resignification of political concepts that circulated the ports of the slaveholding Atlantic, into and out of French, Spanish, and English, it seeks to push the disciplinary boundaries

of comparative Americanist or Atlanticist frameworks to treat translations as objects of study in their own right, worthy of sustained and systematic analysis.

To my mom and dad (August 31, 1931 – July 30, 2021)

and

For Linds, mi sol y luna entre nieblas monótonas

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NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated and deploy a particular strategy of close semantic and formal adherence to source texts according to dictionary definitions and the approximation of style and syntax. I fix the meaning of source texts through a historicist method of reading that seeks English terms and syntax at once consistent with usage in a given period and redolent of its political discourse. Depending on the chapter, language, and contexts, I establish correspondence by consulting historical and contemporary dictionaries as appropriate. In addition, when a political term is especially dense with respect to how its meaning is constituted in a given context, e.g. *pueblo*, I leave the word in the source language so as to highlight, or register indirectly, the cultural and political implications that linguistic differences entail.

INTRODUCTION

REVOLUTIONS IN TRANSLATION: HISTORIES, POLITICS, ARTICULATION

This dissertation studies the role of translation in the emergence of political concepts as they traveled through the Atlantic world in various discourses, documents, and genres of writing from 1776 to 1853. The central importance of translation in this period is difficult to overlook, given its inextricability from the rise of transnational anti-slavery and anti-colonial movements that relied on it as an interested mode of cultural exchange. A practice vital to new revolutionary governments, exiled or internal dissidents, and international abolitionists alike, the translation of political writing supported revolutionary political movements and expanded their scope by, in the final analysis herein, not merely circulating but actively transforming the meaning of concepts such as “emancipation,” “equality,” and “anti-slavery.” The chapters that follow thus explore translation as a form of cultural production, examining cases of translations that generatively intervened at two decisive moments often studied in terms of how literary and print cultures shaped their insurgent ideas: the Age of Revolutions and the abolitionist period. These case studies are animated by work in US-American literary history over the past two decades that has taken into account non-English language materials, including translations, as it has underscored how various writing practices bore on the political spheres that defined public life. Through its transnational, hemispheric, and transatlantic orientations, this body of scholarship has ultimately redefined what “America” means in linguistic, cultural, and political terms. In the wake of this advance,

this dissertation emerges from a wonder at how few scholarly works still, even when adopting comparative American or Atlanticist frameworks, treat translation as an object of study in its own right, worthy of sustained and systematic analysis.

I begin to close this gap in literary and historical scholarship by offering close readings of translations *as translations*: textual compositions distinct from both their source texts and any others initially composed in the translating language whose features and effects therefore require a particular analytical method to appreciate. Translations are illuminating to investigate as such because translators' interpretive strategies, guiding everything from diction to style and the use of culturally specific allusions and political idioms, ensure that translations vary the form, meaning, and effect of their source materials even as they are based on them. In short, translations introduce new interpretations of those materials that accrue and generate still further meanings in their receiving cultures. The question too often glossed over is: *how* precisely, in each case, do they do this? So many of these texts and translators, the special kind of writers who create them, remain to be studied that this dissertation can only constitute one small part of a more thoroughgoing history of translation as a political tactic which we currently lack.

The dissertation is organized into two parts, each of which represents a historical period and field of study. The first, “‘Justificado años há’: Rendering the Scope of Emancipatory Politics in the Age of Revolutions,” brings together two cases of translation that have been understudied in conventional accounts of the period, each marginalized in relation to the national cultures that have been positioned as major players in dominant political theory and history: France, Britain, and the U.S. Chapter

one studies the English-language translation of the state papers of the long-disparaged Haitian King, Henry Christophe, by African American abolitionist Prince Saunders. The text was regarded in the period as an essential piece of writing for the insight it provided into the Haytian system of governance, as described by British naturalist Joseph Banks, “without doubt in its theory ... the most moral association of men in existence; nothing that white men have been able to arrange is equal to it” (qtd. in Saunders, *Memoir* 18). Yet, Saunders’ translation of the *Code Henri* in his 1818 *Haytian Papers* has been virtually absent from prevailing scholarship on the political theory of revolution. The second chapter takes up Venezuelan Manuel García de Sena’s 1811 *La Independencia de la Costa Firme*, a compendium that contains Spanish-language translations of Thomas Paine’s key writings, including excerpts from *Common Sense*, and U.S. state constitutions. Through the interpretations they inscribe, García de Sena’s translations negotiate what have been held as discrete or even discordant histories of modernity and political thought: Euro-Anglo Protestant Enlightenment and Hispanophone Catholic Scholasticism. The first part of the project, therefore, recharts a geography of revolutionary thought that moved from Haiti to the U.S. and from Philadelphia to the Spanish Americas. Taking its cue from Haitian, Atlanticist, and scholars of the Hispanic world, this part selects texts that displace Enlightenment, Anglo, and Protestant as a center or as origin of the universal political ideals of the period. Moreover, by analyzing translations as variable interpretations—against the still prevailing and limiting tendency to misconstrue them as an “untroubled transfer[s] of meaning” or “transparent communication” that Lawrence Venuti identifies—its alternative, multilingual and

translational history of the Age of Revolutions complicates our understanding of the ways that differences in language entail differences in how political realities are constituted.¹

The second part of the dissertation, “Abolitionism Across the Atlantic World,” studies two texts that, while major touchstones in the fields of Latin American Studies and Nineteenth-century American Studies, have not been as frequently read either as translations or as a part of the canonical histories of modernity and revolution: Irishman Richard R. Madden’s 1840 *Poems by a Slave in the Island of Cuba Recently Liberated*, a compendium containing translations of the life story and poetry of Juan Francisco Manzano; and Louise Swanton Belloc’s *La case de l’oncle Tom*, her 1852 French translation of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s sentimental novel. Part two contributes to a growing body of scholarship that adopts an Atlanticist framework that includes multiple languages, rather than an Americanist or Anglophone framework, for the study of the abolitionism. It expands the archive to include two instances that demonstrate the role of translation in interconnected iterations of anti-slavery movements in Cuba, Britain, the U.S., and France. Madden’s translation delivers what would become an authoritative account of slavery in Cuba circulated in the U.S. and Britain. It constructs an image of the Spanish American system of slavery that challenged the prevailing tendency among Anglophone abolitionists to cast Cuban slavery as “mild” and utterly distinct, demonstrating instead the complicity of the British and US-Americans with Spanish

¹ I have pulled these two phrases, respectively, from *Translation Changes Everything: Theory and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 77 (hereafter *TCE*), and his introduction to *The Translation Studies Reader*, edited by Lawrence Venuti, 4th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2021), 5. The identification and demonstration of this tendency across a wide array of scholarly and popular discourses spans Venuti’s work, as he develops what he calls a “hermeneutic model” of translation to contest the tendency and “facilitate” precise “accounts” of the effects such interpretations “release” in receiving situations (more about this model further on) (*TCE* 4).

colonial plantation slavery. And Belloc's version of Stowe, one of twelve that appeared in France that year, has been treated as an underwhelming artifact largely because it was regarded, even in the period, as politically belated: France abolished slavery in its colonies in 1848. Yet, the translation renders images of the French colonial past that would decisively shape the Second Empire's colonial future. Taken together, these case studies demonstrate how the abolition of US American and Cuban slavery were interconnected *with* the legacies of the Haitian Revolution and interconnected *by* aspirational images of post-emancipation racial harmony produced through translation.

Together, the two parts suggest how translations could be read to more fully investigate the transnational and multilingual histories of political concepts that continue to animate global movements. The primary task of this dissertation is to deepen our understanding of the transnational production of political concepts that would become foundational for so-called Western modernity. It takes its initial bearings from studies that begin with the understanding that, since modern racial slavery undergirded the development of networks of communication and exchange in the revolutionary Atlantic, these concepts cannot be thought apart from colonial plantation slavery as an aspect of modernity.² It therefore produces the slaveholding Atlantic as a unit of analysis by assembling an interlinguistic archive of texts that provide a window into how the

² See for instance: Sibylle Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Durham: Duke UP, 2004); Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*. (New York: Verso, 1988); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995); Sidney Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (New York: Columbia UP, 1989); Eugene D. Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1992); C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Overture and the San Domingo Revolution*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1989); David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823*. (New York: Oxford UP, 1999)

meaning of notions like “liberty,” “equality,” “emancipation,” “public feeling,” “people,” and “abolition” were being translationally defined and redefined.

Across the chapters, my readings deepen, too, our understanding of how the foundational ideas of the overlapping democratic revolutions of the eighteenth century and the anti-colonial, anti-slavery movements of the early nineteenth century were forged in relation to nascent racial and gender ideologies. Scholars have recognized that literary and political forms of writing specific to this period elaborated these ideas and ideologies. Yet by closely examining their translations, we gain, new insight into a now longstanding scholarly effort to challenge the prevailing tendency of Western historiography to locate revolutionary political discourses as originating in French, English, and U.S. contexts and radiating outward. As I trace the resignification of political ideas that moved in the other direction from French and Spanish colonies to these contexts, the project attempts to push further outside disciplinary boundaries that segment the investigation of literary and cultural production in this period which, while they have sought to become hemispheric, transnational, or Atlanticist, have largely retained their monolingual orientation.

In addition to their more specific historical arguments, my case studies of demonstrate that sustained analyses of translations as relatively autonomous texts that support and expand transnational political movements offer us a unique understanding of political thinking: through them we can track how such thinking unfolds through a complex confluence of locally situated practices and international networks of actors attempting to articulate common ground. I contend that the methodological approach crafted here allows us one way to apprehend *how precisely* translations of political writing have sought to incorporate local actors into transnational movements, how

translations can create global perspectives at the local level, and thus how political concepts achieve at once a necessarily global and local significance.

The Method in Action

If a historical orientation, period, and field of study are the sites of my project's scholarly impetus and intervention, its present has also inspired its conception and lent it its urgency. Much as a translator's work rewriting a source text often answers to the concerns of a present distinct from its author's, my construction of historical narratives designed to emphasize each case's cultural functions for and social effects on revolutionary politics was prompted by political translation activity in my own moment. Living in Spain in 2011, I witnessed first-hand how translation became a site of ideological critique for Los Indignados, one of the mass protest movements that took hold early in the last decade by staking claim to public space as a form of political resistance and collective empowerment. Translation also facilitated, in part, these Spanish protesters contact with comparable movements elsewhere, such as Occupy Wall Street. This geopolitical development alerted me to both the activist significance of translation and how I might elucidate it. Let us start where I began as I thought retrospectively about how the protesters felt the impact of a key translation: the political pamphlet *¡Indignaos!*, the Spanish version of Stéphane Hessel's *Indignez-Vous!* translated by Telmo Moreno Lanaspá. Take this recent case as an illustrative example and consider, if you will, the following analysis of it as a demonstration of how my dissertation both constructs its historical narratives and deploys its methodology for reading the political and cultural functions of translations.

On May 15, 2011, a new political movement coalesced in Spain, resulting in mass protests in the public squares of 58 cities. The protests channeled an impassioned affect that was driving a groundswell of social engagement, activism, and organizing. This activity had been building online and in the streets since at least the large-scale demonstrations against the Iraq war in February of 2003. Henceforth known as El Movimiento 15-M, for the date when it began, or else Los Indignados (The Indignant Ones), after the Spanish title of Hessel’s pamphlet published late that February, the demonstration of around 50,000 people that marched to Madrid’s Puerta del Sol on May 15 expressed what would become the movement’s constitutive passion: indignation. In this affect, the protestors found a vehicle to link contingently, or “articulate,” as Stuart Hall might put it, a set of fomenting social forces to an emergent political discourse.³ The latter was encapsulated by the name of the online grassroots organization that came to the fore to mobilize the demonstrations: *¡Democracia Real YA!* (Real Democracy Now!). The protestors responded to the call of the “‘Democracia Real YA’ Manifesto,” itself an amplification of the fervor Lanaspa’s *¡Indignaos!* (Get Indignant!) had generated. The

³ I derive this use of the term articulation from Hall’s theorization of it throughout his work (more about it below and, at length, in Chapter 2). Referring to one of its denotations, to link via a joint (as a truck cab to its trailer), he summed up his understanding of it nicely in a 1985 interview with Lawrence Grossberg: “It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time,” while it also retains the “sense of language-ing, of expressing, etc” (53). It is for him, in short, a historically contingent connection. Thus, as it functions in the case of social movements and their attendant political discourses, it is the “non-necessary link, between a social force which is making itself, and the ideology or conceptions of the world which makes intelligible the process they are going through, which begins to bring onto the historical stage a new social position and political position, a new set of social and political subjects” (55). See Grossberg, editor, “On Postmodernism and Articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* vol. 10, no. 2 (1986): 45-60. And for its applications to the “study of racially structured social formations,” see “Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance” [1980] in *Selected Writings on Race and Difference*, edited by Paul Gilroy and Ruth Wilson Gilmore (Durham: Duke UP, 2021), 195-245.

manifiesto linked affirmative beliefs, feelings, and critical opinions about pressing social concerns to an affective state of indignation. In response to the hijacking of governmental power and the commons by financiers and political elites, the need for direct participatory democracy, the elevation of profit over people, and the infringement of basic social rights to education, housing, healthcare, and public space and transportation, the protestors proclaimed: “Por todo lo anterior, estoy indignado” (Due to all of the above, I am indignant) (9).⁴

But this movement also placed itself in a self-consciously transnational and global framework, and Hessel’s pamphlet itself looked outward from France to an international community. Since translations, perhaps especially of this kind of work, mediate between local situations and wider worlds, my dissertation argues that we lose sight of their significance—how they mediate—unless we (re)construct their historical contexts at both local and geopolitical levels. This is equally true of other cultural practices that involve second-order creation, such as adaptation. For instance, taking their cue from the Arab Spring and, most notably, the January 25th Revolution in Egypt, Los Indignados adapted, and thereby (re)localized, the Tahrir Square encampment strategy. In Spain, its form, meaning, effect, and affect were changed. After a small group of 100 remained camped out on May 15th, the numbers steadily grew in response to the repeated and aggressive displacement by police that was broadcast through social media like Twitter, reaching 20,000 by the 20th. Most notable, and indeed revolutionary, were this use of social

⁴ “Manifiesto ‘Democracia Real Ya’ (15/05/2011)” in *¡Indignados! 15M*, edited by Fernando Cabal (Mandala ediciones, 2011), pp. 7-9. Their proclamation continues, “Creo que puedo cambiarlo./Creo que puedo ayudar./Sé que unidos podemos./Sal con nosotros. Es tu derecho” (I believe I can change it./I believe I can help./I know that united we can./Come out [and camp/demonstrate] with us. It is your right.) (9).

media, as well as the particular forms of horizontal organization and direct participation through which the demonstrators arrived at both the decision to camp and its logistics—of how to enact the retaking of space for common use. Insurgent, too, was the political tactic of “occupation,” which we should now see as at once irreducibly local, and part of a culturally syncretic global, or worlded, form of revolutionary politics. In Spain, for one, public space is eminently more available for use and taking than in the United States, or, differently, in Egypt, and the violation of a law banning protests on the day before elections constituted a key local dimension of the 15-M occupations in Spanish cities. At the same time, scholars and journalists have not ignored the Egyptian and Tunisian lines of influence that Los Indignados cite, a series of general strikes in Greece, support protests in Dublin, London, Berlin, and Paris, or that participants would come to New York City to train and support the Zuccotti Park Occupiers, where an English version of Hessel’s pamphlet, *Time for Outrage: Indignez-vous!* translated by Marion Duvert, made its way into “The People’s Library.”⁵

The demands, concerns, and strategies in response to political corruption, austerity, and authoritarianism articulated by such locally-based movements clearly have a global resonance; yet the precise functioning of the processes of mediation through which political concepts and affects circulate, often going global, have been less often

⁵ In addition to personal experience attending protests and encampments, as well as Cabal’s *Indignados*; *15M*, I have drawn on two sources in creating my narrative of this recent history, here and below: Marco Briziarelli and Susana Martínez Guillem, *Reviving Gramsci: Crisis, Communication, and Change* (New York: Routledge, 2016); and Paolo Gerbaudo, *Tweets and the Streets: Social Media and Contemporary Activism* (London: Pluto Press, 2012). The most relevant chapters are 6 (pp. 98-119) and 3 (pp. 76-101), respectively; both focus on Los Indignados, with the former particularly useful for its rhetorical analysis.

studied. Among these, and even less attended to at the level of concerted scholarly analysis, is the role that translations play and have historically. Given that they are so central to the material and discursive exchange of ideas across languages, how have translations articulated revolutionary politics? How, that is, have specific practices of translation introduced and shaped political ideas and concepts, linking them to social forces in the cultures that receive them? How have they done so in ways that are integral to creating or effecting political identities? How does translation work to join local interests with transnational political discourses, and what are the consequences of doing so? These are the questions at the heart of this dissertation.

To pursue them, it situates translators' verbal choices and strategies in both the social and cultural conditions and discursive contexts of their translations—hence, my self-conscious attention, at both interrelated levels, to how the dissertation assembles its historical narratives. The histories I assemble are at once socio-cultural and discursive. My work proceeds in this way because, culling from Translation Studies, it assumes an understanding of translation as interpretive that requires us to distinguish among at least four scenes of interpretation, and, in turn, to compare them: the source culture as it reads and circulates the source text; the translator's as they read the source text and inscribe their interpretation in it; the receiving culture as it reads and circulates the translation; and the critic-analyst's as they develop contextualized readings of each source text and its translation. This comparative method is what allows us to notice the evidence of a translator's work and account for it by formulating arguments about its effects and their significance.

Take the concept of “indignation” that animated these anti-austerity political movements in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. As the new politics of refusal that it named suffused the air—a disidentification with the political class, a rejection of the autocratic control or takeover of governmental structures by wealthy elites—the rendering of this concept into various languages demonstrated translation’s capacity to “articulate” existing social forces to emergent discourses. The Spanish, Basque, and Catalan versions of Hessel’s 2010 *Indignez-vous!* that protestors were reading in the lead up to the 15-M demonstrations gave voice to longstanding grievances in and across Spain’s autonomous regions, even as Hessel had initially hailed a different and narrower audience. He exhorts young people in France to take up the principles of the Council of National Resistance that had fought Nazi occupation and the Vichy regime under the direction of General De Gaulle. In addition to playing a key role in the liberation of France, at least in the few years following the war, the Council implemented a republican political program of justice and social solidarity that marshaled French capitalism in favor of the popular classes. A 93 year-old former resistance fighter and diplomat, Hessel both had a key role in the Council and was member of the United Nations collective that wrote The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the wake of the war. In *Indignez-vous!*, he points to the ostensibly less clear-cut forms of totalitarianism that confront us today, while urging young people to seek out the condemnable aspects of the contemporary world.⁶ Recognizing these and acting in relation to them requires the “faculty” of indignation, as well as the engagement that follows from it. It is a faculty

⁶ I have drawn these biographical details from Hessel’s narrative of his life in the French pamphlet itself (9-10), as well as both the editor, Sylvie Crossman’s, notes in accord with the author (23-24) and her afterward (25-28).

that, for him, constitutes one of the fundamental and indispensable elements of being human (14). In the section “Indifference: The Worst Attitude,” he asserts that a posture of apathy leads to the loss of the indignation that should be mobilized to identify and confront two already visible challenges: first, the immense gap between the very rich and the very poor; and second, the violation of human rights and the state of planet (14-15).⁷

It was a version of this call to action and its attendant political discourse with which Spanish activists were engaging in the months before 15-M. Hessel’s work, as I have interpreted it, clearly spoke to them. Yet what created its capacity to spark action, was a series of interpretive acts, starting with the choice to translate it at this moment and continuing with the particular strategies that were marshalled to guide its transformation into a Spanish text. Through this choice and the application of these strategies, the translator, Lanaspá, inscribed an interpretation in Hessel’s pamphlet. Introduced by renowned Spanish economist José Luis Sampedro (itself an interpretive move), this textual iteration of Hessel’s work turned out to be so meaningful as to become the movement’s namesake. When added to the Catalan and Basque versions, its reprints formed part of more than a half-million copies sold and circulating in Spain in 2011. This figure becomes quite significant, as does the practice of translation, when one considers that it represents such a substantial portion of the over 3.5 million copies the pamphlet had sold worldwide in 15 different languages by the end of 2011. For contrast, a mere 6,000 copies were initially printed in French in 2010.⁸ In this case, then, what Walter

⁷ “Faculty” and the English title of the section are my translations from the French of “faculté” and “L’indifférence: la pire des attitudes,” respectively.

⁸ For these figures, see Briziarelli and Martínez Guillem, *Reviving Gramsci*, 100.

Benjamin called a work's "afterlives" in translation—their relative autonomy as they create and accumulate new (political) meanings over time through their reception—proved the most consequential.⁹

We can deepen our understanding of just how such a thing might come to pass by zooming in further on the social and cultural conditions in Spain at this time, as well as the discursive context of the segment of the receiving culture most deeply affected by the pamphlet. February 2011 can be narrated as a key moment in terms of the buildup of discursive and cultural practices and forces that had yet to be transformed into *Los Indignados*. These were elements that, to refer back to Stuart Hall's notion of articulation, had yet to be "organized together in a new discursive formation" (Grossberg 55). Several online grassroots organizations preceded *Democracia Real YA*, which was actually the final actor to appear on the activist scene. These organizations responded to an increasing vilification and police crackdown on public demonstrations and gatherings throughout the 2000s, coupled with the impacts of steadily rising housing costs, unfair mortgage practices, and, eventually, evictions, as the peak effects of the financial crisis approached in 2010. This included a government campaign against a youth subculture's subversion of the high costs of "legitimate" establishments through large informal BYO-social gatherings in plazas called "botellones" (great bottles), which had been taking place since the 1980s.

Responding to these pressures, activists had turned to the Internet or other alternative forms of organizing. In Madrid, for example, they had cultivated a vibrant culture of legally and illegally occupied social centers whose fomenting of alternative

⁹ Walter Benjamin, "The Translator's Task," translated by Steven Rendall, in *Translation Studies Reader*, edited by Lawrence Venuti, 4th ed, pp. 89-97, 90.

culture and social practices would prove a key resource in planning and sustaining the eventual occupation of Puerta del Sol. And organizations like “Estado Del Malestar” (Badfare State), “Juventud Sin Futuro” (Youth without a Future), and “Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca” (Platform for Mortgage Victims) formed a link to the housing rights movement of 2006, which had orchestrated a series of sit-ins in public squares through SMS texts. Added to the mix was an activist group against the “Sinde” law, which targeted file sharing, that would become “No les votes” (Don’t vote for them) (in reference to the major political parties that supported the law). Each of these groups, through their very names even, generated bits of political discourse that began to circulate in virtual and actual space. To name a few more: “sin curro, sin casa, sin miedo” (without a job, without a house, without fear), and a thumbs down paired with the phrase “no me gusta,” satirizing Facebook’s neoliberal form of sociality. The “Don’t vote for them” campaign culminated in a highly visible and well-covered protest outside the Goya Awards on February 13, 2011, demanding the resignation of Senator Gonzalez-Sinde and imploring people not to cast their ballots for the establishment parties in upcoming local or general elections.¹⁰

Later that month *¡Indignaos!* would be published with the subtitle “un alegato contra la indiferencia y a favor de la insurrección pacífica” (a plea against indifference and in favor of peaceful insurrection). If we analyze even its title, we can see how the context of a receiving culture combines with features of its translating language to shape the interpretation a translation inscribes, so that, finally, a translator’s transformation of a

¹⁰ To confirm the historical details in this paragraph and the previous one, I referenced: Briziarelli and Martínez Guillem, *Reviving Gramsci*, 98-118; and Gerbaudo, *Tweets and the Streets*, 76-101.

source text might produce a revolutionary political concept. Along with *Democracia Real YA*'s inclusive political platform, *¡Indignaos!* would be crucial in organizing the aforementioned series of discourses into a new discursive formation, and thus in galvanizing the 15-M political movement.

A translation of “Indignez-vous!” into English that closely adheres to the French might be “Get indignant!” Yet even as I describe my translation this way, it is still an interpretation, one among other possibilities produced by maintaining a semantic and formal correspondence to Hessel’s phrase according to current dictionary definitions and standard grammar.¹¹ In the French, the title takes the form of the second-person plural imperative, a command that, as we have seen, hails a collective subject like the French youth, a resistance movement even. The Spanish translation, too, is cast in the second-person plural imperative of the verb *indignarse* (to become indignant), thus at first glance (or to the untrained eye), it ostensibly reproduces the meaning and the form of the French. It does certainly maintain a close semantic and formal correspondence. But, based on my methodological assumptions, I would argue that this rendering of the title, paired with a subtitle that constructs a purpose for the pamphlet, proliferates meaning in particular ways in Spanish. As Lawrence Venuti’s work demonstrates, all acts of

¹¹ For an illustrative contrast, compare Marion Duvert’s translation *Time for Outrage: Indignez-vous!* Based on the current historical criteria for accuracy, it is no less accurate even as its English departs grammatically, merely inscribing another interpretation. Her title, one might argue, registers indirectly the pamphlet’s foreignness—even a Frenchness perhaps meant to suggest a particular tradition of political philosophy—by inserting Hessel’s French phrase as the subtitle, while using an English title to render its French command. The latter move still establishes a semantic correspondence. Although the English is not an imperative conjugation of the verb, it does use the linguistic resources of English to suggest the temporal immediacy of a command (“Time for”), as well as the noun form of the more colloquial dictionary possibility indicated for the French verb “s’indigner,” “to be outraged.”

translation, including instances of close adherence, “radically decontextualize” and “recontextualize” source texts, replacing the foreign “signifying processes” that “constitute” them with new sets of signifying processes that constitute translations in receiving cultural contexts.¹² In this case, the translation transforms the French both phonologically and grammatically, so that the Spanish title has the effect of making the command both colloquial and regional. In the Andalusian regional dialect as well as colloquial Spanish, past participles (here, *indignado*) are spoken with final the consonant swallowed, as in “estamos indignaos,” or “me ha indignao” (we are indignant, or it has made me indignant). Yet second-person plural commands can also be contracted and still be considered standard, formal Castilian Spanish: so “¡Indignad-os!” becomes “¡Indignaos!” Thus, given these features of its signifying process, the translation also creates grammatical slippage, since, spoken and heard aloud, *indignados* or *indignaos* might be understood as either the present imperative, or a past participle, which is also an adjectival form. As recontextualized here, the translation of Hessel’s phrase and pamphlet inscribes an interpretation that creates the possibility of an affect achieving multivalence: indignation can be an exhortation, a state of being (“estoy/estamos indignado/s”) and collectivize those who are, or have been made, indignant (“los indignados”). The same word effectively functions as and may conjure up: an imperative to politically engage, an affective state with a temporal aspect, and the name of a political collective.

The temporal aspect points to the possibility of a historical trajectory into which the protestors see themselves intervening. They might narrate it as follows: once we had a kind of dignity in a democratic European welfare state which endowed us with political

¹² This idea and argument spans Venuti’s work. For a throughgoing yet concise explanation of it supported by an example, see *TCE*, 179-182.

power in the wake of Franco’s dictatorship, but we experienced the collective loss of power that attended the perceptible shift to a form of autocracy in which, through money, financial institutions wield more power than governments. As Venuti observes, citing my research into the impact of *¡Indignaos!*, “The possibility that Spanish readers might formulate this narrative is indicated in the preface” when Sampedro “points to resemblances between his life and Hessel’s: ‘Yo también nací en 1917. Yo también estoy indignado. También viví una guerra. También soporté una dictadura.’ (I too was born in 1917. I too am indignant. I too lived through a war. I too endured a dictatorship.)” For Venuti, “Sampedro can allude so obliquely to the Spanish Civil War and Franco’s fascism because the economist assumes that his readers will immediately understand” (*Contra* 80-81).¹³ The spoken word *indigna(d)os* has a rich, multilayered sonic, grammatical, and semantic texture born here through an interpretive act of translation, such that it can name, inaugurate and perform a particular political subjectivity in Castilian Spanish—even in a regional dialect—and thus in Spain at this particular social and cultural moment.

In a case like *¡Indignaos!*, translation negotiated linguistic, cultural, and social differences to establish mutual understanding—here a basis for combatting apathy toward pressing (global) injustices. In turn, translation created (local) community around a new collective political orientation towards the contemporary world that it allowed to become intelligible. My historical narrative has sought to foreground the conditions that came together to make this possible, how the production of this translation occurred in a

¹³ Venuti cites my 2017 dissertation prospectus, “Translating Revolutionary Politics in the Nineteenth Century,” 4. The translation of Sampedro is his.

discursive context at a moment when it could support an interpretation that led to the emergence of a new political concept, indignación. A chance encounter driven by the translator's intentionality. I seek to maintain throughout this study such an emphasis on how translators' interpretive acts and their material conditions are mutually determining. As Stuart Hall put it—his basis, in part, for “articulation”—the latter are “the necessary but not sufficient condition for all historical practice,” while qualifying that “we need to think material conditions in their determinate discursive form, not as fixed or absolute” (Grossberg 57).¹⁴ Translators decide to rewrite a source text in another language, to fix, however provisionally, its form and meaning, and that makes them distinct kinds of intentional political actors in history.

Implementing the Hermeneutic Model of Translation

In terms of how *Translating Revolutionary Politics in the Atlantic World, 1776-1853* pursues the mediation that translation entails as an object of study, the cornerstone of its approach is its implementation of what Lawrence Venuti has called a “hermeneutic model of translation.” It conceives of translation as I did in my treatment of *¡Indignaos!:* “as an interpretive act that inevitably varies source-text form, meaning, and effect according to intelligibilities in the receiving culture” (*Contra* 1). This methodological

¹⁴ As this quote suggests, Hall importantly theorizes “articulation,” in both the Grossberg interview and elsewhere, by, like Venuti, thinking post-structuralism's focus on *différance* (hence, for Hall, the significance of discourse analysis) with Althusserian Marxism's understanding of “overdetermination.” Specifically, Althusser's essay “On Contradiction and Overdetermination” provides him fertile theoretical ground because it “begins precisely to think about complex kinds of determinacy without reduction to a simple [structural] unity.” A unity, say a collective subject, like a meaning, must “fixed,” or “articulated,” to a set of practices, and an ideology or discursive formation does this work of arbitrary/non-arbitrary “fixing,” or constituting. See “Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates.” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1985): 91–114, 93-94, and 112.

assumption guides how the dissertation culls from Translation Studies to investigate instances of cultural exchange like the circulation of various iterations of Hessel's pamphlet. It informs, too, the ways the project applies methods from literary and cultural studies. Venuti's work has long been concerned with adopting a hermeneutic model to replace what it demonstrates to be the dominant model that has "limited our understanding of [translation] for millennia": instrumentalism (*Contra* ix, 1). Instrumentalism "conceives of translation as the reproduction or transfer of an invariant that is contained in or caused by the source text, an invariant form, meaning, or effect" (*Contra* 1). The fruitfulness of moving away from such a conception has been inventively shown by Karen Emmerich, whose recent *Literary Translation and the Making of Originals* (2017) has also fundamentally shaped my approach. Emmerich builds on the translation scholarship of André Lefevere and Theo Hermans, two other critical touchstones for this study, who argue that interpretive mediation extends to editing, anthologizing, adaptation, and literary criticism.¹⁵ Her contribution to my thinking lies in illuminating not only that editing is implicated in translation, but that the latter "doesn't just edit or manipulate some preexisting, stable 'source,' but rather continues a process of textual iteration already at work in the language of initial composition" (10). This insight leads her to adapt from contemporary Anglophone textual scholarship a distinction between a *work* and a *text*, which I embrace throughout: "A work, [Peter] Shillingsburg writes, is a 'product of imagination' that can take shape in many versions corresponding

¹⁵ See: Hermans, *Translation in Systems. Descriptive and System-Oriented Approaches Explained* (Manchester: St. Jerome, 1999); *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, edited by Theo Hermans (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985); and Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

to different moments in the work's development; a text is 'the actual order of words and punctuation contained in any on physical form, such as a manuscript, proof, or book,' or in digital or oral forms" (16).¹⁶ As the translators I study translate prior works for political purposes, they are always also editors, translingually producing new textual iterations of those works *and* new works of their own with relatively autonomous political functions.

Following Venuti and Emmerich, my own effort to demonstrate the value of a hermeneutic model for literary history relies on two concepts from Derrida's poststructuralist theories of language and textuality that underpin their work: *inscription* and *iterability*. Most simply, Derrida uses inscription to indicate that any text, by virtue of having been written into a system of meaning, is always already mediated by a network of signification and therefore never accessible without interpretation.¹⁷ Hence, Venuti reminds us that "the source text not only com[es] to the translation process as always already interpreted, traced with a cultural discourse, but also undergo[es] a further, perhaps divergent inscription when translated" (*TCE* 4). Iterability, for Derrida a basic feature of all language and the notion that informs Emmerich's use of the phrase "textual iteration," is the idea that shifts in context can produce shifts in meaning, since

¹⁶ Emmerich is careful to note that she "open[s] up the 'work' to accommodate *translingual* versions, i.e. translations in other languages" (16). She cites Shillingsburg's *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age: Theory and Practice* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1996 [1984]), 42, 46.

¹⁷ Derrida develops the concept of inscription in his seminal *Writing and Difference* where, in Alan Bass' translation, it is defined as "the written origin: traced and henceforth *inscribed* in a system, in a figure which it no longer governs" (115). It is in this sense that writing is always already mediated, its meaning discontinuous and in excess of an author's control, since it encounters new networks of signification, in new scenes of reading that resituate its "original" utterance *ad infinitum*.

any sign “can break with every given context and engender infinitely new contexts in an absolutely nonsaturable fashion” (Derrida, “Signature” 320).¹⁸ For the literary history of how interlinguistic cultural exchange has fueled changes in political thought, these two concepts help to elucidate what can happen in transnational revolutionary moments when mutually animating cultural and discursive formations arise by turning to and reworking each other’s ideas in ever-shifting contexts.

Across the dissertation, I am interested in drawing on the considerable theoretical insights of Venuti’s work especially to explore how the interpretive possibilities of translation have been harnessed to continually reformulate concepts that formed the basis for political change. Through my implementation of his hermeneutic model, I want to emphasize how recognizing translation’s interpretive potential opens up its artistic and intellectual possibilities, and also, necessarily—most crucial here—its political ones. Albeit to varying degrees, instrumentalism has created a situation in which, as literary scholars and historians, even when working in multiple languages, we often quote from, read, and reference translations without attending to the differences they make, particularly at the level of a translator’s verbal choices. Observing this as I researched translation activity for this dissertation suggested to me that instrumentalism operates implicitly in these fields through a kind of vicious circle: if we gloss over the differences that translations make, we imply that they are transparent reproductions, and then there is nothing to think about. As Venuti points out in a recent conversation with fellow translation scholar Michael Cronin, by reducing translations to a single meaning,

¹⁸ Once again, this is Alan Bass’ translation.

instrumentalism leads to a reductiveness in our study of translation because it does not “allow for [its] creative and learned dimensions” (“Lawrence Venuti in Conversation”).

Yet fortuitously, the array of translations referenced but left unanalyzed indicates a vast unexplored terrain for scholarly inquiry. As this dissertation contends, we have yet to fully grasp the ethical or political force of translations—especially at the level of the “cultural and social implications of the translator’s verbal choices” (Venuti, *TCE* 6)—that can be glimpsed in their interpretive force. The key elaboration of Venuti’s model from his earlier to later work that has been so generative for my own on this score is the notion of the “interpretant,” which he derives, in part, from the semiotic theory of Charles Peirce and Umberto Eco. Interpretants are the mediating “factors” the translator applies to “turn a source text into a translation,” the means by which, ultimately, a translator inscribes an interpretation in that text (*Contra* 2). They include what I have referred to thus far as a translator’s strategies, as well as discourses or beliefs, and can be either formal or thematic:

Formal interpretants may include a concept of equivalence, such as a semantic correspondence based on philological research or dictionaries, or a concept of style, a distinctive lexicon and syntax related to a genre or discourse. Thematic interpretants are codes: values, beliefs, and representations that may be affiliated to specific social groups and institutions; a discourse in the sense of a relatively coherent body of concepts, problems, and arguments; or a particular interpretation of the source text that has been articulated independently in commentary. (*TCE* 181)

Venuti’s definition of this capacious concept calls our attention not only to the formal and thematic elements of a translation, but also to the historical and cultural contexts in which these elements produce meaning. Often applied “intuitively and without critical reflection,” the interpretants “not only guide the translator’s verbal choices but ensure

that they are more than merely verbal, that they effectively constitute interpretive moves which inform and nuance various textual structures and meanings, including prosody and imagery, narrative point of view and characterization, genre and discourse, terminology and argument” (*Contra 2*). This theoretical concept has allowed my project to pursue its research questions for several reasons. First, the very reason translations have the capacity to (re)shape the meaning of political concepts is because they are texts in their own right: the “application of interpretants” is what “guarantees that a translation is relatively autonomous from its source text even while establishing a variety of interpretive relations to that text” (*Contra 2*). Second, considering a translator’s interpretants demystifies what has been treated, colloquially and academically, as an abstract creative process, if, that is, it is not elided entirely: the kind of mediation that translation entails.

With respect to the translation revolutionary politics, a focus on interpretants facilitates my dissertation’s development of arguments about the *process* through which a given translation redefined political concepts, *how* and *why* it constitutes a historical intervention worthy of our attention. Because the notion of the interpretant accounts for the socio-cultural dimension of a translator’s choices, it shifts the basis of comparative study vis-à-vis translation. Since interpretants “mediate between the source language and culture, on the one hand, and the translating language and culture, on the other,” accounting for them necessitates that we situate our comparisons of translations and source texts in relation to their respective contexts (*TCE 181*). Rather than only reading source texts against their translations, that is, we must attend to how the translators have applied interpretants to recontextualize source texts, to inscribe interpretations in them as

they “rewrite [them] in terms that are intelligible and interesting to receptors, situating [them] in different patterns of language use, in different cultural values, in different literary traditions, and in different social institutions” (*TCE* 180). What therefore provides each of my chapters its argumentative thrust, as in the case of *Los Indignados*, is how it infers interpretants from translators’ verbal choices to demonstrate why their application produced a translation of political significance.

In Lanaspá’s case, for instance, we might venture that the operative formal interpretants included close semantic and formal correspondence as a *concept of equivalence*, the *genre* of the political manifesto, Spanish protest *rhetoric*, and *colloquial speech*, while the thematic ones consisted of an emergent *belief* in a particular form of popular democratic participation, and the inciting of collective consciousness and action as a political *function*, among others. Imagine, for instance, the different meanings and effects that might have been generated by a slight divergence from a close adherence to the second-person plural imperative that calques Duvert’s English title: *Hora de la indignación: Indignez-vous!* (*Time for Outage: Indignez-vous!*). One could make a case that this title would have been differently yet equally intelligible and compelling; yet it remains the case that the interpretants Lanaspá applied made *¡Indignaos!* galvanizing in the way I have narrated.

Although I deal with a range of interpretants throughout the dissertation as raised by my reading of each case, *equivalence* and *function* have a special significance in that, along with “relative autonomy,” they have also been what Venuti calls “key categories” for translation research commentary (*Reader* 4). I endeavor keep all three categories in sight throughout my study, as they remain crucial to scholarly and popular discussions in

the present. An overarching claim of *Translating Revolutionary Politics in the Atlantic World, 1776-1853* is that the way we construe these categories bears on how translation can be mobilized as a political act, since the nature of each translator's political intervention turns on—shapes and is shaped by—how they understand them. For, whether discernable as theoretical categories or interpretants in action, their meanings are historically contingent. Equivalence has been understood in range of a ways, whether “‘accuracy,’ ‘adequacy,’ ‘correctness,’ ‘correspondence,’ ‘fidelity,’ or ‘identity,’” and is “a variable notion of how the translation is connected to the source text” (*Reader 5*). Function is perhaps even more crucial for me throughout because, insofar as it often more explicitly disclosed by these translators, it serves to locate their political affiliations. Thought of as “the potentiality of the translated text to release diverse effects,” it is “a variable notion of how the translated text is connected to the receiving culture” (*Reader 5*). Such effects, as formulated in theory and commentary, have included “the communication of information” and the “production of a response comparable to the one produced by the source text in its own culture”; but they have also been understood, as is the case in this dissertation, as social, whether key to the development of a (national) literary tradition or language, the projects of colonialism and imperialism, or activism (*Reader 5*).

Finally, it bears pointing out here that, while I hope the historical narratives the chapters (re)construct are seamless enough, matters are theoretically more complicated still. This dissertation, too, represents an occasion or scene of interpretation. At the end of the day, I am comparing my interpretation of each translation to my interpretation of the text I have fixed as its “source.” Given that I am working in French, Spanish and

English, this has meant producing my own translations: in certain cases, as a basis for comparison to those of the translators under study; and, in others, to provide an Anglophone reader without facility in French and Spanish an English version. All of these interpretations are guided by my own set of interpretive factors, including “critical interpretants” like the hermeneutic model that I have applied to “infer and formulate the interpretations inscribed” by the translations under study (*TCE* 183). If histories can help us to refine the questions we pose for the future, this one hopes to have assembled a set of interpretants that proliferate the possibilities for inquiry into these and other translations as instances of instructive, meaningful and politically charged cultural work.

Interpretive Factors; or Translation Studies for Comparatists

The now-substantial body of Translation Studies scholarship has been drawn on only occasionally and sparsely by scholars of nineteenth-century comparative literary history. And as a mode of cultural production, translation is seldom the subject of book-length studies, even as a wide array of works broaden their unit of analysis beyond the nation, adopting multilingual, transnational, or even, oceanic frameworks. Such a broadening ushered in a major advance: a concerted effort to move away from monolingual and culturally nationalist paradigms, undergirded by the methodological assumption that language uses, far from being transparent acts, are thickly mediated by the institutions of the nation-state and empire (among others). Yet, decades later, a 2004 observation by Kirsten Silva Gruesz, remains just as apt: “Rather than saturating the current critical discourse of American studies, *translation* is virtually absent from it. While other reflexes of thought are interrogated and revealed as situated knowledge, the

assumption that linguistic differences are bridged easily and transparently remains undisturbed” (85). In the two historical periods that this dissertation investigates, few scholars, whether working in Americanist, Atlanticist, or Latin Americanist frameworks engage in sustained close textual analysis of translations, even as they readily acknowledge that translation was a major facet of revolutionary activity.

Recent studies of transatlantic print culture map networks of cultural exchange as they circulated and translated revolutionary political concepts, incisively challenging us to think complexly about how transnational cultural formations and ideas are constituted across vast geographical sweeps. For example, Sibylle Fischer’s *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (2004) incorporates texts from the Francophone and Hispanophone Caribbean in order to trace a diffuse politics of “radical antislavery” and its “attendant cultural practices” that are “scattered across languages, histories, and continents” (2). Through close readings of a variety of textual artifacts from poetry and novels, to slave narratives, to constitutions, primarily across Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Fischer adumbrates a radical politics of anti-slavery that, she argues, was buried, “disavowed” by a “colonial world order”—a process of suppression integral to the constitution of “emerging national cultures in the Caribbean and metropolitan political discourse” (274). Yet, even as she relies extensively on her own translations and those of others, Fischer turns to phrases like “it is impossible to give a good sense of the text in translation,” rather than devoting sufficient attention to the significance of translators’ interpretive choices, translators’ roles in the dissemination and shaping of the very revolutionary ideas that are the subject of her work (312).¹⁹ And

¹⁹ One highly significant translation on which Fischer’s analysis relies is that of Prince Saunders. As we shall see in Chapter 1, his compilation of Haitian legal documents and “pronouncements”

Marlene Daut's virtually encyclopedic account of transatlantic print culture featuring writing about Haiti, *Tropics of Haiti: Race and the Literary History of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World, 1789-1865* (2015), looks across a vast array of imperial contexts to see what images of the Haitian Revolution were proliferated. Drawing on Meredith McGill's concept of a "culture of reprinting," Daut regards the "adapting modifying, reprinting, translating and circulating texts" as a process that "'outstrip[s] authorial and editorial control'" (3).²⁰ The meaning of the Haitian Revolution, in other words, is made through and by textual iterations that are "relatively autonomous" from their initial composition. Yet, the study does not take up translation as a transformative process that inscribes interpretations, even when examining the translation of key Haitian texts, such as those of Baron de Vastey, into English, or other potentially revealing instances when analysis of the process of translation itself would deepen her points.

Scholars of Latina/o studies, too, have done important work to reconstruct the textual networks through which Hispanophone political writing was produced and moved in the nineteenth century from the U.S. to Latin America and back again. Raúl Coronado's *A World Not to Come: A History of Latino Writing and Print Culture* (2013)

contains a translation of the version of a Haitian constitution Henri Christophe's issues in 1811. Fischer quotes modified versions of Saunders' translation in her 12th chapter in order to add crucial nuance to the argument launched in her 11th that, "no documents articulate more clearly [than Haiti's successively issued early constitutions] the revolutionary nature of the new [Haitian] state, the radically syncretistic modernity of its ideological origins, and the extraordinary challenges the new state was facing in a world where slaveholding was the rule and where colonialist designs were just beginning to extend into Africa and Asia" (227). She cites the preamble—in the form of a modified version of Saunders' translation—as evidence of Christophe's "conscious effort to create a national culture" as form of "counterhegemony" that might form a bulwark against the very real threat of the reintroduction of a colonial slavery regime (259).

²⁰ See McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting, 1834-1853* (Philadelphia: UPenn P, 2003), 2.

is an excellent example. Coronado assembles an archive of texts and array of print practices that he uses to perform a genealogical investigation of Latino political concepts such as *pueblo*, *felicidad pública*, and *nación*. Coronado discusses the practice of translation in detail, tracking textual production in Philadelphia, Texas, Mexico, and New Spain to argue that these iterations of republican ideas are not mere mimicry of Anglo-American concepts, but rather articulate a Catholic Hispanic worldview. His analysis considers semantic differences and how even apparently corresponding words such as “people” and “pueblo” produce varied and different meanings, depending on their context and history, but does not perform close readings of translations themselves. Rodrigo Lazo, too, argues that Hispanophone print culture in Philadelphia “connected the revolutionary discourses of the 1770s and 1780s with the Latin American revolutions and political developments of the second and third decades of the nineteenth century” (“La Famosa Filadelfia” 59). His work, as Coronado’s, displaces long dominant Anglophone and Anglo-centric understandings of American literature and culture.

My project most closely aligns with historical investigations of translation as a form of cultural production, those which engage in close analysis of its textual aspects and political or cultural effects. Susan Kay Gillman and Eric Cheyfitz, for example, study translation’s role in imperial cultural and political processes.²¹ The work of Kirsten Silva

²¹ Gillman’s 2014 article, “Humboldt’s American Mediterranean,” studies the extensive translations and translation strategies of Prussian naturalist Alexander von Humboldt in his *Relation historique (Personal Narrative)*, part of thirty volume travel narrative, in which he records his observations of the Gulf-Caribbean basin, including its peoples and languages. For her, Humboldt’s text provides suggestive evidence of the “translational link between language and worldview,” as Humboldt’s translation at once inscribes native terminology with European notions of race and place, and embeds reflections on moments when his worldview and its embodiment in language are brought to crisis. Eric Cheyfitz’s 1997 *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from The Tempest to Tarzan* advances the field by arguing for “the central function of translation in the history of Anglo-American imperial foreign policy” (xi). He

Gruesz and Anna Brickhouse has been pathbreaking in terms of how it lays the groundwork for further inquiry into how the literary, as a site of material and discursive exchange, produces new forms of knowledge, how it is that political horizons take shape in moments when these kinds of relations are cultivated. Silva Gruesz's 2002 *Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing* takes a wide-sweeping approach to the study of overlooked Spanish-language periodicals and literary public sphere thriving in both major U.S. cities and newly acquired territories from the mid to late 19th century. Importantly for my work, she devotes a full chapter and portions of others to the ways acts of translation can be either resistant or assimilationist with respect to dominant cultural paradigms. She traces a transnational print culture that extends from New York to Cuba, Panama, Boston, San Francisco, Mexico City, New Orleans, and San Antonio; in this way, her study revises our understanding of this period in "American" literary and political history by locating us in a hemispheric spatial imaginary that, through literary exchange and influence, gave rise to one form of Latin Americanism that was anti-imperialist, even if culturally essentialist.

Brickhouse builds in many ways on Silva Gruesz's work in her 2004 *Transamerican Literary Relations and the Nineteenth Century Public Sphere*. She focuses on the politics of literary production during a time period—from the Congress of Panama in the 1820s to the Continental treaty signed in Chile in the 1850s—when the U.S. came to be seen as an imperial threat. On the heels of the Monroe Doctrine, the

traces an imperial poetics in both literary works produced out of European encounters with the so-called New World—like *The Tempest* or Montaigne's "Of the Canibales"—and works considered part of American literature proper, such as those of Fennimore Cooper. Among other revealing insights is his understanding that an imperial politics and its attendant policies inform and are informed by a poetics that shapes translation practices and conventions.

Congress of Panama began to show the fracturing of a previously held hemispheric idealism. As she traces lines of influence among the texts and ideas of various canonical figures from the U.S. tradition—from Wheatley, to Cullen-Bryant, to Hawthorne, to Fennimore-Cooper—and many non-canonical texts from Latin America and the Hispanophone and Francophone Caribbean, including translations, Brickhouse argues that the “transamerican literary relations” that emerged during this period came to “assume a central role in reshaping the public spheres of cultural production and political commentary in the United States and other parts of the American Hemisphere” (8). What is perhaps most illuminating about Brickhouse’s work is its attention to “relations” themselves as an object of study. My dissertation extends this critical impulse to study the relational production of knowledge and meaning, drawing on the extensive archival research assembled by Brickhouse and Silva Gruesz.

What tends to limit these studies is an insufficient theorization of translation. In Translation Studies, there are a variety of approaches to the study of political movements and writing, whether from a sociological, social and communication theory, or historical perspective.²² My project looks to these as models that might benefit Americanist or

²² In the past two decades, the scholarship in the field with an orientation towards politics has been extensive, and the field of literary history could benefit from how it underscores activist translation practices and their ethical and political stakes. While indebted to this scholarship, my project seeks to address gaps in it through methods culled from literary and cultural studies. My emphasis on textuality, on the social and political impact of a translators’ verbal choices in specific historical conjunctures points to the limits of more zoomed-out, systemic socially oriented studies like: *Translating Dissent: Voices From and With the Egyptian Revolution*, edited by Mona Baker (New York: Routledge, 2015); Mona Baker, *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account* (New York: Routledge, 2006); and Sherry Simon, *Translation Sites: A Field Guide* (New York: Routledge, 2019), especially Ch. 10, “The Street: Activist Translation: The Streets of Montreal and Cairo.” Moira Inghilleri’s intervention has been suggestive because she cultivates an approach that balances close analysis of translations performed by interpreters, situated in specific contexts, with philosophy of language and sociolinguistics in her *Interpreting Justice: Ethics, Politics and Language* (New York: Routledge, 2012). Two recent Routledge volumes are also a promising development, with the second containing close textual analysis that

Atlanticist studies of transatlantic print culture, both insofar as they study translation's role in politics and consider how meaning is produced in and across languages. Essays by Lydia H. Liu and Alexandra Lianeri, for example, explore the central function of translation activity in the emergence and legitimization of key political concepts in the 19th century: "positive law" and "natural law" in the context of translating Anglophone conceptions of international law into Chinese, in the case of Liu's work (152-3); and "democracy" and "democratic" governance in the context of England's shift from a feudal, aristocratic society ruled by monarchical divine right, to a "modern industrialized nation-state," in the case of Lianeri's (4). Both emphasize the extent to which translators worked to shift existing political discourses by introducing new political ideals.

Liu's essay, "Legislating the Universal: The Circulation of International Law in the Nineteenth Century," points us to how translations produce new political meanings and discourses as translators bring languages into mutually interrogative relation: "languages [in this case] that had limited contact before...must learn to speak in each other's *political discourse* for the first time" (137, emphasis in original). The result, in

is dememphasized in the first: *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Activism*, edited by Rebecca Ruth Gould and Kayvan Tahmasebian (New York: Routledge, 2020); and *The Routledge Handbook of Translation, Feminism and Gender*, edited by Luise von Flotow and Hala Kamal (New York: Routledge, 2020). Overall, these studies tend to be oriented towards the present and the most linguistics or social and communication theory oriented of them can rely on an empiricism that suggests it is possible to offer objective or neutral accounts of translation activity or decisions, even if they acknowledge the scholar's own positioning. My own contextually situated, historicized close readings can supplement them because informed by cultural studies, and poststructuralist notions of textuality that emphasize the role of translation in political developments as it inscribes interpretations. Liu's and Lianeri's approaches are closest to mine for this reason. For two other works of translation history that deploy related approach based in literary and cultural studies, see Vicente Rafael's "Translation, American English and the National Insecurities of Empire," *Social Text*, vol. 27, no.4 (2009): 1-23; and *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988).

this case, is a new “condition of universality”: “[The] neologistic compounds [*xingfa* and *gongfa*] borrowed from the universalism of neo-Confucian thinking to promote the translatability of international law,” and its “universalist agenda” in the wake of the Opium War (1840). Liu’s work suggests that we miss a crucial piece of the transnational constitution of political ideas when we fail to pay attention to the ways linguistic difference demands generative comparative work that translators undertake.

Lianeri’s 2002 essay “Translation and the Establishment of Liberal Democracy in Nineteenth-Century England: Constructing the Political as an Interpretive Act” tracks the shifting interpretations of Athenian democracy inscribed in Greek source texts by a series of British translators from the early 17th century to the late 19th—primarily Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War*. The significance of Lianeri’s work for Americanists cannot be overstated: these circulating Anglophone conceptions of democracy—realized through English translations, as opposed to, say, French ones—are those taken up and further interrogated by the founders of the U.S. constitution. Through their interpretations of them an “ambivalent disposition” toward Athenian democracy was cultivated in “American revolutionary thought” (11). Her work provides, in terms of both its content and method, a model for how to undertake a transnational study of the material history of political ideas based in close readings of translations.

My project draws together these various methodological and disciplinary threads to begin to address the tendency of scholarship to overlook the transformative power of translation. I hope to yield new insights into the role of translation in the nineteenth century by taking up commonplace U.S. texts, locations, and concerns, as well as points of contact, and construing them within different geographical and linguistic formations. I

assemble a scholarly archive of specialists working in different languages, including experts from Haitian, French, Latina/o, and Cuban studies. Not always integrated into Americanist or Atlanticist frameworks, this historical research allows me to construct both the broader systems or networks of translation through which the texts under study were produced, and pay close attention to the translator as a historical actor that negotiated social, political, and discursive constraints.

As with the case of Lanaspa's *Indignados*, I endeavor to narrate their interventions in the chapters that follow with an awareness that what gives them significance, as Hayden White has argued, is my "emplotment" of historical details (91-95). For White, narrative genres like romance, tragedy, comedy, and satire stand as different modes through which "by a specific arrangement of the events reported in the documents, and without offense to the truth value of the facts selected, a given sequence of events can be emplotted" (61). My histories are romantic, in that they find hope in how translators' practices look elsewhere to produce ideas that might stage resistance or redefine social relations (I found the effects of *¡Indignaos!* thoroughly inspiring, I must confess, in the face of betrayal by a political class that had abandoned any collective engagement or reckoning with their complicity in sustaining worlds that militate against mutual care and support). Still, they are not nearly as romantic as the one you read above; they maintain a healthy suspicion through recourse to various contemporary critical discourses, careful to not only interrogate the ways translators describe their work, but also recognize the contradictory effects their translations can have as they become

complicit with the very social forces they resist.²³ Ultimately, this allows the chapters to create a picture of translator's agency that accounts for overdetermination of various kinds, for what Venuti refers to as the "full complexity of human behavior," ranging from "intended actions" to responsiveness to translation norms, from the conscious to an unconscious "composed of unacknowledged conditions and unanticipated consequences" (Venuti, *TCE* 7-8).²⁴ With their translations of political writing, the translators under study here hope to supply some lack they consciously perceive or unconsciously experience, articulating those transnational desires and anxieties that animate social issues or political conflict to local situations and conceptions of the world.

This understanding of translation's relationship to articulation has led me to structure my chapters so that they move between narrative accounts of specific conjunctures and close textual analysis. I aim to bring into focus mediation itself as an object of study that is possible to track through a translator's verbal choices and strategies. When we reconstruct this process of a text's recontextualization using archival research, we open out onto a set of unique insights: not only what a culture values,

²³ While I was aware of Hayden White's *Tropics of Discourse*, an essay of Venuti's alerted me to its significance for histories of translation. See, "Translation, History, Narrative" *Meta: Journal Des Traducteurs/Meta: Translators' Journal*, vol. 50, no. 3 (2005): 800–16, especially 812-815.

²⁴ To formulate his notion of the translator's unconscious, Venuti draws on both Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure, and Contradiction in Social Analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), chap. 2, and Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980). For a more extended treatment of this notion, see *TCE*, chap. 2. For a succinct, forceful argument for it, see *Theses on Translation: An Organon for the Current Moment* (New York: Flugschriften, 2019), 11-13. There he submits that "a translation too can be thought of along the lines of Frederic Jameson's" study, as informed by an unconscious at once psychological and political. On translation norms, see Gideon Tourey, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995), 53-69.

whether beliefs or rhetorical and literary forms, but also how it constructs, in and across languages, its own culture in relation to its constructions of others. To consider how political concepts emerged in translation as it proliferated meaning is to learn about how they were forged through cultural exchange in more textured, dynamic historical complexity.

The Parts and the Chapters

The two chapters that comprise Part 1 of my dissertation study the role of translation in expanding the scope of emancipatory politics. The chapters share an interest in the revolutionary and resistant uses of print culture that circulated among the major ports of the Atlantic world in French, Spanish, and English. The two cases studies demonstrate how the meanings of freedom and becoming free were in flux within and across contexts, as imperial regimes struggled to secure their place on the international stage and colonial holdings increasingly sought to cast off the “yoke” of the monarch or racial slavery.

The first chapter, “Translating for the King: Prince Saunders’ *Haytian Papers* and the Expansion of Emancipatory Politics,” studies the 1816 translation of the French language state papers of Henri Christophe, King of Northern Hayti, into English by abolitionist and free African American Prince Saunders of Boston. Saunders was enlisted by Christophe to translate the documents that would become *The Haytian Papers* as part of an ongoing effort by the Kingdom to secure diplomatic recognition in the wake of the independence and overthrow of colonial plantation slavery that the Haitian Revolution had achieved. I argue that, in his attempt to redeem the reputation of the monarch,

legitimize Northern Hayti as a sovereign Black state, and encourage the emigration of free African Americans, Saunders effectively smuggles into the U.S. a subversive reframing of the relationship among labor, freedom, equality, and citizenship. Inscribing the state papers of a monarchical regime—utterly antithetical to the democratic principles on which the U.S. slave republic was theoretically premised—with the values of republicanism, Saunders’ editing and translation practices subtly inserted into U.S. political discourse the suggestion that the enslaved persons of the U.S., too, might become free through their labor on the land. As it challenges a prevailing transnational image of the revolutionary Haytian government as backward, illegitimate, and provisional, Saunders’ translation imaginatively expands the scope of emancipatory politics to encompass the possibility of a Black state in which freedom signifies the racial equality maintained by a monarch who guards against the reinstatement of slavery.

Chapter two, “De-sacralizing the Monarchy, Authorizing the Pueblo: Versions of Paine in Manuel García de Sena’s *La Independencia de la Costa Firme*” also explores how translation can serve to expand the meaning of emancipatory politics. Published in Philadelphia in 1811 as part of an explosion of Spanish-language printing, García de Sena’s book was a compendium that staged a maxim-model relationship between several of Thomas Paine’s key texts, including his incendiary *Common Sense*, and U.S. constitutions. The compendium was a part of a broader Spanish American effort to imagine more stable autonomous futures in the New World following Napoleon’s invasion of Spain and installation of his brother, Joseph, which led the Spanish government to flee south and embrace a more deliberative model of government. García de Sena found himself in Philadelphia as an unofficial agent for the Venezuelan

government as it became an Atlantic world publication hub from which to envision a global Hispanophone. Drawing on Stuart Hall's concept of articulation, I suggest that García de Sena's work of translation articulates the republican principles of liberty detailed in Paine's writing to the values of Catholicism. Unlike the U.S. iteration of constitutional government that sought to separate church and state, García de Sena's version needed to make constitutionalism compatible with Catholicism, and disarticulate the religion's long ties to monarchical tyranny. Recoding the concepts of Paine had deployed to authorize popular sovereignty—constitutions and the people—as *constituciones* and the *pueblo*, while suppressing the anti-Catholic sentiments on which much of Paine's key arguments rested, García de Sena subverted the control of the Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church by de-sacralizing monarchy. In a diachronic interpretive move, he negotiated Paine's anti-Catholic critique of monarchical tyranny as he reimagined his 1776 as a justification for an independent future on the Costa Firme. Ultimately, he challenged even his own governmental body in Caracas to be more expansive in its understanding of popular governance by "constitutionalizing" Catholicism and relocating sovereignty in the *pueblo* as opposed to the monarch.

Part 2 studies the role of translation in the transnational abolitionist movement of the mid-nineteenth century, focusing on how translation played a key role in imagining a post-emancipation future characterized by racial harmony and paternal social relations, and in fact created a new basis for racialization.

The third chapter, "R.R. Madden's *Poems by a Slave in the Island of Cuba, Recently Liberated* and the Making of a 'Negro Intellect,'" takes up the case of Irish abolitionist Richard Robert Madden's anti-slavery compendium. In addition to its

English-language translation of the enslaved poet Juan Francisco Manzano's life story, the compendium includes Madden's own writing on Cuban slavery. Acting in his official capacity as a British inspector of the illegal slave trade, Madden edited and translated these texts in conjunction with the 1840 London World Anti-Slavery Convention to deliver what he deemed a "perfect picture of Cuban slavery" that dispelled the myth of its mildness. To do so, critics have conventionally argued, Madden translates the particular case of Manzano's life story in terms more familiar and meaningful to his Anglophone audience, suppressing both features of the Spanish American slave system and aspects of Manzano's self-image that undermined his purpose. Yet these critics have stopped short of interrogating the simultaneously formal and ideological dimensions of the concept Madden relies on to establish an equivalence between his English version and Manzano's life story: "literal translation." I suggest that this concept parallels Madden's work establishing a correspondence between two competing systems of racialization, the Spanish American *régimen de castas* and Anglophone abolitionism. What he calls his "literal" translation strives to find an equivalent figure for Manzano's self-representation as an enslaved poet in the figure of the "negro intellect," recasting his journey from slavery to freedom in terms that were compatible with the paternalist posture of Anglophone abolitionism. In so doing, the translation creates new meanings of the concepts of freedom and anti-slavery for both Cuban and Anglophone readers.

Chapter four, "Communion d'émotions pures et saintes": The French Romancing of Revolutionary Feeling in Louise Belloc's *La case de l'oncle Tom*" considers Louise Swanton Belloc's 1852 French version of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Translated during the onset of the Second Empire, the text was popularized in the context

of an authoritarian censorship regime that sharply curtailed political discourse and sent France's most outspoken republican authors into exile. Although it formed part of an international "Tom mania" that saw countless iterations of Stowe's novel worldwide, Belloc's translation has been understudied, since it was presumed to have little political importance of its own. France had already abolished slavery in its colonies, reviewers noted with self-satisfaction. Plus, the novel was regarded as a decidedly feminized and therefore unserious phenomenon. As such, Belloc's translation was well positioned to enter French political discourse and literary culture at a decisive moment through covert means. On the one hand, key moments in Belloc's translation inscribe the text with revolutionary and even criminalized republican concepts such as *le peuple* and the (in)famous tripartite motto, *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, that tapped into readers' affective experience of loss and sought to rekindle their hope for a more just future. At the same time, as the Second Empire sought to reinforce a religious monarchy and expand its reach in West and North Africa, the translation's rendering of the relationship among "white" masters and their "black" servants provides insight into other interpretants that guide Belloc's verbal choices, specifically those drawn from a prior colonial imaginary containing literary forms and political beliefs that might mollify the haunting memory of the Haitian Revolution with the promise of a more harmonious colonial project in Senegal. In her translation, we can observe aspirations for a Franco-centric future in which both the suppressed republicans seize control of the government once more, and their refined values are successfully disseminated throughout Africa and around the world.

PART 1

**“JUSTIFICADO AÑOS HÁ”:
RENDERING THE SCOPE OF EMANCIPATORY POLITICS
IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTIONS**

CHAPTER 1

TRANSLATING FOR THE KING:

PRINCE SAUNDERS' *HAYTIAN PAPERS* AND THE EXPANSION OF EMANCIPATORY POLITICS

Prince Saunders, a well-respected African American teacher and public figure involved in public education and anti-slavery initiatives in Boston, traveled to Haiti in 1815 at the suggestion of British abolitionist Thomas Clarkson. The announcement of Saunders' arrival was widely printed in U.S. newspapers, which described him as "an African of good education and excellent character," and appealed to readers' curiosity, "It is believed that the gentleman is the bearer of important news."²⁵ Correspondence between Clarkson and King Henry Christophe of the Northern Kingdom of Haiti indicates that Saunders' purpose was to enlist African Americans to emigrate there in order to support Christophe's ultimate goal of achieving international recognition as a sovereign state.²⁶ Along with Haitian politicians, Saunders believed that African Americans felt an allegiance to this new nation and would be eager to help preserve its independence. Another 1816 article in the Boston tri weekly *The Repertory* relayed the

²⁵ In reports from Haiti, the announcement was published in at least twelve newspapers from March 6 to March 12, 1816, alongside news of an attempted assassination and a description of Alexandre Pétion, Christophe's rival in the south, as a "tyrant" that his people would "sooner or later destroy" (*Commercial Advertiser*, vol XIX, issue 7282, New York: March 6, 1816).

²⁶ See Griggs, Earl Leslie and Prator, Clifford H. (eds). *Henry Christophe and Thomas Clarkson; A Correspondence*.

report of a U.S. “gentleman” who encountered Saunders aboard a ship while returning from Haiti:

[Saunders] describes the morals of the court and the country as pure, the troops in high state of perfection, and the kingdom growing fast into a well-organized government—

*“Nigroque simillima cygno”*²⁷

The Latin phrase, which in a close translation might read “and very similar to a black swan,” was a metaphor first used by Roman poet Juvenal to describe an impossible event. However, upon the seventeenth-century discovery that black swans do exist, it came to connote an event that once *seemed* impossible, but could be seen in hindsight as a historical inevitability.²⁸ The editorialist’s use of the term evinces his condescending surprise at Haitian competency: it serves his racializing irony as an image that figures blackness as non-human, reinscribing notions of Haitian aberrance in order to exclude Haiti from the categories of civilization and rationality.

Despite the editorialist’s racial inflection, the term may still be apt for describing the unique character and significance of Christophe’s regime: no other sovereign state had emerged from a slave revolt, sustained for over a decade with steadily increasing levels of military organization, to announce its independence by instituting a constitutional monarchical regime that was at once radically anti-slavery and authoritarian. In the Age of Revolutions, post-revolutionary governments achieved legitimacy on the world stage according to the terms of Enlightenment and republican

²⁷ *The Repertory*, May 23, 1816.

²⁸ For more on the development of black swan theory, see Peter Hammon, “Adapting to the entirely unpredictable: black swans, fat tails, aberrant events, and hubristic models” (1).

political thought and values, both of which were readily mobilized to exclude the possibility of recognizing Christophe's Kingdom as a sovereign state.²⁹ The diplomatic project for which Saunders was enlisted required the justification of this apparently aberrant historical event.

In this chapter, I argue that his selection, translation, and arrangement of an array of texts written and printed in the Northern Kingdom of Hayti constituted a resistant interpretive act that served this end. Compiled and published first in London in 1816, then Boston in 1818 under the title *Haytian Papers: A Collection of Interesting Proclamations and Other Official Documents, Together with Some Account of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Kingdom of Hayti*, these translations and the interpretive moves that their production entailed situated Christophe's rise to power in a teleological historical narrative, the logical conclusion of which would be radical human emancipation.³⁰

Yet if the *Papers* constructed a composite image of Christophe, his Northern Kingdom, and its capacity to safeguard freedom from slavery as a *fait accompli*, the

²⁹ A body of works on the period from various disciplinary perspectives adopt and adapt the periodizing term "age of revolutions" from Eric Hobsbawm's seminal 1962 history of intellectual shifts and material transformations, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848*. One of the most fruitful developments has been the expansion of the geographic, linguistic, conceptual and descriptive scope of the phrase to include both cultural production (from texts to visual forms and music) by a broader array of actors in the wider Atlantic and Caribbean and the practices of slavery. Particular attention has been focused on rectifying the glaring omission of the Haitian Revolution from the study of the period. See, for example: Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823*; Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*; Johnson, *The Fear of French Negroes: Transcolonial Collaboration in the Revolutionary Americas*; Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions*; and Langley, *The Americas in the Age of Revolution, 1750-1850*.

³⁰ The two versions of the text are nearly identical. Hereafter, I abbreviate their title as *Haytian Papers* or *Papers*, citing the pagination of the Boston version.

historiography of the Haitian Revolution, replete with divergences, contradictions and ambiguities, suggests the embattled process of assigning meaning to the series of events that transpired from 1789 through 1816. The year of 1816 found the former French colony split, beset by a protracted civil war between “black” former slave and revolutionary general Christophe’s Kingdom and the *de jure* democratic republic in the south (theoretically modeled after that of the United States), governed by another revolutionary general, “President-for-Life” Alexander Pétion, a *gens de couleur libre* (free person of color). Conflict and division would only abate after both leaders’ deaths in 1822 under *gens de couleur libre* Jean-Pierre Boyer, who had succeeded Pétion under the same title in 1818. He would unify the country and extend his control over the entire island of Hispaniola until political unrest spurred by his authoritarian policies forced him to resign and go into exile in 1843.³¹ The civil war would be seized upon by many in the Atlantic world to interpret Haitian sovereignty as suspect. But even before that, events were not necessarily driving towards an unprecedented, stable combination of independence and universal human emancipation signaled by the overthrow of colonial racial slavery. And to Saunders’ contemporaries, the statehood of Haiti, especially on these terms, was not a foregone conclusion; rather, the threat of the reinstatement of slavery loomed large, and reportage from the island did not present a coherent picture of ongoing and concerted revolutionary action directed towards such an end.

³¹ For these historical details, I culled from: Alexander, ““The Black Republic,”” 58-60; Daut, *Baron de Vastey and the Origins of Black Atlantic Humanism*, 18-21; Fanning, “The Roots of Early Black Nationalism,” 48-50; Jackson and Bacon, “Fever and Fret,” 10-11; and Popkin, *A Concise History of the Haitian Revolution*, 141-158.

For one, the narrative character of the stories that emerged harkened back to the spectral image of future slave rebellion in Jamaica and Guyana proffered as a cautionary tale by Abbé Raynal and Denis Diderot's 1770 *Histoire des deux Indes*. English versions translated by John Justamond were published in London in 1776 and 1783 and combined to sell around 25,000 copies in the United States by 1795. Hugely popular, with a wide circulation in translation in Europe as well as the broader Atlantic world in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, this encyclopedic work warned of a rebellion chief—a “black Spartacus” for which accounts found a ready analog in Toussaint Louverture—as it “used depictions of slavery as complex metaphors of self-interpellation that radicalized disenfranchised metropolitan subjects while giving advice concerning colonialist management” (Aravamudan 56).³² As Michel-Rolph Trouillot aptly observes, while the text did in certain respects constitute a radical critique of colonialism, its “evocation of a slave rebellion was primarily a rhetorical device” (*Silencing* 85). Raynal and Diderot's vision of changes to the colonial system, including abolition, was ultimately a reformist one designed to shore up control, while obviating insurrectionary

³² For the famed “black Spartacus” passage, see Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des européens dans les deux Indes*, 6: 206-208. For an English version, see J. Justamond, trans., *A Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies* 3: 172-173. Justamond translated first from the second edition published in 1774 to create the 1776 version, and subsequently the third edition published in 1780 to create the 1783 version. On this last detail, see Jimack, 2006, *A History of the Indies*, 279. For analysis of the *Histoire*'s circulation and translation in the period as well as its contents see: Courtney and Mander, *Raynal's Histoire Des Deux Indes: Colonialism, Networks and Global Exchange*; Furtado et al., “The Different Brazils in Abbé Raynal's *Histoire des Deux Indes*”; Jimack, 2017, *A History of the Two Indies: A Translated Selection of Writings*, “Introduction”; and Jimack and Mander, “Reuniting the World: The Pacific in Rayanal's *Histoire De Deux Indes*.”

carnage—the “concrete possibility of such a rebellion flourishing into a revolution and a modern black state was still part of the unthinkable” (*Silencing* 85).³³

During the Revolution and after it, this unthinkable was mediated through what Marlene L. Daut has called a “mulatto/a vengeance narrative.” Such a narrative imbued eighteenth- and nineteenth-century accounts with a “racial” character by drawing on a “naturalist lexicon” of “racial” types that European travel writers had created starting in the seventeenth century (*Tropics* 4). This vocabulary and its fusion with the later “‘scientific’ debates about ‘race’” that it informed came to produce a storehouse of tropes to which early nineteenth-century U.S. American and colonial European writers would narratively turn again and again to impute the impetus for the Haitian Revolution to “‘race’” (5, 4). What’s more, Daut observes, such a “colorized understanding” of Haitian society and history has carried over into even otherwise groundbreaking contemporary scholarship (22).³⁴ The move to enshrine the causal explanatory power of “race” worked to position the Haitian Revolution beneath the French and American ones in a hierarchy of importance by eliding its political substance. As Daut argues, the tropes which she organizes under the banner of “mulatto/a vengeance” relied upon the “language of incongruity, ‘hybridity,’ and uncertainty found in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century

³³ For more on how the *Histoire* has been understood in relation to the Haitian Revolution, including the figuration of Toussaint Louverture as a “black Spartacus,” see, in addition to Trouillot, *Silencing*, and Aravamudan, “Trop(Icaliz)Ing”: Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans*, 289-325; and Daut, *Tropics of Haiti*, 49-61, 325, and 365.

³⁴ Also see 462 where Daut draws fine-grained distinctions among a “diverse array” of contemporary scholars who are influenced by such an understanding, with David Nicholl’s 1979 *From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour, and National Independence in Haiti* being the seminal contemporary instance in that his “‘color’ thesis” enjoys “an ever-widening circle of influence.”

conversations about ‘racial mixing’ in the ‘tropics’ to narrate the history of the Haitian Revolution as a ‘racial’ Revolution” (6). It is just such derisive language that we hear in the editorialist’s stigmatizing invocation of the “black swan,” a figure of “‘monstrous hybridity’” in that it “relies upon a language of ‘racial’ monstrosity in order to destabilize the idea that [the Kingdom] had been *civilized* or *humanized*” (56, emphasis in original). Thus, when Saunders’ made the formal move to construct the narrative logic of the events that led to the “rise” of the Kingdom of Hayti as he did, he disrupted what Daut refers to as a “pseudoscientific ‘racial’ framework for understanding revolutionary motivations” (4). Saunders used his editing and translation practices to challenge the narrative that the outcome of the Revolution was inherently unstable because it was about the “innate consequences of ‘blackness’ or ‘mulattoness’ rather than about freedom from the twin oppressions of slavery and colonial racism” (17). The cultural work the *Papers*’ performed stands in stark contrast to the frequent use of both the demeaning term “mulatto/a” and the trope of “monstrous hybridity.” Both were mobilized in early nineteenth-century writings to figure the existence of two Haiti’s as a sign of illegitimacy: a marker of “natural” and perennial political chaos that would be invoked to legitimize French efforts to retake its former colonial holding until mid-century.³⁵

³⁵ On the view and use of the word “mullato/a” as not “a simple stand in for free people of color,” but actually “as a way to demean them,” see Daut, *Tropics of Haiti* 17-18. For her, this understanding has been suppressed, despite the fact that “nearly all scholars of the Haitian Revolution acknowledge that in Saint-Domingue ‘the signifier *mulatto* became synonymous with the entire population of free people of color, as whites constructed the free class in terms of sex between whites and blacks’ (Garraway, 2005, 212)” (17). On the use of the two Haitis as a go-to example of “monstrous hybridity” in the period, see Daut’s first chapter “‘Monstrous Hybridity’ in Colonial and Revolutionary Writing from Saint-Domingue,” especially 77-78.

Haiti did face actual threats to its stability. Political loyalties were ever shifting, driving armed conflicts and plots throughout the revolutionary period, but not reducible to seeming racial alliances. Rather, loyalties were constrained by the intertwined pressures of various imperial designs on the island—with France, until an 1802 military expedition, the one power that promised to maintain the abolition of slavery—as well as the dynamically intersecting ideologies of race and class that were produced and reproduced by the invention of the French colonial regime of slavery and its lived daily realities.³⁶ From Toussaint Louverture to the Baron de Vastey, a free person of color, secretary to King Henry and prolific writer, revolutionaries themselves racialized political ambiguity and instability according the tropes of monstrous hybridity.³⁷ A

³⁶ The language I use here to understand the relationships among race, class, slavery, colonialism, and imperialism, and, by extension, the production of capital hews closely to that of Cedric Robinson and Barbara J. Fields; and their work, along with C.L.R. James', and Jordan T. Camp, Christina Heatherton, and Manu Karuka's undergirds my thinking. See specifically: Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton, "The World We Want, an Interview with Cedric and Elizabeth Robinson" in *Futures of Black Radicalism*, edited by Gaye Theresa Johnson and Alex Lubin; Robinson's *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*, 10, 26, 27; Fields' 1990 "Slavery, Race and Ideology in the United States of America," James' *The Black Jacobins*; and Camp et al.'s "A Response to Nancy Fraser." More broadly, see: Robinson, *Forgeries of Memory and Meaning: Blacks and the Regimes of Race in American Theater and Film Before World War II*; and Karuka *Empire's Tracks: Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental Railroad*. The relevant quotations are the following: "As I said in the introduction to *Forgeries*, racial regimes are not actualities but inventions; they constantly fray and fall apart, so they have to be repaired" (Robinson in Camp and Heatherton, "The World" 246, my emphasis); "Race is not an element of human biology (like breathing oxygen or reproducing sexually); nor is it even an idea (like the speed of light or the value of π) that can be plausibly imagined to live an eternal life of its own. *Race is not an idea but an ideology*. It came into existence at a discernible historical moment for rationally understandable historical reasons and is subject to change for similar reasons." (Fields 101, my emphasis); "Racism, for Robinson, was a *product* of imperialism, slavery, and genocide." (Camp et al. n.p., my emphasis); and "The race question is subsidiary to the class question in politics, and to think of imperialism in terms of race is disastrous. But to neglect the racial factor as merely incidental is an error only less grave than to make it fundamental" (James 283). As Camp et al. observe, "For Robinson, as for C.L.R. James (about whom Robinson wrote), confronting racism was critical to a conjoined struggle against capitalism and imperialism" (n.p.).

³⁷ On Louverture, see Popkin *A Concise History*, 78: After Louverture aided the then French Governor General Étienne Laveaux in putting down a coup attempt in 1796, winning in the

military elite representing all racial designations and regional affiliations rose to power during the initial slave uprising, gaining possession of plantations and cultivating varied political interests, including differing opinions about the maintenance of the plantation economy as well as diverse diplomatic relationships to Spain, Britain, and France. After Toussaint, who by 1802 was the Governor General of Saint Domingue, was betrayed by his high-ranking officers looking to rise to power by defecting to the French, Henry among them, the war of resistance to the reimposition of slavery by decree of Napoleon would begin anew. While for months during a spring and summer armistice with the French expeditionary forces Jean-Jacques Dessalines, a former slave and general under Toussaint, had violently suppressed plantation worker and small farmer uprisings, he would rejoin the resistance in October 1802. It was Dessalines who emerged as the top military commander to issue a declaration of independence in 1804 of which he was the sole signatory. After reigning as Emperor for two years, he was assassinated in a coup plot, and the newly independent State of Hayti descended into civil war. The 1804 Haitian Declaration of Independence would meet a dubious reception. Given the way that Haitian revolutionary events unfolded and the prevailing scripts for registering their meaning, Christophe and Saunders would have to do rhetorical work in order to resist the denial of their revolutionary significance by the United States and trans-Atlantic empires.

process the title of Deputy Governor, he explained small rural uprisings in the north using racialized language. “Even though he emphasized that he had free colored supporters as well as black ones, Toussaint blamed these disturbances on free colored followers of [the coup leader] Villatte, casting the free colored population as fomenters of disorder in the colony” (Popkin 78). On Vastey, see Daut *Tropics of Haiti*, 129: While Vastey deconstructed the French colonial racial regime in many of his writings, in the context of the civil war with the south he “wrote that Pétion was ‘sometimes a republican, sometimes a slave, sometimes a *bonapartiste*, sometimes a royalist; black, yellow, or white; he puts on a mask according to convenience and circumstances.’”

In order to become a “free state”—that is, a non-monarchical republic premised on the natural rights and equality of all men—North American colonists had needed to cast off the yoke of British rule. This casting off was initiated using a declaration, a genre of political writing inscribed with a republican vocabulary, logical and historical arguments for their separation from the British Empire, and an appeal to an international order of world powers alongside which they demanded to be recognized as equal. The genre came to function as what J.L. Austin terms a “performative utterance,” words that enact what they articulate (5-6). In the decades following this declaration, such a performative utterance was understood as the customary method by which any free state could enact their legal recognition—so long as it was delivered in a form and language that conformed to contemporary political norms. That U.S. colonists relied on the metaphor of slavery to describe their political oppression was an irony not lost on British readers of the Declaration of Independence who criticized an announcement of the natural equality of all men which failed to emancipate slaves. While republican definitions of independence and equality could and did support anti-slavery movements—Paine, for instance, led the charge to abolish slavery in the Northern U.S.—they were also constitutive of the United States of America as a slaveholding republic where independence and equality were racially codified.

Such were the conditions in which Saunders’ *Haytian Papers* appealed for the international recognition of the Kingdom of Hayti as a sovereign state, which it still lacked in 1818, despite its declaration. To prevent further internal dissension and mitigate against external threats, Christophe imposed the *Code Henry*, an authoritarian civil code enforced by the military that constructed a rigid social hierarchy; however, the Haytian

Kingdom was also radically anti-slavery and anti-colonial, advocating for general human emancipation. As an outright refusal of the conditions under which enslaved Africans worked in the Atlantic World, Christophe's labor system emphasized the rights and roles of laborers, offering protection from abuses, and granting them a twenty-five percent share of produce, in addition to access to redistributed property.

In these significant ways, the government established in northern Haiti stood outside the possibilities of republicanism as conceived by Anglo and French political discourses. Saunders' translation and publication of the *Haytian Papers* in London and Boston, therefore, needed to do the political and interpretive work of making Christophe's governance legible and legitimate to skeptical Anglo audiences. If the *Papers* were to serve their performative function, it was necessary that they adopt the terms and conventions of the existing international order, a task for which the stakes were nothing short of life or death. As Saunders translates Christophe's *Manifesto of the King*: "Free by right, and independent, in fact, we will never renounce these blessings; no, never will we consent to see subverted the edifice we have raised and cemented by our blood; at least, without being buried beneath its ruins" (131).

Saunders' work went beyond reporting on the conditions in Haiti in any simple way. As an editor and translator, he marshaled interpretive strategies to transform what he framed in his "Editor's Address" to the London version ("Preface" in the Boston version) as the Kingdom's "enlightened systems of policy" and "liberal principles of government" into vehicles for radical emancipation.³⁸ Through his translations, he reconfigured the Enlightenment and republican principles that constituted the

³⁸ See i the London version and 7 in the Boston version.

slaveholding republic and underwrote ongoing colonialism to accommodate the very things that these Anglo-European value systems ostensibly opposed: a nominally Black, anti-slavery monarchy.³⁹ The analysis that follows demonstrates Saunders' use of translation and editing to assimilate Haitian history, social life, and forms of governance into discourses and contexts which were constituted by the racialized exclusion of the very possibility of a Haiti. For the *Papers* confront what Sibylle Fischer calls a "troubling contradiction" at the heart of Enlightenment political theory: "At the same time that liberty emerges as the most cherished political value, and slavery comes to signify all that is wrong with traditional forms of social organization and political rule, racial slavery—slavery as a global business, a labor regime, and a legal practice—expands to an extraordinary degree. Yet when we look at the philosophical tradition, comments about the actual slaves and the slave trade are rare and rarely unequivocal" (24). This chapter reads the text as a translation by analyzing the strategies that Saunders uses to manipulate this contradiction. Through this manipulation, I suggest, he submits the terms of Enlightenment and republican political thought to a radical resignification, disrupting Anglo-European conceptions of labor, freedom, independence, and racial equality.

The Politics of Translation and The Translation of Politics

Emphasis on the radical aspects of the Haitian Revolution has come to dominate its representation in scholarship, and for good reason, since the significance of the

³⁹ Crucially, as Sibylle Fischer informs us in her analysis of the Dessaline's 1805 constitution, the understanding of "black" in the discourse of Haytian statecraft in circulation "disrupt[ed] any biologicistic or racialist expectations": "[the revolutionaries] make 'black' a mere implication of being Haitian and thus a political rather than biological category" (233).

revolution in Atlantic cultural and political life was long “silenced” by the epistemological limits of Western historiography.⁴⁰ This field of study has largely been built on the seminal work of C.L.R. James and his argument that the Haitian Revolution theorized a radically inclusive vision of universal human rights, thus revealing the limits of the concepts of freedom and equality espoused by the French.⁴¹ While scholars are right to challenge narratives about Haitian politics and culture that suppress its role in theorizing emancipation and independence on its own terms, such work can run the risk of constructing a somewhat utopian counter-narrative that effaces the realities of life under the various regimes that followed independence. By these accounts, Toussaint Louverture and Dessalines are generally represented as glorious and brilliant leaders of the revolution, while Christophe is memorialized only as their foil; his regime, a corrupt failure. More measured assessments of the results of the Haitian Revolution have attempted to negotiate the necessity of recognizing its significance within the context of the Age of Revolutions, and the tendency to overstate the extent to which it theorized and enacted human and, especially, political emancipation. Scholars such as Sibylle Fischer, Doris L. Garraway, Colleen O’Brien, and Michel-Rolph Trouillot remind us that the forced labor system instituted by Christophe was, after all, an inheritance from both Dessalines and colonial social and economic institutions; Louverture’s reign, too, became dictatorial and repressive.⁴²

⁴⁰ See Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*.

⁴¹ See *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*.

⁴² Trouillot’s *Haiti State Against Nation: The Origins and Legacy of Duvalierism* advances this argument about colonial institutions, explaining that the state could be seen in countermovement to the nation in this respect, since the Haytian nation revolved around the affective bond generated by a collective thinking about how to preserve liberty from slavery. See Garaway’s

In contrast to his celebrated predecessors, Christophe's reputation has "always been more dubious," writes Fischer (246). Indeed, the narratives surrounding Christophe's kingdom throughout the twentieth century, have "represented [him] as someone who sought to satisfy his petty ambitions with crass displays of power and might—the symbol of the corruption of revolutionary principles" (Fischer 246). In an ongoing effort to dislodge and complicate these narratives, this chapter extends the work of Marlene L. Daut and others to reckon with the apparent contradictions between Christophe's revolutionary politics and the material realities of his kingdom.⁴³ Attention to the textual production of his kingdom as well as its transnational circulation allows us to move beyond assessing Christophe's reign in terms of success or failure, provoking us instead to consider how and to what extent these texts disrupted and reshaped existing political discourses and formations. To this end, scholars have studied the production of Haitian literature and culture in this period, most often focusing on the work of Baron de Vastey, a prolific statesman who worked diligently for Christophe's cause. Saunders has been the subject of scholarship less frequently, with descriptions of his role ranging from intellectual leader to propagandist. And though his *Papers* have been analyzed to great effect for their rhetorical strategies and the nature of his appeal to African Americans and

"Empire of Freedom, Kingdom of Civilization: Henry Christophe, the Baron de Vastey, and the Paradoxes of Universalism in Postrevolutionary Haiti." O'Brien is quoted and cited further on.

⁴³ See Daut's "The 'Alpha and Omega' of Haitian Literature: Baron de Vastey and the U.S. Audience of Haitian Political Writing, 1807-1825," in *The Haitian Revolution and the Early United States: Histories, Textualities, Geographies*, edited by Elizabeth Maddock Dillon and Michael Drexler (Philadelphia: UPenn P, 2016). In its attention to various aspects of materiality, Maddock Dillon and Drexler's collection is also broadly emblematic of a trend in scholarship towards unpacking the instructive contradictions of both the revolutionary and post-revolutionary periods.

Anglo philanthropists, scholars have generally treated them as original works, failing to even locate most of the French source texts.⁴⁴

My reading of Saunders' translation stands at the intersection of Translation Studies and the critical histories of the Haitian Revolution produced by contemporary Hemispheric Americanist and Black Atlantic scholarship. Such an interdisciplinary approach yields new insights about well-known historical events and actors, avoiding some of the pitfalls that attend scholarly investigations of the revolution and its leaders. Sustained readings of Saunders' text are few, but those who do read it tend to oscillate between two poles: treating it as either an original creation with singular significance for Anglo audiences or as a pure transmission of historical documents containing raw fact. Both of these tendencies efface Saunders' role as a translator, participating in the historically persistent practice of what Lawrence Venuti terms, in a field-reorienting study, making translators "invisible."⁴⁵ The historically oriented theories proposed by Translation Studies scholars, such as Venuti, Alexandra Lianeri, and Lydia Liu, provide a framework for moving beyond these assessments to create a basis for analyzing

⁴⁴ For examples of the crucial work that I hope to advance by considering Saunders' translations as translations, see Colleen C. O'Brien, "The Haytian Papers and Black Labor Ideology in the Antebellum United States," in *The Haitian Revolution and the Early United States: Histories, Textualities, Geographies*, edited by Dillon and Drexler; and, Sara C. Fanning, "The Roots of Early Black Nationalism: Northern African Americans' Invocations of Haiti in the Early Nineteenth Century." Garraway does acknowledge Saunders as a translator in two footnotes in her "Empire of Freedom," quoting his version of Christophe's "Manifeste du Roi" ("Manifesto of the King"), but does not account for how translation transforms its meaning.

⁴⁵ See Venuti's *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*, in which he aims to provide a "cultural critique"—through the concept of the translator's "invisibility"—of the cultural situation in American and British societies under which translation as a process and practice is erased in the service of creating the illusion of transparent, unmediated access to foreign texts. As a "first step," Venuti aims to "present a theoretical basis from which translations can be read as translations, as texts in their own right, permitting transparency to be demystified, seen as one discursive effect among others" (13).

Saunders' *Papers* with their French source texts. Following Lianeri's argument that translation plays a constitutive role in the formation of political thought, this chapter foregrounds the role of translation, understanding it not merely as disseminating the concepts of independence, emancipation, and equality, but also as constructing and transforming them.⁴⁶ Read this way, Saunders' translation negotiates the disparity—and even contradiction—between the political discourses most powerfully positioned to articulate the legitimacy of states, and the “failures” of post-revolution, authoritarian Haitian governments that continued to rely on forced labor, a problem in which scholars have long been invested.

Based on Derrida's notion of inscription, the state papers that Saunders translates are already “traced” with political and cultural discourses and thus flush with meanings legible to Haitian society and Francophone readers. And since for Venuti's hermeneutic model, translations can never transmit an essential meaning of a foreign text, when translated, the documents are inscribed with yet more, and possibly “divergent,” meanings according to what is significant and intelligible to Anglophone readers. Venuti's theorization provides a method for undertaking a thorough accounting of the

⁴⁶ In her article, “Translation and the Establishment of Liberal Democracy in Nineteenth-Century England: Constructing the Political as an Interpretive Act,” Lianeri argues for and traces the role translations played in the creation of a discursive field, in the constitution of “the conceptual frameworks within which democracy was revived and accepted as a positive concept and a legitimate form of government during the next centuries” (13). Liu, too, points us to how translations produce new political meanings and discourses as translators bring languages into mutually interrogative relation. In her “Legislating the Universal: The Circulation of International Law in the Nineteenth Century, she considers U.S. missionary W.A.P. Martin's 1864 collaboration with Chinese translators to produce a translation of Henry Wheaton's widely circulated *Elements of International Law*: “languages [in this case] that had limited contact before... must learn to speak in each other's *political discourse* for the first time” (137, emphasis Liu's).

process by which a translator like Saunders interprets a source text and inscribes his interpretation in it through translation.

By this method, my reading of Saunders' *Papers* deviates from those that might understand his translations in terms of "fidelity" or "infidelity" with their source text, an evaluation that would presume the fixed and essential meaning of the French documents, and focus exclusively on the semantic elements of the translation. Rather, applying Venuti's method allows for a generative engagement with both the "formal" and the "thematic" in relation to the linguistic, social, and cultural contexts of both the source and receiving culture that at once bear on my analysis of the *Papers* and produce the multiple interpretations that they can support. Research into the generic and thematic conventions of nineteenth-century Anglo-European political writing, trans-Atlantic print culture that represents and responds to Haitian affairs, and the historical conditions and literary culture of Christophe's Kingdom serves to situate the *Papers* as well as their production of meaning in and between the U.S. and Haiti.

Rendering Hayti in Trans-Atlantic Print Culture⁴⁷

At the time of the *Papers*' publication in the U.S., fourteen years after Haiti had issued a Declaration of Independence, the former French colony was still not officially

⁴⁷ The condensed history that follow draws from the following sources: Buck-Morss, "Hegel and Haiti," 830-39; Daut, *Baron de Vastey and the Origins of Black Atlantic Humanism*, 18-21; Daut "Genocidal Imaginings' in the Era of the Haitian Revolution"; Daut, "Inside the Kingdom of Hayti"; Daut, "The Wrongful Death of Toussaint Louverture"; Fick, "The Haitian Revolution and the Limits of Freedom"; Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed* (her chronology from 283-85 is especially useful); Garraway, "Empire of Freedom, Kingdom of Civilization"; Geggus, "Slavery, War, and Revolution in the Greater Caribbean"; Girard, "Jean-Jacques Dessalines and the Atlantic System: A Reappraisal"; Jackson and Bacon, "Fever and Fret," 10-11; James, *The Black Jacobins*; McIntosh and Pierrot, "Capturing the Likeness of Henry I of Haiti"; and Popkin, *A Concise History of the Haitian Revolution*.

recognized as legitimate on the world stage, although the U.S. and England did engage it in trade. Without this diplomatic recognition, Haiti remained vulnerable to French claims on the island and the reinstatement of slavery. This was especially true in the wake of Napoleon's surrender and abdication in April 1814 when the Bourbon monarchy was restored under King Louis XVIII and officially recognized with the ratification of the Treaty of Paris on May 30. The treaty returned Spanish San Domingo to France as well as extended the slave trade for five years to compensate for the inopportune formal abolition of slavery that the Haitian revolutionaries had forced from the French Jacobin government by February 4, 1794. And at the Peace Congress of Vienna (1814-1815), a condition of the treaty, not only did Britain cede Martinique and Guadeloupe back to France with their slavery systems undisturbed, but all of the European powers present acknowledged France's ongoing right to Saint Domingue, including the eventuality of retaking it by force. Internally, the state's unification was also threatened by ongoing conflicts between, on the one hand, the rural population of plantation laborers who sought to establish their own small farms, and, on the other, an emergent military and land-owning elite of various racial designations who wanted to maintain the plantation system. Following the empire-wide general emancipation decree of February 4, plantation workers began to be designated as *Africains*, a racially coded term in official use that distinguished them from *citoyen* (citizen) soldiers and property owners, effectively designating their political disenfranchisement from citizenship. Although there was a general understanding of the symbolic and material associations of the plantation system with slavery, the elite ruling classes saw it as economically crucial to maintaining the militarized regime required to defend the island against imperial antagonists. For readers

in the U.S., Britain, and France, the precarious position of Henry and his Northern state would have been taken as further evidence of the revolution's illegitimacy. Since 1791, reportage in the *Atlantic World* had engaged in a panoply of rhetorical moves to ridicule the revolutionary leaders as well as their insurrectionary acts and statesmanship, undermining their capacity to act as agents of political change.

Beginning with the slave uprising on the island that historians came to regard as the onset of the Revolution, French colonists propagated the myth that such a massive rebellion was largely the result of the slaves' contact with Enlightenment discourses, locating revolutionary thinking and impetus in France, or else among the *gens de couleur* who, the mythology went, persuaded the slaves to act on their behalf. Rhetorically, this mystified slave agency altogether by disavowing the possibility that organized revolt could emerge as resistance to the brutality and violence of the French colonial slavery regime. This effect was, in part, achieved by colonists' reportage of another rebellion in October of 1790 led by Vincent Ogé, a businessman who, upon returning to Cap Français from Paris, led a small, armed uprising of around 250 *gens de couleur* demanding equal rights. Though it was put down quickly and Ogé was promptly executed, colonists persistently named his action as an inciting incident that inspired the subsequent and more powerful revolt led by Boukman Dutty, a "black" enslaved African who had been abducted and transported from Senegambia to Jamaica, and then to Saint Domingue. Initiated in August 1791 at a ceremony in a northern forest near a Morne-Rouge plantation, the revolt destroyed 1,500 sugar and coffee plantations, and reached a strength of 80,000 in a month's time. It was coordinated across plantations through African warfare techniques including small ambushes and the use of *lambi* (conch shells) as horns

to alert rebels to danger and call them to assemble, reportedly terrifying colonists. Yet, in his account of the rebellion, colonist M. Gros claimed that of “all of the People of Color none were more to blame than the Outlaws of Ogé ... It has been proved that these were the Persons employed by the Government to instruct the Negroes, and prepare them for Rebellion” (92-93). Gros’ account, first written in French and published in Saint Domingue in summer 1792, and then reprinted in both English translation and French in Baltimore later that year, was regarded as a reliable, singular first-hand narrative of the early events of the revolution and greatly influenced subsequent representations of Haiti in the Atlantic world.⁴⁸ While Gros believes that Boukman’s rebellion was executed and made possible by the importation of French political thought and *gens de couleur* leadership, the historical record indicates otherwise. Gros’ representation of the events denies the agency of Boukman and the enslaved in organizing the revolt, which ultimately made general abolition the only recourse for the French, instead insisting on a racialized hierarchy in which *gens de couleur* and “white” colonists were legible as political subjects, while “black” slaves were their dependent pawns. This rhetorical move persisted for the duration of the Haitian Revolution in Britain and France, as well as in the U.S. among former British colonists who allied themselves with some of the revolution’s leaders, while persistently mocking the “blackest” of the formerly enslaved.

⁴⁸ The full titles of M. Gros’ account in French and English, respectively, were: *Isle St.-Domingue, province du Nord. Précis historique; qui expose dans le plus grand jour les manoeuvres contre-révolutionnaires employées contre St. Domingue; qui désigne & fait connoître les principaux Agents de tous les massacres, incendies, vols & dévastations qui s’y sont commis*, and *An Historick Recital, of the Different Occurrences in the Camps of Grand-Reviere [sic], Dondon, Sainte-Suzanne, and others, from the 26th of October, 1791, to the 24th of December, of the same year*. For a detailed treatment of the publication history as well as a historical analysis of the text as a first-hand account, see Popkin, 2003, “Facing Racial Revolution: Captivity Narratives and Identity in the Saint-Domingue Insurrection.”

If the uprising led by Boukman represented the horrific possibilities of “savage” Haitian Revolution, the subsequent negotiations between the French, and Black rebellion generals Georges Biassou, Jean François, and their then-secretary Toussaint Louverture in November 1791 represented its most heroic and Enlightened potential. With Boukman killed in battle and the arrival of the first of three French civil commissions intended to quell the rebellion, Toussaint played a key role in deliberations with the colonial government. He urged moderation on all sides, including in the treatment of “white” prisoners, as the leaders attempted to broker a deal for their freedom and amnesty for slaves who would return to their plantations in exchange for an end to hostilities. While the deal collapsed when the French refused the leaders’ demands, the outcome saw the leaders establish a regional stronghold in the Northern Plain. As they developed systems to govern the area, held councils, and issued letters and proclamations, Toussaint emerged as a top political and military leader. Although he might have been construed as a threat to U.S. and British readers, for whom his rise to power might give credence to the efficacy of violent slave rebellions, Louverture was frequently represented with admiration in French, U.S., and British culture. In his widely read 1802 account of the Revolution, for instance, British Captain Marcus Rainsford describes Louverture as a “truly great man” whose principles were “pure and legitimate” (xvi), circulating the detail throughout the Anglophone world that General Laveux, who would later appoint Louverture his deputy governor, called him the “Spartacus foretold by Raynal” (247). Both the sympathy for white colonists that he displayed in negotiations and his subsequent military strategy convinced readers across the Atlantic world that Toussaint was singular and impressive. By 1804, he represented for British readers a noble leader in

distinctly racialized terms: ““He uniformly prevailed with his countrymen to spare the lives of their masters, and other white persons in their employ, first exhibiting an example of the most grateful and dignified sentiment, in embracing his late master, and with bended knees and tears supplicating his departure from his habitation, manfully and religiously promising him a safe escort”” (qtd. in Hunt 88). Deploying the trans-Atlantic figure of the loyal slave, this biographer represents Toussaint’s military strategy as evidence of his gracious restraint and reasonableness, especially as compared to the “barbarousness” of the initial uprising.

In addition to his relative peaceable treatment of colonists and masters, Toussaint was celebrated by U.S. journalists as an exceptionally talented leader whose refusal to submit to French rule resonated with their own self-image as anti-colonial rebels and whose paternalistic and militaristic rule reinforced their ideological investment in the plantation system. Crucial to Toussaint’s rise to prominence was the keen understanding of geopolitics he developed as the island became a key theatre of the trans-Atlantic imperial war among France, Britain, and Spain in 1793. As the battle for the world’s most profitable sugar colony raged, he made sure to recruit “white” and *gens de couleur* secretaries who could render the ideas he dictated for public statements and letters in clear, error-free prose in order to meticulously craft an image of himself as savvy and steadfast. From his position in the North, both as compared to the other Black generals and in terms of the geographical placement of his troops, Toussaint made a series of shrewd moves. These ultimately played a decisive role in pushing the French to concede to general emancipation, initially in the various regions of Saint Domingue and then throughout its colonies. First aligning his troops with the Spanish in protest of the French

failure to adopt the rebels' demands, Toussaint later agreed to join the French in protecting the island from Spanish and British conquest, eventually parlaying his strategic position into the role of deputy governor of the colony in 1796, and, after more maneuvering, the head of the French government on the island by 1798. Laudatory reports in the U.S. celebrated Louverture as a skilled and intelligent leader who threw off the yoke of slavery but still maintained paternalistic control over the population. For instance, the *Columbia Mirror and Alexandria Gazette*, a southern tabloid, described Toussaint in 1799 as a "man of no inconsiderable talent, since he has both conceived and executed so great a project as that of rescuing his unhappy country from the miseries with which it was afflicted by the tyranny of France" (qtd. in Hunt 85). Again and again, Southerners expressed their admiration for what they understood to be Toussaint's republican ethos, his Enlightened resolve to control the revolution and restore law and order. In difference with the Haitian leaders who would follow after the French deposed him, Toussaint would long be remembered as an upstanding leader who minimized violence.

Especially after Napoleon sent his brother-in-law, General Charles Victor Emanuel Leclerc, to arrest Toussaint, retake control of Saint Domingue, and reinstitute slavery there, Toussaint was memorialized in the U.S. as a sympathetic and rightful leader. Dessalines, however, would come to be constructed as Toussaint's foil by newspapers that mobilized racist rhetoric to condemn the general-in-chief of the Indigenous Army as a savage. Leclerc's siege, at the time one of the largest overseas military operations, resulted in a ceasefire agreement in May 1802 when both sides found themselves battle weary. While Louverture had agreed to the ceasefire on the condition of

amnesty for he and his generals, withdrawing to his Ennery plantation, the amnesty would be used as a ruse to seize and deport him to France, where he would die wrongfully and alone in his Fort de Joux prison cell on April 7, 1803.⁴⁹ The events that led to his capture included successive betrayals by his top generals Christophe and Jean-Jacques Dessalines.⁵⁰ Although Leclerc represented the purpose of his expedition as diplomatic, leaders on the island recognized his arrival and continued presence as Napoleon's threat to reinstitute slavery. Christophe, for instance, responded deftly in a February 1802 letter to an indignant Leclerc that Saunders selected and translated from the *Papers*: "The very mention of a rebellion is an argument for our resistance" (25). Furious at being denied entry, Leclerc had referenced the French army's ability to subdue "rebels," undermining the semi-autonomy of the colony that the Revolution had established. Shortly after that, Christophe strategically set Le Cap ablaze and reduced it to ashes when the Leclerc defied him and ordered troops ashore. In time, the leaders were compelled to come over to the French side. Dessalines even participated in the slaughter of rebelling plantation workers at the direction of the French when, as June rolled into

⁴⁹ On this last specific detail as well as the circumstances of his death, including a brief biography of his life and an account of his time as a both leader of the Revolution and a French general, see Marlene L. Daut's June 2020 "The Wrongful Death of Toussaint Louverture." For further information on the orchestration of his arrest, see Girard, "Jean-Jacques Dessalines," 559-560, and Popkin, *A Concise History*, 125-128.

⁵⁰ Daut, in her June 2020 piece, and Phillippe Girard in "Jean-Jacques Dessalines," draw on archival materials to document how first Christophe in April, and then Dessalines more damningly through a denunciation in May, betrayed Toussaint in deals with Leclerc and the French (Daut 35-37; Girard 559-560). Dessalines would even subsequently denounce Christophe, from which Girard concludes that "Dessalines' habit of denouncing his competitors as traitors to incite the French to execute or deport them was so common in 1802 that one can speak of a pattern (such denunciations were frequent in the politically competitive era of the Haitian Revolution)" (564). While Leclerc executed another "black" general Jacques Maurepas due to such a denunciation, Christophe managed to escape by defecting from the French and rejoining the rebels (564).

July, the next wave of resistance first began among them. News had reached Saint Domingue that the French had violently retaken Guadeloupe and reimposed slavery. In August the more widespread turn against the French would begin as the Revolutionaries learned of Napoleon's law of May 10, 1802 officially reinstating slavery and the *Code Noir*. The *gens de couleur* general Charles Bélair was the first officer to defect, and Dessalines produced evidence that he had led an uprising. But by October an increasing number of generals defecting from the French forced Dessalines' hand. What would start for Dessalines as a war of resistance against the pro-slavery French and the violation of shared revolutionary ideals that Napoleon as well as this brutal military campaign represented—albeit still rife with conflicts between a landowning class, cultivators, and runaway cultivators—shifted to a revolutionary war for independence in July 1803 when France's odds of victory decreased as their war with Britain began anew.⁵¹

When Dessalines then declared independence from France on January 1, 1804, naming the western half of the island Haiti, from the Taino language, the declaration was well received, especially because it reportedly included provisions that protected “white” colonists on the island from harm. But in the context of heightened and ongoing risk they posed, as well as the decline of the island's agricultural output, Dessalines ordered his troops to kill all the remaining French citizens on the island, an act that struck terror and rage into the hearts of U.S. readers. March 1804 reportage in the *Otsego Herald*

⁵¹ See Girard “Jean-Jacques Dessalines,” especially 559-569, who culls from a number of archival documents, including overlooked ones, to offer a corrective to histories of this period of the Revolution that portray it as a Manichean clash between “a white French army bent on the restoration of slavery” and “a black and mixed-race rebel army committed to emancipation and independence” (564). In an October 24, 1802 letter concerning his decision to defect from the French, Dessalines represented himself as a “Frenchman, a friend of my country and liberty,” as he expressed his somewhat begrudging decision (565).

represented Dessalines as “ferocious, ignorant, and savage, utterly incapable of long retaining his situation” (2); and in the April 1804 *Mercantile Advertiser*’s choice turn of phrase he was “the black butcher” (2). Mythology about the rivalry between Toussaint and Dessalines appeared regularly in U.S. papers, especially in the decades leading up to the Civil War, and consistently portrayed Dessalines as a “black despot.” As one reporter for the Hudson-based *The Bee* had it, responding in June 1804 to the publication of proclamations describing the reasoning and context of the massacre: Dessalines “pretends to justify his monstrous atrocity in two lengthy and ably written though bombastic and high sounding, proclamations. It is true that the conduct of the French towards these now abandoned wretches has been savage and unjustifiable. But all civilized nations should raise their hands against a horde of ferocious, uncultured, and ruthless murderers” (3). By constructing the leaders and acts of war as “savage,” the U.S. press rendered the Revolution a primitive as opposed to Enlightened endeavor. This dehumanizing rhetoric of monstrosity undermined the legitimacy both of Dessalines’ statesmanship and the war for independence more generally.

In the years following Haitian independence, when Dessalines was subsequently assassinated, his successors, Henry Christophe in the North and Alexander Pétion in the South, were similarly derided in the U.S. press. Landowners, workers, and generals on the island were dissatisfied with Dessalines’ rule and strident control of the plantations. Along with Étienne Gérin, another *gens de couleur* general, Pétion plotted a *coup*, garnering the support of other generals. The plotters drew up a manifesto that spoke to the dissatisfaction and, together, assassinated Dessalines at Pont Rouge in October of 1806, just two years after the declaration of independence. The assassination destabilized

and ultimately divided the leaders of the island, despite efforts at compromise as well as a constitutional convention that was intended to unite the disparate groups in the North and South. Christophe rejected the plan that emerged from that convention, which would have had him serve as a puppet president controlled by a Senate composed of his rivals in the South.

With his power base in the North, Christophe—a former slave born in British Grenada who had fought alongside his then master to support the American Revolutionaries in the Battle of Savannah—initially established himself as the president of a State constituted by that region. By 1811, however, he would promulgate a constitution that proclaimed and justified the creation of a hereditary monarchical regime. His knowledge of English allowed him to establish early diplomatic relations with abolitionist leaders in Britain to support his goals of universal basic education and medical care. Yet, unlike their rendering of Dessalines as a “savage” threat to “white” society, the U.S. press ridiculed Christophe as a backward and unintelligent ruler. In Baltimore’s *Niles Weekly Register*, for example, a reporter wrote in November 1816: “Bonaparte once asked a West Indian how Christophe *aped royalty*—the newspapers can now inform him, for they give a long account of a set of black fellows at Hayti, the *quondam* grooms and scullions of the ‘legitimate’ days, disguised as gentlemen and ladies, riding in somber processions, acting royalty with about as much display of sense as is usual on such occasions; that is little or none at all.” The paper relies on derogatory simian imagery, a staple of proslavery antebellum U.S. culture, to undermine the legitimacy of Christophe’s reign, suggesting his is but a crude imitation of a backward form of governance. The author submits that the Haitians’ appearance as “gentleman and

ladies” is but a thin cover for their degraded, servile nature. Unlike Toussaint, whose mobilization of French- and Anglo-European discourse was taken in earnest as a sign of his intelligence and skill, Christophe’s appropriation of the forms of the King and monarchy stood as evidence to republican readers of foolishness and inferiority.

Radical Decontextualization and Recontextualization: *Haytian Papers* in English

With his *Haytian Papers*, Saunders joined the ranks of two kingdom officials, the Baron de Vastey and the Comte de Limonade, who authored official state papers on the island. Claiming Haitian identity and history through print culture was of central importance to Christophe’s mission. Of the power of the printing press to elevate the reputation of Hayti and Christophe, de Vastey writes:

[T]he majority of historians who have written about the colonies were white, colonists even...The friends of slavery, those eternal enemies of the human race have written thousands of volumes freely; they have made all the presses in Europe groan for entire centuries in order to reduce the black man below the brute...Now that we have the Haitian printing presses, we can reveal the crimes of the colonists and respond to the most absurd calumnies, invented by the prejudice and greed of our oppressors.⁵²

For the Haytian Kingdom, the printing press was a political and cultural tool, one essential to their project of declaring sovereignty, refuting the narratives peddled by colonial powers, and cultivating a cultural identity. The *Haytian Papers* contribute to this project in an especially significant way, launching a multi-faceted argument that employs rhetorical and interpretive strategies intended to: appeal to and re-educate a broad Anglophone readership about Haitian history and society; enlist the support of

⁵² The translation is Marlene L. Daut’s, from her study *Baron de Vastey and the Origins of Black Atlantic Humanism* (New York Springer: 2017), xxiii.

abolitionists and philanthropists from whom Christophe desired both financial support and formal recognition; and entice African American emigrants for whom Haiti represented a place singular in the Atlantic world, a vision of liberty that would guarantee their emancipation from racial slavery.

Following their London publication, the *Papers* were published in a new edition in 1818 by Boston textbook author Caleb Bingham, best known for his publication of *The Columbian Orator*. Invested in the dissemination of republican and abolitionist ideals, Bingham's press issued works that supported the moral education of citizens. The *Orator*, for instance, was an elocution manual containing speeches celebrating republican virtues as part of its exercises. The *Papers* were received with enthusiasm and anticipation, considered a long-awaited chronicle of what Saunders had seen on the island—the details that the past news of his travels could only glimpse. An anonymous review in the July 15th edition of the *Essex Register* that circulated widely ensures readers of Saunders' integrity, adding that these papers “are the work of the Haytians themselves. They are not imposed upon under false names. They can say, our own hands have done this.”⁵³ The reviewer both marvels at the Haytians' literacy, a response that not only belies condescension but also crucially registers a formal, generic feature of slave narratives, and echoes Saunders' statement: “I upon my honor declare, that there is not a single white European at present employed in the writing of any of the public offices: and that all the public documents are written by those of the King's Secretaries whose names they bear, and that they are all black men, or men of colour” (ix). For Saunders, it was essential to address and oppose the derisive, racialized perception that the Haytians were

⁵³ *Essex Register*, July 15, 1818.

an illiterate and uneducated people. By strategically effacing his own role as translator, he creates the effect of giving readers the voices of the Haytians themselves.

The reviewer, however, sees Saunders purely as a transmitter of information, assuming that he was able to and should communicate the essential meaning of the French text to his Anglophone audiences. In spite of the fact that the London *Papers* included an Editor's Address and even a portrait of Saunders, the way that the *Papers* were read and received made his role in the construction and circulation of this image of Hayti virtually invisible.⁵⁴ In reality, Saunders' work on the *Haytian Papers* was a necessarily and deeply interpretive act. While he surely wanted to communicate what he saw as the truth about Haiti, he made interpretive choices, like any translator, starting with his choice of source texts. Saunders selected excerpts from a range of state documents published in Cap-Henry, the majority of which were authored by Henry or his Council of State and transcribed by the Secretary of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Julien Prévost, Comte de Limonade, between 1811 and 1814: a selection of articles from the Kingdom's civil code, the *Code Henry*, which Saunders embedded in his preface; a series of 1802 letters exchanged between Christophe, when a General, and the French generals of the Leclerc expedition; a detailed battle history of the civil war against

⁵⁴ For instance, the portrait was absent from the Boston publication and the "Editor's Address ["to the public"]," featured in the London edition, was re-titled "Preface to the English Edition," further effacing Saunders' editorial agency. The Boston publication contains an advertisement to the American audience: "Impelled by considerations similar to those which first led to the publication of these State Papers in England, the *compiler* now offers them to the perusal of the American Public, hoping that they may have a tendency to excite a more lively concern for the promotion of the best interests, the improvement, the definite independence, and happiness of the Haytian People." (v, my emphasis). Other paratextual elements are also modified: while the London edition includes a list of "those serving under the Patron and President, the Duke of Gloucester," this is removed from the Boston edition; a "Reflections of the Editor," authored by Comte de Limonade, which followed the "Manifesto of the King" was also removed.

Alexandre Pétion; a series of proclamations that celebrate victory and independence; Christophe's 1811 Constitution; and a King's manifesto. Saunders not only selected passages and excerpts that best suited his purpose; he also deployed a fairly consistent translation strategy of close formal and semantic correspondence to his source materials. Supplementing the French materials, Saunders used his preface to speak to his purpose and included a "Reflection on the Abolition of the Slave Trade," presumably another translation, although he does not indicate its author. The selection and translation of materials is deliberate, a form of editing inherent to the translation process that constructs an argument designed to evince that, according to the terms of republican and Enlightenment thought, Haitians had already effectively achieved legally legitimate independence.

With the *Haytian Papers*, Saunders advanced a teleological history of Christophe's rise to power, providing context and justification for the form of government that Christophe installed. According to the customary logic of the genre of declarations in this period, Saunders aimed to demonstrate that the Kingdom of Hayti was already an independent state, its formal recognition long overdue. As David Armitage argues of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, "A mere declaration alone could not constitute independence; it could only announce what had already been achieved by other means" (*Declaration* 80). More than just announce Haitian independence and equality with other world powers, then—an effect that their 1804 Declaration of Independence should have achieved—the *Papers* offered proof that the Kingdom was effectively independent, if not formally recognized as such, by drawing on both historical evidence and the logic of republican thought to make its case.

When Saunders began them with the translation of letters exchanged between General Christophe and invading Napoleonic generals off the coast of Le Cap in 1802, he purported to give readers access to the voice of Christophe himself, affecting the appearance of first-hand, material evidence of his deft dealings with and resistance to the duplicitous French. These letters are followed by a “Narrative of the Accession,” a battle log that chronicles the 1806-1807 civil war between Christophe and his rival to the south, Pétion. Glorifying Christophe’s leadership, courage, and savvy, and detailing his provisional governing throughout, the “Narrative” ends with a proclamation delivered in the form of a victory speech. Saunders included the text of this proclamation on the next page of the *Papers*, thus embedding evidence of the narrative’s veracity into the argument made by the translation. Saunders next moved to the 1811 Constitution, positioning it for readers as the culmination of Christophe’s struggles with both external threats and internal dissension. The constitution symbolizes his ability to overcome oppressive forces and assert those intrinsic republican qualities by which his independence was won. This opening section functions as historical context that constructs Christophe’s rise to power, and specifically his elevation to the position of King, as a logical and historical inevitability. What’s more, the documents selected demonstrate that Haitian independence was a foregone conclusion, since Christophe’s resistance resulted in a systematic government articulated in the form of a constitution—the republican genre most conventionally used to guarantee popular sovereignty as a check on absolute power, *not* to found an authoritarian monarchy.⁵⁵ The historical

⁵⁵ As Fischer informs us, this constitution was an odd document, contradictory in ways with which Saunders would have to reckon: “Constitutional regimes are supremely textual: they operate precisely by continuously measuring actual practices against a frame that only exists on paper” (252). Due to the illiteracy of the vast majority of Haitians, such measuring could only be

narrative that Saunders constructs thus undercuts those propagated by colonial powers, which derided Haitians as irrational, backward, or savage. Instead, Saunders constructs an image of an enlightened Haiti, with its King as the logical and historical consequence of a virtuous revolution.

The remainder of the documents included in the *Papers* represent the present state of the Kingdom as distinctly “post-independence” and forecast its future as resolutely so. Beginning with the “Manifesto of the King,” these documents portray a now-independent Christophe, certain of his entitlement to freedom and unwavering in his control over his Kingdom’s future. Saunders included further evidence of this fact from the perspective of the Haitian people, translating both an article from the *Royal Gazette of Hayti*, which reports a celebration on the anniversary of independence on January 3, 1816, and the proclamation given by Christophe that closed the ceremony. With these translations, he aimed to demonstrate that Haiti was already in a state of post-independence, that the people of the Kingdom accepted and celebrated Christophe’s rule, and that Christophe assured them that he would protect them from all threats. While the earlier documents that Saunders included represent Christophe’s burgeoning independence, his overcoming of the trials and obstacles that threatened his freedom and that of his people, these later *Papers* represent his achievement of Enlightenment and republican independence. Thus, Saunders staged a progress narrative in which Christophe’s rise to power was also a coming to Enlightenment.

done by a small group of elites, restricting both who could interpret and the “continuity of constitutional interpretation over time.” This dual problem meant that “the constitution would become an almost tautological document through which the small elite that can read can exercise power” (252). Popular sovereignty in this context was founded on “the population’s affective commitment to liberty [from racial slavery]” (259).

The progress narrative that Saunders constructed meets and exceeds republican terms of independence. As David Roediger argues of the U.S. discourse, “Republicanism had long emphasized that the strength, virtue, and resolve of a people guarded them from enslavement, and that weakness and servility made those most dependent a threat to the Republic, apt to be pawns of powerful and designing men” (35). Saunders adapted the narrative of Christophe’s rise to power to meet the qualifications of republicanism, representing it in terms of a virtuous overcoming of enslavement. While, on the one hand, this gesture might be read as neutralizing the threat posed by the Haitians’ susceptibility to the influence of “powerful and designing” Frenchmen, it was also incredibly provocative, representing, as it did, the possibility that slaves could, in fact, make themselves free. More than an innocuous appeal to readerly sensibilities, to suggest that Black former slaves could become independent on the terms of republicanism was thus a radically disruptive gesture, since, writes Roediger, “from a [republican] stance, it was not difficult to move toward considering the proposition that Black oppression was the result of ‘slavishness’ rather than slavery” (35). The disruption that Saunders staged is further emphasized by his inclusion of the “Reflections on the Abolition of the Slave Trade,” which brought the possibility of Black emancipation home for U.S. readers.

Revolutionizing Labor Republicanism

Saunders’ translation advanced his argument for Haitian legitimacy by suppressing details of the plantation system that violated republican norms and by deploying the terms of labor republicanism that foregrounded the protection of laborers’ freedom. These moves are especially evident in his handling of the *Code Henry*. The

source text, first published in Cap-Henry in 1812, spans nearly 800 pages and contains laws regulating all aspects of social and commercial life: civil, military, police, and agricultural codes constructed an organized social hierarchy and labor system. Saunders included only those portions of the *Code* addressed to the *agriculteurs* (the plantation laborers). His omissions are telling: excluded from the *Papers*, for example, are codes that established the regime's procedures for the repression of plantation revolts. Of the articles outlining "Des Devoirs des Propriétaires et Fermiers" (Duties of Landowners and Farmers), codes that regulate the treatment of laborers by plantation owners and management staff, Saunders included all but one. Following an article that institutes a policy for managing "seditious movement," he omitted an article that alludes to the deadly consequences of labor insurrections:

Toutes les fois que le lieutenant de roi d'une paroisse et le commandant de la police seront requis, soit par les autorités civiles ou administratives, soit par les propriétaires, fermiers ou gérans [sic], de se transporter sur une habitation pour prévenir le désordre, s'ils ne remplissent exactement leur devoir, en employant tous les moyens qui sont en leur pouvoir, pour le réprimer; ils seront personnellement responsables des funestes conséquences qui en résulteraient.

(*Loi Concernant la Culture*, Chapitre II, art. 28., pg 8)

(Every time that the King's lieutenant of a parish and the police commander are required, whether by civil or administrative authorities, or by the landowners, farmers, or managers, to travel to a plantation in order to prevent disorder, if they have not fulfilled their duty, by employing all the means in their power, to repress it; they will be personally responsible for the fatal consequences that would result.)

That this article's aim is the protection of a social hierarchy and class system makes it fundamentally opposed to the principles of labor republicanism. By excluding this article, Saunders suppresses the extent to which Christophe enshrined in the *Code* a forced labor system reminiscent of plantations across the slaveholding Atlantic world. The article

discloses a systematic chain-of-command for repressing worker rebellions, threatens the use of violence, and takes the death of workers as an inevitable consequence—all features of a labor regime for citizens at once considered immoral by republicans, and yet all-too-familiar to the members of the slaveholding republic.

Saunders implemented a consistent strategy of suppression, not only through omission, but also through translations that cast the language of bondage in the language of labor republicanism. In two articles that authorize the power of plantation owners and civil authorities to place and keep laborers at a plantation, the *Code Henry* describes laborers' relationship to the land by using the metaphors of slavery: “où ils sont attachés” (where they are bound) (3). However, when Saunders translated these articles, he re-coded this relationship, reframing it in terms of the laborers' agency. For example, Article XIX outlines a strict procedure that makes work compulsory for beggars and idle laborers who are, by law, positioned as dependent in relation to both civil authorities and landowners. The article prohibits “mendicité” (begging) and empowers the police to arrest and take “ceux qui ne sont attachés à aucune habitation...sur l'habitation ou la manufacture qui leur sera designee par les autorités supérieures” (those who are not bound to any plantation...to the plantation or factory that shall be designated for them by the highest authorities) (6). In Saunders, we read that those who have “no legal settlement [will be] placed by the proper authorities, in their discretion, to labour for their livelihood” (xvii). Recast are the coercive elements of this article, which Saunders inscribed with the values of labor republicanism by linking work with independence and self-possession. By translating “habitation,” a euphemism for “plantation” in the Francophone Caribbean, as “legal settlement,” Saunders rendered ambiguous the

laborers' relationship to the land. "Legal settlement" might refer to institutionalized social welfare and the development of a community more than bondage. And Saunders inserted the phrase "labour for their livelihood," which refigured the state as a benefactor that facilitates economic independence, as opposed to the militarized apparatus depicted in the French. Saunders' *Papers* increase the extent to which the article enshrines the laborer's agency, suppressing language that would position laborers as bound subjects whose movement and labor are controlled by state authorities.

Saunders' application of an interpretant—labor republicanism—encoded his translation with U.S. cultural values. But if his translation conformed to these values, it also introduced a new conception of labor into U.S. political discourse. During this period, dependent labor relationships, such as slavery, indentured servitude, and debt peonage, were increasingly perceived to be incompatible with the values of the republic. "[T]he spectre of chattel slavery," writes David Roediger, "made for a remarkable awareness of the dangers of dependency and a strong suspicion of paternalism" (46). In the context of racial slavery, the labor republican terms of dependence and independence took on a racial cast, linking "whiteness" with economic independence and "blackness" with slavery. By applying the logic supported by these terms to render the working conditions of free Black citizens in Christophe's monarchy, Saunders' translation radically disrupts and revises the terms' meanings for U.S. readers. As Colleen O'Brien argues of Saunders' text, while "white" republicans accepted Paine's claim that "man was free in large part because he held 'property in his own labor,'" "formerly enslaved Haitians [and African Americans] knew well that their labor could very easily be expropriated and exploited" (O'Brien 194). The labor system that Saunders represents in

the *Papers*, while perhaps distant from the material realities of Christophe's plantations, is revolutionary in its rejection of the wage system which had largely come to dominate labor relationships in the U.S. Saunders asserted this revolutionary idea by foregrounding the following article of the *Code* on the first page of his translation: "In lieu of wages, the labourers in plantations shall be allowed a full fourth of the gross product, free from all duties and expenses to the time of removal" (xiii). Because the wage form ran the risk of producing a hierarchical labor relationship, Haitian laborers were instead compensated with a share of produce, and even land ownership. Whereas republicanism understood self-sufficient labor to be the source of freedom, Saunders' *Papers* "acknowledge[d] that the Haitian people had their own vision of liberty as something that one worked to create and that manifested in one's entitlement to property, to the land, to the very soil one tilled" (O'Brien 195). Undercutting the U.S. republican principles that made Black freedom an impossibility, Saunders used translation to theorize a conception of labor that displaced the legal category of slave. The interpretation of the Haitian labor system advanced by the *Papers* introduced into the receiving culture a possibility threatening for many U.S. readers: that the labor that slaves were already doing would at once entitle them to property and constitute their freedom. The interpretant Saunders applied here did assimilate the Haitian labor system to what were racially exclusive U.S. political discourses; but under their cover, his translation smuggled in an ideology of labor that challenged the constitutive contradictions of a republicanism whose rejection of political slavery depended on slave labor.

Re-codifying Enlightenment Racial Ideology

In 1818, the year of the *Papers*' publication in Boston, an anonymously authored "exposé" of Cap-Henry defamed Christophe's reign as backward and illegitimate, as a consequence both of his "blackness" and his form of governance. Recounting an anecdote in which a club-wielding Christophe beats a member of his regiment and uses his sword to cut off the hoofs of an unruly horse, the exposé relies on the tropes of savagery to code the King as barbaric in racial terms and undermine the legitimacy of his reign on the basis of his tyrannical and uncivil behavior.⁵⁶ In opposition to such narratives, Saunders deployed the basic binaries that structure Enlightenment thought—civilization/barbarism; strength/weakness; virtue/force—in his handling of key source texts in order to recode the French as tyrants, and the Haitians as virtuous and reasoned citizens.

The 1814 French-language source text, *Manifeste du Roi (Manifesto of the King)*, for example could be read as an appeal to Enlightenment and republican sensibilities that reframes Haitians' past enslavement and oppression by the French not as an indication of their servility and weakness, but instead as evidence of their republican virtues. Here Christophe narrates his conflict with French colonial powers and their subsequent defeat. Reflecting on their past deception by French diplomats, the *Manifeste* proclaims of the Haitians: "Nous ne pouvons être victimes de notre crédulité et de notre bonne foi" (We cannot be victims of our credulity and good faith) (14). Christophe refigured their failure to resist the influence and force of the French—a sign of their weakness—as strength of

⁵⁶ "Kingdom of Hayti," *American Beacon*, Norfolk, Virginia: June 15, 1818.

character. This argument effectively displaces the charge that he was thereafter a tyrannical monarch by constructing the French as a corrupt imperial power and the Haitians as temperate and modest republican citizens.

Saunders advanced just such a reading, creating a corresponding argument in his translation by setting up a dichotomy between French tyranny and Haitian virtue. When the French General Leclerc arrives, avowedly coming to Haiti to provide financial and military support, and the Haitians are caught off guard, the *Manifeste* reads:

C'est alors que les colons, dont le nombre grossissait progressivement, croyant leur empire déjà assis, cessèrent de dissimuler; ils manifestaient hautement que l'esclavage était rétabli, et ils agissaient en conséquence; ces hommes impudens réclamaient sans honte, comme leur sujets, des citoyens, des hommes qui s'étaient rendus recommandables par des services signalés rendus à la patrie, tant dans le civil que le militaire, des magistrats probes et vertueux, des guerriers couverts de cicatrices, dont le sang avait coulé dans les combats pour la France et la liberté, rentraient sous le joug de l'esclavage.
(*Manifeste du Roi* 7).

(It was then that the colonists, whose numbers were growing progressively, believing their empire already seated, stopped hiding; they openly declared that slavery was reestablished, and they acted accordingly; these insolent men reclaimed without shame, as their subjects, citizens, men who had made themselves commendable through their noteworthy services to their country, both civil and military, virtuous and honest magistrates, warriors covered with scars, whose blood had flowed in the battles for France and liberty, went back under the yoke of slavery.)

To demonstrate the felt injustice of French claims on the island as the 1802 military expedition sent by Napoleon to reinstitute slavery descends, the *Manifeste* positions the Haitians as upstanding and virtuous citizens who fall prey to the vices of the too-powerful French. Saunders' translation of this passage rewrote the construction of a binary between the Haitian and French in the terms of Enlightenment political philosophy. For instance, he translated "réclamaient sans honte, comme leur sujets, des citoyens" as "to

claim as their slaves, citizens,” opting for the word “slaves” where a close translation might read “subjects” (121). In so doing, Saunders drew a dramatic opposition between the free status of the Haitians as “citizens,” and the force imposed by the French, making the reinstatement of slavery seem unreasonable, if not a glaring violation of Enlightenment political principles. One of the “main themes of the Enlightenment and the Age of Revolution,” according to Fischer, was “the unsurpassable value of liberty, national sovereignty, and the superiority of the virtuous subject to those who seize power by force” (98). The source text and Saunders’ translation inscribe these themes in colonial history, casting the Haitians as “virtuous subject[s],” superior by opposition to the French who “seize power by force.” This would have been understood as a radical inversion of terms, since this Anglo-European philosophy was constituted by racializing barbarism as “black” in order to code civilization as “white.” Saunders’ translation disrupted and re-coded these terms even more forcefully when he translated “les colons” in the passage above as “white colonists,” disorganizing the racializing logic of Enlightenment political philosophy and asserting the virtues of Black citizens in the face of “white” barbarism (121).

By 1816, the political concepts of independence and equality were widely accepted as the defining features of sovereign statehood. Yet since the Enlightenment republican notions of political freedom that drove revolutions were at once racially circumscribed and undergirded by slaveholding, republican discourses worked to deny the political character of the emancipatory projects of racial equality and the overthrow of slavery through their figurative uses of “slavery” to represent various forms of tyranny. As Sibylle Fischer argues, the dominant mode of narrating the Haitian Revolution

adopted the strategy of disavowal, relegating the issue of racial subordination, which came to be inextricable from Haitian independence, to the “realm of moral or of social policy” and interpretively displacing it “out of reach for revolutionary action” (37). Displaced, too, therefore were the material realities of the slave-driven colonial and United-States economies that stood as ready referents for the metaphorical slavery that republicanism opposed to despotic and colonial regimes, to the terms independence and equality. The precise application of these terms depended on national context and form of governance. However, since at least the late-eighteenth century, both French and Anglo political writing had defined independence in opposition to the rhetorical notions of enslavement and dependency, embedding the fundamental tenets of republicanism in their declarations, constitutions, pamphlets, and political treatises.

Because enslavement implied inherent weakness and servility, it was perceived to be incompatible with, and even threatening to, the virtues of self-possession and resolve required to sustain a republic. “Freedom,” as Thomas Paine wrote in a 1786 pamphlet invoking the fundamental tenets of republican government and Constitutions to contest an arbitrary use of power by the Pennsylvania Assembly, “is destroyed by dependence” (398-99). Taking as his case in point the matter of bank charters in *Dissertations on Government; The Affairs of the Bank; and Paper Money*, Paine deploys the metaphor of slavery right from the outset to ground his exploration of the scope of power in republican, representative democracies. When in “countries under a despotic form of government”—a form for Paine that included both monarchy and hereditary aristocracy—there is an attempt to “wres[t] [sovereignty] from the person in whose hand their government has placed it,” the “exercise of [sovereign power] there is styled

rebellion” (369). “Therefore the despotic form of government knows no intermediate space between being *slaves* and being rebels” (369, my emphasis). If the administration of a republican government deviates from the principles of equal rights and justice agreed upon in a declaration of rights, such a deviation indicates a “kind of stepping out of the republican principle, and an approach toward the despotic one” (372). Paine carried this opposition forward to his exploration of republican constitutions as bulwarks against arbitrary uses of power in his 1795 *Dissertation on the First Principles of Government*. There he wrote that to accept government by hereditary succession meant to think “as slaves,” since the notion that a “former generation had a right to bind us” underwrites this acceptance (575). He opposed this form of a government to a representative one under which the right to vote for representatives is protected by a republican constitution and, in turn, protects all others. Again, the figure of slavery stands in for despotism: “To take away this right is to reduce a man to slavery, for slavery consists in being subject to the will of another, and he that has not a vote in the election of representatives is in this case” (579). Since Paine was such a popular writer in the United States, the appearance of this tropes of slavery in and across his works is especially significant for understanding the discursive context into which Saunders was translating.

But it is also crucial to recognize how the use of the term slavery as what David Luis-Brown calls a “metaphor for the thwarting of republicanism” had achieved a certain hegemony in trans-Atlantic revolutionary political discourse by the early nineteenth century (437). Philip Petit traces this figurative usage in the Classical republican tradition through Machiavelli and the “belief in freedom as non-domination” according to which “liberty is always cast in terms of the opposition between *liber* and *servus*, citizen and

slave” (31). Demonstrating first that Machiavelli “gives pride of place” to this opposition, derived from the Roman, republican usage in which *servus* (slave) was the contrary of *liber* (free person), Petit argues that it was in “English and American developments of the republican heritage” starting in the seventeenth century that the use of the distinction became especially prominent (32). However, looking backwards from 1816, once we are squarely in the Age of Revolutions, we can see that this definitional binary attained its widespread appeal as a principal of universal political value through the generative mixing of Classical republican thought and the Enlightenment frameworks of natural law and the universal rights of man.⁵⁷ An array of Enlightenment texts circulating the Atlantic world in this period derived their revolutionary force by deploying the trope of slavery as the conceptual antithesis of equal rights and popular sovereignty, Paine’s among them. In her article-length “Hegel and Haiti,” for instance, Susan Buck-Morss traces its conspicuousness in a portion of this textual network of influence that animated the American and French revolutions, from Locke’s *Two Treatises of Government*, to Rousseau’s *On the Social Contract*, and the lyrics of the anti-ancien régime anthem *La Marseillaise*.⁵⁸ Locke, a shareholder in the Royal African Company, decries the slavery

⁵⁷ For excellent succinct summary of the “developments of the republican tradition in the political history of the Enlightenment,” shifts in republican thought in relation to Enlightenment frameworks, i.e. “Enlightenment republicanism,” see Ferrone *The Politics of Enlightenment: Constitutionalism, Republicanism, and the Rights of Man in Gaetano Filangieri*, 100-111.

⁵⁸ As the next chapter turns to, focusing especially on the works of Paine, this network influence extended to Spanish America. With the exception of Locke’s, the texts listed would also be read there during and leading up to revolutions, in either the language of their initial composition or in translation. On the translation and circulation in Spanish America of Rousseau’s *Du Contrat Social, Principes du droit politique*, see Coronado *A World Not to Come*, 130, 133-134, and 159-163. Significantly, 159-163 document the possible reference by a Mexican delegate to the Cortes Cádiz to Rousseau’s metaphorical use of slavery. It was at the Cortes that the Spanish Constitution of 1812 would be ratified, establishing for a two-year period and for the first time a constitutional monarchy. For the circulation of *La Marseillaise* in Spanish America in French, as

of “legal tyranny” as “so vile and miserable an Estate of Man” in book 1, chapter 1 (826); Rousseau laments in his opening lines that man is everywhere “in chains,” later writing that “*slavery and right [droit, that is, law], are contradictory*” while making no mention of the *Code Noir* that legalized slavery and the brutal punishment of slaves (830); and *La Marseillaise* condemned “l’esclavage antique” (the old slavery [of the feudal system]) (836). I would argue that these are iterations of the very forms of disavowal that sustain the actual practice of slavery and, eventually, the denial of the revolutionary character of resistance by the enslaved.

This discursive context underscores the significance of Saunders’ decision to translate an opposition between *sujets* and *citoyens* (subjects and citizens) as one between “slaves” and “citizens” (121). This instance of Saunders’ work as a translator is all the more telling in light of the fact that, as Deborah Jenson observes, “enslavement was arguably subordinated in Haitian former slaves’ autobiographical consciousness to their manumitted adaptations and identities, in which desires for class mobility frequently permeated subjectivity” (29). In her *Beyond the Slave Narrative: Politics, Sex, and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution*, Jenson contrasts both “white” revolutionaries’ descriptions of themselves as slaves and the abolitionist character of the slave narrative genre with the “Haitian literary record.” Whereas “working against slavery, abolitionism tactically and understandably privileged identity based on enslavement as the locus of ethical resistance and paradoxical voice,” Haitian revolutionary textual production oriented itself “away from enslavement as an overarching category of traumatic identity”

well as more on in Rousseau in Spanish America, see Bastin, Echeverri, and Campo, “Translation and the Emancipation of Hispanic America,” 47.

(28-29). Given Saunders' close relationship with abolitionists this suggests the extent to which, in a double move, his translation established formal and thematic resonance, on the one hand, with the slave narrative genre and, on the other, with the metaphors and conventions of Enlightenment republicanism. For the transnational political discourses of the moment preemptively delegitimized Haitian revolutionary leaders and governments by prefiguring them in two ways: despite their actual manumitted statuses, they could be narrated as slaves and situated definitionally outside Enlightenment conceptions of political subjectivity; they could be narrated as reproducing what these discourses recognized as the conditions of political enslavement—monarchical, tyrannical, non-republican forms of governance.

In support of the claim that Christophe was a rational leader, instituting policies that serve his people, Saunders' translation strategically replaces French language that describes power in terms of wealth with the language of Enlightenment reason. This strategy was primarily used in his translation of the "Narrative of the Accession," translated from an 1811 collection of state papers authored by the Comte de Limonade and titled *Relation des Glorieux Événements Qui ont porté Leurs Majestés Royales sur le Trône d'Hayti, Suivie de l'Histoire du Couronnement et du Sacre du roi Henry 1er, et de la reine Marie-Louise* (Relation of the Glorious Events That Brought Their Royal Majesties to the Throne of Hayti, Followed by the History of the Coronation and Sacrament of King Henry I, and Queen Marie Louise). The collection begins with an address to the Royal Prince of Hayti that describes his dual purpose as both offering a testament of his admiration and respect for his "Maîtres" (masters) and "fixer une époque qui sera à jamais célèbre dans les fastes de notre Histoire" (setting down an era that will

forever be celebrated in the annals of our History) (vi). Within the context of the collection, the “Narrative” functions as both a tribute to the royals and part of an ongoing project of producing a national history and literature.

The representation of Christophe in the *Relation*, beginning with its title, draws on the language of glory and wealth associated with monarchical regimes—displays of power that U.S. readers, in particular, associated with greed and tyranny. In his translation, Saunders’ displaced imagery that republican and Enlightenment thought associated with avarice, choosing instead words evocative of its values. A striking example of Saunders’ strategy occurs late in the “Narrative,” as Limonade pays homage to Christophe for all he has done to re-establish order:

Son oeil améliorateur embrasse toutes les parties; il a la douce satisfaction de voir que partout les cultivateurs, régulièrement payés du quart afférant sur les revenus qu’ils manufacturent, le bénissent de l’aisance dont ils Jouissent.
(*Relation* 41)

(His ameliorative eye embraces all parties; he has the sweet satisfaction of seeing that everywhere the agricultural laborers, regularly paid one quarter pertaining to the revenues that they produce, were blessing the material comfort that they enjoyed).

The source text emphasizes the significance of wealth, naming its fair distribution as bringing the King self-satisfaction. It implies that the primary way that he has ameliorated the plantation system is by mandating that laborers be entitled to a share of the profit derived from their labor. Although this was indeed a revolutionary revision of the labor system, Saunders chose to suppress the emphasis on wealth, translating “l’aisance,” which might be translated closely as “wealth,” “affluence,” or “material comfort” in this context, as “freedom.” He writes: “He has the sweet satisfaction of seeing that the cultivators, being everywhere regularly paid by a fourth of the gross

produce, were praising the *freedom* they enjoyed” (111, my emphasis). Whereas the French source text tends to evidence the Kingdom’s power in terms of riches and glory, Saunders’ translation appeals to the centrality and “unsurpassable value of liberty” in Enlightenment thought to fix the interpretation that the King’s satisfaction depends on his ability to ensure the liberty of his people. In fact, Saunders activated a semantic possibility in the word “aisance”: while it connoted an ease of action and speaking beginning in the late seventeenth century, by the mid eighteenth century its range of signification included a “liberté d’esprit et de corps dans l’action” linked to material comfort that it maintained into the early nineteenth.⁵⁹ The availability of this connotation meant that Saunders could maintain a semantic correspondence to the source text even as his ideological perspective inflected it. Saunders’ applied an interpretant—a critical posture towards the Enlightenment—inscribing the source text with its values in an effort to subtly position the French-language Haitian documents in disruptive relation to an Anglo discourse and context. His translation makes compatible what might otherwise be perceived as in tension: Black freedom and the terms of republicanism and Enlightenment political philosophy. For U.S. and British readers, the *Papers* support a potentially a transformative effect, reconfiguring the terms of liberty and freedom that had long been premised on Black enslavement.

⁵⁹ The phrase is from the entry for “aisance” in the fourth edition of *Le Dictionnaire de l’Académie Française* published in 1762 and might read “freedom of mind and body in action” in a translation that adheres closely to the French. The phrase carries forward to the 1798 fifth edition and the 1835 sixth edition. The dictionaries on which I’ve relied for the seventeenth century meaning are the 1601 *Thresor de la Langue Francoyse tant Ancienne que Moderne* and the 1694 first edition *Le Dictionnaire de l’Académie Française*.

Covert Manipulations

That the Kingdom *could* realize the universal emancipation for which the Haitian revolutionaries fought was the basis of Saunders' promotion of the Haitian Emigration Project. In a speech delivered at the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, published six months after the *Papers*, Saunders admits some misgivings about the present state of Christophe's regime, alluding to its problematic reliance on the colonial-era plantation system and the greed that the French have instilled in Haitian leadership. He argued, however, that the influence of American and British philanthropists could be instrumental in the production of a truly free Black state:

In this great island there seems to be some foundation, for the hopes of those who are to emigrate to rest upon; as there are already governments established there, which, although they may be arbitrary, and somewhat allied to military despotism in their present features and character, they are still susceptible of being improved, whenever a tranquilized state of society, and their stability and independence as a nation, shall authorize it.
(11)

Rather than advertising the Kingdom as a utopic destination that fulfills the promises of liberty and equality, Saunders describes it as a "foundation" for independence, since its success in casting off and resisting the reinstatement of the yoke of slavery laid essential groundwork. The "improvement" of its "tranquility," "stability," and "independence as a nation," could be accomplished by the importation of republican values. He goes on to quote the Bible, "Blessed are the peace-makers," and appeal both to his audience's virtuous nature and their sense of themselves as saviors: "And if, according to the magnitude of the object in all its political, benevolent, humane and Christian relations, the quantum of recompense is to be awarded and appraised to the just, to how large a share of the benediction of our blessed Saviour to the promoters of peace, shall these be

authorized to expect, who may be made the instruments of pacification and reunion of the Haytian people?" (15). Imagine, he intones, how large your celestial reward will be if you facilitate the emigration of African Americans and the unification of Haitian society through philanthropic investment. The speech deploys a strategy of flattery and self-deprecation, obligating the service of U.S. philanthropists on the terms of their own moral code and sense of civic duty. The logic of his argumentation here further illuminates the basis of his approach to the *Papers*, demonstrating to us that what might appear as an acceptance and glorification of Anglo-European political philosophy was instead a covert manipulation.

Though understudied in historical scholarship about the Haitian Revolution, Saunders' *Haytian Papers* represents a significant intervention into Anglo and French political discourses of the period. His translation strategies perform the critical and comparative work necessary to facilitate intercultural dialogue and set forth a transnational, Black anti-slavery politics; his marshalling of those strategies entails an appeal to an international audience according to generic and discursive customs in order to articulate a theory of radical emancipation. Saunders' purpose should be understood as an effort not only to correct readers' perception of Christophe, but also to give voice in English to an as yet unimagined form of liberty. In contrast with Anglo-Europeans for whom liberty signified independence and national sovereignty, Haitian revolutionaries considered emancipation from slavery a necessary precondition of freedom. In the various regimes that followed the Revolution, Haitian leaders confronted the limits of the political philosophy that would earn them internationally recognized independence: how might they articulate the kind of liberty that they desired without making it synonymous

with mere political emancipation? Christophe's state documents reflect an effort to expand and transform the terms of liberty announced by the U.S. and French revolutions, and through their arrangement and translation, Saunders performed cultural, political, and conceptual work to make a distinctly Black free state legible to an international audience.

CHAPTER 2

DE-SACRALIZING THE MONARCHY, AUTHORIZING THE *PUEBLO*:

VERSIONS OF PAINE IN MANUEL GARCÍA DE SENA'S

LA INDEPENDENCIA DE LA COSTA FIRME

Translating from Philadelphia in the first decade of the nineteenth century, Venezuelan Manuel García de Sena hoped to provide a set of principles to validate and expand a revolutionary push for independence from Spain underway in the Costa Firme, an administrative jurisdiction of the empire located in the Caribbean Basin and composed of parts of contemporary Colombia and Venezuela, as well as Panama, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua.⁶⁰ In 1811, he compiled a series of translations and published them with the prolific Philadelphia-based foreign language printers Thomas and George Palmer under the title *La independencia de la Costa Firme, justificada por Thomas Paine treinta años há* (*The Independence of the Costa Firme, Justified by Thomas Paine Thirty Years Ago*).⁶¹ Along with his versions of three of Paine's works—among them portions of Paine's wildly popular and insurrectionary *Common Sense*—he included his renderings of

⁶⁰ The region was also known as *La Tierra Firme*. See: Burke and Humphrey, 4; and Wilgus, 11-12, 27, and 42-43 for a detailed list of histories about the region published in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, respectively.

⁶¹ The full title of García de Sena's translation was: *La independencia de la Costa Firme, justificada por Thomas Paine treinta años há, extracto de sus obras, traducido del inglés al español por D. Manuel García de Sena* (*The Independence of the Costa Firme, Justified by Thomas Paine Thirty Years Ago, an Extract of his Works, Translated from the English into Spanish by Mr. Manuel García de Sena*). Hereafter, I abbreviate the title as *La independencia*.

a collection of U.S. legal documents, which consisted of the Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, and Constitution, as well as five state constitutions. This book-length project, as he conceived it, would take the structure of part maxims, part practical models. As he wrote in the December 1810 letter to his brother Ramón that functions as a portion of the book's preface,

Pues aunque verdaderamente es casi imposible en el orden social llevar [las máximas contenidas en las obras de Paine] á la practica en toda su extension, con todo ellas han sido adaptadas por estos Estados, formando cada uno su Constitucion particular, en que dando al hombre en la sociedad el lugar que le corresponde segun su clase, le dexa una entera libertad, que parecerá acaso, al que no la ha contemplado de cerca como yo, incompatible con la tranquilidad y buen orden que se advierte en todos estos pueblos. (iv)

(So, although in truth it is almost impossible within the structure of society to put into practice to their fullest possible extent the maxims contained in Paine's works, yet and still they have been adapted by these States, each one forming their own Constitution, in which, giving Man in society his rightful place according to his kind, they allow him a complete liberty, which will seem perhaps, to one who has not gazed upon it as closely as I have, incompatible with the tranquility and good order that may be observed in all of these pueblos.)⁶²

Here we glimpse what I argue is the formal conceit that García de Sena will deploy to undergird his attempt to elaborate in Spanish precepts for “establecer, y preservar la libertad de los Tiranos” (establishing and preserving liberty from Tyrants) (iii). He holds up Paine's ideas as ideals to which the states have aspired in their respective constitutions. In his eyes, the states have to a remarkable extent succeeded, granting man

⁶² On Ramón García de Sena and his relationship to both Venezuela and Manuel, see: Grases and Harkness (1953) 13, and Esteves González 77-78. Grases and Harkness document that they are siblings, in addition to other biographical information. Esteves González documents Ramón's esteemed status as colonel who died in the defeat of Venezuelan forces at the decisive battle of La Puerta on June 15, 1814.

a “complete freedom,” one previously—and still—unimaginably compatible with social order.

He judged the prescribing (“prescrib[ir]”) of laws, or maxims, for the purpose of establishing and preserving liberty to be Paine’s crucial accomplishment in coming to America, along with his being the “first” to publicly decry tyrannical oppression. Urging Ramón to inform the inhabitants of the *Costa Firme* of this fact, García de Sena hoped that Ramón could relay as well the message that they should “procuren impresionarse de las máximas en ella [la traducción] *contenidas*, pues que la generalidad de ellas constituye en estos países la felicidad de sus habitantes...y que es la misma que deseo con ansia para los nuestros” (endeavor to be stirred by the maxims *contained* herein, since their prevalence constitutes in these lands the happiness of their inhabitants...and the same that I anxiously desire for our own) (iii, my emphasis). For him, Ramón represented a trustworthy messenger who could deliver these works while conveying that “estas [eran] las verdades que el antiguo Gobierno tenía tanto interes en ocultarnos; incurriendo á este fin en el sacrilego atentado de hacer un precepto casi divino lo que era en realidad un acto de despotismo” (these [were] the truths that the former Government had such an interest in obscuring from us, falling, to this end, into the attempted sacrilege of making an almost divine precept that which was in reality an act of despotism) (iii). He wanted, in other words, for his translation to act as a vessel to carry—or even smuggle, as we will see—what he deemed Paine’s revelatory and, as such, subversive “truths” abroad, so that they would displace and supplant the monarchy’s claim to divinity.

Whatever García de Sena declared or thought, he could not export truths in any unaltered form. And Ramón was no mere messenger. It is crucial to recognize that

translation cannot function in this manner, since even otherwise quite useful and informative contemporary scholarship can fall prey to García de Sena's logic. An outside scholarly focus on the *contents* of his work distracts our attention from the *strategies* he developed in relation to the historical conjuncture in which he translated. The function García de Sena sketched for his translation operated as a thematic interpretant, bearing on the interpretations of Paine's texts and of the U.S. legal documents that constitute its contents. In contrast to prior readings of García de Sena's work that stress the subversive nature of the translated materials, as well as his need to suppress their blasphemous aspects in order to achieve his revolutionary aspirations, I argue that he is engaged in an effort to reconfigure the relationship between Catholicism and forms of non-monarchical governance. The new forms of governance García de Sena sought found the basis for their authority in a set of emergent authorizing concepts that he understood himself to be culling from Paine's work: constitutions and the people. More aptly, he transformed such concepts, encountered upon reading Paine's texts, into semantically correspondent versions that resonated differently in Spanish, activating new semantic possibilities in a Spanish American political discourse that was itself shifting and unstable.

In what follows, I examine a series of cases involving two interlingual conceptual relations—constitutions/*constituciones* and people/*pueblo*—conceiving of them as rhetorical sites, or nodes, where a set of concerns about the (new) basis for political authority and its articulability to religion play out. I invoke here and throughout Stuart Hall's understanding of *articulation* as he theorized it over the course of many works and discussed it in a series of 1985 interviews compiled by Lawrence Grossberg. There he explains the term's generative double meaning by calling to mind the image of tractor

trailer: “It carries the sense of language-ing, of expressing, etc. But we also speak of an ‘articulated’ lorry (truck)...where the front (cab) and back (trailer) can, but need not necessarily be connected to one another.... An articulation is the form of connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions” (53). For Hall, the value of such a theory turns on how it “enables us to think” the historical contingency of social forces (e.g. political movements) and their coming together with particular ideological and discursive formations, which are themselves provisional unities as articulations of “distinct elements” (53). His theory allows us to reconstruct the process through which specific discourses “do or do not become articulated at specific conjunctures, to certain political subjects”: “it is the articulation, the non-necessary link, between a social force which is making itself, and the ideology or conceptions of the world which makes intelligible the process they are going through, which begins to bring onto the historical stage a new social position and political position, a new set of social and political subjects” (53, 55).⁶³ In this chapter, I contend that García de Sena’s work as a translator reveals that translation can be a significant practice by which articulation is achieved. Analyzing his translation—and translations of political writing in general—in

⁶³ See Grossberg 51-58. The full version of what I quote—the opening of the explanation Hall provided when asked to describe his theory of the “articulation of ideology and ideological struggle” in relation to those other “postmodern theorists” like Deleuze and Guattari who “emphasize the articulation of desiring production”—reads: “In England, the term has a nice double meaning because ‘articulate’ means to utter, to speak forth, to be articulate. It carries the sense of language-ing, of expressing, etc. But we also speak of an ‘articulated’ lorry (truck): a lorry where the front (cab) and back (trailer) can, but need not necessarily be connected to one another. The two parts are connected to each other, but through a specific linkage, that can be broken. An articulation is thus the form of connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time” (53). The primary example Hall uses to illustrate articulation is the Rastafarian movement in Jamaica, a case of a “religious form of explanation” that “become[s] articulated to a social movement, a movement of people” (55).

the way that I do here allows us to grasp key aspects of the difference that language entails, of the process through which new political subjectivities are forged by circulating ideas across languages and cultures. This is not only an argument about García de Sena's text, but also a theoretical and methodological one about the practice of translation: it may be productively analyzed as a form of articulation.⁶⁴

To fulfill the function of providing precepts and models for “liberty,” García de Sena knew his text would need to be compatible with Catholic beliefs. Yet his aim was to *de-sacralize* the monarchy, wresting from it any claim to the divine, and his use of a religious lexicon belies what we might see as a desire to articulate Paine's ideas to religion—to Catholic notions of the divine and the sacred. For if some in the Costa Firme had urged separation from the Spanish Monarchy, none advocated the separation of Catholicism from the workings of the state, or even religious tolerance.⁶⁵ This was where

⁶⁴ Cf. Brent Hayes Edward's *The Practice of Diaspora* where he deploys Hall's *articulation* in relation to the practice of diaspora and translation as the “means to account for the diversity of black takes on *diaspora*” (12). For Hayes Edward's, referring to Hall's “Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance” (1980), “the notion of articulation is crucial not just because it combines the structural and the discursive but also because it has a flip side: such ‘societies structured in dominance’ are also the ground of cultural resistance” (12).

⁶⁵ On the ongoing adherence to Catholicism in emancipation movements and newly independent republics in Spanish America, see Fernández Sebastián (2011), especially 161-163, and 186. For related but more sweeping arguments about the notion put forward by Fernández Sebastián that “the conceptual [political models]” from the colonial period through independence “corresponded to a Catholic vision of public life” (161), see Coronado (2013), Fernández Sebastián (2009), Guerra (2013), and Lempérière (2004). Fernández Sebastián's multi-volume project begun in 2009, *Diccionario político y social del mundo iberoamericano (The Political and Social Dictionary of the Iberian American World)*, which he continues to edit, is an invaluable work of collaborative scholarship. It has been especially significant in shaping my thinking about this distinct aspect of Spanish American revolutionary politics in the period and its bearing on newly emergent understandings of political terms. Organized by key political concepts operative on both sides of the Spanish and Portuguese Atlantic—such as *pueblo* and *constitución*—it is a reference work composed of extended historical essays devoted to the use of a term in specific geographical areas. It allows scholars from various disciplines to track the shifting meaning of the concepts in decisive historical conjunctures. The most relevant volume here is the first: *La era de las revoluciones, 1750-1850 (The Age of Revolutions, 1750-1850)*.

Ramón came in as a high-ranking member of the military well respected by the new government. After asking that Ramón pardon his initial decision to entrust another with the distribution of the translation, García de Sena implores him to present it to the government, “para que informado por tí, y cerciorado por su lectura de no contener una sola palabra contraria á nuestra Religion tenga un libre pasage entre mis conciudadanos” (so that, informed by you, and assured by your reading that it contains not a single word contrary to our Religion, it circulates freely among my fellow citizens) (iii). Fearing that the new government (*La Junta Suprema de Caracas*) might censor his work, he envisions Ramón as a trusted agent. He sees him as uniquely positioned to diplomatically certify before them that, despite containing works by both a known opponent of organized religion and an Anglo-Protestant country which subscribes to freedom of religion, his translation remains free of blasphemy.

Read this way, *La independencia* is thus a highly instructive case for any investigation into the conceptions of emancipation that circulated the Atlantic in this period. Once we shift the focus of our inquiry to how the broader aims and strategies of translators like García de Sena nuanced philosophical arguments and political models, we can more fully understand the transnational dimensions of how political life was reconceived in this period. But attention to this aspect of his work’s role in both local political history and “circum-Atlantic history” has been precluded by the notions of translation that scholars have deployed, even as they have brought attention to the historical importance of his texts.⁶⁶ This has arrested thinking across various fields from

⁶⁶ I borrow the term “circum-Atlantic history” from David Armitage’s chapter “Three Concepts of Atlantic History” in the volume *The British Atlantic World 1500-1800* that he edited with Michael J. Braddick. There he lays out three concepts or “approaches” to Atlantic history: 1.

Atlantic History to Latin American and Translation Studies almost at the mere detail that García de Sena performed translations. Gabriel González Núñez, for example, argues that, due to the mere fact that the title page bears the imprint of a Philadelphia publisher, “[t]he ideas found in *La independencia* were exported by García de Sena, who was a Spanish American that at the time lived in the United States” (196).⁶⁷ Similarly, Georges L. Bastin, Álvaro Echeverri, and Ángela Campo have written a pathbreaking essay that recognizes translation as a “subversive activity” which played a crucial role in the emancipation movement in “Hispanic America” (43). But they insist that García de Sena’s attention to “content” over “wording” in the dedication to his other book-length translation in the period “illustrates that the contents of [his] translations rather than discursive or textual strategies are here the primary site of resistance, contrary to

“Circum-Atlantic history – the transnational history of the Atlantic world”; 2. “Trans-Atlantic history” – the international history of the Atlantic world”; and 3. “Cis-Atlantic history – national or regional history within an Atlantic context” (2002 16). He elaborates on these definitions as follows: Circum-Atlantic history is “the history of the people who crossed the Atlantic, who lived on its shores and who participated in the communities it made possible” (16); Trans-Atlantic history is “the history of the Atlantic world told through comparisons” (18); Cis-Atlantic history, the “parentage” of which he traces to Thomas Jefferson in his 1785 *Notes on the State Virginia*, “studies particular places as unique locations within an Atlantic world and seeks to define that uniqueness as the result of the interaction between local particularity and a wider web of connections (and comparisons)” (21). Consistent with Armitage’s “caveat” that his delineation of this trichotomy does not preclude the combination of these approaches, my analysis throughout deploys them together.

⁶⁷ Despite my work’s methodological divergence from González Núñez’s with respect to its treatment of translation, my reading of García de Sena’s prefatory materials is indebted to his 2014 “When a Translator Joins the Revolution: A Paratextual Analysis of Manuel García de Sena’s *La independencia*.” It is one of few contemporary instances of scholarship that focuses extensively on García de Sena’s role in the revolution *as a translator* and, by extension, the role of translation in revolutionary politics in Spanish America. I cite the others throughout in relation to which I similarly situate my reading (i.e. indebted, but methodologically divergent). For an early, but similar, Latin American Studies approach, see Grases (1949), and Grases and Harkness (1953). For a book history approach focused on the inter-American book trade, see Vogely, especially chapter 1, “Philadelphia”: 35-87.

arguments about resistance in (literary) texts proposed by Venuti, for example” (60). Their evidence takes the form of García de Sena’s self-deprecatory remarks—present, too, in his letter to Ramón—that the quality of his translations should not overshadow the crucial texts he has chosen to translate, and for them it evinces his overall program. To claim, however, that the remarks demonstrate that the contents, as opposed to the “textual strategies,” of the translations are the “primary site of resistance” surprisingly reinscribes a form-content binary, and uncritically accepts García de Sena’s (perhaps falsely modest) request that readers pay attention to the content “sin atender al buen, ó mal estilo de la traducción” (without attending to the good or bad style of the translation) (iii).

For the hermeneutic model of translation, wording is inseparable from content, and one certainly cannot be privileged in favor of the other—at the very least, their relationship must be theorized in this historical situation. García de Sena produced the contents of his translation through the application of textual strategies *and* values as well as beliefs particular to a Spanish-American political context, and, within it, a Venezuelan one. Of course, in practice these two interpretive factors are inextricable, since verbal choices are at once linguistic and cultural: “They do not simply render words and phrases, but also establish culturally specific meanings” (Venuti, *TCE* 181). It is the significance of *the process* of establishing these “culturally specific meanings” that has been glossed over, so that a prominent scholar of the period and region like Jaime E. Rodríguez O. can write that “Paine’s arguments had little to do with Venezuelan reality” (*Political Culture* 157). Rodríguez O.’s broader point is that the case for U.S. influence on Spanish American independence has been overstated.⁶⁸ But no less than three different

⁶⁸ Rodríguez O. makes a key contribution in that he, like Raul Coronado (*A World not to Come*), recovers the traditions of Hispanic legal and political thought, dating back to interpretations of

translators from Spanish America translated Paine's arguments, suggesting they felt, on the contrary, that those arguments *did* have to do with the events occurring there, that, at a bare minimum, there were attempts to articulate Paine's arguments to Spanish American reality.⁶⁹ If we adopt a narrow focus on the translations' direct causal influence

Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* in the medieval period. But because he is at pains to demonstrate the exceptionalist character of historical scholarship premised on the "belief that the U.S. independence movement was not only the first to create a successful nation-state, but also the first to advance the principles of liberty, self-determination, and representative government," he eschews altogether the possibility that Spanish American interpretations of ideas from the U.S. could intervene into either Venezuelan or Iberian Atlantic political discourses—not to mention a broader "circum-Atlantic" one—by generating insurgent ideas (2018 149). Despite my sense that we elide key aspects of political developments by evaluating their significance according to a narrow rubric of influence, there are contrasting approaches that make a convincing case that independence movements and popular insurrections across Spanish America were fueled by translations of ideas associated with the Enlightenment from Europe and North America. For instance, Bastin and Iturriza's "La traducción como elemento creador de identidad en la prensa independencia de Venezuela (1808-1822)," argues that a central site for the propagation of such ideas was the press, edited, directed, and written by a creole elite, where translation played a key role in creating regional culture, national identity, and consolidating the independence movement. See also, for a Hemispheric American Studies approach, Lazo (2007) who argues that "Hispanophone Philadelphia reminds us of the multinational and multilingual dimensions of independence movements and debates over republicanism in the hemisphere," connecting as it does the "revolutionary discourses of the 1770s and 1780s with the Latin American revolutions and political developments of the second and third decades of the nineteenth century" (58, 59).

⁶⁹ Paul Cahen has done a comparative analysis of three translations of Paine's works from 1811-1821: Anselmo Nateiu's published in London and Peru in 1811 and 1821, respectively; García de Sena's; and one contained in Vicente Rocafuerte's *Ideas necesarias a todo pueblo Americano independiente que quiera ser libre* [Necessary Ideas for all American *pueblo* that Wish to Be Free], published in Philadelphia in 1821. In addition, he mentions a translation of *Common Sense* by the notorious Santiago Felipe Puglia, published by M. Carey and Sons in 1821 about which there is scant information. While there are many useful and illuminating moments in Cahen's analysis, the more incisive insights into the "geopolitics of translating *Common Sense* into Spanish" it might generate are marred by an inconsistent and instrumentalist theorization of translation that traffics in the discourse of fidelity when comparing the translators' political choices. There is also insufficient evidence that Rocafuerte translated the version of *Common Sense* that appears in his edited volume, although it is clearly a distinct one. The potential significance of Puglia's translation lies in how Puglia's long-standing subversive posture towards the Spanish regency might have figured into his rendering as an interpretive factor. In 1790 he had published a highly controversial book, *El desengaño del hombre* [*The Disabusing of Man*], that set the full force of the Spanish royal censorship apparatus in motion, as the book was added to the Inquisition's *Index*. For a full account of the book's publication and background on Puglia see Coronado (2013), where he informs us that the work is "packed with satire, ironic wit, diatribes against monarchical government, and several translated pages of Paine's *The Rights of Man*" (148). For further information on Puglia and his works, see Simmons. As Bastin and

on the reconfiguration of governmental structures and the documents that attended it, as Rodriguez O. does, we miss what we can learn about new developments in political thinking in the period from exploring *how* García de Sena pressed Paine's arguments into service.

At the time Manuel wrote the letter to his brother, *La Junta Suprema*, while not declaring independence, had refused to recognize the new Council of Regency in Spain. Although the Council was forged after the government fled south to Cadíz from Napoleon's invasion and subsequent installation of his brother, Joseph, as sovereign, the *Junta* feared that it was nonetheless compromised by the circumstances of its creation. Notwithstanding their declared continuing loyalty—should governmental stability be reestablished—to Fernando VII, the reigning Spanish monarch, they were suspicious of the role that merchants in Cadíz had played in the design of the new Council. In November 1810, with elections for a new Venezuelan parliament to be convened in Caracas in March 1811 about to commence, the conflict came to a head. The Council in Cadíz, which had lain dormant for some months, demanded recognition, including submission to its newly installed Captain General, Fernando Miyares. The *Junta's* continued resistance led to the decision, under heavy pressure by Cadíz merchants, to end Spanish American free trade with foreigners. Enforced by a naval blockade of Venezuela through the use of forces on hand in Cuba and Puerto Rico, the shutdown came at moment when Spain had no hope of making up the resulting deficit in commerce.

Iturriza point out there are also are many instances when a translation would have been overlooked in a press publication because a source text was not named (83).

By the time García de Sena's book was published on July 9, 1811, a group of mostly middle-class *criollo* radicals had coalesced and pressured the older, moderate elites who controlled the *Junta* to declare full independence. With pro-Royalists standing pat in the provinces and other cities of the Captaincy, the *acta de independencia* approved on July 7 would prove a crucial political fault line for the bloody civil war that would ensue in 1812.⁷⁰

Another deepening fault line, as García de Sena's charge of sacrilege against the monarchy suggests, concerned the relation between religion and sovereignty as Catholicism was being newly politicized as the basis for governmental authority. In this vein, Jeremy Adelman argues that new press freedoms ushered in by both the Spanish and Portuguese Crowns, whether they took the form of "lifted restrictions" or allowing a "press to begin to take root in the first place," were designed to "re-sacralize the monarchy and rebuild confidence in its ministers" (2008 333). Adelman intervenes in the field of Atlantic history by reorienting discussions of sovereignty in the period from assumptions of "national self-determination as [its] modern genesis" (323)—in the sense that nationalist insurrections from within inevitably precipitate imperial declines that result in the formation of nation-states—towards understandings of sovereignty capable of taking on board the ways in which a series of "imperial adaptations" shifted its

⁷⁰ The full name of the new government was, crucially, *La Junta Suprema Conservadora de los Derechos de Fernando VII* (The Supreme Junta, Conserver of the Rights of Fernando VII). For a fuller recounting of these events, including the class, racial, regional, and transatlantic dynamics that came together to create this historical conjuncture, see: Rodríguez O. *The Independence*, especially 109-122; and McKinley, *Pre-Revolutionary Caracas*, especially 158-160. On the violence of the civil war, its underlying political dynamics, and its relation to notions of sovereignty and state formation, see, in addition to Rodríguez O., Adelman "An Age of Imperial" and Adelman, "The Rites of Statehood."

meaning, resulting in new forms as empires rearranged themselves (323, 320). Thus, in many cases “revolutions were imperial in nature,” “part of empire-wide transformations in that they yielded new social practices” (320). Under the pressures of Napoleonic invasion, the “ruling cliques” in Spain and Portugal were pushed to “reconstitute” their empires “with improvisations to rescue them” (333). In one such improvisation, moves by the interim government in Cadíz to transform communications by ending state censorship made the printing press a tool to “promote colonial loyalty to the king and Spain” (333). García de Sena’s translation practice should thus be understood as part of a pitched battle for control over what Adelman calls these “new practices of public representation” (333).

Constitutions/Constituciones

In support of the Spanish Crown, and with the expanded freedoms of the printing press, documents circulated among the Spanish colonies that advanced religious interpretations of politics that favored the king. These texts attempted to mitigate revolt in Venezuela, effectively “re-sacralizing” the monarchy and justifying the divine right of kings. At the very same time, García de Sena’s translation of Paine circulated a radically different image of monarchical government. Through his translation, García de Sena vernacularized the Bible in a way that released two transformative effects: it introduced first, the possibility that scripture supported neither the divine right of kings nor monarchical rule, and second, the possibility that scripture supports popular sovereignty and constitutionalism. But Paine’s *Common Sense*—the first text readers of *La independencia* would encounter—was a Protestant Republican treatise that made its own

arguments for popular sovereignty by deriding both what Paine called the “popish” structure of the Catholic Church, and the tyranny of the British Crown. In order to make his case, then, García de Sena had to assert a distinction between Catholicism and monarchy, invested as he was in preserving the former while supporting attempts to declare independence from the latter. In the examples that follow, we will see how, through the strategies of suppression, close formal and semantic adherence to the source text, and the colloquialization of scripture in defiance of the Church’s centuries-long prohibition, García de Sena disarticulated Catholicism from monarchy and “constitutionalized” Catholicism.⁷¹ Since the only version of a Spanish language Bible in circulation was translated in favor of kings, to translate Paine’s quotations of scripture from the King James Bible was to challenge the Spanish Catholic Crown’s control over one of the principal authorizing texts of the period.

García de Sena confronted the anti-Catholic sentiment that Paine used to make his case for the self-evidence of monarchy’s tyranny. Because Catholic countries prohibited common people access to scripture, these served Paine as obvious examples of anti-republican principles, since these tyrants maintained power by maintaining ignorance.

⁷¹ The notion of constitutionalizing Catholicism is Fernández Sebastián’s from his “Toleration and Freedom of Expression in the Hispanic World Between Enlightenment and Liberalism.” It makes a case for “*Catholic* liberalism and republicanism, which omitted dogma from the realm of opinion, and restricted freedom of the press and of speech to matters of a political nature which were subject to debates and open to diversity of opinion” (189). Adherence to Catholicism, on this account, preserved “the unity of the nation’s body politic” (189). In the 18th century, the idea circulated that the civil wars that followed the Protestant Reformation resulted from religious divisions. This combined with a “Catholic culture that was deeply embedded in their societies” to create a situation in which, at the turn of the 19th century, the objective for liberal elites was “to *constitutionalize* Catholicism, making it the national religion, a measure which implied the abolition of the Inquisition and the subjection of the Church to civil authority” (196, emphasis in original).

When García de Sena translated this argument from Paine, his Catholicism shaped the set of editing choices that are a facet of his translation process. This allowed him to present a version of Paine's argument against monarchy that could nonetheless pass Venezuelan censors who would have taken issue with Paine's separation of church and state. Take, for instance, a passage from Paine's "On Monarchy and Hereditary Succession," the section of *Common Sense* where he launched his most fervent attack on monarchical forms government. His readings of quoted passages from the King James Version of the Bible serve the purpose of undermining the notion that any "natural or religious reason can be assigned" for the "distinction of men into KINGS and SUBJECTS" (52, emphasis Paine's). These stand, for him, as "anti-monarchical parts of scripture [that] have been very smoothly glossed over in monarchical governments" (53). In order to prove that "[m]onarchy is ranked in the scripture as one of the sins of the Jews," and therefore against the will of God, Paine recounts the story of the Israelites' desire for a king, starting with the example of Gideon (Judg. 8.22-23) and moving to that of Samuel (1 Sam. 5-8, 12:17-19). In both cases, when the Israelites ask the men for a king, they appeal to God, whose authority supersedes. In Samuel's case, however, after he prays to God, He sends him back to his people to describe the perils of how kings rule over men. But as is evident above in his assertion that monarchical governments manipulatively elide these passages, Paine goes beyond merely using them to illustrate the lack of historical precedent and religious justification for hereditary monarchy. He marshals biblical allusions as a rhetorical device to imbue his arguments with the quality of self-evident, universal truth, embedding in this section the idea that restriction of unmediated

access to the Bible's wisdom and window into history has obscured the pitfalls of monarchy from common people. Here is the forceful point he made in closing:

These portions of scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against monarchical government is true, or the scripture is false. And a man hath good reason to believe that there is as much of king-craft as priest-craft in withholding the scripture from the public in Popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the Popery of government. (56)⁷²

Writing to an audience of Anglo-Protestants, Paine's argument assumes that his readers share a distrust—and even a hostility—towards Catholicism and its hierarchical organization, using the derogatory term “Popish” to deride the power embodied by the figure of the Pope. Readers, he argues, would easily agree that the Catholic Church's practice of withholding scripture from common people is evidence of their manipulative and tyrannical ways. It is easy, then, for Paine to convincingly state his case against monarchy which, he argues, is similarly “Popish” and, moreover, unequivocally rejected by scripture.

That Paine's argument assumed a Protestant readership presented a problem for García de Sena, who dealt with this passage using a strategy of omission. Up to this point, García de Sena maintains close correspondence to Paine's “On Monarchy and Hereditary Succession,” recounting the stories of the Israelites and God's proclamation against the rule of kings. Yet when he reaches Paine's comments comparing monarchy with the Catholic Church, García de Sena writes:

⁷² I quote throughout from the 2004 Broadview edition of *Common Sense* edited by Edward Larkin.

Estos pasajes de la Escritura son directos y positivos: Ellos no dan lugar á construcciones equivocadas. Que el Todopoderoso ha estampado en ellos su protesta contra el Gobierno Monárquico, es verdad, ó la Escritura es falsa. (24)

(These passages of the scripture are direct and positive: They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty has inscribed in them his protest against Monarchical Government is true or the scripture is false.)

Here the passage ends, excising entirely the comparison between priests and kings. This has the rhetorical effect of giving God and scripture the final word, as it were, producing a sense of finality by providing no further qualification or example. Whereas Paine describes for his readers the implications of the scriptural evidence, appealing to their shared context for reading and interpreting the Bible, García de Sena appears to merely present the word of God for a readership that accepts the word of God as truth. This strategy allowed García de Sena to disarticulate Catholicism from monarchy, rejecting Paine's analogy, and presenting a Catholic argument *against* monarchy.

García de Sena repeats this strategy of omission at several other key moments when the source text similarly links the Catholic Church and its beliefs with monarchy. In the same section of *Common Sense*, when Paine makes his case against hereditary succession as a practice unjustifiable by scripture, he refers to the doctrine of original sin and the case of Adam as the only exception, and this, an absurd one. Here, too, García de Sena cuts Paine short, omitting mention of either original sin or Adam, since to cast the doctrine as baseless would have been considered heretical by Catholic readers. By elision, García de Sena's translation therefore advanced an argument against monarchy that kept faith with Catholic beliefs and scripture. What's more, by translating the biblical passages into Spanish, his text unsettled Paine's representation of Catholics as ignorant masses, supplicant to tyrannical authority.

In fact, García de Sena's *La independencia* was one of only a few texts circulating in the period that contained Spanish translations of scripture. The only officially sanctioned version of the Bible in Castilian was the work of Father Felipe Scio de San Miguel. Originally commissioned by King Carlos III in 1780, the project was taken up by King Carlos IV who requested that Scio de San Miguel translate the Vulgate in 1790. While stories from the Bible certainly circulated by word of mouth and were well-known among all classes, the only written versions available were in Latin. Although in the vernacular, Scio de San Miguel's *La Biblia Vulgata latina*, dedicated to the Prince of Asturias, only made the text available to wealthier classes since it was leather-bound, ornate, and expensive. Portions of Scio de San Miguel's translation appear in a later text, another version of Paine's *Common Sense* that Vicente Rocafuerte published in 1821. An influential figure in Ecuadorian politics and President of Ecuador from 1834 to 1839, Rocafuerte assembled a compendium of translations of U.S. political treatises and documents, remarkably similar to García de Sena's. The unnamed translator of the version of *Common Sense* that Rocafuerte included, however, inserted Scio de San Miguel's translations of scripture, instead of daring to render them himself. Rocafuerte notes the difference in the versions, perhaps alarmed by how Scio's interprets the Bible. He provides explanation in a footnote that cites García de Sena's version, which he believes is superior "por ser mas conforme a la mente del Criador" (since it better accords with the mind of the Creator) (31). He takes issues with Scio de San Miguel's version insofar as it translated scripture in favor of kings, at the risk of misrepresenting the Word of God. The passage that vexes Rocafuerte reads as follows:

Ahora, pues, oye su voz [la del pueblo]; pero protesta primero, y anúnciales el derecho del rey que ha de reinar sobre ellos: esto es no el

derecho de algun rey particular, sino la conducta general de los reyes de la tierra, á quienes Israel imitaba con tanta ansia. Y no obstante la gran distancia de tiempo y diferencia de usos y costumbres, el carácter es todavía del mismo, y lo será eternamente. —*Y así Samuel refirió todas las palabras del Señor al pueblo, que le habia pedido un rey.* (34-35).

(Now, then, hear their voice [that of the pueblo]: but first protest unto them, and announce to them the right of the king that must reign over them: that is, not the right of any particular king, rather the general conduct of the kings of the earth, whom Israel was imitating with such yearning. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference of habits and customs, the character is still of the same kind, and it will be eternally.—And thus, Samuel recited all the words of the Lord to the pueblo that had asked of him a king.)

It is Scio de San Miguel's use of the word *derecho* that concerns Rocafuerte. According to his translation, God suggests that it is the *right* of kings to reign and will be eternally, supporting the Spanish Crown and the divine right of monarchy. For Rocafuerte, this interpretation of the Bible is inconsistent with his understanding of God's conception of earthly kings, so he notes that He "*nunca pudo llamar derecho la conducta opersive del rey*" (*could never call a right the oppressive conduct of the king*) (31).

Rocafuerte prefers García de Sena's translation of *Common Sense*, including Paine's quotations from scripture, although he chooses not to include it in his compendium. García de Sena translates this passage by creating a close formal and semantic correspondence to the source text and, as a result, presents a more decidedly anti-monarchical argument:

Now therefore hearken unto their voice [the people's], howbeit, protest solemnly unto them and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them, i.e. not of any particular king, but the general manner of the kings of the earth, whom Israel was so eagerly copying after. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference of manners, the character is still in fashion, And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people, that asked of him a king. (Paine 54)

Ahora por tanto escucha su voz; con todo protestales solemnemente y muestrales las maneras del Rey que gobernará sobre ellos; esto es, no del algun Rey particular, sino la manera general de los Reyes del tierra, á quienes Isráel imitaba con tanta ansia. Y no obstante la gran distancia de tiempo, y diferencia de maneras, el caracter está auntedavía en uso. Y Samuel dixo todas las palabras del Señor al Pueblo que le pidio un Rey. (García de Sena 22)

(Now therefore, listen to their voice: even so, protest solemnly unto them and demonstrate to them the manners of the King that will govern over them: that is, not of any particular King, rather the general manner of the Kings of the earth, that Israel was imitating with such yearning. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference in manners, the character is still in fashion. And Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the pueblo, that asked of him a king.)

The practice of close adherence to this passage from *Common Sense* might appear conventional from a contemporary perspective in which popular and elite discourses alike prize “fidelity” to the “original.” But such a practice relies on a historically contingent concept of equivalence which has achieved hegemony in the present. Historicizing this practice reveals the extent to which a concept of equivalence is an interpretant, one interpretive strategy among many that García de Sena had at his disposal. According to Raúl Coronado in his *A World not to Come: A History of Latino Writing and Print Culture*, to translate directly from English was itself unique, since most Anglo-Protestant political philosophy made its way to the Hispanophone world through French, along with Latin the European *lingua franca* at the time. These Enlightenment texts, whether in English or French, frequently positioned themselves in opposition to Catholic monarchy, which meant that their Spanish translators “often excis[ed] virulently anti-Catholic passages,” in order to abide the edict of the Inquisition (124). Well-served by the French translating tradition of the *belles infideles*, these translations adopted a different concept of equivalence. Intellectual historian Vicent Llobart Rosa describes this eighteenth-

century “French taste”: “Translations were to be beautiful yet unfaithful, introducing adaptations and modifications in favor of good taste, in favor of the destined reader’s ability to comprehend the text, of the translation being acceptable to the censors, and of the purchase and quality of the translation itself” (qtd. in Coronado 124). Hispanophone translators, including García de Sena, then, culled from an array of strategies—in this case, varying concepts of equivalence—to skirt the censors, achieve a desired aesthetic, and develop Spanish Catholic political discourse. In contrast to Scio de San Miguel’s translation, García de Sena’s does not insert qualifications that justify the divine right of kings. Instead, he presents for a Catholic Venezuelan audience a rendering of scripture that opposes monarchy. His version of *Common Sense*, while it omitted heretical references to Catholicism, risked blasphemy by presenting unsanctioned Spanish-language scripture—this act alone a transgression of Spanish and Catholic ordinance—that challenged the Crown’s authority. Through close adherence, García de Sena undermined the chief characteristic of what Paine calls the “Popery” of the Catholic Church and the government, offering a broader swath of people access to truths formally withheld from them and opening up the possibility that the Bible could be interpreted to justify the independence movement, as well as imagine a Catholic constitutional government.

To achieve this purpose, García de Sena translates sections of Paine’s *Dissertation on the First Principles of Government*. Following a section that argues for the discretionary use of force in the revolutionary struggle to achieve liberty, in its final paragraphs, Paine argues that the same means should not be used for governing after despotism has been overthrown. What is necessary then is a constitution. Paine offers the

French Revolution, and all the violence that followed, as a case in point. He argues that if the French had had a constitution in place after overthrowing the monarchy, “The nation would then have had a bond of union, and every individual would have known the line of conduct he was to follow” (587).⁷³ As Maurizio Griffo argues, Paine is concerned here with “government by faction,” a preoccupation heightened by the particular case of the “French political situation”; but he also reaffirms the “role of the constitution as a rampart against every kind of despotism,” including an assembly (202). Since they are texts that give governments both “principle” and “authority,” and distinguish “crime” from “virtue,” constitutions for Paine function to mitigate the use and abuse of power, as well as manage the “conduct” of citizens (587). He continues:

All these things have followed from the want of a constitution; for it is the nature and intention of a constitution to *prevent governing by party*, by establishing a common principle that shall limit and control the power and impulse of party, and that says to all parties, *thus far shalt thou go and no further*. But in the absence of a constitution, men look entirely to party; and instead of principle governing party, party governs principle. (588)

As the text that authorizes power and principle, the constitution serves for the government and public life a function analogous to the Bible in U.S. Protestant private life. That Paine inscribes in it a divine power is evinced by his use of the phrase, “*thus far shalt thou go and no further*,” which in the period would have been easily recognized as a quote from the Book of Job. In the scripture, God describes the process of Creation, figuring the sea as a bursting, unruly force that required containment—braking, swaddling, and shutting up behind doors—until God finally issues the command Paine quotes, drawing a firm boundary (Job 8-11). The use of this axiom in the description of

⁷³ My quotations from both the *Dissertation on First Principles of Government* and the *Dissertations on Government; The Affairs of the Bank; and Paper Money* refer to the version in volume 2 of Philip S. Foner’s 1945 *The Complete Writings of Thomas Paine*.

the constitution links it to divine power, comparing the work of the constitution to the work of God and locating a precedent for this form of governance in the origin story of the world.

In *La independencia*, García de Sena's translation of this *Dissertation* serves to outline a possible path forward for many who were reluctant to declare independence from the monarchy, since it would surely lead to instabilities and potentially violent conflicts like those seen in France. Offering a rendering of Paine's description of the constitution as a guiding set of principles, along with his versions of the U.S. and state constitutions, García de Sena's compendium could make a strong case for the stability ushered in by such a text. In his version of the penultimate paragraph quoted above, where Paine most emphatically attributes divine power to the constitution, García de Sena writes:

Todas estas cosas se siguieron de la falta de una Constitucion; por que la naturaleza, é intencion de una Constitucion es *prevenir el ser gobernado por partidos*, estableciendo un *principio* comun que limitará y gobernará el poder é impulso del partido, y que dirá à todos los partidos: HASTA AQUI IRÀS Y NO MAS. Pero á falta de una Constitucion el hombre mira enteramente al partido; y en vez de gobernar los *principios* al partido, este gobierna á los *principios*. (65)

(All these things followed from the lack of a Constitution; because the nature, and intention of a Constitution is to prevent being governed by parties, establishing a common *principle* that shall limit and control the power and impulse of party, and that shall say to all parties: TO HERE YOU SHALL GO AND FURTHER NO. But in the absence of a Constitution man looks entirely to party; and instead of the *principles* governing party; the latter governs the *principles*.)

Otherwise closely adhering to the source text, he emphasizes the phrase from Job sonically, syntactically, and typographically: *HASTA AQUI IRÀS Y NO MAS*. Unlike the English version, which appeared across a wide range of Anglophone texts and was thus a

fairly recognizable turn of phrase, the Spanish would not have been widely available as an idiomatic expression, since almost no one had access to a Spanish-language Bible. The line from Job is neither common nor consistent with its rendering in Scio de San Miguel's *La Biblia*. But García de Sena creates a rhyming and metrically regular phrase, lending it a refrán-like (proverb-like) quality in the Spanish. As Venuti observes of the genre of proverbs in the context of how they entrench rote thinking about translation, its formal features, "notably its brevity, its [metrical] regularity and its rhyme, produce the forceful closure that releases an illusionistic effect of truth" (*Contra* 87). Thus, this formal choice inscribes an interpretation by giving the text the appearance of both idiomatic expression and maxim. In this case, García de Sena's translation imbues the paragraph's elevation of constitutions to a divine status with rhetorical power through the felt closure of rhyme.

Together, these translation strategies enact what Javier Fernández Sebastian has described as the "constitutionalization of Catholicism," the effort by Hispanophone thinkers to make "Catholic exclusivism," that is, national religion, compatible with the political philosophy of constitutionalism, which in the Protestant Anglophone world necessarily entails the freedoms of expression and religion (196). What appeared as a contradiction or incongruity from the perspective of the U.S., in other words, García de Sena, as well as other anti-monarchical revolutionaries in the Spanish Americas, *made* congruous by articulating Catholicism to constitutionalism. To transform their source texts they applied thinking from a divergent tradition of Hispanic Enlightenment that had first informed efforts in the mid eighteenth century to introduce economic reforms by

linking collective well-being to the notion of *felicidad pública* (public happiness).⁷⁴ This tradition relied on the Catholic Scholastic thought that found its most powerful modern articulation in the work of Francisco Suárez (1548-1617), whose teachings achieved the status of doctrine across Hispanic universities in Spain and the Americas by the eighteenth century. Translations like García de Sena's, then, allow us to track a political discourse that shaped a worldview which saw political authority as eternal law that descends in concentric levels from God's realm to divine, natural, and, finally, civil law. As Coronado informs us, Suárez conceived of this eternal law as expressed and revealed to a "select few" as divine law in the bible, but "also imprinted in nature," such that when "interpreted correctly—using reason while inspired by revelation—it would give rise to natural law, universal truths that applied to all beings" (225). Since "each realm of law had to accord with God's plan, which was ultimately happiness, defined as the common good," and natural law, descended from divine law, related but "separate from it," Suarez's scholasticism opened two possibilities: that God could not have "ordained

⁷⁴ For a thoroughgoing analysis of the notion of *felicidad pública* as it animates economic reform, the emergence of "political economy" as an autonomous discipline, and revolution in the Hispanophone Atlantic in the late eighteenth century, see Coronado 101-138. He stresses there the significance of the contrast between the persistence into this period of happiness as a collectivistic concept in the Hispanophone world, and its gradual supplanting by a liberal focus on "the individual's well-being as the rationale for the state" in Anglophone world, especially in the United States (106). The "concept [of *felicidad*]," he argues, "develops into the syntagm *felicidad pública* or public happiness, producing an elaborate discourse on the need to secure the happiness of the social body, the collectivity" (106). Thus, in the Hispanophone world, this political concept, while at first directed at socioeconomic reform, formed part of a "larger epistemic shift, one that over the course of the eighteenth century [Hispanics] began to describe as 'modern.'" Despite the surface appearance of a transition from mercantile capitalism to free-trade capitalism, this shift "was embedded in a much larger systemic transformation, one where people were slowly no longer viewing the world as a received order but, rather, as a produced order" as they expanded the connotation of 'social body' beyond the monarch proper (104). See also: Maravall "La idea de la felicidad en el programa de la ilustración" (The Idea of Happiness in the Program of the Enlightenment) in the collection of his articles *Estudios de historia del pensamiento Español* (*Studies in the History of Spanish Thought*).

monarchs as divine,” and that the common good could be understood as attainable through the establishment of political society, which issued from the law of nature and humans’ creation of society (civil law) through their study of it (Coronado 226-27). It is this notion of collective happiness that shaped not only García de Sena’s work to constitutionalize Catholicism, but also his effort to interrogate and reshape the concept of the *pueblo* as it was being newly deployed to authorize popular sovereignty.

People/Pueblo

Taken together Paine’s *Common Sense, Dissertation on First Principles of Government*, and *Dissertation on Government; the Affairs of the Bank; and Paper Money* empowered and unified “the people” as social actors entitled to forms of participatory democracy, refuting the aristocratic notion of “the people” as ignorant or dependent masses unfit to participate in government directly. When García de Sena translates Paine’s ‘people’ to *pueblo*, he at once introduces a version of this meaning into the context of Venezuela and shifts the meaning of these texts in the source culture, expanding the scope of what Paine’s ‘people’ could signify. While they semantically correspond, people and *pueblo* have vastly different uses and meanings. Since the medieval period, *pueblo* has referred to a collective inhabiting a town or region, but during the seventeenth century the term took on an ideological meaning with derisive connotations. The 1737 *Diccionario de autoridades* of the Real Academia Española offers this definition: “those people inhabiting a town who were not part of the nobility.”⁷⁵ By the time García de Sena is translating Paine, the term is also deployed by

⁷⁵ Dictionary of Authorities, or Authoritative Dictionary, was the name of the six-volume set compiled the Royal Spanish Academy and issued one volume at a time from 1726-1739. The fifth

revolutionaries who articulate it to the Scholastic theory that “sovereignty emerges from the people” (Coronado 67). This section will examine precisely how García de Sena’s translation intervenes in Venezuelan political discourse, contesting the use of *pueblo* by the political elite by introducing an image of the foreign linked with revolutionary capacity. We will see, too, how his *La independencia* gives the Protestant, individualistic concept of “people” a Catholic, collectivistic significance that extends the argument of Paine’s writing to revitalize its meaning for Anglophone readers.

García de Sena’s translation appears in the same year that the first Congress of Venezuela was installed, followed thereafter by the *Declaración de los Derechos del Pueblo*, on July 1, 1811. This Congress was comprised of political and social elites based in Caracas, who claimed to serve as representatives for the towns and provinces beyond the city’s limits. In her discussion of *la opinión pública* and the concept of the *pueblo* in Venezuelan political discourse during the Constitutional Congress, Véronique Hébrard observes that in both discussions among the members of the assembly and in the press, there emerged a distinction between, on the one hand, *el pueblo soberano* (the sovereign *pueblo*) and, on the other, “la masa ignorante, el vulgo, [y] la plebe” (the ignorant masses,

volume published in 1737 contained entries from O-R. 1780 marked the first edition of what was formerly dubbed the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española*, or *DRAE*, and originally published under the full title *Diccionario de la lengua Castellana compuesto por la Real Academia Española, reducido a un tomo para su más fácil uso* (*Dictionary of the Castilian Tongue Composed by the Royal Spanish Academy, Reduced to One Volume for its Easier Use*). It was an abridged version of the six-volume *Diccionario de autoridades* in circulation referenced above. The Academy now refers to the editions since 1780 as the *Diccionarios de la lengua española*, providing access at: <https://www.rae.es/recursos/diccionarios>. Here, one can use various digital tools to search previous editions (1726-2006), as well as the current edition. In addition to Coronado’s detailed etymological research and the *Diccionario de autoridades* tool, my argument about the shifting denotations and significations of *pueblo*, as well as the other terms I cite below, has benefited most from the “Mapa de diccionarios” (Map of Dictionaries) tool. It allows one to view in table form the changing denotations of words from the 1780 to 2001 editions.

the vulgar, and the plebes) (198). Among those in power, the predominant belief was that “Si el pueblo es bueno por naturaleza, no es bastante ilustrado para practicar el libre uso de su razón y por eso es propenso a sobresaltos tumultuosos” (If the *pueblo* is good by nature, it is not enlightened enough to practice the free use of its reason, and is thus prone to violent outbursts) (198). Though their notion of *pueblo* is informed by Scholastic theory, in which sovereignty emerges from the *pueblo*, where *pueblo* signifies a unified entity rather than a group of individuals, the assembly sharply curtails the power of the common people to participate in government, since they are generally believed to be too uneducated and unrefined to do so effectively. Curtailing the freedom of expression and the power of *la masa ignorante*, the Congress includes in their constitution severe punishments to be handed down if opinion is expressed publicly and freely outside the confines of the representative body.

For Paine, as we have seen in his *Dissertation on First Principles*, these practices would be abhorred as despotism by assembly, in clear violation of the principles of a democratic republican government. Whether by representation or through direct participation, the people must have an equal right to public opinion. He argues that, “In all matters of opinion, the social compact, or the principle by which society is held together, requires that the majority of opinions becomes the rule for the whole, and that the minority yields practical obedience thereto. This is perfectly conformable to the principle of equal rights: for, in the first place, every man has a *right to give an opinion*, but no man has a right that his opinion should *govern the rest*” (584-585). The principle of equal rights requires that the opinion of all, including representatives *and* those that they represent, be considered in the formation of a majority and thus in the development

of a rule. This basic principle, he believes, prevents despotism either by an individual or by a party, and should undergird any representative government, no matter its shape. He continues:

Representative government is not necessarily confined to any one particular form. The principle is the same in all the forms under which it can be arranged. The equal rights of the people is the root from which the whole springs, and the branches may be arranged as present opinion or future experience shall best direct. (585-586)

Using the metaphor of a tree to explain the relationship between his principles and the branches of government, Paine argues that all representative forms of government take as their basis the equal rights all people to public opinion. Such a conception of “the people” refutes the prevailing assumptions and practices of the Constitutional Congress in Venezuela, revealing them to be in violation of the most basic principle of democratic government.

When García de Sena translates this passage from Paine’s *Dissertation*, therefore, he introduces into Venezuelan public culture yet another interpretation of *pueblo*, expanding its range of signification, and thereby contesting the constitution’s right to limit the power and opinion of the common people. He writes:

El Gobierno Representativo no está necesariamente limitado á alguna forma particular. El principio es uno mismo en todas las formas baxo las quales pueda ser ordenado. *La igualdad de derechos* del Pueblo es la raiz de donde dimanen todas, y sus diferentes ramos pueden ser ordenados con arreglo á la opinion presente, ó como mejor lo enseñe la experiencia futura. (García de Sena 61-62)

(Representative Government is not necessarily limited to any one particular form. The principle is one and the same in all the forms under which it may be arranged. *The equal rights* of the Pueblo is the root from which all spring, and their different branches can be arranged in accordance with present opinion, or as future experience may best demonstrate.)

By strategically maintaining close correspondence while activating new semantic possibilities through subtle shifts from the English, García de Sena links the notion of equal rights, which he translates and italicizes as *la igualdad de derechos*, to the concept of the *Pueblo*, giving the term a new and subversive meaning. Rather than the discrete entities embodied by the *pueblo soberano* or *la masa ignorante*, García de Sena joins representatives *and* those whom they represent under the banner of *Pueblo*. While the term *el pueblo* has by the contemporary period achieved a kind of hegemony as the term that most closely corresponds to the people, based on both dictionary definitions and contextual use, what we witness here is a genealogical moment in the creation of a basis for correspondence (a concept of equivalence) between the terms. It is also necessarily a moment of profound divergence that bears on understandings of the relation between the terms in the present. One need only imagine the seeming impossibility of any number of vitriolic U.S. right-wing commentators today replacing a phrase like “rights of the people” with “rights of the pueblo” to grasp how the terms come closer together in some contexts while being violently hierarchized in others. Translators like García de Sena form part of a long historical process of embedding in these terms a deep grammar.

To suggest in 1811 that public opinion should be articulated by all men, and that the opinions of the people should inform the decision making of the assembly, was to call attention to the extent to which the Venezuelan constitution and the operations of representatives were, in fact, undemocratic and oppressive. When, for instance, the assembly drafted the *Declaración*, Hébrard describes in haunting fashion the control that the Congress exercised over the public’s knowledge of the debates and differences among representatives. According to them, she observes: “Si bien el debate es necesario para el

surgimiento de la evidencia, ciertas situaciones exigen el secreto e impiden que el pueblo sea testigo de la fábrica de la opinión” (If debate is necessary for the emergence of evidence [documenting the proceedings], certain circumstances demand secrecy and prevent the *pueblo* from being a witness to the production of opinion) (216). The ruling class of Venezuela strictly censored expressions of “public” opinion in the press, constructing for the people a singular, sanctioned, and unified determination made by the assembly behind closed doors. Through his rendering of Paine, then, García de Sena challenged the principles that informed the assembly’s practices, subverting what was by this time a regime that actively suppressed even the hint or possibility of dissent.

García de Sena’s use of the term *pueblo* also had consequences for his source text, interrogating as it did Paine’s notion of “the people” and transforming its meaning to include a Hispanophone Catholic understanding of popular sovereignty. The subtle differences between the terms people and *pueblo* are evident in García de Sena’s translation of Paine’s *Dissertation on Government; the Affairs of the Bank; and Paper Money*. Here Paine asserts that the location of freedom distinguishes despotic and democratic forms of government, writing that,

The *repository* where the sovereign power is placed is the first criterion of distinction between a country under a despotic form of government and a free country. In a country under a despotic government, the sovereign is the only free man in it. In a republic, the people, retaining the sovereignty themselves, naturally and necessarily retain their freedom with it: for wherever the sovereignty is, there must the freedom be. (370, my emphasis)

Using the figure of the “repository,” Paine gives freedom an abstract location, placing it either in the body of the sovereign, or else in the people themselves. And with the verb “retain,” Paine embeds in the example the language of self-possession, a common feature

of the discourse of U.S. republicanism. In his formulation, that the people “retain” or “maintain possession” of their sovereignty is a precondition of “freedom.” In his translation, García de Sena inscribes in the text significations of popular sovereignty unavailable to Paine:

El lugar en que el poder soberano está colocado es la primera regla de distincion entre un país baxo una forma despotica de Gobierno, y uno libre. En us país gobernado despoticamente el Soberano es el solo hombre libre que hay en él. En una Republica el Pueblo guardanado la Soberanía en sí mismo, necesaria [sic.] y naturalmente guarda la libertad con ella: por que donde quiera que esté la Soberanía, alli debe estar la libertad; la una no puede estar en un lugar, y otra en otro. (73)

(The place in which sovereign power is located is first principle of distinction between a country under a despotic form of Government and a free one. In a country governed despotically, the Sovereign is the only free man that there is in it. In a Republic the *Pueblo*, safeguarding Sovereignty in itself, necessarily and naturally holds liberty with it: because wherever Sovereignty is, there must be liberty; the one cannot be in one place, and the other in another.)

His rendering, while maintaining close formal and semantic correspondence, inserts a metaphoric that emphasizes the concrete locational aspect of *Pueblo*. Rather than a “repository,” which might signify an abstract space in which goods are stored for safe-keeping, García de Sena uses the word *lugar*, which more generally means “place.” This has the effect of making sovereignty a condition of a *Pueblo*, a place inhabited by a collective of people, a place that vigilantly persists, the metaphor continues, in *guardanado* (safeguarding) it. He further amplifies the placed quality of *pueblo* by adding a final phrase: *la una no puede estar en un lugar, y otra en otro*. With this addition, García de Sena reinforces that the *physical site* from which sovereignty emerges is the *Pueblo*, an idea historically available in Scholastic Catholic political thought that the Spanish Crown had desperately resisted.

It is crucial to note that García de Sena had available another word for Paine's "people": *gente*. Far less politicized in this period, *gente* denoted a "pluralidad de personas" (plurality of persons). Although it could also be synonymous with *nación* ("la colección de los habitantes en alguna provincia, país, ó reino," or the aggregate of the inhabitants in a province, country, or kingdom), *gente* as *nación*, too, had its etymological roots in the Latin *gens* and denoted a secular, quasi-demographic unit of population, e.g. a group of persons with a common language or set of traditions.⁷⁶ In this Spanish-American historical conjuncture *Nación* was still in the process of emerging as an abstract political concept, in the sense of what Benedict Anderson has termed an "imagined community" whose history can be retrospectively emplotted, traced to a past constructed through narrative.⁷⁷ *Gente* was thus a collective noun that could be used to

⁷⁶ The quoted phrases are from the entries for *gente* and *nación* in 1780 edition of the *Diccionario de la lengua española de la Real Academia Española*. I have also referred to the entries for *habitador*, *colección*, and *conjunto* in the "mapa de diccionarios" in order to translate the entry for *nación*. As with the entry for *pueblo* above, I have used the digital tools on the Real Academia Española site to trace the etymology of the terms.

⁷⁷ For a detailed, genealogical approach to the etymology of the terms *nación* and *pueblo*, see Coronado 62-74. Also see 246, where he discusses *pueblo* in relation to *gente*. On the narrative construction of national pasts, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, especially 187-206. And as I mention in note 64, the entries in Fernández Sebastián's *Diccionario político y social del mundo iberoamericano* inform my understanding of the significations of *pueblo*, *gente*, and *nación* in circulation in the period, as well as their political genealogies. As Fernández Sebastián writes in his article "Toleration and Freedom of Expression in the Hispanic World Between Enlightenment and Liberalism," he sees the dictionary as the "fruit of" a "new line of investigation in comparative conceptual history of the Iberian-American world, paying special attention to semantic problems" (162). I see my work here as advancing the kind of "joint reflection" in which he calls for Latin American, European, and North American academics to engage on "the significant differences [from a transcultural point of view] in the way our respective societies and linguistic areas conceptualize political life" (162).

name an aggregate of individual persons living in vast geographical area, a meaning that might more closely correspond to Paine's notion of "people." In contrast, *Pueblo* inscribes "people" more forcefully with a situated, physical meaning, naming not such a group of individuals, but a site of social activity, "the combined entity of a group of people—or, more accurately, an indivisible collective—inhabiting a town or region" (Coronado 67). As Coronado observes "*Pueblo*, then, carries with it the Scholastic concept of [Suarez's] *corpus mysticum*, the mystical living body that can only emerge by the coming together of a mass of indivisible people associated with a specific territory" (246). When García de Sena translates "the people" as *pueblo*, he applies a Catholic political discourse that has particular resonance in the Revolutionary period to inscribe his source texts with meanings, and a history unintelligible to Paine for whom Catholicism is symbolized by "Popery." At the interstices of two discordant histories of Enlightenment critical thought, García de Sena's translation, therefore, identifies an overlap between two apparently opposing political philosophies and transforms a Protestant, individualistic concept into a Catholic, collectivistic one.

Conclusion

As García de Sena translates writings by Paine and assembles them in his compendium alongside U.S. state documents, he participates in an ongoing struggle to determine the role of constitutions and the people in the governance of an independent Venezuelan republic. Circulating among other translations of Paine and scripture, as well as French and English Enlightenment thought, *La independencia* participates, too, in the development of Hispanophone Enlightenment discourse, drawing into conversation

notoriously anti-Catholic texts and the Catholic philosophical tradition of Scholasticism. By examining the strategies that García de Sena used to make intelligible U.S. Protestant notions of constitutionalism and popular sovereignty, we can better understand the syncretic relation between the revolutionary politics of Anglo America and Protestant northwestern Europe, on the one hand, and the Hispanic world, on the other, while recovering an alternative history of emancipatory thought retrospectively posited as belated in scholarly as well as popular accounts. It is not the case that García de Sena merely imported U.S. concepts into Venezuela; rather, his work transforms Paine's texts and reimagines their arguments and their principles, effectively subverting the control of the Spanish Crown, the Catholic Church, and the Venezuelan Congress by "constitutionalizing" Catholicism and advocating for public access to scripture as well as the equal right to public opinion. In so doing, García de Sena's translation pushes Paine's writing beyond the limits of Anglo-Protestant republicanism, and beyond, too, its reductive and inaccurate collapse of Catholicism into monarchy

PART 2
ABOLITIONISM ACROSS THE ATLANTIC WORLD

CHAPTER 3

R.R. MADDEN'S *POEMS BY A SLAVE IN THE ISLAND OF CUBA*,

RECENTLY LIBERATED AND

THE MAKING OF A "NEGRO INTELLECT"

Irish abolitionist Richard Robert Madden arrived in London at the first ever World Anti-Slavery Convention in June 1840 prepared to shatter the pervasive fantasy among Anglophone abolitionists that slavery in Cuba was "mild." Recently dispatched to Havana by the British Crown, where he had served as a magistrate for the mixed-court commission to advocate on behalf of enslaved and free Africans on the island, Madden's reputation as an abolitionist thoroughly preceded him in London. After his post in Havana, en route to the Convention, Madden appeared as an expert witness in the now infamous Amistad trial on his way back to Britain for the Convention. There, in Connecticut, he offered key testimony and acted as an interpreter and translator for the kidnapped West Africans that had overtaken a ship headed to Cuba and, attempting to redirect it back to Africa, were discovered off the coast of Long Island. Already regarded as among the most progressive abolitionists in attendance, Madden was cheered on by delegates who both valued his position and report on the status of slavery in Cuba *and* cautioned against any rhetoric or plan of action that appeared to deviate from their explicit commitment to pacifism.

This sentiment was echoed by Cuban officials who had regarded Madden's appointment by the British Crown as an unwelcome, if not hostile imposition. When Captain-General Miguel Tacón y Rosique, autocratic leader of the Spanish colony (1834-1838), learned of Madden's appointment in Havana, he wrote: "Dr. Madden is a dangerous man from whatever point of view he is considered, and living in this Island will have far too many opportunities to disseminate seditious ideas directly or indirectly, which not even my constant vigilance can prevent" (Murray 49). In his role as the Superintendent of Liberated Africans in Havana, Cuban officials feared Madden would instigate the kind of violence that his presence in Kingston, Jamaica had stoked years earlier. He had been sent to that island to oversee the institution of a gradualist abolitionist program, the apprenticeship system, but witnessed only the failure of such a system to ameliorate relations among the master and enslaved classes. Madden wrote a damning account of the apprenticeship system and delivered testimony to a parliamentary committee attesting to the fact that there was effectively no difference between apprenticeship and slavery. Because he was a loud and respected voice among Anglo abolitionists, his post in Havana implied to Cuban officials there that the Crown meant to disrupt the island's flourishing plantation economy, which continued to both illegally participate in the slave trade and welcome British slaveholders who fled Jamaica with their former slaves, now legally British free subjects, following the abolition of slavery in the British colonies.

Throughout the 1830s and 40s, Madden continued to serve as an advocate for "liberated Africans," often at personal risk, whether putting his life in danger, or becoming the subject of anti-Irish slander. Following his time in Cuba, for example,

when Madden investigated British merchants in Gambia who illegally participated in the slave trade, implicating prominent members of London society, he was called a “*hungry Whig radical*,” a racializing slur that threw his whiteness into question (Burton 36, my emphasis). This possibility troubled Madden’s anti-slavery writing as well as his work more generally, as he attempted both to assert the humanity of formerly enslaved people and to seek literary and political fame as a decidedly “white” abolitionist. The account of Cuban slavery that he delivered at the 1840 Convention, and his subsequent writing about Cuba, bore this out. His “Address” was welcomed with resounding praise from British, European, and U.S. delegates who voted unanimously to support its publication as well as the publication of Madden’s subsequent translation of the life story and poetry of the formerly enslaved Cuban, Juan Francisco Manzano, *Poems by a Slave, Recently Liberated; Translated from the Spanish, by R. R. Madden, M.D., With the History of the Early Life of the Negro Poet, Written by Himself*. Beneath the surface of their explicitly abolitionist goals, both pieces of writing unconsciously struggle to secure Madden’s whiteness, whether by racializing the *criollo* of Spanish America or by claiming paternalistic authority over and distance from Manzano as an exemplar of the “negro intellect,” a transatlantic trope fast rising to prominence as both a “racial” pseudoscientific category and anti-slavery political concept.⁷⁸ This is most evident in those moments when the translator appears to suppress aspects of Manzano’s writing that

⁷⁸ On this dual valence of “negro intellect,” see Daut *Tropics of Haiti*, 140-151, where she tracks it across a transatlantic network of U.S., French, British, and Haitian texts, that swirls around the British botanist William Hamilton’s English translation of the Haitian Baron de Vastey’s *Réflexiones sur une lettre de Mazères, ex-colon français, ... sur les noirs et le blancs, la civilisation de l’Afrique, le Royaume d’Hayti, etc.* Hamilton rendered the title as follows: *Réflexions on the Blacks and Whites: Remarks upon a Letter Addressed by M. Mâzeres, a French Ex-Colonist, to J.C.L. Sismonde de Simondi.*

might be read as subversive of a prevailing Anglophone racial ideology. Indeed, scholars have often regarded Madden's translation as constrained by his white supremacist perspective and goals, which could not countenance Manzano's claiming of authorial agency. But such a reading risks reducing Madden's politics too simply to a reactionary position that he explicitly rejected and an affinity with whiteness that was ever uncertain for the Irish writer.

Consider, for instance, Madden's translation of a scene towards the end of Manzano's autobiography when the poet compares his suffering to that of Christ. In its initial composition in Spanish, the image is subversive in at least two ways: first, it renders an enslaved person as an analogue for the most holy figures of the Spanish Catholic imagination, a potentially sacrilegious suggestion; and second, as Matthew Pettway convincingly argues, since Manzano is not "saved" from his suffering, despite his good Christian behavior, the passage rejects a Catholic morality that would have the enslaved endure suffering indefinitely as they awaited redemption in the afterlife (46-48). In the version of the manuscript written by Manzano and edited by Cuban *criollo* Anselmo Suárez y Romero—Madden's source material—the text describes a scene of torture that brings the enslaved poet to a point of utter despair. As edited by Suárez y Romero it reads: "Me atan las manos como las de Jesu Cristo: me cargan y me meten los pies en las dos aberturas de la tabla. ¡Oh Dios! Corramos un velo sobre esta escena tan triste. ¡Ay!, mi sangre se derramó y perdí el sentido. Cuando volví en mí, me hallé en la puerta del oratorio en los brazos de mi madre, anegada en lágrimas" (They tie my hands like those of Jesus Christ: they lift me up and put my feet in the two apertures of the board. Oh God! Let us draw a veil over this sorrowful scene. Oh!, how my blood spilled,

and I lost consciousness. When I came to, I found myself in the doorway of the oratory in the arms of my mother, flooded with tears...) (Manzano 94).⁷⁹ Manzano compares his beating—as Pettway shows, likely also “a nightmarish rape scenario” (66)—to the torture and crucifixion of Christ, including the detail of being held thereafter “en la puerta del oratorio” by his mother, the description of whom resonates with Catholic imagery of the Virgin Mary. He renders his suffering as a radical injustice, positioning himself as a passive figure of moral purity who is persecuted without the eternal redemption that Catholic morality promises. With this gesture, which Manzano repeats in the poetry that accompanies his life story, the enslaved poet is careful to avoid the suggestion that his suffering was degrading, implying that the torture instead elevates him to the moral superiority of Christ. This rhetorical move works to humanize Manzano by drawing on and reappropriating the terms of his racialization through religious discourse and the symbolic association of Catholicism with whiteness and “civilization.” Further, as the scene is followed by his decision to flee to freedom, the image rejects Catholicism as an emancipatory system and that Manzano is a victim in need of salvation, whether by Catholic religion or abolitionists, suggesting instead that he is the agent of his own emancipation.

Madden’s translation of this passage departs from the reference to “Jesu Cristo,” using language that undermines the poet’s rhetorical strategy. Unable to sustain the suggestion that Manzano was an analogue for Christ, or perhaps Manzano’s tacit

⁷⁹ My citations of Manzano throughout refer to the pages of William Luis edited critical edition *Autobiografía del esclavo poeta y otros escritos* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2007). It contains both the version edited by Suárez y Romero (pp. 79-116), and William Luis’ transcription of the version of Manzano’s signed manuscript found in the Biblioteca Nacional José Martí (pp. 297-346). For detailed material textual information on this version provided by Luis, see 291-296.

criticism of the hollow promises of Catholic salvation, Madden writes: "...when my hands were tied behind my back *like a criminal* and my feet secured in an aperture of the board. Oh, my God! Let me not speak of this frightful scene! When I recovered, I found myself in the arms of my mother, bathed in tears, and disconsolate" (Madden 85, my emphasis).⁸⁰ Madden interpretively displaces the crucifixion imagery with that of mere criminality, having in mind, perhaps, the thieves crucified with Christ. Undoing Manzano's claim to moral goodness, the comparison operates by another logic, implying that the injustice of Manzano's torture lies in his innocence rather than his goodness. Finding this logic only in negation—that is, in the description of what Manzano is *not*—Madden renders the scene as more a condemnation of his torturers than an exaltation of the poet's character. The effect is to racialize Manzano as a worthy victim in need of abolitionist salvation, restabilizing the paternalistic relationship between "white" abolitionist and "black" slave that prevailed in Anglo-Atlantic abolitionist discourse, and displacing the terms on which Manzano figured himself as "human." He therefore transformed a potentially subversive strategy of representation into something more acceptable, and, in so doing, stabilized his own racial identity in relation to the enslaved Cuban and the Anglo readers for whom he translated, as well as the ontological category of the "human." While this transformation has often been read as evidence of Madden's inability to countenance Manzano's humanity, his own subject positioning and history as a translator and abolitionist suggest that his choice is informed by a more complicated set of ideological, formal, and thematic pressures.

⁸⁰ My citations of Madden's translation throughout refer to the second edition of Edward J. Mullen's excellent edited version of it in *The Life and Poems of a Cuban Slave: Juan Francisco Manzano 1797-1854* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 39-197.

In the chapter to follow, I consider how Madden's translation did more than suppress subversive elements of Manzano's narrative to make them palatable to a moderate abolitionist audience. I suggest that the translation also creates new meanings of the concepts of freedom and anti-slavery for Cuban and Anglophone readers, both which emerge within and are constituted by contemporaneous systems of racialization: the Spanish Cuban *régimen de castas* and transatlantic Anglophone abolitionism. These each differently encode the significance of Manzano's suffering, life, and writing, and therefore underscore how the text articulates the enslaved poet's journey from slavery to freedom. I argue that Madden's translation transforms Manzano from a self-described "mulato" into a "negro," in the Anglophone sense of the word, or even a "negro intellect" in the emergent transatlantic sense of the term. While the translation appears to have adopted a conservative and even white supremacist approach to rendering Manzano's life story, if we halt examination of the historical particularities of its operation in this period of post-abolition socio-economic restructuring without looking at *how*, as an ideology and discursive formation, that white supremacy fixes an understanding of a figure like Manzano, we miss a central feature of the work that the translation is doing. I show that the act of translation and the interpretive moves that this act entails have the effect of entering the specifics of Cuban slavery into a formerly exclusive Anglo paradigm, expanding the scope of Anglo-Atlantic abolitionism and the meaning of "universal abolitionism."

Within the context of this dissertation, the case of Madden's translation serves as a uniquely significant illustration of one of my underlying methodological premises: that translation is an interpretive practice, the ethics of which can be most incisively evaluated

and understood by moving away from accounts that narrowly define the ethical as the burden of “capturing” the “essential” meaning of its “original” or “faithfully” transmitting the voice of its author. Besides the fact that no such inherent or invariant meaning exists, since its initial composition by Manzano in 1835, which was itself produced under social, ideological, and formal constraints that configure readers’ efforts access to the “true” voice of the enslaved author, that text has undergone numerous rounds of editing and translating. Circulated first and only in translation until 1937, the life story set down by Manzano underwent a process of transmission involving multiple contextual shifts, both intra- and inter- cultural and linguistic: it was first requested by Domingo Del Monte, a *criollo* planter and literary mogul with a *reformist* agenda vis-à-vis Cuban slavery, who sees slaves’ writings as the possible apotheosis of a new tradition of national letters, which he was attempting to establish against a more ornate romance tradition; then penned by Manzano with a number of orthographical and syntactical errors from the perspective of the standard Spanish of the period; next edited by Suárez y Romero, a member of Del Monte’s literary circle who marveled at Manzano’s life as well as the plain, unvarnished quality of his narrative; and finally, Suárez y Romero’s Spanish version was passed to Madden, who translated and edited it into a form that, in part, resonated with the slave narrative genre, printing it in a compendium that included two interviews with Del Monte, as well as documents and poems of his own about Cuban slavery. He also wrote a preface and included his translation of a glossary of “creole terms in common use in Cuba and those relative to slavery and the slave trade” (Madden 193).

In the twentieth century, Manzano's initial Spanish composition was "rediscovered" and authenticated by Cuban and Black Atlantic scholars, resulting in the publication of three editions since 1937 that each bear the aesthetic politics of their editor, translator, and publisher. The first, *Autobiografía, cartas, y versos de Juan Fco. Manzano*, edited and studied by José L. Franco, and published in Havana by the Biblioteca Nacional, includes the orthographic idiosyncrasies and non-standard syntax of Manzano's 1835 manuscript, but effaces the revisions scrawled onto the manuscripts pages by his editor, Suárez y Romero, instead incorporating the changes prescribed by the editor seamlessly into his version. As such, according to William Luis, Franco's version conceals the extent to which it contains two voices, both that of Manzano and Suárez y Romero, and, I would add, a third: Franco himself.

In 1996, Ivan Schulman and Evelyn Picon Garfield, two leading Latin Americanist scholars, published a bilingual version of the text with Wayne State University Press, titled, *The Autobiography of a Slave / Autobiografía de un Esclavo*. Though they use Franco's edition to produce their own, the scholars present readers with a "modernized Spanish version" that Garfield translates into English en face. They explain their decision as follows: "We decided not to reproduce the text of Franco's edition, which duplicates the original manuscript with all the orthographic and syntactic deficiencies that make it so hard to read. We believe that the contemporary reader, more than ever interested in matters of Black literature, slavery, underdevelopment and cultural dependency, requires a text both reliable and modern" (10). Favoring scrutability and ease of reading for both contemporary Spanish and English language readers over "faithfulness" to Manzano's initial composition and its "deficiencies," the scholars fix an

interpretation of the text as well as its historical significance, (re)making an “original” (Emmerich 2) by treating it as a sociological artifact that communicates something “reliable” about the history of transatlantic slavery.

Most recently, in 2007, Spanish literary scholar and expert on Cuban literature, William Luis, published a Spanish-language critical edition of the text that contains: a detailed reconstruction of the text’s iterations, editions, and rediscoveries throughout the Atlantic world, including Luis’ own choices as editor; a reprint of a recovered manuscript of Manzano’s initial composition that includes its grammatical idiosyncrasies, before Suárez y Romero’s editing; letters between Manzano and Del Monte; and a selection of Manzano’s poetry, as well as his play. Luis includes extensive notes that interpret Manzano’s writing process and choices, as can be inferred from his crossing-out or replacing of words, as well as contextual and linguistic information that twenty-first century readers may need to understand the text (specialized vocabulary or spellings that have fallen out of usage). The edition also contains a bibliography that collects scholarship related to the manuscript. Taken as a whole, the edition represents a seismic shift in the treatment of the text as both a translation and as a set of texts written by an enslaved person. Luis’ edition assumes the ethical and methodological necessity of distinguishing between the interventionary work done by critics, editors, and translators, and Manzano himself, as well as framing readers’ interpretation of the text as one produced under the constraints of coercion. Not merely Manzano’s patron, Del Monte is rightly cast, in Luis’ edition, as a member of the *criollo* elite that withholds Manzano’s freedom in exchange for his cultural labor.

Each of these textual iterations, I argue, reflect changes in critical perspectives on the role of translator, the role of the critic, and the value and necessity of access to “authentic” historical materials. According to Karin Emmerich, in her recent study, *Literary Translation and the Making of Originals*, “the textual condition is one of variance, not stability,” and “The process of translation both grapples with and extends that variance, defining the content and form of an ‘original’ in the very act of creating yet another textual manifestation of a literary work in a new language” (2). Each of these editors and translators fix and (re)create an “original,” and each is utterly distinct, as they emerge from historically contingent value systems and literary markets. While they often stake ethical positions in relation to the historical record or the historiography of Cuban literature, it would be a mistake to assume that any of our approaches to these *texts* is best, right, or pure in its use and appropriation of Manzano’s work. Rather, to Emmerich’s point, the vast array of textual iterations should de-naturalize the assumptions and values that we bring to the study of translations.

While ours is a historical moment and critical paradigm that values “authenticity,” and seeks to elevate voices of the oppressed, the fact is that our rendering of Manzano is always already mediated by present value systems and critical paradigms. Luis’ edition demonstrates the self-consciousness with which contemporary scholars of translation and literature, adopting a rigorously historicist approach, seek to bring to light the many historical actors and developments that have, to this point, shaped our understanding and access to Manzano’s manuscript. Yet even Luis’ edition is informed by his own interpretation of the textual iterations of this work that precede his, and therefore actively

shapes readers' interpretation of his version in its composition, inclusion of paratextual materials, and appendices.

More than just reconstructing the historical record, then, we may understand the work of Luis and, by extension, this chapter, as constructing a historical narrative in accordance with contemporary historicist methods and as informed by the anti-essentialist understanding of the subject positioning of slaves advanced by both postcolonial theory and work by Black Studies scholars focused on "slave writing."⁸¹ In the analysis of Madden's translation to follow, I rely on Luis' archival research to distinguish between Manzano's initial composition and the version from which Madden was translating, fixing his source as the "corrected" edition put together by Suárez y Romero. Scholars have often presumed that Madden translated Manzano's writing directly, without considering the impact of Suárez y Romero's editing on the arrangement of the text's events, as well as its metaphors.⁸² In their readings, they have therefore taken Madden to task as a translator, citing the elisions and "infidelities" of his English

⁸¹ For more about white patrons and abolitionists publishing apparatuses that shaped and constrained access to the "slave's voice" and in fact the form of writing by enslaved persons to which we have access, see: John Sekora, "Black Message/White Envelope: Genre, Authenticity, and Authority in the Antebellum Slave Narrative," *Callaloo*, no. 32, 1987: 482-515; Christopher Castiglia, *Interior States: Institutional Consciousness and the Inner Life of Democracy in the Antebellum United States* (Durham: Duke UP, 2008); and Beth McCoy, "Race and the (Para)Textual Condition," *PMLA*, vol. 121, no. 1, 2006: 156-169. For a seminal work on the tradition of autobiographical writing by enslaved persons that includes an essay by Susan Willis on Manzano's work that, in many ways, brought it to Americanist's attention, see: Charles T. Davis and Henry Louis Gates, editors, *The Slave's Narrative* (New York: Oxford UP, 1985).

⁸² Prior to Luis' 2007 edition, scholars were limited by their access to the text's initial composition, relying on Franco's 1937 edition. But even scholars since the recovery of one copy of the manuscript, and its printing by Luis, such as Joselyn Almeida, Gerard Aching, Fionnghuala Sweeney do not consider how the editors' transformation of Manzano's initial composition effected meaningful changes that shaped Madden's interpretation of the enslaved poet's life story, too.

version as evidence of his hypocrisy and circumscribed racial imagination. Because they have not yet analyzed Madden's translation from the perspective of the hermeneutic model, nor considered the role of translation in generating at once racialized political subjectivities (e.g. the "white" abolitionist, the "black" slave, and the "negro intellect") and the basis for further racialization, these readings have tended to take for granted the stability of the subject positioning of both Manzano and Madden.⁸³

This chapter seeks to address this significant gap in scholarship by situating Madden's source material (both Manzano's manuscript and the edited version produced by Suárez y Romero) and Madden's English translation in the discursive and political contexts of Spanish colonial Cuba and the Anglophone abolitionist movement. Guided by the protocols of Venuti's hermeneutic model and Emmerich's theory of "translingual editing," I focus on the verbal and structural choices of Madden as an editor and translator of Suárez y Romero's edition of Manzano's manuscript, inferring the ideological, formal, and thematic interpretants that shaped Madden's decisions, whether consciously or unconsciously. While editing and translation can and should be treated as distinct creative processes, Emmerich reminds us that editing is often part of the translation process, whether through the abridgement of source material to meet contractual demands, or, in the case of this text, through the reordering and excision of some writing, as well as the framing of the text with an array of paratextual materials,

⁸³ Even Gera Burton's *Ambivalence and the Postcolonial Subject: The Strategic Alliance of Juan Francisco Manzano and Richard Robert Madden* (2004), which seeks to analyze the relationship between the translator and poet in terms of their subject positioning, takes for granted that Madden's "Irishness," a feature of his identity as a colonized subject of the British Crown, had an inherent or essential meaning as he moved throughout the colonial Atlantic world, marking him as ever "non-white." On the other hand, Molloy and Luis tend to fix Madden's whiteness as a stable fact and essential feature of his being, as opposed to a social aspect of his identity forged in relation and in particular contexts.

including Madden's translations of Manzano's poetry. As Emmerich points out, "there is no translation without editing: each new textual manifestation of a work, including those in translation, embodies assumption about what a work is and where its boundaries lie; each new iteration of a work, in the same language or a different one, shifts those boundaries at least a little, and sometimes quite a lot" (8). In the end, "each new published text in translation is both a translation *and* an edition" (8). This is certainly the case with Madden's translation, which situates the life story of Manzano among other documents that authorize the veracity of his account.

To pursue its argument, this chapter first details Madden's career as an abolitionist, diplomat, translator, and travel writer throughout the New World. By taking stock of Madden's previous travel writing and experiences as an Irish anti-slavery advocate throughout the British colonial empire, we can situate his translation of Manzano's writing within the personal context of his literary career and the political context of British abolitionism. His earlier anti-slavery writing about his time in Kingston, for example, implies that the experience was a radicalizing one that would transform his relationship to the captives of the *Amistad* as well as the "liberated Africans" of Havana. In addition to his avowed and expressed politics, we can also see how Madden developed a form for communicating the urgency of immediate and complete abolition, as his writing practice evolved over the course of his career.

The second part of the chapter constructs the broader discursive and political contexts in which Manzano was writing and Madden was translating. Drawing on materials that emerged from the World Anti-Slavery Convention, I establish the parameters of a hegemonic Anglophone abolitionist discourse in order to demonstrate

how Madden's translation met or exceeded the established bounds of "universal emancipation." Madden's work intervenes to challenge the prevailing image of Cuba and Spanish colonial slavery more generally, offering an interpretation of the *régimen de castas* which emphasized its exceptional brutality. I also reconstruct the conditions under which Manzano wrote and the formal expectations of the Cuban literati that requested it from him to show how the production of the manuscript was shaped by the constraints of Manzano's enslavement and the coercion of Del Monte. I look to letters exchanged between Manzano and Del Monte, as well as the manuscript itself, before it underwent any editing, to consider how Manzano negotiated the difference between his own self-image and the public degradation that he experienced at the hands of his mistress as narrated in his life story.

The last section performs a comparative analysis of Manzano's initial composition, the edition created by Suárez y Romero, and the translation that Madden prepared for the Convention. The political goals of each were utterly at odds: Manzano was primarily concerned with using the writing to convey his "true" self image and contesting the image of him circulated by cruel masters and mistresses; Suárez y Romero sought to construct Manzano as a "literary prototype," from which Cuban literature would emerge; and Madden was concerned with creating a "true" image of Cuban slavery that would be legible and convincing to Anglo audiences. In each, therefore, we may infer a distinct conceptualization of "freedom" and "anti-slavery" as political concepts that emerge from within systems of racialization and in relation to religion and education. My analysis will show how their differences in goals, context, language, and

subject positioning led to transformations in the form, structure, and diction that each used.

I argue that Madden's translation constructed an image of Cuban slavery (and anti-slavery) that would be "true" for Anglophone abolitionist readers, where the "truthfulness" is an effect produced by formal, syntactical, and linguistic choices. This is achieved through the inscription of Anglophone abolitionist discourse and tropes, chiefly the "negro intellect," in the texts. Manzano's conception of "freedom" and "anti-slavery" emerge from an experience of slavery in Cuban society structured by the *regimen de castas*, as well as strategies for resistance. While living under slavery, these revolve around Manzano's ability to craft and defend an image of himself by cultivating artistic and intellectual skills, as well as courting the affection of his mistress. On the other hand, Madden's version of these concepts is informed by the political philosophy of abolitionism. He tends to cast "freedom" and "slavery" as legal or political categories and material conditions. He sees resistance as either active rejection of slavery (as in a masculine image of casting off chains) or effective performance of a rational, liberal subjectivity (e.g. image of a slave that is "ready" to serve society after emancipation). From this case, I argue, we can discern the way a concept of equivalence and a function—interpretants both—interact and are entangled with racial desire, emerging notions of race that drive the emergence of a new, post-emancipation, political economic world order.

Madden the Traveling Irish Abolitionist

Born in Dublin in 1798, Madden began his abolitionist career in Jamaica in 1833 as a curious kind of interpreter. As a freshly appointed Stipendiary Magistrate under the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, he had to explain to now formerly enslaved persons what “freedom” meant under the new apprenticeship system: remaining on the plantations and toiling for their masters without pay for forty and a half hours per week for the next six years.⁸⁴ Apprenticeship was the compromise forced by the Jamaican plantocracy after The Baptist War, a revolt of some 60,000 of Jamaica’s 300,000 enslaved, combined with its brutal suppression to finally push parliament to abolition.⁸⁵ Magistrates were tasked, as Colonial Secretary Lord Edward Stanley outlined their charge, with ensuring just relations between “the negro and the planter,” which entailed both educating apprentices in their new contractual labor rights and assuming from planters the power of punishment (1228).⁸⁶

⁸⁴ See *Debates in Parliament, Session 1833, on the Resolutions and Bills for the Abolition of Slavery in the British Colonies, with a Copy of the Act of Parliament*, 929-964.

⁸⁵ See Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies*, 291-321, and Blackburn *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*, 419-473 for a detailed accounts of The Baptist War, including as a factor in slavery reform and abolition legislation in British parliament. Both Craton and Blackburn also provide an understanding of the war’s entanglements with other factors, paramount among them shifts in the British Imperial and Atlantic economies. The figures are from Craton. On Madden and stipendiary magistrates’ relationship to parliamentary legislation regarding slavery, planter-metropole relations, and the role of magistrates, see Rodgers “Richard Robert Madden: an Irish anti-slavery activist in the Americas,” 121-125.

⁸⁶ See *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, third series, xvii, 1228 and 1231. The full text of Lord Stanley’s description of the purpose of the stipendiary Magistrates reads: “The House will, therefore, be called upon to consider the expediency of having in the Legislative, as in the conquered colonies, stipendiary Magistrates, to be appointed by the Crown, unconnected with the colonies, having no local or personal prejudices, paid by this country, for the purpose of doing justice between the negro and the planter, of watching over the negro in his state of new-born freedom, and of guiding and assisting his inexperience in the contracts into which he may enter with his employer” (1228). Stanley explains the punishment power in response to Sir Robert

Tracking Madden's path to this post and his tenure there, including the writing that attended it, allows us to better understand how he positioned himself as a mediator between competing, and often opposed, political interests—and even divergent ways of knowing and being in the world. The form and rhetorical arguments of his travel writing, including the volumes that document his time in Kingston, show how he was developing a practice for representing “blackness” and “whiteness” as a paternal figure and outsider in the British Caribbean. Scholars have often glossed over the extent to which Madden's career lends insight into the relationship among antislavery politics, translation, travel, and the production of whiteness. In what follows, however, we will see that his anti-slavery writing provides insight into how the British Empire and Anglo abolitionist discourse negotiated anxieties and fears about slave revolt and revenge. On the one hand, the Crown's apprenticeship program—a gradualist approach to abolition—proved to be ineffective for stabilizing social and labor relations among planters and the formerly enslaved. On the other hand, Madden's writing participates in the production and circulation of an emerging racial ideal that would supplant the “slave” in a post-emancipation society: the “negro intellect.” Both of these developments would inform Madden's writing, editing, and translating when he later served as the first Commissioner for Liberated Africans in Cuba. Once again, he would mediate between many opposing political interests, literary programs, and languages to produce a compendium of documents that proved, finally, the brutality of the Cuban slave system to the Anglophone Atlantic world.

Peel's question about whether “negroes should subject to corporal punishment” for violating contracts with their masters (1231).

Having settled in London in late 1828 after extensive travels through continental Europe and the Levant, Madden joined the Anti-Slavery Society in 1829. The 1839 successor of this organization, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS), would distribute his *Poems by Slave* after putting on the first World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840, occasioning his translation of Manzano's writings and its publication.⁸⁷ By the end of his first year in London, Madden was a trained surgeon and experienced physician with an MD credential from the London College of Surgeons who had practiced medicine during his time in Paris, Naples, Smyrna, Constantinople, Crete, Egypt and Syria. He had also pursued journalism and travel writing, publishing two books based on his travels—*Travels in the East* (1829), and a two volume novel, *The Mussulman* (1830)—both of which he sold for the tidy sum (for a first-time author) of £ 300.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ For a comprehensive history of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, including how it emerged from the Anti-Slavery Society of the 1820s (among other developments), see Heartfield *The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1838-1856: A History*. The detail that it succeeded the “old Anti-Slavery Society” appears on pp. 22. In addition to distributing Madden's book, the BFASS office also housed the manuscript of the Suárez y Romero version of Manzano's *la verdadera istoria de mi vida* (the true story of my life), as he termed it. For this detail, see Burton *Ambivalence and the Postcolonial Subject: The Strategic Alliance of Juan Francisco Manzano and Richard Robert Madden*, 36. That Madden deposited the manuscript with the Secretary there stands as convincing evidence, as Burton puts it, that “contrary to the conclusions of some critics, Madden presented his translation as simply another version, safeguarding Manzano's work and preserving it for future generations when Cuban censorship would no longer exist” (36).

⁸⁸ The full title of *Travels in the East* upon publication was *Travels in Turkey, Egypt, Nubia, and Palestine, in 1824, 1825, 1826, and 1827*. I have used the shorter title for the sake of brevity and its association with the later *A Twelvemonth's Residence in the West Indies, during the Transition from Slavery to Apprenticeship; with Incidental Notices of the State of Society, Prospects, and Natural Resources of Jamaica and Other Islands*, to which I turn below. The title page of *A Twelvemonth's Residence* uses this abbreviated title to identify Madden as “Author of ‘Travels in the East.’” On Madden's sale of the books, including the amount, see Rodgers “Richard Robert Madden,” 119.

In 1833, perhaps because he was a writer regarded as an adept narrator of keen-eyed observations of foreign cultures, he was recommended for the newly created civil post in Kingston by men of political influence whom he had met through the Society.⁸⁹ Madden decided early on in his nine-month training period in rural St. Andrew's parish that such a post required translation. He quickly learned Patois not only to convey the conditions of this "emancipation" to "apprentices," but to understand their stories so that he could render judgments about the fairness of their working conditions.⁹⁰ And he began to compile notes for what would become a two-volume book about his experience, *A Twelvemonth's Residence in the West Indies, during the Transition from Slavery to Apprenticeship* (1835). Beyond an account of his experience, it is productive to see this work as constructing and circulating a particular image of a foreign locale at a pivotal moment. What he would set down, even in note form, was mediated by his interpretations of this area of the Caribbean and its languages, as well as the rhetorical gestures of previous anti-slavery writing. Madden was thus interpreting apprenticeship in the Empire's world-leading sugar exporter in two directions: for apprentices, and, eventually, for an audience that began with the British metropole and extended to the broader Anglophone Atlantic. An ascendant metropolitan anti-slavery politics—for which he would develop a notorious reputation by the time he reached Cuba—imbued the foreignness of the British colonial West Indies that he portrayed, and shaped the form he chose to do so.

⁸⁹ For these biographical details, see: Boyd "The Life and Times of R.R. Madden," 133-144; and Rodgers "Richard Robert Madden," 119-121. For a more extensive treatment of Madden's life and literary career focused on how it relates to Manzano, see Burton *Ambivalence and the Postcolonial Subject*.

⁹⁰ See Madden *A Twelvemonth's Residence*, vol. i, 129.

As he moved from his training to his post as a Special Magistrate in Kingston, Madden confronted hostile masters and authorities who railed against his rulings, as well as the way he ran his court. It was here, surveying the transition away from urban slavery firsthand, that he elaborated a more radical anti-slavery politics and a written form through which to convey it. As Nini Rodgers observes, *A Twelvemonth's Residence* “opened with wry musings on travellers’ troubles and plaudits to planter hospitality [and] mounted into moral intensity and bitter condemnations of colonists who opposed the reforming intent of the imperial government” (124). Both his time in Jamaica and this account of it, I would argue, came to bear on the form he devised for *Poems by Slave in the Island of Cuba*. While he had been planning and taking notes for *A Twelvemonth's Residence* during his training period, it was his experience as a Special Magistrate in an urban setting that transformed the book into part exposé. Much like *Travels in the East*, it conveyed its subject matter through a series of letters and was a hybrid work—; *with Incidental Notices of the State of Society, Prospects, and Natural Resources of Jamaica and Other Islands*, as the full title specified—mixing memoir, travel narrative, collected testimonies, documents and interviews, and ethnography. An entry from the table of contents suggests the various genres a given letter could deploy as it treated a range of subjects:

Letter IX

To T. F. Savory, Esq.

Mountains of Port Royal, splendid view from—Kingston merchants—Desolation of the town—Public buildings—Black parson—Creoles of Jamaica—Spanish settlers—Jews, rites and customs of—Gold and silver mines—Valuable ores—Oppression of the coloured people—Different classes of coloured people—The ghost of a planter—Disinterested humanity of a brown woman 96 (xi)

In *Poems by a Slave*, too, Madden assembled a variety of genres to make his case, so reading it in conjunction with *A Twelvemonth's Residence* reveals what, for him, became an integral relationship between politics and literary form. This work, in its generic hybridity, is part of a larger project of formal experimentation encompassing *Poems by a Slave* that is inextricable from an effort to articulate an anti-slavery politics—and inextricable, too, from Madden's development of a set of practices for negotiating and registering cultural differences, translation crucial among them.

Madden's role as an administrator of the apprenticeship system had him mediating between planters and formerly enslaved persons. Doing this work revealed decisively to the translator that the gradualist approach was neither practical nor successful in subduing violence. As conceived, the apprenticeship system was to serve two purposes, according to Colonial Secretary Lord Edward Stanley: to create a "religious and moral system of education for the negroes," based on his conviction that the British were "bound to see that they [were] fitted for the enjoyment of that state [of new-born freedom]," and to allow the planters time to adapt to their new financial situation (1228).⁹¹ A liberal paternalism thus guided the approach, which was designed to gradually educate and "civilize" newly freed Africans as British subjects. While it ultimately failed to ameliorate relations between planters and their newly freed "apprentices," the logic of the system continued to undergird Anglo abolitionist discourse and projects. The discussion of universal abolition at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention, for instance, embraces the hope represented by enslaved men of "promising intellect" that need only to be educated with the "blessings of Christianity" (Convention Proceedings 293). In Madden's

⁹¹ See *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, third series, xvii, 1228-1231. The quoted portions are from 1228.

subsequent anti-slavery writing, and indeed throughout the Atlantic world, the trope of the “negro intellect” would come to function as a symbolic resolution to the potential violence augured by emancipation, suggesting that the gentle nature of the “childish slave” prepared him to be assimilated to imperial cultures, whether Spanish, French, or Anglo.

Madden’s *A Twelvemonth’s Residence* demonstrates that his experience as a magistrate was radicalizing, persuading him that a gradualist approach to abolition was dangerous and entirely counterproductive. In this book, in a letter to the colonial office, as well as in testimony that he offered to a parliamentary committee investigating apprenticeship, he officially denounced and called for an immediate end to the system. He knew firsthand the incendiary nature of both his opinions about apprenticeship and the actions those opinions led him to undertake while regulating it. In Kingston, he in particular was subject to physical harassment at the hands of both masters and local authorities. But he made his chosen form a vehicle to convey the broader implications of his experience, elevating his trials to the level of general significance. The final letter of the second volume is a case in point. Replete with documentation of the violence committed against him, it culminates his account by linking the moral obligation to abolish apprenticeship with his maltreatment *as an official*. This fits his conception of the letter’s last four sections in the table of contents: “...Conduct of a corporation magistrate—Assault on a special magistrate—Objections to the present system—Proposal for its abolition” (vii). The urban site of his special magistracy, a reader gleans, was a more charged context due to the material circumstances under which enslaved persons labored there as well as the kinds of work they performed. A large number of city

households, where spinsters, widows, and retired people lived, relied economically on the practice of leasing out their slaves, creating a degree of mobility that contrasted starkly with plantations. And since the formerly enslaved worked as servants, artisans, dockers, and sailors, the conditions were ripe for them to engage in all manner of resistance tactics from attaining literacy to stealing, selling their services elsewhere, private trading, shorting set tasks (i.e. time theft), or outright fleeing for good.

Enter Madden to judge the two principal kinds of cases that unsurprisingly arose given this situation: masters who lodged complaints against apprentices who had cut and run, and apprentices who appealed for immediate manumission.⁹² He regarded all apprentices as British subjects from the moment emancipation took effect and, as such, sought not only to remain unbiased and evidence-based, but to issue only light flogging sentences for labor or other violations. This incensed masters and local officials. Since they were now legally barred from exacting physical punishment themselves, masters began to rough up apprentices by dragging them before him, claiming their obstinate refusal to attend otherwise. Madden would have no truck with this practice. Establishing a non-coercive warrant application procedure designed to mitigate it, he denied hearings in all such cases.⁹³ As for manumissions on the grounds of illegal original enslavement, mistreatment, or purchase of freedom, Madden pushed through eighty of three hundred

⁹² I have drawn these historical details about Kingston from Rodgers, 122.

⁹³ For these details see Madden *A Twelvemonth's Residence*, ii, 309-312.

applications, a rate that, coupled with his treatment of complaints, made him a marked man.⁹⁴

As represented in *A Twelvemonth's Residence*, Madden's experience prompted reflection on his position as a mediator, translator, and advocate. The animosity among different classes on the island pushed the altruism of his anti-slavery politics to its limit, as the magistrate was himself working under threat of violence. His reflections register an anxiety about the precarity of his "whiteness" and, in fact, the ontological impossibility of allying himself with the interests of the formerly enslaved "negroes" whom he is there to "protect." When Madden issued rulings in favor of apprentices in Kingston, a local municipal magistrate along with his associates, slaveholders all, assaulted Madden and threatened him with tarring and feathering, a form of public humiliation and punishment historically used to signify disloyalty or treason (Irvin 226). From this experience, Madden drew the conclusion that in this context, "the protection of the negro [was] incompatible with [his] own" (vol. 2 322). Rather than interpreting his victimization at the hands of British planters as a means through which his alliance with Black colonial subjects may be strengthened, Madden actually admitted that he experienced this event as evidence that their interests are not only divergent, but directly opposed.

Further still, the threat of assault and public degradation forces Madden into a sudden recognition of how his defense of the interests of the formerly enslaved places him in an embodied and deadly proximity to them. In order to counteract this possibility, in this case, we see that Madden redirects racialization by using the term "negro" to

⁹⁴ The rate is documented in the "Report from Select Committees appointed to inquire into the makings of the Apprenticeship System in the Colonies with minutes and evidence" in *British Parliamentary Papers, Slave Trade*, iii, 67.

reconfigure and restabilize the terms of his relationship with the formerly enslaved he was sent to protect. The task of translating Manzano's autobiography, again, puts Madden uncomfortably close to "blackness" and the subjectivity of the enslaved, on the one hand, creating an ethical dilemma for Madden as an abolitionist who seeks to understand and advocate for Black captives, and on the other, throwing Madden's claim to "whiteness" into question as another non-British colonial subject.

The Political and Literary Pressures

By the time that *Poems by a Slave* was presented at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention, Madden was already a respected diplomat, travel writer, and abolitionist. He had decisively contributed to the 1838 termination of the apprenticeship in the British West Indies and had offered key testimony in the Amistad trial which served to enforce the abolition of the slave trade. But his work in Cuba differed in key ways from the service he had performed on behalf of the British parliament thus far. As a Superintendent for Liberated Africans in Cuba and an appointed judge for the mixed court in Havana that enforced the international treaties among Britain, Spain, Portugal, and France prohibiting the slave trade, Madden served alongside Spanish judges to intercede in and stop the trade that persisted to run through Cuba.⁹⁵

Although his intervention in Jamaica and his appearance in U.S. courts had required Madden to negotiate cultural and linguistic differences, Cuba presented new challenges. Here, Madden would encounter the Spanish American *régimen de castas*, a distinct political system of racial classification, as well as an emergent nationalist politics

⁹⁵ For more on Madden's biography, see: Rodgers, "Richard Robert Madden"; Gera Burton, *Ambivalence and the Postcolonial*; and Murray, "Richard Robert Madden."

among Cuban *criollo* elites who sought governmental autonomy from Spain. Moreover, his commission by the white *criollo* planter and literary mogul Domingo Del Monte required not that Madden merely write a firsthand account of his own experiences on the island as he had done in the past, but that he translate the autobiography and poetry of a man born into slavery, a task that involved myriad linguistic, cultural, and political challenges.

In what follows, I survey the political pressures that Madden negotiated as an abolitionist translator, editor, and writer, those which shaped his editorial and translation choices in *Poems*, as well as the image of Cuba that he presented at the Convention. I show that the discursive demands of Anglophone abolitionism were often in tension with the literary and political context in which the Cuban, Spanish-language documents comprising the *Poems* were produced. Juan Francisco Manzano's project of self-representation and poetic sensibility, as well as the lofty proto-nationalist cultural goals of Domingo Del Monte were both at odds with the readerly expectations of Anglophone abolitionists.

Critics have often understood the text that resulted from Madden's editorial and translation practices as "unfaithful" to the "original." But this accedes to the presumption that faithfulness is possible, ideal, and an inherent feature of the anti-slavery text.⁹⁶ Instead, in what follows, I argue, we should understand that Madden's goal, in line with the demands of his readers, was to produce the effect of authenticity, the appearance of "truth," in order to persuasively argue for the abolition of slavery in Cuba in terms that

⁹⁶ Sylvia Molloy, William Luis, and Gerard Aching are among the most prominent scholars to study Madden's translation, and each are in different ways limited by their use of an instrumentalist approach to translation.

would be intelligible to his readers. By construing his translation as “literal,” Madden aimed to suggest that readers would have transparent access to what he interpreted in his preface as the “most perfect picture of Cuban slavery that ever has been given to the world” (43). In fact, this notion of the “literal” was Madden’s concept of equivalence, the socially and historically contingent means by which he developed a correspondence between the source material and the translation.

The 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London was the first of its kind and marked a shift in the abolitionist movement towards “universal emancipation” and the immediate end of the transatlantic slave trade, which illegally persisted, primarily in Cuba and Brazil. Since the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies in 1833, and the subsequent abolition of the apprenticeship system established to ease the transition away from slavery, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS) sought to expand the scope of the abolitionist project to call for the end to slavery worldwide. Not just a moral project, the call for universal abolition emerged also from Britain's own political interests. Britain’s abolition of slavery throughout its colonies would not hold so long as slavery was flourishing in Cuba. Its close proximity to Jamaica made it a desirable destination for planters that fled the British West Indies with those they formerly held as slaves, now as kidnapped British subjects.⁹⁷ Moreover, although Britain had entered into treaties with all mercantile colonial powers to agree to end the slave trade at the 1815 Congress of Vienna, ending the importation of Africans to Cuba by 1820, Spain had been

⁹⁷ See Jonathan Curry-Machado, “How Cuba burned with the ghosts of British slavery: race, abolition and the Escalera.” *Slavery and Abolition*, 2004, vol. 25, no. 1. pp. 71-93.

notoriously reluctant to enforce the prohibition, especially when it concerned Cuba.⁹⁸ Since Spain opened the island to international trade in 1818, Cuba had risen dramatically in prominence and productivity, replacing Haiti as a leading sugar producer. The island became a central hub for the slave and sugar trades in the Americas, and therefore the bane of British abolitionism. Throughout the 1820s and 30s, Cuba was subject to continual attempts by the British to police the island and enforce international treaties. In the year that Madden arrived in Havana, therefore, the British parliament was not surprised, but nonetheless dismayed, to find an advertisement in a Havana newspaper openly selling newly imported Africans (Martinez 67-98). Tensions between the British and the Spanish were escalating and Madden's appointment there was thus an unwelcome one.

Madden attended the Convention as one of two hundred delegates from Britain, as one of only two expert witnesses on the situation in Cuba, and as the only delegate invited to present a summary of his findings. During the ten-day convention, the proposed agenda had delegates sharing information about the present conditions of slavery in the U.S., Cuba, and Brazil, as well as news of already emancipated islands such as Haiti and Jamaica. Their cause, as they described it, was the ending of slavery and the slave trade in the name of God:

[Abolitionists] recognise no means as allowed for them, in the prosecution of their holy enterprise than those which are of a *moral, religious, and pacific nature*; in the diligent use of these means, and trusting in God, they cherish in the hope that, under His blessing, they may be permitted to accomplish the great work to which they are devoted, and thus be made instrumental in advancing the sacred cause of Freedom and its attendant blessings, Civilization and Religion, throughout the earth. (*Proceedings* iv, emphasis theirs)

⁹⁸ For more on this, see Jenny Martinez, *The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law*, Oxford University Press, 2012.

The transcript of the proceedings, representative of a new, global iteration of Anglo abolitionist discourse, advances an understanding of freedom as a universal moral imperative, a “sacred cause” that transcends any one set of national or political interests. Throughout the convention, too, delegates reminded each other of their shared commitment to pacificism, whether in the description of hostile relations among “masters” and “slaves,” or as they conjured a plan to ratchet up pressure on Spain to participate earnestly in the abolition of the trade. Emancipation, they suggested, must be achieved through paternalistic and peaceful means, avoiding both slave revolt and war among the imperial powers.

Reviewers and attendees agreed that Madden’s contribution was “among the finest and most valuable proceedings at the convention.”⁹⁹ With his presentation, Madden sought foremost, he says, to correct the errant but prominent assumption among British and U.S. abolitionists that Cuban slavery was of a peculiarly mild character, a common perception of the island. Madden goes so far as to suggest that, based on what he saw “with his own eyes,” “the fact is to be established that slavery in Cuba is more destructive to human life, more pernicious to society, degrading to the slave, and debasing to the master, more fatal to health and happiness *than in any other slave-holding country on the face of the hospitable globe*” (10-11, emphasis Madden’s). Moreover, he suggested that the significance of pursuing an international resolution to the atrocities he had witnessed in Cuba, in which were implicated the U.S., Britain, France, and other colonial powers whose economic and political interests aligned with Cuban planters (31).

⁹⁹ See “Art. VIII. *Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention held in London, 1840.* [Reports of the Sun, Patriot, and Anti-Slavery Reporter.]” *The Eclectic Review*, London, Aug 1840, p. 236.

If, after 1830, American anti-slavery societies “sought to compile a moral geography of slavery, with accounts from each of the slave states,” as John Sekora observes that the titles of these accounts evince—a decisive, radical Garrisonian turn towards concrete renderings of the inner workings of the institution of slavery—the BFASS sought to achieve an analogous aim on a global scale (499). Accordingly, Madden is determined to demonstrate that, while the situation in Cuba is unique, it is equally brutal and continues to be supported by a transnational network. His presentation was impressive to the attendees who helped further his literary and political career by officially resolving to promote the English language text he had brought (*Poems*), and even recommending that the analysis of the Cuban slavery system in his address be translated into Spanish so that it could circulate even more widely among Spanish and Cuban readers who, up to this point, were reluctant to admit the truth of their atrocities (*Proceedings* 264). As Madden prepared his manuscript and presentation for the convention, he had in mind this sense of the purpose for which he was enlisted. The interests of “universal emancipation” would mediate his translations, too, as he constructed an image of Cuba that would show, once for all, the “truth” of slavery there.

Madden’s interpretation of Manzano’s autobiography, and the severity of Cuban slavery more broadly, were shaped by his experiences as a diplomat and travel writer throughout the Atlantic world and the Levant. His subject positioning and career aspirations, too, informed his interpretation of Manzano’s life story. Because Madden, as an Irish Catholic, is also a colonial subject of the British empire, some critics have argued that it is on these terms that Madden identifies or empathizes with Manzano’s plight.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Gera Burton is the primary scholar that makes this argument.

Scholarship about the Irish diaspora would support such an argument insofar as the “whiteness” of Irish Catholics was only tenuously produced and maintained in the contexts of the U.S. and Britain in this period.¹⁰¹ However, and even according to Madden’s other travel writing, Madden’s perceived racial identity means differently as he moves around the Empire where he encounters alternative systems of racialization and racial ideologies. While in the Parliament, Madden may appear as a marginal figure and even, as Gera Burton suggests, a “token Irishman,” through his travel writing, Madden becomes a “white” European abroad, writing back to the metropole about the differently racialized, colonized subjects for whom he seeks justice (Burton 45). This is especially true in his reportage from Cuba, in which Madden distinguishes himself from “Spaniards” whom he portrays according to the racializing scripts of the longstanding “Black Legend”¹⁰²: “amongst the Spaniards the prejudice against the stolen people of Africa, on account of their complexion, is less than amongst the colonists of other European States. Such unquestionably is the fact, and there is too much Moorish blood, in the veins of the descendents of the old ‘Conquistadors’ for the feeling to be otherwise” (*Address* 4). Suggesting that the island’s *criollo* planter class was more proximate to “blackness,” Madden secured his own whiteness at the Convention and within a broader Anglo-Atlantic abolitionist.

¹⁰¹ For more on this, see: Patricia Williams, “The Ethnic Scarring of American Whiteness,” *The House that Race Built*, edited by Wahneema Lubiano (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), pp. 253-263.; Bronwen Walter, “Whiteness and Diasporic Irishness: Nation, Gender and Class,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol. 37, no. 9, (2011): 1295-1312; Catharine Eagan, “‘White,’ If ‘Not Quite’: Irish Whiteness in the Nineteenth-Century Irish-American Novel,” *Éire-Ireland*, vol.36, no. 1 (2001): 66-81

¹⁰² For a more detailed account of the “Black Legend,” see María de Guzmán, *Spain's Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2011).

Such a figurative move had political implications for Madden’s translation, too. In this passage and throughout his *Poems*, Madden’s writing tended to reiterate the very same racializing logic that Cuban literary elites like Domingo del Monte sought to contest when he asked Madden to translate Manzano’s life story. According to scholars such as Gerard Aching, Sibylle Fischer, and William Luis, Manzano’s narrative was commissioned in order to serve a particular function for Cuban elites who were fomenting a literary culture as a vehicle to contest authoritarian Spanish colonial rule, Del Monte principal among them. Del Monte was a “white” *criollo* and a member of one the most powerful slave-owning and -trading families on the island. At the forefront of dissident political activity, he sought Cuban self-governance, free trade policies, and the end of Spanish censorship, which had limited the scope of political discussions, even about international issues in which the lives and livelihood of “white” Cuban *criollos* were directly implicated. The Spanish colonial regime marshalled both a censorship administration and the Catholic church to define the parameters of admissible political speech so that they only legitimized pro-slavery views. As one of Cuba’s leading humanists and literary critics, del Monte attracted a coterie of up-and-coming writers, who collectively cultivated a seditious literary counterculture. They sought to create a distinctly Cuban literature which dispelled the perception—their greatest fear—that they were hurtling dangerously towards their own version of the Haitian Revolution. This, they felt, necessarily involved promoting an antislavery agenda.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Versions of this argument are supported by evidence in Gerard Aching’s *Freedom from Liberation: Slavery, Sentiment, and Literature in Cuba* (Bloomington: U of Indiana P, 2015); Fischer’s *Modernity Disavowed*; and William Luis, *Literary Bondage: Slavery in Cuban Narrative* (Austin: U of Texas P, 1990).

Not purely altruistic, then, their investment in the abolition of slavery was, at once, a strategic representation of Cuban *criollos* as enlightened and civilized, and an attempt to pacify a growing free and enslaved Black population by displaying (paternalistic) sympathetic “whiteness” as integral to their society. So long as slave revolt remained a looming threat, the Cubans would depend on the military presence of Spain. Throwing off the Spanish monarchy, Del Monte believed, would be achieved through the production of an antislavery literary counterculture that both defied the Spanish colonial censorship regime and demonstrated the certainty of Cuba’s future nationhood. According to Fischer, “it seems clear that the idea of literature was closely connected to that of progress. Literary writing and more refined aesthetic practices no doubt symbolized the overcoming of barbarism: having a specifically Cuban literature meant that civilization had taken root” (113). Seen this way, such a cultural program stands in stark contrast to Madden’s characterization of the Cuban *criollo* as a population that is, at once, racially predisposed to be sympathetic towards enslaved Africans and brutal towards a slave population in ways far beyond those he encountered in the British West Indies (*Proceedings* 230). Del Monte sought instead to promote a distinctly Cuban literary culture that “held out the promise of producing readers with a more refined and subtle sensibility, subjects more susceptible to feelings of humanity and reason” (Fischer 113).

Although Del Monte wanted to do away with absolute monarchical control, he also aimed to maintain “white” *criollo* dominance over the free and enslaved “black” population (Pettway 33). To this end, del Monte insisted that Cuban literature advance beyond “romanticismo” to “el género realista” in its portrayal of slavery on the island, as

this emergent literary form could more effectively represent the contours of daily life (Luis, *Autobiografía* 15-16). In Manzano's poetry, for example, del Monte explained that he recognized an aesthetic and cultural value that far exceeded that of the distinguished classically trained Afro-Cuban poet Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés, known by his pen name Plácido. In an article written in Paris in 1845, he affirms Manzano by comparing him to Plácido:

Manzano no sabe repetir en su *encadenada* lira, otro tema que el de las angustias de una vida azarosa y llena de peripecias terribles. Pero yo prefería los cantos tristes del esclavo, a las *nugs canors* (versos simples, aunque armoniosos) del mulato libre, porque notaba más profundo sentimiento de humanidad nativa; porque los principios de mi estética y de mi filosofía, se avienen más con el lamento arrancado del corazón del oprimido, que con el concierto estrepitoso del oficial laureado, del poeta envilecido, de Plácido... (qtd. in Luis 60)

(Manzano does not know how to repeat in his chain lira [verse], any other theme than that of the anguishes of a perilous life full of dreadful turns of fortune. But I preferred the sad songs of the slave to the *nugs canors* (simple verses, although harmonious) of the free mulato, because I perceived a more profound feeling of native humanity; because the principles of my aesthetic and of my philosophy are more in keeping with the lament torn from the heart of the oppressed, than with the noisy concerto of the official laureate, of the debased poet, of Plácido...)

Politically and aesthetically, del Monte professes to prefer the more “raw” and “authentic” writing of Manzano as an uncultivated subject who experienced the oppression and tragedy of slavery firsthand. Rejecting the much-celebrated Romanticist verse of Plácido, a “mulato libre” born of a Spanish mother and an Afro-Cuban father, Del Monte vaunted Manzano as a “literary prototype” for a new Cuban literature (Pettway 45).

When Madden translated literature produced in this context, he negotiated two apparently opposed understandings of “anti-slavery”: on the one hand, *criollo* Cuban elite saw the condemnation of slavery as a necessary step towards autonomy and modern

nationhood, and, more immediately, the preservation of their lives; on the other, the Anglo audiences for whom Madden translated upheld anti-slavery as a universal, moral necessity. Whether he understood and supported the literature's role in achieving Cuban self-governance or not, his translation displaced this set of political goals, making the cause of universal abolition the primary politics that gave his version its formal and thematic coherence.

At an earlier moment of textual transformation, Del Monte's politics, too, decisively configured the terms of his editorial relationship with Juan Francisco Manzano: Manzano would write an autobiography at his behest as a tacit condition of securing the purchase of his freedom. Manzano's letters to Del Monte beginning in 1835 indicate that he understood himself to be writing the story of his life *as a slave* under a coercive form of patronage that necessarily constrained his self-representation.¹⁰⁴ Before meeting Del Monte, and as the result of cumulative acts of resistance, Manzano had found his way to the cultural center of Havana where, still enslaved, he taught himself to read and write. His increasing prowess at composing and reciting standard Spanish Neoclassical and Romantic verse—including properly local appropriations of these traditions such as Cuban *décimas*—attracted the attention of Ignacio Valdés Machuca, who eventually introduced Manzano to Del Monte in the early 1830s. A “white” reformer and writer, Valdés Machuca arranged for the publication of Manzano's first compilation, *Poesías líricas*, in 1821, the first published book of Cuban verse (Pettway 12-13). Like *Flores pasageras*, Manzano's second collection published in 1830, *Poesías líricas* not

¹⁰⁴ Taking its cue from Matthew Pettway, this chapter distinguishes between conceptualizing Manzano as either an “enslaved person” or “a slave,” the latter which Pettway describes as a dehumanizing category that reduces the identity of the enslaved person to their legal status within the colonial regime.

only contained poems denouncing slavery but also portrayals of aspects of Cuban culture (Luis, “Black Poets” 130). In Manzano, del Monte saw a model for the literary culture he envisioned, the culmination of what Matthew Pettway refers to as his search for a “literary prototype that might give Cuban fiction a national character of its own” (45-46). Inspired by a poetry reading that Manzano gave for his literary salon, Del Monte identified Manzano as an ideal candidate for advancing his literary and political agenda—a slave who could convincingly prove, on the world stage, the sophistication of Cuban literature, made all the more distinct or “authentic” by its emergence from the conditions of slavery (Luis, *Literary Bondage* 39).

For Manzano, the writing of his autobiography was a tall order; as his letters to del Monte from this period evince, rendering his experiences of torture in realist prose, a form in which he was as yet unpracticed, made the enslaved poet anxious and uncomfortable. In a letter to Del Monte written on June 25, 1835, Manzano writes:

Me abochorna el contarlo y no sé cómo demostrar los hechos, dejando la parte más terrible en el tintero y ¡ojalà tuviera otras con que llenar la historia de mi vida, sin recordar el excesivo rigor con que me ha tratado mi antigua ama, obligándome o poniéndome en la forzosa necesidad de apelar a una arriesgada fuga para aliviar mi triste cuerpo de las continuas mortificaciones que no podía ya sufrir más! (qtd. in Luis *Autobiografía* 125)

(It embarrasses me to tell it [his life story] and I don't know how to prove the facts, leaving the most terrible part in the inkwell and I wish I had others with which to fill the story of my life, without remembering the excessive rigor with which my former mistress has treated me, forcing me or putting myself in the forced need to appeal to a risky flight to relieve my sad body of the continuous mortifications that I could no longer suffer!)

While his poetry was markedly antislavery, even representing slavery’s atrocities on occasion, Manzano himself pursued education and cultivated his skills as a poet in order to build a life outside enslavement. Writing the account del Monte desired would have

him reduce his literary art to an archetypal expression of enslavement, transforming him from a poet who is enslaved into a slave poet. This desire ran counter to the strategies of resistance that Manzano had used throughout his life. On the one hand, Manzano pursued freedom and dignity within the legal constrictions of the slave system, eventually petitioning the courts to change masters when he was treated with an excessive brutality unbecoming to his perceived status as a “mulato” on the island. Manzano deftly negotiated Cuba’s *régimen de castas*, a “pigmentocracy” in which, given how it had configured his imaginative horizon of possibility, Manzano could claim a close enough proximity to “whiteness” to win an appeal. On the other hand, even before he was politically or legally free, Manzano carved out a space of psychic freedom for himself, early learning that his talent for storytelling represented a threat to the sociosymbolic order of the plantation.

What began as inventing tales, memorizing sermons, the catechism, songs, and poems, eventually led to him composing his own poetry, and culminated in Manzano surreptitiously teaching himself to read and write. To be able to write in Spanish and participate in a dissident literary salon like del Monte’s was a powerful act of transgression, one that evidenced his exceptionality and the particular injustice of his enslavement. When tasked, then, with the retelling of his life story, Manzano was faced with the challenge of disclosing those details of his physical torture and personal suffering that, he feared, del Monte and other readers might interpret as signs of irredeemable disgrace. Not wanting to appear personally weak and therefore undignified, or else the criminal his enslavers made him out to be, Manzano strategically disidentifies with “blackness,” constructing a self in narrative that appears coherently exceptional and

thus wrongfully enslaved—a self-conception he characterizes by describing himself as “mulato, y entre negros” (mulato, and among negroes) (115).

But the rhetorical strategies that Manzano deployed to challenge the slaveholders’ control over the symbolic order, and thus his self-image, advanced an interpretation of his life in competition with both what del Monte and Madden desired. In its particular racialized idealization of his exceptionality, his autobiography rendered Manzano neither a “literary prototype,” nor the universal slave for which Madden’s readers sought abolition. For both parties the work thus required intervention. Accordingly, Manzano’s text would be subject to myriad shifts in advance of reaching either the Cuban *criollo* literati or an interested Anglophone readership on the occasion of the World Anti-Slavery Convention. In the latter case, it would undergo a radical decontextualization and recontextualization as Madden repackaged the evidence that the narrative provided, rendering it testimony to make the case for the abolition of Cuban slavery in a way that would be intelligible to his audience.

Once Manzano submitted his account for publication, a young, up-and-coming writer in Del Monte’s circle, Anselmo Suárez y Romero, took full editorial control. After this manuscript changed hands from Manzano to Suárez y Romero, part two of Manzano’s story was lost (Pettway 286). Suárez y Romero forwarded an interpretation of the part that remained through a host of significant editorial moves, including rearranging the narrative order of events, standardizing orthography and grammar, inserting words like “blanco” (white) to mark race, and extending religious metaphors.¹⁰⁵ This textual

¹⁰⁵ My analysis of the editorial changes made by Suárez y Romero refers to the versions of Manzano’s initial composition with markings by the editor made available by William Luis’ 2007 critical edition, *Juan Francisco Manzano: Autobiografía del esclavo poeta y otros escritos*.

iteration of the work was then passed to Madden, who was preparing materials, including his own account of Cuban slavery, to present at the Convention. This interpretive labor involved not only translating Manzano's manuscript into English, but compiling a set of other English-language materials and translations to offer a comprehensive account of Cuban society and life under slavery for the BFASS. Madden wrote a preface, and included his own poems on Cuban slavery, his translations of Manzano's poetry, essays describing his experiences and impressions as an anti-slavery diplomat on the island, as well as his translation of a glossary of "creole terms in common use in Cuba and those relative to slavery and the slave trade" (Madden *Poems* 193). For Anglo audiences, these additional literary, testimonial, and documentary pieces would confer upon the text both "authenticity" and "authority," proving that Cuban slavery was not "mild," but in fact, exceedingly similar to slavery throughout the U.S. and the British empire.

In the "Address on Slavery in Cuba" that Madden presented at the convention, he seeks to de-bunk the myths that he says have thwarted the cause of world abolition by misrepresenting the reality of life in the Spanish colony. As he translated and prepared Manzano's autobiography for a misinformed audience, any evidence that might support these prevalent mythologies would need to be suppressed. According to Madden, one prominent source of the misinformation was an account of the island presented by Alexis de Toqueville, who had been asked to compare Cuban slavery to that of the French colonies. De Toqueville claimed that Spanish slavery had a "peculiar character of mildness," due in part to the ordinances issued by the Crown, which gave some slaves some rights to seek redress against brutal masters, and in part to the uniquely paternalistic relationship among masters and their slaves (*Proceedings* 229). But, for Anglo

abolitionists, this fact was not necessarily attributable to the superior benevolence or morality of Spanish and creole masters.

On the contrary, Madden and others at the convention deemed the *criollo* to be far less civilized and far less “white” than their Anglo counterparts (*Proceedings* 230). Indeed, Spanish colonial society was also more explicitly anxious about the purity of Spanish blood and the significance of the “miscegenation.” To that end, the Crown instituted a *régimen de castas*, a racial caste system, that hierarchized racial categories like *mulato*, *pardo*, *negro*, and *negro bozal* ascribing them with different socioeconomic and political privileges. This system, which theoretically worked in tandem with the courts to offer enslaved persons’ the opportunity to seek redress, change masters, or even pursue *coartación* (manumission), loomed large in the Anglo imagination as evidence of the comparative “mildness” of Cuban slavery.

In order to contest the mythologies which had so far hamstrung attempts to abolish slavery in Cuba, Madden would need to show that the legal systems for the enslaved to seek redress or purchase freedom which might be mistakenly taken as evidence of the relative humanity of slavery in the Spanish Americas were actually completely corrupted by the Creole investment in maintaining slavery via the necessary methods of brute force. In particular, Madden would need to refigure the meaning of Manzano’s exceptionality and emphasize the inhumanity of his treatment as both a domestic and *mulato* slave, whose position within the caste and slave systems might have, according to myth, granted him with social and economic privileges. As in his “Address,” Madden would need his translation to emphasize the impossibility of even a most “fortunate,” intelligent, and educated slave of successfully navigating the Cuban

legal system. Instead, as we shall see, Madden's translation suggested just the opposite: that no matter the attempts by Manzano to racialize himself as *mulato*, educate himself, and appeal to righteous laws, the enslaved poet was subject to familiarly brutal and unjust forms of punishment, issued by Christian *criollo* planters in defiance of both the "law" and supposed imperative to treat one's servants paternalistically.

Translating and Editing Freedom and Antislavery

Recounting a scene of punishment from his childhood, Juan Francisco Manzano writes of the moment when his brother convinces his own master, Don Nicolás, to save him from the brutality of labor at the sugar mill: "El cambio de traje y de fortuna fue todo uno" (The change in clothing and in fortune were one in the same) (98). This sentiment—edited out by Madden—becomes something of a refrain throughout the manuscript, as Manzano signals to readers the literal and symbolic relationships among his appearance and his "fate" (*suerte*), freedom, and treatment by others. It is shameful, his autobiographical self comes to learn, to have his head shaven and to be dressed barefoot in henequén, the clothing worn by field slaves. Such physical markings threaten to degrade or "blacken" him, according to the values and logic of the *régimen de castas*, which forged connections between social and economic privileges and perceived skin pigmentation. Controlling how others see him and his appearance, including its public, sartorial aspect, is, therefore, a central preoccupation for Manzano—and something counter to Madden's purpose.

Over the course of his life, as he narrates it, Manzano cultivates artistic and covert strategies that allow him to intervene in how he is perceived, and it is through these

strategies that the enslaved poet conceptualizes and pursues freedom. Manzano claims the status of a “mulatto,” and is consistently at pains to reject terms that, in Cuban society, rendered him racially and politically closer to “negro bozal” (a derogatory term used to describe newly arrived slaves from Africa not yet able to speak Spanish).¹⁰⁶ In retrospect, Manzano narrates his as the childhood of a gifted and nearly “white” slave, protected from exposure to “blackness” by both his parents and his masters, suggesting that his enslavement was never absolute or justifiable. At the level of its form, too, the story of his life enacts resistance, as Manzano meticulously arranges scenes of suffering and self-education so that his audience might come to know, as he has, how the master class deployed racial optics to distort his sense of self. Each brutal punishment is associated with a public shame that the narrative renders inextricable from the disciplinary machinery of the pigmentocracy, which mobilizes racial categories to generate an opinion of him “tan terrible como nosiva” (as terrible as it is damaging) (Manzano 319-20). But while Manzano clearly demonstrates that this was a deliberate, psychological aspect of his punishment, he also stages a resistance, as psychic as it is rhetorical, by repeatedly associating this aspect with the notion of violent, arbitrary turns of fate that interrupt his cultivation of an otherwise upstanding “mulato” self-image. With this creative act, Manzano seizes authorial control from a planter class that sought at every turn to enforce his subjection by reducing him to a “negro.” Instead, he narrated into being a racial and social identity for himself that engendered his freedom as an inevitability.

¹⁰⁶ My understanding of the *régimen de castas* is informed by both Pettway, *Cuban Literature* and Jerome Branche, *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Hispanic Literature* (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 2006).

In what follows, I consider how Madden’s translation transformed Manzano’s life story into a document more formally and thematically legible as the “true” testimony of a Cuban slave for the occasion of the World Anti-Slavery Convention. Whereas Manzano crafts the authorial perspective of his freest self by foregrounding declarations of self-knowledge and artful telling in the face of torture, Madden’s rendering fixes Manzano as a “negro” victim that only abolitionism can save. This dramatically alters the conceptions of freedom and enslavement—and, in turn, anti-slavery—that such a work might convey. I examine this transformation by providing my own reading of Manzano’s narrative, situated within a theoretical framework guided by translation theory and a historicist approach. I draw on historical research about the *régimen de castas*, as well as the relationship among Catholicism, language, and race within the Spanish colonial empire. I take readers to moments in Madden’s translation that effect interpretive displacements, whether by obscuring Manzano’s own understanding of his position within Cuba as an enslaved person, or by obscuring the implications of the *régimen de castas* for quotidian forms of resistance and practices of freedom. These range from editorial and translation decisions that hew closer to close semantic and formal correspondence, to out-and-out departures and excisions. I focus on the political concepts of anti-slavery, abolitionism, and freedom, to show how they are differently constituted in English. Yet it is not merely that Madden fits notions he finds in Manzano’s works into their English analogues, but rather that the process of translation articulates new iterations of them. I argue that his transformation at once departed from the particular, local meanings of “freedom” for Manzano and worked, through such new iterations, to admit Cuban slavery into an

international abolitionist movement that had been reluctant to intervene in the notoriously “mild” institution.

In his *Autobiografía*, Manzano contextualizes experiences of suffering within a broader narrative about his pursuit of freedom, acquisition of skills, and subversive strategies for undermining his masters and mistresses. The text performs the very strategies of resistance that it thematizes: Manzano describes learning the very creative and intellectual abilities that allow him to write his life story, demonstrating the transgressive power of his storytelling, memorization, and imaginative capacities. For instance, when recounting past scenes of torture, Manzano often uses an authorial first-person narrator to interject from the perspective of the present. This narrator provides an interpretation of the events, as well as a framework for understanding how the text itself is put together. Manzano explains that the totality of his suffering is too much to express in detail, so he has instead chosen to “[señirse] unicamente” (limit himself to only) “los mas esenciales [lances dolorosos] como fuente o manantial de otras mil tristes visisitudes” (the most essential [painful incidents] as a fountain or wellspring of a thousand other mournful vicisitudes) (318). This gesture announces Manzano’s authorial and artistic agency by making explicit through a creative flourish the self-conscious strategies he has used as a writer. This text, as he describes it, may be understood as a metanarrative that contains an account of its own composition, the disclosure of its author’s self-knowledge, self-control, and, in retrospect, a shaping power over the meaning of events that once appeared as incomprehensible and uncontainable as the ocean tides. His use of water imagery, an instance of synecdoche that transforms every tearful change of fortune into a “wellspring” that only Manzano can fully know or

understand, serves to display Manzano's temperate restraint as well as his mastery of sentimental rhetoric.

From the poetic vantage point he has cultivated under slavery, Manzano portrays how he came to learn to be creative, whether through sewing, memorizing sermons, spinning sorcery tales, painting, improvising and writing poetic verse, or, eventually, writing the "true story" of his life. As Matthew Pettway argues, "bridging the gap between the spoken word and written discourse" constituted a key aspect of Manzano's anti-slavery resistance, hence the significance of thematizing his literary becoming in writing. Once narrativized, the forms of ingenuity Manzano acquired come to be legible as modalities of freedom. His writing, whether poetry or prose, at once resulted from and evinced a continual struggle for creative control, since "creative control was a proxy for political power" (69). Manzano's autobiography thus stands as a crystallization of the forms of freedom he had elaborated and practiced under slavery in order not only to bear its physical and psychic brutality, but to shore up the justified will to escape.

Rather than organizing his life story according to chronology, Manzano structures his memories according to a figurative coherence that highlights the injustice of his punishment, debasement, and criminalization at the hands of his masters and mistresses. He uses a first-person narrator, figured as a present and intellectually empowered self, to interrupt scenes of past suffering and reframe them as incidents of unjust persecution. Instead of providing a comprehensive account of his experiences, he gathers those incidents that most effectively evoke the arbitrary cruelty to which he was subjected, those which were most harmful to a self-image increasingly bound up with a public one. These memories he juxtaposes with anecdotal windows into his socialization as a

“mulato,” a racialization enacted by both slaveholders, whom the young Manzano treats affectionately, and his parents, whose subjection positioned them in a social and racial caste distinct from “negros.” Readers bear witness to moments when the bright child is robbed of what is rightfully his and then accused of stealing—an interpretation of events often corroborated by others within the narrative. As he constructs it, what he deems the “verdadera historia” of his life (true story), is the story of his struggle to tell his story, to be an agential author in the meaning of his racial identity, and master of his “fate” (Manzano 304).

This coming-of-age and coming-to-artistry narrative underwent two interpretive transformations before it was received by Anglo abolitionist readers; first through editing by Anselmo Suárez y Romero, and then, through editing and translation by Madden, producing two distinct textual iterations. These subsequent, relatively autonomous versions of Manzano’s life story shifted the text’s theorization of freedom and anti-slavery, inscribing the narrative as a whole with a form and politics that better suited, for Suárez y Romero, the Cuban literati’s mission and, for Madden, the cause of universal abolition. This proliferation of meanings recalls Karen Emmerich’s argument that “editing and translating are mutually implicated interpretive practices that further the iterative growth of a work in the world” (Emmerich 8). Emmerich provides a framework for understanding the relationship between Manzano’s signed manuscript and its edited and translated versions not as one of distortion or perversion. Rather, whether editing, translating, or both at once, Suárez y Romero and Madden created interpretations of Manzano’s work that responded to distinct audience expectations and political pressures by establishing different forms of correspondence with it. Whereas critics have often read

Madden's rendering as an affront to Manzano's "original," the analysis to follow suggests that it is fruitful to identify differences among the textual iterations of the work insofar as they evidence the competing political programs that it was made to advance in the world.

If Manzano claims authorial agency over the experience of being enslaved, Suárez y Romero and Madden each construct a different image of an enslaved person. Their versions displace Manzano's claim in order to make manifest a (Cuban) "slave" or even a "negro intellect." In their respective ways, that is, Suárez y Romero and Madden effectively elide the particularities of Manzano's portrayal of life experiences and his form of storytelling so that they can present him as a more archetypal or universal figure. For Suárez y Romero, this would ensure that Manzano could serve as a Cuban literary prototype, advancing the elite *criollo* goal of creating a dissident Cuban literary culture which rejected the political and cultural constraints imposed by the Spanish Catholic monarchy. By rearranging the events narrated as Manzano's life story, and attempting to place them in chronological order, Suárez y Romero imposes an alternative, temporal coherence. This strategy includes the excision of authorial interjections in which Manzano claims control of the sociosymbolic meaning of scenes of suffering. In addition to omitting the passage quoted above, Suárez y Romero also removes the following:

Si tratara de aser un esacto resumen de la istoria de mi vida seria una repetition de susesos todos semejantes entre sí pues desde mi edad de trece a catorce años mi vida a sido una consecusion de penitencia ensierro azotes y aflisiones así determino descrivir los sucesos mas notables q^e. me han acarreado una opinion tan terrible como nosiva. (Manzano 319-20)

(If I were to try to give an exact summary of the story of my life, it would be a repetition of events, all similar to each other because from the age of

thirteen to fourteen years old my life has been a realization of penance confinement/imprisonment lashes and afflictions so I have decided to describe the most notable events that have given rise to an opinion of me as terrible as it as damaging.)

By omitting moments like these, Suárez y Romero's editing effectively removes aspects of the work's artifice to foreground the "raw" material of Manzano's life story; the metanarrative components of the work are removed to leave readers with a narrative framed not by a self-conscious authorial narrator, but instead an apparently unmediated access to the "truth." Madden, in relying on the version of the manuscript edited by Suárez y Romero, amplifies this formal effect by erasing moments in which Manzano describes scenes of public shame that threaten his self-image and public standing, including those when Manzano describes his change of dress as a change in fortune. This has the double effect of effacing Manzano as an authorial presence and eliding the text's thematization of self-image. Without these narrative interjections, and without the non-linear structure that Manzano invented, the editor and the translator diminish the extent to which Manzano was enslaved but bound towards freedom through the acquisition of skills, emphasizing instead the ever-increasing physical brutality that leads Manzano to flee. Not a self-taught and self-aware narrator of his own life story, Manzano becomes instead a "slave" with the potential to become a "negro" once emancipated.

In addition to a broader restructuring of the text, Madden's lexical and syntactical choices often diminish Manzano's authorial agency, especially at moments when the narrator describes scenes and introspective reflections that are somehow at odds with Anglo abolitionist sensibilities. When Madden confronts scenes of affection between Manzano and his second mistress, La Marquesa de Prado Ameno, for example, his

handling of them evinces an anxiety about how they might be read by anglophone abolitionists. He consistently transforms language suggestive of a too intimate familial love and affection into the properly deferential and grateful expressions of a subordinate. At stake for Madden are two concerns: first, that Manzano's avowed love for his mistress would be unsympathetic for readers who would interpret it as misplaced, if not perverse; second, that Manzano might appear too deft in his use of affection to garner and claim moral superiority. In the former case, he might be insufficiently worthy of emancipation; in the latter, he might dangerously exceed the bounds of the ideal emancipated subject in need of the abolitionist's benevolent intervention. Madden rewrites scenes of the complexly torturous, coerced love that Manzano claims for Prado Ameno to fit the liberal post-emancipation future he envisions for the "negro intellect," the "character" of which, he writes in his preface, he seeks to "vindicate" through his translation of Manzano's poems (41). What, in Manzano's text, constitutes an admission that he at times "amábala tanto como a madre" (loved her like a mother) (112), becomes, in Madden's version, scenes in which Prado Ameno in her "kinder" moments, imparts to Manzano the very "blessing[s] of education and good government" that Madden claims are "wanting to make the natives of Africa, intellectually and morally, equal to the people of any nation on the surface of the globe" (41). There is a tension between Manzano's understanding of his own affection for his mistress, and Madden's prerogative to shape Manzano into a figure worthy of "universal emancipation." This tension, we will see, unfolds a series of incompatibilities among the enslaved poet's experiences of freedom and resistance under slavery, and an Anglo abolitionist discourse that foreclosed the meanings of "slavery" and "freedom" as utterly opposed, material states of being.

A particularly telling example of Madden's tendency to displace scenes of affection between Manzano and Prado Ameno occurs late in the narrative, just before he resolves to flee Matanzas for Havana. The sequence of events, as described by Manzano's first-person authorial narrator, establishes a symbolic relationship among Prado Ameno's behavior, his racial identity, and his Catholicism. Madden makes two significant choices in his rendering of Suárez y Romero's edition. Taken together, these moves—which it is illuminating to consider as what Emmerich calls “translingual editing” (10-11)—shift the meaning of Manzano's affection for his mistress. As Manzano retells the events, he returns to Matanzas, unhappy to be taken from Havana where he is learning new skills, and is continually punished by his mistress, leading him, at first, to feel hopeless about his future. Madden creates a corresponding version of this sequence in English. However, after she treats him with more kindness, the first-person narrator in the Spanish reflects on how this change affected the way others perceived him, how they treated him, and how he might use affection to secure his freedom. This is where we see the first significant shift, as Manzano describes his mistreatment by Prado Ameno. As Suárez y Romero has it, Manzano writes:

Mi corazón no era ya bueno y la Habana, juntamente con los felices días, que en ella gocé, estaban impresos en mi alma, y yo sólo deseaba verme en ella. Notó mi Señora el caso que yo había hecho de la comida y no dejó de maravillarse de que no me alegrase el corazón un buen plato. Es de admirar que aquella no pudiese estar sin mí muchos días seguidos: así era que mis prisiones jamás pasaban de once a doce: pero con todo me pintaba siempre en el Molino, como el más malo de todos los nacidos, de donde decía que era yo criollo: otra mortificación que me desazonaba: amábala a pesar de su dureza, porque sabía muy bien que estaba bautizado en la Habana. (111)

(My heart was no longer any good and Havana, along with the happy days I enjoyed there, were imprinted on my soul, and to see myself there was all I desired. My Mistress noticed all the attention I had given to food and

marveled to no end at the fact that a good plate would not make my heart happy. It is astonishing that she could not be without me for many days in a row—so it was that my detentions never lasted beyond eleven or twelve—but even so she always painted me at el Molino, as the worst of all those born on that plantation, of which she said I was *criollo*, another mortification that made me distraught. I loved her in spite of her harshness because I knew full well that I was baptized in Havana.)

The authorial narrator draws attention to Prado Ameno's usage of the term "criollo" as an epithet by creating a sense of compounding humiliation through the use of compiling adjectival phrases. His mistress "paints" him with three charges: suggesting first that he belongs at the Molino, among the field slaves; second, that he's the lowest born on the plantation, which is utterly opposed to Manzano's sense of himself as exceptional and even the "best" of the enslaved; and finally, as a "criollo," in this context a derogatory term that Cuban masters used to dehumanize the children of enslaved persons (Barnet 10). This moment contrasts to the opening of Manzano's life history where he uses the term's more positive connotations to create a genealogical enabling fiction. As his story opens, he sketches the circumstances of his birth, naming himself as a descendant of a mother whom he describes as among the chosen ("de las escogidas") most "bonitas criollas," the most beautiful, or finest, Cuban, as opposed to African born, "criadas" (servants), of a "clase" that Manzano never names as slaves (83). Prado Ameno, however, uses *criollo* in a way that Manzano recognizes as the worst possible epithet, activating as she does its most pejorative connotations. In this way, she revises the story of his birth, racializing him downward in the pigmentocratic caste hierarchy, defaming him by robbing him of his exceptional status and marking him as a dehumanized slave since birth.

In response, the authorial narrator rejects the charge, going so far as to suggest his moral superiority over his mistress through a reference to his Catholic baptism in Havana, the center of arts and culture. As Pettway explains by citing Margaret Olsen's *Slavery and Salvation in Colonial Cartagena de las Indias*, "baptism was not simply salvation from original sin but, perhaps more importantly, salvation from blackness itself" (55). Counter to proslavery arguments that claimed "black" slaves required paternalistic treatment because they were dependent on their masters, Manzano's narrator suggests that it is Prado Ameno who developed an intemperate and inappropriate dependency on the child she enslaved. Her "need" for him and an unjust cruelty towards him stand as a condemnation of the institution of slavery more broadly. Manzano reminds readers, and consoles himself, with the fact of his baptism; but the baptism also functions figuratively, alluding to an acculturation that follows in the line of his mother's as worthy of education, as "una de las criadas de *estimación*, de *distinción*, de *razón*" (one the servants of esteem, distinction, reason) (83, emphasis in original). His capacity to forgive and love his mistress in spite of her intemperate and cruel behavior is figured as a testament to his character as a good, educated Catholic. Foregoing meals, he is sustained by the memory of his baptism and pursuit of education in Havana, both of which serve to "whiten" him in relation to the image that Prado Ameno "paints" with her words.

When Madden translates this passage, he transforms Manzano into a slave more clearly prepared to serve society as a particular type of racialized liberal subject after emancipation: a "negro." He achieves this by inscribing in this scene the figures and values of anglophone abolitionism. This requires that he depart from or omit what he perceives as incompatible with the image of the "negro intellect" worthy of "vindication"

that he seeks to construct. Where Manzano has written that the happy days he experienced in Havana “estaban impresos en [su] alma” (were imprinted on [his] soul), for example, Madden translates that Havana was “continually in [his] mind” (96), electing a rational metaphor to translate a spiritual or emotive one. This decision is made more significant by Madden’s translation of the paragraph’s last sentence, which involves “translingual editing” in the form of erasing, condensing, and replacing language. He excises Manzano’s allusion to his baptism in Havana entirely, suppressing any reference in the paragraph to his spirituality or his Catholicism.

What he does instead is telling. Madden replaces “I loved her in spite of her harshness because I knew full well that I was baptized in Havana,” with language more compatible with the vision of post-emancipation society that abolitionists desired. He renders Manzano’s righteous, Christian “love” with the phrase “I was still attached to her and shall never forget the care she had taken on my education,” combining one clause that refigures Manzano’s professed “love” as “attachment” and another translated clause that more closely adheres to a phrase that opens Manzano’s next paragraph. “Attached,” in Madden’s usage, invites a reading of Manzano’s relationship to his mistress as structured by an affective bond *as well as* the bonds of slavery. But the fact that Madden follows it with an expression of Manzano’s gratitude has the effect of restabilizing theirs as a properly hierarchical relationship between mistress and slave, inscribing in the narrative a recognition of her benevolence and power to bestow education. Madden’s English replaces a righteous feeling with a deferential one, a moment in which Manzano insists on the “authenticity” of his own self-image with a concession, a retreat into the role that Prado Ameno “paints” him into: that of a negated-personhood-as-property,

subjected through what Pettway, drawing on Saidiya Hartman, terms the “property/person duality that enabled slave society to deny him free will even while assigning him criminal intent” (63).¹⁰⁷ By shifting the focus of the passage’s figurative language onto Manzano’s education and mind, he transforms an emotionally distraught and then subtly transgressive image of Manzano into an image of a slave more readily amenable to becoming a rational, liberal subject after emancipation.

As Manzano narrates it, his torment by his mistress was particularly harmful insofar as it affected his public image, as she disparaged him by insulting his racial and class status. Madden, however, often deemphasizes these experiences of shame, rendering her cruelty more reductively as scenes of physical brutality. In this scene, for example, Madden minimizes the fact that Manzano and Prado Ameno assert competing interpretations of the meaning of Manzano’s racial identity and upbringing. Manzano is hurt, most of all, that his mistress would call him a “criollo.” But Madden’s insertion of phrase referencing his frequent beatings at the hands of Prado Ameno, as well as his diction and syntax choices, change the implications of this word, and with it, the cause of Manzano’s grievance: “although she struck me so often, and degraded me, calling me always the worst of the Creoles born in the Molino” (96). The insertion has the effect of differently attributing the cause of Manzano’s despair to physical brutality, rather than the psychological aspect of the shame that results from damage to Manzano’s public or self-image. This effect is reinforced by the choices not to closely adhere to either the metaphor of tableau painting that Manzano uses to initiate his lament, or his use of a series of adjectival phrases to register a cumulatively deepening embarrassment

¹⁰⁷ See Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997), 80.

culminating in the use of a dehumanizing epithet. Perhaps because he seeks to diminish the psychological effects of the racial caste system—including the possibility that one could imaginatively turn its own chromatic logic back on itself—Madden displaces what for Manzano was essential for seeing a pathway towards freedom: correcting, once and for all, how others perceive him.

This is nowhere clearer than when, in a subsequent passage, Manzano's authorial narrator is able to win over his mistress' affection and, as a result, see his freedom as an eventuality. Manzano explains that, as she became kinder towards him, so too did Manzano feel love for his mistress. To ensure that things would remain affectionate between them, the narrator explains, Manzano was cautious not to disclose to Prado Ameno the cruel words that other servants had to say about her, admitting, in other words, that he had discovered a way to manipulate how she felt about and treated him. As a consequence, he says, "Estaba como nunca de bien mirado y nada echaba de menos: hacíame el cargo de que ya era libre" (I was better looked upon than ever and wanted for nothing: I understood myself to already be free) (112). In this narration, Manzano sketches a relationship among his perceived racial identity, the quality of the affective relationship he maintained with his mistress, and his eventual freedom. Being "well looked upon"—that is, being seen as the descendent of a "una de las criadas de *estimación*," a baptized and educated house slave, rather than as a *criollo* of El Molino, or the worst among the most degraded field slaves—allowed Manzano to imagine his freedom as a real possibility. Madden displaces this understanding of freedom, replacing it with a description of Manzano's material conditions, writing: "I began to be as comfortable as ever; in a word, I thought myself already free" (97). This transformation

erases the relationship between Manzano's public image and his freedom, rendering instead the experience of anticipating freedom as emerging from Manzano's material comfort. Freedom, as Madden represents it here, is not achieved through the overcoming of sociosymbolic systems like the *régimen de castas* which constrain the possibilities of how Manzano can be seen and, therefore, move through the world; rather, freedom is achieved through the transformation of his material conditions. Excluding the aspects of the passage in which Manzano describes his strategic navigation of Prado Ameno's temperament as a strategy of resistance that will lead to his freedom, Madden creates an image of Manzano as passively awaiting comfort to be bestowed.

In the final pages of the life story, readers witness again Madden's tendency to minimize the extent to which Manzano figured himself as an authorial and actual agent, a poet and person pursuing modes of freedom under slavery. In the edition that Suárez y Romero presents to Madden, Manzano describes a conversation with a free servant in the house who recognizes the injustice of Prado Ameno's abuse, and instills in him the resolve he needs to, finally, secure his freedom. In the sequence of events that follows, Manzano describes at length the fears and memories that lead him to decide to flee Matanzas. He anticipates, for example, that when Don Saturnino, a much reviled and feared figure, comes again to take him to the Molino, he will be shaven and beaten, made to walk through the streets in burlap. Manzano can see himself, in his mind's eye, being taken through town "como un facineroso" (like a criminal) (115). At this imaginative possibility, Manzano feels afraid and, beyond that, ashamed. The authorial narrator recalls an instructive moment from his childhood when Manzano's father forbade him from playing with "black" children. The juxtaposition of a future self dressed like a

“slave,” and a past self elevated above other enslaved and racially “blacker” children produces, in Manzano, a state of agitation. This agitation, anger, and pride lead the enslaved poet to “determine to flee,” no matter the risk he will incur in doing so. It is the combined threat of physical brutality, mental anguish, and public shame that leads Manzano to act. He can no longer endure the imposition of conditions unbecoming to his place in the racial caste system and must, finally, reject the unjust and potentially “illegal” actions of Prado Ameno and Don Saturnino.

The sequence of events, which combines projections into the future and past with witness testimony of the present, advances the argument that Manzano’s skills, education, and perceived racial identity should be rightly interpreted as evidence of his entitlement to freedom. Beginning with the conversation Manzano has with a free servant, the scene authenticates Manzano’s racial identity and, within this *régimen de castas*, the privileges that should attend it. Suárez y Romero edits Manzano and presents the following to Madden:

“Hombre que tú no tienes vergüenza para estar pasando tanto trabajos: cualquier negro bozal está mejor que tú: un mulatico fino con tantas habilidades como tú, al momento hallará quien lo compre.” (114)

(“Man, don’t you have any shame about having to go through so many labors: any negro bozal is better than you: a mulatico fino like you with so many abilities will find someone to buy him in a second.”)

As the authorial narrator recounts it, the free servant, who also works on the plantation and has witnessed Manzano’s mistreatment, associates it with “vergüenza” (shame), because Manzano is, as a “mulatico fino,” racially and socially entitled to better treatment. The racial signifier and term of endearment names Manzano’s refinement and proximity to “whiteness,” both of which are evident to the eye witness on the plantation.

The servant compares Manzano's treatment with that given to the "negro bozal," the enslaved of the lowest class of the *régimen de castas*, who are, in general, newly imported from Africa and "muzzled," without the ability to speak Spanish.¹⁰⁸ The comparison thus calls attention to their differences in birth, socialization, optical racial identity, and education. The servant suggests that it is these qualities that make Manzano valuable within the slave economy, where, he says, the "mulatico fino" could easily find a more just master. This conversation, which confirms how other free servants perceive Manzano in the present of the text, is compared with two other scenes of Manzano's racialization: first, the imminent punishment that Don Saturnino will enact by shaving, beating, and dressing Manzano in burlap; and second, the memory of his childhood protection from proximity to the "blackest" slaves. Just as the free servant distinguished Manzano from the "negro bozal" so too, in his memory, does Manzano's father name the difference between Manzano and the other children on the plantation (Manzano 115).

Suárez y Romero's Manzano reads:

Enterado de mi mala suerte, no me es dado pintar mi situación amarguísima en este instante: un temblor general se apoderó de todo mi cuerpo, y me atacó un dolor de cabeza que no me podía valer: ya me veía atravesando el pueblo de Madruga como un facineroso, atado, pelado y vestido de cañamazo, cual me vi en Matanzas, sacado de la cárcel pública para ser conducido al Molino, sin padres ni aun parientes: y, en una palabra mulato, y entre negros. Mi padre era algo altivo y nunca permitió, no sólo corrillos en su casa, pero ni que sus hijos jugasen con los negritos

¹⁰⁸ According to Jeremy Branche, the term would have had derogatory connotations for Manzano, comparing him to a newly captured slave that did not speak any of the colonizers languages (139). The current edition of the *Diccionarios de la lengua española* provides an array of definitions that point to the multiple meanings of the term, including the definition that Branche provides of a slave recently taken from their country, with an additional entry that says the term is used to describe "Dispositivo que se pone a ciertos animales, preferentemente a los perros, en el hocico para que no muerdan" (a device placed on some animals, usually dogs, on the snout so that they do not bite). The dictionary lastly includes an historical and Cuban definition of "bozal," which reads: "Persona que pronuncia mal la lengua española, a semejanza del antiguo negro bozal" (A person who pronounces the Spanish language badly, as the old negro bozal).

de la Hacienda, por lo que no éramos muy bien queridos. Todo esto se presentó a mi imaginación, y en aquel instante determiné mi fuga. (Manzano 115)

(Having learned of my terrible fate, I can hardly paint my extremely bitter state in this moment: a general trembling overtook my entire body, and I was struck with such a terrible headache that I could not hold myself up: I already saw myself traversing the town of Madruga like a criminal, tied up, head shaven, and dressed in burlap, just as I was Matanzas, taken from the public jail to be led to El Molino, without parents or even relatives: and, in a word, mulato, and among negros. My father was somewhat haughty and never permitted not only groups in his house, but even that his children play with the negritos from the plantation, due to which we were not very well liked. All of this presented itself to my imagination, and in that instant I determined to flee).

Just as Prado Ameno “painted” Manzano as a *criollo*, the worst at the Molino, so Manzano “paints” for readers the scene of suffering that he envisions. The change in appearance that initiated punishment at the hands of Don Saturnino will, Manzano forecasts, lead to a public shaming in which he is both racialized as a common slave and treated as a criminal. He sees himself in this moment as the free servant sees him: as a “mulatto, y entre negros.” The imagined future degradation recalls, for the authorial narrator, his father’s “altivo” (haughty) attitude towards the other children on the plantations, whom the narrator describes as “negritos.” Across an imagined past and future, Manzano thus draws together moments that confirm for him his exceptionality and the elevation of his status within the *régimen de castas*. The suffering he anticipates with Don Saturnino takes on a symbolic meaning as he imagines that to accept his criminalization and racialization as a “negro” would be to defy the social identity that his father had desired and cultivated for him. To reclaim his birthright, the identity that even his mistress had, at times, socialized him to accept, Manzano cannot but flee and free himself.

Madden's translation of this sequence departs from close correspondence with the introspective and psychic struggle that Manzano undergoes when faced with another stay at El Molino, minimizing the role of the authorial narrator in shaping the significance of the events. His interpretation of the advice imparted by Manzano's fellow servant renders any reference to Manzano's racial identity implicit. Instead, he translates the advice as:

My friend, if you suffer it is your fault; you are treated worse than the meanest slave; make your escape, and present yourself before the Captain-General at Havana, state your ill treatment to him, and he will do you justice. (98)

Condensing the sentences that succeed the direct quote Manzano offers, Madden transforms the servant's advice into a suggestion that Manzano seek redress through the legal apparatuses available to slaves in Cuba. While a version of this suggestion appears in the Suárez y Romero manuscript, it takes on new significance here, as Madden effaces entirely the possibility that someone else might be willing to purchase Manzano, a valuable slave because of his skills and place within the *régimen de castas*. He translates "negro bozal" as the "meanest slave," transforming a particular racial category that had significance within a local system of racialization into an archetype of Anglo abolitionist discourse. This has the effect of flattening the differences among Manzano and other slaves, comparing them on the basis of their relative suffering, where "meanest" refers to the lowliest and most brutal existence. Moreover, the advice of the servant in the Suárez y Romero text generally recommends that Manzano advocate for himself, prove his case, and submit as evidence his skills, his education and refinement ("fino"), his class status, and his racial identity—all of which entitle him to greater privileges than the "negro bozal." In fact, it is Manzano's racial and class positioning that affords him the possibility of petitioning at all. As Jerome Branche observes, as a status, "negro," meant "he who

has no political significance”; and “bozal” could be understood as “he who does not signify,” since it drew on the Peninsular Spanish meaning “muzzle” to reference the fact that newly arrived captives spoke neither Spanish, Portuguese, nor French (Branche 139-140). Here, Madden elects not to register these linguistic and racial dimensions of political power nor their entanglement. Instead, he endows the Captain-General with the power to free Manzano, figuring the slave as the passive recipient of the benevolence of the master class.

Following this exchange, Madden excises entirely Manzano’s memory of his father’s haughty attitude towards the other “negritos” on the plantation, instead moving from the future criminalization that Manzano “fancied,” as Madden puts it, to his making his escape within the space of a single paragraph (98). As he condenses the sequence of events, Madden omits the details that cause the authorial narrator the most anguish. Madden imposes restraint through his editorial decisions in instances where, his excisions indicate, Manzano’s lamentation and imaginative leaps through time were excessive. Whereas Manzano paints an image of himself as “*atravesando el pueblo de Madruga como un facineroso, atado, pelado y vestido de cañamazo, cual me vi en Matanzas*” (traversing the town of Madruga like a criminal, tied up, head shaven, and dressed in burlap, just as I was Matanzas), Madden writes: “leading me tied away like the greatest criminal” (98). Madden thus removes the details about how Manzano would be physically transformed into a slave more degraded and “blacker” than how he has been socialized to see himself, a source of great shame for the enslaved poet. He minimizes the extent to which Manzano’s decision to flee was motivated by his self-esteem, his determination to live life as a “*mulatico fino.*” The removal of this racial signifier, plus

the erasure of the details of Manzano's imagined sartorial transformation, plus the excision of the memory of Manzano's childhood—all of these “translingual editing” decisions have the effect of reducing the cause and significance of Manzano's decision to free himself to an abstract notion of “justice.” Madden reorganizes the relationship among race, slavery, and freedom, presenting Anglo abolitionist readers with a far more simplified and, thus, palatable story. By his account, Manzano determines to flee and seek “justice” not because he, in particular, was due better treatment and greater privileges. Rather, Madden's editing and translation decisions transform Manzano's into a narrative more broadly condemning the institution of slavery as an injustice in itself.

Conclusion

In the year of its publication, Madden's translation received positive reviews in several popular anti-slavery publications in London, all of which praised the abolitionist's rendering of Cuba, endorsing Madden's claim that it is the “most perfect picture of Cuban slavery” yet shared with Anglophone readers (Madden 43). As the text was shared by abolitionists throughout the Atlantic world, it took on yet other political lives and functions, as new adaptations and iterations by writers in the U.S. as different and influential as Martin Delany, William Wells Brown, and William Lloyd Garrison circulated an image of “the black Revolutionist of Cuba” (Whittier 51). Madden's translation thus both established the Irishman's reputation as an antislavery writer and diplomat, and generated a plethora of political possibilities in the U.S., where the story of “Juan” became a canonical example among different sects of the abolitionist movement. Madden's verbal choices, his rendering of Manzano as an example of “negro intellect,”

contributed to the emergence of Cuba as a cause célèbre for Anglophone antislavery movements and secured Madden's authority as a "white" abolitionist.

The London reviews of Madden's translation reveal to us how his contemporaries interpreted the translation, the image of Cuban slavery that his text constructed, and the political significance of the text for the cause of "universal abolition." All are laudatory of the text both in terms of its claim to authority and its literary quality, praising Madden for his "zealous labours for the abolition of slavery" (*The Christian Observer* 44), and the anonymized enslaved poet, "Juan," for his surprising and revelatory poetic skill. From the reviewers' commentary, we can infer that the success of the translation depended in large part on its ability to render Manzano as an exemplar "negro intellect." All three reviews position the text as powerful evidence that the prevailing racial science and even physiognomy often used to justify slavery are fallacious and harmful theories. One review suggests that the autobiography and poems "satisfactorily dispose of the theory long prevalent among us of the essential inferiority of the African intellect" (*The Eclectic Review*, 1841, 406). Another reports in 1840 that Madden's translation "introduces us to a Cuban slave of high native endowment and poetical genius" (*British and Foreign Antislavery Society Reporter* 314), describing Manzano as a "noble-minded man" (315). Each includes extended excerpts of Manzano's poetry, as well as his life story, all of them including two scenes of suffering: one where Manzano is tied "like a criminal," and another when he witnesses the torture of his mother. The reviews thus foreground those scenes of Manzano's life that demonstrate the horrors and degradation of his experience, rendering him a "wonder" that succeeds in cultivating his intellect in spite of the most brutal dehumanization and emasculation.

The reviews suggest that Madden was successful in achieving one of the political goals he had in mind when he translated the manuscript: to “vindicate the character of the negro intellect” (Madden 41). The review in *The Christian Observer* even situates the text within a transatlantic network of texts that shored up the image of the “negro intellect” in the service of abolition, citing a collection of African writing by enslaved or formerly enslaved persons throughout the Atlantic world, assembled by the French abolitionist Abbé Grégoire in 1808. Grégoire’s collection, *De la littérature des nègres, ou Recherches sur leurs facultés intellectuelles, leurs qualités morales et leur littérature*, was spurred by Thomas Jefferson’s 1787 *Notes on the State of Virginia*, in which he infamously dismissed the enslaved poet Phyllis Wheatley as intellectually incapable of writing poetry. In 1810, the collection was also translated into English in the U.S. by David Baillie Warden.¹⁰⁹ Together, these texts create a French-Anglo racial trope to which Madden and reviewers assimilated Manzano and Spanish American slavery. Disavowing theories that would cast “darker” races as inferior, the reviewer from *The Christian Observer* states: “Our curiosity [in Manzano] therefore was not elicited by the fact that a man of dark skin and African blood should write poetry; but that he should have done so under the withering influences of slavery. That he was able, or had the desire, to cultivate his mind, or to pour forth the affections of his heart in tuneful numbers, alternating with the stocks, the lash, and the prison-house, may well excite wonder” (44). The reviewers thus articulate the racializing logic of a transatlantic and

¹⁰⁹ Warden, an Irish republican insurgent in the Rebellion of 1798, was in exile in the U.S. working as a teacher and diplomat in the Jefferson and Madison administrations when he produced his translation, *An Enquiry Concerning the Intellectual and Moral Faculties, and Literature of Negroes; Followed with an Account of the Life and Works of Fifteen Negroes & Mulattoes, Distinguished in Science, Literature and the Arts* (Brooklyn: Thomas Kirk, 1810).

multilingual abolitionism, as positioned against the logic of slaveholders, and in accordance with the paternalism of both Anglo and French racial ideology.

As it racialized Manzano, the reviews also secure Madden's position as a "white" abolitionist, a reliable and authorizing figure through which readers gain access to the suffering of the enslaved poet. In its article on the Convention proceedings, *The Eclectic Review* reports that Madden served in his post in Havana "with the justice and firmness belonging to an Englishman," describing his "rare courage" and "fidelity" to the truth of what he saw (August 1840 236). His sympathy and righteous advocacy for the Liberated Africans of Havana, whether through his role as a diplomat or translator, stabilized Madden's racial identity in British parliament and in relation to Manzano. Christopher Castiglia describes the racializing logic of Anglophone abolitionist discourse as the "making of white civic depth," arguing that: "White reformers took on blackness, not on the surface of the skin, but as a suffering interior, a civic 'depth.' With an inner experience of black suffering, white reformers claimed a public authority that differentiated them from other whites, even while it maintained an affective difference from persecuted blacks" (34). By translating Manzano's life story and re-presenting his suffering in the context of his own writing and poetry about Cuban slavery, Madden claims the public authority and virtue that allow him to achieve notoriety and whiteness, even as one of just a few Irish delegates that represented the Crown.

Madden's rendering of Manzano had such a convincing affective power, endowing civic depth upon abolitionist readers whose sympathy was activated by the story of the enslaved poet, that the image that he constructed of Cuba became a mainstay in U.S. abolitionist culture in the decades following the publication of the translation. As

R.J. Boutelle has documented, Madden's translation was adapted by prominent abolitionist John Greenleaf Whittier in his essay, "The Black Man," that appeared in his 1845 compendium, *The Stranger in Lowell*. The essay re-presents the facts of Manzano's life story, as represented by Madden's translation, but mistakenly names its author as "Juan Plácido." Collapsing Juan Francisco Manzano with Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés (better known by his nom de plume, Plácido), the essay "signposts its prose with the familiar generic conventions of North American antislavery literature—its sentimental tone, a central whipping scene, and a resolution toward resistance—while also contextualizing the poetical prowess of Juan Plácido within a distinctly U.S. discourse on the intellectual equality between the races" (Boutelle, *Imagining* 4). Boutelle hypothesizes that Whittier mistook Manzano for Plácido because Madden's translation omits Manzano's full name, and the Cuban poet Plácido had become recently famous throughout the Atlantic after the failed plot to overthrow slavery in Havana referred to as *La Escalera*. The story presented by Whittier, which adapts Madden's translation to produce yet another iteration of Manzano's initial composition, became a common referent among abolitionists across a wide spectrum of positions.

Whittier's piece was so influential and widely read that when Madden's translation appeared in serialized form in the New York monthly *Non-Slaveholder* in 1854, the text was attributed to Juan Plácido. It was reviewed by Frederick Douglass, and appears in Martin R. Delany's *Blake, or the Huts of America* (1859-62) and William Wells Brown's *The Black Man, His Antecedents, His Genius, and His Achievements*. With each iteration, the text was put to new political use, and generated a vast array of political possibilities in the U.S. abolitionist movement through its particular

interpretation of Cuban slavery. Whether the Black radical abolitionism and even Black nationalism of Delany, or the more multiracial and coalitional abolitionist politics of Douglass' newspaper, new political possibilities emerged within the movement through engagement with Whittier's adaptation of Madden's translation. This instance of cultural synchresis demonstrates that Madden did not merely assimilate Manzano's life story to the discourse and tropes of Anglophone abolitionism by suppressing its particularities. Even as it did this, the entry of this image of Cuba into the British and U.S. abolitionist movements resulted in a proliferation of new positions and ideas.

CHAPTER 4

“COMMUNION D'ÉMOTIONS PURES ET SAINTES”:

THE FRENCH ROMANCING OF REVOLUTIONARY FEELING IN

LOUISE BELLOC'S LA CASE DE L'ONCLE TOM

L'amour du peuple, la conscience du citoyen, le sentiment qui porte l'individu à se confondre avec l'ensemble, à se subordonner à la communauté, à se sacrifier au besoin lui, son intérêt, son individualité, son égoïsme, son ambition, son orgueil, sa fortune, son sang, sa vie, sa renommée même quelquefois au salut de sa patrie, au bonheur des peuples, au bien de l'humanité dont il est membre en vue de Dieu, toutes ces vertus en un mot, nécessaires sous toutes les formes de gouvernement, utiles sous la monarchie, indispensables sous les républiques, ne dérivent donc et ne peuvent dériver que de ce seul mot prononcé avec une foi religieuse, au commencement, au milieu, à la fin de tous nos pactes patriotiques: *Je crois en Dieu*. (25)

—Alphonse de Lamartine, *Le conseiller du peuple* (1849)

(The love of the people, the conscience of the citizen, the sentiment which leads the individual to merge into the whole, to subordinate himself to the community, to sacrifice if necessary himself, his interest, his individuality, his egoism, his ambition, his pride, his fortune, his blood, his life, even sometimes his very reputation for the salvation of his homeland, for the happiness of peoples, for the good of humanity of which he is a member in view of God, all of these virtues in a word, necessary under all forms of government, useful under monarchy, indispensable under republics, therefore derive and can only derive from this single word pronounced with religious faith, at the beginning, in the middle, at the end of all our patriotic pacts: *I believe in God*)

The romantic idiom through which Alphonse de Lamartine, leader of the Provisional Government following the French revolution of 1848, puts forward his model of social and political community is representative of a spiritual strain of French

republican discourse of the mid-nineteenth century.¹¹⁰ It is this idiom that Louise Swanton Belloc echoes in her 1852 translation of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Just one year after the fall of La Deuxième République Française to Emperor Napoleon III, Belloc writes as a French Catholic republican and abolitionist living under a repressive censorship regime that relegated to a nostalgic ideal the social romanticism that Lamartine and many others deployed to articulate their political vision.¹¹¹ Discussion of local social and political events, and especially the dissent of republicans, was entirely prohibited. Yet, in the final pages of her translation, Belloc calls on French readers to

¹¹⁰ Shortly thereafter, Lamartine was elected The Second Republic's first foreign minister. On his contribution to social romanticism as a political and literary discourse, as well as this model in the political context of the 1848 revolution, see Peter Hutchings, *The Poetic Act: Lamartine's Integration of Art and Politics* (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2016), especially pp. 7-8 and 14. On the rise of this idiom as part of a new wave of militancy leading up to the revolution that brought together dissenting socialists and romantics in a "semi-religious quest for harmony in social existence, in nature, and in the cosmos," see Arthur Mitzman, "Michelet and Social Romanticism: Religion, Revolution, Nature," *Journal of the History of Ideas* vol. 57, no. 4 (1996): 659-682, especially 662-674.

¹¹¹ Following the 1848 Revolution that unseated constitutional monarch King Louis Phillippe I, Lamartine sought, in the Republic's second year, to enlighten and educate the broader public on the values of French republicanism. He had set in motion this project for realizing more accessible forms of governance under the July Monarchy by stepping outside parliament and using, instead, public speeches, historical writing, and journalism, such as his newspaper *le Bien Public* (Hutchings 114). As he would begin to lay out in a famous 1843 banquet speech in his native Mâcon, in contrast with the private counselors of the July Monarchy, who limited contact between the Crown and the people, the public needed a "conseiller du peuple" (Hutchings 115). He figured himself as just that, launching a weekly publication by this name in 1849. As we see in the epigraph above, he theorizes a relationship between individuals and society that combines Christian with republican values to promote civic responsibility. The passage suggests the necessity of self-sacrifice on behalf of each individual person in order to promote the interests of the greater good, sketching a relationship between *l'amour, la conscience, Dieu, and les républiques*. According to him, to love *le peuple* is to love God. Such a subordination of self-interests to the cultivation of a sense of duty and affection is, for him, *indispensables* the well-being of the new republic. On this aspect of Lamartine's integration of the literary and the political, see: Cristina Cassina, "Alphonse de Lamartine, poète et politicien: Le discours du 6 octobre 1848," *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* vol. 32, no. 2 (2012): 111-122; Martine Gantrel, "Lamartine's Popular Novels: Between Literature and Politics," *Literature and History* vol. 8, no. 1 (1999): 20-33; and Hutchings *The Poetic Act*. On disillusionment with social romanticism and Lamartine, in particular, see: Gantrel; and Hutchings, pp. 2-6.

open their eyes and consult their “conscience,” recalling Lamartine’s appeal to the necessity of introspection and self-sacrifice for attaining the higher ideal of republican society. In a forceful passage where, in its final chapter, Stowe’s novel prescribes a method by which the individual reader may advance the cause of abolition in the U.S., Belloc translates:

Mais que peut un individu dans son isolement? Sa conscience le lui dira. Il est une chose du moins à la portée de chacun, — c’est de voir avec justesse et de se pénétrer d’un *sentiment droit*. Une atmosphère magnétique environne chaque être humain, et celui qui pense avec justesse, avec énergie et droiture sur les grands intérêts de l’humanité, est, par cela même, un des bienfaiteurs de sa race ; il a respiré, et il exhale la vérité. Étudiez donc vos sympathies sur ce sujet; sont-elles en harmonie avec celles du Christ, ou se laissent-elles influencer et pervertir par les sophismes d’une politique mondaine? (589)

(But what can an individual do in his isolation? His conscience will tell him. There is one thing at least within everyone’s grasp,—that is to see rightly and to allow themselves to be filled with a *righteous feeling*. A magnetic atmosphere surrounds every human being, and whoever thinks rightly, with strength and rectitude on the great interests of humanity, is, by that very fact, one of the benefactors of his race; he has breathed, and he exhales the truth. Study, then, your sympathies on this subject; are they in harmony with those of Christ, or do they allow themselves to be swayed and perverted by the sophistries of a worldly policy?)

Aligned with her dominant strategy for rendering Stowe’s work, Belloc’s translation choices hew closely to the source text in the name of what her publisher, Gervais Charpentier, referred to as “scrupuleuse fidélité” (scrupulous fidelity) (Belloc vi). However, the translation uses the vocabulary of a marginalized and suppressed French republican idiom, addressing readers whose perspectives were stifled under the new imperial regime. Where Stowe writes “every individual can judge,” Belloc translates that “Sa conscience le lui dira” (His conscience will tell him), appealing to the civic and spiritual duty of French readers as *citoyens* (Stowe 438). Stowe recommends that it is

readers' responsibility to "see to it that *they feel right*," but Belloc further elaborates that it is French readers' responsibility "de voir avec justesse et de se pénétrer d'un *sentiment droit*" (to see rightly and to allow themselves to be filled with a *righteous feeling*) (Stowe 438). While maintaining a degree of semantic correspondence, Belloc, in contrast to Stowe, emphasizes the act of seeing (*voir avec justesse*), suggesting that readers need only open their eyes and hearts to what they are reading and, perhaps in France, seeing firsthand. Much as Lamartine envisions with his Romantic image of *le peuple* in *Le conseiller*, Belloc imagines that if readers submit themselves to the "atmosphère magnétique" that encompasses them—where Stowe writes "atmosphere of sympathetic influence"—they will be awakened to the injustice that they see and transformed (438). She inserts the phrase "il a respiré, et il exhale la vérité," conjuring a vision of an enlightened audience physically, emotionally, and spiritually moved to breathe and, even perhaps, to be able to speak "la vérité."

Although her translation of the passage caused no alarm among the Empire's censors, nor even necessarily gave her readers pause, from our historical vantage point, we can understand it as one that would release potentially subversive meanings in a highly controlled print culture that delimited political discourse. Take the final provocative questions towards which the passage builds. Here, Belloc adheres closely to Stowe's questions: "Are they in harmony with the sympathies of Christ? or are they swayed and perverted by the sophistries of worldly policy?" (Stowe 438). Yet as we have seen in previous chapters, even close semantic correspondence based on contemporaneous dictionary definitions does not prevent a translation from being both transformative and politically inflected. In this case, it is only further politicized by the

kinds of idiomatic shifts detailed above. Drawing an opposition between sympathies “en harmonie avec celles du Christ,” and those that “se laissent-elles influencer et pervertir par les sophismes d’une politique mondaine” would have struck a chord for French readers whom Belloc’s other choices hail. Even as she approximated Stowe’s notion, Belloc’s own corresponding French version of its affect of protest can readily take aim at “les sophismes” of a repressive regime whose policies have, for certain readers, perverted sympathies for a toppled republicanism in righteous spiritual harmony with Christ. In a literary and political context that increasingly favored “l’art pour l’art,” and diminished the aesthetic and political value of sentimental and romantic literature, Belloc’s translation and its direct address to French readers suggest a renewed hope and urgency for reinvigorating a republican spirit now lost. By rewriting Stowe in this way, Belloc situated her translation in a tradition of popular social romantic writers like Jules Michelet, Alphonse de Lamartine, Georges Sand, and Victor Hugo—the latter three ardent abolitionists, and all prominent figures in the movement against the July Monarchy and its cultural establishment—ultimately recreating the political subjectivity of *le peuple*, the citizens who would cultivate a sense of duty and mutual affection that Lamartine says is *indispensable* for the republic.¹¹²

This chapter considers how Belloc’s translation of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* intervened in covert political debate about the future of the French empire. French historians and even readers in the nineteenth century have often denied the significance of Stowe’s anti-

¹¹² On these writers as part of this cultural ferment in the context of the July Monarchy, see: Arthur Mitzman, “Michelet and Social Romanticism,” 663-677; and Hutchings, *The Poetic Act*. For Hutchings, “The July Revolution of 1830 catalyzed a socialization of French romanticism that gave it a greater political charge than any other branch of European romanticism” (4).

slavery text for the French, as the abolition of slavery across the French colonies had already taken place in 1848. However, recent historical analysis of the translation of Stowe's protest novel, its apparent "mutability," and its adaptation by writers and artists throughout the Atlantic world has shown that the text's significance lay not merely in its "original" political function.¹¹³ Rather, the translation of a novel so rife with allegorical figures for revolutionary history, racial strife, and republican social relations occasioned a grappling with local iterations of political debates with transnational audiences and dimensions. By performing a sustained close analysis of Belloc's translation, we may discern how her interpretation transformed the tropes, formal features, and political ideology of Stowe's novel to speak to readers whose stake in the questions of liberation and racial difference was informed by experiences of monarchical tyranny and aspirations of colonial power. Such a focus contests the conventional interpretation of Stowe's novel as commercially successful but politically ineffectual for the French, suggesting instead that the process of translation transformed the political function of Stowe's work by producing a new textual iteration of it. Belloc's version, like Stowe's, intends to "move" readers to "sentiment droit" (righteous feeling) via a sentimental form of writing. But unlike Stowe's text, which takes the U.S. as the site of its political intervention, Belloc's translation—by virtue of its historical situation and the resonance of her verbal choices within that situation—projects, through French literary forms,

¹¹³ See: Tracy C. Davis and Stefka Mihaylova, editors, *Uncle Tom's Cabins: The Transnational History of America's Most Mutable Book* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2018); and Sarah Meer, *Uncle Tom Mania: Slavery, Minstrelsy, and Transatlantic Culture in the 1850s* (Athens, GA: U of Georgia P, 2005). The former is of special note, since its approach is most akin to my own, and its conception and method are informed by Lawrence Venuti's work (see pp. 5 and 25, for instance). I draw on several of its essays further on.

properly local anxieties about the Haitian Revolution, the lack of freedom under the Bonaparte regime, and the future of the French empire.

As in earlier chapters, careful attention to the interpretants operative in this case brings to the fore a comparison of source and receiving languages and cultures, rather than only a comparison of source text and translation. The cultural and political meanings that French words and phrases accrued supplemented their apparently equivalent dictionary-based ones in striking ways, given how the political and the literary had become intertwined in France by the conjuncture at which Belloc translates Stowe's novel. While scholars such as Emily Sahakian and Anna Brickhouse have recovered the ways that Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* moved through the Francophone Atlantic world to show how French (Sahakian) and a Haitian (Brickhouse) plays "recast" and responded to "[its] domestic racial romance," scholarship attending to Belloc's translation has been scant.¹¹⁴ Doris Y. Kadish's thoroughgoing analysis of Belloc's work has yielded

¹¹⁴ See Sahakian, "Eliza's French Fathers: Race, Gender, and Transatlantic Paternalism in French Stage Adaptations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 1853" in *Uncle Tom's Cabins: The Transnational History of America's Most Mutable Book*, edited by Tracy C. Davis and Stefka Mihaylova (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2018), pp. 81-115; and Brickhouse, *Transamerican Literary Relations and the Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2004). The quote is from Brickhouse, pp. 13 (also see 228). For Sahakian, the three French plays she analyzes (more about which further on) engaged through their adaptations and translations the "predominant metaphor for understanding slavery in nineteenth-century France: paternalism" (109). In their different ways, the plays "facilitated reflections on the social role of the enslaved in the aftermath of abolition, France's status vis-à-vis the United States, and theater artists' power and need for freedom from censorship" (109). In her sixth chapter, Brickhouse explores the 1856 version of Haitian dramatist, poet, and intellectual Pierre Faubert's play *Ogé, ou, Le préjugé de couleur* published in Paris during his exile there after first being staged in Port-Au Prince in 1841 (227). For her, when Faubert's historical introduction and foreword are considered, his hemispherically and transatlantically oriented play engages and contests white French narration of Haitian history, as well as virulent, racist attacks on Haiti in the 1850s U.S. press, while deploying its critical revision of Stowe's characters and tropes against both these and other French and U.S. literary representations of Haiti. The attacks in the press took aim at new Haitian leader Faustin Soulouque who had converted his presidency into an emperorship in 1849 and repeatedly attempted to colonize the Dominican Republic until 1855. While not my focus here, it would no doubt be revealing to consider Belloc's translation in relation to Faubert's play, since both might

productive insights into the gendered reception of the translation as well as its treatment of race, locating it both in a tradition of women's anti-slavery writing and translating, and in an aesthetic debate among France's romantic and proto-modernist writers. Further, Kadish, Françoise Massardier-Kenney, and Michaël Roy suggest that Belloc's translation practices can be read as situating her in a marginalized translation tradition among French women writers most ardently advocated by Germaine de Staël in her 1816 essay "De l'esprit des traductions."¹¹⁵ Widening the focus of my analysis while encompassing the ways that the production and reception of Belloc's translation were mediated by prevailing racial and gender ideologies, I also situate Belloc's writing in relation to French Romantic literary traditions, colonial discourse, and in relation to the specific local political pressures that writers and journalists faced in the early days of the Second Empire. In doing so, I seek to account for a fuller range of the possible political functions and effects of what has been understood as a "proto-feminist" approach to translation.

Americanist scholarship about the transnational circulation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* gives limited attention to how Belloc, along with Stowe and Charpentier, framed her version, and in French literary studies, there has been thus far sparse engagement with her translation as a relatively autonomous text constituted by her specific lexical and

be seen to respond to journalistic and literary representations of Soulouque's Haiti, including Stowe's novel (despite its somewhat oblique engagement with current Haitian events).

¹¹⁵ See: Kadish, "Translation in Context" in *Translating Slavery, Volume 1: Gender and Race in French Women's Writing, 1783-1823*, edited by Doris Y. Kadish and Françoise Massardier-Kenney (Kent, OH: Kent State UP, 1994), pp. 26-61, especially 35-61; Massardier-Kenney, "Staël, Translation, and Race" in the same volume, pp. 135-145, especially 137-140; and Roy, "'Throwing pearls before swine': the strange publication history of *Vie de Frédéric Douglass, esclave américain* (1848)" *Slavery & Abolition* vol. 40, no. 4 (2019): 727-749, 731-733. All speak to the crucial role women played in the translation of abolitionist writings, each underscoring the influence of de Staël's literary and political contributions. Kadish analyzes Belloc's translation on pp. 51-61 of her essay.

syntactical choices and how they make it meaningful in the receiving context. Most scholarship focuses on print history and reception of the novel as a work. Critical analyses tend to account, that is, for the reception of the translations in general, with little focus on the potential impact of any one in particular.¹¹⁶ Yet Belloc's translation was one among eleven translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that appeared in the French literary market in 1852. Hers is an unusual case, even among the other editions. As the only woman translator, the only translator whom Stowe commended in writing, and one of only two versions that translated the novel in full, Belloc's work represents a departure from most other textual iterations. Moreover, her practices as a translator were quite distinct from those of her contemporaries, who tended to hew more to the "les belles infidèles" (the beautiful unfaithfuls) tradition of French translation that sought to "beautify" texts while appealing to authors' intentions as the texts were made French in what amounted to a revisionary strategy, rather than the maintenance close correspondence.

¹¹⁶ For exemplary and key contributions of the Americanist variety, see: Colleen Glenney Boggs, *Transnationalism and American Literature: Literary Translation 1773–1892* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 127-149, especially 131; Christopher G. Diller, "The Prefaces to 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,'" *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 77, no. 4 (2004): 619–45; and —, editor. *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or Life Among the Lowly* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2009). For the same in French literary studies, see: Claire Parfait, *The Publishing History of Uncle Tom's Cabin, 1852-2002* ([2007] New York: Routledge, 2016); —, "Un succès américain en France : *La Case de l'Oncle Tom*," *E-rea: Revue électronique d'études sur le monde anglophone* [Online], vol. 7, no. 2 (2010); and Agnès Sandras, "L'ambivalente réception de *La Case de l'oncle Tom* en France : pleurer ou persifler ? (Partie I. Un succès éditorial orchestré)," *L'Histoire à la BnF* [Online]. Boggs' intervention is to explore Stowe's shifting perceptions of intellectual property as she distinguishes between translations of her work performed intra- and inter- nationally. With respect to Parfait, it is crucial to note that while she is, on the one hand, technically an Americanist, she is, on the other, a French, French-American-English comparatist and book historian with a university appointment in France. Sandras' blog post for the French National Library (BnF) has two other parts under the same title, which I list in the bibliography.

Born in 1796 in La Rochelle where her father was stationed with the “régiment de Berwick,” Belloc, then Louise Swanton, relocated to Paris with her family in 1815. There she began moving in French literary circles, eventually attending the “salons and soirées of Madame de la Villette, Madame Mohl, Victor Hugo and Lamartine among others” (Ingelbien 141). A second-generation member of the Irish diaspora in France, she was notable for her shrewd negotiations with publishers, unusual for a French translator at the time and perhaps especially for a woman, as well as her politicized translation practice. Belloc’s work can be seen as part of an Irish patriotic project throughout much of her career. Effectively creating a mini canon of Irish prose and poetry in French, she sought to educate the French public in Ireland’s history and literary traditions. In what may be the most telling instance, she inserted commentary into her translation of Walter Scott’s preface to Oliver Goldsmith’s 1766 *The Vicar of Wakefield* when she agreed to undertake the novel’s ninth distinct French translation in 1839. The commentary highlighted the Irish childhood and education of Goldsmith, usually construed as an English writer, ultimately reintroducing French readers to him as an Irish one. Belloc achieved literary visibility as a woman by being a translator and doing so in a way that aligned her both with a feminized form of translation against les belles infidèles and, in the case this chapter examines, with sentimentalism.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ I have drawn these biographical details and understanding of her translation practice vis-à-vis Irish writers from Raphaël Ingelbien, “An Irish Diasporic Translator: Louise Swanton Belloc and the Diffusion of Irish Writing in Nineteenth-Century France,” *Translation Studies*, vol. 13, no. 2 (2020): 138–52. On the unusualness of her negotiations with publishers and for another narration of Belloc’s biography, see Susan Pickford, “Traducteurs” in *Histoire des traductions en langue française. XIXe siècle (1815–1914)*, edited by Yves Chevrel, Lieven D’hulst, and Christine Lombez, (Lagrasse: Verdier 2012), pp. 119–157, especially 150.

To pursue a reading of Belloc's translation that seeks to understand the political and literary significance of her verbal choices for French readers, this chapter adopts a historicist approach informed by book history and cultural studies in order to situate the text materially and discursively in French literary and political history. As in preceding chapters of this dissertation, a hermeneutic approach culled from Translation Studies guides my reconstruction of the historical and discursive contexts of the receiving and source cultures and languages in order to infer and argue for what interpretants are at play for Belloc. The first section of this chapter does so by drawing on research about the publishing history, political function, and reception of Stowe's novel, initially a serialized feature in *The National Era*. The novel attracted an unprecedentedly vast readership, as members of Congress, African-American activists, then leaders in the abolitionist movement, and fellow writers engaged in debate about the text's aesthetics and politics. In many ways revolutionary, the novel deviated from social norms that circumscribed the bounds of sentimental and women's writing to include only matters of the heart and home, experimenting with new forms of social realism that purported to document the truth of slavery's brutality and taking aim at the recently passed, yet actively debated and resisted, Fugitive Slave Law. As the Underground Railroad pressured the 32nd Congress to reconsider the Law's constitutionality, Stowe's novel took to task Northerners and Southerners alike for their complicity in what could only be the Law's moral bankruptcy, given how it enlisted them in maintaining the legality of the slave system. Although many abolitionists and Northerners praised the novel's compelling arguments, reviewers on both sides of the Atlantic critiqued its racial politics and its ostensible position on the American Colonization movement.

Many of the features and circumstances that made the text exceptionally disruptive for U.S. readers, my research shows, did not resonate with the same effect in the political and literary context of France. The first section of the chapter demonstrates that, unlike in the U.S. and broader Anglophone context, which saw the intrusion of Stowe's sentimental literature into political matters as inappropriate and rash, French literary artists had long played a decisive role in national and foreign politics. Romantic and sentimental writers such as Victor Hugo, François-René de Chateaubriand, and Alphonse de Lamartine held political office and routinely intervened in public debate through their literature. Moreover, George Sand, a socialist and romantic writer, was the most widely read and translated author of the period, exercising great influence over public debate. Indeed, the French Romantic literary tradition had long fretted over the social and political implications of colonialism, whether crafting narratives of "colonial intimacy," slave rebellion, or French paternalism. Although the censorship regime of le Second Empire attempted to constrain literature's political function, scholars have convincingly shown that writers in this period used literary magazines and aesthetic debate as a covert means of engaging in public political discussion, whether about issues such as the abolition of slavery, the tyranny of the monarchy, or the *mission civilisatrice* that le Second Empire undertook in their colonial expansion into North and West Africa and the South Pacific.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ See, for instance: Agnès Sandras "L'ambivalente reception," Partie I-III; Alain Vaillant, "La Presse littéraire" in *La civilisation du journal: histoire culturelle et littéraire de la presse française au XIXe siècle*, edited by Dominique Kalifa, et al. (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2011), pp. 317-332; and Peter Vantine, "Censoring/Censuring the Press under the Second Empire: The Goncourts as Journalists and 'Charles Demailly'" *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, vol. 43, no. 1&2 (2014): 45-62.

The second section analyzes the translation and source text together by situating them in relation to a comparison of the source and receiving languages and cultures. I look to Belloc's verbal choices in order to establish connections between them and her translation strategies that, finally, amount to my interpretation of her translation and the possible meanings it would release. *La case de l'oncle Tom* was, by Belloc's textual decisions, as well as her work's reception by readers and reviewers, positioned within the French romantic and sentimental traditions, which had long been socially oriented and feminized. Even as these forms fell out of fashion among the French literary elite, her translation activated them to engage political and social issues of great concern to French readers. Focusing on corresponding U.S. and French republican concepts such as *la liberté* and revolution, as well as the paternalism of abolitionism, I show that Belloc's translation managed to be both apparently "foreign" enough to pass French censors who prohibited commentary on local issues, and, covertly, deeply nostalgic for a French republicanism that united *le peuple* against the tyranny of the Emperor. Images of "racial mixing" in Stowe's novel come to serve a distinctly French imperial and historical purpose in *La case*, as the text grapples with the recent and fraught memory of the Haitian Revolution, and hopes for racial harmony among the colonizers and colonized in new and expanding French African territories. By attending to images of the political freedom for which French readers longed, and those which threatened or stabilized a vision of racial harmony in the future, I demonstrate how Belloc's registration of the U.S. novel's foreignness through close rendering also answered to what would be interesting and intelligible to French readers. Her combination of such rendering—guided by a concept of equivalence, "scrupuleuse fidélité"—with insertions and subtle departures

from it represents, I suggest, an interpretive move that proves to create a potentially provocative text for French readers that differs from the one initially written by Stowe.

I argue that Belloc's moves have the effect of shifting the focal point of Stowe's affective appeal to the "public sentiment of nations," which restricted its enlistment of support to the cause of U.S. abolition. Belloc's version of the novel inscribes its most explicit calls to "feel right" with a longing for revolutions past, and a future vision of utopian egalitarianism that circumvents violent revolts by either those who remain enslaved or (will be) colonized. Consequently, Belloc's interpretive moves impact French language and culture in two interrelated ways: first, they contribute to solidifying the reorientation of the meaning of the republican concept *la liberté* towards the universal emancipation of the enslaved; and second, they rework French colonial discourse and images to figure the expansion of the le Second Empire as a benevolent and socially necessary undertaking in a Francocentric future. Understanding the effects produced by Belloc's strategies, including their generation of new meanings, allows us to see and appreciate the political stakes of selecting this anti-slavery work to translate in this particular way. Her translation occasions reflection about this specific set of French social and political concerns both because it renders *this* work in French and because it integrates close lexical and syntactical adherence to its features with the use of French political idioms and imagery.

The Political Significance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in le Second Empire

When Stowe's novel first appeared in translation in French, readers voraciously consumed the text that had already been a sensation in the U.S. and England. Translations

and adaptations were produced rapidly, all competing for the attention of a rapt readership. “Tom Mania” was visited upon France towards the end of 1852. At the material level of its circulation and reception, the sheer proliferation of forms and media through which it was made available and reacted to indicate avid engagement. In the short span from late 1852 through early 1853, eleven translations and around twenty distinct editions appeared, in addition to at least three theatrical adaptations.¹¹⁹ Lengthy reviews and announcements, among other promotional materials flooded papers, and, in response, the satirical press was quickly abuzz, churning out all manner of parodies, comedic stories, cartoons, and caricatures.¹²⁰ Despite its commercial success, however, scholars have hesitated to suggest that the translation of the novel had any decisive political influence on French readers. France had already abolished slavery in its extant colonies in 1848, and reviews of the novel generally expressed that readers in France were well beyond the question of slavery and the racism on which it depended. Indeed, when Stowe wrote a preface for Louise Belloc’s translation of the novel, she seemed to believe French readers would be less inclined to engage with the immediate aims of the book than those in England, who, she hoped, could exercise more direct political influence over the U.S. South and Congress. In her preface, she sought instead to reframe the novel as one that articulated a universal message, writing “The author proposed, in this book, an even loftier goal than emancipation: she wanted to turn our attention to the source of all liberty, to the Savior Jesus Christ” (qtd. in Diller 641). She appeals to broad

¹¹⁹ Agnès Sandras “L’ambivalente reception,” *Partie I*.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

French and Christian values—*la liberté* and eternal salvation—to frame the text as one that meditates on slavery as a violation of shared moral and religious sensibilities.

Belloc's own prefatory writing sketched a different role for French readers. Framing the novel's capacity to move readers as a revolutionary power, Belloc suggests that it might accomplish the transnational political aim of "abolition complète" (complete abolition) (xv). Years later, in 1878, when Houghton Mifflin published a new edition of Stowe's novel in the U.S., the publishers featured testimony from Belloc that indicates that her hope for the novel had indeed come to pass. In English translation, Belloc's testimony reads: "It was read by high and low, by grown persons and children. A great enthusiasm for the anti-slavery cause was the result. The popularity of the work in France was immense, and no doubt influenced the public mind in favor of the North during the war of secession" (liii). By her account, her translation of the novel was not only popular, but politically influential, as it cultivated French support for abolition. However, historical scholarship generally agrees that French readers remained largely ambivalent towards involvement in the cause of worldwide abolition. Despite Belloc's hope that the translation would move French readers to action, the translation is remembered as largely politically ineffectual.¹²¹

In this section, I consider how the history of revolutionary politics in France, the mournful memory of the Haitian Revolution, the immediate context of yet another repressive Napoleonic regime, and the imminent expansion of the French Empire shaped Belloc's translation as well as French readers' engagement with its revolutionary

¹²¹ See: Christopher G. Diller, "The Prefaces to 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'"; Claire Parfait, "Un succès américain en France" and *The Publishing History of Uncle Tom's Cabin*; and Agnès Sandras "L'ambivalente réception," Partie I-III.

potential. I argue that although French critics and readers express self-satisfaction in their assessment of *La Case de L'oncle Tom*, reading the U.S. as woefully behind in terms of abolition and viewing the cause as passé, French abolitionists and writers had failed as yet to agree on either unified understanding of the Haitian Revolution, an event that loomed large in the imagination of a French public on the cusp of yet more colonial expansion, or the broader legacy of colonial plantation slavery. The political and civic fate of formerly enslaved and free Black persons within the French empire still hung in the balance. Belloc's translation of Stowe came at a decisive moment in French revolutionary political discourse as writers and thinkers conjured new racial tropics that both revised their memory of Haiti and justified further colonial domination of peoples in Africa. In what follows, I sketch the political and discursive contexts in which both the source text and translation circulated to show how they shaped and reshaped the work's political function as well as its formal textual features and therefore its meaning.

Writing "under the spell of the protest climate of late 1850" (Brooke 127), Harriet Beecher Stowe published the first installment of the serialized novel that would become *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in June 1851 in response to the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law and what she perceived as a lack of political will to challenge the power of slaveholders in Congress. At the suggestion of her sister-in-law, Stowe began publishing the novel serially in the abolitionist newspaper, *The National Era*, a moderate anti-slavery publication based in Washington, D.C. funded and devised by Lewis Tappan and his supporters in the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Edited by Free-Soiler Gamaliel Bailey and Liberty Party founder and gradualist John Greenleaf Whittier, it was a newspaper that published abolitionist pieces and promoted American literature, yet

Stowe's was the first abolitionist fiction to be featured.¹²² The choice to publish her work with *The National Era* was significant for several reasons. Since the paper was strategically moderate, it tended to print well-trod anti-slavery arguments on a weekly basis, along with flat, clichéd portrayals of fugitive slaves that evacuated them of all of subjectivity.¹²³ William Lloyd Garrison and other radical abolitionists regarded the paper's approach as "milk-toast" politics (Brooke 117), as it risked generating apathy around the issue through relentless repetition, accommodating readers who might be anti-slavery but were also anti-Garrisonian immediate abolition. By placing her fiction in this newspaper, Stowe addressed readers who were in the capital—a slaveholding state and the site of the political stagnation surrounding slavery—and especially those who remained undecided about the cause of abolition. And, crucially, she did so by creating enslaved characters who generated identification through a psychic and emotional depth to which readers were unaccustomed, cutting through the abstractions of "fugitives" and "slaves," "rights" and "laws" to which they were.¹²⁴

¹²² See Barbara Hochman, "'Uncle Tom's Cabin' in the 'National Era': An Essay in Generic Norms and the Contexts of Reading," *Book History*, vol. 7 (2004): 143–69. Hochman argues for the significance of *UTC* as the first abolitionist fiction featured in the *Era* through a detailed and illuminating reconstruction of the "abolitionist and literary material alongside it" that allows us to better "understand how Stowe's narrative often challenged well-worn interpretive norms" (145). For historical details about the *Era*, including its political orientation, I have drawn on the following sources in addition to Hochman: John L. Brooke, *"There Is a North": Fugitive Slaves, Political Crisis, and Cultural Transformation in the Coming of the Civil War* (Amherst: UMass P, 2019), especially pp. 116-119; Tracy C. Davis and Stefka Mihaylova, "Introduction" in *Uncle Tom's Cabins*, pp. 1-29, 2; and Sarah Robbins, *The Cambridge Introduction to Harriet Beecher Stowe* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2007), pp. 26-61.

¹²³ See Barbara Hochman, "'Uncle Tom's Cabin' in the 'National Era,'" 156-157.

¹²⁴ See Barbara Hochman, "'Uncle Tom's Cabin' in the 'National Era,'" 156-158. While Hochman argues that "the choice of sentimental fiction afforded Stowe a battery of rhetorical devices for defamiliarizing slavery," she takes care to qualify that Stowe's "effort to attribute emotional depth and moral consciousness to the slaves she created relied heavily on white middle-class conceptions of subjectivity, moral norms, and family relations" (156). Indeed, what makes Hochman's argument so convincing is that she deftly maintains a balancing act between,

Stowe's decision to write anti-slavery fiction in long form was, in 1851, a bold move. It was far less common in the 1840s and 50s for women writers to take up political and social causes directly, more often writing about domestic dramas and moral issues, and unusual for white writers in general to take up the subject of slavery in fiction.¹²⁵ Even as it appeared to conform to the moderate politics of the paper, Stowe's project was in many ways a radical one, transforming the conventions of sentimental fiction and abolitionist discourse to convince readers of "the capabilities in liberated blacks to take care of themselves," as she wrote to her husband in late December, 1850 about her plan for the serial (Charles Stowe 147). She intended to show how the "peculiar domestick [*sic*] institution," (Calhoun) through which slaveholders claimed to provide benevolent and paternalistic care for slaves, also had the effect of corrupting and perverting the institution of the family for both the enslaved and the free.¹²⁶ Targeting families of readers, Stowe's cultural intervention was framed as an appeal to sentiment, the private

on the one hand, recognizing how Stowe's most prominent "black characters" embody "sooner or later" the "ideals of white middle-class behavior, including gratitude and self-control," and, on the other, that "many of these characters invite the reader's identification precisely where white norms of behavior are abrogated" (157-158).

¹²⁵ See: Brooke, "*There Is a North*"; Hochman, "'Uncle Tom's Cabin'"; and Robbins, *The Cambridge Introduction to Harriet Beecher Stowe*.

¹²⁶ John C. Calhoun used this phrase in a September 11, 1830 letter to his friend Virgil Maxcy at the height of the Nullification Crisis of 1828-1832 to describe one of three pillars of the South that opposed them to the North "in regard to taxation and appropriations." The other two were "her soil and climate." William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass popularized the phrase as they lampooned it. While its benevolent, Christian paternalist defense of slavery became commonplace, Calhoun significantly mobilized it to foment an extreme Southern states' rights position. For a comprehensive history situating the letter in the broader context of the Civil War and Reconstruction, see Allen C. Guelzo, *Fateful Lightning: A New History of the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford UP, 2012), 51-53. On the carrying forward of Calhoun's position into the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law debates, see John L. Brooke, "*There Is a North*," 73-76.

feelings that they might most typically express and extend to their family—sympathy, affection, pity—which were at odds with the conventions of sociality and political debate that characterized the public sphere.¹²⁷ But her appeal to the heart supplied as its most potent evidence historically realist representations of slaves, slave traders, politicians, and freedmen.¹²⁸ As she wrote to Gamaliel Bailey: “My vocation is simply that of a *painter*, and my object will be to hold up in the most lifelike and graphic manner possible slavery, its reverses, changes, and the negro character, which I have had ample opportunity for

¹²⁷ The argument I pursue here is, crucially, made possible by a series of seminal, corrective feminist readings that emphasized *UTC*'s social and cultural functions in relation to its form. Their recovery of it as a literary work illuminating to study in this period informs my approach to it as what Jane Tompkins calls a “political enterprise” (126). In addition to Tompkins, see: Elizabeth Ammons, “Heroines in Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” *American Literature*, vol. 49, no. 2 (1977): 161–79; Gillian Brown, “Getting in the Kitchen with Dinah: Domestic Politics in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*,” *American Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 4 (1984): 503–23; and Ann Douglas’ negative critique of its sentimentalizing apology for slavery in *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Macmillan, 1998 [1977]). For a deft evaluation of this scholarship that considers how race has been “mut[ed]” in its readings (59), as well as how subject positioning bears on any “collective [or] individual reinvention of the discourse of ‘slavery’” (29), see Hortense J. Spillers, “Changing the Letter: The Yokes, The Jokes of Discourse, or Mrs. Stowe, Mr. Reed,” in *Slavery and the Literary Imagination*, edited by Deborah E. McDowell and Arnold Rampersad (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1989), pp. 25–61.

¹²⁸ On Stowe’s use of realism and effort to create factual representations of actual historical actors, see: Winfried Fluck, “The Power and Failure of Representation in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*,” *New Literary History*, vol. 23, no. 2 (1992): 319–38; John C. Havard, “Fighting Slavery by ‘Presenting Facts in Detail’: Realism, Typology, and Temporality in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*,” *American Literary Realism*, vol. 44, no. 3 (2012): 249–66; and Hochman, “‘Uncle Tom’s Cabin.’” Any discussion of this dimension of the novel, however, must qualify its treatment of it given what can rightly be understood as the novel’s “realism,” once one accounts for the “racist assumptions” that “inform Stowe’s slave portraits” (Hochman 156). Beyond critical attention to these often “carnavalesque” caricatures (Spillers 35), a focus on “sympathy itself as a coercive dynamic that appropriates and demeans its object” (Hochman 156) emerged as framework to analyze the novel, and sentimentalism more broadly. See, for instance: James Baldwin, “Everybody’s Protest Novel” in *Notes of a Native Son* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012 [1955]), 13; Lauren Berlant, *The Female Complaint the Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture* (Durham: Duke UP, 2008), especially 33–67; Castiglia, “Abolitions Racial Interiors”; Amy Schrager Lang, “Slavery and Sentimentalism: The Strange Career of Augustine St. Clare,” *Women’s Studies*, vol. 12, no. 1 (1986): 31–54; and Spillers, “Changing the Letter.”

studying. There is no arguing with pictures.”¹²⁹ Stowe aimed, with this representation of U.S. society, to transgress the imaginative boundary distinguishing private from public life, to move moderate and complacent Northern readers to action by bringing the political and social realities of slavery into their parlors, and even, as Christopher Diller observes, to “cultivate common ground with Southern readers” (621).

Perhaps because of its formal innovations, or else because of the audacity of Stowe’s endeavor, the novel became a lightning rod in public discourse, provoking a series of debates among U.S. and European readers, both in the press and in the halls of Congress. In each case, readers’ public responses to the text served as an occasion to trot out their own political position, whether about the colonization project, the Fugitive Slave Law, or the political efficacy of sentimental literary form. The polarizing responses to the novel began from the original appearance of the first chapter in *The National Era* and continued throughout Stowe’s quest to publish the serialized chapters in full thereafter. With only about a third of the novel written and published in serially, Stowe was issued a contract for the novel’s publication as a book by John P. Jewett, a small publisher in Boston who contacted Stowe at the urging of his wife. Although the serialization was quite popular and well known, several larger publishers had already denied Stowe due to the political nature of the work and the controversy it was already generating. Even before its publication as a book, it could be reasonably credited with reigniting the 1852 public and congressional debates around the Compromise of 1850 and the Fugitive Slave Law.¹³⁰ Within the first month of its publication by Jewett in March 1852, Congressman

¹²⁹ Letter to Gamaliel Bailey, 9 Mar. 1851, William Lloyd Garrison Papers, Boston Public Library.

¹³⁰ Brooke, “*There Is a North*,” especially 150-58.

Orin Fowler of Massachusetts referenced Stowe's novel in his remarks on slavery to the House, describing it as "a work which, for descriptive power and truthful delineation of character, is unrivalled, and will be read wherever the spirit of liberty beats in the heart of man."¹³¹ Figuring Stowe as a representative of the best American mothers, Fowler sanctions women's authority to intervene in matters of the heart, even as it exercised influence over political discourse and reshaped the terms of the congressional debate.

During the 32nd Congress, Fowler and other anti-slavery representatives reintroduced their dissatisfaction with the Compromise of 1850, which had sought to stabilize relations among free and slave states by reissuing the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 in bolstered form to require that all citizens aid slave catchers, and making it a crime to assist a fugitive. In his final statement to Congress on August 26, 1852, on the illegitimacy of the Fugitive Slave Act, Senator Charles Sumner, too, cited Stowe's work as evidence that broad public opinion was against slavery. He wrote: "In a brief period, nearly 100,000 copies of Uncle Tom's Cabin have been already circulated. But this extraordinary and sudden success—surpassing all other instances in the records of literature—cannot be regarded merely as a triumph of genius. Higher far than this, it is the testimony of the people, by an unprecedented act, against the Fugitive Slave Bill."¹³² Sumner transforms the act of reading fiction, in the period often considered a frivolous and leisurely activity, into the decisive expression of the body politic. Comparing Stowe

¹³¹ Rep. Fowler (Mass.) "Slavery Question—Public Lands—The Tariff—Non-Intervention," *Congressional Globe: Thirty-Second Congress, First Session, App.* (31 Mar. 1852), 394.

¹³² Sen. Sumner (Mass.) "The Fugitive Slave Law (Debate in the Senate)," *Congressional Globe: Thirty-Second Congress, First Session, App.* (26 Aug. 1852), 1112.

with Joan of Arc, he calls the author a “woman inspired by Christian genius,” who, “with marvelous power, sweeps the chords of the popular heart. Now melting to tears, and now inspiring to rage, her work everywhere touches the conscience, and makes the Slave-Hunter more hateful.”¹³³ Sumner’s speech, thereafter reprinted widely and read alongside Stowe’s novel, renders Stowe a vehicle through which both the people and God speak, a metaphysical force that effects political change by moving hearts. Stowe’s novel, and its subsequent interpretation by anti-slavery politicians, introduces feeling, or sentiment, as a political concept in the antebellum public sphere.¹³⁴

Although political leaders opposed to the Fugitive Slave Law were eager to claim the novel as the articulation of right feelings and a beacon of hope and direction for the nation, African American readers in the U.S. responded more ambivalently. Frederick Douglass, for example, endorsed the novel’s message, strategically publishing an advertisement for the text in the April 1, 1852 issue of his paper, releasing his affirmation of its message during the 32nd Congress. *Frederick Douglass’ Paper* thereafter featured responses, news items, and reviews of the novel, some of which were more critical of Stowe’s racist caricatures of Black slaves, and apparent endorsement of the colonization project that would have freed and educated African Americans sent to a new colony in Liberia, which Stowe has one of her most affirmed characters, fugitive slave George Harris, idealize in relation to Haiti where “the subject race will be centuries in rising to anything” (426). Shortly after the book’s publication, in June 1852, reader William Wilson writing under the name “Ethiop,” penned a critical review addressed to Douglass,

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ On the reprinting of Sumner’s speech, see Brooke, “*There Is a North*,” 155-56.

taking particular issue with the character of Tom and Stowe's apparent idealization of Black non-resistance. Wilson wrote that "the blacks (who by position ought to be the more faithful delineators of oppression, and the keenest searchers after justice, that she fully does her office-work) being found in the REAR instead of being found, not merely in the FRONT RANK, but in the very LEAD" ("Ethiop"). Such a critique was elaborated the following year by Martin Delany in letters exchanged with Douglass and published in the paper. For Delany, and other Black writers across the republic, Stowe persisted in envisioning emancipation as a gift bestowed, not a right won by the struggle and will of the enslaved themselves. Writes Delany:

... in the same world-renowned and widely circulated work, she sneers at Hayti—the only truly free and independent civilized black nation as such, or colored if you please, on the face of the earth—at the same time holding up the little dependent colonization settlement of Liberia in high estimation? I must be permitted to draw my own conclusions, when I say that I can see no other cause for this singular discrepancy in Mrs. Stowe's interest in the colored race, than that one is independent of, and the other subservient to, white men's power. ("Mrs. Stowe's Position")

Delany suggests that the difference between Stowe's representation of colonization and the Haitian Revolution implies an underlying racial politics: embracing the colonization movement was akin, for him, to not only locating emancipatory power in white men's hands, but creating a new form of subservience. This interpretation is supported by Stowe's idealization of Tom, a Christ-like character celebrated for his passive, pious acceptance of suffering. For some Black abolitionists in the U.S., this articulated preference for non-resistance of the enslaved to the terms of slavery was harmful and portended a future in which freedom would require their continued subordination to a white ruling class. Moreover, Stowe's "sneer" denied the enslaved—whether in Haiti or the U.S.—the capacity and agency to free themselves from their condition.

The novel's position on the Haitian Revolution, the colonization project, and the figure of Tom remained at the center of reader responses across the Atlantic, where the book received praise from Stowe's political allies and criticism from readers who felt the novel's characters were unrealistic, its advocacy for immediate abolition rash, and the form of the novel inappropriate for its content. Right as the book was published in the U.S., Stowe sent copies to abolitionists and writers in England, including Charles Dickens, Prince Albert, and T.B. Macaulay, enlisting their support to both advocate for the abolition of U.S. slavery and prevent Canada from complying with the Fugitive Slave Law—an imminent possibility, from her perspective (Diller 626). Despite praise from these allies, public conversation turned more contentious when a highly critical review appeared in the *London Times* in September 1852. Reprinted throughout prominent Anglophone Atlantic periodicals such as *The New York Times*, *The New York Independent*, regional American newspapers and circulated as an independent tract on both sides of the Atlantic, the review would become a touchstone for much of the subsequent public discourse about the novel's feminized literary form, racial politics, and vision for emancipation (Diller 634-35). For the reviewers, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* threatens to awaken violent passions that they feel will ultimately prove disastrous to the goal of abolition. The issue, they write, is that “with the instinct of her sex, the clever authoress takes the shortest road to her purpose, and strikes at the convictions of her readers by assailing their hearts” (“American Slavery”). Whereas Congressmen and supportive readers praised Stowe's capacity to move readers, these reviewers frame this feature of her writing as a flaw, potentially a liability, and even a “weapon” (“American Slavery”). Faulting the intuitive and passionate “instincts” of Stowe's “sex,” the reviewers claim

that the text effects a rash assault on political processes that the lady does not fully understand.

At worst, they imagine, Stowe's "impassioned song may set a world in conflagration," igniting the rage of racist whites (North and South) and the vengeful ire of those they enslave ("American Slavery"). That she advocates for immediate abolition they also see as a shortsighted and impulsive suggestion—"the shortest road to her purpose"—arguing that it would without a doubt result in widespread violence:

Imagine them [the enslaved] liberated to-morrow in those portions of the United States where they outnumber the whites, and where they would have only to raise their liberated hands in order to strike down the traditional enemies of their race, their once tyrannical owners, their always contemptuous social superiors. Hate begets hate, and a war of races secures the rapid deterioration and decline of all the combatants. We may well shrink before rashly inviting so bloody and disastrous a conflict. ("American Slavery")

In stark contrast to Delany's sense that the novel's rendering evacuates Black agency by subordinating it to white power, the reviewers suggest that the novel portends "bloody" "black" insurrection, a "war of races" initiated by legions of a vengeful enslaved population. The reviewers cite anecdotal evidence to support their sense that, at present, neither the "whites" nor "blacks" of U.S. society are ready for abolition, as the former are too hateful and the latter too uncivilized ("American Slavery"). It is for this reason that they take special issue with Stowe's rendering of Uncle Tom. As "an Ethiop," Delany, and other readers did, the reviewers interpret Tom as unbelievably passive. Yet in difference with these Black readers, the *London Times* article suggests that what is "unrealistic" about Tom as a representative of a "class" of "Negroes" is that he is depicted as morally superior to even white characters within the novel, effecting a

reversal of the white supremacist racial hierarchy that undergirds Western colonialism, missionary evangelism, and even slavery.

Throughout the essay, the reviewers again and again call to mind images of racial disorder that both admit an underlying fear of insurrection and produce it. They see Stowe's novel as itself engendering a symbolic revolution of the racial hierarchy—"paint[ing] her negroes, mulattoes, and quadroons, in the very whitest white, while she is equally careful to disfigure her whites with the very blackest black"—as it calls for the bloody, political revolution that would result from immediate abolition. Inflected by both their impression of the U.S., as generated by anecdotes and travel writing, and a British gradualist abolitionism that finds its nearest historical referent in the, by this point, defunct apprenticeship system, the reviewers contrast these images of disorder with a fanciful image of racial harmony in Jamaica achieved through that system and the slow integration of former slaves into political and public institutions. Endorsing the colonization movement and ongoing efforts to educate and Christianize slaves in the U.S. and elsewhere, the authors argue, in the end, that Stowe's advocacy for a more accelerated program is rash and unnecessary, citing the successful efforts of Southern slaveholders to improve the living conditions of their plantations and of all slaveholding empires to civilize Africans through education and Christian indoctrination. Peace and harmony, they say, is inevitable. In sum, the review mobilizes prevailing gender and racial ideologies to stoke fears of "black" barbarism and undermine Stowe's authority, delegitimizing immediate abolition as a feminine fantasy of the weak-minded and overly sentimental. Widely reprinted throughout the U.S., and repeatedly referenced by reviewers in their assessment of the novel, the review became the central set of talking

points that Stowe was determined to refute, especially in the prefaces that she wrote for international editions.

When Stowe authorized the novel's translation and composed prefaces for each edition, she sought to create a framework for the text's interpretation by transnational audiences whom she perceived as differently interested in and empowered to advance the cause of the abolition of U.S. slavery. The historical and discursive contexts in which Stowe shaped the reception of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* included not only the U.S., but also Europe and the Americas where its reprinting, translation, publication, and adaptation within the first two years of its appearance engaged transnational histories and political concerns.¹³⁵ Although Stowe didn't expect that French readers would be interested in or positioned to directly support the cause of U.S. abolition, the novel in French translation and adaptation took on a new political function, initiating meditation on the history and future of French colonialism, exploration of "interracial" relationships as either a threat to cultural stability or a method to achieve egalitarian social relations, and debate about the relationship between literature and social issues.

Towards the end of 1852, the novel was brought to France from England through two lengthy reviews that each praised the novel and emphasized its phenomenal reception among U.S. and English readers. A competition between French periodicals and

¹³⁵ On this print cultural history, see for instance: Diller, "The Prefaces to 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'"; Parfait, "Un succès américain en France" and *The Publishing History of Uncle Tom's Cabin*; Boggs, *Transnationalism and American Literature: Literary Translation 1773–1892*; and Davis and Mihaylova, editors, *Uncle Tom's Cabins: The Transnational History of America's Most Mutable Book*.

translations ensued, each adopting different marketing strategies for attracting voracious readers. Some published a few chapters at a time to draw a steady readership; others published larger swaths of the novel and delayed printing the next series in order to build suspense (and likely in order for the work of translation to be done); and each critiqued the others' quality of translation and translators' authority to deliver an "correct" version of the American text that was not "abridged."¹³⁶ Of the eleven translations produced between 1852 and 1853, however, only two could claim to be authorized by Stowe herself: one by Leon Pilatte; and the other by Lousie Belloc, notably the only woman translator of the novel whom Stowe claimed to prefer to all others as such, and whose title page bore the inscription "Traduction faite à la demande de l'Auteur" (Translation done at the request of the Author). Pilatte was hired to translate the novel as a serial in November 1852 by *La Presse*, stepping in after the periodical had already released the novel's first chapter. The publication justified this decision by explaining first that he "arrivé récemment d'Amérique ... où il a vécu au milieu des noirs" (arrived recently from America... where he had lived among the blacks). Pilatte was thus trusted to provide an historically accurate rendering and disclose crucial contextual details about the American South that might help readers interpret the novel. The next month, in December 1852, Pilatte's translation was advertised as "la seule autorisée et approuvée par l'auteur" (the only one authorized and approved by the author).¹³⁷ Just a few months

¹³⁶ Claire Parfait's article, "Un succès américain en France" tracks the appearance of different translations, their marketing strategies, and reception. Of particular interest is paragraph 21 in which she describes how different translations claimed exceptionality and excellence in relation to others, some presuming the significance of the text's "completion" and other's its "authenticity," as achieved through the use of a translator familiar with U.S. American idioms and practices, or through authorization by Stowe herself.

¹³⁷ See the advertising insert on the last page of *La Presse* dated December 20, 1852.

later, in early 1853 however, Belloc's translation was announced by her publisher, Gervais Charpentier, who proudly claimed that this new translation was "demandée par l'auteur" (requested by the author) (*Bibliographie de la France* 306).

Published within a few months of each other, and within less than a year of the text's first appearance in France, the prefaces that Stowe writes for each translation represent two distinct appeals to French readers, who, Stowe fears, may be somewhat ambivalent to the political message of the novel. The "first" preface, published with Belloc's translation, appeals to readers' anti-slavery politics and religious sensibilities.¹³⁸ In contrast to those prefaces published for the English or European editions,¹³⁹ which presents the book as an "appeal to the public sentiment of a common humanity" (reprinted in Diller, 629) the preface for the Charpentier edition reads, in Belloc's translation: "L'auteur s'est proposé, dans ce livre, un but encore plus élevé que celui de l'émancipation; elle a voulu porter nos regards vers la source de toute liberté, vers le Sauveur Jésus" (The author proposed, in this book, an even greater goal than emancipation: she wants to direct our gaze towards the source of all liberty, towards the Savior Jesus) (ii). Presuming that the French, who have just recently abolished slavery in 1848, are not particularly compelled by the cause any longer, the preface appeals first to

¹³⁸ According to Diller's 2004 research, it has been difficult to discern which of the two French prefaces were composed by Stowe first, as both were published in 1853. Diller supports the thesis of John A. Woods that conceives of the preface given to Belloc as "first" and the preface given to Pilatte as "second." In addition, Belloc's translation contains two additional paragraphs that do not appear in the English language typescript manuscript held by the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center in Hartford, Connecticut. It is possible that Belloc received additional paragraphs from Stowe that have been lost in their travel across the Atlantic, or that Belloc inserted two paragraphs of her own.

¹³⁹ Although it appears in the German language translation of the novel, Stowe titles it "Preface to the European Edition."

readers' moral superiority and then suggests that the novel calls not just for a local cause, but for "toute liberté" (all liberty). Recalling French revolutionary discourse around *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, the preface also inscribes the novel's message with an especially religious interpretation, locating the source of liberty in Christian salvation. Such an appeal was astutely informed by French political discourse around slavery. Slavery had historically been justified by the French empire as an institution that offered Christian salvation to African souls, while bringing moral pain and damnation to the slaveholders (Miller).

The "second" French preface published with Pilatte's translation further distinguishes the "local errand & object" of the novel from its potential relevance for French readers, redoubling the effort to frame *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a religious parable and containing a more universal message (transcribed in Diller 642). Stowe writes: "In the history of Uncle Tom we have the history of the relation of the human soul, in itself poor helpless & defenceless [sic] to the divine *Redeemer* by whom it becomes powerful glorious & divine. Jesus Christ was born in a stable, & cradled in a manger, came not of the great the rich & the powerful but of the poor & lowly—thus by one significant act proclaiming to all ages his brotherhood with man, in his lowest estate & his lowest determination by that brotherhood, to restore man to God" (transcribed in Diller 643). The preface proceeds to elaborate on this idea, channeling readers' devotion to Christ as a meek and lowly sufferer towards the "poor American slave." The preface moves from comparing Christ's earthly poverty with the conditions of slaves, to His capacity to love the enslaved, to the faith of the enslaved in Christ, and finally to the "day of reckoning" on which Christ will issue judgment upon those who witnessed suffering and failed to

intervene. Writing for the French that “deeper than that local & temporary design of the book lies another applicable to all countries and all times,” Stowe appeals to the Christian sentiments that had long undergirded French revolutionary and anti-slavery politics, while also converting hers from a “local” issue to a “universal” truth. This may have been in anticipation of, or in response to, a dominant French literary culture that valued art for art’s sake (“l’art pour l’art”) over sentimental women’s fiction. As Stowe had already received negative reviews inflected by sexism in the U.S. and England that questioned the aesthetic quality of her work and the role of women’s fiction in politics, the attempt to reframe the novel as disclosing a universal truth seems to anticipate critiques like that of Gustave Flaubert who, in a letter to Louise Colet, expressed disappointment with the novel’s failure to aspire to “la vérité seul, l’éternel” or “le Beau pur” (only truth, eternity, or pure beauty) (Kadish, “Gendered Readings” 313).

Both French prefaces appear to avoid altogether making secularized political appeals to readers who might be able to directly support the cause of U.S. abolition through immigrating to the U.S., voting, or otherwise exerting influence from abroad—all possibilities to which Stowe alludes in her prefaces to the British and German editions. Scholars have understood this changing focus in the prefaces as evidence that Stowe and perhaps her translators were unconvinced of the novel’s relevance or purchase for French readers for whom abolition was a foregone conclusion.¹⁴⁰ There is some evidence in the novel’s reception history to support this claim. In December 1852, for example, an article in the *Revue de Paris* opines: “Nous doutons toutefois que le succès de l’oncle Tom soit aussi vif en France qu’il l’a été en Amérique. La question de

¹⁴⁰ Scholars such as Parfait, Sandras, and Diller make this argument based on inference from Stowe’s prefaces and the reception of the translation in France.

l'esclavage nous est inconnue; les infortunes noires trouvent peu d'échos dans nos cœurs qui se réservent pour les philanthropies locales, et la curiosité épuisée, le livre passera sans doute, comme toute œuvre que ne soutient pas la puissance de la forme, et aussi de toutes les traductions" (We doubt, however, that Uncle Tom's success will be as strong in France as it has been in America. The issue of slavery is unknown to us; black misfortunes find little echo in our hearts which are reserved for local philanthropies, and curiosity exhausted, the book will no doubt pass, like any work that does not support the power of form, and also of all translations) ("Le monde et le théâtre"). The article in the *Revue* considers the aesthetic and political value of the text, finding both to be lacking in comparison to the standard set by French literature and the French abolition of slavery in 1848.

Other early reviewers also predicted that the novel would have very little impact on the French, even as it was already a phenomenon in the U.S. and England. Reiterating the point, another translator, Emile de La Bédollière, writes: "Pour nous Français, qui, sauf quelques exceptions, sommes tous d'accord sur les questions de liberté, ce livre n'a pas un intérêt immédiat" (For us French, who, with a few exceptions, are all in agreement on questions of freedom, this book is not of immediate interest) (La Bédollière 1). According to de La Bédollière, the French did not need to be convinced of the significance of freedom, implicitly referring to the freedom of the enslaved or French revolutionary politics more generally. As the French book historian Claire Parfait suggests, these reviews often read as "les témoignages d'auto-satisfaction" (testimonies of self-satisfaction) ("Un succès américain" 31). As such, the reviews generally position the French as well beyond the progress of the Americans that they read about, treating the

question of slavery, French colonialism, and even liberal democracy as a past achievement and foregone conclusion.

Their claim that the novel was of little significance, however, need not be read at face value. Belloc's translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* appeared in the context of a censorship regime bent on repressing criticism of the President turned Prince turned Emperor Napoleon III. Belloc and Stowe's other reviewers mourn not only the loss of French territories in the New World and the nation's standing as an imperial power, but also reckon with the memory of the Haitian Revolution and the reinstatement of a Bonapartic authoritarian regime in 1851. The regime imposed harsh financial strictures on newspapers and periodicals, and defined new press crimes which disallowed anonymity, as well as reportage on session of legislature or trials. As a result of severe penalties, the ubiquitous posting of warnings against press violations, and the seemingly arbitrary nature of punishments meted out for press violations, self-censorship among writers and journalists became common. This limited the scope of acceptable and safe literary output, and perhaps accounted in part for an apparent aesthetic shift in French literature. During this period, as more "objective" literature like that of Gustave Flaubert flourished, the regime suppressed more socially-oriented literature by writers Victor Hugo and Alphonse de Lamartine, who had formerly been elected to seats in the French Parliament of the Second Republic in 1848. Hugo, one of the most popular writers of the period, fled to exile on the island of Jersey where he wrote satirical critiques of the Emperor as well as *Les Misérables*. Those socially-minded writers who stayed in Paris, however, "deployed," according to Peter Vantine, "ingenuity and subtlety in working around government-imposed constraints by disguising their political views as aesthetic

debates, often in the theater reviews that were regularly published in the *feuilleton*” (52). What may, in other words, have appeared as translations of reviews of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* that debated the text’s aesthetic quality or political efficacy, might also be rife with subversive commentary about the monarchy and its oppressive practices. During this period, writes critic Alain Vaillant, it was commonly held belief that “le littéraire et le politique sont intimement liés, qu’ils représentent les deux dimensions complémentaires de l’action collective” (the literary and the political are intimately linked, that they represent the two complementary dimensions of collective action) (319). Even under the terms of the censorship regime, then, literature and literary presses served a key political function in French culture, whether through coded debate or the translation and adaptation of foreign texts.

Although the French downplayed the significance of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* as a work of literature in terms of both its aesthetic quality and its potential political impact, we therefore have reason to believe that it was socially significant. Theatrical adaptations in particular evince how both dramatists and their audiences transformed Stowe’s novel to comment on French social and political concerns, including the legacy of colonial slavery, the Haitian Revolution, present and future colonialism, and the meaning of race in the context of these historical developments. Although the text’s popularity was not necessarily a measure of the text’s political significance, the fact that the novel became and continued to be a referent for French political and literary discourse for decades thereafter is suggestive of its imaginative staying power. The theater was a key site in Parisian society for exploring social issues and already established as “a place where audiences went, unashamedly, to cry,” and early reviews of Stowe’s novel extolled its

ability to evoke emotion as readymade for drama (Sahakian 87). Within the first three months of 1853, three theatrical versions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* appeared, each advancing an interpretation of the novel through their adaptation, rewriting and staging it to speak to current French political and social issues.

Take, for example, the most popular and thereafter widely translated and disseminated theatrical adaptation, *La case de L'oncle Tom: drame en 8 actes* by Dumanoir and Dennery (Sahakian 83). It inscribes the novel, and especially the relationship between Stowe's Senator Bird and the runaway slave Eliza, with French ideological preoccupations and literary conventions. The interpretive factors shaping the transformation of Stowe's work here were the French ideology of paternalism and the formal features of French Romanticism. The playwrights adapt a famous chapter from Stowe's text in which Senator Bird and his wife discuss the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, for which Bird voted, and whether they would actually enforce the law should the opportunity to aid a refugee slave come to pass. In the source text, Senator Bird stands by his decision and his constitutional duty until their conversation is interrupted by the entrance of Eliza, an actual "fugitive slave" who finds herself in their kitchen. Dumanoir and Dennery replace reference to the Fugitive Slave Law with a more general discussion of the ramifications of emancipation. Like the reviewers in the *London Times*, Dumanoir and Dennery's Bird takes a gradualist posture, stating:

Non pas, je parle sérieusement... Je dis, je soutiendrai à tous vos abolitionistes, que le négre esclave est un enfant, dont toute la vie n'est qu'une longue minorité sous la tutelle du maître ... Je dis que, si vous ne l'avez pas préparé à l'emancipation... ce qui serait peut-être l'oeuvre d'un siècle ... il fera un triste usage d'une liberté incomprise... Que diable! Si vous voulez en faire des hommes libres, commencez donc par en faire des

hommes!... Eh! Tiens, vois tous ces esclaves affranchis par le caprice de leur maître ... (Dumanoir and d'Ennery 12)¹⁴¹

(Not at all, I speak seriously...I say, I maintain to all of your abolitionists, that the black slave is a child...whose whole life is but a long minority under the tutelage of the master... I say that, if you do not you haven't prepared him for emancipation... which would perhaps be the work of the century... he will make sad use of a misunderstood freedom... what the devil! If you want to make free men of them, the begin by making men of them!... Hey! Here, see all these slaves freed by the whim of their master...)

Dumanoir and Dennery's Senator Bird ironically dismisses the idealistic notion of freeing all slaves given the law's dictate that they are property. After his wife rejoins that he is always joking around, he doubles down, asserting his seriousness. While a clear analogue to such a scene exists in the source text, in terms of dialogue and characterization, Dumanoir and Dennery depart from a close correspondence to both, imbuing Bird and Marie's conversation and, in turn, their dynamic with recognizably French conventions and themes. Both pro and anti-slavery French rhetoric and writing had long deployed a paternalistic attitude towards the enslaved and its colonies. When Bird describes the slaves as "children" that need to be educated and properly made into men before they can be freed, he gives voice to the attitudes that had formerly justified the first French colonial empire's enslavement of Africans and, under the rule of Napoleon III, were newly supported under the banner of the *mission civilisatrice* (civilizing mission). Bird embodies a paternalistic, romantic hero familiar to French readers of Romantic literature and travel writing, here rendering the enslaved as an infantile population, and later

¹⁴¹ MM. Dumanoir and d'Ennery, *La case de l'oncle Tom: Drame en 8 actes* [Uncle Tom's cabin: Drama in eight acts], followed by *Griseldis, ou Les cinq sens: Ballet- pantomime en trois actes et cinq tableaux* [Griseldis; or, The five senses: Pantomime- ballet in three acts and five tableaux] (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1858). The French text is available through Gallica, BnF, where I consulted it. The translation of the titles is Sahakian's.

protecting Elisa (an analogue for Stowe's Eliza) from Harris (an analogue for Stowe's Haley), shooting the slave catcher dead in the play's climactic scene.

Whether by reviewers or dramatists, translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were positioned within the French Romantic tradition. As a socially-oriented and sentimental text written by a woman, the novel was swiftly interpreted as something akin to the works of Victor Hugo or George Sand, if not quite as good by French standards—made for the stage and written for children. In fact, George Sand was one of only a few major French writers to review the text at all. The most widely read European author in the period, and a powerful political and cultural voice in Paris, Sand's promotion of the novel in a December 20, 1852 issue of *La Presse* was crucial to its success thereafter. By her account, it is precisely those qualities that Flaubert and other critics name as the novel's faults that comprise its virtues. Praising Stowe's heart and soul ("son ame") as "la plus maternelle qui fût jamais" (the most maternal that ever was), Sand argues that it is the feminine qualities of the literature that give it power ("Harriet Beecher Stowe" 2). While she admits the novel was "mal fait selon les règles du roman moderne en France" (badly done according to the rules of the modern novel in France) (1), ultimately Sand suggests that:

"En fait d'art, d'ailleurs, il n'y a qu'une règle, qu'une loi, montrer et émouvoir. Où trouverons-nous des créations plus complètes, des types plus vivans, des situations plus touchantes et même plus originales que dans l'Oncle Tom?" (2)

(In matters of art, moreover, there is only one rule, only one law, to show and to move. Where will we find more complete creations, more lively types, more touching and even more original situations than in Uncle Tom?)

In contrast to Flaubert's "l'art pour l'art" which valued the universal objectivity of fictional writing, Sand's decidedly Romantic definition of art's function locates its value in its capacity to "show" and "move" readers. Elaborating on this idea with the example of the character Uncle Tom, Sand explains that in him, Stowe realizes for readers a "complete" creation, effectively creating a true-to-life rendering that she sets dramatically in motion. As she argues building to this point in the preceding paragraph, it is through these creations that the work is able to act upon readers—physically and politically—since Stowe's novel overwhelms us ("nous bouleverse"), chokes us up ("nous serre la gorge"), and pains the spirit ("nous navre l'esprit") (2). Readily amenable for Sand to the powerful emotions Romantic art concentrated and stirred, the novel's sentimental features effected a transformation in readers who gained new empathy for the enslaved through the "situations" Stowe dramatized and, in turn, new insight into slavery as political injustice. Stowe's genius ("génie") lay, in Sand's estimation, in her heart and how it guided such a creation (2). If, for Sand, Stowe shares something with Walter Scott and Honoré de Balzac, whom she cites as examples of initially misunderstood but later appreciated masters of their craft, it is that her writing issues from her instinct ("instinct") rather than the "rules of the modern novel" (1).

Beyond its immediate affiliation with French sentimentalism, Belloc's translation of Stowe's novel would intervene in a somewhat understudied aspect of French Romanticism: its engagement with colonial discourses and explorations of the social relations among colonizer and colonized. Though French Romanticism is often regarded by scholars as a literary and artistic movement characterized by introspective and increasingly individualized expressions of emotion or pain, recent scholarship has

convincingly shown that novels by such writers as François-René Chateaubriand, Victor Hugo, and George Sand engage with the histories and ongoing projects of French colonialism, mobilizing colonial discourses and giving shape to French colonial desires.¹⁴² Pratima Prasad argues that these novelistic explorations of romantic love between colonizer and colonized, the memory and suffering of indigenous peoples, and the institution of slavery produce and reproduce a kind of “doublespeak” that is characteristic of French colonial discourse. Chateaubriand’s novel *Les Natchez*, from which his deeply influential novella *René* was later excerpted, mourns the loss of the customs, language, and autonomy of the Natchez people in the present-day Louisiana region, while at the same time yearning for what might have been: French America and French imperial expansion the world over. Rather than a contradiction, Prasad observes this as a structuring feature of French Romantic thought which allows Romantic writers like Hugo and Chateaubriand to be outspoken both in their condemnation of slavery and in their celebration of the conquests of the second French empire into Senegal and North Africa. These pronouncements were often articulated in writing about the U.S., whether through novels or travel writing like Alexis de Toqueville’s diplomatic reportage about U.S. democratic society. Measuring differences in terms of moral superiority or social progress, French Romantic thought invented an image of its national culture and values in relation to its impressions of the U.S. Reflection on the atrocities of colonialism and

¹⁴² For more on the relationship among French literature, Romanticism, and colonialism, see: Doris Garraway, *The Libertine Colony: Creolization in the Early French Caribbean* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2005); Christopher L. Miller, *The French Atlantic Triangle: Literature and Culture of the Slave Trade* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2008); and Pratima Prasad, *Colonialism, Race, and the French Romantic Imagination* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

slavery in the North American territories provided, in other words, an occasion for French writers to more fully define a distinctly French political program that was both morally superior and economically strategic: the *mission civilisatrice*.

An approach to colonization that sought to spread French influence and Catholicism throughout a colonized society, the *mission* was premised on the racist and paternalistic logic that saw Africans, in general, as childlike, in need of French religious guidance and education, and unable to independently make proper use of their resources. This became the ideology that structured French colonial rule through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as le Second Empire took greater control over Senegal and other territories. But its appearance in French political discourse can be traced to the beginning of the Romantic era in writings produced during and about the first colonial empire. In her analysis of colonial writing about Saint-Domingue on the eve of the Haitian Revolution, for example, Doris Garraway argues that authors used the “family romance” (a concept she adapts from Freud and expands) to imagine a desired sociopolitical order. In this case, texts described the marriage of a white créole slave master to their black slave, resulting in the production of a “mixed-race” child, a “métis” that, as representation of racial harmony, created a notion of family that would stand in for the “whole of colonial society” and function “as a means of consolidating political authority over non-whites” (272).¹⁴³ The image of the family, featuring the French and white father

¹⁴³ In a chapter titled, “Race, Reproduction, Family Romance,” Garraway takes the example of an ethnographic produced by colonial historian Médéric-Louis-Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry, his 1797 *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique, et historique de la partie française de l’isle Saint Domingue*. In her analysis, Garraway argues that “by affirming the primacy of the master-slave relation for colonial biopolitics, Moreau constructs a fantasy of white male paternity over the entire class of mulattoes, thus effectively denying them any significant role in the biological reproduction of colonial society. The ideological importance of such a move is unmistakable, for in affirming a paternal filiation with mulattoes the author essentially denies free

figures as protectors and teachers, initially served, at once, to elide the brutalities of colonial slavery, to quell anxieties about a potential Haitian revolt and the vengeful violence that it portended, and to imagine a stable world order in which the French reigned supreme. Repurposing this paternalistic logic and imagery during the latter half of the nineteenth century, Romantic writers like Victor Hugo and Alphonse de Lamartine—whose drama about the Haitian revolutionary Toussaint Louverture premiered just a year before Dumanoir’s *La case de L’oncle Tom*—revised cultural memory of the Haitian Revolution in order to imagine a more peaceful and successful colonial ventures into Africa and Asia.¹⁴⁴

Far from insignificant for French readers, Belloc’s *La Case de l’oncle Tom* may be understood as a crucial text for exploring pressing social and political crises in France that are not unrelated to abolition. Under the repressive monarchical regime, republican readers might be more receptive to Stowe’s calls for freedom and the novel’s renunciation of tyrannical forces than either Stowe or reviewers would or could admit. Whether consciously or not, Belloc’s translation would be informed by the warnings issued against press violations and perhaps seek ways to subvert the censors to keep the spirit of French republicanism alive. Even as she advocates for the cause of “abolition complète,” in other words, the text may serve a simultaneous set of political functions

people of color as the masters’ bastards, to be dominated and controlled as such. What we have, then, is a representation of the whole of colonial society on the model of filiation comprised of white master, black female slave, and mulatto offspring” (272).

¹⁴⁴ Lamartine published his play *Toussaint Louverture* in 1850, two years after the abolition of French slavery, a decree to which Lamartine was one of the official signatories. His play has been largely forgotten, as it was performed just a few times, but Prasad reads it as a “fitting example of the ways in which the representations of race” that fall within the scope of the “Romantic” period of French literature, “continue to be borne out well into the mid and late nineteenth century” (147).

beyond those that Stowe imagined. In addition to being a celebration of republican values, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* also presents an opportunity for Belloc and readers to recall Romantic images of French colonialism that, in the context of le Second Empire, had new meaning. Abolitionists like Belloc, Hugo, Lamartine, and other public figures, found, in these images, a long-lasting way to settle what we may regard as apparent tensions between the political program of universal emancipation and the *mission civilisatrice*.

Translating with “scrupuleuse fidélité”:

Mourning *la liberté*, Imagining *la civilisation*

In her “Notice sur Madame H. Beecher Stowe” (Note on Mrs. H. Beecher Stowe), Belloc sketches both a political function for the novel and the role a transnational readership plays in realizing that function. Though French critics were skeptical of the novel's literary and political powers, regarding the cause of abolition as a rather moot point for the French, Belloc suggests otherwise. According to her, readers of Stowe's novel enter a “communion d'émotions pures et saintes” (communion of pure and holy emotions) (vii). It is through the cultivation of this sentimental unity that Belloc imagines the possibility of political transformation:

Ce livre est, nous l'espérons, le précurseur de l'abolition complète de l'esclavage. L'humanité tout entière ne se sera pas émue en vain. L'Europe n'aura pas en vain compati aux tortures, assisté au martyre de l'humble Tom. Cités à la barre des nations, les États du Sud rougiraient de mettre plus longtemps leur or dans la balance comme contre-poids aux larmes, aux gémissements, au sang de tout un peuple. (xv)

(This book is, we hope, the harbinger of the complete abolition of slavery. All of humanity will not be moved in vain. Europe will not have sympathized with the torture and witnessed the martyrdom of humble Tom in vain. Called before the court of nations, the Southern States would

blush to put their gold on the scales for much longer as a counterweight to the tears, to the moans, to the blood of an entire people.)

Describing the novel as the “précurseur” of “abolition complete” in this prefatory essay, Belloc situates *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* as work that blazes a trail towards the eradication of slavery the world over. While “précurseur” might be translated closely as “precursor,” in French, it connotes seminality and that which heralds the transformation of the status quo. Belloc thus suggests that transformation will be achieved through the accumulation of a transatlantic and transnational readership’s sympathy, as they bear witness to the actual suffering that the novel’s characters’ typologically evoke. Tom’s Christ-like martyrdom will, she predicts, unite readers unequivocally against the brutality of the Southern States and, finally, save the souls not only of slaves but of all those who have borne witness to the inhumanities of the institution of slavery. Using the figures of “la barre des nations” (court of nations) and “la balance” (the scales [of justice]), Belloc indicates that justice will be meted out in both a Biblical and practical sense as the affective economy that recognizes the meaning of slaves’ suffering will, at last, supersede the political economy of slavery that dared to put a price on human life. As a call to testimony, for Belloc, the novel ultimately functions to constitute a pan-European judicial body of readers that issues judgment on the dispassionate greed of the slaveholders and, in turn, ushers the Southern States into a state of shame. Belloc locates its revolutionary power in her own approximation of Stowe’s notion of the “public sentiment of nations” from her preface to the 1852 English edition: “The book is an appeal to the public sentiment of a common humanity: it presents in this last high court the cause of an injured and helpless race, who cannot speak for themselves” (Stowe, qtd. in Diller 629).

Rather than be achieved by force, or through violent revolution, Belloc imagines that complete abolition will result from a sentimental “revolution of feeling.”

Belloc’s note collapses, if strategically, any distinction between the source text and her translation, presenting “ce livre” (this book) as containing an invariant meaning that produces an invariant effect on readers, whether French or Anglo. While from the perspective of this dissertation’s method and argument such transparent communication was, in actual practice, impossible, presenting the translation this way still amounted to a political move. A function for the translation is what the note sketches most overtly, but the concept of equivalence entangled with that function is, if latent, also politicized. Belloc’s version was authorized as a nearly identical reproduction of the English novel by Stowe herself who is quoted in a prefatory note written by the text’s editor and publisher Gervais Charpentier. Comparing Belloc’s translation with those that preceded it on the French literary market, which, the author says “laissait beaucoup à désirer” (left a lot to be desired), Charpentier presents a translation of a letter from Stowe: “je suis de plus convaincue qu’un esprit féminin prendra plus aisément l’empreinte du mien” (I am more than convinced that a feminine spirit will take more easily the imprint of mine). As Belloc was the first and only French translator who was a woman, and the text’s genre and form of appeal was thoroughly feminized in both Anglo and French contexts, Charpentier uses the metaphor of “imprinting” to describe a spiritual relationship between the women whose shared gender and sentiments will fix an accurate impression of the book. He assures readers further that “la scrupuleuse fidélité” (the scrupulous fidelity) of the translation will preserve “les nuances les plus délicates de l’original” (the most delicate nuances of the original) (vi). Circulating among at least eleven other French

translations, Belloc's version is promoted as most effective for delivering, untroubled, the spiritual message and power of the novel to readers both because of the translator's gender—an aspect of her identity that predisposes her to be especially attuned to matters of the heart—and her commitment to accuracy. Many other versions were abridged, their translators selecting those sections of the novel which most apparently appealed to French readers. Following in the “les belles infidèles” tradition—which Lawrence Venuti traces to the seventeenth-century translator Nicolas Perrot D’Ablancourt—these versions translated the source text in order to cast it in a more beautiful French that claimed to be in line with “the author’s intention or [with] the essential meaning of the source text while performing revisions that answer[ed] to what was intelligible and interesting in French culture” (*Reader* 4th ed. 18-19). More than many of her contemporaries, Belloc sought to offer readers access to the novel’s original insights in order to achieve a transnational alignment of “public sentiments” against slavery in the U.S.

But although she professes to advance the cause of abolition, what Stowe conceives of as a “local errand,” in order to move readers to action, Belloc’s translation expands and changes the terms of its appeal. In what follows, I show that the translation of the political concepts and images of resistance that Stowe narrativized, those most charged with revolutionary energy, prompts for Belloc conscious and unconscious meditation on two related French concerns: the post-emancipation future and the lost French republic of the past. Despite what she and Charpentier aver, when Belloc translates Stowe’s “protest novel” using a strategy of “scrupuleuse fidélité,” she produces what we might understand as a corresponding version of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin’s* affect of protest, moving French readers to consider their role in both the abolition of U.S. slavery

that Stowe's novel renders and, more latently, the political interests of French republicans recently defeated and newly positioned to invigorate the mission of the Empire. Drawing on research about French republican discourse, especially concepts such as *la liberté, la patrie, la nation*, and *le peuple*, and contemporaneous French writing about republicanism and race, as well as engaging with emergent racial pseudoscience, I show how, even when Belloc adheres closely to Stowe's text, the translation of this anti-slavery work ends up meditating on the history of French revolution and colonialism and lamenting the loss of republican freedoms. I focus on both moments in the translation when the text represents scenes of righteousness and articulates statements of protest, and those where Belloc encounters figures of "racial mixing," including representations of "mixed" lineage, relationships, alliances, and conflicts. I locate the ways in which the receiving culture's political interests and colonial literary imagination inflect Belloc's transformations of these moments.

I argue that, while still registering the U.S. situation as an analog, once it is translated, the terms and target of the novel's protest necessarily shift given the contours of the receiving context: there is no Fugitive Slave Law, rather: there is a free and newly freed population of Black peoples, there are new and former colonial subjects; there is a white French citizenry perhaps in a state of Freudian melancholia about the loss of the republic to monarchical autocracy, a situation Belloc's translation may be actively mourning. Formally, the translation productively transforms Stowe's novel into what we may regard as analogous literary forms and political discourses, whether it renders closely or recognizably departs. Even Belloc's close translations of the most typological aspects of Stowe's novel, for instance, create a version of them that appeals to French

Catholic and republican readers and evokes the static characters of a taxonomic French racial imagination, as well as colonial tropes common to travel writing and Romantic literature about the colonies. At one and the same time more realist representation factors in, since such French colonial writing formed part of a project that, through (pseudo)scientific ethnography, documented colonized peoples. This storehouse of representations, too, is activated by *La case de l'oncle Tom*, effecting transformations of the more realist elements of the novel, such as its quasi-ethnographic chronicling of U.S. national and regional culture and customs. Taken together, these inevitable changes have the effect of broadening the purview Stowe's affective appeal to the "public sentiment of nations," which was delimited to the cause of U.S. abolition. Belloc's translation inscribes the novel's most overt appeals to "feel right" with a revolutionary nostalgia and a future desire for a more utopian egalitarianism that avoids the violence of insurrections by enslaved or colonized peoples. Her interpretive moves therefore have two complementary effects: first, shoring up the extension of the meaning of republican concept of *la liberté* to include the universal emancipation of the enslaved; and second, adapting French colonial discourse and images to project a Francocentric future in which the expansion of le Second Empire might be understood as a benevolent and socially necessary endeavor.

Achieving "la scrupuleuse fidélité," means for Belloc, on my reading, translating the entirety of Stowe's novel, providing footnotes to gloss the usage of idiosyncratic vocabulary (e.g. "stump orator" or "Yankee"), provide geographical and historical context for places and events the novel documents, and even share evidence translated from U.S. newspapers that attests to the accuracy of Stowe's characterization of slaves,

masters, and traders. As we saw in the case of Dumanoir's theatrical adaptation, many translators created only abridged versions, omitting details or descriptions that they believed were extraneous to the novel's drama, or replacing especially local issues (like the Fugitive Slave Law) with more general talking points about abolition and slavery. Additionally, for most part, Belloc adheres to the formal features of Stowe's novel and maintains a close semantic correspondence based on the dictionary definitions of the period. Belloc attempts to approximate the sonic qualities of the novel, often using French phonetic spellings of names to register their Anglo pronunciation (e.g. "Legris" for Legree). In the case of the "black" "dialect" that Stowe creates as a written representation of slaves' speech, Belloc inserts Anglo words like "massa," apparently taken from other extant anti-slavery writing, and uses contractions and infinitives to suggest the use of an improper and racialized version of French.

In one of the few sustained readings of Belloc's translation, Doris Kadish argues that Belloc's close translation formally and culturally situates the text within the feminized literary tradition of sentimentalism. Rather than changing the text to abide by the aesthetic standards of literary critics like Flaubert who valued "objective" and "universalist" artistic expression, Belloc insists on the cultural and historical specificity of the social and linguistic worlds that the novel represents. As such, she participates in a competing and marginalized translation tradition that critics locate in an 1816 essay by Romanticist and proto-feminist Germaine de Staël. In "De l'esprit des traductions," she argued that: "Il ne faut pas, comme les Français, donner sa propre couleur à tout ce qu'on traduit" (One must not, as the French do, give their own color to everything they translate) (602; vol. 3). Belloc's decision to maintain close correspondence and

emphasize the linguistic and cultural particularities of the U.S. text thus has the effect of positioning her translation, and Stowe's novel, within the traditions of an especially socially oriented French Romanticism and sentimentalism.¹⁴⁵

Yet close readings of *La case de l'oncle Tom* reveal departures that, I argue, work in tandem with Belloc's more dominant strategy. When she deviates from close correspondence, Belloc does so to achieve a few different formal and political effects: some choices have the effect of "domesticating" the text, inscribing it with familiar French discourses, metaphors, and political concepts; others have the effect of constructing political analogues through imagery potentially transgressive or subversive in the local context, whether because they challenge prevailing, moderate abolitionist politics or because they challenge the terms of the Empire's censorship regime. This was consistent with Belloc's previous translation work, in which, as Raphael Ingelbien argues, she frequently added paratextual materials and even whole passages to advance a political agenda with which she identified. As a translator of the Irish diaspora, Belloc built her literary career in France by translating popular patriotic Irish poets of the day. She used these strategies to situate the work in its appropriate cultural contexts, constructing images of its Irishness in French and, in turn, teaching French readers about the contributions of the poets' writing to an Irish literary tradition. Late in her career, after the death of her close Irish contacts and amidst the shifting meanings of Irish nationalism among Catholics seeking autonomy from the British Crown, Belloc turned to translating English writers like Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell, thereafter

¹⁴⁵ See Kadish, "Translation in Context" in *Translating Slavery, Volume 1: Gender and Race in French Women's Writing, 1783-1823*, edited by Doris Y. Kadish and Françoise Massardier-Kenney (Kent, OH: Kent State UP, 1994), pp. 26-61, especially 35-61.

accepting the project with Stowe.¹⁴⁶ Although Belloc does not inscribe her translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* with images or discourses that foreground Irish nationalism, she does insert symbols of French republicanism and allusions to the project of French colonial imperialism. This allows Belloc to appeal to French readers' self-interest as a means of activating both their indignance against the repressive Bonapartic regime and their sympathy for U.S. slaves as an allied oppressed people.

Her appeal to French republicans, like that of the source text, is grounded in religious and moral principle. Belloc interprets the more typological aspects of Stowe's novel through Catholic thought, repositioning the text's relationship to God and readers, while also evoking a French racial taxonomy. From the outset, in her preface, Belloc notes that, from her perspective, Stowe was quite mistaken in overlooking the power of the Catholic Church to advance the cause of abolition in the U.S., as "nul n'a plus d'autorité pour prêcher à l'esclave l'oubli, le pardon des injures, pour imposer au maître réparation et repentir" (no one has more authority to preach to the slave the forgetting, the pardoning of injuries, to impose on the master reparation and repentance) (xvi). Responding implicitly, perhaps, to reviewers in the *London Times* who famously argued that neither slaves nor masters in the U.S. were prepared for emancipation, as the former were too vengeful and the latter too hateful, Belloc suggests that the teachings of the Catholic Church are uniquely suited to correcting these wrong feelings. Consciously or not, Belloc's subsequent translation demonstrates the extent to which this may be true for

¹⁴⁶ Ingelbien argues that her turn towards English authors may be understood as either a shift in Belloc's political alliances, or may be merely circumstantial, as Belloc lost material connections with Irish literary circles over the course of her career. For more, see Ingelbien, "An Irish Diasporic Translator."

her, as she inscribes the text with French Catholic republican discourse and racial tropes to imagine racial harmony.

Although she often figured herself as a lesser artist than those that she translated, her understanding that the political significance and formal genius that she observed in Stowe's novel were religiously inflected raised the stakes. As Jane Tompkins seminally argued *Uncle Tom's Cabin* reads as a "jeremiad" that "does not simply quote the bible" but "rewrites [it] as the story of a Negro slave" (134 add to biblio). Going beyond even many readers in the period, who readily observed the text's intertextual relationship with the Biblical stories of Christ, and even the story of Creation, Belloc treats the novel as a sacred text that delivers to readers nothing less than the word of God. In her "Notice," Belloc writes:

La Case de l'oncle Tom est moins un livre qu'un acte de foi, d'amour, d'ardente charité. Comme l'apôtre, l'auteur a dit à l'âme atrophiée : « Au nom de Jésus le Nazaréen, lève-toi et marche ! » Et l'âme engourdie s'est redressée, a secoué sa torpeur, et s'est sentie revivre. Tout ce qu'il y a en nous d'instincts nobles, bons, généreux, s'est réveillé à cette voix.

(*Uncle Tom's Cabin* is less a book than an act of faith, of love, of ardent charity. Like the apostle, the author said to the atrophied soul: "In the name of Jesus the Nazarene, arise and walk!" And the numb soul straightened up, shook off its torpor, and felt revived. All that there is in us of noble, good, generous instincts has awakened to this voice) (vii).

Belloc recalls a scene from the Book of Acts in which Peter, Jesus' disciple on whom He bestowed his power, heals a lame beggar. Figuring Stowe as Peter's analogue, the translator suggests that she and her text have the same spiritual authority and healing powers as Jesus. Instead of bodily healing, Stowe's novel enacts a soulful and affective healing on its readers, reviving deadened sympathies that had withered by apathy. Further, Belloc suggests that it is a work of genius that awakens "cette sympathie

universelle et féconde” (this universal and fecund sympathy) (vii). Like George Sand, Belloc celebrates those aspects of the text that Flaubert and other male critics regarded as its flaws. Its genius emerges from its capacity to “move” sympathies and mobilize affective energy in the “right” direction. She regards this as a Godly endeavor and act of literary art, suggesting that “Juger cette œuvre au point de vue littéraire serait, selon nous, une sorte de profanation” (To judge this work from a literary point of view would be, in our opinion, a sort of blasphemy) (viii). By rendering Stowe’s text as Biblical, as opposed to entertaining or fulfilling the precepts of “l’art pour l’art,” Belloc positions her translation as a sacred and serious act of faith, achieved through a dedication to effacing herself as a mediator between the reader and the Text. She follows Stowe’s lead, fixing an interpretation of the novel as a religious allegory meant to focalize French readers’ political energy.

The relationship between Tom and Eva proves to be particularly amenable to this purpose, as French Romantic literature and abolitionism alike often fantasized about and exalted the potential of “interracial” unions among colonizer and colonized. The figure of *métissage*, or “race-mixing,” represented the potential for an egalitarian future in which racial harmony was achieved through the assimilation of “nonwhite” colonized subjects to French Catholic republicanism. Abbé Grégoire, a prominent abolitionist in the decades following the French Revolution, and a French Catholic priest, argued that the Catholic sacrament of marriage would resolve inequalities and tensions among even the residents of Haiti, former slaves and masters. In his 1823 essay addressed to Haitians, *Considérations sur le mariage et sur le divorce*, Grégoire writes:

Haïtiens, jusqu'à ce que pour moi s'ouvre le tombeau; tant que mon Dieu permettra que ma faible voix retentisse sur vos rivages, je ne cesserai de faire entendre les divins oracles, de vous crier que l'union entre les couleurs, que la justice, la droiture, la bonté, le travail, les moeurs pures, la piété, sont les sources uniques du bonheur des familles, de la prospérité des peuples, de la félicité dans cet ordre futur qui est placé au-delà des bornes de la vie, où les hommes des toutes les couleurs, tous frères devant leur père commun, seront jugés, non d'après les nuances corporelles que l'oeil humain aperçoit, mais d'après leurs oeuvres comparées aux maximes immuables de l'Évangile. (60-61)

(Haitians, until the tomb opens for me; as long as my God permits my feeble voice to resound on your shores, I will not cease to make the divine oracles heard, to cry out to you that the union between the colors, that justice, righteousness, goodness, work, pure morals, piety, are the unique sources of the happiness of families, of the prosperity of peoples, of happiness in this future order which is placed beyond the bounds of life, where men of all colors, all brothers before their common father, will be judged, not according to the bodily shades which the human eye perceives, but according to their works as compared to the immutable maxims of the Gospel.)

Grégoire advocates for holy unions among different “colors” and races, prescribing marriage as that which is proclaimed by “divins oracles” to be the surest path towards bliss and peace. As Prasad observes, “Interracial marriage was one of the means by which to create an egalitarian and homogenous universal human family whose culture and values would be that of French Catholic republicans” (68). Mobilizing a French Catholic paternalism, abolitionists like Grégoire, believed that the supremacy of French values and language could be preserved through abolition and education. French Romanticists similarly imagined marriage and sexual union as a means for achieving peace and elevating all races of humanity to transcend the conditions of slavery. Whether Lamartine’s rendering of the martyrdom of a former slave of ambivalent racial identification in his 1850 drama *Toussaint Louverture*, or the ideal mixed-race subject of Chateaubriand’s *Atala* (1801), romances among colonized and colonizer had the potential

to resolve social anxieties about revolting, mutinous, and dangerous slaves, replacing these images with something more stable.¹⁴⁷

Belloc's characterization of Uncle Tom inscribes him with the potential to enter a civilized, Catholic and "mixed-race" union. A beloved image from Stowe's novel, the relationship between the at once Christ-like and child-like Tom, and his child-mistress Eva was celebrated transnationally. Along with Eliza's crossing of the Ohio river on her way to freedom, the image of Eva sitting on Tom's lap is the most reproduced image of the novel, featured in every illustrated version of the text across languages and countries, and memorabilia such as plates, figurines, and dolls.¹⁴⁸ In her version of Tom and Eva, Belloc inscribes the characters with a comparatively higher degree of holiness designed to make their relationship embody a future ideal and mutually affectionate relationship among the master classes and freedmen. Belloc's handling of the key passage in which the narrator introduces readers to Tom, for instance, has the effect of recasting Tom as an emblem of divinity. When Stowe introduces him as an admired and respected man throughout the neighborhood, "Uncle Tom was a sort of patriarch in religious matters, in the neighborhood," (31) Belloc translates "L'oncle Tom passait dans tout le voisinage pour un oracle en matières religieuses" (Uncle Tom passed throughout the whole neighborhood for an oracle in religious matters) (38). Belloc inscribes the characterization of Tom with the features of a Catholic ideal, grounding his authority in the neighborhood not merely in his capacity to lead others in religious matters, but his

¹⁴⁷ For a more extended analysis of these competing racial tropes, see Prasad's *Colonialism, Race, and the French Romantic Imagination*.

¹⁴⁸ See Jill Weitzman Fenichell, "Fragile Lessons: Ceramic and Porcelain Representations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*" in *Ceramics in America*, edited by Robert Hunter (Milwaukee: Chipstone Foundation, 2006), pp. 40-57.

actual transmission of the Word of God as an “oracle.” To move French readers to action, Belloc’s interpretation productively transforms the narrator’s characterization of Tom into one perhaps more amenable to Catholic ideology. In contrast to Stowe’s Protestantism, which figured the Bible as a text with which each individual conferred and interpreted to learn God’s meaning, Belloc’s Catholicism required that only those anointed and chosen to serve God could provide common parishioners with an interpretation of the Word. Her characterization of Tom, therefore, positions him as one delivering the Word of God to the neighborhood, as opposed to merely one whom others seek out due to his engagement in the individual practice of reading the Bible. Belloc’s translation makes Tom legible, according to the paradigmatic French racio-religious discourses of the day, as disciplined, Catholic, and in service of a greater good, abiding familiar French racial tropes like the “bon négre” (good negro).

As such, Tom’s subsequent relationship with Eva, the angelic daughter of the slaveholding but privately antislavery Augustine St. Clare, is rendered as a divine ideal that might be achieved in a post-emancipation world in which the teachings of Catholicism have led “l’esclave” to “pardon des injures,” (the slave to pardon injuries) and the master class “repentir” (to repent). The possibility of such a reading is evident when we examine how Belloc translates the chapter representing Tom and Eva’s introductions and affections, XIV, “Evangeline.” Once again, she employs a strategy of close correspondence to the source text, while subtly translating Protestant imagery into figures more decisively Catholic. The source text is, on my reading and those of previous scholars, amenable to just the sort of “interracial” affection so familiar to French

Romantic and colonial discourse.¹⁴⁹ While her translation does not deviate too greatly from the source material, therefore, her words nevertheless release a series of familiar meanings for French readers. When Tom and Eva meet, Tom is praised by both the narrator and Haley the slave trader for his piety and religious character. Both Stowe and Belloc describe his qualities with a paternalism familiar to both Anglo and French abolitionist discourses, comparing Tom's worldview to that of a child. When he first sees Eva, Stowe writes that: "Tom, who had the soft, impressible nature of his kindly race, ever yearning toward the simple and childlike, watched the little creature with daily increasing interest. To him she seemed something almost divine... he half believed that he saw one of the angels stepped out of his New Testament." (144). Belloc maintains close semantic correspondence using similarly paternalistic, primary dictionary equivalents to describe Tom, including words such as "douce," "ingénu," and "enfantin" (soft or gentle, ingenuous or naive, and childlike). When she translates the phrases describing Tom's perception of Eva, however, Belloc calls special attention to the child's exceptional and divine nature, describing her as "un ange échappé des feuillets de son saint Évangile" (an angel escaping from the leaves of his holy Gospel) (190). Using the phrase "saint Évangile" instead of the more directly to hand "Nouveau Testament," Belloc's version generates the effect of calling more explicit attention to the figurative quality of Eva's full name, Evangeline, which shares a Latinate root—"evangelium"—with the French word for the Gospel. Although theirs is not a sexual or romantic union culminating in marriage, the two are nonetheless rendered as equals—perfectly innocent, childlike servants of God whose mutual affection is confirmed by Eva's unusual request

¹⁴⁹ My reading is informed by scholarship such as: Hortense J. Spillers, "Changing the Letter"; and Brickhouse, *Transamerican Literary Relations*.

that her father purchase Tom because, in her words, she “want[s] him” and “want[s] to make him happy” (148). As the most celebrated couple in the novel, the pair might represent a future that the French empire would ideally realize in Senegal, North Africa, and Indochina through their *mission civilisatrice*.

The idealization of Tom and Eva is contrasted in Belloc’s translation by an image of *métissage* that yielded not a harmonious but a hostile relationship between Simon Legree, Stowe’s emblematically worst master, and his slave Cassy, a foil for Tom’s good nature. In Chapter XXXIX, “Stratagem,” Cassy plots to escape her violent master by tricking him into believing that the garret is haunted and stowing away there until it is safe for her to flee. Stowe represents Cassy as a strong personality, in near constant conflict with her master. Theirs is a relationship perverted by the evils of slavery, as Legree’s brutality “hardened womanhood within her,” awakening “fires of fiercer passions” (395). He, too, is changed by their interaction, as one cannot escape “strong female influence” (395). In spite of the fact that “he was her owner, tyrant and tormentor,” Stowe writes that Legree lives in “dread” of Cassy (395). The relationship of domination and subordination is nearly toppled by Cassy’s influence, as she exercises enough to “become in a measure his mistress,” most near his equal as a woman might be (395). Stowe’s rendering of this relationship is mediated by and inscribed with an Anglo-abolitionist sentimental discourse that condemned slavery as a force that corrupted families, violated the marriage contract, and denied both bondwomen and slave masters their right place in society as husband and wife, father and mother.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ This discourse is perhaps most famously represented in U.S. abolitionist Lydia Maria Child’s *The Patriarchal Institution, as Described by Members of Its Own Family* (New York: The American Anti-Slavery Society, 1860). Child collects evidence and testimony from participants in and survivors of the plantation slave system that contradict slaveholders’ claim that theirs is an

Belloc's handling of the passage that characterizes their relationship throws into stark relief the ideal that Eva and Tom embody against the doomed pair in ways that, through allusion, can readily evoke for French readers the memory and "tragedy" of the Haitian Revolution. Inscribing the passage with recognizable racial anxieties that structured French abolitionist discourse, Belloc presents a Cassy who does not merely threaten to become Legree's "mistress," but his master:

L'empire de Cassy sur cet homme était d'une nature étrange. À la fois son possesseur, son tyran, son persécuteur, il la savait complètement en son pouvoir, dans l'impossibilité d'être aidée ou secourue, et cependant elle le dominait ; car l'homme le plus brutal ne saurait vivre en rapports constants avec une femme énergique sans subir son influence. Lorsqu'il l'acheta, elle était encore délicate et distinguée ; il ne se fit aucun scrupule de la fouler aux pieds ; mais à mesure que le temps, l'avilissement, le désespoir eurent endurci le cœur de Cassy et allumé ses mauvaises passions, elle le maîtrisa à son tour, et il la redoutait, tout en la tyrannisant. (530)

(Cassy's empire over this man was of a strange nature. At the same time her possessor, her tyrant, her persecutor, knew she was completely in his power, in the impossibility of being helped or rescued, and yet she dominated him; for the most brutal man knows not how to live in constant contact with a strong woman without being brought under her influence. When he bought her, she was still delicate and distinguished; he had no scruple to trample her underfoot; but as time, debasement, despair had hardened Cassy's heart and kindled her evil passions, she in turn mastered him, and he dreaded her, at the same time as he tyrannized her.)

Once again, Belloc's translation maintains, for the most part, semantic correspondence according to the dictionary definitions of the period. Yet her verbal choices more decisively figure Cassy as an existential threat to Legree's domination. In the first sentence, for instance, she translates "influence" as "l'empire," drawing on the French term's secondary definition, control or influence, to characterize Cassy's sway as

institution built on paternalistic and mutual affection. The text argues that slavery perverts the domestic ideology, a common talking point, especially among white women abolitionists in the U.S.

authoritative, or even dominating. This reading is emphasized in the next sentence when Belloc fixes just such an interpretation by inserting the notion of domination—“et cependant elle le dominait” (and yet she dominated him)—as she translates Stowe’s more tepid suggestion, introduced somewhat ambiguously by the phrase “and yet so it is,” that it would be impossible for any man to be in close contact with a woman and “not be greatly controlled by it” (395). Belloc here shows French readers the image of a mutinous, and even vengeful, slave that, in response to maltreatment from her master, has undergone a transformation to become one motivated not by “fiercer passions” (Stowe 395), but *evil* ones (“mauvaises passions”). More than just merely becoming something approaching his mistress, Belloc’s Cassy effectively topples the patriarchal relation to become the master of Legree.

Cassy represents, in many ways, not only the fears of gradualist abolitionists like the reviewers for the *London Times* review, who believed enslaved peoples would be too incensed to accept immediate emancipation without seeking vengeance on their masters, but also the haunting memory of the planned revolts by the enslaved that culminated in the Haitian Revolution, which resulted in the deaths of many French Catholic members of the planter master class on the island. The allusive suggestion is made more emphatic as the chapter continues when Belloc translates Stowe’s use of “hag” to “sorcière” (hag, or witch). While this choice certainly maintains closer correspondence than one like “l’empire,” yet and still for French readers it might have released meanings more specifically associated with the Haitian “voudou” alleged to have begun the Revolution under the cover of darkness in Boukman’s forest ceremony. Belloc redoubles the emphasis on such a semantic possibility when she elects the word “surnaturel”

(supernatural) (530) to describe Cassy's character, where Stowe chose the descriptors "strange, weird, or unsettled" (395) to portray Cassy's "words and language" (395). Characterized in stark contrast to the mutually affectionate relationship between the civilized Tom and the innocent Eva, the malefic Cassy and dominated Legree embody anxieties about *métissage* and enslaved peoples not properly assimilated to French Catholic republican values.

The juxtaposition of utopian and dystopian revolutionary potentials embodied by the couples takes on a more explicit political significance in later chapters when Stowe's characters imagine a future for Africans in Liberia, site of the U.S. colonization project. In one of Stowe's more controversial chapters, XLIII: "Results," "mixed-race" fugitive slave George Harris—successfully escaped to Canada and then to France with his wife, Eliza, a "quadroon" (5), where he "remained four years at a French university" (425)—writes a letter to a friend from France endorsing the colonization project and proclaiming his aspirations to make a nation in Liberia. Stowe casts George's desires as decisively republican in the context of "political troubles in France" that "at last led the family again to seek an asylum in this country [America]" (425). As he writes in the letter that the narrator implores us to read as evidence of his "feelings and views" as "an educated man," "The desire and yearning of my soul is for an African nationality," and, further on, "On the shores of Africa I see a republic" (426). As Stowe's George explores these desires, explaining why Liberia is particularly appealing, given the denial of his "race[s]" rights "in the American republic," Stowe uses the conceit of his letter to contrast the situation in Haiti with the future potential of a citizenry educated according to a republican ethos. For George, whereas "in Hayti they had nothing to start with,"

and moreover ““The race that formed the character for the Haytiens was a worn-out, effeminate one,”” the future republic in Africa will be comprised of ““picked men, who, by energy and self-educating force, have, in many cases, individually, raised themselves above a condition of slavery”” (426). This vision of a future segregated society vaunts the values of self-reliance and social mobility typical of Anglo-American republicanism—and the right to them—suggesting that it is through the processes of education, “civilization,” and indoctrination to Christian thought that Africans might be enabled to form their own, equal nation. These, Stowe’s George writes explicitly, were conditions missing from Hayti, the population of which was ill-prepared to self-govern, given the “effeminate” and weak nature of the French ruling class, which failed to sufficiently civilize their slaves. For Stowe’s more conservative readers, George’s description of colonization offers a stabilizing vision of a post-emancipation future in which U.S. republican values rule the day, and freedmen remain ever a few steps behind, tucked away on a different continent.

Belloc’s translation of this passage creates a corresponding endorsement of a civilized African republic, while subtly reconfiguring the comparison between the residents of Haiti and Liberia to accommodate French historiography and its attendant discourse about Haiti. The history of the revolts that culminated in the Haitian Revolution remained a vexing aporia for French abolitionists, even into the 1850s as France engaged in a second phase of colonial imperial expansion into Africa. As we saw Prince Saunders negotiate in Chapter 1, the French had long perpetuated a paternalist mythology about the origins of the Revolution according to which a set of ideas that sparked it were imported onto the island by *gens de couleur* who had spent time in France. This mythologizing

came to be the source of famous conflict between two of France's most prominent abolitionists, Victor Schoelcher and Cyrille Bissette, who were differently positioned to advance the cause of abolition in France's colonies: Schoelcher, eventually member of the 1848 Parliament of the Second Republic, and Bissette, a free *hommes de couleur* born in Martinique, there arrested for allegedly fomenting a slave revolt and deported to Paris. Bissette argued that Schoelcher mischaracterized the relationship between free *gens de couleur* and the enslaved, diminishing the contributions of people like himself to the achievement of emancipation, and perpetuating the myth that ideas about political revolution were handed down to the enslaved from the planter classes.¹⁵¹ The rhetorical battle for narrative control over the significance of what transpired in Haiti was, at this point, of grave political significance, as it would likely inform how the French would approach and narrate their conquest of Senegal and Northern Africa.

In her version of George's letter in Chapitre XLIV, "Résultats," Belloc advances a particular understanding of the Haitian Revolution through her rendering of the contrast the letter draws between Haitians and the future republican residents of Liberia. While

¹⁵¹ Christopher Bongie reconstructs the rivalry and conflict between the two revolutionary politicians and historians, that was made most manifest in Bissette's publication of an 1844 *Réfutation* to what he describes as Schoelcher's falsified history of Haiti's independence. Bongie translates Bissette's purpose: "What I am refuting are the errors into which the author has all too readily fallen, treating as friends of the blacks the very people who have shown themselves to be their greatest enemies; the unfair criticism that he has made regarding the conduct of the mulattos toward the blacks; his malicious assessment of their principles and their morals; finally, the unfortunate tenor of a book that risks dividing blacks and mulattos" (456). Bongie's article seeks to counteract the long tendency in French historical research to take Schoelcher as the "great white father" of Emancipation, effacing Bissette's contributions as a revolutionary and as a writer. Because Bissette died earlier, and his writing was less prominently featured, Schoelcher's became an unquestioned historical account. For more, see: "'C'est du papier ou de l'Histoire en marche?": The revolutionary compromises of a Martiniquan *homme de couleur* Cyrille-Charles-Auguste Bissette," *Nineteenth Century Contexts*, vol. 23, no. 4 (2002): 439–73.

hewing closely to the letter's critique of the French as "effeminate," Belloc alters the terms of the Haitian's purported weakness, writing: "Partis de bas, ces hommes ne sauraient s'élever" (Starting from below, these men cannot rise up) (571). While Stowe's George had described the Haitians as "having nothing to start with," Belloc suggests that the Haitians lack the capacity to elevate themselves above their condition. This point is further underscored through the way the comparison between the Africans of Liberia and the Haitians turns on the verb "élever." Of the future republic, Belloc's George writes: "Sur les rives de l'Afrique, je vois une république formée d'hommes choisis partout, élevés pour la plupart au-dessus de sa condition d'esclave à force d'énergie individuelle, dont l'intelligence s'est formée, s'est éclairée, toujours grâce à des efforts personnels" (On the shores of Africa, I see a republic formed of men chosen everywhere, raised for the most part above their condition of slavery by dint of individual strength, whose intelligence was formed, was enlightened, always by means of personal efforts) (572). Whereas Stowe had emphasized the U.S. republican values of self-reliance and self-education, Belloc's vision of the African republic is more subtly paternalistic. Rather than a group of people that elevate or raise themselves (s'élever), the members of this republic are positioned, through the use of passive voice, shifts in the syntactical positioning of qualifying phrases, and a reference to the Enlightenment, as the direct object of elevation or raising (in the sense of éduquer), ready analogues perhaps for pupils of the French *mission civilisatrice*. While still praised for their "efforts personnels" and "énergie individuelle," their capacity to raise themselves up is displaced as a marker of their superiority in favor of suggesting the possibility of their reliance on the civilizing institutions of the French empire. The idea that the Haitians were simply not ready to be

an independent republic was a common talking point among French abolitionists, especially in writing about Saint-Domingue, and it gained new purchase in the latter half of the nineteenth century as a second wave of colonialism began. Through the education and civilization imposed by French institutions, the logic went, Africans of Liberia or elsewhere might succeed where the Haitians had failed. This safe and ideal vision of the future did not consist of violent revolutions in which the vengeful oppressed toppled their brutal masters—the case of Cassy and Legree—but rather the willful submission of characters like Tom to the affection and tutelage of mistresses like Eva.

Yet if there was one ideal to be inscribed in Tom’s potential as a “bon nègre,” George’s character arc offered up the possibility of another: to realize Tom’s martyred and thwarted potential in the form of an ideal *métis*. As we have seen, Belloc encoded her version of George’s letter not only with the entanglements of French republican and colonial discourses, but also with, in turn, the way these discourses could operate in tandem to further a particular mythology of the Haitian revolution. We can glimpse still a further dimension of how Belloc’s version mobilizes the character of George to meditate on a post-emancipation future if we examine how her translation frames his letter as the product of his French education, and therefore the culmination of his character arc. Two chapters pivotal to Stowe’s characterization of George precede the chapter containing his letter, representative of “results” (translated closely by Belloc as “résultats”). The interpretive moves that Belloc makes as she renders key passages in these chapters demonstrate her construction, leading up to the letter, of an image of George as the fulfillment of the *mission civilisatrice*. First, Chapter XI (XII in Belloc), “In Which Property Gets into an Improper State of Mind,” a scene of racial passing, finds George on

the run in Kentucky, disguised, through “a slight change in the tint of the skin and the color of his hair,” as “Spanish-looking fellow” (Stowe 108). Stowe draws on then emerging biologist racial pseudoscience to generate an understanding George’s racial difference, assigning characteristics to him that suggest his predisposition towards freedom. For her narrator, it is his inherited or “transmitted instincts” that lead him to adopt a state of mind that is “improper” and unbefitting of “property” (103). Accordingly, George has, because of both his white father and his beautiful “mulatto” mother, self-knowledge and self-respect that far exceed those who blithely accept enslavement as their fate.

Kahila Chaar-Pérez situates this scene in the novel in what she terms a Euro-American tradition of “romantic racialism,” which, she argues, “suffuses the description” of all of Stowe’s characters, whether white or black, so that “their racialized physiognomy” expresses “a fixed conception of character” (153). That this set of conventions can be recognized as operative in Stowe’s characterization is significant for our reading here, since such an interpretation reveals how, for Belloc, Stowe’s novel was particularly amenable to racializing French readings of character as both static and dynamic, both typological and realist. As John C. Havard suggests, responding to a prevailing trend of interpreting Stowe’s novel as only typological, “Stowe’s critique of slavery relies on a narrative strategy that produces a defamiliarizing tension between the corruption of a particular national socio-historical context and a universal standard of righteousness evoked through typology” (261). Stowe’s portrayal of socio-historical context hews towards national realism for Havard, often relying on what he calls an “ethnographic register” to describe the “characteristic customs” of a specific regional and

national social milieu. For French readers, therefore, it could at once readily reinforce racial taxonomy and function as realist ethnography, picking up on a robust tradition of Romantic colonial travel writing and the colonial fictions often derived from them. George is a salient example for Havard of the narrative strategy he describes in that his predicament evokes the historical realities of fugitivity under the Fugitive Slave Act, including the operation of slave catchers, while also providing Stowe a way to give voice to “God’s higher law that every man is free,” here and throughout the novel a feature of his very “natural” genealogy (Havard 261).

Bringing George into a French racializing discourse, Belloc creates a corresponding yet Frenchified version of his racialized genealogy and physiognomy. When Belloc translates the image of his mother constructed by Stowe, for example, she uses descriptive language that decisively situates her within a French system of racial tropes. Where Stowe writes that he was “by his father’s side of white descent,” and that his mother “was one of those unfortunates of her race, marked out by personal beauty to be the slave of the passions of her possessor,” Belloc translates: “était fils d’un blanc et d’une de ces infortunées qu’une beauté exceptionnelle condamne à devenir l’esclave des passions de leurs maîtres” (he was the son of a white man and one of those unfortunate women that an exceptional beauty condemns to become a slave to the passions of their masters) (141). Belloc’s signal departure is the phrase “une beauté exceptionnelle condamne,” which has the effect of heightening his mother’s sexualization; her beauty is so exceptional that it becomes tragic, the very terms on which she is subjugated by her possessor. This is consistent with broader French colonial imagery of the tragic, objectified *mulâtresse*, which many other translations and adaptations of Stowe

mobilized in their fetishizing renderings of Eliza—Dumanoir and Deverney’s play being perhaps the most prominent example of this form of “sensationalistic” sexualized paternalism, as Emily Sahakian convincingly argues (101).

Moreover, as Belloc translates the image of George that Stowe constructs, she uses language and political concepts to indicate where George would fit in a French racial taxonomy. As Stowe’s narrator describes George’s lineage, we read: “From one of the proudest families in Kentucky he had inherited a set of fine European features and a high, indomitable spirit” (108). The passage thus figures inheritance as a quasi-biological process through which one develops a racialized body and mind; that is, both “features” and “high, indomitable spirit,” an ironclad independent will, are traits of “European” and perhaps republican peoples. When Belloc confronts this passage, however, she deletes the association of George’s appearance or character with Europe, writing instead: “Descendu d’une des plus orgueilleuses familles du Kentucky, il en avait la finesse de traits et l’esprit indomptable” (Descended from one of the proudest families of Kentucky, he had the fineness of its features and an indomitable spirit) (141). Erasing the possibility of George’s proximity to her French-European readers, Belloc instead finds a more stable political identity in the *métis*, inserting the racializing compound noun *gens de couleur* in a later passage to describe his racial identity. As we will see, given how Belloc figures George’s lineage, such an insertion situates George in a representational tradition of *métissage* that, by this point in French letters, had “overtones of cultural fusion” that were “held up as regenerative, utopian even” (Prasad 70). For Pratima Prasad, the polyvalence of *métissage* could encompass this figurative sense of an “idiosyncratic form of egalitarianism” (19), and the more biologist reproductive sense that had taken hold

beginning in the late eighteenth century through the influence of the German anatomist Johan Blumenbach's writings, as well as those of French naturalists, scientists and ethnographers, such as the comte de Buffon, Louis-Antoine Desmoulins, Pierre-Paul Broc, and the Caribbean colonist Moreau de Saint-Méry, who had published an ethnography of colonial Saint-Domingue in 1797 (45-48). This proliferation of meaning, the lack of consensus about or fixed sense for "racial mixing," generated a set of cultural anxieties about it that carried forward into the mid-nineteenth century, as the actual *gens de couleurs* whom George would have evoked demanded their rights on the road to full integration into French political and social life—much as George takes a stand against the slave catchers.

In this pivotal scene in Chapter XVII, "The Free Man's Defense," George faces them down at gunpoint on a steep hillside with his own pistol drawn, defying the legitimacy of slave laws. As he proclaims the virtue of his rebellion, he performs for readers the act of casting off the yoke of slavery through his refusal to comply with its legal terms. A key three-paragraph sequence begins in the source text when George says, emphatically, to his legally sanctioned pursuers, "We don't own your laws," and further, "we don't own your country" (195). Offering readers a way to interpret the significance of this act, Stowe's narrator quickly introduces an allusion to the European revolutions of 1848, specifically the U.S. media and Congressional fascination with Lajos Kossuth, the governor-president of Hungary during their revolution. Stowe's text compares U.S. readers' response to Kossuth and Hungarian revolutionaries with their potential condemnation of George's act of righteous rebellion. The comparison points to a hypocrisy in U.S. public discourse about revolution(s), calling readers to account for

being “too well instructed and patriotic to see any heroism” in “a youth of African descent, defending the retreat of fugitives” (195). But not before a brief paragraph (the second of the sequence) that casts George in a sublimity born, at once, for Stowe’s narrator, of typologically transcendent values—whether founding U.S. ideals or those handed down from on High—and his physiognomy. George “stand[s] out in fair sight, on top of the rock, as he make[s] his declaration of independence” and, as if “appealing from man to the justice of God, he raise[s] his hand to heaven as he sp[ea]ks” (195). Between these phrases, Stowe embeds physical descriptors in the narrator’s typologically driven affirmation of George that harken back to the earlier description of his racialized genealogy and the sympathetic desire his appearance might cathect. In the wake of Toni Morrison and María DeGuzmán, we are squarely in the presence of the chiaroscuro of a “white imagination’s” playing in the dark as the “glow of dawn g[ives] a flush to his swarthy cheek, and bitter indignation and despair g[ive] fire to his dark eye” (195).¹⁵² The sequence brings to a climax all of the righteous protest George has been made to embody, all of the sympathy he has been made to court through the combustible combination of his racial positioning and his exceptionality, what Stowe’s narrator refers to upon first introducing him to readers in her second chapter to as his “adroitness and ingenuity,” his “mechanical genius” (13). It is this very quality, as emplotted in his invention of a machine similar to Whitney’s cotton gin, that leads his resentful master to punish him by ceasing to hire him out in a bagging factory, precipitating his determination to flee to Canada in the third chapter.

¹⁵² See Morrison’s seminal study, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993) and María de Guzmán, *Spain’s Long Shadow*.

Belloc translates from the perspective of a European who experienced what came to be known as the February Revolution in 1848, resulting in the short-lived institution of the Second Republic, and, in George, creates the image of an even more arresting and powerfully defiant figure. Her George does not merely observe that the laws of the U.S. are not for him; rather, he proclaims, “Vos lois, nous les renions!” and “votre pays n’est pas le nôtre.” (“Your laws, we renounce!” and “Your country isn’t our country”) (257). What’s more, in the second paragraph of the sequence, while adhering closely to the physical descriptors used by Stowe’s narrator, she fixes an interpretation of Stowe’s more ambiguous phrase “George stood out in fair sight” that decisively emphasizes an attractiveness associated with his mother right from the outset: “Georges était beau à voir” (George was beautiful to see) (257). And, finally, in the third, where Stowe’s text ironizes the hypocritical treatment of fugitive slaves by comparing them to fugitive Hungarians, Belloc writes: “mais nous sommes trop bien appris et trop bons patriotes pour voir rien d’héroïque dans la défense de gens de couleur, de race africaine, s’enfuyant de l’Amérique au Canada” (but we are too well instructed and too patriotic to see anything heroic in the defense of *gens de couleur*, of the African race, fleeing from America to Canada) (257). Where Stowe describes George as a “youth of African descent,” Belloc inserts a legally codified French racial category, *gens de couleur*, to name his defense against oppressive forces. In so doing, her translation reasserts the significance of George’s *métis* status, displacing the suggestion that he is a direct descendent of the African race, as well as Stowe’s description of his “European” features, with the more idealized framing. For Belloc, he is, at once genetically and culturally, something completely different: the result of successive “mixed-race” unions.

This characterization takes on a heightened significance as George articulates a vision of freedom and a republican future for freedmen in Liberia. In Belloc's translation, we see George transformed into the embodiment of a former and renewed French ideal, a *gens de couleur* assimilated to and educated by French institutions to spread the virtues and language of French Catholic republicanism in the North and West African colonies and beyond. Beginning with the framing of George's infamous colonization letter, the translation emphasizes the extent to which his ideas and vision for the future are informed by French political history and principles, affirming the paternalism of both French republicanism and abolitionism. Where Stowe's narrator offers, "George's feelings and views, as an educated man, may be best expressed in a letter to one of his friends" (425), Belloc's lexical and syntactical choices reorient the focus of the sentence towards locating the origins of George's feelings and views: "Ce que l'instruction et la fréquentation des hommes lettrés apportèrent de maturité dans les sentiments et les vues de Georges se fera mieux comprendre par les fragments d'une lettre qu'il écrivit à cette époque à un de ses amis" (That which education and the company of men of letters brought about in terms of maturity in George's feelings and views will be better understood through the fragments of a letter he wrote at that time to one of his friends) (570). The syntax foregrounds what in Stowe's is an appositive, ensuring, by moving it to the head of the sentence, that it will be read as primary, as opposed to a passing remark. But Belloc also generates her own reading of "an educated man," elaborating on Stowe's idea of one—in addition to her own characterization of George—in ways particular to the image of him she has been constructing. Consistent with French paternalism, she inserts the notion of "maturité" and makes it hinge on not only French education, but also the

“fréquentation des hommes lettrés,” implying the developmental civilizing effects of an elite French cultural socialization. Such a shift in focus sets up the rest of the chapter to demonstrate the imposition of French republican values onto an African nation. Belloc’s George envisions Liberia as a republic in distinctly French terms. This transformation, in keeping with French historiography of the Haitian Revolution, persists in framing revolutionary potential and democratic ideals as a French import, achieved through the influence of French institutions on *gens de couleur*.

In George’s letter, where Stowe uses “nation” and “republic” almost interchangeably, Belloc is careful to use the French political concepts of *la nation*, *le peuple*, and *la patrie* (nation, people, and fatherland) to unfold the political and revolutionary processes involved in becoming a free republican nation. These concepts accrued new meaning during the French Revolution and were certainly unstable over the half century, as France underwent a series of political revolutions that cycled between monarchical and republican governmental structures. According to Avner Ben-Amos, *la patrie* and *la nation* are formerly Christian and monarchist concepts that, during the Revolution, accrued subversive meanings to displace the authority of the Crown and the Church. While *la patrie* formerly referred to “the sacred, mystical body of the Church” as well as the “religious personality of the king,” and *la nation* referred to the absolutist power of the sovereign, the concepts were radically transformed to name a popular force (Ben-Amos 54-55). Following the Revolution, observes Ben-Amos, “The nation and the fatherland thus merged to produce the Republic, which was the felicitous combination of a political regime and the people’s pride in their country. Being *patriote* was the same as being *républicain*, and defending *la patrie* meant defending the achievements of the

Revolution against its enemies from within and without” (55). These political concepts are vested with particularly nostalgic significance during le Second Empire, as *républicains* like Belloc lament the loss of their former meaning. In charting a path forward for George’s Liberia, she thus recalls images of a former and future French republican victory, inscribing his letter with concepts and images resonant with a French republican struggle to overcome tyrannical rule.

As George describes his reasoning for supporting the colonization project, he continues, “My sympathies are not for my father’s race, but for my mother’s....,” concluding this paragraph with “---though I hope to have no unchristian sentiments, yet I may be excused for saying, I have no wish to pass for an American, or to identify myself with them” (426). In Belloc’s version, this final sentence reads: “— sans manquer de charité chrétienne, je l’espère, je puis dire que je ne souhaite nullement passer pour être Américain, et que je n’adopte point l’Amérique pour patrie.” (“—without lacking in Christian charity, I hope, I can say that I do not wish to pass for being American in any way, and that I in no way adopt America as my motherland.”) (571). Inserting George’s rejection of America as his *patrie*—which might be translated closely according to dictionary definitions as homeland, native land, fatherland, or, based on my interpretation here, motherland—Belloc interprets his political desires through the lexicon of French republican discourse, a choice that also has the potential to activate historical meanings of *la patrie* as a place of birth or origin, “to which one was attached in a sentimental manner” (Ben-Amos 54). George’s reasoning, after all, is grounded in his sympathetic attachments to his mother’s “race.” Further, as George explains that equality has not been possible in the U.S., even for freedmen, his letter reads: “I want a country, a nation, of

my own” (428), which Belloc renders as: “Je demande une patrie, une nation qui soit mienne” (I seek a motherland, a nation, that is my own) (574). Using the subjunctive form of être, “soit,” to indicate specificity and future desire, Belloc maintains semantic correspondence, while also introducing both a mood and the two key political concepts that, together, coalesced in French history to form the republic: *une patrie* and *une nation*. As a result of his French education, it seems, Belloc’s George has assimilated a distinctly French republican set of political desires, projecting a future in which he and other educated freedmen could remake Liberia into a once and future homeland for “the African race” with which he affectionately identifies.

How this would be accomplished, Belloc suggests, is through political and revolutionary means familiar to French readers. In a passage that elaborates how this *patrie* and *nation* might be formed, Belloc inserts insurrectionary imagery as well as the French concept of *peuple*, effectively tracing a relationship between the three institutions that form a republic. Stowe’s George writes: ““In these days, a nation is born in a day. A nation starts, now, with all the great problems of republican life and civilization wrought out to its hand; – it has not to discover, but only to apply”” (427). Consistent with the paternalism of the colonization plan that saw the U.S. republican framework as one that could and should be easily “applied” to peoples around the world in order to create a “nation,” George’s description of this process suggests that there is no need for revolutionary energies, or very much debate about the terms of nationhood. Belloc’s rendering, however, inserts images of French collective action that give the members of a future nation more agency as actors in the transformative process of becoming a republic. In her French, George writes: ““De nos temps il n’y faut qu’un jour. Un peuple se dresse-

t-il tout à coup, il trouve tous les grands problèmes de la vie sociale, de la vie politique et de la civilisation déjà préparés, résolus pour lui. — Il n’a rien à découvrir, il lui suffit d’appliquer” (These days it only takes a day. A people rises all at once, it finds all of the great problems of social life, political life and civilization already prepared, determined for it. —It has nothing to discover, it need only apply) (572). Belloc locates the origin of the republic in *la peuple*, the masses that rise up to confront the social and political dynamics among them and give them voice and shape in the form of a republican government. This is further emphasized by the images that follow. Whereas Stowe’s George writes, “Let us, then, all take hold together, with all our might, and see what we can do with this new enterprise” (427), Belloc’s diction suggests the transgressive or insurrectionary power of *un peuple*, evoking images of French revolt: “Laissez-nous donc, nous serrant les uns contre les autres, réunir nos forces, marcher tous ensemble, et voir ce que nous pourrions accomplir” (So let us, bracing one another, gather our forces, march all together, and see what we can accomplish) (572). Stowe’s imagery imagines the projection of republic values and forms onto a blank space to meet little resistance, while Belloc’s suggests that in order to form a republic, a people must steel themselves against resistance and resolve to overcome the political and governmental structures that preexist the republic as it “march[es] all together.” Their power comes not entirely from without, not from the purity or righteousness of republican values; it lies in their ability to stand and move together as a collective force in the face of anti-republican values. Such imagery moves beyond being reminiscent of mass marches and collective actions in the French revolutionary past—as recently as 1848 February Revolution that resulted in a short-lived Second Republic—to allude to a possible French future in which repressed

citizens, again, join forces to overturn the Bonaparte monarchy. Belloc's choices therefore have the effect of making George's political desires thoroughly French by, perhaps unconsciously, smuggling subversive social commentary into a censorship regime that silenced all critique of the Empire by imprisoning writers.

This imbrication of French and African futures pushes the translation, in Chapter XXXVIII, "La liberté," to advocate for a more radical vision of the post-emancipation future, in stark contrast to other more moderate and gradualist notions of abolitionism. As a central tenet of French republican values—*liberté, égalité, fraternité*—the concept resonated with the terms set forth by both the 1789 and 1848 Republican governments. The Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen du 26 août 1789 defined *liberté* in Article 4: "La liberté consiste à pouvoir faire tout ce qui ne nuit pas à autrui: ainsi, l'exercice des droits naturels de chaque homme n'a de bornes que celles qui assurent aux autres Membres de la Société la jouissance de ces mêmes droits. Ces bornes ne peuvent être déterminées que par la Loi" (Freedom consists in being able to do anything that does not harm others: hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other Members of Society the enjoyment of these same rights. These limits can only be determined by the Law) (Conseil Constitutionnel). Situating the meaning of freedom in a discourse of natural rights, the article bestows positive freedoms on the French people, whose actions are only constrained by the extent to which they harm the community. In 1852, as Belloc was translating, the motto had been displaced by Napoleon III's diptych "*ordre et progrès*," as the former represented insurrection and disorder. Her decisions to translate this chapter and to do so by applying, primarily, a strategy of close adherence, therefore, reintroduced into French political discourse terms

and concepts that were prohibited by the state and deemed anarchical. Moreover, the content of the chapter, which ascribes the rights of man to freed slaves, introduces a yet more radical vision of general human emancipation in which all persons could find freedom and happiness under French republican institutions.

Beginning with the chapter's epigraph, which cites a famous quote from Irish abolitionist lawyer Joseph Curran, Belloc's translation appears to advocate not for colonization or the gradualist programs of emancipation approved by more moderate abolitionists, but for "universal emancipation." By closely adhering to the source text, she thus expands the scope of *liberté* to include the complete and universal emancipation of slaves. Rather than just the positive political freedom to live unrestricted, here *la liberté* also insistently includes freedom from the constraints of slavery and abuses of the master classes. Thereafter, the novel asks, "what is freedom to George Harris?" and elaborates a rights of man discourse that comes to include both freedoms to participate in social life and institutions unrestrained *and* freedom from repressive structures

(378):

To your fathers, freedom was the right of a nation to be a nation. To him, it is the right of a man to be a man, and not a brute; the right to call the wife of his bosom his wife, and to protect her from lawless violence; the right to protect and educate his child; the right to have a home of his own, a religion of his own, a character of his own, unsubject of the will of another (378-79).

Translating closely, Belloc introduces the possibility that freed slaves should be entitled to freedoms as yet unimagined or unsanctioned by French colonial discourse: the freedom to self-educate and be "unsubject" to the will or, perhaps, influence of others. This sentiment stands in defiance of the logic of the *mission civilisatrice*, which saw the imposition through colonization of French institutions onto peoples of Africa, the

Southern Pacific and Southeast Asia as a necessary step towards achieving egalitarian relations and racial harmony. At the same time, the translation names those rights to which the French no longer have access. When the chapter later names the joy of the freedom “to move, speak, and breathe — go out and come in unwatched, and free from danger!” (382), Belloc’s version reads: “Agir, parler, respirer, sortir, rentrer, sans un œil qui vous épie, affranchi de tout danger!” (To act, to speak, to breathe, to go out, to return, without an eye which spies on you, freed from all danger!) (512). The translation signifies, at once, the persecution of fugitive slaves by slave catchers—who, at this point in the novel, George and Eliza learn, will be on the lookout for them in Ohio—and, as perhaps figured in the slight but telling departure “un œil qui vous épie,” the repression of French journalists, artists, professors, and citizens through laws that restricted speech, mobility, dress, voting rights, and the power of representative governing bodies.

This is made most emphatically clear in a moment when Belloc departs much further from her strategy of close correspondence to insert a figure from French republican history. In the chapter’s final pages, as their ship approaches Amherstberg, Canada, Stowe’s George and Eliza break into a prayer, proclaiming:

*“ ’Twas something like the burst from death to
life;
From the grave’s cerements to the robes of
heaven;
From sin’s dominion, and from passions strife,
To the pure freedom of a soul forgiven;
Where all the bonds of death and hell are
riven,
And mortal puts on immortality,
When Mercy’s hand hath turn the golden key,
And Mercy’s voice hath said, Rejoice, thy soul is free.”* (382)

Reborn, the fugitive slaves are freed from sinful institution of slavery, and through God's mercy, become eternally free as they become politically and legally free in Canada. In this song, it is Mercy that is able to bestow upon them the joys of freedom by granting them passage—"turn[ing] the golden key"—to a space beyond the legally sanctioned purview of slavecatchers, beyond the jurisdiction of U.S. slave laws. In fact, the imagery of the poetic prayer locates freedom in an immaterial, heavenly realm that transcends earthly constraints. Using the metaphor of spiritual salvation to describe George and Eliza's freedom from slavery, the poem grants their experience divine meaning.

Of all the passages we have considered, Belloc's treatment of this prayer in verse deviates the most from her strategy of close adherence. Here Belloc's strategy of nostalgically evoking French political ideals supersedes that of close adherence, as she transposes the metaphors that Stowe uses to describe eternal salvation on High to locate freedom and happiness in a political immortalization achieved in Paris. From the perspective of contemporary translation practices her rendering of the prayer would constitute something closer to an adaptation, although, given the *belles infidèles* tradition, it could safely fall within the scope of what was possible for a translation. Yet, in light of her other decisions throughout, Belloc would seem to be operating with an understanding of how her translation relates to Stowe's text here that moves definitively away from rendering "les nuances les plus délicates de l'original" with a "scrupuleuse fidélité." We might understand the correspondence she establishes to Stowe's imagined prayer as a relatively freer one that strategically and accordingly jettisons certain textual features, as it bases its semantic relation to Stowe's text on a general theme and its figuration, as opposed to dictionary definitions, and its formal one less on closely approximating how

specific poetic elements are used, and more on loosely remaining within the genre of poetry. Her imagined prayer reads:

C'était — c'était passer de la mort à la gloire,
Et du funèbre glas à des chants de victoire;
C'était du noir péché, l'empire anéanti,
Et des luttes du mal, l'esprit libre sorti;
La chaîne de la mort et de l'enfer brisée,
Le mortel revêtu de l'immortalité,
Et la miséricorde, au seuil de l'Élysée,
Criant : *Soyez heureux durant l'Éternité!* (512)

(It was — it was passing from death to glory,
And from the funeral knell to songs of victory;
It was from black sin, the shattered empire,
And from the struggles of evil, the free spirit left;
The chain of death and broken hell,
The mortal clothed in immortality,
And mercy, on the threshold of the Élysée,
Shouting: *Be happy for all Eternity!*)

Part of the culminating passage of the chapter “La liberté,” the prayer becomes a cry not for God’s mercy on their souls, nor the entrance of Eliza and George into the Heavenly Kingdom. Freedom and happiness, the French poem reads, would be found on the steps of the *Palais de l'Élysée*, a symbol of the French republican government and the official residence of Napoleon III, both as the President of the Second Republic and, soon thereafter, the self-proclaimed Emperor of France. The *Élysée* was, at once, a symbol of what was lost and what might be regained, embodying the theft by the monarch of the rights enjoyed by citizens of the Second Republic. Belloc’s poem might recall a past before the fall of the Republic, or serve as a call to action to French republican readers. In her version, the death of the empire (*l'empire anéanti*), and not the more implicit “death” of George and Eliza’s former enslaved selves, results in *la gloire, victoire, and l'esprit libre*, perhaps both brought about by and celebrated by the people meeting on the

threshold of the *Élysée* to reclaim it in the name of the Republic. Inserting this insurrectionary sentiment achieves two subversive ends: first, it smuggles past the censors the imagery of a prohibited French political discourse to hearten and inspire republican readers; and second, it aligns the experience of the newly free fugitives, George and Eliza, with that of the French, destabilizing the hierarchical arrangement in which prevailing racial discourse situated them. In sum, the chapter's range of transgressive images expand the scope of the French republican definition of *la liberté* to encompass freedom from the tyranny of both monarchy and actual slavery, a rhetorical move that expands the bounds of the discourses of natural rights on which both U.S. and French republicanism were founded.

Conclusions

Though nineteenth-century French readers doubted the political significance of Stowe's novel, and French literary critics and historians have only recently begun to reconstruct the print and reception history of the text's many translations, this chapter suggests that Belloc's translation was politically significant in at least two ways. First, Belloc used literary translation to subvert le Second Empire's censorship regime and reinvigorate republican and revolutionary energies. And second, Belloc's translation played a decisive role in reorienting French colonial desires towards the *mission civilisatrice*. Indeed, *La case de l'oncle Tom* would remain a referent in French African political discourse for decades to come. As such, this chapter demonstrates the multifaceted role that literary translation may play in the generation of new political concepts and subjectivities. The foreignness and apparent frivolity of Stowe's text—a

sentimental novel written by a young woman with, reviewers thought, little practical understanding of politics—provided an alibi not just for Belloc, but for writers and journalists throughout the Atlantic world. Translators could conceal illicit political critique behind the pretense that their work was about the U.S., and disavow their role in creating insurgent meanings by positioning themselves as mediators rather than authors. At the same time, the anti-slavery novel entered an international community that was on the brink of political and social transition, moving away from slavery and the slave trade and towards a new political world order no less predicated on the accumulation of imperial power through territorial expansion, the exploitation of labor, and the extraction of resources.

Belloc's translation is one among several in the period that uses Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to subvert a censorship regime and register a set of political critiques prohibited from being articulated otherwise—whether of monarchical tyranny in France and Spain, condemnation of the slave system in Cuba, or Spain's role in perpetuating an illegal slave trade and therefore plantation slavery in the U.S. In Spain, the monarchy prohibited popular novels by socially-oriented foreign writers such as George Sand and Alexander Dumas, yet permitted the translation and widespread circulation of Stowe's novel. Perhaps in response to pressure from progressive publishers that advertised the text's popular reception among "enlightened" readers, translations of Stowe's novel appeared in at least fifteen editions between 1852 and 1853, and in serialized form. According to Lisa Surwillo, the translations served a number of political functions in Spain. Most explicitly, the translations meditated on and criticized Spain's role in the slave trade and their policies in Cuba. One theatrical adaptation, *Haley*, even

reconfigured the drama of the text to focus on and develop the role of the novel's most inhumane slave trader, indirectly criticizing the Spanish monarchy as among the most morally corrupt forces that sustained the U.S. plantation system and threatened the stability of the Spanish empire. More implicitly, Surwillo explains, politically progressive newspapers took to replacing censored articles with sections of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, signaling to readers that discussion of Cuban slavery and the Spanish slave trade was being suppressed.¹⁵³

One especially transgressive Spanish version, *La cabaña del Tío Tom*, translated by Andrés Avelino de Orihuela in 1852, issued critique of the Spanish monarchy and Cuban elite alike by producing what Kahlila Chaar-Pérez terms a “Cubanized” version of the novel. First published in Paris, the translation was subsequently published in Barcelona, Colombia, and Argentina, circulating an annexationist interpretation of Stowe's novel throughout the Hispanophone world. In Cuba, as we saw in chapter three, such a position was difficult to fully articulate, as the Crown instituted a similarly rigorous censorship regime that prohibited anti-slavery and Cuban nationalist literature. So while literature by reformists like Domingo del Monte was prohibited, the translation of Stowe's novel passed censors with curious ease, even as the novel, and especially Orihuela's version, had obvious implications for the future of the Spanish empire and Cuba. Orihuela, through translation, thus intervened into political discourse with his translation to register an otherwise utterable position in favor of annexation. Likewise, his

¹⁵³ According to Surwillo, the government approval of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is “extraordinary,” given the extent of repression and censorship. She writes that while “Not every Spanish citizen read a translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*,” “its availability and familiarity situated the characters and explosive themes of slavery and the slave trade—both exotically North American and domestically Spanish—squarely in the national cultural imagination” (772).

translation challenged the position of criollo elites like Del Monte that sought to abolish slavery, but maintain white criollo racial supremacy and economic power on the island. According to Chaar-Pérez, Orihuela's Spanish casting "offer[s] flashes of a cultural and racial imaginary critical of the Cuban elite's politics of whitening and of Stowe's Protestant brand of romantic racialism" (150).

Belloc's work, especially in relation to a wider network of translators, suggests the significance of literary translation as a site of political critique and the generation of new political subjectivities. Indeed, in addition to its nostalgia and hope for a republican France, her translation can also be seen as influential in shaping an emergent discourse that repackaged colonial desires as compatible with a racial egalitarianism achieved through the assimilation of African peoples to French politics, language, and institutions. While the redevelopment of the French colonial empire would not be fully realized until the late nineteenth century, under the leadership of le Troisième République that took power in 1870, mid-century writers and politicians played a decisive role in reimagining a French empire sustained not by slavery, but by paternalistic intervention. Belloc's translation adapted images of racial harmony and strife that were produced in French Romantic writing and colonial discourse during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As such, she and others, such as Hugo and Chateaubriand, narrated a moral and political continuity between the abolition of slavery and the expansion of French influence and power throughout North and West Africa.

Indeed, *La case de l'oncle Tom* would remain a part of French discourse for decades to come, especially in writing by and about French Africans. In a monthly bulletin published in January 1923 at the behest of Auguste Terrier, secretary general of

the Comité de l'Afrique Française, Camille Guy, governor of French Sudan, references *La case de l'oncle Tom* in an editorial piece that expounds upon the evolving situation in French Cameroun. Guy writes:

Dans cet ordre d'idées, le premier problème qu'il s'agissait de résoudre était celui de l'esclavage. A première vue, quoi de plus simple? Des indigènes sont esclaves; il faut les mettre en liberté. Sans doute! c'est l'idée simpliste de "La case de l'oncle Tom": c'est le geste généreux des révolutionnaires de 1848. Mais, dans la pratique, il en va autrement. Le captif au Cameroun, comme d'ailleurs dans toute l'Afrique, y compris Madagascar, n'est pas l'esclave tel que le connaissait l'antiquité. Sa situation se rapproche beaucoup plus de celle du serf du XIII^e siècle en ce sens qu'il est bien plus l'esclave de la terre que d'un propriétaire. S'il a des devoirs envers son maître, le maître en a envers lui des très définis et des très sérieux. (325)

(In this vein, the first problem to be solved was that of slavery. At first glance, what could be simpler? The natives are slaves; they must be released. Without a doubt! it is the simplistic idea of "Uncle Tom's Cabin": it is the generous gesture of the revolutionaries of 1848. But, in practice, it is different. The captive in Cameroon, as elsewhere in all of Africa, including Madagascar, is not the slave as known in antiquity. His situation is much closer to that of the thirteenth-century serf in that he is much more a slave to the land than an owner. If he has duties towards his master, the master has very definite and very serious ones towards him.)

Guy writes in support of the colonial policies imposed by Jules Cadre, the first French commissioner to Cameroon, and defended the administration's maintenance of a forced labor system that, while under German rule just a few years earlier, had been recognized by the League of Nations as plantation slavery. In this piece, Guy refers to the 1848 abolition of slavery in French colonies, likening its gesture to that of "l'idée simpliste" of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, to suggest that the same logic cannot apply to the situation of Cameroon, where masters and servants have an amicable and mutually interested relationship. His reinterpretation of the meaning of *La case de l'oncle Tom* is somewhat ironic in the context of this chapter. As we have seen, the French iteration of the novel contained various examples of "inter-racial" relationships, ultimately valorizing the most

paternalistic relationship that operated according to a logic of mutual obligation and affection. Strategically distinguishing the present iteration of French colonial slavery from those universally defamed by the nineteenth-century abolitionist movement, Guy nonetheless reinforces the racializing logic promoted by Belloc's anti-slavery novel, that which would have the enslaved persons in Cameroon assimilate to French culture and society as a docile, educated, but ultimately subordinate class.

CODA

I have attempted in this study to provide a variegated account of how past translation practices have articulated notions of political change in two overlapping periods of intense political activity. I would submit that further inquiry into the vast archive of translations that had implied or explicitly stated political functions in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world can reorient our approach to the study of revolution more broadly. If we understand translation as generating new political concepts, potentially producing revolutionary subjects, and suturing transgressive social forces to radical ideologies, our field of vision is substantively changed. Both as we look back at movements of the past, and identify instances in our present, we can recognize that translation has the capacity to transform what I would call the scope of a political concept. I mean scope in two interrelated ways: first, the range of meanings that a concept can take on, in the sense of how capacious or delimited it can be; and second, how widely a concept can circulate as a corresponding political form or idea. Translation and other practices of second order creation, then, should be understood as sites of social struggle that demand scholarly and politically engaged attention.

In a post about 15M, blogger Iohannes Maurus argues that, as a passion, indignation has a “función fundamental: restablecer la relación social cuando el poder la daña y amenaza con destruirla” (fundamental function: to re-establish the social relation when power damages and threatens to destroy it) (35).¹⁵⁴ In 2011, *¡Indignaos!* resisted

¹⁵⁴ Here I cite “Indignación y dignidad” in *¡Indignados! 15M*, edited by Fernando Cabal, pp. 31-36. The blog post can also be found online at <https://iohannesmaurus.blogspot.com/2011/05/15-de-mayo-indignacion-y-dignidad.html>.

the alienation and atomization endemic to capitalism and exacerbated by neoliberalism, connecting people of different social classes and political beliefs into a community built on an ethos of mutual care. Just 11 years later, similar but different struggles are being waged against new iterations of totalitarianism. To meet these forces, many activists and artists, much as Manuel García de Sena did, have looked back to look forward, translating and adapting anew an infamous nineteenth-century Italian protest song: *Bella Ciao*.

Originally sung by women working in the rice paddies of Modena, “Bella Ciao” (Goodbye Beautiful) was a work song, announcing that one day, they would work in freedom and escape the tyranny of their bosses. The song was adapted by Italian Partisans in the mid-twentieth century to become an anti-fascist anthem, a freedom fighting song in which the speaker declared they would die for their freedom. Over the course of its 150-year lifespan, the song has been translated and adapted many times, to articulate a range of anti-authoritarian political positions. Most recently, “Bella Ciao” appeared as a leitmotif in the 2017 Spanish Antena 3/Netflix series, *La casa de papel*, which follows a group of outcasts that execute an elaborate heist plot to take over the Spanish National Mint and print millions of Euros. Since the show was an international sensation, it re-circulated the song widely, inscribing it with new meanings to articulate resistance to historically specific, present conditions. *Bella Ciao* was translated and adapted by activists and singers in Brazil, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the U.S., Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. Palestinian singer Azza Zarour says of her adaptation of *Bella Ciao* that, though she knew the song as a kid, she was unaware of its background. The story behind the song, she says, is what

really piqued her interest in adapting and performing it. Citing the women working in Modena, Zarour actively connects current struggles with past ones, situating her adaptation in a long historical tradition.¹⁵⁵ These iterations of *Bella Ciao*, though serving culturally specific functions, therefore articulate present resistance directed at fascism, capitalism, and other structural forms of oppression to past revolutionary action. This proliferation of second order creations, whether translations or adaptations, points to possible new directions in the study of transnational revolutionary politics.

A visual art adaptation of *Bella Ciao* by a performance collective in Mosul, After Dark Theatre Group, titled “Blaya Chara” (No Solution) is perhaps particularly suggestive.¹⁵⁶ It creates a sonic correspondence between its own Iraqi Arabic refrain “blaya chara” (no solution) and the Italian one, and a visual one between its own red-orange jumpsuits and the heist costumes in *La Casa de Papel*, replete with Guy Fawkes masks. The show’s aesthetic and theme song are reworked and repurposed to address and express local political concerns about joblessness, dead-end education, and lost loved ones that are squarely implicated in the geopolitics of war and U.S. occupation. Evocative as the costumes are of those worn by working mechanics, on the one hand, and detainees, on the other, how might this process of mediation allow After Dark to articulate this particular rhetoric of resistance to the current living and working conditions of Mosul, and Iraq more broadly? And what about the lyrics? What kind of research would we need

¹⁵⁵ My friend and translator Mohammad Husayyan S. Alanzi translated and summarized this September 19, 2019 interview with Al Arabiya for me in an email correspondence. My summary relies on his work.

¹⁵⁶ The translation of the Iraqi Arabic is Alanzi’s, who notes in an email correspondence that the phrase might also be translated closely in the following ways, depending on the context: “no way out”; “there’s no point”; “for no reason”; “it makes no difference”; or even “falling on deaf ears.”

to conduct in order to apprehend the interpretive factors that mediate the social, cultural, linguistic, and historical differences between contemporary Spain and Iraq? What, ultimately, might be the stakes of such a political act of adaptation, and what political ideas could it set in motion?

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